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20. Challenges to Indian Foreign Policy

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Abstract

Recently India celebrated 70 years of republic day with pomp and pageantry. In that situation India is emerging as one of the leading and influential power in International community. Today India's economy become a 6th largest economy in all over world. But now a day India facing three major challenges at foreign policy level. First is, we have strained relations with our neighbours. Second is, India's relationship with major power is unclear and finally India didn't take the lead for developing countries on the issues of food, water, energy security, terrorism and the environment, including climate change. The paper endeavours to selectively present some of the new 'challenges and threats' that India's foreign policy is likely to face in the next few decades. In this paper explain the challenges to India's foreign policy at the base of all above three major challenges.

Keywords: - Foreign Policy, International Community, Energy security, Climate change, Neighbourhood policy.

Introduction

The Indian foreign policy is at the anvil of challenges in multiple fronts. Means when we see the world map then we can find a complex range of challenges at every corner of the world politics. But there is no permanent friends and no permanent enemies in International Politics, permanent is only that countries supreme national interest. The challenges to India's Foreign Policy naturally depends on what matters to the country, its priorities and how government defines the goals of its foreign policy. The primary mission of Indian foreign policy is to ensure an external environment that is helpful to India's transformation and development. India's foreign policy was shaped by Prime Minister Nehru in post-cold war period. At that time world was divided into two power blocs. India chose for a non-aligned principle which make it the leader of developing or third world countries.

After cold war power politics between two blocs was end and influence of economic factor was increased and also the idea of non-aligned principle become irrelevant. In recent years, India's military, diplomatic and economic energies have expanded far beyond Nehru's Non-Aligned position. But till the date our foreign policy has positive aspect of peace. When USSR was collapsed, we formulate our foreign policy at the base of realism. because new world become unipolar and America was dominated in unipolar world order.it was very difficult time for India to shape our policies with the new dimensions and in new world order including economic parameters and challenges of terrorism, food security, energy security, environmental issues, strained relation with our neighbours etc.

Objectives

1. To study the Indian's strained relation with neighbours.
2. To study the India's relationship with major powers and challenges to India's foreign policy.
3. To explain the future issues like food, water, energy security, terrorism and the environment, including climate change.

Strained Relation with Neighbours

Every ruling government in India tried to improve its relations with our neighbours. India's vision of itself as the self-declared "regional superpower" has been cut to size by the smaller countries in South Asia deciding to leverage China's ambitions in the region, particularly the Indian Ocean, to their own advantages. India has tried to fight china's deep pockets by backing those political parties and leaders in these countries whom it sees as being more "pro-New Delhi" as in Sri Lanka and the Maldives or through high-handedness, as in Nepal. In 2018, India celebrated the electoral defeat of Abdulla Yameen in the Maldives, and the political and judicial putdown in Sri Lanka of a move by President Maithripala Sirisena to bring back the "pro-China" Mahinda Rajapaksa as Prime Minister. However, as India has realised, even pro-India leaders in these countries do not like to take dictation. In Nepal, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's three visits in 2018, and promises to speed up long-pending projects, have not yet succeeded in reversing the damage done by the 2015-16 economic blockades.



India's Relationship with Major Powers**a) China**

China's profile is dynamically emerging in South and South East Asia. China has entered into every neighbour nation through economic aid, be it Nepal, Maldives, Bhutan and also Sri Lanka. Myanmar is another name in the list after India's low reaction to Rohingyas and a prompt one from China. China's interference in Hindi ocean is headache for India. Thus, the real challenge is to counter this rising profile.

b) U.S.A

Under both Republican and Democratic political system, U.S.A-India relations have improved significantly over the past 20 years. Today the two countries have a \$120 billion two-way trading relationship, growing economic, political relations, and an increasingly shared vision of the region's strategic viewpoint that has bolstered bilateral defence interests. Deepening the two countries bilateral trade and investment relationship will take commitment and time, with expected setbacks that will necessitate each side to view the economic relationship in a broader geopolitical context. Finally, USA's longer-term strategic goals in Asia will be progressive if the U.S. has the foresight to cultivate a confident and democratic India.

c) Russia

It is clear that India-Russia relations remain energetic for both countries amid a changing regional and global security challenges. A sharp rise in Russia-China defence ties, the forceful foreign policy of a rising China in the Indo-Pacific, and the China-Pakistan relationship will all encourage India to continue to strengthen ties with Russia.

Some strained issues with Russia, that challenge to India's foreign policy:

1. The first issue- rapidly expanding ties between India and USA, which started with the
2. India-US nuclear deal in 2008.
- 3) The second issue- the growing defence relationship between India and USA.
- 4) The Russia-Pakistan joint defence exercises are raising many issues for India.
- 5) Russia had proposed to India a Russia-India-China (RIC) forum. India is hesitant about
3. this because of India has some unsolved issues with China
- 6) New emerging axis of Russia-China-Pakistan.

Some Major Challenges to India's Foreign Policy

A) Indian Security Issues

India followed peaceful relations with its direct neighbours as a state policy but the response of the other side of the border was not so friendly. As it is a known fact that Pakistan was pursuing cross border terrorism as its state policy to fade India from 1947 to till date, also India has a border dispute with china. border destruction by Chinese troops, aggressive statements in the state controlled Chinese media and military support to Pakistan, Iran and North Korea. China's attempt to block US \$ 2.9 billion to India by Asian Development bank and Indian support to Tibetan refugees is a cause of tension between the two countries.

b) Climate Change

Climate change is one of the most important challenge in front of every nation and specially to the developing country like India. India is growing last two decade and climate change is direct related with growth. Dynamic industrialization in developing countries now become a cause of concern in the world community as it become a major cause for the global warming and other environment pollution. India rapidly growing in Industrial sector. Industrial sector needed more energy in the future so the use of fossil fuels would remain the important element for energy. India has 17% of the global population and our own GHG emissions are only 4% of the world. Even with 8-9% growth per annum, our energy use has been growing at less than 4% per annum. We started the process of adopting the green field energy in a number of sectors and our government is also promoting the solar and other renewable energy sources.

c) Energy Security

Energy security is directly related to economic growth. It is projected that India would get economic growth in double digit from the year 2015-2025. Currently, India import 70% oil and 40% gas from gulf and other countries. Demand of oil and gas is increasing every year rapidly. Gulf countries would play an important role in satisfying India's future energy needs but the on-going struggle between US and Iran would have a direct impact on the supply of oil to India. Iran, Pakistan, India gas pipeline project was deferred by India due to US pressure. Now a day this is big challenge to India's foreign policy, also India wanted to expand its nuclear energy production and aimed 20% electricity production from nuclear energy.

d) Terrorism

Former Prime Minister of India Mr Atal Bihari Vajpayee was rightly said that Terrorism knows no boundaries. Terrorism is serious challenges to international and specially India's peace and security. In India terrorism is a major violator of human rights. According to The Global Terrorism Index (the institution for economic and peace) for 2018 India include in top 10 countries was affected by terrorism in the world.

Attacks by terrorists on Akshardham temple (2002), Delhi blasts (2005), Samjhauta Express (2007), Hyderabad (2007), Jaipur blasts (2008), Mumbai 26/11(2008), attacked on Indian army (2018), these are some major incidents in India. India established National Investigation Agency to investigate and prosecution in respect of terrorist activities in India. India is strengthening its counter terrorist force National Security Guards. More NSG regional hubs have been created after Mumbai attacks on 26/11/2008.

e) Food Security

In 21st century, solving trans boundary issues such as food security, water security and environment issues requires a concerted effort between domestic and foreign policy investors. Food security policy making in India is at crossroads. India has emerged as a leading rice exporter. The Government of India has introduced the National Food Security Act which requires 33.6 million tons of rice per year for its public food distribution system. Recent rates of economic growth have not been matched by similar rates in health and nutritional improvements. To meet the second Sustainable Development Goal of achieving zero hunger by 2030, India faces a substantial challenge in meeting basic nutritional needs in addition to addressing population, environmental and dietary pressures. In India food wastage has also received little attention.

India's role within global food markets needs to be more closely assessed. To successfully address malnutrition, India will likely have to fill the gap between domestic production and food demand through increased imports. Food imports can have a significant impact on domestic prices, and the dominance of agriculture as a primary source of employment in India may be a negative influence on farmer livelihoods and further, a large increase in food imports could potentially reduce energy-protein intake for the poorest 30% of the population. This means appropriate economic and social analysis must be carried out to try to optimise



import quantities and products which will have minimal domestic impacts. The importance of reducing economic and dietary inequalities makes this even more crucial.

Conclusion

To conclude, we can say that challenges before India's foreign policy is complex and dynamic. India face unique geo-political challenges. The threat from china, Pakistan terror attacks and the loss of Russia will be the main challenge beyond India. And also faces the challenges from neighbour countries. India needs a global strategy to faces US, China and Russia's foreign policy. Sustainable Development, economic growth, energy security, food and water security, national security, strained relation with neighbours, climate change and India's role, terrorism, etc. are the major challenges in front of India and these should be tackled with a very careful hand.

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