



A Brief Analysis Of Nehruvian Foreign Policy And Modi's Foreign Policy

Rimon Rajkonwar

M.A in Political Science, Sikkim University

Abstract: Jawaharlal Nehru's leadership from 1947 to 1964 established a defining foreign policy for India. Centered on the principles of non-alignment, peaceful coexistence, and solidarity with the newly independent nations of the Third World, this approach fundamentally shaped India's identity and role on the global stage. The foreign policy framework enacted under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (1947-1964) was a cornerstone of India's post-independence identity. Its foundational doctrines-namely, non-alignment, peaceful coexistence, and Third World solidarity-were instrumental in determining India's international posture and diplomatic relationships during this formative period. During the pivotal Nehruvian Era (1947-1964), India's global stance was shaped by a unique diplomatic philosophy. This approach, defined by a commitment to non-alignment, peaceful coexistence, and unity among developing nations, left a lasting imprint on the country's international position and legacy. Jawaharlal Nehru's idea of non-alignment and Narendra Modi's forceful and practical diplomacy represent major shifts in India's foreign policy. Here it will also focus on various kinds of things that's are very related to India's global transform. It will focus on Modi's era briefly and India's multi alignment strategy and diplomatic ties with various state and non state actors. It also focus India's foreign policies significance in shaping India's diplomatic identity and its role in the international arena.

Keywords: Modi's Doctrine of Indian Foreign Policy, Multilateralism, soft power, bilateral, cooperation

Introduction: After the independence of India in 1947 the foreign policy of India has shape the country in the world in a very significant way. It helps India to find itself in the global arena. by striking a balance between its colonial history and its ambitions for an independent, sovereign future. India's diplomatic strategy, which emphasises independence, peaceful cohabitation, and leadership among recently decolonised states, was founded on Jawaharlal Nehru's non-alignment vision. Emerging from colonial rule in 1947, India faced the immense challenge of defining its place in a world increasingly fractured by the nascent Cold War. The bipolar power struggle between the American-led capitalist bloc and the Soviet-led communist bloc presented a stark choice for new nations. For Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, aligning with either camp was seen as a direct threat to the hard-won sovereignty that was the very essence of India's

independence. As historian Ramachandra Guha argues, Nehru was determined that India would not become a “camp-follower” of any great power, believing such a path would merely exchange one form of subordination for another. This conviction led to the foundational policy of non-alignment, which was not an isolationist retreat from world affairs but a deliberate strategy to forge an independent path. Its primary objective was to preserve India’s autonomy in decision-making, allowing it to engage with both superpowers on its own terms to secure economic and diplomatic support for its own development, while simultaneously advocating for peace and decolonization on the global stage. The objective of this paper is to examine the evolution of India’s foreign policy from Nehru’s era to the present, analyzing the strategic decisions that have shaped its global standing. The research explores key phases, including the Cold War period, economic liberalization, nuclear deterrence, and the transition to a multi-aligned foreign policy under Narendra Modi.

Jawaharlal Nehru’s vision for foreign policy during the Nehruvian Era was guided by a set of principles and objectives that aimed to secure India’s sovereignty, promote peace, and advance the nation’s interests on the global stage. Key aspects of Nehru’s vision included:

- ❖ **Non-Alignment:** Nehru championed the policy of non-alignment, advocating for India to maintain independence from both the Western and Eastern power blocs of the Cold War. This approach aimed to safeguard India’s autonomy, prevent alignment with any military alliance, and enable the nation to pursue its own interests without being drawn into conflicts.
- ❖ **Peaceful Coexistence:** Nehru believed in peaceful coexistence among nations, emphasizing diplomacy, negotiation, and dialogue to resolve international disputes. He sought to establish amicable relations with other countries, even in the face of ideological differences.
- ❖ **Third World Solidarity:** Nehru’s foreign policy aimed to foster solidarity among newly independent nations of the Third World. He believed in the importance of collective action to address common challenges, such as economic underdevelopment and colonial legacies.
- ❖ **Promotion of Decolonization:** Nehru was a vocal advocate for decolonization and supported the independence struggles of various nations. He viewed colonialism as a grave injustice and called for an end to imperialist rule around the world.
- ❖ **Support for Internationalism:** Nehru valued India’s engagement with international organizations like the United Nations. He believed in the potential of these institutions to facilitate cooperation, uphold global peace, and address issues such as poverty, health, and education.
- ❖ **Economic Self-Reliance:** Nehru’s foreign policy also extended to economic matters. He aimed to strengthen India’s economic self-reliance by promoting industrialization, technological development, and trade diversification.
- ❖ **Asian Identity:** Nehru emphasized India’s identity as an Asian nation and sought to enhance ties with other Asian countries. He envisioned a united and cooperative Asia that could play a significant role in global affairs.
- ❖ **Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts:** Nehru advocated for the resolution of conflicts through peaceful means and negotiations. He believed that war and aggression should be avoided whenever possible. Nehru’s foreign policy vision was shaped by a blend of idealism and pragmatism, reflecting his deep

commitment to India's national interests, sovereignty, and the pursuit of global peace. While his approach faced challenges and criticisms, his legacy in shaping India's diplomatic identity and contributing to the international discourse remains enduring.

Non-Alignment (NAM) as Strategic Autonomy:

Jawaharlal Nehru's policy of Non-Alignment was fundamentally an exercise in preserving India's strategic autonomy during the Cold War. Its original intent was not a passive neutrality or a claim to moral superiority over the superpowers, but a pragmatic refusal to join formal military alliances like the US-led CENTO or SEATO. This stance was designed explicitly to shield India's nascent sovereignty from external pressure, ensuring that its foreign policy decisions were made in New Delhi, not Washington or Moscow. This pursuit of autonomy was intrinsically linked to the cultivation of "Third World" leadership and Afro-Asian solidarity. Nehru recognized that a single nation, however large, could not effectively counter superpower pressure alone. By championing the cause of newly independent nations across Asia and Africa—most notably at the 1955 Bandung Conference—he sought to create a collective voice that could transcend the Cold War dichotomy. This solidarity was not merely rhetorical; it was a strategic project to build a political force that could assert its interests on the global stage, thereby amplifying the autonomy of each member nation, including India .

The NAM was formed at the conference of Belgrade conference in the year of 1961, where India along with Yugoslavia, Egypt, Indonesia, and Ghana, laid out the principles of non alignment. That movement basically created a way for the third world countries or newly independent countries to take a new path and refused to be drawn in to cold war rivalries. NAM's core principles included respect for territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs, peaceful conflict resolution, and the promotion of economic cooperation among developing nations. India was instrumental in furthering NAM's goals, especially when it came to promoting decolonization and disarmament at the UN. By providing diplomatic solutions in crises like the Korean War and the Suez Canal issue, Nehru established India as a mediator in global disputes. India's non-alignment was not absolute, though. It leaned towards the Soviet Union on strategic issues, especially in military and economic cooperation, even if it outwardly maintained its neutrality.

Panchsheel (The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence):

The Panchsheel principles, also known as the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, are a set of principles that were jointly formulated by India and China in the 1950s. These principles served as a framework for diplomatic relations and cooperation between the two countries and have also been widely recognized as guiding principles for international relations. The Panchsheel principles are as follows:

- * **Mutual Respect for Each Others Territorial Integrity and Sovereignty:** This principle emphasizes the importance of recognizing and respecting the territorial boundaries of each nation and refraining from any actions that could infringe upon another country's sovereignty.

- * **Mutual Non-Aggression:** This principle highlights the commitment to refrain from the use of force or aggression against each other. It promotes peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts through dialogue and negotiation.
- * **Mutual Non-Interference in Each Other's Internal Affairs:** According to this principle, nations should respect the sovereignty of other countries by refraining from intervening in their internal political, social, and economic matters.
- * **Equality and Mutual Benefit:** This principle underscores the importance of treating each other as equals and seeking cooperation that brings mutual benefits. It emphasizes the significance of fair and balanced relations.
- * **Peaceful Coexistence:** This principle advocates for peaceful relations among nations, encouraging the resolution of conflicts through diplomatic means, dialogue, and negotiations. It calls for the absence of hostility and confrontation. The Panchsheel principles were initially put forward in the context of India-China relations, but they were also embraced by other nations as a broader framework for international interactions.

While the principles were originally intended to promote peaceful coexistence and cooperation, their practical application has faced challenges in various contexts, including the Sino-Indian border conflict and other geopolitical dynamics. Despite these challenges, the Panchsheel principles remain significant as a representation of diplomatic aspirations for peaceful relations and cooperation among nations. They reflect the desire to create a world order characterized by respect, non-aggression, and mutual benefit, even as the complexities of global politics continue to evolve.

It has been stated that Nehru's Foreign policy have faced various challenges. Firstly the Kashmir Issues that was quickly emerged after India's Independence, Nehru's decision to refer the Kashmir issue to the United Nations remains controversial, as it internationalized the dispute and left it unresolved. Another issue was the Sino-Indian war 1962. Nehru thought that both countries will peacefully coexistence but the issue remain expand and made a war in 1962. The Chinese invasion exposed India's military vulnerabilities and dealt a severe blow to Nehru's credibility. The defeat led to widespread domestic criticism and forced India to reassess its defense policies. These difficulties demonstrated Nehru's idealistic approach's shortcomings and the necessity of a more practical foreign policy in the years that followed.

Anti-Colonialism and Anti-Racism:

A Moral and Ideological Commitment to Supporting Liberation Movements Globally

Nehru saw India's own difficult victory over British domination as a component of a larger, worldwide fight against racial and imperial oppression. He believed that supporting the interests of other colonised countries was India's moral obligation.

Political and Diplomatic Support: India continuously brought up the subject of decolonisation at the UN and other international fora. It backed liberation movements in Asia and Africa and was among the most outspoken opponents of apartheid in South Africa.

The Bandung Conference and Afro-Asian Solidarity (1955): Nehru had a significant role in organising the Bandung Conference in Indonesia in 1955. This was a historic occasion that united recently independent Asian and African countries. With its clear support for colonised peoples' rights and condemnation of racism, the conference's final communiqué gave liberation movements throughout the world a significant political and moral boost.

Material and Training Support:

While India was not a wealthy nation, it provided modest financial aid, and more importantly, training and educational opportunities to freedom fighters and citizens from other colonized nations. The Indian National Congress, even before independence, had established contacts with anti-colonial groups.

Opposition to All Military Pacts:

Nehru opposed military alliances like SEATO and CENTO because he saw them as a new form of "neo-colonialism" where former imperial powers could maintain their influence over newly independent states under the guise of Cold War security. He argued this undermined true sovereignty.

Modi Era and his Foreign Policy :

India's foreign policy under Narendra Modi has drastically changed the concept of Indian Foreign policy. In his reign of leadership he has encouraged new asianism, soft nationalism and market-oriented economy to play a vital role in the contemporary global world. He has developed a strategic partnership with major powers in the contemporary global world. He has started bilateral relationship with south Asian countries and also focused on Integration of regional context.

Modi's Doctrine of Indian Foreign Policy :

The principles and objectives of Narendra Modi's foreign policy had been described as 'Modi's doctrine of Indian Foreign Policy'. The following aspects are part of Modi's doctrine of Indian foreign policy : (i) developing economic relations with the global world (ii) furthering multilateralism by effectively participating in the various multilateral and regional organizations (iii) developing strategic defence cooperation with the Russia, USA, France, EU, Australia and Israel (iv) Promoting India's 'soft power foreign policy '. Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has many opportunities to bring dynamic and structural changes in the contemporary global world.

External Affairs Minister Shri Subramanyam Jaishankar has stated that India is strongly committed for multi alignment, to realize the objectives of 'multipolar world'. Further, he has declared that India would like to develop bilateral relationships with all major powers in the contemporary global world. Further, Jaishankar has explained that India would like to develop defence cooperation, strategic partnership human capital and FDI by actively engaging with the USA, Russia, France, China and EU.

Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has followed the following principles of Indian Foreign Policy:

- (i) Establishing strategic partnership with Russia, USA, France, UK to develop defence cooperation
- (ii) Playing a vital role in the multipolar and regional organizations
- (iii) Developing an effective strategy to combat traditional & non – traditional security threats;
- (iv) Developing dynamic foreign policy towards neighborhood countries in the South Asia region

(v) furthering Indian economy by establishing economic, commerce and trade relations with the global countries.

Multi-Alignment:

Modi's foreign policy has extensively focused on multi alignment. India has adopted the concept of strategic autonomy. The concept of non - alignment had gained momentum in international relations during the cold war period. In the contemporary era of world India has adopted the concept of Multi—Alignment. It focuses to establish good relations and network with regional and international institutions. The Indian foreign policymakers have also implemented the above principles in letter and spirit to further the objectives of Indian foreign policy. It is a great strategy to avoid military, economic, and political dependence on major powers. It indicates that India has a strong commitment to strategic autonomy. India has been playing a vital role in the contemporary global world.

Following key elements are part of the Modi's doctrine of Indian foreign policy:

- (i) developing India as a confident, self-reliant and strong nation to further national interests for holistic development
- (ii) India would like to develop a strategic partnership with the neighborhood countries
- (iii) promotion of soft power foreign policy through India's traditions, values, technology and tourism
- (iv) promoting multi-track alignment policy with major powers
- (v) addressing various contemporary global issues at multilateral forums

Narendra Modi and Panchamrit:

In April 2015, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji has explained the five pillars of Indian foreign policy from the concept of Panchamrit (five sacred foods) in April 2015. The five pillars of his foreign policy are (i) engagement, dialogue (samvād) (ii) cultural and civilizational linkages (Sanskriti evam sabhyat) (iii) global and regional security (Suraksha) (iv) dignity, honor (Sanrman) (v) shared prosperity (samriddhi).

Domestic Factors:

Modi has given the priorities to the domestic factor also. His focuses on economic growth, self reliance and indrustructure development influenced India in the global platform. His initiatives such as Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat reflect a way to make India self dependent and has influenced in the context of enhancing India's manufacturing and export capabilities. Economic diplomacy has been a key component of Modi's foreign policy. India has actively sought foreign direct investment (FDI), strengthened trade partnerships, and expanded its role in global supply chains. The domestic political landscape, marked by nationalist rhetoric and a focus on security, has also shaped India's international positioning. Modi's government has taken a firm stance on issues such as cross-border terrorism, revoking Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, and implementing stricter border controls..India's innovations in technology and digital evolution have enhanced its position on the global stage. Fintech, space exploration, and the rapid expansion of digital infrastructure have made India a leader in emerging technologies, increasing its soft power influence. Together, these home factors have reinforced

India's foreign policy objectives and ensured a strong link between domestic concerns and international relations.

Soft Power of India's Policy:

The ability of a country (India) to sway others without using force or coercion is known as soft power. Soft power, as opposed to hard power, which depends on economic or military force, works by influencing opinions and preferences around the world through diplomatic engagement, cultural resonance, and shared ideals. By appealing to hearts and minds rather than imposing will, it is a compelling strategy that promotes alignment and cooperation.

Under the reign of Modi soft power policy has influence or significantly impacted in the worldwide. It emphasis on soft power diplomacy, leveraging cultural influence, historical ties, and developmental assistance to strengthen global ties with other nations. India's promotion of yoga, Ayurveda, and Indian cultural heritage has played a crucial role in enhancing India's global image . The United Nations' recognition of International Yoga Day, championed by India, reflects the success of this soft power approach.

India's Bollywood film, television serials and music also one of the most important driver of Soft power. Indian movies enjoy widespread popularity in Africa, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and even parts of Europe and North America, fostering cultural connections and reinforcing India's influence.

The Indian diaspora has also played a crucial role in soft power diplomacy. With over 30 million people of Indian origin living in different parts of the world, India's diaspora contributes to economic, cultural, and political linkages with host nations

Smart Power of India:

India's Smart Power policy also plays important role in shaping India's current foreign policy in the cglobal context. India's growing role in humanitarian aid, development cooperation, and disaster relief operations has strengthened its global standing. Notably, India's Vaccine Maitri initiative during the COVID-19 pandemic saw it providing millions of vaccine doses to developing countries, reinforcing its role as a responsible global player. India's humanitarian assistance extends beyond health diplomacy. It has been actively involved in disaster relief missions, such as its swift response to the 2015 Nepal earthquake and humanitarian aid efforts in Sri Lanka and Afghanistan . India also strengthened its defense policy through military cooperation with soft power outreach. Its increasing defense collaborations with ASEAN nations, along with strategic partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region, highlight this approach.

India's Cultural Diplomacy:

Another important factor of India's foreign Policy is Cultural diplomacy. Which has emerged as a key instrument in India's foreign policy, strengthening its international influence through educational exchanges, spiritual outreach, and heritage promotion. India has increased international goodwill by utilizing its old customs and civilizational expertise. The expansion of Indian cultural centers, operated by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), has facilitated deeper cultural interactions across Asia, Europe, and the Americas. Cultural diplomacy has also benefited greatly from academic cooperation and education. Through its scholarship programs, India welcomes thousands of international students, mostly

from South Asian and African underdeveloped countries. Universities like Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) have developed into hubs for global academic collaboration, promoting intellectual exchange between India and the rest of the globe.

Spiritual diplomacy has influence very deeply. India's effort to restoring Buddhist sites in South Asia and Sri Lanka, promoting Hindu and Buddhist Dharma has enhanced a good ties with these countries. The online platform also helps India to reach its traditions, cultures and other things to the worldwide.

India's engagement with multilateral institutions

As a founding member of United Nations, India also arguing for permanent seat in the UN Security Council (UNSC). While progress has been slow, India's growing influence in global governance bodies such as the G20 and BRICS has reinforced its strategic importance.

Through initiatives like the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and its leadership in South-South cooperation, India continues to expand its regional and global influence. There are still challenges, particularly with regard to tensions with China and Pakistan, but India's proactive multilateral engagements underscore its ambition to shape the emerging world order. India's foreign policy has evolved from non-alignment to strategic multi-alignment, positioning it as a balancing force in global politics.

Conclusion:

The Foreign Policy of India has showing a drastically transformed from the from its post-independence years to its current status as an emerging global power. The Nehruvian era's foreign policy represents a distinctive chapter in India's history that continues to resonate with contemporary global dynamics. Jawaharlal Nehru's visionary approach of non-alignment, peaceful coexistence, and solidarity with the Third World left a lasting legacy that has relevance in the complex world of today. While the world has evolved since Nehru's time, the core principles of his foreign policy still offer valuable insights. The emphasis on neutrality, sovereignty, and ethical diplomacy remains a reminder of the importance of safeguarding national interests and maintaining independence in an interconnected world. The pursuit of peaceful coexistence, conflict resolution through dialogue, and disarmament speaks to the universal aspiration for global stability and harmony.

From the Came to the power in 2014 India drastically get a ambitious strategy. The Government has influence through many pillars like multi-alignment, strengthening defense and economic partnerships with the United States, Russia, Japan, and European nations, while also deepening ties with the Global South. The Act East Policy, infrastructure-led diplomacy, and the Indo-Pacific strategy have positioned India as a key player in regional and global security frameworks. Today, India presenting itself at pivotal moment in its global ascent, it tries to balance its economic factors with its geopolitical responsibilities. India itself presenting as a defender of multilateralism ,advocating for UNSC, also representation for developing nations. India now holds leadership positions in the G20, BRICS, the Quad, and BIMSTEC, demonstrating the growth of its influence in multilateral organizations. India was able to showcase its digital economy, renewable energy initiatives, and post-pandemic recovery plans during its 2023 G20 leadership. However,

due to geopolitical opposition from current permanent members, India still has difficulties obtaining a permanent seat on the UNSC. Security is still a major worry, especially in light of the continuous border tensions between China and India and the ongoing cross-border disputes with Pakistan. The 2020 conflicts in the Galwan Valley highlighted the tense relationship between China and India, which led India to deepen defense cooperation with France, Israel, and the United States. At the same time, India has sought to balance its historical ties with Russia, navigating complexities arising from the Russia-Ukraine conflict while avoiding direct entanglement in Western-led sanctions.

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