

Foreign Policy of Independent India

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Abstract:- This article titled “Foreign policy of Independent India” is based on the reflections of Indian foreign policy adopted after independency. Foreign policy principles of India are panchasheela, NAM, respect to international law, respect to UN, regionalism (SAARC, BIMSTIC) but in terms of foreign policy practice India is dominating towards its immediate neighbors but bowing towards powerful nations.

➤ *Objectives of the Study:*

Broadly, this article has made its objective to study the overall Indian foreign policy but specially, India's foreign policy of independent India and to find out its dual role in terms of implementation contradiction is focused.

➤ *Methodology of Study:*

This study is carried out on the basis of available resources i.e. books, journals, newspapers, interviews of scholarly people broadcasted and published, online materials, internet articles and so on. It means descriptive method of study is mainly applied while conducting this research.

➤ *Limitation of Study:*

This study is limited on Indian foreign policy since 1950-2019 A. D. The article has defined basic principles of Indian foreign policy as well as it has described the Indian foreign policy under Prime Minister Nehru (1947 - 63), Lal Bahadur Shastri (1964 - 66), Mrs. Indira Gandhi (1967 - 76), Morarji Desai (1977 - 1980), Mrs. Indira Gandhi (1980 - 84), Rajeev Gandhi (1984 - 1989), VP. Singh (1989 - 1991), P.V. Narsimha Rao (1991 - 1996), H.D. Deve Gowda (1996 - 1997), I.K. Gajral (1997 - 1998), Atal Behari Bajapayee (1998 - 2004), Dr. Man Mohan Singh (2004 - 2014), Narendra Modi 2014 onwards are referred here.

Keywords:- Foreign Policy, Panchasheela, Non-Alignment, National Interest, Security Perspective.

I. INTRODUCTION

Foreign policy is the manifestation of internal policy of state. It is the study of actions, interactions and reaction between state and states, organizations and organizations and state and organizations (Dahal, 2002). George Modelski defines foreign it is the systematic activities evolved by a nation for bringing change in the behavior of other states and for adjusting their own activities to the environment. It also involves the formulation and implementation of a group of principles which shape the

behavior patterns of a state in course of diplomatic lobbying with other states to protect its own interests. Thus, foreign policy is a set of norms and values adopted and applied by the nation states to establish, extend and protect national interest in international political scenario

It is strategy in dealing with other nations. It is also called means to conduct foreign relations consisting of self-interest strategies chosen by the state to safeguard its national interests and to achieve goals within its international relations milieu. In next term, it can be termed as the plan of action adopted by one nation in regards to its diplomatic dealings with other countries (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/www.businessdictionary.com>).

It is such wheel around that the machinery of international politics revolves and operates (www.Studylecturenotes.com). Likewise, foreign policies are claimed to be driven by ideology but in reality this is more so in rhetoric and articulation of foreign policy than in its substantive evolution and implementation. Thus, foreign policy followed by a nation in its diplomatic intercourse with other nations that is designed to attain national objectives. It means, foreign policy refers to how a government deals with other countries in the interests of the nations. It includes such matters as international trade and defense. It is chosen to safeguard the interests of the nation and its citizens.

While knowing about India's foreign policy, Geopolitical Theory of international relation is more relevant because intellectual society from India views that the geographical location, physical layout, extent of territory, population size, National character and the policy of government etc. are the major components of this theory.

II. FOREIGN POLICY OF INDIA

Constitutionally, Indian foreign policy is to be guided by the principles of the United Nations Charter, NON-Alignment Movement, Panchasheela, International law, Regionalism (SAARC, BIMSTIC), globalization and the norms of world peace and prosperity. Indian foreign policy is shaped by the traditional principles drawn from the religious epics i.e. Gita and Mahabharata and mostly from the doctrine of statecraft framed by Kautilya that guided Indian foreign policy. Before independency, India was lacking its formal foreign policy because it was ruled by British East India Company Government, BEICG. Pre-independency, foreign policy of India was disserved to have peace and friendship with neighbors. But after independency, India adopted Nehruvian foreign policy.

Indian foreign policy aims, principles and parameters were framed by Jawaharlal Nehru. They are:-

- Opposition Colonialism and Imperialism: foreign policy of independent India has resistively opposed all forms of colonialism and imperialism. India expressed her solidarity with the people of Asia and Africa in their fight against imperialism and colonialism. Now she is showing her concern against the rise of neo-colonialism in all its manifestation.
- Opposition to Racial Discrimination: From the very beginning India is against of all kinds of discriminations based on race and culture etc.
- Promotion of International Peace: In chapter IV and article 51 of Indian constitution under directive principles of state policy it is referred that India enjoys working for International peace and security.
- Pansheela and faith in peaceful co-existence :
 - Mutual respect for other's territorial integrity and sovereignty,
 - Non-aggression,
 - Non-interference in each other's internal affairs,
 - Quality and mutual benefit and
 - Peaceful co-existence, it became very popular among sovereign states like, USSR (erstwhile), Indonesia, Myanmar, Yugoslavia, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Laos, Vietnam, etc.
- Special Relations with Asian States.
- Promotion of SAARC.
- Links with commonwealth.
- Faith in UN charter.
- Nuclear and conventional Disarmament but India has not accepted Non-proliferation, NPT yet.
- Sharing cooperation under New International Economic order.
- Non-Aligned Movement, NAM (Nehru it's one of its founder father), further explains Maximum participation in internal affairs, Promotion of international understanding, mutual co-operation, peaceful co-existence and respect for national sovereignty, avoidance of local regional and global wars, Strengthening the cause of international peace and security, Consideration of each international issue on its own merit and Pursuance of an independent foreign policy without aligning itself with any power or bloc.
- National Interest: They change according to the needs, requirements and circumstances internal as well as external. Even then, there are certain basic interests of Indian foreign policy ;
 - To maintain her own territorial integrity
 - To maintain friendship with the neighboring states to get an access to the oil of the Middle East.
 - To safeguard the interests of the Indians living in the Border States.
 - To improve her trade in foreign countries.
 - To enhance its defense capabilities.
 - To get maximum aid and assistance for economic development.
 - To accomplish the security of the Indian AIR AND SEA ROUTES.

- TO maintain dynamic neutrality in the worldwide power conflict.

India the world's second largest populated country has world's fifth largest military expenditure occupies second position in terms of largest armed force , third largest economy and regional power of South Asia intends to extend its regional and international glory through successful penetration of foreign policy. In foreign policy there are no permanent friends or enemies, there are only permanent national interest i.e.History, politics, economy, socio- cultural relationships including security and so on (www.nef.org.np).

India was declared socialist republic through 1960's constitutional amendment under the influence of socialist USSR. But it could not sustain. Till the end of 1980's Indian foreign policy was highly guided by Nehruvian thought .After that Indian foreign policy is about to shift from being a leader of the "third world" as a hope of rising power of the region. Likewise, India could emerge as a great power in its own night. Likewise, India has big tension on increasing foot prints of china in Nepal. Since May 11th and 13th, 1998 nuclear test of India called (Pokharan Test) had shown the paradigm shift of Indian foreign policy.

India is a natural hegemony and where external actors have a history of madding is regions affairs; the contention that domestic factors have had a deeper ole to play in forming the limits of Indian foreign policy is explored rather than converging on to the assertion of national self-interest. As Nepal believe in NAM, Panchasheela, Regionalism, Globalization, UN charter, International law, India also follows its foreign relations based on same principles. Theoretically, Nepal-India relation is guided by such principles but practically, India's big brotherhood policy is dominating its foreign policy.

The collapse of the USSR and the remarkable change in global political order Indianforeign policyframers started thinking at multiple levels. Here NAM had ceased to have much meaning and it was shunned for all practical purposes. A new course of foreign policy was sought by the then Prime Minister I k Gujaral and later P.V.Narsimha Rao .Gujaral had given due importance to peace with neighbors. This doctrine is popularly known as Gujrat Doctrine which is idealistic but affected RAW's activity. Likewise, P.V .Narsimha Rao successfully grasped the Indian foreign policy in favor of Indian interest. During the decade of 1990, Indian foreign policy was tilted towards protecting the following interests:

- Western world including UN had interest in India with regard to Nuclear Non-proliferation but India was compelled to go ahead with its national interest.
- India as the big emerging markets and interest on investing in Indian trade and business.
- 'Look East Policy' because south East Asia was neglected since long that India wanted to make access.

- Improvement of India's relation with china. He had visited china in 1993 and did a treaty with the intension of ending border issue with China.
- Suppression of insurgents being held in Pakistan controlled Kashmir etc.

The terrorist attack held in December 2001 dragged India towards coercive diplomacy with Pakistan but this policy shift did not give satisfaction to India because Indo – Pak relations has not been normalized yet.

The coalition government of Bharatiya Janta party (BJP) under Atal Behari Vajpayee came to power in 1998 while adhering to the traditional principles of Indian Foreign Policy laid special emphasis on;

- To exercise nuclear option in the interest of national security.
- To pursue vigorously for India's permanent membership of the UN Security Council.
- To promote closer regional relations through development of SAARC and to improve bilateral relations with neighboring countries.
- To make due check and balance for interference of Pakistan in India by supporting insurgent and terrorist groups.
- To improve relations with china by the timely resolution of the outstanding border problem.
- To support Sri Lanka for solving LTTE issue.
- To maintain warm and friendly relations with Nepal and to develop new avenues of fruitful co-operation with that country.
- To improve relations with Myanmar and promote greater co-operation in the field of defense, security, economy and culture.
- To further consolidate friendly ties with Bhutan.
- To improve relation with Bangladesh and impress on the Bangladesh authorities the need to check illegal infiltration into India.

Prime Minister Nehru was succeeded by Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri (1964-66). He gave importance to the development of Indian economy (agro sector) and necessity of defense Force due to Pakistan and Chinese hostility. He sent his foreign minister Sardar Swaran Singh on a good will mission to Nepal, Burma, Ceylon, Afghanistan and other neighboring countries with a view to improve India's bilateral relations with them. But he died before completing his tenure in office. Indira Gandhi (1966-77) was chosen as the third prime minister of India on January 24th 1966. In her first Republic Day broadcast, she pledged to follow her father's policy of friendship among nations to implement the Tashkent Declaration to maintain friendliest relations with neighbors, to resolve all disputes peacefully and to uphold the policy of non-alignment. The underlying philosophy behind her foreign policy was implicit in her statement "where there is friendship, we must enlarge it. Where there is difference we must blunt it. Where there is misunderstanding we must remove it." Yet national interest we cannot compromise (Chandra, 2006)*. To quote Trevor Driberg, "She took particular care to emphasize that she was a believer of a

firm base of Indianans as against Nehru's emphasis on internationalism (ibid).

India faced difficulties created by Arab-Israel war of 1967 due to blockage of Suez Canal. India tried to improve its relations with Muslim countries. But due to the increasing threat created by US and China tie, India made Indo-soviet Treaty for lower balance. Creation of Bangladesh (1971), Normalization of relations with Pakistan, following the Simla Agreement (1972), Repairing of relations with China (1976), Strengthening of relations with small neighbors-boundary and sea zone pacts with Sri Lanka (1974) and (1976), with Indonesia (1974) and with Bangladesh (1974) by exchanging Dahagram and Belonia with Benibari enclave, conversion of Iran into a good friend with Benibari enclave, conversion of Iran into a good friend (1973), Merger of Sikkim as the 22nd state of the Indian Union (1975), showing sturdy independence on the nuclear policy-refusing to be pressurized into signing the NPT, and the nuclear explosion at pokharan-explosion was meant to serve as an image booster and as a domestic diversion for her shaky regime at the time of mounting economic and political crisis.

Due to the negative impact of emergency congress party loosed the craze of Lok Sabha in 1977. Janta Party emerged victorious. Morarji Desai assumed the office of PM. Atal Behari Vajpayee, the external affairs minister, had shown dissatisfaction of giving more preference to erstwhile USSR stressing to NAM. Desai government gave preference to Soviet Union for military assistance. He also tried to improve relations with USA.

Another outstanding feature of the Janta party Government's Foreign Policy was an attempt to develop closer relations with neighboring countries. India was alert of possible foreign interference in India's internal affairs. India tried to improve relations with Bangladesh (Farakka Dam), Pakistan (Salal Dam), Nepal, China (trade) and others among various treaties and understandings. Further the Janta Government continued the policy of improving relations with South-East Asian and West-Asia nations and extended full support to the anti-racial policies and liberation movements in Africa.

In the election of Lok Sabha held in 1980 Mrs. Gandhi staged a dramatic comeback to power with an overwhelming mandate from the people and a steam-rolling majority in the Lok Sabha. During this term India's relations with her immediate neighbors were suddenly turned sour. India has again started being in a big brotherly manner and invited the charge of bullying with neighbors. India's unending search for military superiority in the name of external threats created mistrust and suspicion in the neighboring countries. Indira Gandhi's tactic of negotiating from a position of strength had the disadvantage of putting the neighbor's back-up, particularly, after the Janata interlude.

After Mother Gandhi's rule Mr. Rajiv Gandhi became prime minister of India and he gave continuity to the foreign policy laid down by Nehru and Indira Gandhi and reaffirmed his faith in the USA, the Non-aligned movement, opposition to colonialism, old or new (Muni,2012).

But Prime Minister V.P. Singh (1989) opposed aligned foreign policy which was against NAM. He expressed its desire to improve in relations with immediate neighbors which had got stained during the past few years. Soon after assumption of power it initiated moves to hold talks with the leaders of Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan to remove some of the irritants present in the relations of India with these countries.

After the end of bipolar world, the Foreign Policy of all most nations, for the global strategic grid was completely transformed. Prime Minister P.V. Narsimha Rao (1991-1996) gave focus on economic liberalization. He gave a new orientation to the foreign relations in the light of harsh economic realities; greater emphasis was laid on economic diplomacy was given by Mr. Rao. He openly declared that his government would use foreign policy as a dynamic instrument for promotion of national interest in the changed global context. This constituted a clear departure from traditional foreign policy. India established diplomatic relation with Israel, India came actively under UN PKF.

H.D. Devegauda (1996-1997) the prime minister of India (1996) gave continuity to the earlier foreign policy. He further gave emphasis on improvement of relations with the neighboring countries. After Devegauda, I.K. Gujral became prime minister in March 1997. He had developed his own approach about foreign policy in the changed circumstances. His ideas on foreign policy of India came to be known as the Gujral Doctrine. At the core of his ideas was the belief that as the dominant state in South Asia, India need not weigh the concept of reciprocity in numerical or arithmetic terms. As the largest country in the South Asian region, India could afford to be more generous while protecting its foreign policy interests. If neighbor was willing to move an inch forward, India should be willing to move a yard forward. It means Mr. Gujral gave equal preference to all nations for its balanced foreign relation and special preference was given to immediate neighbors (Dutt, 2007).

After Gujral, Atal Behari Vajpayee (1998-2004) became the prime minister. During his time he followed foreign policy as need to exercise nuclear test in the interest of national security, pursuing the matter of India's permanent membership of the Security Council, enhancing closer regional relations through SAARC. He further emphasized on improving relation with Pakistan and other neighboring countries too.

The elections of House of Commons resulted victory of united progressive Alliance (UPA) under the leadership of Sonia Gandhi made Manmohan Singh the prime minister of India. The government was also confronted with critical problems in Nepal and Sri Lanka. For continuity's sake India has considered developments with Pakistan first. UPA government continued with almost the same policy as the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). India focused on cooperation to friendly nations and it entered into strategic partnerships with the United States, Russia, Japan and the EU and is pursuing strategic co-operation with China.

The remarkable feature of Manmohan Singh's foreign policy was a successful India-US civil nuclear co-operation agreement. India gave preference relation with Pakistan but Mumbai attacks (2008) worsened the relations. But during second tenure of Manmohan Singh there was a three week stand-off between India and China troops near line of actual control between Ladakh and Aksaichin in 2015. It was resolved through mutual understanding. Manmohan Doctrine gave high preference for economic progress. India's relations with the global powers as well neighborhood countries are shaped and more focused on regional institutional capacity and regional connectivity (<https://www.google.com>).

The foreign policy of the PM. Modi (26th may 2014) government (Modi Doctrine) concerns on improving relations with neighboring countries in South Asia and the major global powers. Modi and his minister of External Affairs Shusma Swaraj made several visits in friendly nations.

Modi's unprecedented invitation to leaders from neighboring countries to attend his swearing in ceremony has to be appreciated. BRICS and G20 nations' approach of India made happy. BJP's manifesto called India for global strategic engagement that includes the country's economic, scientific, cultural, political and security interests (www.brookings.edu). He was blamed as bowing to the powerful and bullying the weak (Bharatkarnad, strategic forward Narendra D. Modi and India's Global ambition, 2018). He sees Modi as reflexively deferential to the US and China. Modi was popularly taken at the beginning years but later on he was highly criticized by various intellectuals for his neighborhood policy. Centralization of foreign policy's decision making in the PM office is another strategy of strengthening political control rather than bureaucratic domination. Religious diplomacy adopted by Mr. Modi played an important role for the promotion of Hinduism but his constitutional amendment (November 2019) on citizenship issue made him somehow failure as he had been failed internationally in issue of unofficial blockade against earthquake ruined Nepal in 2015. India's foreign economic policy has adopted a distinct nationalist tone. And his main focus was on "*neighborhood first*" foreign policy (<https://academic.oup.com/isp>ekyoo8>).

III. CONCLUSION

Indian foreign policy still has strong legacy of Nehruvian thought as well as its neighborhood policy is also highly influenced by big brotherhood thought though the basic foreign policy principles adopted by India and Nepal are more or less same but due to India's political economic and regional influence its immediate neighborhood policy with small nations i.e. Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka is domination and interference in their internal and external affairs has been common but that do not let India to reach in its fast growth in international political arena.

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