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CHAPTER

1

INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY: AN OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

Foreign policy is the mechanism national governments use to guide their diplomatic interactions and relationships with other countries. A state's foreign policy reflects its values and goals, and helps drive its political and economic aims in the global arena.

Many foreign policies also have a strong focus on national and international security, and will help determine how a country interacts with international organisations, such as the United Nations, and citizens of other countries.

Foreign policies are developed and influenced by a number of factors. These include:

- The country's circumstances in a number of areas, including geographically, financially, politically, and so on.
- The behaviour and foreign policies of other countries
- The state of international order and affairs more widely (for example, is there war or unrest? Are there trade alliances to take into consideration?).
- Plans for advancement, such as economic advancement or technological advancement.

Guided by foreign policy, diplomats and diplomatic bodies can work across borders to tackle shared challenges, promote stability, and protect shared interests.

A nation's foreign policy typically works in tandem with its domestic policy, which is another form of public policy that focuses on matters at home. Together, the two policies complement one another and work to strengthen the country's position both within and outside its borders.

So in short, Foreign Policy is a framework within which the Government of a given country conducts its relations with the outside world in different formats i.e. bilateral, regional and multilateral or global.

Diplomacy on its part is a profession, skill and art of managing country's relations with the rest of the world with a view to achieving the objectives of country's

foreign policy. Broadly, Diplomacy can be political, economic or cultural, and ideally should work in tandem. As a rule the diplomacy is pursued through established diplomatic channels and mechanisms. It may or may not always be transparent and in public knowledge. At times It can be pursued through back-door channels or through informal Track 1.5 /Track2 mechanisms.

1.2 Objectives and Principles of India's Foreign Policy

The multifarious objectives of India's foreign policy achieve a blend of national and international interests. India has sought to achieve its security and socio-economic advancement while at the same time working for peace, freedom, progress and justice to all nations and peoples.

Basic objectives of Indian foreign policy are as follows:

- Aims to safeguard and further national interest in terms of protecting the country's political independence and promoting its external security.
- Seeks to promote world peace, prevent or resist military threats, support to the initiatives for disarmament, peaceful neighbourhood and work to avoid wars.
- To promote harmony and cooperation between the countries that have ideological, political and other differences.
- To direct its foreign policy towards realisation of equal rights of all peoples and nations without discrimination.
- Leveraging international partnerships to promote India's domestic development.
- Advancing Indian representation and leadership on matters of global governance.

However, broadly it's about securing nation's Interest .In India's case it includes for instance: securing our borders to protect territorial integrity, countering cross-border terrorism, energy security, food security, cyber security, creation of world class infrastructure, non-discriminatory global trade practices, equitable

global responsibility for the protection of environment, reform of institutions of global governance to reflect the contemporary realities, disarmament, regional stability, international peace and so on.

Following principles have guided India in achieving above objectives:

- Panchsheel
- Non-alignment
- Anti-colonialism, Anti-imperialism and Anti-racism
- The principle of avoiding use of force in settling differences with other countries.
- Strengthening the United Nations and other global and regional organizations and development of international law as useful tools for international harmony and cooperation.
- Strategic partnership.

In short, through foreign policy India wants to be seen as peace-loving, mature, law-abiding and trust worthy country while trying to benefit from friendly contacts with other countries in the society of nations.

1.3 Evolution of India's Foreign Policy

The evolution of India's foreign policy can be traced back to pre-independence days of Indian National Movement. The meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in New Delhi in 1921 was '*a landmark in the history of India's foreign relations*'. For the first time, the Congress passed a resolution on foreign policy, which included the statement that "the present government of India in no way represents Indian opinion". It was during the course of India's struggle for independence that the All India Congress Committee passed another important resolution in its session held at Madras in 1927, which stressed the need to conduct independently the external relations of India with the rest of the world without the interference of the British government. Indeed, the foundations of India's foreign policy had been laid down at the Madras Session of the Congress.

An assessment of the Congress resolutions from 1921 to 1947 reveals "*an acute awareness of the dangers in the growth of fascism, a sympathetic approach to the aspirations of the Soviet Union, a consistent criticism of the continuation or expansion of Western imperial power*

anywhere in the world, and a sensitive exposure of all forms of racial, social, and economic discrimination."

It was only after it became independent in 1947 that India began to evolve its own foreign policy in the light of its requirements and the prevailing international situation. Since its independence, Indian foreign policy advocated the principles of friendship and co-operation with all the countries of the world, irrespective of their political systems. Especially the establishment of friendly relations with the neighbouring countries was the principal plank of India's foreign policy.

The post-Independence foreign policy was formulated on the principle of non-alignment because India achieved its independence during the time when the Cold War clouds were already looming large on the globe, as a result of which it not only underwent but also experienced the power politics of the 'Super Powers'. This naturally made India formulate her foreign policy on the lines of non-involvement and non-alignment that became the basic principle of India's foreign policy.

Foreign Policy under Jawaharlal Nehru

Jawaharlal Nehru, under the auspices of the Indian National Congress played a decisive and dynamic role in the evolution of India's foreign policy. Nehru is aptly regarded as the main architect of India's foreign policy. Jawaharlal Nehru had formulated the basic policy outlines in a broadcast from New Delhi on 7th September 1946 in which he laid out certain foreign policy goals. These goals included: *end of colonialism and racism, independence from power blocs, and close ties with China and Asian neighbours.*

Nehru drew the contours of the foreign policy by declaring that India would always keep away from the power politics. He also asserted that, "*wherever freedom is menaced or justice threatened or where aggression takes place, we cannot be and shall not be neutral.*" Nehru believed in extending India's abiding faith in the UN. He made it clear that India never had any interest in power politics of the great powers.

"To the nations and peoples of the world we send greetings and pledge ourselves to cooperate with them in furthering peace, freedom and democracy."

Jawaharlal Nehru in his "Tryst with Destiny" speech at Parliament House in New Delhi in 1947

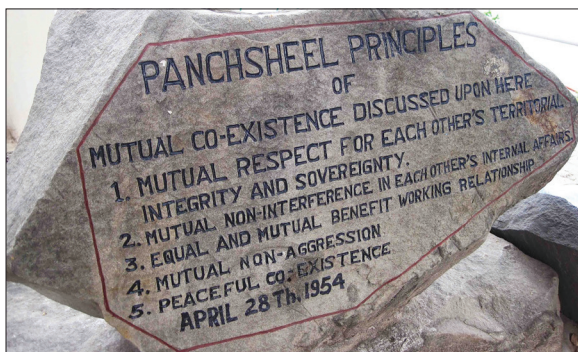
Non-alignment is a positive thought; it meant that India retained the independence of decision making on an issue that affected her interests. There was not a priori

commitment to support one or the other nation involved in a crisis.

During the time of Nehru, India faced many challenges ranging from poverty alleviation at the domestic front to issue of Cold War at the international platform. India needed a period of peace and stability to spur economic growth and political stability. Thus, it was believed that aligning with any of the major powers would subvert this primary goal, reducing India to an arena of Cold War confrontation. Given the task of national integration and development, India can ill afford to invest its energy and scarce resources on arm race. India under Nehru therefore followed the following policies:

Nehru and Panchsheel

The word '*Panchsheel*' denotes '*five virtues*', which used to govern the personal behavior of Indian monks as described in the ancient Buddhist scriptures. Under Nehru, this idea was to become a central theme guiding the relationship among the international states.



The same principle was proposed to govern the India-China relationship, which was enshrined in a trade pact between the two countries, streamlining their bilateral trade operations on Tibet. Based on this, India and China had agreed to follow the following five principles in conduct of their relationship:

- Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty,
- Mutual non-aggression,
- Mutual non-interference,
- Equality and mutual benefit, and
- Peaceful co-existence.

The enshrined principles in the Panchsheel agreement were to later guide the relationship, not only between the two countries, but also their relationship with all the other countries. This was perceived as laying foundation for peace and security in the world. It was thought to give voice to the newly Independent countries, as well as lowering the chance of war in the world.

During the *Bandung Conference* of 1955 of 29 Afro-Asian countries, Panchsheel tenets were incorporated into the Ten Principles of International Peace and Cooperation enunciated in its Declaration. The United Nations General Assembly also unanimously accepted these tenets in 1957. The same were also accepted as the core principles of the Non-Alignment Movement.

Essentially, these principles stand for non-use of force, approach of tolerance, and peaceful co-existence. It allows all the nations to work towards peace and prosperity in cooperation, while maintaining their national identity.

Non-Alignment Movement

Non-alignment aimed to maintain national independence in foreign affairs by not joining any of the 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.

Nehru saw in non-alignment a guarantee of India's independence in the field of foreign policy. According to him, joining any of the world blocs would mean only one thing, to "*give up your view about a particular question and adopt the other party's view on that question, to please it, and gain its favour.*"

India played an important role in forging the non-aligned movement (NAM). Non-Alignment Movement was conceived by five leaders – Jawaharlal Nehru, Gamal Abdel Nasser (Egypt), Sukarno (Indonesia) Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana) and Yugoslavia's Josip Broz Tito. *The first summit of the NAM was held in Belgrade in 1961*. The non-aligned movement was a group of the newly independent states who refused to accept the dictates of the former colonial masters, and decided to act according to their own judgement on issues of international concern.



Founders of NAM: Jawaharlal Nehru (India), Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Gamal Abdel Nasser (Egypt), Sukarno (Indonesia), Josip Broz Tito (Yugoslavia)

NAM was crucial for India for at least two reasons:

- Non-Alignment Movement allowed India to take independent international decisions based on merit which served its interests.
- It enabled India to balance the two superpowers, as neither of the superpower could pressurize India or take her for granted.

Non-Alignment Movement reflected an ideology that a sovereign state, no matter how big or small, can pursue an independent foreign policy based on their own assessment and need. The movement was also a recognition to the need of democratizing the international institutions, which is still very much relevant in the backdrop of demand of emerging countries to give them a greater share in the international bodies like the UN, WTO and World Bank among others.

Nehru's non-alignment policy was continued despite India's conflicts with China and Pakistan, and the major changes in some key relationships involving South Asia. During the formation and decline of United States – Pakistan alliance, the development of close relations between India and the U.S.S.R. and the Sino-Indian relations, India held on to the policy of non-alignment and its support for world peace.

Kashmir Issue

Kashmir as a most important single factor of India's external relations, brought cold war to the Indian subcontinent, resulting in a heavy expenditure on military armaments. Since Indian independence, and accentuated further after 1962, Kashmir continues to be a major factor in India's defence.

Nehru's approach to Kashmir question was also revealed when the issue was referred to the United Nations. The U.N. then was yet an infant and an experimental organization, heavily weighed in favour of the Western powers. On the issue being referred to the U.N., Nehru, in the Constituent Assembly, in March 1948, stated that "our making a reference on this issue to the Security Council of the U.N. was an act of faith, because we believe in the progressive realisation of a world order and a world government. The United Nations Security Council passed a resolution proposing that the Kashmir dispute should be resolved through mutual negotiations between India and Pakistan, and also spoke about plebiscite. However, India ruled out the options of either holding a plebiscite as proposed by UN Security Council or accepting any outside intervention as desired by Pakistan in resolving the Kashmir issue. Since there

was no breakthrough in resolving the vexed issue and disgust over Security Council's resolution, Pakistan decided to acquire Kashmir by waging an undeclared war against India, and resolved to resort to non-peaceful means to achieve its aims to achieve its aims.

Indo-China Relation and War

Nehru was of the view that India and China had so much in common as both the countries had suffered at the hands of colonial powers, and were also struggling to eradicate poverty and underdevelopment. So, it was hoped that both countries would join hands to bring Asia to its rightful place. For its part, India voiced for representation of China in the United Nations Security Council. India did not support the US position in declaring China as an aggressor state in the Korean War.

Tibetan Crisis

After the Chinese revolution of 1949, China wanted to incorporate the Tibet region, and claimed it as an integral part of China. In 1950, China attacked the eastern part of the region and occupied Chamdo region. While India protested against this aggression, it also offered to mediate in response to Tibet's request, which was rejected by China claiming it as a domestic issue.

Under Panchsheel agreement (1954), India voluntarily gave up its military, communication and postal, and other rights over Tibet which it had inherited from the British in accordance with the Anglo-Tibetan Treaty of 1904. India recognized China's claim over Tibet region. At that time, China also assured India that Tibet would be given much greater autonomy, though the commitment remained elusive.

1962 Chinese Attack

Nehru was aware that the Chinese revolution of 1949 represented a fundamental transformation. Also, he was fully aware of possible threat from China as in his speech to the Lok Sabha in November 1959, he said, *"we know enough history to realize that a strong China is normally an expansionist China."* The 1962 Indo-China war was a border dispute which culminated into war.

Two issues that led to the dispute were:

- **First**, Tibet used to be a buffer state in the past, but its annexation by China complicated the border issue.
- **Second**, the border between India and China was decided by the McMahon line during the British era. China refused to recognize this line.

After the Panchsheel agreement, India hoped to resolve the border dispute through McMahon line but the

efforts proved futile. Only in September, 1957 did the Indian government learn of a 1200 km Chinese military highway that passed through Aksai Chin. China also started showing the region as its territory in its maps. India protested against this aggression. China later protested India's decision to provide asylum to Dalai Lama. These border disputes finally led to the war in 1962 when China launched a swift and massive attack on both Aksai Chin and NEFA. India also made a mistake in the assessment of the China's motive. Though China withdrew swiftly on the face of opposition of both the USA and the USSR, it retained Aksai Chin leaving NEFA in Indian control.

Nehru faced his first no-confidence motion over his failure to properly assess the Chinese intentions. India's foreign and security policy took a definite change after the war. Within two years, China conducted nuclear test and India had to increase defence investments. Thus, India's nuclear test was the result of threat posed by both Pakistan and China. Also, the war made the Indo-China conflict a part of global Cold War, as India signed a Friendship treaty with the USSR and China improved its relationship with the USA. Thus, the war took a heavy toll on India-China relations and it took many years to normalize the relation again.

Foreign Policy under Lal Bahadur Shastri

Lal Bahadur Shastri became the Prime Minister of India after the demise of Jawaharlal Nehru. Shastri mostly continued *Nehru's policy of Non-Alignment*, but also built closer ties with the Soviet Union.

Sirimavo-Shastri Pact (1964)

To settle the issue of Indian Tamils in the then Ceylon, Lal Bahadur Shastri signed an accord with the Prime Minister of Ceylon Sirimavo R.D. Bandarnaike in 1964. This agreement was seen as a great achievement as it removed a persistent cause of unpleasantness between India and Ceylon. According to the agreement, 5,25,000 Indian Tamils were to be repatriated, while 3,00,000 were to be granted Sri Lankan citizenship. This settlement was to be done by 31st October 1981. However, in 1982, India declined to consider any further applications for citizenship, stating that the 1964 agreement has lapsed.

China's Nuclear Explosion 1964

China tested its atom bomb during Shastri's time. It was said that the bomb entirely was to protect the Chinese people from the US nuclear threat. Though China asserted "no first use" policy of the bomb, it nevertheless

created a sense of insecurity not only in India but also in the other countries of the South Asian region. However, during the Shastri's period, the pro-bomb supporters forced India to go in for the Nuclear Bomb. Thus, Nehru's era of influence started declining from this period as far as the nuclear weapons policy is concerned.

India-Pakistan War (1965)

The 1965 war has been considered as an important development in the history of India's foreign relations because the war occurred during the post-Nehru era and it was a challenging task to the leadership of Lal Bahadur Shastri. In fact, the 1965 War, which expected to pave the way for improvement of Indo-Pak relations, failed to solve the Kashmir problem.

India-Pakistan war of 1965 was an undeclared war. Kashmir issue was providing the fodder as Pakistan was demanding for reopening of the issue and India maintained that, Kashmir being part of India is a settled fact. These were the following reasons for the war:

- In 1965, the situation in Kashmir became volatile as the followers of Sheikh Abdullah and others created a great deal of unrest in the valley. Thus, the Pakistani leadership thought the time was right for an intervention.
- Also, Pakistan was equipped with superior military weapons which it had acquired from the USA. Pakistan also wanted to strike before India could improve its defences after the debacle of the Sino-India war of 1962.
- Pakistan was also emboldened by the closer ties with China which aimed at isolating India.

Tashkent Declaration

Tashkent declaration was signed between India. Both the parties agreed to withdraw from all occupied areas and return to pre-war positions. They also agreed to repatriate the prisoners of war and not resort to force, thus settling their differences through peaceful means.

However, the Tashkent Declaration failed to resolve the core issue of Kashmir. From the Indo-Pak war two things were clear, one was that no country, except Malaysia and Singapore, was prepared to come out openly to support India. Even the Soviet Union, after reiterating that Kashmir was an integral part of India, chose to assume, like other several countries,

a posture of neutrality when it came to pulling up Pakistan.

Foreign Policy under Indira Gandhi

Indira Gandhi assumed power after the sudden demise of Shastri. She largely followed a policy of Non-Alignment, but her policy was more realistic than idealist. Unlike Shastri, Indira Gandhi had visited most of the countries as Nehru's daughter. The main objective of the foreign policy of Indira Gandhi was to regain India's lost position in the world. Due to her active involvement in the world affairs, she began to be recognized as one of the important leaders of the world.

"Only with coexistence can there be any existence. We regard non-interference and non-intervention as basic laws of international behaviour."

(Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, in her inaugural speech at the Seventh NAM Summit, New Delhi, March 7, 1983)

Bangladesh Crisis

In 1970, free election was held in Pakistan, in which Bengal's Awami party under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman won more than 98 percent of seats in East Pakistan. This meant an overall majority in Pakistan's national assembly, but the Army refused to let the Awami party form the government. In response to this, Awami party launched a civil disobedience movement and the army launched a massive crackdown in East Pakistan, which led to fleeing of lakhs of people to India.

Indian government under Indira Gandhi showed patience and tread cautiously to make world powers aware of the real situation of East Pakistan repression, and also the burden falling on India due to refugees issue. India extended moral and material support to the freedom struggle in Bangladesh.

Pakistan accused India of a conspiracy to break it up. Support for Pakistan came from the US and China. To counter this threat, India signed a 20-year Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. The treaty provided for immediate mutual consultations and appropriate effective measures in case of either country being subjected to a military threat.

Within ten days, the Indian army had surrounded Dhaka from three sides and the Pakistani army of about 90,000 had to surrender. With Bangladesh as a free country,

India declared a unilateral ceasefire. Later, the signing of the Shimla Agreement between Indira Gandhi and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto on 2nd July 1972 formalised the return of peace.

Shimla Declaration (1972)

After the ceasefire, India was ready to negotiate with Pakistan on issue of withdrawal of forces from Western and Kashmir front. Also, considering the fact that a hostile neighbour would force India to maintain a high level of military presence in the western front, it was necessary to engage Pakistan for peace.



Outcomes of Shimla Agreement

- Except some strategic points, India agreed to return the Pakistani territory it had occupied during the war.
- Pakistan also pledged to respect the Line of Control (LoC) and not to alter it unilaterally.
- Both the countries also agreed to settle their issues bilaterally rather than by outside mediations.
- India agreed to return prisoners of war to Pakistan conditional on Pakistan-Bangladesh agreement.

Bangladesh crisis resulted into increasing Indira Gandhi's prestige both at the domestic and International arena. There were many positive outcomes from the war for India:

- India regained lost pride and self-respect that it had lost during the 1962 war.
- After the war, around 10 million refugees were sent back to their homes. Thus, a grave refugee problem straining India's resources was resolved.
- India also emerged as a regional power in South Asia.
- India's prestige at the world stage rose to a new high and its morale boosted; one, due to the way India handled the whole episode and two, Shimla agreement to start the peace process with Pakistan.

Revival of Diplomatic Relationship with China and Pakistan

After the 1962 Indo-China war, India's relationship with China hit a new low. However, by 1976 the situation has changed with India emerging as a major regional power in South Asia. India has demonstrated its capabilities in 1971 war, nuclear explosion of 1974, and the merger of Sikkim in 1975. Also, India wanted to reduce its dependence on the USSR after the 1971 treaty. China also wanted to reduce the Soviet influence in the South Asia region.

As a result of above considerations, India, in a bold decision, unilaterally announced restoring the diplomatic relationship with China to normalize the long-standing strained relationship. China welcomed the move and reciprocated by restoring diplomatic relations. This also saw resumption of trade and cultural relations between the two countries.

Similarly, Indo-Pak relationship was also strained since the 1965 India-Pakistan war. But the Shimla agreement of 1972 finally led to normalization of relationship and revival of diplomatic relations between the countries. The resumption of peace process was also highly appreciated by the other South Asian countries.

Relationship with Soviet Union

Indira Gandhi became Prime Minister of India in 1966. By the year 1970, she started playing a remarkable role in the international arena and had strengthened her position in the country. During the period, India was threatened by China and Pakistan, whereas the USA openly supported Pakistan. This led to India and Soviet Union moving closer to each other in their relationship.

Indira Gandhi's decision of abolition of privy purses, Nationalization of Banks, and the establishment of the socialistic pattern of society also impressed the Soviet Union. By 1970s, the Soviet Union became the second largest buyer of Indian goods while helping India in setting up of Heavy Industries, and also supplying sophisticated military equipment. It also supported Indian cause on Kashmir issue in the United Nations.

Indo-Soviet Treaty (1971)

India and the Soviet Union signed a 20 year treaty of peace, friendship and co-operation, legalizing the rapidly developing friendship and co-operation between the two countries over the years, and elevating their mutual relations to a new and higher stage of development.

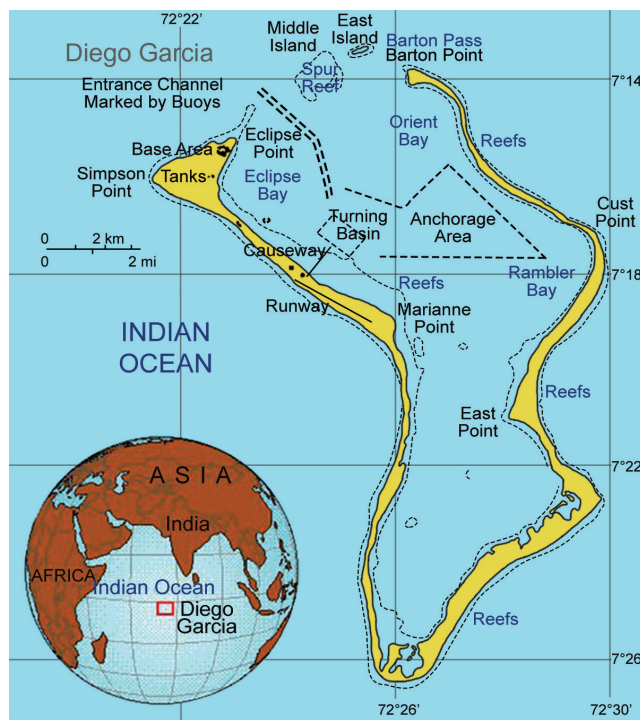
When India conducted nuclear test in Pokhran (1974), almost all the nuclear powers criticized it except France and the Soviet Union, which kept a steady silence, which in a way was an endorsement of India's position.

The relationship between the two countries continued on the basis of mutual understanding, leading to the Soviet Union welcoming the Shimla Agreement and supporting the Indian initiative to resolve outstanding issues bilaterally. The Soviet Union welcomed Mrs. Gandhi's stand on the Indian Ocean being made a zone of peace. Indo-Soviet relations were also very significant in the field of science, technology and trade.

Relationship with the USA

During the first phase of Indira Gandhi's leadership, the relationship with the USA deteriorated due to latter's effort to build a close relationship with China, taking side with Pakistan during the Bangladesh crisis, sale of arms to Pakistan in general, and due to establishment of American naval base in the island of Diego Garcia (Indian Ocean). Indira Gandhi voiced for Indian Ocean free from the Cold War tactics, which did not go down well with the leadership of the USA. The USA was also critical of India for conducting the nuclear explosion in 1974.

Differences Over Diego Garcia



US, with a view to increasing its naval strength, decided to develop Diego Garcia, a strategic island in the Indian Ocean, as a strong naval base. It developed the naval

base in Indian Ocean to safeguard its interests in Asia, and to check the growing Russian power in Asia, and in the Indian Ocean area. Taking into consideration these developments, India strongly opposed the Super Power rivalry in Indian Ocean. Further, India felt that the development of Diego Garcia as a strong military base in the Indian Ocean would certainly increase the tension not only between the super powers, but also in the South Asian region.

During the second phase of Indira Gandhi's leadership, USA helped India get IMF loans and fuel for Tarapur Nuclear Plant. There was also an increase in cooperation between the two countries in the fields of trade, science and technology.

Rajiv Gandhi Years

Rajiv Gandhi followed the foreign policy laid down by Nehru and Indira Gandhi, but also differed from them on certain grounds, thus creating his independent foreign policy to an extent.

His policy was aimed at amity and good will amongst the mankind. For this, he advocated for a *better world economic order* and *nuclear disarmament*. He also realized that *racial harmony* is a prerequisite for peaceful co-existence of the nations. Rajiv Gandhi continued to pursue an activist foreign policy and to assert India's place in the world community.

He asserted that, in the rapidly changing world order, our country must remain flexible to cater to its needs and not remain mired in the past. At the same time, the basic principles and fundamental ethical perceptions must be rock solid. In January 1985, he pledged himself to pursue the following goals:

- World Peace
- Friendship with all nations on the basis of reciprocity and mutual benefit
- Non-Alignment
- New world economic order based on Justice, mutual cooperation, peace and development
- Respect for the Independence of other states and for the principles of sovereign equality of nations, non-interference and non-intervention in their internal affairs
- Strengthening the deep historical and cultural links with our immediate neighbours in south Asia
- Peaceful co-existence
- Adherence to the twin principles of continuity and change, stability and dynamism, in the changing context of world politics.

Under his leadership, India tilted towards the West to get the technological know-how rather than seeking assistance from the Soviet Union, thus differing from his predecessors. This led to marked improvement in relationship with the West.

Disarmament Efforts

Rajiv Gandhi voiced his support for Nuclear disarmament in various forums especially during the years 1985-86. He declared India's stand in clear terms when he said "India has been fighting for nuclear disarmament for long before it became fashionable. We must work towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons within a time-bound programme. We must include all nuclear weapon powers in the process. We must see that nuclear weapon powers do not extend into new dimensions. We must see that there is no development of other weapons of mass destruction or surgical weapons. We must replace doctrine of deterrence by the *doctrine of peaceful coexistence*."

Commitment to Non-Alignment Movement

Rajiv Gandhi reaffirmed India's commitment to the NAM in 1985 when he said that NAM was a logical development of the Indian freedom movement that showed the way to the rest of the colonized world, half a century ago. He focused especially on achieving more cohesion in the NAM in order to meet new challenges in the changing world, particularly towards important economic issues. Creation of a new economic order while countering the onslaughts of racialism and colonialism were the major issues that he raised for the NAM to address.

Rajiv Gandhi emphasized that environment protection and issues of development were inexorably intertwined. For this, he put a great effort towards the creation of a unique multi-billion dollar *Planet Protection Fund* (under UN auspices) to conserve energy and combat atmospheric pollution.

Rajiv Gandhi and Indian Ocean

Indian Ocean has been at center of world politics since long and the dynamics changed when Britain handed over the Diego Garcia, an Indian Ocean island, to the USA. This opened the floodgates for the Cold War hegemony in the region. Given the centrality of Indian Ocean, it was clear that India would be heavily dependent on whoever controls the Indian Ocean region.

Rajiv Gandhi strongly voiced for transforming the Indian Ocean into an arena of Peace, stability and cooperation and to insulate it from the Cold War politics. Rajiv Gandhi asserted that the Indian Ocean had become the playground for world navies infested with nuclear weapons, in turn pitching for making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace.

Efforts to Strengthen SAARC

India fully realized the potential of SAARC as an historic opportunity to overcome the contentious bilateral, political disputes with her neighbours through regional cooperation in economic and cultural fields. Rajiv Gandhi emphasized that the objective of the SAARC should be towards the attainment of collective self-reliance and to strengthen the forces of multilateralism and world-wide cooperation. Rajiv Gandhi emphasized strengthening the SAARC and utilized it especially for discussions at technical levels among experts of the seven countries.

Peace Mission to Sri Lanka

Rajiv Gandhi's Sri Lanka policy was sound and correct, even though it can be argued that the diplomatic and army leadership had perhaps underestimated the real nature and the fighting capacity of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). It was on July 29th 1987, that Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and Mr. J.R. Jayewardene signed at Colombo, the famous *Indo-Sri Lanka Accord* under which India agreed to send its peace keeping force to Sri Lanka to help her fight the menace of LTTE. The agreement was signed after Sri Lanka's attempts to find a military solution to the ethnic problem had failed. Indian Peacekeeping Forces (IPKF) faced a lot of issues, not only from the LTTE but also by the Sinhalese politicians and the opposition leaders in India, but they did a great job amidst such difficulties. Later, IPKF was pulled out under the leadership of the then Prime Minister V. P. Singh, on 24th March 1990.

Narasimha Rao Period

Liberalization and Change of Foreign Policy

New Economic policy of 1991 brought a wide ranging changes in the foreign policy as well as economic sphere of the country. Though India faced many Balance of Payment crisis during 1980s, the conditions in the 1990s forced India to open up its economy to the world, thus paving way for the much needed reform.

Government introduced far reaching changes, opening the Indian economy to the outside world and also reforming the economy at the domestic level. Thus, the government unveiled the *New Economic Policy*. The policy aimed for the pursuit of equity and social justice and to achieve sustained high growth.

End of Bipolar World and India's Foreign Policy

India had very close economic, cultural and technological ties with the USSR. The Soviet Union had supported India on many issues ranging from Kashmir to Bangladesh crisis. *India-Soviet Union signed a treaty of friendship in 1972* and after that India had signed several defence deals with the Soviet Union which had been the largest arms exporter to India.

Though the end of the Cold War has led to the end of threat to India from the Cold War context of US-Soviet power rivalry, it had opened up many challenges for India. For India, disintegration of the Soviet Union has meant uncertainty on several aspects viz. supply of weapons system, supply of spare parts, diplomatic support on Kashmir and other politico-strategic issues in and outside the United Nations and as a counter weight to US in South Asia.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the USA emerged as a sole global power, ending decades of the Cold War and end of bipolar world. In these changing circumstances, India's foreign policy also started changing to adapt to these developments.

First major change was to adapt to the challenges of Globalization which became its primary objective. Thus, India's foreign policy focused on transitioning India from building a socialist society to building a modern capitalist one. To this, change in national economic policy with the introduction of New Economic Policy of 1991, produced many options at the foreign policy front to cater to changing needs.

With growing economy, India started moving towards prioritizing military and economic power in its foreign policy as evidenced by the fact that by 2010, India became the largest importer of arms in the world. This was also due to the troubling neighbours that India had on its western and northern borders. The pragmatism was also reflected in the growing closeness in the India-USA relationship which later culminated into *India-USA nuclear deal*, also known as *123 Agreement*. The inclusion of economic objectives has added diversity

to India's diplomatic portfolio, and India's growing economic power has added weight to its voice in world affairs, particularly in forums such as the WTO and the G-20 forum aimed at global economic recovery.

Rapidly changing domestic politics also affected India's foreign policy. Regional parties started gaining prominence and an era of coalition governments created a turmoil led to highly unpredictable foreign policies evidenced from India abruptly withdrawing its peacekeeping mission from Sri Lanka. Also, during the Gulf War of 1991, Indian foreign policy changed many times, first opposing, then supporting, and then again opposing use of Indian refueling facilities by American airplanes en-route to Iraq.

India's changing foreign policy was not all about '*big-power*' diplomacy, it also engaged with its neighbours. India started putting great efforts to find political reconciliation with two of its large neighbours – Pakistan and China. During 1990s, India-Pakistan relationship saw dramatically changed from a limited conventional war to a total military confrontation. Since 2004, several steps towards normalizing the relationship have been taken up including a serious negotiation on the Kashmir dispute. With China, India started looking for purposeful negotiations to end the long-standing boundary dispute.

Following the 1991 parliamentary elections, P.V. Narsimha Rao became India's 10th Prime Minister. The end of the cold war brought many changes in the international order. The era of bipolar world politics and bloc politics in international relations came to an end in 1991. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the US retained its position of sole power nation. All the nations, including India witnessed this sudden change in international relations, hence, Indian leaders were now tasked to rethink and reshape their foreign policy. Narasimha Rao undertook to restructure India through:

- **Economic Reforms:** Deregulating the economy, loosening state control system, opening up to the world economically, and encouraging the private economy to go forward. This policy of reform was welcomed by the US and other industrialized nations.
- **International Relations:** Indian foreign policy under P.V. Narasimha Rao was greatly focussed on building relations with the US. Many experts believed that Indian foreign policy post 1991 was based on building strong relations with not only the United States, but also with the European Union, Russia, China, Japan, Israel, Brazil, South Africa followed by economically stable nations in Southeast Asia.

India's relation with the US gradually improved after 1991. P.V Narasimha Rao also tried to improve relations with "just" neighbours Pakistan, China, Nepal and Sri Lanka. India extended its relations with the NATO member nations and successfully established a formal strategic partnership with Israel in 1992.

The greatest achievement of P.V. Narasimha Rao in the field of country's foreign policy was the signing of the peace talks with China with a view to ending the long-standing border dispute between the two countries.

Look East Policy

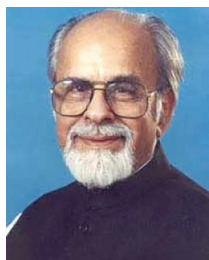
India's Look East Policy (LEP), initiated by former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao in early 1990s, aimed at reducing India's isolation in international affairs and boosting India's involvement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in order to benefit from the advantages of regional cooperation. India's attempt to build a meaningful cooperation with Southeast Asian countries has been well reciprocated and at present, India and ASEAN share vibrant economic, strategic and political ties. This includes the signing of FTA in goods, services and investments. Maritime security, connectivity, etc., are other areas of common concern.

Reasons for Look East Policy

- **Economically Countering China:** China's trade policies during the 1980s led to its meteoric rise and competition between the countries on many fronts, including political, economic and military sphere and most importantly, for economic influence in the region of South East Asia. Thus, India needed to adopt a new economically aggressive policy.
- **Emerging Middle Class:** India has a vast number of educated and talented people forming a huge manpower pool waiting to be tapped. Thus, India started seeking new markets to export its restless workforce and its products.
- **Containment from West and Central Asia:** Also, the avenues of investment and trade relationship with these regions were under constant threat due to geo-political instability and threat of terrorism.

Thus, India started looking for more reliable and stable destinations.

I.K. Gujral Period



I.K. Gujral has a special place in Indian foreign policy realm. Gujral's main focus was on improving India's relationship with its neighbours. Thus, to improve the relationship with neighbours and also to secure peace in the South Asian region, he formulated set of policies which

came to be known as the '**Gujral Doctrine**'. The Gujral Doctrine is considered to have made a substantial change in the manner in which India's bilateral relations were conducted with its immediate neighbours, especially the smaller ones.

The Gujral Doctrine is a set of five principles to guide the conduct of foreign relations with India's immediate neighbours as spelt out by I.K. Gujral. These five principles arise from the belief that India's stature and strength cannot be divorced from the quality of its relations with its neighbours. It, thus, recognises the supreme importance of friendly, cordial relations with neighbours.

These principles are:

- With the neighbours and other nations, India should not ask for reciprocity but should give all that it can, in good faith and trust.
- To create mutual trust, no country in the region should allow its soil to be used against the other countries in any manner.
- Countries in the region should respect the sovereignty of each other and not interfere in the internal matters of any country.
- Respecting territorial integrity and sovereignty.
- Mutual resolution of the bilateral issues without third party interference.

AB Vajpayee Period



AB Vajpayee headed a coalition government in 1998. As a Prime Minister of India, he made significant contribution to India's foreign policy. His Foreign policy initiatives can be summarized under:

Nuclear Test (1998)

India has opposed the international treaties aimed at non-proliferation since they were selectively applicable to the non-nuclear powers and legitimised the monopoly of the five nuclear weapons powers. Thus, India opposed the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995 and also refused to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

India conducted a series of nuclear tests in May 1998, demonstrating its capacity to use nuclear energy for military purposes. Pakistan soon followed, thereby increasing the vulnerability of the region to a nuclear exchange. The international community was extremely critical of the nuclear tests in the subcontinent and sanctions were imposed on both India and Pakistan, which were subsequently waived.

India's nuclear '**doctrine of credible minimum nuclear deterrence**' professes '**no first use**' and reiterates India's commitment to global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament leading to a nuclear weapons free world.

Global Response to Nuclear Test

- India's nuclear test invited strong criticism from the International community.
- The Nuclear tests had created the bitterness in India-China and India-Pakistan relationship.
- Countries, including the USA and Japan responded with economic sanctions over India for the tests and also for going against the NPT and the CTBT.
- These tests had put strain in the otherwise improving relationship with global powers.

India's Response

India clearly stated its goal that the nuclear testing was to protect her own interest and not directed towards any country. India had always maintained its protests against the discriminatory nature of non-proliferation treaties (NPT & CTBT).