

Politics of Foreign Policy in India

Farooq Ahmad Malik

lecturer political science school education department Kashmir India.

ABSTRACT : *The paper makes an effort in giving a thorough understanding of the concept of foreign policy its nature and importance. It also tries to evaluate the factors that determine the foreign policy of a state. The paper in its theme delineates as to how governments come and go but the overall foreign relations of a country still remain the same. Since all country's foreign relations revolve round a common ground that is "national interest" by fox or by lion as may be appropriate in the given conditions. Since foreign policy always depends upon the art and vision of policy makers so everything done by the policy framers in the name of national interest shall have to have a lot of rational behind it for the largest interest of the country. The whole region is pinning hopes on the mantra of Modi though he may still not have unveiled his foreign policy but he may pursue his predecessor's diplomatic initiatives.*

KEY WORDS: *foreign policy, national, interest, determine, basic, change, behavior, environment, important etc.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Foreign policy is the extension of domestic policy. A country's foreign policy, also called the foreign relations policy, consists of self-interest strategies chosen by the state to safeguard its national interests and to achieve its goals within international relations milieu. The approaches are strategically employed to interact with other countries. In recent times, due to the deepening level of globalization and transnational activities, the states will also have to interact with non-state actors. Even though there may be as much difference among the thinkers on the issue as may be thinkers. But, one thing is almost settled on the issue that is foreign policy is a dynamic notion and India is no exception. Despite the change in Indian political establishment the foreign policy may not find a sea change. No doubt the change in personality may fetch a bit change under the ambit of already defined paradigm. Foreign policy has been defined by Modelski as "the system of activities evolved by communities for changing the behavior of other states and for adjusting their own activities to the international environment". He adds that the most significant assignment of foreign policy must be to "throw light on the ways in which states attempt to change, and succeed in changing, the behavior of other states." Hugh Gibson has defined foreign policy as "a well rounded, comprehensive plan, based on knowledge and experience, for conducting the business of government with the rest of the world. It is aimed at promoting and protecting the interests of the nation." According to Northedge, foreign policy is an interaction between forces originating outside the country's borders and those working within them. Hartman has described the foreign policy "It is a systematic statement of deliberately selected national interests." So, the prominence in every definition is on conduct of states to adjust their own actions and, if possible, alter or control the behavior of other states, with the view of serving their national interests.

According to Professor Mahendra Kumar, this is an incomplete and imperfect meaning of foreign policy. A change in behavior of other states may not always be desirable. At times, it may be desirable to ensure continuation of the same behavior of others. And, at yet another time, it may become necessary to make certain adjustments in one's own behavior. Thus, "The aim of foreign policy should be regulate, and not merely to change, the behavior of other states. Regulation means adjusting the behavior of other states to suit one's own interest as best as possible." though during the cold war period both the United States and the former Soviet Union attempted to modify the behavior of other states to make sure maximum number of bloc supporters, India wanted to regulate the behavior of maximum number of countries to build a strong non-aligned movement. While framing foreign policy, the role of policy makers is undeniably crucial. A lot depends on the vision and ideology of the statesmen who channelize those officials who identify the aims of foreign policy and determine the principles to be followed. Of late, the people, media, NGO's and others also play an important role in influencing the making and remaking of foreign policy. Modelski calls the flow of actions from the community towards the policy makers as the "input" and the decisions of the policy makers as the "output". According to Mahendra Kumar, foreign policy includes (i) the policy makers, (ii) interests and objectives, (iii) principles of foreign policy, and (iv) means of foreign policy. He, therefore, defines the foreign policy as "a thoughtful course action for achieving objectives in foreign relations as dictated by the ideology of national interest."

II. NATIONAL INTEREST

According to Hans Morgenthau, the great realist scholar, who has been described as the twentieth century descendant of Kautilya, all politics is struggle for power, and, "as long as the world is politically organized into nations, the nations interest is indeed the last word on world politics." No government can act dissimilar to the national interest of the country. No country, whatever its principles, can afford to base its foreign policy on considerations other than the national interest. Lord Palmerston had very rightly opined, over a hundred years ago, that : "We have no eternal allies and we have no eternal enemies. Our interests are eternal and those interests it is our duty to follow." It is true. Friendship or enmity between nations keeps on changing as environmental changes occur and as every state seeks to promote its self-interests. According to Robert Osgood, national interest is "state of affairs valued solely for its benefit to the nations." And, Morgenthau maintains that the major prerequisite of a nation –state is to protect its physical, political and cultural identity against threat from other states. Foreign policy makers can never disregard the state's national interest. Its indispensable mechanisms are generally assumed to be security, economic development and a peaceful world order. Defence of the state is obviously the major aim of a foreign policy. Secondly, endorsement of economic interest, including positive conditions of trade, is another vital goal of foreign policy. Lastly, most modern states are also afraid with maintenance of international peace, admiration for international law and principles, pacific settlement of international disputes and escalation of the system of international organization.

Power

The term power being an evaluative one has no universally accepted definition. It has been described "as the ability or capacity to control others and get them to do what one wants to do and also to see that they do not do what one does not want them to do." Mahendra Kumar implies that power is an ability to get things done as Actor A wants Actor B. If 'A' succeeds, it has power. This ability, when exercised enables a state to control the behavior of other states. Since foreign policy is aimed at regulation of behavior of other states, power alone enables states to devise and lucratively execute their foreign policy. Robert Dahl explained power by stating 'A' has power over 'B' to the extent that it can get 'B' to do something that 'B' would not otherwise do.

Determinants of Foreign Policy

Professor Appadorai discussed two broad determinants which influence the making of foreign policy. These are called by him as domestic environment and international environment. Appadorai mentions these two environments in the context of Northedge's opinion that foreign policy is an interaction between forces originating outside the country's borders and those working within them, needles to elaborate.

Determinants of India's Foreign Policy

Geography : India's size, average temperature, position and topography have played a vital role in shaping its foreign policy. Nehru had said in 1949 that India's position was strategic and that no power could ignore us. He said: "Look at the map. If you have to consider any question affecting the Middle East, India inevitably comes into the picture. If you have to consider any question concerning South-East Asia, you cannot do so without India. So also with the Far-East. While the middle East may not be directly connected with South-East Asia, both are connected with India. Even if you think in terms of regional organizations in India. You have to keep in touch with the other regions." Thus, India is the gateway of both South-East Asia and the Middle-East. India's security and vital interests are closely tied with the future of the region. Nehru had also stated that "India becomes a kind of meeting ground for various trends and forces and a meeting ground between what may be roughly called the East and the West." Writing about compulsions of history and geography, professor V.P. Dutt says : " it can hardly be overlooked that India's size, potential and perceptions of her elite postulated an intense interest in world affairs...." India has common land frontiers, at places, with Pakistan, Bangladesh, China, Myanmar (Burma) Nepal and Bhutan. Afghanistan touches northern part of Jammu and Kashmir. **History and Tradition:** As V.P. Dutt says: "A proud civilization with the weight of centuries of tradition and the rich legacy of what appeared to Indians an abiding civilization, like China, she was too deeply conscious of her priceless heritage to accept the role of a client state." India is committed to world peace and has included in part IV of the Constitution a directive to the state to seek pacific settlement of international disputes. Nehru declared in 1949 in the Constituent Assembly, "One of the pillars of our foreign policy is to fight against racial discrimination." The idea of the above discussion is to underline the fact that traditional, values and historical developments have had distinct impact on India's foreign policy. **Charisma of Jawaharlal Nehru :** Michael Brecher wrote : " Few statesmen in the twentieth century have attained the stature of Jawaharlal Nehru. As the pre-eminent figure in India's era of transition he bears comparison with Roosevelt and Churchill, Lenin and Mao, men who towered above their colleagues and guided their peoples through a period of national crisis." Even Winston Churchill described him thus : " Here is a man without malice and without fear." Gandhi had said of him much before independence : "He is as pure as crystal; he is truthful beyond suspicion....The nation is

safe in his hands.” Jawaharlal Nehru’s leadership left his impact both on domestic policy and on foreign policy. An outstanding contribution of Nehru was the shaping of a foreign policy, above party considerations, which has grown into the “national policy.” Ideological factor: Making of foreign policy has always had a profound influence from the ideology, be it east or west the ideology does play a role in shaping the foreign policy and India is no exception in the same. Since the architects of Indian foreign policy had never the over enthusiastic tilt towards a particular idea or ideology. Nehru himself had the influence of both liberal democracy and soviet socialism. Hence, he incorporated both facets in the framing of Indian foreign policy so India adopted neither pure socialism nor the true liberalism in its policy so the option opted was to mixed one. The other factors that determine the foreign policy of a state are Domestic factors, national and international environment, Economy, natural resources, ideological factors, national interest etc. needless to analyze every aspect that determines the foreign policy of a state

Does foreign policy change with change in Government?

The misconception that a change changes the mood is almost a dead debate in the circles of intellectuals but a continue debate among those who hardly understand much about politics Joseph Nye is very right and relevant in saying that “ international politics is like weather everyone talks about it but few understand it”. There are hundreds of examples in defending the argument that basic structure of a country’s foreign policy remains the same even if there is a change of guard in the structure. No doubt, there could be a change in mood not in the mode.

Modi’s foreign policy mood

There may be euphoria of change in the media circles and bordering countries with reference to Indian foreign policy after Modi became the prime minister of India with a huge mandate and thumping majority. He also became the architect of his own cabinet in many ways after 1984 elections when Congress under Rajiv Gandhi won 415 seats. The expectations on the part of Modi are very within the country and outside India. But, realistically the message for the country men could be don’t expect the magic wand from Modi led BJP and try to understand the sensitivity of issues that India has with neighbors particularly China and Pakistan. Since our neighbor states can give us “SARIES” but not something that we may otherwise wish for! The second message for other countries could be “ don’t forget the fact that MODI has become the prime minister of India not yours”. The rational argument that everyone understands rather should understand is there are no permanent enemies or friends in politics if there is anything permanent that is INTEREST, politics apart otherwise as well. So, the concluding line on the same could be that there would be no paradigm shift in the foreign policy of India, yes there may be shift in the driver but not the car!

Challenges in the region : South Asia has been one of the most volatile regions of the world. Tensions within the region have been Heightened and conflicts have been made more intractable as states sought alliance with either the USA or China. There seems a perennial conflict between India and Pakistan on issues like Kashmir, Water sharing, Sir Creek, Problem of Terrorism and so on. Likewise, India has some outstanding border disputes with China. Similarly, India has some issues with Sri Lanka like Tamil problem, Nepal like concern for democracy and Maoists. The Bhutan inclination towards China and the Indian Ocean’s strategic importance also creates large amount of apprehension.

III. CONCLUSION

Indian foreign policy is neither an abrupt development nor a political outburst rather has evolved gradually rather than dramatically. There are hardly any domestic political or international reasons to expect brisk changes in India’s foreign policy. Swami Vivekananda right and relent in saying “India must conquer the world and nothing less is my ideal.... Our eternal foreign policy must be the preaching of the Shastras to the nations of the world.... One of the reasons for India’s downfall was that she narrowed herself, went into a shell, as the oyster does and refused to give her treasures and jewels to the other races of mankind outside the Aryan fold”. So the government of the day shall have to deal with outstanding issues in a statesmanship attitude and aptitude, since the hollow out engagements won’t mend unless substance is delivered.

REFERENCES;

- [1] Hill, Christopher. (New York, 2003): the changing politics of foreign policy: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [2] Rajamohan, C. (New Delhi, 2003): Crossing the Rubicon: the shaping of India, a new foreign policy:
- [3] Chacko, Priya. (2007): Indian foreign policy and Ambivalence of postcolonial Modernity.
- [4] Carlsnaes, Walter. (2002): ‘Foreign Policy’ .In Handbook of international Relations, eds W. Carlsnaes, Risse and B. Simmons 331-350. London: Sage.
- [5] Pant, Harsh. (New Delhi, 2009): ‘Introduction’ In Indian Foreign Policy in a unipolar world, ed , Harsh Pant.: Routledge.
- [6] Nehru, Jawaharlal. (Delhi, 1961): Indias Foreign Policy- Selected speeches 1946- 1961. Ministry of information and Broadcasting , Government of India.: Publications Division.

- [7] Ahmad imtiaz .(New Delhi,1993):State and Foreign policy:India,s Role in South Asia.
- [8] Rana ,A.P. (1976): The imperatives of Non Alignment :A conceptual study of india,s foreign policy strategy in Nehru period. Delhi Macmilan.
- [9] Dutt, V.P.(New Delhi,P, 252):India,s Foreign Policy ,vikas,.
- [10] Rajan ,M.S.(New Delhi,p.78):Studies in India,s Foreign Policy, Pillai Raman,K.(New Delhi):p.70.
- [11] Arguments analysed by Sri Ram Sharma, in India,s foreign policy(Hindi)p,166-167.
- [12] Breacher, Michael .Nehru(1959,p.577): A political Biography, .ibid.,p.198.
- [13] Kumar, Mahender,(Agra):Theoretical Aspects of International Politics,Agra,p.352.
- [14] Bandopadhyaya,(1970):The Making of India,s Foreign Policy .p.231.
- [15] .Dubey, Muchkund.(April-june,1993): ‘indias Foreign policy in the Evolving Global Order’ .in international studies, p .117.ibid.,p.4.ibid.,pp.8-9.
- [16] Appadoria, (Delhi):Domestic Roots of India,s Foreign Policy,p.37.
- [17] Modelski ,George.(London): A theory of Foreign Policy ,p.3.
- [18] Gibson Huge.(New York): The Road to Foreign Policy ,p.9.
- [19] Chaterjee, pratha.(1986):Nationalist Thought and the Colonial world –a Derivative Discourse. London Zed Books.
- [20] Parekh, Bhikhu.(2010):India,s Place in the World’. Indian Foreign Affairs Journal vol.5(1),32-46.
- [21] Sahni, Varun .(New Delhi, 2010) ‘Revisiting and revising trusteeship:A Foreign Policy Idea for our time’.Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru Memorial Lecture Series .
- [22] Subrahmanyam, K .(New Delhi 1976): ‘Nehru and the india-China conflict of 1962’. In Indian Foreign Policy .
- [23] "India, Brazil, South Africa – the power of three". bilaterals.org. Retrieved 21 may 2014.
- [24] Jump up^ "A History of Indian Participation in UN Peacekeeping Operations". Indianembassy.org. Retrieved 16 june 2014.
- [25] Jump up^ "Four nations launch UN seat bid". BBC. 22 September 2004. Retrieved 18 june 2014.
- [26] .Jump up^ High Commission of India in Australia: India Australia Relations. Hcindia-au.org (20 April 2011). Retrieved 17 june2014.
- [27] Jump up^ First Assembly, Geneva, 15 November – 18 December 1920. Indiana.edu (18 December 1920). Retrieved 15 june 2014.
- [28] Jump up^ UN list of members by admission. Un.org. Retrieved 12 june 2014.