

Course Name- B.A.L.L.B. VIth Sem.

Subject- Political Science

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Topic- India's Foreign Policy

India is a sovereign country and every sovereign country has its foreign policy. India too has one.

But What is Foreign Policy?

Basically, foreign policy is the sum total of principles, interests and objectives which a country promotes while interacting with other countries.

Even though, there are certain basic features of foreign policy it is not a fixed concept. It is dynamic. Furthermore, the dimensions of foreign policy keep on changing according to changing international conditions.

Moreover, history, culture, geography and economy of one country shape its foreign policy.

Foreign Policy of India

Talking about India, our first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, is the architect of the country's foreign policy. Since he was not only the Prime Minister but also foreign minister for over 17 years which were the formative years of independent India.

The primary purpose of any country's foreign policy is to promote its national interest- to ensure its security, safeguard its sovereignty, contribute to its growth and prosperity and generally enhance its stature, influence and role in the comity of nations. A country's foreign policy should also be able to serve the broader purpose of promoting peace disarmament and development and of establishing a stable, fair and equitable global order-
Muchkund Dubey

Now let us dig deep and learn more about the principles of Indian Foreign Policy.

So here are the 6 Principles of India's Foreign Policy-

The Constitutional Principle

Article 51 of the Indian Constitution Lays down some Directive Principles of State Policy on Promotion of International Peace and Security. The state shall endeavour to-

1. Promote international peace and security.
2. Maintain just and honourable relations between nations.
3. Foster respect for international law and Treaty obligations in the dealings of organised people with one another,
4. Encourage settlement of international disputes by arbitration

Panchsheel

Panchsheel, or the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, were first formally iterated 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: –

1. Respect each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty,
2. Mutual non-aggression,
3. Mutual non-interference,
4. Equality and mutual benefit, and
5. Peaceful co-existence.

Non Alignment

Non-alignment has been an important feature of India's foreign policy. The aim of Non-alignment was to maintain national independence in foreign affairs.

Non-alignment was neither neutrality nor non-involvement nor isolationism. It was a dynamic concept. Furthermore, Non-Alignment gained popularity in the developing countries.

Consequently, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was created and founded during the collapse of the colonial system and the independence struggles of the peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America and other regions of the world.

Anti Colonialism

India has always opposed colonialism and racism. When injustice happened, India raised voice against it, for instance-

1. in favour of Indonesia's nationality fighting the Dutch colonialism in 1947,
2. against South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia

Consequently, India was the staunch supporter of the decolonization process. These are testimonials to the fact that India opposed colonialism.

Afro Asian Unity

India established good relations with other newly independent states in Asia and Africa, throughout the 1940s and 1950s.

Notably, Nehru was an ardent advocate of Asian Unity. As a result, Under his leadership, India convened the Asian relation conference in March 1947.

As stated earlier, India also made honest efforts for the early realisation of freedom of Indonesia from the Dutch colonial region. Also, India convened an international conference in 1949 to support the freedom struggle of Indonesia.

Furthermore, the Asian conference held in the Indonesian city of Bandung in 1955 commonly known as the Bandung conference marked India's engagement with the newly independent Asian and African Nations. Later, the Bandung conference led to the establishment of the NAM.

Anti Racism

India firmly believes in the equality of all human beings. Her policy is aimed at opposition to all form of racial discrimination.

India firmly opposed the infamous apartheid policy in South Africa. Not only India had cut off diplomatic relations with South Africa in 1949 but also used her influence in the application of comprehensive sanctions (later) against the white minority racist Regime of South Africa.

Foreign Economic Aid

After independence, India realised the importance of economic development. Also, it knew the limitations of herself. India was lacking funds, technical know-how and machinery.

By adopting NAM policy, India killed two birds with one stone. Amazingly, India took the best of both the worlds. Moreover, India approached USSR and USA for help and it went well for India. USSR helped India with technology. Also, USA came up with grains in 1965 famines.

Objectives Of India's Foreign Policy

National interest has been the governing principle of India's foreign policy even at the time of Nehru who was inspired by the ideal of world peace, toleration and mutual respect among nations. In operational terms, the idea of national interest takes the form of concrete objectives of foreign policy.

1. Settle and secure international borders.

Cross-border trade and broader bilateral intercourse can only be achieved when geographic boundaries are beyond doubt.

2. Maintain regional peace and stability through the projection of Indian power.

[Pax Indica](#) can help ensure stability of the littoral Indian Ocean region in general and South Asia in particular. That the region is today plagued by vortices of instability is largely due to India's inability and reluctance to project power in a calculated, strategic manner.

3. Secure unhindered access to international markets on the most favourable terms.

4. Develop deeper and broader economic relations with countries that supply fuel and military hardware.

5. Cultivate and engage political constituencies that can influence policies of foreign governments in India's favour.

6. Protect — and credibly demonstrate the intention to protect at all costs — the lives and well-being of Indian citizens living abroad. Never forgive governments, organisations or individuals who harm Indians.

7. Participate in multilateral and bilateral military co-operation relationships. Secure visiting and basing rights at geostrategic locations in the region.

8. Develop capacities, capabilities and contingency plans to provide relief and rehabilitation in the region in the event of natural or man-made disasters.

9. Attract talented individuals from across the world to visit, stay, work, study, teach or live in India. Encourage talented Indians to do likewise abroad.

10. Project the Indian model as an example for other countries to emulate.