Chapter - I

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

A - The Freedom Movement

B - Formation and Basic Principles of India's Foreign Policy
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

(A) FREEDOM MOVEMENT

The roots of foreign policy of India may be found in the various resolutions passed by the Indian National Congress during its struggle for freedom from the British rule and the speeches and writings of the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. The impact of the British rule also led to growth and development of certain democratic and liberal ideas and institutions which in their turn influenced the pattern of India's Foreign Policy.

When India got independence its economy was in poor shape. This was a result of British rule because the British Government had an anti-industrial policy and did not like to develop industry in India. But after independence, the Indian government became interested in raising the standard of living of the Indian people. This could be possible only through industrialization and this industrialization could only be achieved with foreign collaboration. This pre-requisite contributed to the making of the foreign policy of India.

The main points regarding India's foreign policy as formulated by its leaders before India's independence, were as follows:

1. Preservation of India's Sovereign Independence;

2. Persuance of an independent foreign policy avoiding alignment with power blocs;

1. Foreign Policy of India, Lok Sabha Secretariate, New Delhi, p. 1.
3. Acceptance of the principle of freedom for dependent people and opposition to imperialism, colonialism and racialism;

4. Cooperation with all peace-loving Nations and the United Nations to promote international peace and prosperity;

5. Reduction of world tension; and

6. Refashioning of a more equitable structure of international economic order and cooperation on the basis of justice and fair play.

These principles operated powerfully on the minds of India's leaders and through them on the minds of Indian people at the time when India got its independence.

In 1885, the Indian leaders became politically conscious regarding the policies of the British Government. They gathered at Bombay and established an association called the Indian National Congress. Members of this association were seventy two is the beginning. The Indian National Congress at its first meeting in Bombay declared its loyalty to the British Government. W.C. Banerji presided over the meeting and declared: "I ask whether in the most glorious days of Hindu rule, you could imagine the possibility of a meeting of this kind. It is under the civilized rule of the Queen and people of England that we meet here together, hindered by none, freely allowed to speak our minds without the least fear or hesitation. Such a thing is possible under
British rule, and under British rule only. (December 25 to 31, 1885).

In 1892, the Indian National Congress passed a resolution which declared:

"That having regard to the fact that the abnormal increase in the annual Military Expenditure of the Empire since 1885-'86 is principally owing to the military activity going on beyond the natural lines of the defences of the country, in pursuance of the Imperial policy of Great Britain in its relations with some of the Great Powers of Europe, this Congress is of opinion that, in bare justice to India, an equitable portion of that expenditure should be borne by the British Treasury, and that the revenues of India should be proportionately relieved of that burden."

India and Africa had close cooperation in trade and commerce. The African continent covered a large mass land and sea, from Egypt, Libya and Algeria on one side to Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia and Mauritius on the other. This important

See also;

Wall-bank, Walter: _A Short history of India and Pakistan_, Chicago 1951, p.96.


4. V.P. Dutt: _India's Foreign Policy_, New Delhi 1984, p.349.
strategic position led thousand of Indian people to move to south and east African countries from India. But they were harassed and exploited by the South African Government by all possible means. This large-scale exploitation was greatly resented by the Indian leaders who turned their minds to the solution of this serious problem.

Many colonial powers governed the countries of the African continent particularly Britain, France and Belgium. These big colonial powers were exploiting Indians as much as they could. In 1894 the Indian National Congress openly spoke of the exploitation of Indians carried on by these big powers. It took a firm decision regarding the formulation of a sound policy for saving Indians from this exploitation. The Congress passed many resolutions from 1894 onwards with the aim of safeguarding the interest of Indians against exploitation by imperial powers.

It is true that before the African countries acquired independence from their colonial masters— the British, the French and the Belgians— India supported their freedom of movements in time with India's policy of supporting the freedom of dependent countries. In fact, India gave its powerful moral support to the African peoples against racial discrimination, more especially against the racial politics of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia.

As early as 1919, Gandhiji was described as "Gandhi the Great of the whole of Africa". In later years, he was
visited by many African leaders who sought inspiration and guidance in their own struggle for self-determination. Jawahar Lal Nehru spoke movingly of African freedom and the growth of the African personality in the Asian Relations Conference in March 23, 1947, "We in Asia have a special responsibility to the people of Africa. We must help them to take their rightful place in the human family" 5.

A competent study published in 1951 noted that on the eve of India's independence, the number of people of Indian Origin in South Africa was 282,407 and in East Africa around 184,100 6. The people of Indian Origin abroad were free to decide whether they would adopt the nationality of the country they had settled in or continue to remain Indian nationals. If they choose the former alternative, India would have no political concern with them; if they choose the latter alternative, they could claim only favoured alien treatment and no special privileges.

India was in an advantageous position to seize the opportunity and help in the economic development of Africa, and in the process, provide an expending market for its own expanding industries. Thus, India has vital geopolitical and economical interests in Africa.

During the years 1895, 1897, 1898, 1899 and 1902 at the annual sessions of the Indian National Congress similar resolutions were adopted. In 1897, a resolution was passed on the North-West frontier policy which stated:

"That this Congress expresses its deep and earnest conviction that the present frontier policy of the Government of India is injurious to the best interests of the British Empire in general, and this country in particular, as it involves frequent Military expeditions beyond the present limits of the British Indian Empire and causes great loss of valuable lives and public money; and therefore entreats the British Nation to put a stop to this aggressive policy and to lay down that if such expeditions are found necessary, they being for Imperial purposes, the major portion of their expenses should be defrayed by the British Exchequer."

At the end of the First World War, the Indian National Congress congratulated the various countries, "on the successful termination of the war which was waged for the liberty and freedom of all the peoples of the world."

The Indian National Congress urged the British India Government "to settle the Turkish question in accordance with the just and legitimate sentiments of Indian Musalmans". Congress also passed various resolutions of sympathy for countries which were fighting against imperialism and established contract, with the leaders of nations which were raising their voices against imperialism. United States of America and Soviet Union were supporting the effects to terminate imperialism. The Ahmadabad Congress in 1921 again supported the Khilafat Movement.

In 1921 All India Congress Committee passed its first resolution exclusively on foreign policy and decreed:

1. that the present Government of India in no way represent Indian opinion and that their policy has been traditionally guided by considerations more of holding India in subjection than of protecting her borders;

2. that India as self-governing country can have nothing to fear from the neighbouring states or any state as her people have no designs upon them ... and

3. that the people of India regard most treaties entered into the Imperial Government by neighbouring states as mainly designed by the latter to perpetuate the exploitation of India by the Imperial Power, and would therefore urge the States having no ill-will against the people of
India and having no desire to injure her interests, to refrain from entering into any treaty with the Imperial Power.\(^\text{10}\)

It is important to note that from 1885 to 1947 agreement between Muslim leaders and the Congress materialized only twice - in the Lucknow Pact of 1916 and for the Khilafat/Non-cooperation movement of 1920-4\(^\text{11}\). During the period, in 1921, the All India National Congress passed the most important resolution on foreign policy and openly declared to support the Khilafat Movement\(^\text{12}\).

This was a landmark in the history of India's foreign policy. It was a significant declaration on the part of Nationalist India regarding its interest in the field of foreign policy. Another important resolution was passed at the Congress session in Madras, in 1927 in which the Indian National Congress protested against the use of Indian troops in China, Mesopotamia and Persia and deplored the extensive war preparations which the British Government was carrying on in India\(^\text{13}\). The Congress session also demanded the

\(^{10}\) Khundara, op.cit. pp.35-37
Delhi, All India Congress Committee,1921, Resolution VI, (background of India's foreign policies), p.44.

\(^{11}\) Sharma J.S.,India's struggle for freedom, Delhi 1964, p.179, Resolution, C.W.C. Ahmadabad, 1921

\(^{12}\) D.A.Low, The Indian National Congress, Oxford Univ.Press, Delhi 1967, p.191

\(^{13}\) Raj Kumar, K.V., The background of India's foreign policy, New Delhi, pp.44-48.
withdrawal of Indian troops, police consulate guards from Mesopotamia and Persia and from all British colonies and foreign countries, wheresoever they may be as well as all attempts to separate Burmas from India\textsuperscript{14}.

Leaders of Indian National Congress were against any form of western domination over Asian and African countries. Jawahar Lal Nehru visited several countries like Belgium, Switzerland, Amsterdam, Britain, France, Sri Lanka, Soviet Union and Poland in 1927. When he visited Spain in 1938,\textsuperscript{15} he declared that the foreign policy of India should be in favour of those countries which had been exploited by colonial powers. He added:

"The reaction of the Spanish War on me indicates how, in my mind, the problem of India was tied up with other world problems. More and more I come to think that these separate problems, political or economic, in China, Abyssinia, Spain, Central Europe, India or elsewhere, were facets of one and the same world problem\textsuperscript{16}. There could be no final solution or any one of them till this basic problem was solved. And in all probability there would be upheaval and disaster before the final solution was reached".

\textsuperscript{14} Jagdish Saran Sharma, \textit{India's struggle for Freedom}, volume 2nd, Delhi, 1964, p.179.
\textsuperscript{15} Ralhan, O.P.: Jawahar Lal Nehru Abroad, Uppal Publishing House, New Delhi, 1983, pp.2-5, 16.
\textsuperscript{16} Nehru, J., \textit{An Autobiography}, New York 1942, p.601
Attack on Manchuria by Japan and on Abyssinia by Italy were condemned by Indian leaders and they expressed their opposition against these invasion through demonstration. Such demonstrations were also held in favour of the Spanish republic of Spain and China, when she was attacked by Japan and asked the Indian people to boycott Japanese good. The Indian National Congress repeatedly expressed itself against imperialism, Fascism and Nazism. It also strongly criticised the failure of the Great Powers and the League of the Nations to take a step against invasion of Ethiopia.

Another significant pronouncement about the foreign policy of India was made at the Haripura session in 1938. At this session a historic resolution was passed against imperialism, Fascism and Nazism and in favour of a just world order, discrement and collective security. The resolution declared:

"The people of India desire to live in peace and friendship with their neighbours and with all others countries, and for this purpose wish to remove all causes of conflict between them striving for their own freedom and independence as a nation, they desire to respect the freedom of others and to build up their strength on the basis of international cooperation and good will. Such cooperation must be founded on a world order and a free India will gladly associate itself with such an order and stand for disarmament and collective security."
But world cooperation is impossible of achievement so long as the root of international conflict remain and one nation dominates over another and imperialism hold, sway. In order, therefore, to establish world peace on an enduring basis, imperialism and the exploitation of one people by another must end.

The Indian National Congress supported the exploited nations and refused to support and cooperate with the British. This is what Nehru said in his speech on December 11, 1941, referring to the attitude of the congress towards the British during the World War II:

When the Congress offered its cooperation, it received insult from Britain. Today the British are plunged in misfortune. Our sympathies are with them — not only our sympathy but also our reverence. Britain is fighting for her very freedom today. India has been fighting for freedom for century.

Nehru did not express any support towards Japanese imperialism because Japan belongs Asian continent and had once defeated an European imperialist nation: Russia. On April 7, 1942, he declared in his speech:

18. J. S. Sharma, op. cit., p. 181; and also C. W. C. Resol. 1938, Haripura.

I consider it my duty to oppose any foreign invasion of India. How can I remain mere spectator of events or be silent. The news of Japanese bombing of coastal towns of India must stir the hearts of Indians. The Japanese assertion that they are coming to India to set us free is absurd and wholly false. That was clear from Japan's misdeeds in China and Korea.

He commented on Russia's non-aggression pact with the Nazis and subsequent events in these words:

As the war progressed, new problems arose, or the old problems took new shapes, and the old alignments seemed to change, the old standards to fade away. The Russo-German pact, the Soviet's invasion of Finland, the friendly approach of Russia towards Japan: Were there any principles and standards of conduct in this world, or was it all sheer opportunism?

At the end of World War II Indian leaders wanted to get help for the independence of India. They could not receive help from U.S.A. After this, Indian leaders examined the position of Russia which signed on non-aggression pact with the Nazis. These circumstances affected the thinking of Indian leaders in this search for idealistic foreign policy for the country. In 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru expressed his deep disappoint distress at the conduct of the

great powers in Iran which was a "continuation of the old contest for possession of oil by rival powers". He expressed his views on this matter on March 15, 1946 in the following terms.

On the one hand there appears to be Russian aggression; on the other, the desire of Britain not only to hold on to oil, but also to preserve the so-called life-lines of the Empire. Rival Iranian groups are exploited by either party.

Talking about the situation after the War Nehru said as follows:

Much will inevitably depend on American and Soviet Policy, and on the degree of coordination or conflict between the two and Britain. Everybody talks loudly about the necessity for the Big three to pull together... Yet rifts and differences peep out at every stage, even during the course of the war. Whatever the future may hold, it is clear that the economy of the U.S.A., after the war, will be powerfully expansionist... Will this lead to some kind of new imperialism? It would yet be another tragedy if it did so for America has the power and opportunity to set the pace for the future. The future policy of the Soviet Union is yet shrouded in mystery, but there have been some revealing glimpses of it already. It aims at having as many friendly and dependent or semi-dependent countries near its borders as possible... It relies more on building its own strength on an unassailable basis. So, presumably, do other

22. Ibid, p.358
nations also, in so far as they can. That is not a hopeful prelude to world cooperation. Between the Soviet Union and other countries there is not the same struggle for export markets as between Britain and the U.S.A. But the differences are deeper ... and mutual suspicious have not been allayed even by joint effort in the war. If these differences grow, the U.S.A. and Britain will tend to each other's company and support as against the U.S.S.R. group of nations.

Where do the hundreds of millions of Asia and Africa come in this picture?... For them, inevitably, the test of each move or happening is this. Does it help towards our liberation? Does it end the domination of one country over another? Will it enable us to live freely the life of our choice in cooperation with others? Does it bring equality and equal opportunity for nations as well as groups within each nation? Does it hold forth the promise of an early liquidation of poverty and illiteracy and bring better living condition? ...

Large parts of Asia and Africa consist of an awakened, discontented, seething humanity, no longer prepared to tolerate existing conditions. Conditions and problems differ greatly in various countries of Asia, but throughout this vast area, in China and in India, in South-east Asia, in Western Asia, and the Arab world run-common threads of sentiment and invisible links which hold them together.²³

One of the question of the most immediate concern to us is the question of racial discrimination in South Africa and the treatment of people of Indian descent there.

The question concerns not Indian nationals but people of Indian descent who are South African nationals. There is no Indian national there. Our interest in the problem is not only because we are against racial discrimination, but because there is a long history behind this, going back to 50 or 60 years or more. We have been intimately involved in the issue before and after independence.

There are many conflict which divide the world and this question of racial conflict in South Africa is grave as any other issue. There are racial conflicts elsewhere in the world. In India we have no racial conflict in that particular sense, but something akin to it when we suppress the people because they are called "untouchables" or "depressed classes". We are fighting it. Again, for instance, there are racial conflicts in the United States of America. But there is a difference. In the United States of America efforts have been made with growing success to ease the racial problem. I do not say they have solved it, but the Government have tried to solve it, with the help of public opinion, and there is progress in a certain direction; so also elsewhere.

In South Africa, on the other hand, it is the deliberate, acknowledged and loudly-proclaimed policy of the Government itself to maintain this segregation and racial discrimination.
This makes the South African case unique in the world. It is a policy with which obviously no person and no country which believes in the United Nations Charter can ever compromise because it uproots almost everything the modern world stands for and considers worth-while, whether it is the United Nations Charter or whether it is our ideas of democracy of human dignity."

A number of other pronouncements about the foreign policy of India were made during the independence struggle and they formed the basis of the foreign policy of free India. The follower were the aims and objectives of Indian Foreign Policy which were put in a systematic and lucid form by Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of India's foreign policy, both inside and outside the Parliament:

In a speech of September 7, 1946 he declared: We hope to develop close and direct contacts with other nations and to cooperate with them in the furtherance of world peace and freedom. We propose, as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups aligned against one another, which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disaster on an even vaster scale. We believe that peace and freedom are indivisible and the denial of freedom anywhere must endanger freedom elsewhere and lead to conflict and war.

He added:

We hope that an independent India will have friendly and cooperative relations with England and the countries of the British Commonwealth.

About the unity of Asian Countries, Jawaharlal Nehru said:

We are of Asia and peoples of Asia are nearer and closer to us than others. India is so situated that she is the pivot of western, Southern and South-East Asia. In the past her culture flowed to all these countries and they came to her in many ways. Those contacts are being renewed and the future is bound to see closer union between India and South-East Asia on the one side, and Afghanistan, Iran and the Arab world on the other.

These principles of India's foreign policy were reiterated by Jawaharlal Nehru in various forms on different occasions. Certain supplementary principles were also enunciated. For example, in a speech on April 24, 1955 he said: "We want to be friends with the West and friends with the East and friends with everybody."

26. Ibid, p. 3
27. Ibid, Vol. III, p. 290
The preservation of peace constituted the central aim of Indian leaders. It was this which led India to follow the path of non-violence & non-aggression in foreign policy. As regards the policy of non-violence Jawaharlal Nehru received inspirations from the teachings of Gautam Budha and Mahavira. Jawaharlal Nehru wrote:

"The idea of non-violence, already present in the Vedas and Upanishads, were emphasized by Budhism and even more so by Jainism" 28

Again he said:

"Why was it that Budhism resulted in the growth of other-worldliness in India far more than in some other countries where it has flourished for long periods — in China, Japan and Burma? I do not know, but I imagine that the national background of each country was strong enough to mould the religion according to its shape... India was also influenced by Jainism which was the most otherworldly and life-negating of all those doctrines and philosophies" 29.

The teachings of Jainism and Budhism greatly impressed the peoples of India. This was the reason why India followed the policy of non-alignment, non-violence and peace. Jawaharlal Nehru added:

"The emphasis of Jainism and Budhism on non-violence led to the tilling of soil being considered a lowly occupation, for it often resulted in the destruction of animal life" 30.

30. J.Nehru, op.cit., p.141
This does not mean passivity of mind or action, lack of faith, and conviction. It does not mean submission to evil. It is a positive and dynamic approach to problems such as that of confrontation. India believes that each country has not only the right to freedom but to decide its own policy and way of life. She believes in non-aggression and non-interference by one country in the affairs of another and growth of tolerance between them and the efficacy of peaceful co-existence.

During the period of struggle for Independence Mahatma Gandhi strove hard against imperialism, injustice, colonialism and racialism in many parts of Africa. The Indian National Congress took a keen interest in the struggle as accused imperialism in various countries of Asia and Africa\(^1\).

Jawaharlal Nehru also criticised the colonial policy of brutal regression, undisguised racism, "settler imperialism", and devious methods of divide and rule in Africa\(^2\).

\(^1\) V.P. Dutt, *op.cit.*, p.349
\(^2\) Ibid., p.349
B. FORMATION AND BASIC PRINCIPLES OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

Generally the ideology and philosophy of its people greatly affect the nature of foreign policy. The geographical situation, economic and industrial condition, educational levels, political goals, historic experience, military strength, national character, domestic milieu, international milieu, political institutions and personalities of decision makers and other circumstances of a country also influence foreign policy. India has an important strategic position on the globe due to its location, size, topography, population, state boundary, climate, hydrography, soil etc. All are significant in influencing India's foreign policy. But two out of these are most significant and are responsible for regulating India's foreign policy.

1. The Himalayan Frontier - Common borders with Pakistan and China

2. The Indian Ocean - Frontier.

Pakistan, after partition occupied some area of Kashmir, and China has also occupied some areas of Ladakh. The possession of the disputed areas has been a cause of conflict and confrontation between India on the one hand Pakistan, and China on the other.

India has a long boundary with its neighbours, viz., China, Nepal, Afghanistan and Burma. The northern part of Kashmir is joined to Afghanistan and is only a few miles away from the boundary of the Soviet Union. Pakistan and India have a common border. With the annexation of Tibet by China, distance between the borders of the two countries has virtually ended.

The relations of India with Pakistan and China having gone worse, the foreign policy of this country has to be guided by the defence of its northern borders, while taking about this Prime Minister Nehru said in Parliament on March 17, 1950:

"We are in a strategic part of Asia, set in the centre of the Indian ocean, with intimate connection of the past and of the present with western Asia, with South-East Asia and with Far Eastern Asia. We could not ignore it, even if we would and we do not want to ignore it."

India could not ignore the fact that the navies of the western bloc dominated the Indian Ocean and most of the other water surface of the world.


It is for the reason that India has not been in favour of merely regional nuclear free zones. Instead, India has demanded that the Indian Ocean as a whole be declared a peace zone or a nuclear free zone.\(^{36}\)

The Indian Ocean is very important factor for India's national interests because the total area of the Indian Ocean is 74.92 million square kilometers which approximately, is equal to the total area of Africa and Asia. The main constituent parts of the ocean are the Red Sea, Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, Andaman Seas, Persian Gulf, Mozambique Channel and the Great Australian Bight.\(^{37}\) India is so situated that it is protected by the Bay of Bengal, the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea in the east, south and west and the Himalayas in the north. Its land frontiers make the acquaintance of Pakistan, Bangladesh, China, Nepal, Afghanistan and Burma.\(^{38}\)

The Gulf carries the world's largest deposits of petroleum on which the wheels of the industrial civilisation of Europe are very largely dependent. Powerful international capitalist interests have long term extensive interests in the Gulf oil industry. These interests and the crucial importance of petroleum have made the Gulf region perhaps the most sensitive Third World stake for the United States for

\(^{36}\) V.P. Dutt, op. cit. p. 366.

\(^{37}\) Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, Lok Sabha Secretarial, New Delhi, 1987, p. 1.

retaining its global power and security.

The African portion of the Indian Ocean littoral extends from the Horn to the Cape. It is inhabited by a cluster of states having various degrees of instability. Ethiopia, Angola and Mozambique are Marxist-ruled states which are facing counter revolutionary insurgents backed by the United States and the West European powers, or by neighbours who are allies of these powers. Between Ethiopia and Somalia there is almost a perpetual state of undeclared warfare. And finally, there is South Africa; the time bomb that will explode one day with unpredictable ferocity.

Compared with other oceanic geopolitical regions, the Indian Ocean area is distinguished by a much greater multiplicity of imbalances and conflicts. The Atlantic region claims a stable strategic and political balance written in the nuclear language of deterrence. The Atlantic Pact and the Warsaw Pact blocs match each other in nuclear and conventional armouries: The EEC and CMEA are the world's two most integrated international communities.\(^{39}\)

Compared with the pacific, Atlantic and Mediterranean regions, the Indian Ocean region is more conflict-prone, fragmented and exposed to greater power imbalances. The situation, however, is not altogether bleak. Organisation

\(^{39}\) Prasanta Sen Gupta, India Quarterly, Vol.XLIII, Nos.3&4, New Delhi, July-December 1987, p.203.
of regional cooperation like ASEAN, SAARC and GCC keep tensions and conflicts under control, the first more than the second and the third. The Indian Ocean region, however, has remained politically and strategically unstable so far. The super power naval rivalry in the Indian Ocean continued feeding, and being fed by regional conflicts and instabilities.  

India and other countries usually took a serious view of increasing naval confrontation between the two Super Powers in the Indian Ocean. They treated this as a threat to the safety of the region. The non-aligned countries met at Lusaka in 1970 and urged for the conversion of the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace. At its twenty-sixth session in 1971, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, which was reiterated by its several times afterwards.  

Thus, the Indian Ocean occupies an important strategic place in India's foreign policy postures. India has been guided by certain ideals, which have determined her foreign policy. The following are the distinctive features of India's foreign policy:

40. Bhola Chatterjee a 'SUNDAY', Volume 12, Issue of 30 Dec-5 Jan. 1985, p.61; and also Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, Lok Sabha Secretariat, p.10.

NON-ALIGNMENT

India was one of the founding fathers of the movement of non-alignment, which means detachment from military bloc, and the principle of solving all international disputes through cooperation and mutual understanding.42

In September 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru mentioned that India would promote an active concern in World Affairs, following an independent policy compatible with her own national interests. Nehru felt that India could play an important role in the stretch from Australia and New Zealand to East Africa, because some countries of Asia and Africa to have retain independence. Furthermore, India could show an influential stand on International issues.43

Nehru avoided by joining military alliances in order to remain outside the sphere of the influence of the great powers. Nehru explained his policy as follows:

"Our general policy is to avoid entanglement in power politics, and not to join any group of powers as against any group. The two leading groups that are the Russian Bloc and Anglo-American Bloc. We must be friendly to both and yet not join either."44

43. Gopal, Sarvepalli: Jawaharlal Nehru, A Biography, Delhi, 1979, p. 43.
The policy of non-alignment means a policy of peace—a policy based not on the inevitability of war but on the conviction that war can be avoided. If you are mentally convinced that war is bound to come, Nehru told the Indian Parliament:

"You naturally accustom yourself to the idea and perhaps unconsciously even work for it. On the other hand, if you want to work for the avoidance of war, you must believe that it can be avoided." 45.

Joining military alliances meant postures of war which had to be discouraged. 46 Opposing the policy of alignment, Nehru said:

"We propose, as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups aligned against one another which have led in the past to world war and which may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale." 47

Thus, India tried to keep out of the entanglements of cold war diplomacy and followed its own independent path.

Another reason for adopting the policy of non-alignment by India was due to geo-political considerations. She had two leading Communist powers near her borders—China and Soviet Union 48.

45. M.G. Gupta, Indian foreign policy, Agra, 1985, p.93
46. Ibid, p.93
47. The Statesman Sept.8, 1946, p.5
It must be noted that non-alignment does not mean that friendly cooperation is not possible with other countries. Further, non-alignment also does not mean neutrality. Neutrality as a policy has little meaning, except in times of war. To clarify the position, Jawaharlal Nehru said:

"I submit that this is my approach to foreign policy. You may call it neutral or whatever else you like, but I, for my part, fail to see how this approach is neutral. If you think there is a war on today, we are neutral. If you think there is a cold war today, we are certainly neutral. We are not going to participate in a cold war, which I think, is worse than shooting war in many ways. A shooting war is, of course, very disastrous but a cold war is worse in the sense that it is more degrading. It does not matter who is right and who is wrong, but we shall certainly not join in the exhibition of mutual abuse." 49

Thus, it would be wrong to consider the foreign policy of India as one of neutrality because a country which adopts such a policy has no positive opinions on issues which divide the blocs. India, on the other hand, has been speaking clearly and with conviction on various international issues. For examples, she considered the march of North Korean troops into South Korea as aggression.

She condemned the British and French invasion of Suez as naked aggression. She condemned, though after considerable delay, Soviet inference in Hungary,\(^{50}\) and she was very critical of the bombardment in Vietnam by U.S.A.\(^{51}\)

India succeeded in its efforts to convene an international conference in 1955. Ultimately, the Bandung Conference was held from April 18 to 24, 1955\(^ {52}\) which was attended by 29 countries of Asia and Africa. Three prominent leaders - Tito, Naseer and Nehru also participated in the conference\(^ {53}\). In this conference, the principle of co-existence was approved by all the members\(^ {54}\).

The countries which founded the non-alignment were India, Yugoslavia, Indonesia and Egypt. India has been closely associated with the policy of non-alignment. She succeeded her efforts to convene the first conference of non-aligned nations in September 1961.\(^ {55}\) The summit conference of NAM is held every three years. Addressing

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this conference Nehru said:

"We call ourselves the conference of non-aligned countries. Now the word non-aligned may be differently interpreted, but basically it was used and coined, almost with the meaning: non-aligned with the great power blocs of the world. Non-aligned has a negative meaning but if you give it a positive connotation it means nations which object to this turning-up for war purposes, military blocs, military alliances and the like. Therefore, we keep away from this and we want to throw our weight such as it is in favour of peace. The second summit of NAM was held on October 5-10, 1964 at Cario.

The non-alignment movement played an effective role in reducing world tension and in maintaining world-peace. India's non-involvement with any military bloc did not stop for her right to criticise or condemn any act of aggression, repression or injustice.

At present there are 102 members of the non-aligned movement. The question of disarmament, both nuclear or otherwise, which have global implications could not be left to the mercy of public opinion whether it be in the Soviet Union or in the Western countries.

56. Non-Aligned Movement, Lok Sabha Secretariat, 1986, p.2
57. Non-Aligned Movement, Lok Sabha Secretariat, p.9
The non-aligned movement is working for the promotion of world-peace, disarmament, security stability and economic development of backward countries of the world\(^59\).

The 9th summit conference of Non-aligned was held from 4-7 September 1989 in Belgrade, it pledged to stir for a world of peace, freedom, injustice and prosperity and gave to itself a six point agenda for action to eliminate causes and horrors of war, establish just international economic relation, give freedom to people under colonial or alien domination, protect the environment, promote human rights and strengthen the role and effectiveness of the United Nations.

The non-aligned nations supported the four native paris initiative for an international economic summit to ensure higher growth rates for all.

The summit also endorsed the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's move for a 'planet protection fund'(PPF) and asked the international community to set aside financial resources for environmental cooperation and facilitate across for developing countries to environmentally safe technologies\(^60\).

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\(^59\) G.N. Srivastava, op.cit, p.61

\(^60\) The Hindustan Times, 7 Sept. 1989 p.7
Another feature of India's foreign policy is that it has opposed to imperialism and colonialism. It was only after the first world war that the Indian leaders started to oppose imperialism everywhere not merely because of the financial burdens which had been imposed on India, but because imperialism was now regarded as an evil in itself everywhere in the world. Since then year after year the congress passed resolution against imperialism in general as well as its specific manifestations in different parts of the world. In 1928 the congress observed that "the struggle of the Indian people for freedom is a part of the general world struggle against imperialism and its manifestations". In 1938 it declared that "world cooperation is impossible of achievement so long as the root of international conflict remains and one nation dominates over another and imperialism holds way. In order, therefore, to establish world peace on an enduring basis, imperialism and the exploitation of one people by another must end."

The government of India has been consistently championing the cause of the exploited nations against the colonial and imperial power. In a speech before the UN General Assembly on November 3, 1948. Nehru said; "We in Asia, who

have ourselves suffered all these evils of colonialism and of imperial domination have committed ourselves inevitably to the freedom of every other colonial country. There are neighbouring countries of ours in Asia with whom we are intimately allied. We look at them with sympathy; we look at their struggle with sympathy. Any Power, great or small, which in that way prevents the attainment of the freedom of those peoples does an ill turn to world peace. Great countries like India who have passed out of that colonial stage do not conceive it possible that other countries should remain under the yoke of colonial rule.

It may be observed that India has not merely been raising slogans against colonialism and imperialism. But she followed this policy in practice. For example, when the Dutch tried to re-establish their hold over Indonesia, India convened a meeting of Foreign Ministers at New Delhi in 1949 and made an appeal against the move of the Dutch to the Security Council. As a result, the independence of Indonesia was ultimately recognised. India has always sympathised with the countries which are still under colonial domination. The political emancipation of subject and colonial peoples has received India's consistent support. As Nehru said:

"Let us by all means put an end to what remains of colonialism in Asia, in Africa and wherever else it exists. Likewise, India supported the demand for the independence of Libya and opposed the moves of South Africa to incorporate the territories of South West Africa into her Union. She also advocated the cause of Tunisia and Algeria.

(3) **OPPOSITION TO RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**

The Indian government has also been opposed to the policy of racial discrimination. Nehru said:

"We repudiate utterly the Nazi doctrine of racialism wheresoever and in whatever form it may be practised. We seek no dominion over others and we claim no privileged position over other peoples. But we do claim equal and honourable treatment for our people wherever they may go, and we cannot accept any discrimination against them."

India has not only condemned the policy of racial discrimination but also supported the cause of the black people in the United States and the black majority in Africa.

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65. V.Nikhanin, "*India's role in World Affairs*", International Affairs Moscow, No.1 January 1958, pp.59-60.
in their struggles against the supremacy of the white minority. India has been a strong advocate of the policy of racial equality. It was mainly due to the efforts of India that UN General Assembly condemned the Union of South Africa for its policy of apartheid 68.

(4) **COOPERATION AND CO-EXISTENCE**

Cooperation and Co-existence have been another important principle of India's foreign policy. The idea of different systems existing side by side without conflict not new to India. This policy of co-existence was incorporated in the panchsheel or five principles of peaceful co-existence in the agreement between China and India which was signed on 29 April 1954. The five principles are: (1) Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and Sovereignty, (2) Mutual non-aggression, (3) Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, (4) Equality and mutual benefit and (5) peaceful co-existence and economic cooperation 69. Commenting on the significance of panchsheel, Nehru said:

"This idea of panchsheel lays down the very important truth that each people must ultimately fend for itself. I am not thinking in terms of military fending, but in terms of striving intellectually, morally, spiritually and in terms of opening out all our windows to ideas from others, and learning from the experience of others. Each country should look upon such endeavour on the part of the other with sympathy and friendly understanding and without any interference or imposition."

(5) **FAITH IN THE UNITED NATIONS**

India has great faith in the United Nations and stands for the settlement of all disputes under its aegis through peaceful means. India has been associated with the United Nations since its inception. She is one of the fifty-one original members who participated in the drafting of the charter of San-Francisco in 1945. On October 30, 1945, India became its member.

As early as 1946 Nehru unequivocally declared India's faith in and support to the United Nations. He declared:

"Towards the United Nations India's attitude is that of whole hearted cooperation and unreserved adherence in both spirit and letter to the Charter governing it. To that end India could participate fully in its various

70. Nehru, *India's foreign policy*, p.100
activities and endeavour to play that role in its councils to which her geographical position, population and contribution towards peaceful progress entitles her." 71.

For uncommitted Nations U.N. is a great source of inspiration 72. India has "urged the United Nations to develop into a truly international institution of worldwide prestige" for the achievement of the ideals of human rights, economic development, freedom of dependent people and end of racial discrimination. In the very first session of the General Assembly in 1946, India played a leading role in raising the question of racial discrimination against the people of Indian origin in South Africa. Since then she has been relentlessly opposing the apartheid policy.

India opposed the establishment of organisations for collective self-defence even if it is within the framework of the United Nations Charter as it leads to consolidation of power blocs. She thus tried to do away with cold war politics. 73

India is desirous to eliminate want, disease and illiteracy that affect the greater pact of the world. Hence she voted for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights approved by the United Nations on December 10, 1948.74

For this reason, the government of India took the Kashmir issue to the UN.75 The role of India in Korea and Congo are outstanding examples of India's cooperation with the United Nations.76 However, within the United Nations, India has refused blindly to follow either of the two power blocs and has determined her stand on the various world issues keeping in view the interest of world peace. When India summoned a conference of the Asian countries in New Delhi in January 1949, allegations were levelled against her that she was trying to ignore the United Nations. Nehru at that time said:

"We meet to supplement the efforts of the Security Council, not to supplant that body. We meet in no spirit of hostility to any nation or group of nations, but in an endeavour to promote peace through the extension of freedom.77"


75. Misra, Kashmir and India's foreign policy(Allahabad), 1979, pp.91-92.

76. Secretary General of the United Nations, 1946-53

From time to time India has been helping the UN to implement its decisions. She sent personnel for the observation group in Lebanon to ensure that there was no infiltration by soldiers or supply of arms or other materials across the Lebanese border. Similarly, India contributed a contingent during the Congolese conflict.

(6) SUPPORT TO THE ASIAN CAUSES

Although India has been following a policy of friendship towards all the nations of the world, she has evinced a special interest in developing the closest possible ties with other Asian nations which share her point of view. India has not only tried sincerely to solve the problems facing the Asian countries but has also brought them together through various conferences. The beginning in this direction was made by holding an Asian relation which was held at Delhi from March 23 to April 2, 1947.

Even the Bandung conference of the Afro-Asian countries was held in Asia from April 18 to 24, 1955. Professor Palmer and Perkins describe the Bandung conference as the most significant International conference ever held in Asia and

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80. Nasenko, Jawaharlal and India's foreign policy, New Delhi, p.184.
the first conference of its kind in history. India has sometimes been accused of aiming at the leadership of South Asia but she has always disclaimed any such ambition.

(7) **SYMPATHETIC ATTITUDE TOWARDS DIVIDED COUNTRIES**

As India had to face the bitter consequences of the partition of the country, so she has sympathy for other divided countries. She opposed the partition of Palestine and suggested a union of the Arabs and the Jews. Although India expressed her sympathy for the miserable condition of Jews in Europe, especially in Germany. But she criticised for the establishment of a separate Jewish state in Palestine. On the occasion, Mahatma Gandhi maintained his feelings in this words "Why should they not like other people of the earth make that country their home where they were born and where they earn their livelihood.... this cry for the National Home offered a colourable justification for the German expulsion of Jews—palestine belongs to the Arabs in the sense that England belongs to the English and France to the French."

India also opposed the division of Korea and Vietnam. She vehemently opposed the partition of Germany.  

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82. J.S. Sharma, *O.cit.* p. 196
India has been an active member and supporter of the Common Wealth, India joined the common wealth because she wanted to get certain economic benefits as a result of her association with this august body himself. As Nehru said: "We join the common wealth obviously because we think it is beneficial to us and to certain causes in the world that we wish to advance." Again he said that "our association with the common wealth in remarkable in that it does not bind us down in any way whatsoever and, if I may repeat it has not done so during the last two or three years either. It has given us certain advantages without our having to accept any liabilities in return.... I know that some hon. members do not like the idea of our being in the commonwealth. Their dislike is regrettable and I cannot help it. Since we are concerned only with the advantages our country gains. Now Ceylon and South Africa are both members of the common wealth and we may well be asked why we put up with what is happening in these countries. If any hon. member want us to withdraw from the common wealth on principle, my answer would be that what they object to is precisely the reason why we should remain in the common wealth. I shall explain what I mean. By doing so, we have better chances of being able to influence the larger policies of the common wealth means a meeting once or twice a year and occasional consultations and references. Surely, that is not too great

84. Nehru, India's Foreign Policy, Selected Speeches, Sept., 1046- April 1961, p.141,
a price to pay for the advantages we get. If the commonwealth had to right to interfere with any constituent country, then I should certainly cease to be in the commonwealth" 85.

The immediate considerations which prompted India to retain her membership of the commonwealth were the lack of an alternative to dominion status which included membership of the commonwealth; the link would help to retain the loyalty of the British dominated civil and defence services and facilitate negotiations with rulers of princely states for integration with the rest of India. It was further to India's advantage to retain an international connection - a window on the world which automatically come her way - at a time when she was just launched on the world scene and her foreign policy and diplomacy were only beginning to shape 86.

However, India's membership of commonwealth has come a lot of controversy from the very beginning. During the Indo-pak conflict of 1965, when Great Britain sympathised with Pakistan, a demand was made by many persons that India should quit the commonwealth. But the government turned down this demand by pointing out that the organisation was not British but mainly Afro-Asian. Since a majority of the members of the commonwealth belonged to Asia and Africa.