



INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY: A COMMITMENT TO GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

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Abstract

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, continual attempts are being made in India to seek worldwide engagements with the greatest possible number of nations to fulfill the country's national goals. This has more or less propelled the country into the global center stage, therefore defining its new role to play via expanding multilateralism and stronger economic cooperation with other countries. Previously, the country had a reputation for not reacting due to a lethargic approach to its foreign policy. This image needed to be transformed into one of a powerful and active nation that pursued a realistic and muscular approach to international affairs. This initiative aims to accomplish this goal and provides the necessary push toward safeguarding the country's social, economic, and other strategic interests in a rightfully earned manner.

Keywords: *Foreign policy, Global role, Globalism, National interests, Realistic approach.*

Introduction

India's foreign policy has been consistently flexible and logical since Prime Minister Narendra Modi took office in 2014, and this trend will likely continue under his administration. Its primary objective is to pursue successful interaction with as many nations as possible worldwide to forge strategic partnerships with each of those countries. In addition to advocating regionalism and globalism, he is addressing common global issues like terrorism and global terrorism and religious fundamentalism, environmental pollution, energy crisis, insecurity of food and potable water, violation of human rights, abuse of women and children, increasing display of vulgarity, several unknown infections, and epilepsy. As is visible in the Prime Minister Modi's whirlwind tours in all over the world throughout his first term^[1]. Also, in the current one, he has been earnestly making these multidimensional endeavors to achieve all-round advancement and aggregate success of India with all infrastructure-connected endeavors to revitalize and rejuvenate its economy and also to consolidate its military power and paramilitary forces to make sure national security from internal as well as external threats is they natural or artificial. He has been making these attempts to achieve all-round. Aside from introducing several beneficiary schemes for the socio-economic advancement and cultural uplift of weaker and neglected sections of society by integrating them in the ongoing collective effort by his government, his sincere effort for practicing and popularizing ancient India's unique contribution of Yoga in the country and also in the world may be taken into consideration in this regard. In addition, his efforts to practice and popularize ancient India's unique contribution to Yoga in the country and the world may be considered^[2]. As should be noticeable, all of these things aim to achieve inclusive growth and collective advancement of the country. This is represented in his dedication to "sabka ka Saath, sab ka vikaas and jag ka vikaas," which was announced recently at a Howdy Modi event held in Houston in the United States of America. Along with these, a new development in the country's foreign policy has already emerged. This highlights the necessity of expanding multilateralism in India's interactions with numerous multilateral forums, such as ASEAN, APEC, EAS, RECP, FTA, and SCO, amongst others, to consolidate India's economy and its protection of other federal aspirations.

In light of the increasing realism in India's foreign policy under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, this article examines India's current endeavors to seek global interactions with as many countries as possible to guarantee the greatest accomplishment of its national goals.^[3] The goal of this is to transform a country that was previously inactive and non-reacting and followed a passive method in its foreign policy, particularly concerning cross-border terrorism on many occurrences, into a powerful and active nation that pursues a pragmatic and muscular approach in its dealings with other nations and international organizations. It wasn't until after long and tumultuous suffering endured by millions of people, as well as the deaths of hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians and members of the army and paramilitary forces, in addition to the losses and ruination of precious



properties worth millions of rupees, did this event finally take place. The article discusses India's consistent endeavor to change its slow appearance and also about those impulses which obligated India to make a shift into the continuing course of the foreign policy from a pro-Soviet Union stance to the pro-American alignment in the then surfaced "post-Cold War unipolar world order at the end of the 1990s" and afterward to the multi-polar world order. The article presents a brief overview of the recent developments taking place in South Asia and also in the world. The report then emphasizes the importance of constructing a robust regional security structure to defend Indian frontiers in the face of the newly formed unholy alliance between China and Pakistan.^[4] This alliance is aimed at containing India's steadily ascending profile in the world, which is extremely unsettling for New Delhi, in particular, because of the United States recurring conflicting foreign policy approach towards India and Pakistan under the regime of President Trump, as well as due to Russia's growing military cooperation with Pakistan. In conclusion, the paper argues in favor of placing a greater emphasis on the policy of global interactions to advance India's reputation as a credible and leading global entity.

Participation in economic forums on a regional and global scale

With this knowledge in hand, India is communicating firmly with various regional or worldwide forums to realize its national objectives without sacrificing the goals that it has established for itself and while discussing those mentioned above immediate global issues to highlight its spirit of strengthening its global engagements in the interest of humanity in general. It is particularly centered on addressing its' concerns for trade, investment, national security, and intellectual property-related issues visible in India's stand in "the third summit meeting of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RECP) in Thailand." While this Indian resolve has crafted a new courageous and vibrant image of the country labeled by its firm choices towards its self-interest, it is particularly concentrated on tackling its' concerns for trade, investment, national security, and intellectual property-related challenges. "A Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the ten member states of ASEAN and six other trade partners (Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea) has been in the works since 2012", and it may become a reality sooner rather than later. Fortunately, these negotiations have been ongoing since 2012."^[5] The fact that there is no general agreement regarding India's efforts to safeguard its national interests during this summit does not change the fact that the However, Indian negotiations have shown continuity of intent to ensure that the country "does not rush headlong into a bad trade deal" by caving in to force to meet a target date. It is encouraging that India is working toward an RECP deal that will benefit both parties and that it is doing so without caving into either the internal political opposition or the worldwide champions of pure free trade. Before India inks any agreements, real market access for all parties is essential, as Prime Minister Modi has emphasized.

As seen in recent times, especially during the Doklam crisis with China or the cross-border terror attack by Pakistan-supported terrorists on Uri and Pulwama, and also in New Delhi's dealings with the United States or Russia, and other major powers like Japan, Germany, Canada, England, France or China, the country's foreign policy has always proven to be proactive, vibrant, target-oriented, and even muscular with about dealing with the nation's security concerns. While India successfully acquired Rafael fighter planes for its Air Force from France despite uprisings from its neighbors, the country has refused to capitulate in the face of pressure from the United States regarding the supply of Russian S-400 air defense systems to India. This is because the S-400 air defense system competes with "the United States Patriot and Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD)" missile systems and other contentious issues, such as trade, carbon emission, terrorism, etc., between the two countries. In addition, it would appear that the United States is losing interest in its relationship with the East, as President Trump has decided not to attend the East Asian Summit that will be held in Thailand.^[6] The APEC summit scheduled to take place in Chile has also been called off. This scenario may inspire China to spread its economic and military tentacles over these smaller states and bully them into acceding to China's economic and security priorities, reinforcing China's unquestioned hegemony in the East. While the United States' impending withdrawal from Asia's affairs will negatively impact and discourage the rising economies of these smaller states, this scenario may encourage China to spread its economic and military tendrils over them. Because doing so will provide Beijing with a platform to make a giant leap forward in its pursuit of global hegemony by displacing the United States in the current era of eastward-shifting global geopolitics. Because Beijing has long-standing



disputes with almost all of the countries in the region, this careless attitude on the part of the United States will be detrimental to the national interests of the lesser powers in East Asia as well as those of India, in particular concerning the integrity and safety of their respective regions. It should come as no surprise that the forward Movement of India's foreign policy is defined by a great deal of upheaval and, directly, obstacles of various kinds.

A diminishing presence in the Indo-Pacific region

A further challenge for India, which is also pertinent to the nation's foreign policy, is posed by the conundrum of removing Article 370 from the Indian Constitution and separating the former state of Jammu and Kashmir into two distinct Union Territories. This presents India with a difficult choice that must be made. This difficulty is related to India losing its position in the Indo-Pacific region, which threatens India's national security. Even though China is dedicated to Pakistan because of Islamabad's prolonged intransigence against New Delhi and because this serves Beijing's anti-Indian interests along political as well as cultural lines, the fact that Muslim leaders such as the president of Turkey and the prime minister of Malaysia have joined forces in favor of Pakistan may confirm to be extremely disadvantageous to India's national preferences.^[7] Because it will significantly bolster the attitude of Pakistan and other Muslim nations, and other Muslim nations may also unite on principles of Muslim brotherhood, signaling their unity and sympathy with Islamabad against India. There appears to have emerged a euphoria signifying India's rising connectedness with America, which has disturbed Pakistan as a result of the United States' consistent distancing away from Pakistan on the grounds of Pakistan's continuing policy of terror-funding and providing shelter and other logistical help to terrorists, as well as Pakistan's continuing support of cross-border terrorism into India, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's hopeful show in Howdy Modi event in the United States.

Despite the hype, the United States requires India for its national objectives due to India's thriving economy, large market capacity, and rising power profile to counterbalance China in the East. However, the United States also needs the partnership between Pakistan and China for other reasons.^[8] Both Islamabad and Beijing, separately and cumulatively, may be beneficial to check India's elevation as a strong regional as well as a global power, thereby helping to maintain the existing "balance of power in South Asia and the East in pursuit of the United States." China, like India, is also a very large market with an advanced nation. Pakistan was hitherto regarded as a genuine ally in the US global war against terror. The United States and India are reacting with extreme caution to the unforeseen turn of events that has resulted in a closer working relationship between Russia and Pakistan. Because India's growing proximity with the US prompted Russia to welcome Pakistan into its fold to continue its (Russia's) presence in South Asia, coming down undistracted in the long past due to Russia-time-tested India's and believed friendship and cordial relations between them, while American disenchantment with Pakistan forced Islamabad to develop close interactions with Moscow, this is the reason why India has already put its course correction measures into its evolving foreign policy into action with Prime Minister Modi's visit to Moscow to refresh and consolidate the long tested bi-lateral relations between India and Russia to flourish without disturbing the degree to which it maintains its close relations with the United States government. "Whereas India needs closer relations with Russia for its rising military build-up and convergence because Moscow persists in being New Delhi's major supplier of military hardware and other ancillary weapons, it (India) also very much requires the support of the United States to consolidate and expand its infrastructural spread, strengthening of the economy, military modernization, energy security, space exploration & research and also securing a permanent seat in the United Nations."^[9] While this is the case, India also very much requires support. Cultivating positive relations with the United States will also strengthen India's recently established but already positive relations with Israel. "This is particularly true in the context of combating all forms of terrorism and religious fundamentalism, as Jerusalem has a long history of combating skills against Palestinian violence and terrorism, as well as foolproof and state-of-the-art precautionary technology to ward off any terrorist activity within its territory or across its borders with Palestine." India and Israel share a common goal. In addition, maintaining close and cordial relations with Israel will not only assist in securing India's borders with Pakistan from the infiltration of Pakistan's terrorists through the use of Jerusalem's laser-based technology for this purpose, but it will also assist in effectively meeting India's increasing water-crisis through the use of Israel's sea-water sweetening technology, in



addition to other aspects of study and advancement for India's modernization and contribution to the betterment of humanity. Indeed, selfless devotion to humankind, peace, and nonviolence are some of the primary values of ancient Indian cultural characteristics. These basic ideals were well imbibed into the nonalignment ideology, and the NAM continues to carry them forward.

Disengagement from the NAM

The action of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi not to attend the 18th Non-Aligned Movement Summit, which was held in Baku, Azerbaijan, on October 25-26, 2019, is another issue that relates to India's evolving foreign policy. This decision could significantly damage India's reputation as a nation that pioneered the idea of nonalignment and was a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). This decision may make the United States and other western powers, as well as China, happy; however, the nonaligned community in the Third World may feel disgusted because India was a founding member of the NAM and has always faithfully noticed and affirmed the missions, targets, and aspirations of the NAM for the common welfare of humanity. Non-participation in the Summit by India, the nation that pioneered the concept of Nonalignment and which has remained central to the development of India's foreign policy since the country's independence, is going to be interpreted by some as a watering down of the nonalignment tenet, and this interpretation is not without merit.^[10] Again, this may be construed as possible apathy or dissatisfaction with the Movement, despite the ideology of nonalignment being upheld honestly. "India's first Prime Minister, Late Jawahar Lal Nehru, is credited with being the brainchild behind the doctrine of Nonalignment. Nehru, along with a few other notable leaders of the Third World, such as Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia, President Sukarno of Indonesia, President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, and President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, took the initiative to follow and practice an independent. They made the decision not to join any of the above blocs by keeping an equal distance from both of the blocs." This was done so they would not become entangled in the rivalry between the blocs or in power politics. This was done in the interest of the huge nation-building exercise they were undertaking and in the greater intrigue of instituting and bolstering peace and security worldwide. "The doctrine eventually became so appealing and, as a result, so powerful that it essentially symbolized the independence of judgment and freedom of action for all of those poorly developed and developing countries of the Third World. These countries had been going through the trauma and agony of the worst forms of colonialism under the self-defined white man's burden principle, which had been increased by the wealthy and powerful colonial masters in the West for many decades or even centuries. These nations were certainly fighting for their independence to exercise their inherent right to self in a world that was then divided between the United States of America and the Soviet Union, which Russia has since replaced."^[11]

Even though the previous Cold War between the United States and the former Soviet Union has ended, a new one between them appears to be emerging due to marked discrepancies between them over a variety of issues, including the capping of carbon emissions, trade-related subjects, the democratization of international relations, reforming United Nations, disarmament NPT and CTBT, stand over North Korea, terrorism, religious fundamentalism, and also global Islamic terrorism. In addition, there are an infinite number of other challenges, such as the degradation of the environment, "the violation of human rights, gender discrimination and child abuse, human trafficking and vulgar picture presentation in traditional-cultural societies, etc., through the internet." These challenges call for collective and united action on the part of all nations and the law-abiding citizens of the world to initiate effective steps to overcome these serious challenges. Relations, reforming the United Nations, disarming the NPT and CTBT, maintaining a stance over North Korea, terrorism, religious extremism, and worldwide Islamic terrorism are just a few of these issues subcategories. In addition, there are an infinite number of other challenges, such as the degradation of the environment, the violation of human rights, gender discrimination and child abuse, human trafficking and vulgar picture presentation in traditional-cultural societies, etc., through the internet. These challenges call for collective and united action on the part of all nations and the law-abiding citizens of the world to initiate impactful actions to resolve these serious issues facing the world.^[12]

All of these current incidents, with their respective positive or negative impacts, create the context that will, to a considerable extent, determine the future course of action for the country's foreign policy in the direction of its



ultimate goal. As “the post-cold war world order emerged after the demise of the then-USSR” and the disbanding of the WARSAW pact, including the crumbling of the Berlin Wall and many other new developments, which altogether presented a new context for India’s foreign policy, so did the recent world order emerges in the ongoing era of post-globalization and liberalization demanding increasing multilateralism and economic cooperation for the same to progress and consolidate its position in the South Asian region. In this scenario, Abu al-Baghdadi’s assassination, the Islamic State’s top commander and the kingpin of global terrorism, may bring a reprieve. Still, it may also open the door to an even more severe phase of terrorism in the future as a reaction because the elimination of a single terrorist does not completely eradicate all types of terrorism or the inhumane and savage mindset that underlies the act of killing people. In addition, the decision made by the United States to pull its forces out of Afghanistan will strengthen the morale of Taliban militants, which will lead to a new wave of increasingly violent attacks, notably in Kabul.^[13] The choice made by the United States has caused panic in Afghanistan, India, and other neighboring states in and around the region. At the same time, it has inspired maybe all terrorist organizations that are active in South Asia. As should be obvious, the following scenario may become much more horrible and disastrous for the peace and security of New Delhi as well as for the rest of the world, thereby inciting the United States to take more unilateral actions as it did in the case of the killing of Osama bin Laden in the world after the cold war. The world after the cold war offered a new environment, which was mostly characterized by the hyperpower and unilateralism of the United States, manifested as highhandedness and bullying methods. This new context was shown to the globe.^[14]

The aftermath of the Cold War context and India’s predicaments

However, the post-Cold War international scene saw the downfall of the Soviet Union, the termination of the WARSAW Pact, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the unification of Germany into a single country; the abrupt development of terrorism and non-state actors; chaotic and violent periods in international relations; and the United States ascendance from “Super Power” to “Hyper Power,” in which it dominates not only other countries but also other people’s beliefs. It was not that the former Soviet Union had broken up, causing it to become irrelevant and unnecessary for India. On the contrary, the Soviet Union, throughout its history, had provided unequivocal support to New Delhi in all of its most critical and crucial moments, “whether in the United Nations or the Indo-Pak wars, especially in 1971. The reality of the situation was that the Soviet Union did not possess nearly as much power and influence as was required for it to be in a position to confront and counteract the United States’ hegemonic position as a counterpole in the world’s politics as it had been doing in the years following the end of the second World War and throughout the fiercest years of the Cold War.” In such a tense and horrible global environment of bloc power rivalry, the entire world was put at ransom to the Super Power schism. The poor, under-developed, and developing countries spread over the continents of Asia, Africa, and Latin America were the countries that suffered the most because they were frantically involved in their national rebuilding attempts following the implosion of centuries of colonialism in these continents. The hypothetical situations in international relations that have been addressed provide the framework that underpins the requirement for realism and pragmatism in India’s foreign policy.^[15]

Because India cannot successfully retain its national security and cannot fulfill its long-cherished aspirations to become “a permanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations without Washington’s express consent in its favor along with the four other permanent Security Council members and also in other prominent groupings like the G-7, Missile Technology Control Treaty, it is as obvious that it is India’s compulsion as well as necessity to maintain good relations with the US for some time. India needs American support not only for modern technology, advanced military weapons, and other economic gains but also for exercising force on numerous terror outfits having global outreach,” such as Islamic State (ISIS), Jaish-e Muhammad (J-e-M), Hijab-ul-Muj a hidden (H-ul-M), Haqqani terror networks, and Hafiz Sayeed’s terror organization, and also for putting an iron hand “upon Pakistan to stop exporting cross-border terror into India In point of fact, India is one of the countries that suffer the most from terrorism.” It has already been responsible for the deaths of two very promising prime ministers in the country’s history, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. In addition, “India has been the target of many of the world’s worst terror attacks, including those on the Bombay Stock Exchange, the 26/11 attacks in Mumbai, the Bangalore Bakery, the Delhi High Court, and many others. The country is also facing routine terror.”^[16]



An efficient architecture for the provision of security

As a result, India requires a security architecture that is both highly powerful and very effective to protect both its national security and its regional security against acts of global terrorism and cross-border terror, both of which are very much required. In addition to “sincerely pursuing effective short-term and long-term initiatives against terrorism along with referencing conciliatory efforts towards isolating all terrorists, terror networks, and their sponsoring nations, which include Pakistan, the close surveillance and information sharing at national, regional, and global levels regarding the Movement of terrorists and their future targets so that any terror strike in the country may be prevented. In this attempt, the assistance of the United States of America and a few other developed western countries like Russia, England, France, and Israel will undoubtedly be very relevant. India had already signed the US Kick lighter agreement relatively early, which led to an outburst of scathing criticism of the country’s rising predisposition towards the United States.”^[17] With this view in hand, India had already entered the agreement. After that, in 2008, India and the United States agreed on a Civil Nuclear Deal, which ushered in a new era of strategic partnership between the two countries, even though there were a few obstacles to overcome in terms of the sellers’ liability issue. In the context of the situation, India overlooked even one of its most trustworthy friends, Russia. As a result, Russia was forced to make friends with Pakistan to retain its “domain of influence in South Asia and other neighboring territories. Although India under Prime Minister Modi acted enthusiastically for the forging of close relations with the United States in economic, security, technological, and other strategic fields, and also made considerable concessions in its long-held ideals and goals intending to accommodate the American responsibilities and issues and also to consolidate its newly founded relations, the United States has always played a double game with India’s concerns by creating a working balance with Pakistan on the one hand and creating a working balance with China on the other hand.” Although India under, As a result, India is left with no choice but to make the necessary adjustments to its current pro-American foreign policy to adopt a more robust and pragmatic stance. This is necessary for India to defend and secure the national interests it seeks. Because of this, India has once more gravitated toward Russia to cultivate a friendship with Vladimir Putin, this time with the stubborn and serious intention of rekindling its good relations with Moscow. This will bring new life into India’s relations with Moscow, which have been neglected and declined for quite some time. As a result of the existence of hostile nations on both its northern and western borders, it is obvious that New Delhi is dealing with a growing number of risks to its ability to maintain its national security. As a result, to protect all of its national interests, it must make the necessary adjustments to its foreign policy so that it is oriented more toward global engagements and developing multilateral partnerships.^[18]

Conclusion

Therefore, India wants to proclaim and endeavor itself as an implicated and leading power; to do so, it has been making immense attempts to interact with the whole world. This is done to protect and retain India’s security, economy, and other national interests defined according to India’s priorities. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has stated that India’s goal is to project itself as an implicated and leading power. When viewed in this light, Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s invocation for India to become a leading power in the world reflects both the country’s rising profile as well as its newly acquired assertiveness in front of the international community as to how the top Indian political leadership comprehends of its role in the matters of the world. In other words, the invocation represents how the top Indian political leadership sees its place in the world. There is no denying that such a comprehensive revision of the nation’s foreign policy over the previous four years has already produced the outcomes hoped for regarding India’s ascending status in the international community. And this is reflected in his steadfast perseverance and strong grit to persist in working, especially in the field of economic reemergence and infrastructure building, environmental protection, fighting terror and global terrorism, and ensuring the overall development of the whole world while activating the global workforce for the objectives mentioned above. Because of this, his popular slogan “Union of all, development of all” (sab ka Saath, sab ka Vikas) has been recast as “Union of all, development of the world” (sab ka Saath, jug ka Vikas), manifesting the true spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the whole world as a family). This is following the ancient Indian universal moral values. Prime Minister Modi has conveyed his sincere wish in the manner of an ideal statesman concerned not just for the development of his nation but also for the safety, growth, and prosperity of all of humanity. This shows



that Modi is a statesman of the highest caliber. Prime Minister Modi has demonstrated to the rest of the world that all challenges and obstacles can be conquered with steadfast dedication and sincere efforts since nothing exceeds the capability of humankind's initiative.

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