Chapter – 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION
The twentieth century saw a rapid rise in the importance of foreign policy, with virtually every nation in the world now being able to interact with one another in some diplomatic form. Foreign policies generally are designed to help protect a country's national interests, national security, ideological goals, and economic prosperity. This can occur as a result of peaceful cooperation with other nations, or through aggression, war, and exploitation.

In the present day interdependent world, the foreign policy of a country determines its position in the comity of the nations. While framing a foreign policy every nation takes into consideration the national interests. But with regard to the role of national interest in formulating foreign policy, there are two different groups of scholars. One group of scholars maintains that national interest is the sole judge in the formulation of foreign policy by particular country. While, other group of scholars argue that national interest is vague concept and it is not the only criteria in formulation of foreign policy other values have to be taken into consideration, while taking final decision on foreign policy issues. From this analysis, it can be concluded that besides national interest, other factors have due share in framing foreign policy. But the national interest plays the major role in formulating foreign policy. In a foreign policy of a nation, diplomacy is the chief activity by which foreign policy is enforced.
The principal objective of a country's foreign policy is to ensure its security and safeguard, its other interests against direct or indirect external threat. It provides a framework of general principles and practical considerations in which broad strategies for conducting international relations are formulated and specific measures deployed to resolve specific issues of a bilateral or multilateral nature. The spirit and character of a country's foreign policy are influenced in varying degrees by its geography, its history and cultural tradition, its internal condition and the prevailing world situation.

**Evolution and Growth of India's Foreign Policy**

Peace, disarmament, self-reliance, nonalignment and development are the bedrock of India's relations with other nations, and determine its reactions to external developments. Another bedrock of Indian foreign policy is the element of consensus on vital foreign policy issues, transcending party affiliations, including political parties, diplomats, academics and opinion-makers alike. The task of pursuing national interests through the conduct of foreign policy has been rendered very difficult and complex because of the recent trend and perception of a growing divergence between the interest of the state and that of the people. Today, people in many parts of the world are perceiving the state as their greatest enemy. The state is seen engaged mainly in protecting and promoting the interests of the elite which control it.
India's foreign policy represents continuity and belief in moral principles. India retained these elements while responding pragmatically to the past and emerging challenges, and to the changing global scenario. India as an independent country playing a fair role in international affairs. Therefore India's foreign policy has also been gradually evolving, developing greater substance and say, in responding to the challenges posed, while being securely moored in the framework of its inalienable perspective, that of the Panchsheel, Non-Aligned Movement, developing friendly relations with all, and enlightened self-interest.

India started to play a role in international politics, after it gained Independence from the Yokes of foreign rule in 1947. Independent India's first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru articulated India's voice in international affairs. It is he who framed India's foreign policy principles, keeping in view of the then prevailing world scenario. The basic principles of foreign policy enunciated by him continue to serve as the guiding principle for all the subsequent governments. It however does not mean that these principles were an element of rigidity; rather it has adopted itself to the changing circumstances from time to time.

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi reaffirmed his faith in the foreign policy bequeathed to India to Jawaharlal Nehru and creatively enriched by Mrs. Indira Gandhi. As an inheritor of the Jawaharlal Nehru-Indira
Gandhi legacy he expressed his belief in the principle of peaceful coexistence which seeks to reduce tensions between various states. Far from compromising the basic policies of Jawaharlal Nehru, Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Mr. Morarji Desai, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi cemented them further. He preserved the principles of continuity but was also aware of the contemporary challenges and mutual co-operation. India's commitment to Non-alignment and a New World Economic Order was unshakable which meant a total dedication to peace and development.

**India's Relations with Other Nations**

India's relations with the United States have followed a zig-zag course throughout the cold war period. Sometimes warmer sometimes more troubled, occasionally abrasive, frequently soured by divergent perceptions, interests and foreign policy courses, the relationship is marked, if not marred by instability and fluctuations.

Soon after his election as the Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi expressed India's desire for a better relationship with the United States. Rajiv Gandhi visited USA with three basic objectives- (i) achieving better understanding of the US policies; (ii) persuading Washington to use its influence on Pakistan to desist from war preparations and instigation of insurgency in India; and (iii) bringing the two Super Powers to a point where they could possibly talk to each other.
During his visit to United States he also tried to sort out the areas of mutual differences with great understanding and cordiality. For good measure, Rajiv Gandhi did extract a commitment from the United States Administration for dealing with the international dimensions of terrorist violence aimed at India's policy of non-alignment, its known stand on the Afghanistan question, the Indian Ocean and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). There are also evidences to suggest that Rajiv Gandhi succeeded in impressing upon the United States Administration that the process of 'Opening up the economy' could not be absolute because of large masses of poor people in the country whose very existence called for protection from market forces. Rajiv Gandhi's visit to United States proved success for as soon after his visit, President Mr.Reagan agreed to have a summit meeting with Mr.Gorbachev in November, 1985. Also, the Indian Prime Minister could do some realistic assessment of the ruthlessly warlike policies of the Reagan Administration. But the crux of Indo-US relations is the US posture towards Pakistan and here Rajiv Gandhi's visit failed to produce any tangible gains.

The Indo-Soviet Union relationship has its roots on the one hand in the struggle against Western imperialism and colonialism and on the other in the national interest and requirements of India throughout the Cold War period. The relations between two countries were very cordial and warm since India's Independence. The congenial atmosphere
continued and further strengthened during Rajiv Gandhi period. Rajiv Gandhi made it clear that the friendly ties with the Soviet Union would be maintained. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi went on his first official tour to the USSR from 21\textsuperscript{st} to 26\textsuperscript{th} May, 1985. During his May, 1985 visit to the USSR, Rajiv Gandhi curtly dismissed Gorbachev's new plea for Asian security as an old concept. He expressed himself against nations interfering or intervening in areas outside their own, thus rejecting by implication the Soviet Union's claim to be considered as an Asian Power.

The next year Rajiv Gandhi's visit was reciprocated by the visit of Communist Party of Soviet Union (CPSU) General Secretary Mr. Gorbachev to New Delhi in November, 1986, and the latter was pressed time and again to reassure the public that the Soviet Union would fulfill its obligations in case the Indian security was threatened.

The General Secretary gave a positive response in general and conceptual terms. Both the Soviet Union and India have remained faithful to their commitments and acted in accordance with the spirit and the letter of the treaty. But when he was asked specific assurances, with Pakistan and China being named, he as a statesman of sophistication, refused to commit himself.

Both Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and Mr. Gorbachev have spoken about the current relevance of Indo-Soviet Treaty of 1970. The former said, during
the Banquet speech on November 25, 1986, that the treaty remained a source of strength for our respective countries. Its importance has increased in the context of the current world situation and recent events in our part of the world'. Gorbachev's views have already been quoted.

The Indo-Soviet treaty is a sophisticated instrument to raise uncertainties for our potential adversaries but it is not a substitute for our military preparedness and will to power.

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi found himself beset with a vitiated environment in the region. A grim security environment prevailing in China and Pakistan continued to pose threats. The Pakistan factor having a bearing on Khalistani terrorism dominated along with Pakistan, intrusion into India's territory in the Ladakh region (Siachen) and super power rivalry prevailed in the Indian Ocean. The United States continued to help Pakistan as it needed Pakistan as a frontline state for its strategies in the Gulf and the West Asia.

Apart from Pakistan, the Tamil Eelam Problem persisted in Sri Lanka with the United Kingdom, US, Israel, Pakistani and Chinese intervention there with Britain and the United States trying hard to convert Colombo and Trincomalee as their bases. The Chinese had intruded in Indian Territory and in Bangladesh too problems were raising their heads. The post-1971, foreign national issue, the border fencing, the river water dispute, the maritime boundary are no less
complex problems. In Kathmandu, though some signs of improvement did seem evident yet the question of treating Nepal as a zone of peace continues to be upper-most in Nepalese mind. It was in these regional surroundings that the Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi had to operate his foreign and defence policies in a frame work conducive to India's national interest.

Despite certain problem Mr. Rajiv Gandhi believed that the common aim of development and a better future for the people will make the neighbours to come forward to resolve irritants. As such as tone of Indian policy towards neighbors was set by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi in his very first broadcast to the nation. In several attempts that he made after winning the 1984 Lok Sabha elections he stated that at the top of his foreign policy agenda was improvement of relations with neighbours.

As a corollary to his statement Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi began on improving relations with neighbours on a priority basis. After assuming office he reviewed the foreign policy, especially relations with neighbouring countries. He asked the External Affairs Ministry to examine various possibilities of improving relations with neighbours including China, Bhutan and SAARC nations. The intension was not to initiate any major diplomatic moves but to work quietly behind the scenes to create a better climate for tackling outstanding issues with neighbouring countries in an atmosphere of mutual trust.
Mr. Rajiv Gandhi took particularly active steps to establish greater understanding with the leaders of South Asian countries. He availed every opportunity to meet his South Asian counterparts and set the stage for improving the climate of bilateral relations with each country. He held five meetings with Pakistan President Mr. Zia-Ul-Haq four with Bangladesh President Mr. Ershad and three with Sri Lankan President Mr. Jayawardhane in 1985, and again met them in the Non-Aligned Summit in Harare and the SAARC Summit in Bangalore in 1986. He decided to send the Foreign Secretary of India to all capitals of neighbouring states as a courtesy visit to apprise them of the new government's genuine desire to improve relations. The idea behind it was that the success of its foreign policy will be measured with the success of its achievements, in improving relations with neighbours. Though the basics of the policy remained the same the difference was evident in the style and impression the youthful Prime Minister created within a short span of time. He was firm where the country's national interests were concerned without being abrasive.

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi had reverted to the Janata policy of negotiated settlement of Ganga waters dispute with Bangladesh and abjured a military solution in Sri Lanka so that India's relations with Dhaka as well as Colombo improved perceptibly even at the risk of displeasing conservative opinion in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. Moreover, he did not agree to exploit Pakistan's problems with its ethnic minorities in Sind
and Baluch liberated areas for another Bangladesh. He supported Pakistan's territorial integrity and also South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi was honest in his endeavour to achieve a qualitative change in the relations with neighbours and his image even inspired confidence and trust. This was an asset he utilized to assure neighbours that have no expansionist or Big Brotherly attitude but undue haste and time bound solutions would give them an opportunity to achieve what they found impossible during his mother's tenure as they were kept in the cold and remained in constant unease.

In building the regional base Mr. Rajiv Gandhi moved dramatically in respect of Sri Lanka and Bangladesh but hardly in Pakistan or in Nepal. The Thimpu talks between Sri Lanka Government and Tamil liberals and militants and the indefinite cease-fire were outstanding successes of his new neighbourhood diplomacy. He established credibility of Sri Lankan President by taking a tough stance against militants which Mrs. Indira Gandhi could not, perhaps for fear of losing political support of Tamil Nadu. However, asserting himself on the issue of human rights violation he airlifted food and other aid to the Jaffna militants in June, 1987 when Sri Lankan army surrounded the region and did not permit the Indian navy to enter Sri Lanka waters and grant relief to the people. This incident was openly criticized by Sri Lankan
Government as infringement of the territorial sovereignty of the country. The cumulative impact of the circumstances preceding ultimately led to the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord; a historical agreement which guaranteed Sri Lanka’s territorial integrity, and sovereignty with stationing of Indian Peace Keeping Force emphasizing India’s dominant role in the subcontinent.

Towards Bangladesh he showed a refreshing spirit of sympathy and understanding befitting of a country of India’s size, power and capability. India’s willingness to shun theology of bilateralism and inclusion of Nepal in the river water dispute, and feelers to re-examine plan of building barbed wire fence along the 2000 kms, border were all indicative of this new approach. Differences on Ganga-Brahmaputra Link Canal, problem of refugees, Chakma tribal issues, New Moore Island controversy, Muthuri problem continued to exist as before in spite of India’s keenness to sort out problems and strengthen ties with Bangladesh.

The Nepalese monarch King Birendra neither turned off or on. His visit to India in September, 1985 found the new Prime Minister warmer and more amenable than Mrs. Indira Gandhi but not quite prepared to modify India’s Nepal policy to make the existing relations extensive than what the monarch would like it to be. Being stern where it was needed he even cautioned Nepal of the China card it had been playing.
for quite some time, and March 1989 led to a statement of Indo-Nepal relations when the Trade treaty stood dissolved. The treaty is of considerable importance as it contains details of procedure of movement of Nepal's third country trade through India and grants preferential treatment to Nepal in certain matters.

Pakistan however, remained Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's blind spot. Pakistan President Mr. Zia-ul-Haq remained turned off, unable to see Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi as essentially different from his mother. The suspicion and rivalry did not diminish. His non-enthusiasm for a no war pact, confidence building measures like mutual troops and military budget reduction, his decision to keep on going dialogue but not yield anything substantive to the military regime and his readiness to go to great lengths if Pakistan would be more forthcoming, his over dramatization of Pakistan's nuclear bomb was all taken from Mrs. Indira Gandhi script.

There have been many ups and downs in Mr. Rajiv Gandhi neighbourhood policy but to call it a failure would be strong an assessment to make. Despite all the criticism and blame levied against him for accentuating the problems he inherited, he tried to apply the balm of accommodation and avoided any kind of confrontation. Neighbourhood diplomacy was pursued with renewed vigour to remove misunderstanding and strive for better relations. The purpose was not to
eliminate the problems overnight but to create an atmosphere where more meaningful beginnings could be made. There was no question of any hard and fast decision making and emphasis but emergence of action to concentrate on the positive efforts of bilateral relations in pursuance of the basic tenets to face challenges in a changing situation. Sovereignty, equality, friendship and trust were the bases to build the continuous process of improving relations. Herein, the Prime Minister's new thrust in the neighbourhood policy was a great success in injecting a whiff of fresh air in the atmosphere though set-back and reversals did upset the state of progress.

What emerged out of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's new thrust especially, in view of his genuine efforts to build cordiality with the neighbouring regions even by going out of his way in many ways was not very pleasant. Besides committing himself to the regimes of the region he also opted for a remarkably lower profile for India in the subcontinent as was evident at the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Summit where neighbours raised their heads trying to tell India how to conduct her regional affairs. Multilateralism in the subcontinent has its own place but bilateralism continued to dominate Indian foreign policy including its neighbours.

In spite of efforts made by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi with Pakistan there was no substantial progress on containing terrorism in the Punjab issue,
and there was no consensus on the treaty of friendship and peace with Pakistan. Areas of uncertainty reemerged in relations with Bangladesh and Nepal also. The issue of the erection of border fence was unacceptable to Dhaka. On the question of water resources even his generous gesture of accepting a multilateral approach showed no definite signs of progress. Nepal continued to play the China card with regard to developmental projects in Tarai region and problems emerged due to non-renewal of the trade and transit treaty.

Critics however, feel that after the initial outburst and progress in India’s situation on neighbours continued to be uncertain. Rajiv Gandhi’s pronounced desire to follow a policy towards neighbours different from Mrs. Indira Gandhi created a wrong impression amongst most of them, taking India for granted, including Sri Lanka. Pakistan and Bangladesh used SAARC to subvert legitimate Indian interests in the region and were cleverly exploiting the psychological unease of other small member states to this end. Friendship with neighbours is an achievement in this end but not at the cost of jeopardizing efforts towards interest or loss of respect amongst nations. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi made overtures to Pakistan but found he was stonewalled with the country’s decision to make the bomb.

The positive and honest efforts of Rajiv Gandhi cannot be denied but neighbouring situation was much more complex due to extra
regional and intra-regional problems. Co-operation and conciliation as instrument of foreign policy is commendable but compromise on national interests so as to remove longstanding irritants and improve the atmosphere in the region cannot produce the results anticipated, as the other factors would not necessarily respond in the same positive spirit.

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi maintained continuity in the foreign policy and the objectives in pursuing the neighborhood policy were the same as that of his predecessors, strengthening Indian unity and guaranteeing Indian security. In its quest for absolute security India aims at keeping the region free from external intervention by outside powers. It wishes to establish friendly relations and co-operation wherever consensus with its economic and other matters and building consensus with its neighbours on common security perceptions, including the prevention of non-regional powers from undue meddling.

If there was any change it was in the process of effecting refinements to the on-going policy particularly in the sphere of India's relations with its neighbours which the new Prime Minister sought to endow with new nuances and emphasis. The elements of continuity outweighed the elements of change. The change that was discernible was only in nuance, but nevertheless, important in so far as it sought to infuse a new dynamism into the policy based on self assurance. This change can be attributed to the person, his way of looking at things, his
approach to politics, and his personality. The objective remained unchanged but a change in style was unavoidable, as styles and way of working are personal.

In finding solutions to the problems Mr. Rajiv Gandhi relied on consensus, consultation and consolidation while Mrs. Indira Gandhi has an imperial style of functioning concentrating decision-making in her own hands, and undermining diplomacy for self-righteousness. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi tried distancing himself from power politics, if not reversing them. He followed Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru by relying on consensus and persuasion.

The same holds good for foreign policy. Rajiv Gandhi’s approach of conciliation in place of confrontation when down well in neighbouring countries. Even the estranged King of Nepal in a conciliatory move offered to give information on Sikh extremists and spoke of closer cooperation. His negotiating process enabled the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Ramesh Bhandari to speak to Sri Lankan President Mr. Jayawardhane to be tough with militant Sinhalese.

Though bilateral interaction was achieved during Mr. Rajiv Gandhi’s time, he had an integral approach to SAARC. This was even demonstrated in his visit to Bangladesh in June 1985 when he set aside all protocol and took along with him Sri Lankan President Mr. Jayawardhane to Sympathize with Bangladesh’s devastation due to
floods. He even accepted at a point to include Nepal in bilateral negotiations on the Ganga water problem. But when it appeared that Pakistan and Bangladesh were using SAARC to subvert legitimate Indian interests in the region and were clearly exploiting the psychological unease of other small member states to this end, the emphasis decreased and bilateralism was activated but not in the way it occurred in Mrs. Indira Gandhi's time.

It was observed that before Rajiv Gandhi assumed the Prime Ministership regime the neighbours were kept in the cold or browbeaten. Under the Mr. Rajiv Gandhi’s government though the objectives remained the same, the mode of pursuing them was different. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi showed concern and sympathy and put forward the process of conciliation and negotiation. The change in Mr. Rajiv Gandhi’s attitude, reflected in his pronounced desire to follow a policy towards neighbours different from that of his predecessors, created a wrong impression amongst most of the neighbours including Sri Lanka which went ahead with military operation. The affable attitude followed by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi brought the neighbours closer to India. This attitude brought changes in the mindset of neighbouring leaders. Even a small country like Bhutan declared that in case of confrontation between India and China, Bhutan will remain neutral. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi’s functioning after an initial spurt of activity reflected an uncertainty, conflicting signals, confused ones about India’s perceptions, intensions and strategy. For example just days after Foreign Secretary, Mr.
Ramesh Bhandari visited Islamabad Mr. Rajiv Gandhi began talking of Pakistan's arms build up.

**Impact of Rajiv Gandhi on India's Foreign Policy**

Rajiv Gandhi as a visionary of world given top most priority to the world issues like disarmament, peaceful co-existence, strengthening of regional cooperation, settlement of disputes through arbitration etc. Rajiv Gandhi held six nation summit to bring together the peace loving countries and to made the disarmament a reality. He discussed the disarmament issue in bilateral as well as multilateral negotiations. As a corollary to his world vision, Rajiv Gandhi made relentless efforts for strengthening of Non-Aligned Movement. In can be inferred from his speeches that the Non-Aligned Movement as neutral group in world power ridden structure plays key role in world politics. The efforts of Rajiv Gandhi are laudable in the fields of racism in making Indian Ocean free from power politics.

In the final analysis it is observed that though the impression created by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi was change more than continuity, change not in objectives but change for the better, warmer ties with Pakistan, constructive attitude towards Tamils, greater friendliness for Bangladesh and Nepal. However, an initial euphoria, retreat from high expectations in foreign policy has been no less rapid than the initial ascent of hope. Whatever personal goodwill may have been built between Prime Minister and its neighbours it did not spill over into the position the latter took on various issues. One of the basic assumptions
on which Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's South Asian initiatives had been built was that regional disharmonies and the result of India's assertive stance under Mrs. Indira Gandhi's leadership, and therefore, if this stance was changed all would be well with the neighbourhood. The developments showed that India's neighbourhood situation is much too complex to be improved by such simplistic decisions. The internal policies of the neighboring countries and the extra regional involvement in the area have a great impact in the atmosphere of the subcontinent. India's compromising and amicable attitude is justified only to the extent in which the basic framework of India’s interest in the region is not disturbed or taken advantage. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's initiative besides committing himself to the regimes also included a markedly lower profile for India in regional affairs. This was clearly evident at the SAARC summit when India let every other country pontificate to and how to conduct with neighbours for instance India's acceptance of joint action on terrorism, Nepal playing the China card, agreement of not attacking each other's nuclear installations which is nothing but a limited gesture, and India's stance on Pakistan's nuclear weapons and acquisition of sophisticated arms.

**Major World Problems During Rajiv Gandhi's Regime**

Rajiv Gandhi believed that there was only one answer to the menace of nuclear war, and that was to dismantle all nuclear weapons. At the center-stage of global diplomacy, Rajiv compelled the world to
take note of his extraordinary mettle, to listen to him, to give in, and soon became one of the most respected statesmen. His forthrightness is candidly revealed, when he spoke in no uncertain terms to Ronald Reagan, that the survival of mankind depends on a very few countries. He was a leader who dreamt big and without compromises.

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi gave great importance to the activities of the United Nations in maintaining world peace. He saw it as, the only system, fashioned not to eliminate the scrooge of war, but also to better manage the global polity, the global economy, and the global ecology. It is difficult to put in a few words the comprehensiveness of Rajiv Gandhi's vision of India and the world. Rajiv Gandhi touched upon so many subjects in the innumerable talks, addresses, speeches, interviews, and his writings, that putting them all together, briefly would not do justice to the subject.

Rajiv Gandhi won the hearts of many environmentalists by stating that his government would take up a massive programme for afforestation and start a series of projects to clean up the Ganga. He himself retained the environment portfolio and backed the ministry to the end. Rajiv Gandhi was the only person who is the main inspiration behind the Forest Conservation Act and it was then realized where the interest in environment within the entire government was coming from. It
endeared Rajiv Gandhi to us but it also made us realize how limited was the entire government's commitment to the subject.

Rajiv Gandhi's unique place in world history comes from his zeal to dream himself and make the globe dream too. His legacy to India was to have brought it into the twenty-first century parallel with the more advance countries in the world, out of the branding of India as a developing country - to the status of a developed country. Not satisfied with a justful mention of his nation in global chapters, he pledged to work for a strong and prosperous India devoted to peace with neighbours and peace in the world.