

## INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND CONTEMPORARY SECURITY CHALLENGES

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### ABSTRACT

*The paper is modest attempt of showing the India's foreign policy in different phases. It also highlights the chief characteristics of India's Security and its foreign policy. The objective of this paper is to critically evaluate the dynamics of present foreign policy & probing the new external and internal challenges which is facing by India.*

**Keywords:** Look East Policy, Legacy, Naxalite, China – Pak, Nexus, CPEC, OBOR, Fake Currency.

### Introduction

Foreign policy is a policy through which any countries regulate its external relations or maintain its foreign relations with other countries. Foreign Policy is the set of definite goals and actions which every country wants to achieve at any cost. The foreign policy is deals with the concept of National Interests which no country wants to surrender. The main principles of India's foreign policy are - the policy of Non Alignment, Opposition to colonialism ,Imperialism and Racial discrimination, the policy of supporting UN, Following the Purity of fair means, Respecting International laws & International treaty, Following Panchsheel principles, Following Independent Foreign policy without any external pressure , Following a policy to act as a mediator, Adopting the policy of peaceful methods for settlement of disputes, Developing cordial relations with neighbors .

India is geopolitically & geostrategically, the most important country in the southern Asia Region. Today India is becoming as one of the emerging economies of the world, on becoming independent in August 1947, India as a peace loving country always tries to cultivate friendly relations with its neighboring countries. After getting independence, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru became the First Prime Minister of India. Foreign policy under Pt. J.L.Nehru : National security had been a driving force of India's foreign policy during the time of Pt. J.L. Nehru. He hosted the Asian conference in New Delhi in March 1947. At this conference Nehru declared:<sup>1</sup> "This Conference is significant as an expression of that deeper urge of the mind and spirit of Asia which has persisted ....in this conference there are no leaders and no followers. All countries of Asia have to meet together in a common task..."<sup>1</sup> He made sincere efforts to keep India away from the cold war power politics. Nehru said : "<sup>2</sup> I do not say that our country is superior or that we are above passion and prejudice , hatred and fury . but as things are, there are certain factors which help us. First of all we are geographically so situated that we are not drawn into controversies with passionate fury that some other countries are .this is not due to our goodness or badness, but it is a matter of geography". <sup>2</sup> He founded Non-Alignment movement with Col. Nasir of Egypt, Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia, Sukarno of Indonesia and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana in Belgrade summit of 1961. For developing healthy relations with China, Nehru concluded Panchsheel agreement with Chau -En-Lai in 1954. But in 1962 India had to face Chinese attack which gave rise to Indo-china war.

Foreign policy under Indira Gandhi: Indira Gandhi followed somewhat different policy than her father. During her reign Nuclear test (Pokhran first) was conducted (in 1974). She concluded Indo soviet friendship treaty 1971 for fostering friendly relations with Soviet Union. During the reign of Indira Gandhi, in 16 Dec 1971 India got success in liberating Bangladesh from the control of Pakistan. On 31<sup>st</sup> Oct 1984, Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her bodyguards. Her son Rajeev Gandhi became Prime Minister. In Sri Lanka, as there were a civil war was going on between Singhalese and Tamil, Rajeev Gandhi Sent

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peace keeping forces in Sri Lanka. besides this, Rajeev Gandhi supported South Africa's fight against racialism. He supported Dr. Najibullah in Afghanistan, even India asked Soviet Union for assisting Najibullah govt. Rajeev Gandhi supported Maldives president Maumoon Abdul Gayoom who asked for help from India. In 1988 Maldives had coup d' et at, with the help of India the coup was finally suppressed.<sup>3</sup> He adopted a muscular approach to teach Nepal a lesson when the latter turned anti - India. Such a neighborhood policy led some analysts to suggest that Rajiv Gandhi was a Bonaparte in the making"<sup>3</sup>

Foreign policy under P.V Narsimha Rao: he was first prime minister outside of Nehru family to complete a full term in office. He liberalized Indian economy in terms of FDI. LOOK EAST Policy was first time followed by Narsimha Rao. During his visit to Singapore in 1994 Narsimha Rao, said: <sup>4</sup>"the Asia Pacific could be the springboard for our leap into the global market place.... I am happy to have had this opportunity to enunciate my belief in this vision of a new relationship between India and the Asia- Pacific. I trust this vision will be realized ... and that the next century will be a century of Partnership for us all"<sup>4</sup>. SAPTA was signed in 1995 by India along with other countries of SAARC.

Foreign policy under Atal Bihari Vajpayee: <sup>5</sup>"From the Vajpayee government onwards, the concept of "Extended neighborhood" began to appear in government documents. Prime Minister Vajpayee continued to pursue the Look East policy and described East Asia as India's extended neighbourhood"<sup>5</sup>. India took decision under his guidance and did nuclear test (Pokhran II) in 1998. Kargilwar was fought in 1999. India refused to sign CTBT in 1996. He encouraged Delhi Lahore Bus Services. Agra summit was held in 2001.

Foreign policy under Man Mohan Singh: Indo us nuclear deal is a big achievement for India which was finally concluded on 1 October 2008. It took three years for finalizing this deal from 2005 to 2008. It was decided that US will provide nuclear fuel and nuclear reactor to India for the peaceful purposes (like producing electricity). During Man Mohan Singh, Indo -Pakistan relations got worse due to Mumbai Attack on 26-29 Nov 2008. Nathula Pass was reopened for trade between India and China. In 2005, When China wanting an observer status in SAARC, India opposed & blocked China's entry.

Foreign Policy under Narendra Modi: First and foremost, thrust of present government is likely to focus on streamlining of its neighborhood policy. BJP is going to pursue <sup>6</sup> "friendly relations with its neighbours"<sup>6</sup>. For developing good relations Mr. Modi is making sincere foreign trip to different countries. As far as Pakistan is concerned, on 18 sept 2016 an attack was made by four armed militants near the town of Uri in Jammu -Kashmir. Uri was Indian army camp. The militant group Jaish -e-Mohammad was found being involved in this Uri attack. In wake of the attack, India cancelled its participation in the 19<sup>th</sup> SAARC summit to be held in Nov in Islamabad, Pakistan (2016) . Eleven days after the attack, on 29 sept, the Indian army, conducted retaliatory "surgical strikes " in Pakistan administered Kashmir. Actually, it is pre- emptive strike against the terrorists who were planning to conduct terrorist action in Jammu & Kashmir so Indian commandos crossed the L.O.C and killed Pakistani terrorists. In June 2017, a military stand -off occurred between china and India, as a china attempted to extend a road on the Doklam. India claimed to have acted on behalf of Bhutan. Bhutan too objected to china's road construction in this disputed area. Actually, Doklam is a tri-junction plateau & valley area among three countries Bhutan, China and India. Some experts have started visualizing the foreign policies under P.M. Modi in terms of ' Modi doctrine'. Modi Foreign policy represents both continuity and changes of the policies pursued different regimes in the post -cold war era. Modi is credited of not only defining India's national interests in more categorical manner but also to give sharp focus towards their attainment by making assertions both at domestic and international forums. It is also visible that Modi is making more efforts of making assertive and muscular foreign Policy. During his two tenure PM Modi has travelled many countries for making India's good relations with other countries.

The Concept of security is vital issue for every nation. A sovereign nation must be secured from external and internal threats. If the internal security issues are tackled effectively subversion by the external forces to that extent becomes more difficult. Unfortunately, the rise of contentious politics based on sectarian, ethnics, linguistic and other decisive criteria, is primarily responsible for many communal movements flourishing in India. The presence of hostile neighbors like China & Pakistan are also posing external threats. India faces many external & internal threats to its national security. Externally, its conflict with Pakistan is driven by competing geo- political interests and bitter historical legacies. Since every future Indian government will have to operate within those constraints, tensions over Kashmir will continue well into the future. The geopolitical ambitions of India and China remain fundamentally at Odds.<sup>7</sup> India's neighborhood policy manifests serious challenges and opportunities for the policy makers of the country"<sup>7</sup>.

### **India's External Security**

Most external threats emerge from an unsettled boundary dispute with China and ongoing cross-border jihadi terrorism in J & K sponsored terrorism supported by ISI and Pakistan based Islamist fundamentalist organizations like Lashkar -e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad who in turn are inextricably linked with international jihadi groups like Taliban and Al Qaida. Threat from Bangladesh creates serious dimensions since it became a base for north east insurgent groups like Ulfa and Naga factions. Of late, it has also been serving as pipeline for ISI sponsored infiltration of terrorists along India and Bangladesh's leaked border. To cap it, nuclear threat from neighboring states from jihadi groups have the potential of using nuclear weapons in the foreseeable future, significant being China – Pakistan nuclear nexus.<sup>8</sup> Day by day strong friendship is developing between China and Pakistan<sup>8</sup> China offers no space for India compromising on its strategic opposition to China's CPEC and OBOR projects. Both are detrimental to Indian national interests. China offers no space for any Indian Political outreach to China in the hope of normalization of relations. India should delink itself from all China – dominated or China sponsored organizations and summits. They only belittle India's stature. <sup>9</sup>China's engagement towards South Asia and its partnership with Pakistan, continues with string of pearl's policy for encircling India<sup>9</sup> which possess threat to India's security. Pakistan offers no optimism for India for a political outreach to that nation. We can expect further collusive China- Pakistan activities to the injurious to India.

India should not once again drop into the chasm of outsourcing its Pakistan policy to Washington like the UPA government and nor should India succumb to U.S. pressure for any unwarranted political outreach to Pakistan. The US under the Trump Administration is also falling prey to its traditional US policy to sustain Pakistan as a balancer against India. There is no doubt that Pakistan continues to harbor terrorist activities and shields itself with China's complicity. The joint threat of Pakistan – China Axis is growing day by day against India. Pak still continues to stoke fires in Kashmir Valley. Pakistan has not ceased expanding its network of sleeper cells within India to carry out terrorist attacks. Pakistan still continues in printing of fake Indian currency to continue its proxy war against India.

India did surgical strikes against Pakistan in retaliation to the Uri attacks by Pakistan. This step of India was necessary for its security. In other fields, India security also concerned such as Information Technology (IT) crimes, counterfeiting currency, illicit trafficking in human beings, trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, economic crimes, crimes related to Intellectual property (IPS), and cultural property amongst others. <sup>10</sup>India has a long coastline extending to 7516 KMs. It is only after the Mumbai terror attack that we took steps to strengthen coastal security<sup>10</sup>. But much attention is needed for coastal security. Major global flashpoint generating challenges for Indian foreign policy stretch from North Korea to the Middle East via the South China sea disputes, China's disruptive strategies in South Asia, Pakistan's Islamic terrorism exports and the explosive Saudi – Iran confrontation and ultimately the external military interventions in Syria. Security as understood in India is the absence of threats to the territorial integrity, The political and economic stability of the Indian Union, in the internal matter secessionist movements through act of terrorism, guerrilla warfare, communal violence, religious injustice and castes conflict are threats to Indian security.

### **India's Cyber Security**

Data security is also a matter of discussion. In India, the cybercrime rate is increasing day by day. More three thousands crimes were recorded till 2018. The cyber crimes includes the fraud bank money transaction, money laundering, child pornography, and drug trafficking . These crimes occurred due to more online transaction & digital data and free availability of customer information. The most dangerous weapon is the computer virus. Now days cyber crime is also called as computer terrorism.<sup>11</sup>ISO is the international Cyber security Standard that provide a model for establishing, implementing, operating, monitoring, reviewing, and improving an information security management system." Today's need is an updated cyber security policy which will outline specific guidelines for the training and recruitment of such cyber specialists in a time-bound manner. The government of India, needs to update its policy for operating cyber security in effective manner. Wanna Crypt and Peter Ransom ware attacks that hit Indian networks in 2017. Such types of cyber threats which need to be sorted out by revised an update cyber security policy of India.

### **India's Energy Security**

An Energy security policy is an essential component of national security, it can be described as long – term measures to adequately maintain the required supplies of energy resources, both domestic and imported, for a country at all times and at minimum costs. This would primarily involve the production, import and consumption of commercial energy fuels such as coal, crude oil, natural gas and

hydro and nuclear power. To meet the growing energy demand over the next few years, India will have to enhance its energy security by procuring energy supplies at affordable prices. While the country has surplus refining capacity and is an exporter of petroleum products, major investments will have to be made in the domestic upstream industry and to acquire hydrocarbon reserve abroad.

### **India's Food Security**

Indian union legislature passed national food security act on September 10, 2013 with an objective of providing food and nutritional security by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices. The act also has a special focus on nutritional support to women and children. On the one hand, India is still facing a huge burden of chronic hunger and childhood malnutrition. On the other hand, more than three lacs farmers in India have committed suicide as they are not guarded in the local and global market. Thus, India needs to increase its domestic support basket and increase minimum support price substantially and include pulses and edible oil in the national food security act. It needs to provide incentives to promote production of millets, pulses and edible oil to ensure livelihood and food nutrition security. Between year 2011 – 14 India reduces subsidy on agriculture and food security by eighteen thousand crore rupees then how will the Indian farmer could compete in International market without any subsidy.

### **Insurgencies and Rebellions**

Internally, India face a number of secessionist and utopian movements, the most prominent of which are the Maoist Naxalites. Another issue is a possible influx of Muslim migrants from Bangladesh. India has seen nearly seventeen thousand casualties of domestic and one-sided violence since 1989, the ongoing Naxalite insurgency responsible for some 5,600 casualties since 1989 remains a gaping wound. Naxalite have many grievances such as landlessness, poverty and administrative inefficiencies. The response of the Union and State government to the insurgents has so far been a combination of Carrot and sticks. The Union government and the state have, over the past few decades, tried to resolve the issue by force.

### **Conclusion**

Before dealing with external threats to security, the country must be well guarded internally. Numerous socio – economic and religious conflicts within Indian society exist and forging unity in a diverse society, especially where conflicts generate violence, is no mean task. Maoist volcano erupted in Nepal and its lava is spilling over vast Indian territories. These all problems must be solved in effective manner. The concept of security is the most vital issue for the protection & preservation of any nation. The security of nation consists of the security of its natural resources, human resources and territorial integrity. So, an efficient government is always necessary for the keeping country safe from external and internal threat. India is kept on moving in this direction.

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