India’s Foreign Policy: A Multifarious Cauldron

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ABSTRACT

Every country’s foreign policy has elements of continuity and change following a change in government. It is identified with a marked shift from idealism to pragmatism, with national self interest taking precedence over the norms and ideals that constituted the ideational heritage of the national movement. Permanent interests would dictate continuity in foreign Policy, for this we need to have a clear understanding of national interest, broadly defined. Foreign policy is integral to national security in its broadest sense and defence policy. In this century, US strategic interests will align more closely with India’s than they will with those of any other continental power in Asia. There are five areas of the emerging change: the centrality given to economic and technological development; the orientation of domestic and foreign policies towards this objective; the emphasis on national power including military power; and stress on soft Power; and a reduction in self-imposed constraints on actions that other countries may construe as inimical to their interests.

Keywords-- Foreign Policy, Politics, Strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

Basic Principles Of Foreign Policy

Foreign policy is all about how a country acts politically, socially, economically, and militarily with respect to other countries on issues that are important to it. How such a country behaves towards non-state actors in furtherance of its interests also falls under the domain of foreign Policy. As such, foreign policy may be defined as strategies chosen by a state to safeguard its national interests and to achieve its goals in international relations. Foreign Policy is a system of action of one government towards another, a state towards another state or of a government towards an international organization. Foreign policy is designed to promote, protect and defend a nation’s vital interests such as the preservation of national sovereignty, the defence of territorial integrity, promotion of economic, military, strategic and diplomatic interests. These are external or global environment, societal environment, the governmental setting, the policy-making elites. The role sources, on the other hand, refer to the effect of the office the foreign policy makers occupy in their policy making. Roles are important due to the fact that these decision makers are definitely affected by the behaviors socially prescribed for them and also the legally-sanctioned norms with which they have to comply. The roles would occur regardless of the idiosyncrasies of the decision-makers.

The societal variables include the non-governmental aspects of a political system that influence its external behavior. Major value orientations, degree of national unity, the extent to which it was industrialized are among the societal sources. Finally, the governmental sources too are to be noted. The governmental structure a state has is also influential in the foreign policy making process. The relations between the executive and the legislative organs of a state are very important in this respect. This category more or less pays attention to the means the policy makers adopt in order to realize particular objectives. The external or global environment refers to the attributes of the international system and characteristics and the way both states and non-state actors behave constitute the external source category. Individual characteristic of the policy making elite refers to the idiosyncratic variables or the individual characteristics of the decision-maker- his values, talents, prior experiences that distinguish his foreign policy choices or behavior from those of every other decision maker.

II. FACTORS OF FOREIGN POLICY

They are in the form of guidelines to the policy makers through which India carries out its foreign relations. In essence, they are the means through which national interest is sought to be protected and promoted. India is one of the founding members of the Non Aligned Movement. Without being committed to military alliances, India has opted for cultivating friendly relations with other countries. For this purpose she has concluded treaties and bilateral agreements in the fields of politics, economy, culture or science and technology. It is India’s Gift to the world and has been one of the main principles which have remained an integral part of India’s foreign policy even after the end of the cold war. The vitality of non-alignment can be realized from the fact that it has not only helped in securing friendship and cooperation, promoting world peace, etc. but ensured independence on foreign policy issues. India and NAM countries played a vital role in cold war politics by acting as a third force to reduce the tension.
Being subjected to colonial subjugation for about 200 years, India firmly stands in opposition to any form of colonialism and imperialism. It is with this line of thinking that India played a major role in liberating the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa from colonial shackles. The multifarious objectives of India’s foreign policy achieve a blend of national and international interests. India has sought to achieve its security and socio-economic advancement while at the same time working for peace, freedom, progress and justice to all nations and peoples. Nonalignment, adherence to peaceful procedures for settlement of differences, support to the initiatives for disarmament, and active participation in international bodies constituted notable principles that flow from the objectives of the country’s foreign policy. Indian Policy towards the smaller powers of South Asia has been more explicitly seen since the Indira Gandhi days. India supports and encourages regional democracies and has sought to tie up its regional primacy through a series of regional, and bilateral arrangements, covering a wide range of agreements in the areas of defence, trade and science and technology. Yet difficulties continue to remain in coming to an understanding with India. Divisions and mistrust continue to dominate the region. The commonality of the region leads the small powers to continue to assert their differences so as to regain a sense of identity and independence.

III. CONCLUSION

To attain its set goals and interests in foreign policy, a state continues to seek effective strategies in its approach to foreign policy depending on its power, objectives and leadership. The objective to promote economic development mainly influences a state’s approach to foreign policy while maintaining its traditional core principles and norms of non-alignment, non-interference in internal affairs of other states, good neighborliness and peaceful settlement of disputes. The domestic environment refers essentially to features, factors and forces peculiar to the state on which foreign policy is being made. The domestic environment includes geographical location of the state, its peculiarity, natural and human resources, the nature of the political system, quality of leadership, the nature of the interaction among groups in the society. Domestic environmental factors have great impact on the decision/policy making of a country.

REFERENCES

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