CHAPTER I

DETERMINANTS OF INDIA’S FOREIGN POLICY

It is the foreign policy of a nation, which determines its relations with a specific nation. Hence, prior to the assessment of Indo – U.S. relations, this chapter takes a look at the determinants of India’s foreign policy.

Foreign Policy is a strategy or planned course of action developed by decision makers of a state vis-à-vis other states or international entities, aimed at achieving specific goals defined in terms of national interests.¹ A specific foreign policy carried on by a state may be the result of an initiative by that state or may be a reaction to initiatives undertaken by other states. Foreign policy involves a dynamic process of applying relatively fixed interpretations of national interests to the highly fluctuating situational factors of the international environment in order to develop a course of action, followed by efforts to achieve diplomatic implementations of the policy guidelines.

Foreign policy is never uniquely determined by any one factor or set of factors, but is the result of the interplay of a large number of factors that affect the formulation of policy in different ways in different circumstances.²

The foreign policy of any modern state devolves from implied or explicit references to strategic, economic, and ideological considerations, and aims at the preservation and furtherance of the national interest. But the conceptual sources and political definitions of the national interest vary from country to country, as do the meanings and emphases given to the factors that influence its determination.³

Some of these factors are relatively stable and have to be taken as given by the makers of foreign policy, and can, therefore, be regarded as more basic or unchangeable determinants of policy than others. But the more variable institutional factors, and even the personal role of the decision makers, are no less important in the process of decision making than the basic determinants.⁴

Foreign policy may be viewed as a system of action. Like all social systems it comprises an environment, a group of actors, structures through which the units of behaviour respond to challenges and initiate decisions, and processes which sustain or alter the flow of demands and products of the system as a whole.⁵

A foreign policy system may be likened to a flow into and out of a network of structures which perform certain functions and thereby produce acts or decisions or outputs. These, in turn, feed back into the system in a ceaseless flow of Demands on Policy (Inputs), Policy Process, and Products of Policy (Outputs).⁶

Major steps in foreign policy process include: ⁷

- Translating considerations of national interests into specific goals and objectives;
- Determining the international and domestic situational factors related to the policy goals;
- Analyzing the state’s capabilities for achieving the desired results;
- Developing a plan or strategy for using the state’s capabilities to deal with the variables in pursuit of the goals;
- Undertaking the requisite actions; and
- Periodically reviewing and evaluating progress made toward the achievement of the desired results.

⁴ Jayantanuja Bandyopadhyaya, Loc.cit.
⁶ Ibid.
India’s foreign policy is primarily determined by its national interests. However, national interest of any country is dependent on a multiplicity of factors like security, both internal as well as external, economic development and the existing international milieu. Further, the national interest has been interpreted differently by scholars of international relations. However, a more commonly accepted interpretation of national interest can be found in the Encyclopedia of Social Science, which emphasizes its two major dimensions as follows:

First, as an analytical tool, it (national interest) is “employed to describe, explain and evaluate the sources of adequacy of a nation’s foreign policy”.

Second, as an instrument of political action, it serves as “a means of justification, denouncing and proposing policies”.

The foreign policy of a country is deeply influenced by the domestic correlation of social forces and their material goals. More importantly global alignments exercise a direct impact on a country's foreign policy options.

In this chapter it is proposed to analyse the determinants of India’s foreign policy, such as: Domestic Factors – anti-colonialist attitude of India, political tradition, geopolitical compulsions, security, economic constraints, personal factors, non-alignment factor, Kashmir issue and international environment, and the end of the Cold War and 1998 nuclear explosions of India.

However, it is noteworthy that, “even the basic determinants of foreign policy, however, vary in importance according to circumstances, and it is impossible to lay down any general rule regarding the relative importance of each of these factors, or a

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scale of priorities which the decision makers must permanently adhere to in making their policy decisions. It is, nevertheless, a general rule that these factors do individually and collectively affect major problems of foreign policy, and that decision making in foreign policy can have a claim to rationality only when these have been seriously taken into account.\textsuperscript{11}

\textbf{Evolution of India's Foreign Policy: Before Independence}

After the advent of the Europeans, the rulers of the Indian States surrendered slowly their external sovereignty, e.g., foreign policy and defence, in return for which the British guaranteed their protection from foreign aggression and internal disruption.\textsuperscript{12} Since the British Government assumed control of the Indian Continent no part of India had direct relations with any external country or even with the British Dominions except under the general control of His Majesty's Government. This control applied also to Indian States whose foreign contacts were limited to ceremonial visits paid by their Rulers to foreign countries.\textsuperscript{13}

In the exercise of this control His Majesty's Government in London worked in close consultation with the Government of India, which had a Department, originally known as the Foreign Department but latterly as the External Affairs Department, held by the Viceroy and Governor General himself. This Department deals in the initial stages with nearly all external problems affecting India and its advice was invariably sought and frequently taken, particularly with regard to those countries which had common frontiers with India.\textsuperscript{14} India's foreign policy was a reserved subject for which the Secretary of State for India was responsible to the British Parliament,

\textsuperscript{11} Jayantanuja Bandyopadhyaya, \textit{Loc.cit.}
\textsuperscript{13} Aubrey Metcalfe, "India's Foreign Relations Now and in the Future", \textit{International Affairs}, Vol. 21, No.4, (October, 1945), p. 485.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
and the people of India had not the means of influencing it to an extent which should make it a live issue for them.¹⁵

However, a British Indian delegation being given a separate representation in the post-First World War international conference, at Versailles in France, and India being allowed to become a founding member of the ‘League of Nations’ intensified India’s international consciousness and initiated Indian experience in foreign relations.¹⁶

In the course of their own anti-imperialist struggle, the Indian elite evolved a policy of opposition to imperialism as also the expression and establishment of solidarity with anti-imperialist movements in other parts of the world. From the beginning, the Indian nationalists opposed the British policy of interfering in the internal affairs of other countries and the use of the Indian army and India’s resources to promote, extend and defend British imperialism in Africa and Asia.¹⁷

The broad basis for nationalist foreign policy was laid in the initial years of the national movement, which coincided with a particularly active phase of British imperial expansionism. From 1878 onwards, the Government of India undertook a number of large-scale military expeditions outside India’s frontier and its armed forces were used in some of the wars waged by the British Government in Asia and Africa. The early Indian national leaders condemned India’s involvement in each of these wars and expeditions because of the financial burden of the Indian people, and on grounds of political morality, and also on the basis that these involved not Indian interests and purposes but British imperialist schemes of territorial and commercial expansion. They also argued that India’s interests would be best secured by a policy of peace.¹⁸

¹⁸ Ibid.
It was during First World War that matters of foreign policy seriously engaged the attention of the Indian leaders whose primary concern continued to be dislodging the foreign rulers. At the end of the war India signed the Treaty of Versailles and became an original member of the League of Nations.19

The period between 1920 and 1946 should be considered the time when the fundamental terms of reference for Independent India's foreign policy were formulated. Mahatma Gandhi's influence was the predominant factor in this process. While Gandhi defined the framework for India's foreign policy, Jawaharlal Nehru fashioned its orientations and details. It would be pertinent to recall their conceptual contributions to India's foreign policy.20

A commitment to freedom based on truth, to democracy predicated on safeguarding diversity and individual freedom, and to encouraging reason and impulses of peace in international relations were the terms of reference which Mahatma Gandhi provided for India's foreign relations before the country became independent. He said: "I would rather have that India perished than that she won freedom at the sacrifice of truth". He went on to say: "Democracy is not a state in which people act like sheep. Under democracy individual liberty of opinion and action is jealously guarded". And finally his assertive desire was that India should remain committed to the imperatives of peace. He said: "I am not pleading for India to practice non-violence because she is weak. I want her to practice non-violence, being conscious of her strength and power. No training in or collection of arms is required for the realization of their strength".21

During the decades preceding independence, the protracted political crisis in Europe engaged the constant attention of informed nationalist Indians, and progressively they became more condemnatory of the course of European politics.22 Estrangement from the European powers was evident as early as 1921 when the All-

21 Ibid.
India Congress Committee of the Indian National Congress, the premier nationalist organization, passed its first comprehensive resolution on foreign affairs, and stated that the international policies of the Government of India in no way represented national Indian opinion.\(^3\)

In 1926-27, Jawaharlal Nehru travelled to Europe and came into contact with left-wing European political workers and thinkers. This had an abiding impact on his political development, including in the field of foreign affairs. The highlight of Jawaharlal's European visit was his participation as a representative of the Congress in the International Congress against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism held in Brussels in February 1927.\(^4\) Nehru, in his confidential report on the Congress to the Congress Working Committee, wrote:

"Most of us especially from Asia were wholly ignorant of the problems of South America, and of how the rising imperialism of the United States, with its tremendous resources and its immunity from outside attack, is gradually taking a stranglehold of Central and South America. But we are not likely to remain ignorant much longer for the great problem of the near future will be American imperialism, even more than British imperialism". \(^5\)

During this visit, Nehru also visited Moscow for the tenth anniversary celebrations; Jawaharlal was to say later that seeing the Soviet Union had kept him from becoming a Communist. He was sympathetic toward Russian efforts but convinced that not Soviet but Gandhian methods offered India the best route to the socialist society which was always to remain his goal.\(^6\)

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Further, Jawaharlal Nehru said in his presidential address to the 1929 Lahore Congress, “Out of imperialism and capitalism peace could never come”.

At the same time, a very active phase of nationalist foreign policy began in 1936. From then onward, there was hardly an important event in the world to which the Congress and its leaders did not react. The anti-war campaign intensified after the rise of Hitlerite Germany and, at the Lucknow Congress in April 1936, the 1927 and 1928 pledge of non-support to Britain in the event of conflict was renewed. Jawaharlal Nehru, the principal Congress spokesperson on world affairs, clearly pronounced the nationalist approach to world problems in his presidential address to the Lucknow Congress in 1936. Analysing the world situation in detail and focusing on the Indian struggle in the context of the coming world struggle against Fascism, he said:

“ We see the world divided up into two vast groups today – the imperialist and fascist on one side, the socialist and nationalist on the other. Inevitably we take our stand with the progressive forces of the world which are ranged against fascism and imperialism”.

But the complexity, humanist approach, and anti-imperialist content of the Indian nationalist foreign policy were brought out in the approach to the problem of Palestine. While Arabs were fighting against British imperialism in Palestine, many of the Jews, hunted and killed in Nazi Germany and discriminated against and oppressed all over Europe, were trying to carve out under Zionist leadership a homeland in Palestine with British support. Indians sympathized with the persecuted Jews, victims

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of Nazi genocide, but they criticized their efforts to deprive the Arabs of their due. Nehru gave expression to similar views on the Palestine question from 1936 to 1939.\(^{31}\)

Outlining the nationalist position about using Indian men, money and resources in wars to serve British imperialism, Nehru wrote on 18 April 1939:

“For us in India our path is clear. It is one of complete opposition to the fascists; it is also one of opposition to imperialism. We are not going to line up under Chamberlainism; we are not going to throw our resources in defence of empire. But we would gladly offer those very resources for the defence of democracy, the democracy of a free India lined up with other free countries”.\(^{32}\)

In March 1939, the Tripuri Indian National Congress recorded its “entire disapproval of British foreign policy”, which it said had been one of deliberate betrayal of democracy, repeated breach of international pledges and collective security guarantees, and of cooperation with the avowed enemies of democracy and freedom.\(^{33}\)

During the independence struggle, well before the emergence of the Soviet and Western blocs, nationalist Indians manifested an abhorrence of military alliances – a stance that also foreshadowed the post-Independence policy of non-alignment. Indians ascribed the deterioration in the European situation leading to World War II in part to various states' fear and distrust of each other's motives. In their view, nations resorted to military armaments and the signing of secret pacts and agreements in order to protect their vested interests against encroachments. This only increased mutual feelings of fear and distrust and led to further increases in arms and pacts. War, Indians believed, was the inevitable outcome of the continuing expansion of this


process. Jawaharlal Nehru was a frequent exponent of the idea that war was the product of fear and distrust.\textsuperscript{34}

Nehru's determination to avoid pacts and alliances, which he felt could only lead to war, became apparent in 1946 when he first discussed the type of foreign policy he envisaged for an independent India:

"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 disasters on an even vaster scale". \textsuperscript{35}

Nehru added:

"A free India, with her vast resources, can be of great service to the world and to humanity. India will always make a difference to the world; fate has marked us for big things". \textsuperscript{36}

This pre-Independence tendency to view the Indian approach to international politics as ethically superior to the West was reflected after 1947 in the habit of regarding non-alignment as a foreign policy with pre-eminent moral qualities and of setting India up as "a moral monitor of the world".\textsuperscript{37}

Indian emphasis on ethics in international politics was apparent after 1947 in the attribution to Indian non-alignment of moral qualities not present in the foreign policies of Western states and, hence, in the suggestion that non-alignment was not only right for India, but right for the world.

Thus, it is obvious that various factors, both domestic as well as external, have influenced in determining India's Foreign Policies.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., p.477.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., p.481.
Domestic Factors

In the category of internal milieu, the impact of British imperialism and the nationalist struggle, political tradition, geopolitical compulsions, security, economic constraints, personal factors, non-alignment factor, Kashmir issue may included. In actuality all of these taken together have influenced the planners of our foreign policies right from the time of Jawaharlal Nehru to till date.

British imperialism and Nationalist Struggle for Independence

The British colonialism which lasted for nearly two centuries virtually changed the Indian sub-continent from a self-sufficient agrarian economy to that of a client and subservient trade economy. Without encouraging any technical skill for the natives, the British rulers reaped rich dividends by importing almost all types of primary commodities from India and thereby flourishing in their own industries. The Indian market, during the later phase of British imperialism was flooded with all types of imported goods from Great Britain. Thus it resulted in a sort of double squeeze of the Indian economy. Naturally, it was the “economic drain” – the most important factor which generated hatred in the minds of native Indians towards the British.

India’s struggle for Independence, which was initiated by the liberals, and later on championed by the extremist school, gained further momentum by the mass movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi and his followers. It was during the Gandhian period of freedom movement that one can search for some of the major sources of India’s foreign policy.

To some extent the foreign policy of every nation springs from its own domestic experience. In the Indian example, a good number of experiences lend support to the general attitude of anti-colonialism. During the 1920’s, the leaders of India were already looking beyond India. Gandhi wrote:
“I want the freedom of my country so that other countries may learn something from my free country, so that the resources of my country might be utilized for the benefit of mankind. . . . My love, therefore, of nationalism or my idea of nationalism is that my country may become free, that if need be the whole of the country may die, so that the human race may live”.38

Whether on the basis of a feeling of some greater moral mission or because of an acceptance of the liberal-radical ideas of the twentieth century, Indian leaders saw their movement as an important force in the rest of the colonial world. India's responses to problems of international concerns are quite often determined by the fact that she divided the world into pro-colonial and anti-colonial blocs.39 Hence, the roots of India's foreign policy may also be traced from its anti-colonial attitude.

The meeting of the All India Congress Committee in Delhi in 1921 was in fact a landmark in the history of India's foreign relations. It was for the first time Congress passed a general resolution on foreign policy, which included the statement that “the present Government of India in no-way represents Indian public opinion”.40

Further, the All India Congress session in Madras in 1927 passed a resolution of protest against the use of Indian troops in China, Mesopotamia and Persia and deplored the extensive war preparations the British government was making in India.41 Nehru rightly said several years later that the foundations of India's foreign policy had been laid down at the Madras session in 1927.42

In 1928 the All India Congress Committee set up a Foreign Department within the party with Nehru as its head. From that time onwards Nehru became the major voice of India in foreign affairs till his death in 1964. In fact most of the fundamentals in India's foreign policy were developed by Nehru even before India could achieve its Independence.

In 1928, in the Calcutta session the Congress sent greetings to the peoples of Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Iraq in their struggle for freedom against western imperialism. Thus there were indications that India's national leaders were thinking of a Pan-Asian movement to resist European imperialism.

In the late 1930s the Congress openly condemned the aggressive acts of the Nazis and Fascists. It however, declared that it would not be a party to the "imperialist war". By then the Congress was firmly convinced that India should keep aloof from both imperialism and fascism. In a lengthy resolution on the eve of Second World War, the Working Committee of the Congress emphatically declared that, "India cannot associate herself in a war said to be for democratic freedom when that very freedom is denied to her". In fact the Congress ministries in the provinces resigned in protest against the British policy of joining the war.

In July 1945, the Congress Working Committee, in a resolution, welcomed the formation of the United Nations Organizations (UNO) but raised two major objections i.e. first, the special power of veto enjoyed by the five major nations (USA, USSR, U.K., France and Nationalist China), and second, against the vague and unsatisfactory declaration in the UN Charter regarding non-self-governing territories, instead of a full and frank recognition of national Independence.

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44 Ibid., p.
In a number of resolutions in the subsequent years, the All India Congress Committee was quite critical of the use of atom bombs and Cold war which started between the two super powers in the post-war period.

Jawaharlal Nehru’s understanding of Cold war and power politics was very clear, when he led the provisional government in 1946. In his first radio broadcast after assuming the office of Prime Minister in undivided India, he said:

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

Political Tradition

Along with the impact of anti-colonial movement, India’s foreign policy is also influenced by a set of political norms and values, which it has inculcated over the years. These have been identified as idealist view of power, international peace, non-acceptance of either Western liberal democracy or the Communist model and the support for Afro-Asian movement.

To take idealism first, although ancient Indian political tradition has been partially influenced by the realist school represented by Kautilya (Kautilya’s Arthasastra was one of the greatest political treatises of the ancient world. Max Weber recognized this as “Truly radical Machiavellianism”). However, the impact of Buddha and Ashoka has been felt more and more on the nationalist leaders like Gokhle, Gandhi, Aurobindo and Nehru. As Mahatma Gandhi always emphasized, politics is not an end by itself. It is only a means to a noble end. Besides, in his opinion no foul means or violence can be adopted in order to achieve an ideal objective.

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47 Jawaharlal Nehru,
As a corollary of idealism, striving for international peace and solidarity has been a part of India’s national ethos. The presence of Ashoka Chakra in its national flag itself signifies India’s desire for peace and amity in the world. Besides, India has not accepted either the western liberal democratic model or the Communist model. In fact it has tried to evolve a synthesis of both by the adoption of a socialist pattern of society, which along with ensuring the protection of liberty, also gives utmost importance to centralized planning, dominance of public sector in the economy and a fair distribution system under state control.

India’s identification with Afro-Asian movement is closely linked with its colonial experience. With the liberation of the largest British colony – India in 1947 – the process of decolonization picked up momentum in Asia, Africa and elsewhere. Naturally, India under leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru became a champion of Asianism to begin with and later also emerged as a major spokesman of the Afro-Asian movement, which became the forerunner of the present-day third world.50

After World War I, the eminent Indian writer and Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore was one of the first major exponents of the idea that the continent of Asia was united by a common bond of spiritualism.51 The moral superiority of the East vis-à-vis the capitalist West was a central ingredient of the cultural dimension of the Pan-Asian concept.

Nationalist politicians echoed the Indian philosopher’s dream of the “spiritual East” by asserting Asia’s special moral mission to the international community. For example in a Legislative Assembly debate in 1936, Pandit Krishna Kant Malaviya said that “the domination of the East” was the “only panacea for all the ills of this world”.

“We with our love of peace, spiritualism and goodwill for all can only bring peace on this earth”, he declared.52

In 1940, Jawaharlal Nehru stated that the new civilization to be constructed after the war “out of the capitalist ashes of the old” would be built on the best elements of the East and the West. It would, he said, be founded on Western science tempered by the restraining influence and cultural background of India and China.53 In fact, his vision about Indo-China relations is becoming factual now. 54

At the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi in 1947, the belief in the Orient’s unique mission still prevailed, with Mahatma Gandhi, Sarojini Naidu and Nehru all speaking of Asia’s special international message of spiritual enlightenment.55 While nationalist Indians often spoke of the collective moral mission of Eastern peoples, they also tended frequently to distinguish the spiritual role of India from that of the Orient in general. Thus, for instance, at the Asian Relations Conference, Sarojini Naidu claimed that “the message of peace” came specifically from India although it had “found millions of echoes in every corner of Asia”.56

Thus, the nationalist Indian idea of Pan-Asianism, with its attendant themes of Asian federation, Sino-Indian unity and Greater India, had been a legacy for the post-Independence practitioners of Indian foreign policy.

53 Ibid.
56 Ibid., p.254.
Geopolitical Compulsions

Geography controls the political environment of a country and may propel its foreign policy and national interests.\(^5^7\) The importance of geography in the politics and external policies of a country has been emphasized even by ancient scholars like Aristotle and Kautilya. The Indian geopolitical thinker, K.M. Panikkar defined geopolitics as "the study of the state in space that is an attempt to analyse and understand the permanent political factors arising from geographical features of a country".\(^5^8\) So far as India is concerned, its geography played a vital role in shaping its foreign relations.

A better understanding of the historical and cultural context of the geopolitics of the subcontinent places regional security dynamics in a more textured and layered context. Successive Empires in India down through the ages from the Mauryan to the Mughal and British, to name but a few, have, over time, lead many Indians to view the modern Indian state as a natural outgrowth of its historical evolution.\(^5^9\) Chandragupta’s grandson, Asoka, extended his empire across most of present-day India and Pakistan. As a result, the land between the Himalaya and the Indian Ocean came to be a separate geopolitical zone for the first time.\(^6^0\)

Stephen Cohen has succinctly described the central strategic problem facing India for over 2,000 years as ‘how to achieve the strategic unity of the subcontinent and protect it from the incursions of outside powers’.\(^6^1\) While this is often thought of in the context of the Mughal invasion, the British East India Company, or more modern examples such as the USS Enterprise Carrier Battle Group in the Bay of


\(^{58}\) K.M. Panikkar, "Geographical Factors in Indian History", (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1955), p.89.


Bengal in 1971, it encompasses China in 1962 and Japan in the Second World War as well.62

South Asia is a distinct geopolitical region located at the juncture between the shatter-belts of Southeast Asia and the Middle East, to the east and west, the Indian Ocean to the south and the Eurasian heartland, through Central Asia, to the north.63 Others have described the region as a 'unique civilizational entity' with 'natural geographic unity' though less integrated on the political level.64 This fact informs contemporary Indian concepts of what areas are of legitimate Indian concern.

From the point of view of its defence, external trade and transportation, India cannot just ignore the importance of Himalayas and the Indian Ocean. The highest mountain range of the world on the north and one of the three major oceans of the world on the south have given the Indian subcontinent a certain geographical insularity.65 The Himalayas cut off India from her northern neighbours militarily, politically, and commercially, although in the modern world, mountains are not as impenetrable as they once used to be. The Indian Oceans similarly insulates India from the rest of the world in three other directions. Whoever controls the Indian Ocean dominates Asia. This Ocean is the key to the seven seas. In the 21st century the destiny of the world will be decided on its waters.66

But the strategic location India at the centre of the great Asian Continent, has made it inevitable, from ancient times, that she should play a vital role in the history of Asia and the world in spite of its geographic insularity. Its central position on the main trade route between Europe and Far East via the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean and the straits of Malacca provides favourable commercial connection

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with the rest of the world. Because of its location it also plays a crucial part in the global air route pattern. Its locational relationship to Europe and Asia is such that under certain political conditions it could assume a decisive position in the strategy of the world control.67

Primarily because of its strategic location at the centre of the Asian arc and on the Indian Ocean, India was made the bastion of the British Empire in the East, from Aden to Hong Kong. Again it is because of that situation, India has always loomed large in the global strategies of the USA and the USSR since the Second World War. That is also the reason, why India has been able to play a crucial role in the non-aligned movement, the North-South dialogue and on certain Cold war issues.

The vast landmass of India, which comprises over 1.2 million square miles, has the potentiality to pay rich dividends in two ways. First a large territory generally means a relatively large stock of natural resources. In reality India is by no means deficient in several types of minerals like mica, iron ores, manganese, chromite, dolomite, silica and bauxite bricks etc. Besides, the country is potentially rich in water resources, soil and natural vegetation. Secondly, the vastness of India's territory is a major asset so far as its external security is concerned. It is not that easy for an invading country to physically occupy the entire landmass of India.

Moreover, the pattern of language in India is extremely complex, crossing racial, religious and political boundaries.68 Even some of languages like Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Nepali and Tamil are also commonly spoken by a sizeable population in any one of the neighbouring South Asian countries. Thus languages serve as a useful link for broadening the cultural contact of the Indian people with their counterparts in the neighbouring South Asian region. Naturally, it has became a very useful tool in the hands of planners of India's foreign policy.

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68 Ibid., p.164.
In general, post-Independence India differed from the British to have a perception of the strategic position of India. To Britain, India was the both the 'jewel in the crown' and an integral part of a world-wide empire.69

India's geopolitical perceptions continue to be shaped in part, though increasingly less so, by its experiences with European domination of India from the sea. During the period of European empires the Portuguese, Dutch, French and British all sailed into the Indian Ocean and established colonies in South Asia. During the Second World War the Japanese also sailed a fleet into the Indian Ocean in action against the British. These experiences led to a perception of threat from across the sea. This perception has been moderated as India has built up its own navy and has increasingly come to view the sea as a conduit for international trade.70

After independence, India's geopolitical gaze was based in Delhi, not in London. Further, the new state adopted new notions of its place in the world by playing a leading role in the emerging non-aligned movement. The idealism of Gandhian nonviolence and Nehru's policy of Panchsheel, as well as his reluctance to rely heavily on the military, limited the extent to which India would be a geopolitical player in the early years of the modern Indian state. This was later to change as a result of the 1962 border war with China.71

The Cold War, the decline of idealism in India's foreign relations after the 1962 war with China, and the pragmatic approach to world politics taken by Indira Gandhi increasingly made India more of a geopolitical player. The 'Indira Doctrine' sought to establish India as the unchallenged regional hegemon.72 This was coupled with a somewhat expanded notion of what was India's area of strategic interest and led, under Rajiv Gandhi, to military incursions into the Maldives and Sri Lanka. Part of India's extension of influence into the Indian Ocean stems from its desire to deny the Indian Ocean as a base from which external powers can coerce India. This thinking

71 Ibid.
was greatly exacerbated by the presence of the US Aircraft Carrier Enterprise in the
Indian Ocean during the 1971 war with Pakistan.

This incident did much to shape India's naval and nuclear development and
influenced a generation of Indian geopolitical thinkers to advocate a strategy that
included several components. These are '(a) the ability to fight China to a stand still,
(b) the means to inflict a quick and decisive defeat of Pakistan, and (c) the power to
dissuade any nation along the Indian Ocean rim-land including the United States –
from allying itself actively with either Pakistan or China'.

With the Cold War over, Indian fears of imperial domination from the West
were much abated. India became a more self-confident nation despite ongoing border
tensions with Pakistan, internal religious divisions, lingering rivalry with China and its
continuing need for expanded economic growth. As a result, India came to a position
where it could establish a new relationship with the United States.

Besides, a fundamental realignment in the geopolitics of Asia was taking place
prior to 11 September that attracted the attention of US policy makers. One of the
most important changes was that India had come to be viewed as important to the
United States, as India might be useful in balancing an increasingly assertive China.

There are several reasons why India was evolving as an increasingly key player
in the geopolitics of Asia in the post-Cold War period. With the Cold War past, the
United States came to view India as other than a soft ally of the Soviet Union. Further,
with the Soviets no longer in Afghanistan the United States could delink its strategic
parity between Pakistan and India. India is also a democracy and was becoming an
emerging trade partner to the United States. India's position at a geo-strategic nexus
between Central, Southwest and Southeast Asia was also gaining in importance. India
could also potentially play a part of a hedge strategy against China should Sino–US
relations deteriorate. After the 1998 nuclear tests, India has become a nuclear-capable

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regional power while India's economic reforms of the 1990s fuelled a steady rate of economic growth. Finally, an increasingly effective India lobby in the United States began to gain influence in the Congress.\textsuperscript{75}

An increasingly assertive China will likely increase India's value as a strategic partner to the United States. As India evolves it will be of increasing importance to the larger geopolitics of Asia.

Security

Security has several implications. Every nation-state tries first to safeguard its territorial integrity by pursuing an effective and dynamic foreign policy. However, even without any loss of territory, the sovereignty of a state may be surrendered or compromised through treaties, agreements or military alliances. Second, external security of a state is closely interlinked with its internal security. The latter may either mean the stability and permanence of a particular government or the viability of the state itself as an international personality.

Third, short time security in terms of militarism, beyond the proportion of a state's need often proves deceptive. Only, long-run and durable security is that which results from economic development, state-building and a non-belligerent foreign policy. Quite often the defence requirements of a developing nation have to be supplemented by a large dose of foreign aid. Therefore the military policy of any nation has got to be supported by skillful diplomacy.

India's foreign policy under Nehru tried to augment India's power by pursuing the policy of non-alignment. In a bipolar world it was the best available alternative to optimize the scope of economic aid and transfer of technology from external powers belonging to both the camps.

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid.
Indian security policy traditionally centered on the direct military threat to India from neighboring Pakistan and China or on the indirect impact of superpower intervention in South Asia.\textsuperscript{76} Central to the various security relationships in the region are the conflicting postures of India and Pakistan. Of importance but of a secondary nature are the related conflicting postures of India and China, and Pakistan and Afghanistan. Other security concerns of varying degrees also exist in Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka, which face the prospect of domination by either India or China. To complete the picture, there are also insurgencies and separatist movements in India and Pakistan that aggravate the security problems of the region.\textsuperscript{77}

It should be clear that the economic and military capabilities of the antagonistic states in the region are uneven. There are imbalances between India and Pakistan, India and China, and Pakistan and Afghanistan. These unequal relationships have been resolved in the past — especially during crisis conditions — by alignment strategies. Pakistani efforts to correct the Indo-Pakistani imbalance have included the search for military assistance and support from the United States, China, Western Europe, the Soviet Union, and some of the Islamic states of the Middle East.\textsuperscript{78}

Pakistan’s greatest success has been with China from which state it has received considerable military assistance and diplomatic support to pursue its confrontation with India over Kashmir. Indian efforts to correct the Sino-Indian imbalance have included the search for military sales and diplomatic support from the United States, the Soviet Union, and Western Europe. India has achieved considerable success in this regard with the Soviet Union. Likewise, Afghanistan has received political support or military assistance from the Soviet Union and India in order to pursue its policy of confrontation with Pakistan.\textsuperscript{79}

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., p.693.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
But it must be kept in mind that any nation which is not in a position to defend itself effectively and does not project an image of effective defence capability, is not likely to have a credible foreign policy. For instance, following India’s military reverse in the border war with China in 1962, its image as a military power suffered a major setback. This encouraged Pakistan to launch its operation in the Rann of Kutch in April 1965 and the “Operation Gibralter” in August 1965. However, the Indian image and stature regained their losses following the Indian victory in the Bangladesh war in 1971 and the peaceful nuclear explosion in 1974.\(^80\)

The main characteristic of a power is its ability to establish a system of alliances and to project its power (military or economic, the proportion depending on the development level of the country, its environment, and its foreign policy strategy) over a certain area. The purely qualitative difference between a world and a regional power lies in the area of its influence. India, according to all characteristics, has no doubt begun to play the role of a regional power. The period of the emergence of a power is sometimes marked by somewhat chaotic policy due to the necessity to adapt its new interests to the existing strategic environment. Only foreign policy practice can show what “niches” are relatively free and which of them may be filled by the new military-economic power. It was in exactly this way, by means of tests and tryouts, that India’s regional and ocean strategy was evolved.\(^81\)

The task of ensuring security is regarded in India in terms of the entire subcontinent. Therefore, it is natural that ruling circles strove to keep neighboring countries within India’s sphere of influence, to consolidate its “commanding positions” in South Asia, and to oppose resolutely the participation of external forces – the superpowers in the first place – in the settlement of regional problems.\(^82\) India realized that its tough stand in the regional field led the weaker countries to strive to develop relations with global powers in order to bring controversial issues in their

\(^{80}\) L. Subramaniam, “Power and Foreign Policy”, World Focus, Vol. 11-12, November – December, 1980, pp.5-6.


bilateral relations with India to the attention of international forums and to develop intraregional links without India's participation. From the early 1980s on, therefore, New Delhi began to strengthen its relations with the states of South Asia.83

Thereafter, New Delhi's day-to-day diplomacy is preoccupied with South Asian problems, by examining New Delhi's increased willingness in the late 1980s to assert India's greater power directly and dramatically in smaller neighbouring countries, a great deal about Indian security policy can be learned. By its regional security policy India has asserted its superior power—political, military, and economic—in an attempt to achieve favorable outcomes in South Asia. These are; (1) India's efforts between 1983 and 1990 to end the Sri Lankan civil war through political and military pressure; (2) India's 1988 military intervention to prevent a coup d'etat in the Maldives; and (3) India's 1989-90 trade dispute with Nepal.84 Through these episodes, India's regional security policy sends the unambiguous message to Pakistan, China, and the United States that India will not allow its preeminent position in South Asia to be compromised. To back up this stance, India has proved itself fully prepared to intervene in the affairs of its smaller neighbors with whatever force it deems necessary.85

India also has the world's third largest military. It has approximately 1.26 million military personnel, ranking behind the United States (1.36 million) and China (2.31 million), and ahead of North Korea (1.1 million), Russia (980,000), Pakistan (612,000), Iran (513,000), France (270,000), and the United Kingdom (210,000).86 However, large militaries are not necessarily strong, and the quality of India's military hardware is mixed. India's armed forces have a combination of old and new tanks, obsolete and modern aircraft, and aging and new naval vessels. India's conventional military equipment is qualitatively on par with or better than that of China's, but

84 Devin T. Hagerty, Loc.cit.
85 Ibid.
China's larger defense budgets would enable it to close the qualitative gap with India within a decade.\textsuperscript{87}

However, India's security considerations are not confined to its immediate neighborhood but span a wider area. Measures undertaken by India to cope with its concerns, coupled with the lifting of many financial constraints, led to the modernization of its armed forces. This has, understandably, led to an increase in threat perceptions among India's smaller neighbors and has created a feeling that India is out to become a regionally dominant mini-superpower. To counter this perceived threat, the smaller nations have developed extra-regional links and succumbed to arms proliferation. Like a vicious circle, these latter developments have led to measures from the Indian side for further armed development and a larger threat perception for both India and other South Asian countries.\textsuperscript{88}

As a consequence, in the post-Cold War era, New Delhi could not desist from the acquisitions of advanced conventional weapons, growing nuclear capability, and transition of its navy into a blue-water force which all signal India becoming a major military power state.\textsuperscript{89} Hence, national security is all along determining the course of India's foreign policy.\textsuperscript{90}

**Economic Constraints and Development Strategy**

A developing state, whose actual economic strength is low, necessarily has a low power potential in international relations. However, low economic performance is only one of the indices of rating the foreign policy options of any state. The links between India’s economic development programmes and its foreign policy are growing to a greater extent.


The impoverished colonial economy with which India emerged as a sovereign state gave her a weak domestic economic base for the pursuit of her visionary and global foreign policy. The relatively backward state of the Indian economy acted as a serious constraint of Indian foreign policy. For only an economically developed country can acquire sufficient economic, political and military power to be able to play an influential role in international relations. Naturally, a major objective of India's foreign policy has to be the accelerated development of the Indian economy. Appropriate and efficient diplomacy is, therefore, necessary both for overcoming the constraints imposed by economic backwardness on foreign policy and the use of foreign policy for the rapid economic development of the country.

To begin with, population explosion is one of the major challenges to India's foreign policy as it slows down the rate of economic growth. Although at present India is achieving self-sufficiency in food grain production and even exporting to several countries, but it has not yet permanently solved its food needs and hence depends on food imports from outside. Hans J. Morgenthau had gone to the extent of stating that food deficit is a major weakness in India's foreign policy. Initially, its economic and military dependence on foreign states has brought a major strain to its foreign policy planners, as the country's foreign relations, has to be readjusted.

In a speech delivered on December 4, 1947, at the Constituent Assembly in New Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru said:

“Ultimately, foreign policy is the outcome of economic policy, and until India has properly evolved her economic policy, her foreign policy will be rather vague, rather incoherent, and will be groping”.

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91 Ibid., p.44.
As regards natural resources, India is not very deficient, from a long term perspective; India's natural resources will enhance its national power and foreign policy. Similarly, as regards technology, even decades after its Independence, India had to depend on major industrialized nations. This dependence has been progressively declining with its economic development and diversification of the infrastructure of India's economy. But in this process, in the initial decades of its Independence, India's foreign policy was inevitably affected by its dependence on the economically advanced states for capital and technology. But later, with the maximum possible development of her technological base, India was able to catch up economically and militarily, with the leading industrial nations, and playing the role of an emerging major power in international relations.

India's foreign policy is markedly affected by her efforts to solve her economic problems, and her neighbors near and far are singularly intrigued by the manner in which she solves these problems. Her export and import policies, her cooperation with the International Trade Organisation, her participation in drawing up the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, her trade agreements, all of her negotiations of agreements and treaties for economic, technical, and financial aid from foreign governments, international organizations, and private investors — all these factors constitute a complex structure of external economic relations which directly and indirectly concern numerous nations, above all the chief actors in bipolar rivalry.\(^4\)

The role of direct foreign investment has been a perennial issue in India's development strategy.\(^5\) Following an initial opposition to foreign enterprise, which was in part a reaction to past colonialism, the Indian government has increasingly recognized how joint ventures can be used to bring in new technologies, increase exports, and create domestic employment. Regulations, therefore, have been eased, but a cumbersome system of controls over production in general and foreign investment, in particular, remains an obstacle to investment on the scale India now


\(^5\) Catherine Gwin and Lawrence A. Veit, "The Indian Miracle", Foreign Policy, No. 58, (Spring, 1985), p. 89.
seeks. Because India is in competition with other developing countries that actively seek foreign enterprise, it will have to revise and clarify its rules to persuade international companies that they can profit by investing in India.

The progressive globalization of the world economy, and India's economic policy of privatization and liberalization, have opened up new dimensions of multilateral economic diplomacy for India. The World Trade Organization (WTO) was established in 1995 with India as one of the founding members. The rules, procedures and operations of the WTO are so complex that Indian economic diplomacy started facing new challenges soon after its establishment. In the same year India became a Full Dialogue Partner of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). The first Asia-Europe Meeting (AEM) was held in Thailand in 1996 with India as a major participant. The Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IORARC) was launched in 1997 with India as a leading member. The Bangladesh-India-Myanmar-Sri Lanka-Thailand Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) was inaugurated in 1997. The launching of the Euro in 1999 added a further complex dimension to India's economic diplomacy. These new developments in India's multilateral diplomacy were in addition to the economic diplomacy which was already in existence within the framework of the SAARC.96

Buttressed by a 7 per cent growth rate, India's foreign policy began to change in the summer of 1997 with two principal short- and medium-term objectives: to establish non-frictional, normal-to-cordial relations with its neighbours, and to look East, forming bridges of cooperation with ASEAN countries while keeping a firm eye on membership of the Asia-Pacific Economic Community (APEC).97

In 2001, its gross national income of $477 billion ranked twelfth in the world. When measured in purchasing power parity, its GDP was fourth in the world at $2.69 trillion, behind Japan ($3.26 trillion), China ($5.73 trillion), and the United States

New Delhi’s world status may similarly be enhanced should it change its self-image and view itself as an emerging power rather than as a poor developing nation. An Indian planning commission report titled *Vision 2020*, and Indian President Abdul Kalam’s coauthored work *India 2020*, both outline steps in this direction, envisioning India in the ranks of developed countries by 2020.99

The geographic extent of Indian power (the question of whether Indian influence would extend over South Asia, the Indian Ocean region, Asia, or the world)100, and the pace of India’s rise to power, will depend on two main factors. First, Indian power will be influenced by India’s economic and military capabilities, both of which are likely to steadily expand, barring an economic crisis. Similarly, Indian power will be especially linked to New Delhi’s relative economic and military capabilities compared to those of other states. Given its modest economic growth rates, India’s relative capabilities versus Pakistan and versus other potential rivals could greatly increase in the coming decade. Yet India may not close the capabilities gap versus China because that country may have economic growth rates at least as good as (and quite possibly far better than) that of India.101

The Indian economy is moving ahead. Among the larger Asian economies, India’s overall performance has been second only to China’s. Still, India could advance significantly faster and achieve an 8 -9 percent annual growth rate were the government more vigorous in introducing and implementing necessary policy and administrative reforms.102

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This means that India may fall behind in any strategic competition versus China, but it can offset this disadvantage by normalizing political ties with Beijing and by strengthening political and military ties with Washington. This brings up the second factor - India’s power potential will hinge upon its relations with other states. This factor suggests the necessity of India’s embracing international norms, and taking on a willingness and ability to assert itself in regional and world affairs. If a growing and activist India can normalize ties with Pakistan, China, and other key Asian countries, and develop a strategic partnership with the United States, it will be better able to shape regional and world affairs, and thereby emerge as a great power in the world system in the coming decade.\textsuperscript{103}

At the start of the 1990s, finding that its relations with the United States, China, Japan and Europe were all not at ease, India moved quickly to repair the situation. Discarding old socialist shibboleths, it begun to search for markets for its products and capital to fuel its long-constrained domestic growth. Economic partnerships were easy to construct, and increasing trade flows provided a new basis for stability in India’s relations with other major powers. India’s emergence as an outsourcing destination and its new prowess in information technology also give it a niche in the world economy – along with the confidence that it can benefit from economic globalization.\textsuperscript{104}

India’s embrace of openness and globalization had an especially dramatic effect on the country’s role in the region. As the nations of the subcontinent jettison their old socialist agendas, India is well positioned to promote economic integration. Although the pace has been relatively slow, the process has begun to gain traction. The planned implementation of the South Asian Free Trade Agreement signals the coming reintegration of the subcontinent’s markets, which constituted a single economic space until 1947.\textsuperscript{105}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., p.20.  
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., p.19.
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India’s outward economic orientation has allowed it to reestablish trade and investment linkages abroad. New Delhi is negotiating a plethora of free – and preferential – trade agreements with individual countries as well as multilateral bodies including the Association of South Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and the Southern African Development Community. Just as China has become the motor of economic growth in East Asia, a rising India could become the engine of economic integration in the Indian Ocean region.¹⁰⁶

Persona of Intellectuals and Individuals

The personalities of the ultimate decision makers are a major causal variable in the system and process of decision making in foreign policy. Their leadership qualities, behavioural traits, and above all their potential for personal political survival and consolidation of power inevitably influence the formulation and implementation of foreign policy.¹⁰⁷

Foreign policy is made not by the nation as a whole but by its government.¹⁰⁸ But, the foreign policy of India since the first day of her independence has been the creation of one man, the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Perhaps, at no time was there any individual or institutional influence upon which Nehru relied, either for guidance or for support.¹⁰⁹ Men such as V. K. Krishna Menon were not policy-makers but only mere spokesmen for a policy decided upon by the late Prime Minister. At the same time, “Like Nehru’s, his (Krishna Menon’s) roles were multiple and intense, with influence of a high order on the (foreign) policy flow”.¹¹⁰ Unlike the democracies in the West, Indian interest and professional groups did not concern themselves with the

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p.22.
task of critical evaluation and development of the nation's foreign policy. They apparently accepted Nehru’s policy as correct, and they proceeded to justify it.\textsuperscript{111}

Prior to Independence Nehru had been the architect of Congress 'foreign policy', the only one of the nationalist leaders who had done any thinking about the problems which would have to be faced in India's external relations when freedom came. After independence, Nehru was encouraged to perform this role.

Among the major sources of India's external policy the ideas and power of Jawaharlal Nehru had no real competitor. Permitted by Congress leaders to specialize in foreign affairs, he prepared for policy-making two decades before freedom. Since independence Nehru had created much of free India's foreign policy and had not simply restated or managed it. Five main factors produced such a result: his preeminent leadership in domestic politics; his full use of formal and informal authority; his dual role as prime minister and foreign minister; his function as a bridge from the past; and his skill in discussing international relations in terms of widely valued notions, for example, nonviolence. Nehru's eminence towers over his Congress associates, the Indian diplomatic organization, the Cabinet, and the nation's major interest groups.\textsuperscript{112}

In foreign policy matters Nehru sought and received advice from an inner circle. Over the years this group included Lord Louis Mountbatten, Britain's last Viceroy and India's first Governor General; Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, Secretary General of the Ministry of External Affairs, 1947-1952; K. M. Panikkar, a versatile intellectual and India's ambassador in Peking, 1950-53; Maulana Abul Kalam Azad; Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, a philosopher and India's ambassador to the Soviet Union, 1950-53, subsequently India's Vice President and then President; V. K. Krishna Menon, Nehru's volatile and controversial; Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, sister, and

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid.

India’s ambassador in Moscow and Washington, and then Governor of Maharashtra; and Nehru’s daughter, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, who held high posts in the Congress Party.

But ultimately Nehru has been master of his own thoughts on international affairs and, to a significant extent, has been directly responsible for the conduct of Indian foreign policy. There is some justification for saying that India did not have a foreign policy, but Nehru did. The rest of India's leaders, from ministers in Delhi down to the lowliest Congress member, were happy to leave it to Nehru.

Nehru was neither a “dreamer” nor an “idealist” but very much a realist who knew that in a sovereign nation-state system national survival must be the primary aim of foreign policy. “I am on my side and nobody else's”, he said, and acted accordingly on several occasions.

Certain guiding principles for the conduct of international relations were laid down by the Indian National Congress in 1920 and 1927. Resolutions were then passed to the effect that India would cooperate with other, especially neighboring, countries; that India would not become a party to an imperialist war; and that she would never join a war without the consent of her people. These principles were elaborated after 1947 largely through the mechanism of the Prime Minister’s speeches—Nehru spoke often, usually extemporaneously, and at great length – which they could be summarized as “positive neutralism and nonalignment with major power blocs”.

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113 Ibid.
115 Ibid.
118 Ibid.
The first substantive indication of the direction of the foreign policy of an independent India was given by Nehru in an address before the first Asian Relations Conference at New Delhi when he remarked:

“For too long have we of Asia been petitioners in western courts and chancelleries. The story must now belong to the past . . . We propose to stand on our own legs and to cooperate with all others who are prepared to cooperate with us . . . The countries of Asia can no longer be used as pawns by others; they are bound to have their own policies in world affairs”.

In subsequent years, it became evident that India was to follow an independent foreign policy. But what the nature of this policy would be, Nehru himself was very vague, and his foreign policy speeches during the 1947-48 contain many frank admissions to this effect. Because, While replying to a "cut" motion proposed by an opposition member in the Constituent Assembly, December 4, 1947, for the reduction of the budget of the External Affairs Ministry, Nehru concluded his statement by saying:

“I am grateful to the House for their kind sentiments and expressions of goodwill for our attempt to follow a certain rather vague policy in regard to foreign affairs. I wish it were a more definite policy . . .”

Then, during 1949-50 a viable foreign policy began to evolve and the period of groping came to an end. The basic propositions of this policy may be summarized as follows:

1) Preservation of world peace through peaceful methods;
2) Friendly relations with all nations on the basis of mutual respect and complete equality; and

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120 Ibid., p.211.
3) Pursuance of a policy of nonalignment to accomplish the nation's political, military, economic, and other interests.

The first two elements of this policy are generally accepted as sound principles; indeed, they form the basis of the foreign policy of most nations. The third element of Nehru's foreign policy, the principle of nonalignment, however, has been the subject of both approval and criticism: approval at home and criticism abroad.122

However, one of the strangest aspects of Nehru's foreign policy was that India's prestige in international councils was somewhat higher than her power status might justify. On the other hand, this prestige did not help her achieve many of her primary interests, particularly in relation to her neighbors—China, Pakistan, Nepal, Ceylon, and Burma.

In fact, with his great persona, Nehru had created for India an 'international persona' which was not congruent with her actual status as an underdeveloped country. This statement is by no means intended to diminish Nehru's very real contributions to world peace - during the Korean and Indo-Chinese wars for example - but only to emphasize that these were personal rather than national achievements and that their very success created grave problems for Nehru's successors.123

However, the Nehruvian tradition of strategic thinking, which went through many metamorphoses under his successors — namely Lal Bahadur Shastri (1964–66), Indira Gandhi (1966–77, 80–84) and Rajiv Gandhi (1984–89) — represents a mix of liberal internationalism and a strong state approach.124

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122 Ibid.
Nature and works of Ruling Class and Their Bureau

When India achieved its political independence from British rule, there were broadly three categories of the ruling class viz. the political executive led by the Congress Party, the elitist civil service led by the Indian Civil Service (ICS) officers, and the officers of the armed forces.\(^{125}\)

So far as the first one is concerned, the Congress Party was under the unchallengeable leadership of Mahatma Gandhi till his death in January 1948 but thereafter it was led by Jawaharlal Nehru.

The higher civil servants in India, at the dawn of Independence, being basically trained by their British masters, inculcated an alien outlook and mannerisms. Naturally it was not expected that they would play any catalytic role in bringing a new dynamism to India's internal as well as external policies. But obviously under the influence of the model of western liberal democracy, which India adopted with some minor modification, India's political executive, while laying down certain broad policies in the areas of domestic, defence and foreign policies, left the details to be worked out by the hierarchy of civil servants. However, Nehru was an exception who by virtue of his charismatic personality, by and large succeeded "in relegating the ICS officers in the foreign service to the footnotes of Indian diplomacy".\(^{126}\)

It is a fact that India's foreign policy depends to a large extent how this new generation of political elite reads India's national interests and what relative priority assigns to the various determinants of foreign policy. Similarly the diplomats and civil servants, mostly trained within the country in the post-Independence period are generally projecting a fresh outlook in understanding the complexities of domestic milieu and the realities of contemporary international relations.

\(^{126}\) Ibid.
In this context, there are, however, two major inter-Ministerial institutions which play, or have the potentiality to play, a major role in the making of India's foreign policy. One of these is the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), which grew out of the older Prime Minister's Secretariat. Jawaharlal Nehru was initially interested in a high-powered Secretariat exclusively for the Prime Minister. It was Lai Bahadur Shastri who expanded the PMS with one full Secretary and two Joint Secretaries at its head. However, it was during the first tenure of Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister that the PMS actually grew in importance. It was given its present name by Morarji Desai when he became Prime Minister in 1977 and replaced the Prime Minister's Secretariat (PMS). Although, strictly speaking the main function of the PMO is to assist the Prime Minister with regard to his coordinating and supervisory functions concerning the different branches of government, it has played a significant role, sometimes even a decisive role, in the making of foreign policy since Indira Gandhi became Prime Minister for the first time in 1966.127

The PMO appears to have remained at least as powerful under Rajiv Gandhi and probably monopolized foreign policy functions to an even greater extent, thus marginalizing the Ministry of External Affairs further. After the BJP came to power in 1998 under the Prime Ministership of Atal Behari Vajpayee, the PMO continued to play a high-profile role in foreign policy, particularly through Brajesh Mishra, the Principal Secretary to the PM, who headed the PMO.128

The other, relatively new inter-Ministerial institution which has a bearing on foreign policy is the National Security Council (NSC). Although it had been technically set up first by Prime Minister V.P. Singh in 1990 on a small scale it remained dormant, if not extinct, until it was revived after the BJP-led Government came to power in 1998. In addition, India's elaborate intelligence organization has a crucial role to play in the making of India's foreign policy. When the National Security Council was established in November 1998, the Joint Intelligence Committee, which used to be the

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128 Ibid.
apex body of the intelligence set-up, was converted into the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS).

While the Foreign Minister, and ultimately the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, are responsible for actual decision making with regard to the fundamentals of foreign policy the Ministry of External affairs is responsible for feeding them with detailed and adequate information, analyzing and evaluating the available data, and recommending concrete measures in each case. Moreover, the Ministry of External Affairs is the governmental body most concerned with foreign affairs, with responsibility for some aspects of foreign policy making, actual implementation of policy, and daily conduct of international relations. The ministry's duties include providing timely information and analysis to the prime minister and minister of external affairs, recommending specific measures when necessary, planning policy for the future, and maintaining communications with foreign missions in New Delhi. The Ministry of External Affairs, therefore, plays a vital and indispensable role in the making of foreign policy, without being ultimately responsible for it.

Non-alignment Factor

The foreign policy of the ancient civilization as well as a young republic – India - reflects deep-rooted historical traditions and memories which are embodied in philosophical and spiritual non-materialistic values. India recounts her folklore and sagas in her religious philosophy and literature, but especially does she revere her heritages of nonviolence from Guatama Buddha, Emperor Asoka, and Mahatma Gandhi. Panchsheel was a response to a world asking for a new set of principles for the conduct of international relations that would reflect the aspirations of all nations to co-exist and prosper together in peace and harmony. In a speech at Colombo on 28

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129 "India’s Foreign Relations", available at www.meaindia.nic.in
April 1954, Jawaharlal Nehru coined the phrase “non-alignment” to describe India’s foreign policy.132

_Panchsheel_, or the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, come from the five ancient precepts of Buddhism relative to personal behavior,133 were first formally enunciated in the Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet region of China and India signed on April 29, 1954, which stated, in its preamble, that the two Governments “have resolved to enter into the present Agreement based on the following principles:

i. Mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty,

ii. Mutual non-aggression,

iii. Mutual non-interference,

iv. Equality and mutual benefit, and

v. Peaceful co-existence”.134

To Nehru and many Indians, the principles of _Panchsheel_ have real meaning; they constitute a standard of international ethics under which, in return, she hopes for reciprocal affirmations from her neighbor nations. _Panchsheel_ principles call for no heavy military expenditures. Notwithstanding the barbed gibes of the scoffers, India uses these principles as a powerful moral force for peace in her foreign policies within the United Nations and without, Nehru told Nikita Khrushchev and Nikolai Bulganin in Calcutta that India would co-operate with all nations in the search for peace. _Panchsheel_ principles of co-operation and coexistence, Nehru said, are as old as Indian thought, and since there is no other way today for survival he hoped the spirit of them would fill all the world, India had hoped through _Panchsheel_ to preserve the peace and

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134 Government of India, “Panchsheel”, _Loc.cit_.


independence of lands about China by making aggression so odious that the regime of Mao Tse-tung would not dare to chance it.\textsuperscript{135}

In Nehru's view, the concepts of Panchsheel constitute the ethical alternative to war: the choice is between Panchsheel and the hydrogen bomb. These concepts not only give Nehru the courage to stand alone, and the feeling of security when he does stand alone, but they virtually give him no other choice than to chart an independent course in world affairs. He recognizes that consistency forbids India's joining alliances that imply armed rival camps, and forbids India's favoring one nation above another—at least the major rival powers—in her friendships.\textsuperscript{136}

This policy of independent action, which often infuriates diplomats who would like to have India's support, has earned for India the label of "neutralism", but the traditional sense of this word provides no explanation for India's behavior. "I do not think we are neutral", says Nehru, explaining that neutralism in its relation to war and belligerency means the opposite of belligerency.\textsuperscript{137} In Nehru's sense of the term "neutralism," India has adopted a policy of nonalignment, and independent action in her diplomatic relations vis-à-vis her bipolar world.\textsuperscript{138}

Nonalignment as India lives it does not mean submission to evil, passivity of mind, lack of conviction, a listless desire for noninvolvement: it means a "positive and dynamic approach" to world problems, as evinced in her leadership of the Afro-Asian world toward independence, in her exemplary participation in the spectrum of international organs of peace.

Meanwhile, there is also an ideological factor in India's nonalignment that is often overlooked. In answer to the question, "In what sense is Nehru neutral?" this answer is proposed: in the cold war between the free world and Sovietism, India is

\textsuperscript{135} E. Malcolm Hause, \textit{Loc.cit.}  
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{137} Government of India, "Text of the Prime Minister's Speech in the Lok Sabha on the 29th March, 1956" (New Delhi: External Publicity Division, Ministry of External Affairs, 1956), p. 2.  
strictly neutral, that is, nonaligned; but ideologically, in the cross fire between democracy and totalitarianism, India is definitely unneutral, that is, pledged to the democratic processes.\textsuperscript{139}

\textit{Panchsheel} was incorporated into the Ten Principles of International Peace and Cooperation enunciated in the Declaration issued by the April 1955 Bandung Conference of 29 Afro-Asian countries. The universal relevance of \textit{Panchsheel} was emphasised when its tenets were incorporated in a resolution on peaceful co-existence presented by India, Yugoslavia and Sweden, and unanimously adopted on December 11, 1957, by the United Nations General Assembly.\textsuperscript{140}

The \textit{Panchsheel}, provided the ideological foundation for the establishment of the Non-aligned Movement.\textsuperscript{141} In 1961, the Conference of Non-Aligned Nations in Belgrade accepted Panchsheel as the principled core of the Non-Aligned Movement.\textsuperscript{142} Together with Gamal Abdul Nasser and Marshal Josef Tito, Nehru was one of three leaders who created the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1961 in order to make it possible for nations to cooperate with each other and offer a broad framework for collective dialogue and collective action against the developed countries.\textsuperscript{143} Nehru's non-aligned foreign policy was an attractive model for most developing countries because it was based on the principles of non-involvement in either of the two alliance systems and an active and independent participation in world affairs. Furthermore, Nehru saw non-alignment between the superpowers at the time of the Cold War as a vital precondition to protecting national interest. Thus, his non-alignment strategy by no means precluded an active stance in Indian self-interest; it became the dominant ethos of India's foreign policy in international affairs.\textsuperscript{144}

Nehru promoted the idea of non-alignment to prove that India was an independent country and had a right to play an international role. However, the Sino-

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{141} J.N. Dixit, \textit{Op.cit.}, p.75.
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid., p.739.
Indian war of 1962 was a watershed for Indian defense planners. In the aftermath, India abandoned its cherished non-alignment policy; cast off the Menon defense strategy, which had left the Indian army helpless before the Chinese invasion; and set out a comprehensive program for military modernization with the help of the U.S. and the Soviet Union. New Delhi's military weaknesses had been exposed and in military defeat the country's international prestige declined. Nehru's foreign policy based "on global influence without military power" was shattered and India's position and influence among the new non-aligned nations were also affected.

Nehru categorically wrote in April 1963 that India's responses would inevitably be affected by the policies that others adopted toward it. He argued that protection of the country's interest, by force if necessary, was the first charge on its foreign policy, though to the outside world his rhetoric of peaceful coexistence and mutual respect caught the headlines.

However, it is obvious that India's concepts of the manner in which international relations should be conducted, amassed of: Panchsheel, nonviolence, non-alignment, neutralism, cooperation with the United Nations, and compassion for freedom and equality for the peoples of Asia.

**Ethno-religious Divide: The Kashmir Issue**

Specifically, India's foreign policy is greatly influenced by ethno-religious divides on the subcontinent and neighboring states' involvement in Indian domestic issues. India, through relational control, seeks to insulate its nation-building project from any destabilizing development in neighboring countries. Kashmir is a prime

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144 Ibid.
example of relational control in India’s foreign policy due to its protracted nature and core ethno-religious aspects.

The complexity of the problem has territorial dimensions in addition to the ethno-religious factors. Apart from the religious variances, ethnic divisions between Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslim Kashmiris were exacerbated by their territorial dispersion throughout the state. Those three main problems have caused irredentist, even secessionist, demands in India, Pakistan, and within Kashmir itself.\(^{(150)}\)

With the internationalization of the Kashmir problem, the UN and the cold war superpowers became involved in the Kashmir conflict at the international level. The UN first was brought in by India in a complaint about Pakistan’s aggressive actions over Kashmir that led to the 1947-48 war. In the developments of the following decade, Pakistan’s alliance with the United States brought a cold war dimension to the conflict that forced India to collaborate with the Soviet Union. These domestic causes of ethnic strife led to the internationalization of the conflict, influencing states at the system-oriented, or international, level.

International factors influencing the Kashmir conflict have included the UN’s involvement after 1948, Pakistan’s alliance with the United States and involvement in U.S.-sponsored military organizations such as Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), India’s establishment of close ties with the Soviet Union in response to cold war superpower rivalries and, for the last two decades, the increasing rise of Islamic ideologies and governments in the region.

This rivalry between two states in the subcontinent has had a substantial effect over Indian and Pakistani foreign policy. The conflict over Jammu and Kashmir has resulted in the following incidents: the 1948 and 1965 wars, the 1971 war over Bangladesh, the 1990 crises, the 1999 Kargil War, and the 2002 crises.

\(^{(150)}\) Carolyn C. James and Ozguro Zdamar, Loc.cit.
For India, the Kashmir conflict is definitely a two-dimensional issue. First, ethnic conflict has domestic causes. Subnationally it is related to the success or failure of Indian domestic policies. Second, externally the conflict is linked to the subcontinental rivalry between India and Pakistan. However, this division does not suggest a foreign policy for India that is isolated from domestic concerns.\(^{151}\)

**International Environment**

Nations, however, like people, are the products of their environment and their heredity.\(^{152}\) During the last five decades, there have been a few international factors which have played to a varying degree certain role in determining India’s foreign policy. When India entered into the global scene as an independent nation, already Cold war had started between the United States of America and the Soviet Union and the world was practically divided into two groups under ideological lines. India’s foreign policy makers have to operate in a global crisis situation in which the US is determined to follow a policy of military confrontation with the USSR.\(^{153}\) Several military pacts like the NATO, SEATO, the Baghdad Pact (CENTO) and the Warshaw Pact were signed in quick succession and the two super powers were often menacingly threatening each other.\(^{154}\)

India as a lesser power was really in a state of dilemma and there was very little choice open to the new leadership under Nehru.\(^{155}\) In fact like any other independent state, the choice for India during the post-Second World War period was limited to two broad alternatives. Either it could join any of these military alliances and get involved in the Cold War or keep out of the bipolar confrontation and play an independent role in the world affairs, but at the same time safeguard its newly own freedom and concentrate on economic development and state-building. Apparently in


\(^{155}\) Ibid.
view of its national interest linked mainly with security, development and world order, in that scenario any levelheaded leadership would opt for the second choice - keep aloof from the bipolar confrontation - and Jawaharlal Nehru did exactly the same. But, the Cold War, which was brought to India's doorstep as a result of the U.S.-Pakistan military alliance forged in 1954, to a very large extent blunted India's initiatives and innovations in shaping the new world.156

At the same time, it is a big question to ponder the extent to which such a rational choice has paid dividends. In fact during the Sino-Indian border conflict of 1962, India could not get any sizeable support from either camp because its neutrality vis-à-vis the two super powers. But in the mid-sixties with the gradual lessening of the Cold War and the creation of looser bipolar world, India derived certain advantages from the changed global strategic environment.157 After the Indo-Pak war of 1965 and the Tashkent Agreement, the economic ties with the Soviet Union increased slowly. It reached a high water mark after the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace and Friendship was signed in 1971 when another war was thrust upon it by Pakistan during the liberation struggle in Bangladesh. In the seventies with the rapprochement between the US and the Peoples' Republic of China on the one hand and that of the US and Soviet Union on the other, the global environment again changed for India. Then, it became quite imperative for it to strengthen its political, economic and cultural ties with the Third World states and to strive for strengthening the UN system.

To a large extent nuclear politics at the international level has also influenced India's external policy. Although India was not satisfied with provision of the Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) 1963, it decided to sign and ratify it. But soon it was disillusioned to see the failure in nuclear disarmament talks between the two super powers and naturally withheld its support to a discriminatory Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968) and has not signed it till date. India has broadly supported resolution at the UN General Assembly for creating Nuclear-weapons free-zones in different parts of the

world. And so was the case of 1996 Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty – which one is again with discriminatory character in India’s view – India had not signed and ratified the treaty so far, even facing tremendous pressure from global powers.

The resurgence of the Afro-Asian region and the gradual strengthening of the Non-aligned Movement (NAM) have directly helped India to play a more meaningful role in world affairs. After winning Independence in 1947, Indian ruling circles regarded the cardinal strengthening of India’s position in South Asia as a major goal of its foreign policy course. India hosted the first Asian Relations Conference in 1948 as a pioneer of the NAM. Later, because of its gradual popularity as many as 100 states have joined the Non-aligned forum at the time of the seventh Summit, India has successfully hosted the seventh NAM Summit in New Delhi.

The results of the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war and the emergence of Bangladesh created a situation in which there remained no country in South Asia able to seriously challenge India’s predominance. Anyhow, creating a sound base for India’s foreign policy depends to a large extent on the improvement of its relations with the immediate neighbours in general and with China and Pakistan in particular. In fact, if flipside of the foreign policy of India looked, there seems, these two countries have always remained major concern of India’s foreign policy makers.

India as one of the founder members of the Group of 77, played a dominant role in all negotiations between the North and South. In January 1981, it very successfully hosted the first South-South meeting for initiating a more purposeful dialogue among the developing countries.

The strengthening of the UN system and helping in its efforts for world peace and disarmament has remained a major goal of India’s foreign policy. Although it is conscious of the limitations of the UN in controlling global tension it is a fact that a country like India has a large stake in its success. India, however would not like the

world body to be dominated by the major global powers. Being a major beneficiary of the economic schemes channelized by several international agencies like the UNESCO, UNICEF, UNAID, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, etc. India had to mould its foreign policy in such a way as to maximize the economic and technical aid from several UN sponsored organizations. For instance, in the eighties India is the largest beneficiary of aid from the World Bank and its affiliate, the International Development Association. The total amount from these two sources was Rs. 7,995.93 crores.159

However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the scenario of the world arena was changed, the course of Indian foreign policy too. The end of Cold War freed India to pursue engagement with all the great powers -- but especially with the United States. Barely 15 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, India's omnidirectional engagement with the great powers has paid off handsomely. Never before has India had such expansive relations with all the major powers at the same time -- a result not only of India's increasing weight in the global economy and its growing power potential, but also of New Delhi's savvy and persistent diplomacy.160

End of Cold War

Internationally, the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the USSR have had profound security implications for India. The cumulative impact has been to make India feel more secure and thus more willing to be innovative in its foreign policy.161 Alone among the world's leading democracies, India viewed the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union as a great tragedy and a considerable setback to vital national interests. Gone was New Delhi's closest friend and ally. Standing solitary and triumphant was a

single superpower, the United States, with which India had experienced deeply troubled relations from almost the moment of its birth in 1947.\textsuperscript{162}

India's foreign policy redirection in the 1990s had three broad phases; a period of preliminary change, then one of partial change and, finally, one of pronounced change. The period of preliminary change was one of adjustment in the years immediately following the end of the Cold War. Given India's closeness to the Soviet Union, its collapse meant readjusting to new realities.\textsuperscript{163} Under the circumstances, India's policy of non-alignment itself should have been questioned since it held little meaning when there was nothing left to be non-aligned about.\textsuperscript{164} However, to do so would have required a stable domestic environment that was proving rather elusive at that time. The changes in India's external environment resonated at the domestic level too. After almost four decades of uninterrupted one-party rule, India entered the era of minority and coalition governments in 1989, beginning with the government of V.P. Singh, which lasted just 11 months (2 December 1989–10 November 1990). This was followed by Chandra Shekhar's mini-minority government (10 November 1990–21 June 1991) in which the party in power held only a fistful of seats in parliament (58 in a 545-member house). Both these governments were in power at the time of the Gulf War, and neither proved dexterous in responding to that major event.\textsuperscript{165}

Not surprisingly, then, a perceptible shift in Indian policy took place sometime during late October and November—i.e., during the last days of the V. P. Singh government and the assumption of power by Chandra Shekhar's minority government, which required the support of Rajiv Gandhi's Congress(I) Party.\textsuperscript{166} Apparently, Indian policymakers realized that nonalignment and military alliances had

\textsuperscript{164} Kripa Sridharan, "Explaining the phenomenon of change in Indian foreign policy under the National Democratic Alliance Government", Contemporary South Asia, Vol.15, No.1, (March, 2006), p. 79.
\textsuperscript{165} Ibid.
been rendered irrelevant in the changing parameters of the international strategic environment and the end of the Cold War.

Although fundamentally the character of India's nonalignment policy has not changed, pragmatically the country's policy toward the West is more open and soft as compared to the Cold War period. New Delhi is beginning to come to terms with the new realities of a world in which "non-alignment" has lost meaning. The main challenges for Indian diplomats and policy makers facing the post-Cold War world with its changing security environment are the need to (1) build a strong economic base capable of sustaining the country's military growth and (2) maintain a higher diplomatic profile.\(^\text{167}\)

An indication of this policy shift came in the Joint Declaration of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) issued on November 23, 1990, at the meeting in the Maldives capital of Male, which was attended by Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar. The declaration called on Iraq to leave Kuwait and to comply with all U.N. Security Council resolutions. A few days later, India supported U.N. Resolution 678 authorizing the use of force if Iraq failed to withdraw from Kuwait by the Security Council-stipulated deadline of January 15, 1991. By the end of November 1990, New Delhi's originally low-key condemnation of the Iraqi invasion had become stronger and explicit with its rejection of any linkage between the Kuwaiti and Palestinian issues.\(^\text{168}\)

India's initial reaction to the Gulf crisis gave the impression of being half-hearted in support of the international consensus largely because of New Delhi's tendency to extrapolate from India/Pakistan relations and its failure to take cognizance of the new realities of the post-Cold War era.

However, this did not mean that India's apparent "softness" toward Iraq and its anti-Western stance during the initial stage of the crisis had the broad support of its

\(^{168}\) Ibid.
foreign policy community. On the contrary, there were signs of divisions within the foreign policy establishment with prominent analysts and commentators questioning the wisdom of applying old standards and paradigms to the first major crisis of the post-Cold War era. Air Commodore Jasjit Singh and K. Subrahmanyam of the government-run Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses argued that in spite of India's friendly relations with Iraq, New Delhi must recognize that the "[Iraqi] invasion of Kuwait challenged the basis of the United Nations itself and the energy security and financial stability of the world". At the same time, they held that "the problem could not be solved by NATO and its allies (such as Australia and Pakistan) alone", but "only with the cooperation and collective efforts of all interested powers within the U.N. framework".169

During that time, the "realist" school argued that Indian policy planners must look beyond the current crisis and take steps to reposition India in its relations with the entire Middle East region. In short, a majority of strategic and foreign affairs analysts believed that in the interests of realpolitik and national self-interest, India ought to tune its foreign policy to the resonance of modern realities. The Nonaligned Movement (NAM) was seen as having served its purpose in the bipolar aligned world and was regarded as inadequate to help India meet the needs of a realigned or unipolar world.

But, the Analysts belonging to the "traditionalist" school viewed national interests the other way around. They held that noninvolvement in the Gulf conflict would have better served India's interests. Such a stance would have helped maintain nonalignment as the foundation of India's foreign policy and reaffirmed New Delhi's position on peaceful resolution of intra-South conflicts. According to them, the exercise of weaning the U.S. from Pakistan could even rebound on India because Washington has no permanent friends or foes. The "traditionalists" are also of the view that America has once again imposed its will upon the world, this time with cleverly manipulated U.N. backing and with a private agenda (i.e., "taking out Saddam"

169 Ibid., p.850.
and destroying Iraq as a military power) masked by a legitimate facade. They are critical of the Indian government's decision to allow refueling facilities to the U.S. aircraft and India's "good behavior" in the Security Council in return for IMF loans and aid. In the most vehement attack on India's Gulf policy shift, one commentator compared the sacrifice of India's traditional foreign policy ideals and friends in return for IMF loans with Judas's betrayal of Jesus Christ for thirty pieces of silver. This line of thinking was challenged by several "realist" commentators who contended that acknowledging world realities and adjusting foreign policy accordingly could not be called selling out.  

The political parties in India could not afford to ignore the sentiments of India's large Muslim minority (more than 100 million) community, which was markedly pro-Iraq and anti-U.S. The refueling controversy was kept alive by parties merely to score petty debating points, but the prevailing anti-U.S. feelings forced the Chandra Shekhar government to withdraw the refueling permission in mid-February. In a game of one-upmanship, Rajiv Gandhi announced his "peace mission" to Moscow and Teheran – an exercise aimed more at the domestic audience than at achieving a peaceful settlement of the Gulf crisis.

However, throughout the crisis, India failed to play a constructive role, and signals coming from New Delhi were confusing and contradictory. While, the Iraqis and pro-Saddam Arabs accused India of being an American lackey for allowing the refueling facilities, the Kuwaitis and anti-Iraq forces labeled India a Saddam stooge for initially failing to condemn unequivocally the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and then for stopping the refueling.  

But, with a change of regime in New Delhi - and as more governments joined the anti-Iraqi coalition – India reassessed its policy sometime in November-December 1990, made a U-turn, and eventually allowed U.S. and Australian aircraft to refuel at facilities in India.

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Whatever the final outcome of the foreign policy debate in India, the fact remains that the Gulf crisis has called into question the basic premises and approaches underlying Indian foreign policy: the NAM, Third World solidarity, North-South dialogue, New International Economic Order, and so on. This is also the first time that an Indian government has not resorted to knee-jerk anti-Americanism.172

In the post-Gulf War strategic order envisaged by the United States for Asia, India may be expected to endorse and collaborate with U.S. moves in the Indian Ocean region. Such moves may cover India's sensitive neighbourhood, as in the recent examples of landing U.S. Marines in unusually large numbers in Bangladesh in June 1991 under the pretext of cyclone relief, and of the revival of the proposal to expand the Voice of America transmission station in Sri Lanka notwithstanding provisions against such expansion in the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement of 1987.173

India's foreign policy redirection in the 1990s went through a phase of partial change following the 1991 general election that led to the formation of another minority government (21 June 1991–16 May 1996) under P.V. Narasimha Rao of the Congress Party. As he took office, the Soviet Union was self-destructing and Indian policy-makers were unsure how they should react to this.174

Nevertheless, under the Rao Government there were some noticeable changes in India's outward orientation. First, India established diplomatic relations with Israel. Second, a thaw in Sino-Indian relations led to their 1993 agreement to maintain peace and tranquility on the line-of-actual-control along their shared border. Third, a new beginning in Indo-US relations was inaugurated.175 Finally, a 'Look East' policy was initiated with a great deal of fanfare following the major about turn in India's domestic economic policy. This was the most remarkable achievement of this government as it boldly inaugurated an era of economic reforms. Even though this reorientation was

essentially domestic in nature, its repercussions on foreign policy were unmistakable. Foreign policy change literature acknowledges that the ‘restructuring or transforming the economic system also can be a source of foreign policy change’. Overnight, Indian foreign policy was infused with an economic content which meant that the nature of Indian diplomacy had to be recast.

The BJP-led coalition government of Atal Behari Vajpayee that followed Rao’s administration lasted just over 2 weeks (16 May 1996–1 June 1996) before giving way to another coalition (1 June 1996–21 April 1997) under the leadership of Deve Gowda. When I.K. Gujral, previously Minister for External Affairs under Gowda, came to power at the head of the coalition (21 April 1997–19 March 1998), he kept up the momentum in some of the areas of interest identified by the Rao Government but let some others languish. His administration’s major foreign policy contribution was in initiating unilateral goodwill gestures towards India’s smaller regional neighbours under the famous Gujral Doctrine. This was a virtual Monroe Doctrine even if India lacked sufficient muscle to enforce it. In a Cover Story titled "Clear and Coherent: Foreign policy under I.K. Gujral" Frontline (April 4, 1997), characterised Gujral as "the most thoughtful and best External Affairs Minister India has had since Jawaharlal Nehru" and foreign policy under him, over a nine-month period (during the first United Front Government), as "the one really bright, exceptional area" of government performance.

India’s foreign policy redirection in the 1990s went through a phase of pronounced change in the final decade of the twentieth century during the 6 years (19 March 1998–22 May 2004) that the BJP-led NDA coalition government was in power under Vajpayee. His administration initiated fundamental alterations to the country’s

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foreign policy, thus disproving the conventional views on coalition governments and policy changes.\textsuperscript{180}

In the sweltering heat of May 1998, India finally ended its long standing nuclear ambiguity. By conducting two rounds of nuclear tests on 11 and 13 May, its first right-of-centre government led by the BJP, resolved nearly five decades of nuclear debate in India in favour of an overt nuclear posture. For good or bad, and whether the world like it or not, India decided to cross the nuclear Rubicon.\textsuperscript{181} After the tests, it had to face serious resentment from various sides — particularly from the U.S. — which imposed economic sanctions against India.

The nuclear tests at Pokhran were about redefining India’s approach to the question of power. However, it was the post-Pokhran diplomacy efficiently handled by the Vajpayee Government limited the damage from the nuclear tests.

It was significant that, notwithstanding the constraints — a coalition government, lack of a bi-partisan consensus and the instinctive anti-US stance of sections of the bureaucratic, political and intellectual elites — the Vajpayee regime was able to radically transform India’s foreign policy.\textsuperscript{182} The combined effect of the NDA foreign policy decisions amounted to a basic shift in India’s international orientation as it moved beyond the confines of its non-aligned and Third World centric policy to confidently engage the United States.

U.S. engagement with post-nuclear South Asia, however, produced unexpected and somewhat counterintuitive results—a significant improvement in U.S.-Indian relations and the perceptible stagnation if not deterioration of U.S.-Pakistani relations, as reflected in President Bill Clinton’s tour of the subcontinent in 2000. He spent five days in India and barely a few hours in Pakistan, where he fit in a public broadcast to

\textsuperscript{180} D. Hagan, "Political Opposition and Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective", (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1993), p. 169.
warn the Pakistani people that, if their nation did not change course, it would become isolated in the international arena.

Clinton’s divergent approaches and emphases in dealing with India and Pakistan reflected the new sense in Washington that India was an emerging power in the global arena and a potential U.S. partner.\textsuperscript{183}

Abruptly after the upsetting aerial attacks on the World Trade Centre on 11 September 2001, India expressed its outrage at the terrible terrorist acts. New Delhi was ready to extend whatever support the United States wanted, including military bases, in its global war against terrorism.\textsuperscript{184}

While the United States and the world continue to debate whether the events of September 11, 2001, transformed world politics, the resulting U.S. war on terrorism clearly marks a critical shift in South Asian international relations. As the United States began to demonstrate greater interest in the region, South Asian leaders eagerly moved to draw Washington into their regional and internal disputes by offering military cooperation in the war on terror. Although unstated, the new welcoming attitude toward the U.S. military presence and an enhanced U.S. security role in the region reflect a recognition that South Asian security has become a global issue and that the region’s problems now are no longer manageable within the confines of either domestic political or bilateral frameworks.\textsuperscript{185}

This paradigm shift in U.S. policy toward the region since September 11 can be gleaned from heightened U.S. interest in balanced relations with India and with Pakistan, U.S. efforts to manage the nuclear flash point in Kashmir, and the conscious U.S. promotion of wider regional stability and economic integration. The most significant discontinuity in South Asia since September 11 has been the development of sound bilateral relations between the United States and both India and Pakistan.

\textsuperscript{183} C. Raja Mohan, “A Paradigm Shift toward South Asia?”, \textit{The Washington Quarterly} \textbf{(Winter, 2002-03), p.143.}

\textsuperscript{184} \textit{Times of India, 15 September, 2001.}

One year after the attacks, the Bush administration can rightfully boast of strong equities and unprecedented good relations with New Delhi and Islamabad.

In addition, the pragmatic thrust in India's foreign policy during the past decade needs to continue if the new Indo-U.S. relationship is to bear fruit. The end of the Congress Party's political domination may have made this approach easier to sustain. The Congress Party is the traditional home of India's "Nehruvian internationalists", who shaped India's foreign policy during the country's first 40 years, emphasizing a high moral tone (thereby often annoying their U.S. interlocutors), exhibiting their devotion to the Non-Aligned Movement, and leaving a strong legacy of suspicion toward the United States.186

Vajpayee announced that nothing stopped India and the United States from becoming 'natural allies'.187 This was a stunning departure from the established tenets of India's external policy on two counts: first, the terms 'ally' or 'alliance' are anathemas to Indian foreign policy purists; second, invoking it in the context of relations with the United States was like adding insult to injury. A glance at India's history of non-aligned foreign policy pronouncements would show the level of contempt reserved for alliances, especially those promoted by the United States. In a major speech to the Asia Society, Vajpayee reiterated that:

India — USA relations have undergone a major transformation in recent years. The strength of this relationship derives from a greater understanding of our basic commonalities. The end of the Cold War has enabled us to enhance our engagement, based also on a convergence of many geopolitical perspectives.188

When the NDA Government lost the election in 2004 to the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA), Indo-US relations were expected to weaken given

188 Prime Minister's speech at the Asia Society, "India US relations in the emerging global environment", 22 September 2003, available at http://www.indianembassy.org/pm/Vajpayee/pm_sept _22_03.html
the ideological orientation of the new administration and its leftist supporters.\textsuperscript{189} Because it was expected that “India’s Communist Parties may significantly determine India’s foreign policy formulations” \textsuperscript{190}— which may ultimately affect the course of Indo-US relations. Just the opposite has happened. Ties have scaled new heights with the Americans promising to transform India into a world power, (During her visit to India in March 2005, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced that America’s goal was to help India become a major world power in the twenty-first century)\textsuperscript{191} and by inking a landmark nuclear deal with New Delhi in July 2005.

Indian policymakers, in return, are talking about a potential partnership with the United States to balance the power equation in Asia.\textsuperscript{192} These developments have occurred despite the commitment made in the UPA’s Common Minimum Programme to modify the pro-US policy of the Vajpayee Government, and the continued criticism from its leftwing coalition parties for failing to live up to that commitment. The UPA’s decision to stick to the change is both due to the depth of the policy reorientation toward the United States, and the positive yields from it. Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran endorsed the reorientation as a dramatic transformation that had departed ‘from established positions to realise a genuine strategic partnership’.\textsuperscript{193}

Indian foreign policy increasingly seems structured to achieve the following objectives: (1) closer ties to countries — and multilateral associations — that can help it achieve higher rates of economic growth; and (2) being able to conduct its foreign policy as a major Asian power and not just a regional South Asia state.\textsuperscript{194}

\textsuperscript{189} Sultan Shaheen, “From superpower to pragmatist”, Asia Times, 3 September 2004.
\textsuperscript{190} Subhash Kapila, “United States and India Relations under The New Congress Coalition Government: An Analysis”, available at www.saag.org
\textsuperscript{191} Times of India, 27 March 2005.
\textsuperscript{192} Statement by India’s Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran, Times of India Online, 29 November 2005, available at http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com
Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, with his vision, has begun to play with the big ideas underlying India's foreign policy. In a speech at the India Today conclave in New Delhi in February 2005, Manmohan Singh came up with the outlines of a new doctrine that redifiness India's self-perception as well as its external grand strategy. The underlying elements of Manmohan doctrine are, that:

- Time has come for India to end its traditional furtive attitude to the world
- The recognition of India's new opportunities to improve relations with all the major powers on the basis of economic cooperation in an era of globalization.
- The new approach to the developing regions of the world.
- The emphasis on the economic globalization to reorder relations with the subcontinent.
- The 'idea of India' it self by insisting India's relevance to the world stems from its democratic and plural political order.

In this scenario it is noteworthy that Stephen Cohen's India: Emerging Power discusses how material capabilities, domestic politics, relations with Pakistan, ties with China and other Asian countries, and a new partnership with the United States influence India's power prospects. Assessing these factors, Cohen concludes that India is an emerging power and calls for Washington to pay greater attention to it.

The main characteristic of a power is its ability to establish a system of alliances and to project its power (military or economic, the proportion depending on the development level of the country, its environment, and its foreign policy strategy) over a certain area. The purely qualitative difference between a world and a regional power lies in the area of its influence. India, according to all characteristics, has no doubt already begun to play the role of a regional power and emerging on to the world stage.

195 Speech by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh at India Today Conclave, New Delhi, available at http://meaindia.nic.in/speech/205/02/25ss01.htm
As the 2005 report of the United States National Intelligence Council entitled as *Mapping the Global Future* reveals, “The likely emergence of China and India as new major global players – similar to the rise of Germany in the 19th century and America in the 20th century – will transform the geopolitical landscape, with impacts potentially as dramatic as those of previous two centuries”.

Unlike their U.S. counterparts, Indian leaders do not announce new foreign policy doctrines. Nonetheless, in recent years, they have worked relentlessly to elevate India’s regional and international standing and to increase its power. New Delhi has made concerted efforts to reshape its immediate neighbourhood, finds a *modus vivendi* with China and Pakistan (its two regional rivals), and reclaim its standing in the “near abroad”: parts of Africa, the Persian Gulf, Central and Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean region. At the same time, it has expanded relations with the existing great powers – especially the United States.

In this context the coming chapter deals with the emergence of Indo-U.S. relations from its inception, estrangement, and to engagement in a historical perspective since the end of the Second World War.

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