

Foreign Policy of India

- A country's foreign policy is the set of principles, interests, and goals that it promotes in its interactions with other countries.
- The objectives and activities of a state's foreign policy or external policy (as opposed to its internal or domestic policy) in relation to its interactions with other states, unions, and other political entities, whether bilaterally or through multilateral platforms.
- It states that "domestic considerations, the policies or behaviour of other states, or plans to advance specific geopolitical designs" can all influence a government's foreign policy.

Objectives of Indian Foreign Policy

- Preservation of national interest
- achievement of world peace
- disarmament
- independence

Principles of Indian Foreign Policy

- Panchsheel
- non- alignment
- anti-colonialism
- anti-imperialism
- anti-racism
- Foreign Aid

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 endeavor to-

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

Features of Indian Foreign Policy

The principles of Indian foreign policy are as follows,

1. Panchsheel
2. The policy of Non-Alignment
3. The policy of Anti- Colonialism
4. Afro Asian Unity Policy
5. The policy of Anti Racism
6. Foreign Economic Aid

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.

The policy of 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 or 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.

The policy of 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 a staunch supporter of the decolonization process. These are testimonials to the fact that India opposed colonialism.

Afro Asian Unity policy

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 relations conference in March 1947.

As stated earlier, India also made honest efforts for the early realization 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.

The policy of 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 realized the importance of economic development. Also, she knew the limitations of herself. India was lacking funds, technical know-how and machinery.

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

Objectives of Indian Foreign Policy

Preservation of national interest, achievement of world peace, disarmament, independence for Afro-Asian nations

have been important objectives of India's foreign policy. These objectives are sought to be achieved through some guiding principles such as Panchsheel, NAM, and others.

- To safeguard India against both traditional and non-traditional threats.
- To create an external environment that is conducive to India's inclusive development, so that the country's growth benefits can reach the poorest of the poor.
- To ensure that India's voice is heard in international forums and that India has the ability to influence world opinion on global issues like terrorism, climate change, disarmament, and reforms of global governance institutions.
- To reach out to and protect the Indian diaspora.

The preservation of India's territorial integrity and independence of foreign policy:

The territorial integrity and protection of national boundaries from foreign aggression is the core interest of a nation. India had gained a hard earned independence from foreign rule after long time. Thus, it was natural for her to give due emphasis on the independence of foreign policy. India's effort to strengthen Afro-Asian solidarity endorsement of principles of non-interference, in the internal affairs of other nations and finally the adoption of the policy of nonalignment should be seen in this light.

Promoting international peace and security:

India as a 'newly independent and developing country rightly realized that international peace and development are correlated. Her emphasis on disarmament and the policy of keeping away from military alliances is intended to promote global peace.

Economic development of India:

Fast development of the country was the fundamental requirement of India at the time of independence. It was also required to strengthen the democracy and freedom in the country. In order to gain financial resources and technology from both blocks and to concentrate her energy on the development, India opted away from the power block politics, which was the defining feature of cold war international politics. The foreign policy practice of India also reveals its two other objectives;

1. Elimination of colonialism and racial discrimination.
2. Protection of the interests of people of Indian origin abroad.

An official statement of the Ministry of External Affairs (2010) notes that India's foreign policy seeks to safeguard her enlightened self-interest. Its primary objective is to promote and maintain a peaceful and stable external environment in which the domestic tasks of inclusive economic development and poverty alleviation can progress rapidly. Thus, India seeks a peaceful periphery and works for good neighborly relations in her extended neighborhood. India's foreign policy also recognizes that the issues such as climate change, energy and food security are crucial for India's transformation. Since these issues are global in nature, they require global solutions.