Abstract

Nehru was an eye witness to the destruction brought about by two world wars and was thus impatient to find ways and means which could bring about a climate of understanding and tolerance among the different nations with a view to settling differences without resort to the horrors of war. Thus the future that took shape in his mind was one of intimate cooperation, politically, economically and culturally between India and other countries of the world. But it was different for Nehru to conceive of an effective World Organization at that time because there were forces and powerful nations which were bent on following contrary policies. However, a faint glimpse of this world cooperation came to President Wilson and he sought to realize it. Nehru appreciated President Wilson for his statesmanship towards realizing this world order. Thus the foundation of the League of Nations in the year 1918 by was the first attempt to create machinery for world wide International Government, constitute a remarkable landmark in the world history.

But the League inspite of its pious principles and useful purposes, failed miserably. During that time India was under the foreign yoke and Nehru was involved in a struggle for independence at home, critically watched its activities and behaviour, could not repose her faith and confidence in it. However it was felt necessary to find out another alternative which could pave the way to restore peace. For the implementation of this proposal, Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill during the Yalta Conference decided to find out the possibilities of maintaining peace on stable lines, which later on led to the establishment of the United Nations Organization in 1945.
India thus became the founding member of the United Nations since its founding at San Francisco in 1945 and there was hardly a statesman in the world that displayed greater faith in and allegiance to the UN Charter than Nehru. Thus the activities of the Indian Government under his leadership were guided by the ideals of conduct embodied in one of the “Directive Principles of State Policy” provided in the Indian Constitution.

Nevertheless India being one of the original signatories of the UN Charter is a firm adherent to the principles enshrined in it. Among, others, the UN Charter emphasized maintenance and promotion of International peace and security, preventing the occurrence of wars and aggression and threats to peace, solving international disputes by pacific means and maintenance of international peace and security, solving problems of an international character by cooperation, promoting better standards of living, and social progress. These inspiring aims and objectives of the United Nations as enshrined in the UN Charter constitute an integral part of the Nehruvian ideology pervading his perception of the new global order.

Nehru repeatedly pointed out India’s attitude towards this august body as that of whole-hearted cooperation and unreserved adherence, in both spirit and letter to the Charter governing it. To that end, India will participate fully in its various activities and endeavour to play that role in its council to which her geographical position, population and her urge for contribution towards peaceful progress entitled her.

It was Nehru’s profound sense of history and idealism, which made him a firm supporter of the United Nations. The circumstances under which the UN
was born and the purpose for which it stood for compelled Nehru more than anything else its support firmly and sincerely the UN and its role in the international sphere. Thus after independence, Nehru made it one of the Chief corner-stones of India’s foreign policy to support and work within the UN and to mediate whenever possible and desirable Nehru once said. “But looking at the broad picture, I think we can definitely say that the United Nations has amply justified its existence and repeatedly prevented the recurrent crises from developing into war. It has played a great role, and its is a little difficult now to think of this troubled world without the UN of it had defects they lay in the world situation itself which inevitably it mirrored”.

Nehru had a vision to transform the United Nations into a world government therefore he resisted all attempts to reduce the world body into a forum to serve the interests of the big powers. Keeping this in mind he repeatedly stressed that the UN in order to be an effective world body should be universal in character and all the countries big or small should be represented in it. The League had its demise because it was a limited Organization right from the beginning and he did not want the same to happen with the UN. Keeping this in mind he brought the issue of Chinese representation in the UN as he believed that it was improper for a great country consisting of 450 million to remain unrepresented because it would have an urgent bearing on the major issues of the world such as disarmament and without which the UN is incomplete.

India under Nehru had been a passionate and constant advocate of the principle of racial equality. He even mobilized the world opinion against the
policy of apartheid in South Africa and considered discrimination on ground of race, as the violation of the UN Charter and a menace for world peace.

Nehru equally laid great stress on the specialized agencies of the UN as they could provide economic and social aid to the underdeveloped countries. In this respect he realized that as long as the enemies of mankind in the form of grinding and abysmal poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, backwardness and equality continued to prevail it would be impossible for the UN to play its role in an effective manner for accomplishing its objectives and goals.

India very often criticized the UN for its structure and for some of its activities because the structure of the UN, when it started was weighted in favour of Europe and America and did not seem fair to the Afro-Asian countries. However, with the growth of the UN and more countries coming in, its structure today has become still more unbalanced. Though Nehru was aware of certain structural defects which existed in the Organization but he warned the nations of the world to proceed slowly with agreement and not to press for an immediate amendment of the Charter because that might lead to raising of heated controversies.

The frequent use of Veto by the USSR compelled other members to find an alternative to the UN as it leads to the most dangerous development in the form of military pacts, aggression and the threat to territorial integrity. But according to Nehru, the presence of the USA and the USSR in the UN was a matter of added prestige which League lacked. Moreover, Nehru felt that however undemocratic the Veto might be in theory it should not be abolished from the Charter because the voting right given to the big powers reflected the
reality of the power politics and if any change is made in the Charter without the consent of all the big powers it would only increase tensions and confusion. However Nehru stuck to the presence of Veto, because in his view what was needed was not to restrict the area of Veto but to regulate its use and that was a matter for the big five to consider themselves.

However Nehru’s contribution in the field of political activities within the world Organization is of immense value.

Nehru was very vocal on issue of Palestine and elaborated his points in the following words that “You cannot solve this problem by trying to crush the Arab people. Secondly that it will not be settled by British imperialism, but by the two main parties coming together and agreeing to terms”.

Nehru while addressing the Constituent Assembly in 1947 suggested, “A federal state with naturally an Arab majority in charge of the federal state but with autonomy for the other region of the Jewish region”, as the solution to the problem. According to him this was not only a fair and equitable solution of the problem, but the only real solution to the problem. Any other solution would have meant fighting and conflict. Though India’s proposal was included in the Palestine Committee, it did not find favour with most people in the United Nations. When partition of Palestine became inevitable it was realized that the Indian solution was probably the best but it was too late to realize.

Partition of Palestine thus brought permanent trouble in West Asia, which at present is explosive and might lead to the possibility of World War III. Had Nehru’s plan been accepted the problem perhaps might have been solved much earlier.
Abstract

Even during the Korean crises Nehru devoted his utmost energy in bringing about peace on honourable terms to the troubled spot of South-East Asia. Nehru directly appealed to Stalin and Dean Acheson for admission of the People’s Republic of China to the UN and for a conference between the USA, the USSR and China with a view to achieving a solution of the Korean crises and even desiring to implement the Security Council Resolution through some positive aid, sent to Korea a medical mission which earned high praise for its work. Some of the published letters of Nehru to the then representative at the UN clearly reflect Nehru’s wisdom and caution in dealing with the problem within the framework of the UN Charter.

India’s policy under Nehru during this phase of Vietnamese crises was also the same i.e. her concern for peace and stability in Indo-China, appeal for political solution through a Geneva type Conference to end the crises for good and security for Vietnamese.

In this Asian drama Nehru played very effective roles to solve the problems. Regarding India’s attitude towards Vietnam issue Nehru said that it was a positive attitude because we do not want to make the situation difficult for Indo Chinese fight for Independence thus India followed a policy of neutrality in Vietnam in order to help facilitate the solution of the problem.

The Congo crises was another major issue which had plunged the United Nations into serious crises with Soviet Union threatening to withdraw from the United Nations and it looked, as though a split in the United Nations was inevitable. Here again the efforts made by Nehru are worth appreciating and the role played by him in defusing the United Nations crises assumes vital
historical significance. It was the “greatest peace mission” of Nehru which ultimately helped in resolving the UN crises and the United Nations literally received a new lease of life.

Thus in all these major International crises, each one having potentiality of escalating into yet another world war. Nehru’s role of mediation became very effective and successful. In all these crises, India’s role of conciliation helped in averting global war. It demonstrated one fundamental truth that the powers pursuing Cold War politics needed an outsider and a new comer to the arena of International politics to exert its moral authority in the cause of peace. It demonstrated yet another fact that the conduct of international relations needed some ethics. Sheer force and military power cannot win war. It further revealed that the role of mediation by genuinely peace loving and non-aligned nation could be acceptable to both the hostile camps. Specially when the nations are suspicious and distrustful of one another, they need someone to act as a bridge and Nehru perfectly fitted himself into this picture and played important role in world affairs.

But we feel sorry to see the current picture of India in the International affairs which is completely different to what it was during Nehruvian era. At that time Nehru showed the guts of taking over the most delicate task in the International affairs. But now our leaders prefer silence to major International incidents which is not a healthy sign and would definitely blur India’s image in the eye of the world.

The aim of my work is to examine critically and objectively Nehru’s contribution toward the international Organization and the UN. By
understanding Nehru can we regain our past legacy of actively participating in world affairs.

The methodology that has been used, is analytical based on empirical facts and published data including primary and secondary sources.

The data collected has been used to evaluate and interpret the hypothesis. An historical approach has also been taken up to explore the background of the study.