

Lesson 26

India's Foreign Policy

Summary -

India has followed certain basic principles in the conduct of its foreign policy from which it has not deviated much. In fact, some of its basic features such as non-alignment remain significant and relevant. India has contributed significantly to UN efforts for peace and disarmament and to UN peacekeeping operations.

Basic Objectives & Principles of 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.

Panchsheel - India advocated adherence to five guiding principles known as Panchsheel

1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty

2. Mutual non-aggression

3. Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs

4. Equality and mutual benefit & 5. Peaceful co-existence

- ✚ The Panchsheel agreement enumerates best the principles of peaceful co-existence with neighbours. It is an important component of India's foreign policy.

Non-alignment - non-alignment has been regarded as the most important feature of India's foreign policy

- ✚ Nonalignment aimed to maintain national independence in foreign affairs by not joining any military alliance formed by the USA and Soviet Union in the aftermath of the Second World War
- ✚ The Non-Aligned Movement is providing all member states regardless of size and importance an opportunity to participate in global decision making and world politics.

Anti-Imperialism, Anti-Racism, Anti Colonialism – India has always opposed colonialism and racism. Whenever any injustice happened India raised its voice.

Strengthening of UN –

- ✚ India has always viewed UN as a vehicle for peace and for peaceful change in world politics.
- ✚ Apart from this, India has always expected UN to actively involve countries to moderate their differences through talks or negotiations. Further, India has advocated active role for UN in development effort of Third World countries.
- ✚ India has pleaded for a common united front of the third world countries in the UN.

Major Concerns in India's Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Period -

Disintegration of the Soviet Union has meant uncertainty on several aspects, supply of weapons system, supply of spare parts, diplomatic support on Kashmir and other politico-strategic issues in and outside the United Nations and as a counterweight to US in South Asia.

Post-cold war the world has become unipolar, several states have disintegrated, cold war military blocs have lost their significance, some such blocs have dissolved, and new regional economic blocs are shaping up.

India is trying to establish a new basis for its relations with neighbouring countries in South Asia, China, and the Southeast Asian countries.

India & The United Nations

India's Contribution to UN Efforts for Peace & Disarmament-

Disarmament is limitation reduction and possible elimination of dangerous (like nuclear) weapons,

- ✚ India has consistently pursued the objective of global disarmament based on the principles of non-discrimination.
- ✚ India has contributed to UN significantly on disarmament in terms of ideas, resolutions initiatives & bridging differences through action plans. In 1948, India had proposed limiting the use of atomic energy to peaceful purposes and elimination of nuclear weapons from national arsenals.
- ✚ In 1984, India launched a Six-Nation Five Continent Peace Initiative along with Argentina, Greece, Mexico, Sweden, and

India's Case for a Permanent Seat in the Security Council –

The efficiency of peace maintenance in the world depends on the effectiveness of the Security Council but the Council has suffered in this regard due to its outdated unchanged membership. Since India has emerged as the fourth fastest growing economy and because of the leadership it has provided in all international fora its contribution to UN peacekeeping.

Evaluate yourself –

1. India's role in the world's peacemaking activities is very important, if yes, explain the given statement with suitable examples.
2. Non-alignment is a major feature of the Indian foreign policy, in reference to the statement write your opinion.
3. Write down the Major Concerns in India's Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Period.



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