Development of Indian Foreign Policy

Developments in Indian Foreign Policy:
The early idea for an ideal foreign policy for the independent India was begun at the early 1927s, in Indian National Congress conference. In the conference a resolution was made that India could be no party to an imperialist war and in no event should India made to join any war without the consent of the people being obtained. Later, at the AICC Conference organized at Bombay on August 7-8, 1942 made more clear views of Indian relations with other nations in the world and during the conference a popular resolution ‘Quit India Resolution’ was also passed. It states "While the A.I.C.C. must primarily be concerned with the independence and defence of India in this hour of danger, the Committee is of opinion that the future peace, security and ordered progress of the world demand a World Federation of free nations and on no other basis can the problems of the modern world be solved. Such a World Federation would ensure the freedom of its constituent nations, the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and peoples, and the pooling of the world’s resources for the common good of all. On the establishment of such a World Federation, disarmament would be practicable in all countries, national armies, navies and air forces would no longer be necessary, and a World Federal Defence Force would keep the world peace and prevent aggression...The future relations between India and the Allied Nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their co-operation in the common task of resisting aggression". It emphasized for India’s peace and harmonious relations with other countries. By September 1946, when the Interim Government had been installed, Jawaharlal Nehru had a clear vision of independent India’s foreign policy.

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

Another contribution of Jawaharlal Nehru in the field of foreign policy and international affairs for which he will be remembered was the policy of peaceful coexistence between different social, political and economic systems in the post-World War II period. He had given expression to this long before India became independent and tried to the best of his ability to project this policy in India’s relations with all countries of the world and, in particular, with India’s neighbours.

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:

- Mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty.
- Mutual non-aggression.
- Mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs.
- Equality and mutual benefit.
- Peaceful co-existence.

India’s leadership of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)—which it co-founded in Belgrade in 1961—endeavoured to counteract the rigid dichotomies of a Cold War world dominated by the USA and USSR. Non-alignment also generated moral influence for India and reinforced arguments that to ally with either of the two superpower blocs would effectively mortgage India’s future rise and emergence as a Great Power. In the first decades of her independence, this belief existed regardless of the realities of what India is, as India’s leaders saw Great Power status as based upon moral idealism rather than territorial, economic or military indicators.

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
The 1971 conflict with Pakistan and India's consequent 'liberation' of East Pakistan into Bangladesh showed India capable of successfully fighting a limited conflict and of redefining her strategic environment. Subsequently, post-1971, India emerged as the foremost power on the subcontinent; 1973 further confirmed the ongoing morality present within India's aspiration to Great Power status and remains as a rare case of successful state-to-state humanitarian intervention. These events also emboldened India's acquisition of nuclear weapons, achieved through the Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) of May 1974.

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. As the cold war has ended, the world has become unipolar, the world faces threat from uni-polar world. NAM has a significant role to play, first, with the disintegration of Soviet Union, the world faces threat from uni-polar world. 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. In the present scenario NAM has a significant role to play, first, with the disintegration of Soviet Union, the world faces threat from uni-polar world. India realized that regionalism is essentially needed to extend cooperation and harmony with neighbor countries, so that there is necessary of peace and development among the Asian countries.

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the US and the “Look East” initiative.

The years from the latter half of the 1990s until 2004, witnessed a Bhartiya Janata Party government in power, which maintained the overall general direction of Rao’s foreign policy. Its tenure coincided with the post-Cold War era, the rise of American unilateralism and new policies of pre-emption and unstrained military intervention in global affairs. India becoming a nuclear power with the “Buddha Smiling” tests, the 9/11 attacks in the US and the resultant “global war on terrorism” were highlights of this period which demanded Indian responses. However, greater attention was accorded to building up Indo-US strategic cooperation, normalising relations and enlarging cooperation with China, besides Vajpayee’s personal commitment to bringing Pakistan to the dialogue table.

The nuclear tests of 1998 put India technically in the league of atomic powers. But, India’s membership of the club of five—the USA, China, France, the UK and Russia—who have formal nuclear status and access to fissile material are guaranteed by treaties and sanctions, still remains strongly contested. The signing of the ‘Henry Hyde United States–India Peaceful Atomic Energy Cooperation Act’, on 18th December 2006 permitted US civilian nuclear cooperation with India, and represents the culmination of a year and a half of work. Counterterrorism initiatives, energy security globalization and the opening of new markets all directly benefit influential countries. The major debates today concern the degree of India’s engagement with the US, its handling of China and the Islamic world and its lofty international goals in contrast with its image as a poor, underdeveloped nation.

The initial years of the twenty-first century, in terms of international and political developments influencing India’s foreign policy, presented by Atul kumar as follows:6

- The US in its tactical obsession with Pakistan placed the emerging Indo-US strategic partnership on the backburner and India was no longer a priority. The war on terrorism and the urgent need to control the oil reserves of the Middle East dictated terms. Some mitigation to the American stand was provided by the civilian Nuclear 123 Agreement.

- Russia realized that it was no longer a “natural ally of the West” and the post-Cold War knee-jerk reaction of forging a strategic alliance with China did not bring all the desired fruits.

- China, despite a phenomenal rise in trade with India and a flurry of visits by senior leaders has yet to give up its strategic nexus with Pakistan. The PCR continued with the military build-up and establishment of the infrastructure of its presence in Pakistan.

- The Indian subcontinent presented a dismal security environment. Pakistan strategically buoyed by American economic, military and political aid persisted in its illusions of achieving strategic parity with India and did not display any signs of political maturity or willingness to pursue conflict resolution. Turmoil and conflict also continued in Nepal and Sri Lanka, while Bangladesh under its previous political dispensation was hostile to its huge neighbour and emerged as an alternative base for Pakistan’s long-standing proxy war against India. However, the trend in Dhaka has now been reversed.

- The international community remained divided on important issues of trade, climate change and global recession.

After 1990s, the shifts in India’s foreign policy manifested themselves in various ways, including better relations with China; the “Look East” Policy (launched in 1992) aimed at improved relations with Asia to the east of India; the further nuclear tests at Pokhran (1998); a significant defence procurement relationship with Israel (after diplomatic relations were established in 1992) and simultaneously enhanced energy diplomacy with Arab countries and Iran; acquiescence in the US nuclear missile defence programme (2001); support for the US invasion of Afghanistan (2002); the Indo-US nuclear cooperation agreements of 2005 and 2008; and India’s votes against Iran at the International Atomic Energy Agency. The relationship with Pakistan remained vexed, marked by the potentially dangerous Kargil war of 1999 and Indian concerns about terrorism from across the border and the attack on Indian Parliament.8

As India’s international profile increased, heightened trade levels and greater military-to-military links (including the signing of ‘strategic partnerships’ with many major and great level powers) personified her international interaction. Such ties have helped expand and strengthen India’s links to the international community and international economy, confirming her status as a rising international force. Typical of this expansion, Indian policy-makers broadened the scope of India’s security horizons, with officials talking of India’s ‘extended neighbourhood’ (Central Asia, South-East Asia and Africa), ‘Look East Phase 2’ (towards East Asia and Australasia), a more even-handed approach to West Asia (between Israel and the Arab states), as well as better links with the European Union.9

The principles of Indian foreign policy laid emphasis on the Asian countries. As such, East Asia has been a natural component of India’s foreign policy priorities. These countries formed ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) group and consists of India, China, Burma, Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam, Cambodia, Japan, Thailand and South Korea. The Indian policy with these countries is popularly termed as “Look East” Policy. In this respect, Kanwal Sibal, former Foreign Secretary of India expressed that “India is an Asian country, the second largest both demographically and geographically. Developments in Asia impinge directly on our security and strategic interests. China is a direct neighbour as are ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) countries such as Myanmar and Indonesia. The Indian Ocean straddles the most important sea routes that connect the oil producing region of the Gulf with the consumer countries of East Asia. Increase in maritime trade is another reality today. Cooperation between India and these countries is a necessary prerequisite for the 21st century to become the century of Asia.

Conclusion:
The contribution of Jawaharlal Nehru is much appreciated to give sound foundation to Indian foreign policy as his emphasis on the peace and cordial relations with other countries. His popular Pancha Sheel principle emphasize the mutual respect, non-aggression, non-interference, equality, mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence. As India is faced imperialism and colonialism during British period, after independence, anti-colonialism and imperialism were become the principles of Indian foreign policy. On the gender and racial discrimination as in South Africa, opposition to racial discrimination become one of the principle of foreign policy. Peaceful settlements of international disputes are also one of the principles of India’s foreign policy. India believes in peace and maintaining cordial relations with other countries. As such, India has become member to SAARC and ASEAN countries. United Nations aims to keep peace and helps to develop the member countries all over the world. As such, India is supporting different activities of the UN all the time.

**REFERENCE**