



Foreign Policy under Jawaharlal Nehru: A Review

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Abstract:

After India gained its independence in 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru became the country's guiding political figure. Nehru's primary contribution was not in domestic policymaking, but in international relations, since he maintained tight control over foreign affairs for seventeen years and made all the important foreign policy choices himself with little input from his advisors and aides. As a result, the author of this piece has made an effort to elaborate on the foundations of Nehru's foreign policy by analyzing the actions performed by India's first prime minister under the banner of world peace. The primary purposes of this study are explanatory and analytical. According to the research question, we relied only on secondary data. Since Nehru maintained tight control over foreign affairs for seventeen years, making the entire major foreign policy decisions himself with minimal input from his advisers and aides; it is safe to say that his greatest impact was in this sphere rather than on the domestic front.

Keywords: *political, foreign policy, domestic, international relations.*

Introduction:

India faced a number of both local and foreign obstacles after gaining independence in 1947. Domestically, the agony of partition was still fresh, and national leadership had a significant challenge in trying to unite a fractured India. During this ancient period, India was divided into small kingdoms ruled by rulers and without any kind of democracy. Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru took over and implemented his ambition to make India a global powerhouse. We will not discuss the internal issues of a young nation because the focus of this paper is on the external challenges that India faces in the form of foreign relations with the world during the time of the cold war between the United States, representing the capitalist world, and the Soviet Union, representing the communist world. Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru kept his position in charge of foreign affairs. Nehru didn't create India's foreign policy; Jawahar Lal Nehru did. The Chanakya Arthashastra, the Ramayana, and the Mahabharata are some of the ancient literary works that have influenced Indian foreign policy.

The foundations of India's foreign policy were firmly laid by him. Like any other foreign policy maker, Nehru underlined India's national interest as the basic guiding principle. But even before he did that, Nehru, as head of the interim Government, had declared as on September 7, 1946, principle objectives of India's foreign policy. In a broadcast to the nation he had said. "We shall take full part in international conferences as a free nation with our own policy and not merely as a satellite of another nation. We hope to develop close

and direct contacts with other nations and to co-operate with them in the furtherance of world peace and freedom. We are particularly interested in the emancipation of colonial and dependent countries and peoples and in the recognition in theory and practice of equal opportunities for all races". India's national interest was indeed the most important governing principle of India's foreign policy during Nehru's period. He said in the constituent Assembly on December 4, 1947. "We may talk about peace and freedom and earnestly mean what we say. But in the ultimate analysis, a government functions for the good of the country it governs and no government dare to anything which in the short or long run is manifestly to the disadvantage of the country".

Background of the Study:

After WWII, global events—including the decline of imperialism and the strengthening of forces of democracy and progress—had a significant impact on India's foreign policy. the rise of the national liberation struggle and the first signs of the colonial system of imperialism's collapse in a number of European and Asian nations, and the emergence of a global socialist system. India, as a sovereign nation, has to establish her own foreign policy in light of the shifting global power dynamic. The diverse factions within the ruling party, the Indian National Congress (INC), which represented the interests of different classes and sections of Indian society, played a significant role in the intricate process by which Indian foreign policy was developed. It is not an exaggeration to suggest that competing domestic political forces in India shaped the country's foreign policy (*Sarvepalli Gopal, Jaxoaharlal Nehru, 1976*):.

Significance of the Study:

India's foreign policy study under the statesmanship of Jawahar Lal Nehru has not been studied in a comprehensive manner so far, though there are certain works related to Nehru separately in some books. However, there is no work in its entirety highlighting the contribution of Nehru in the Indian foreign policy arena. The non-availability of comprehensive work on this subject inspired me to take up the present study. This study focuses on the contributions of Nehru in the foreign policy of India, it will be very helpful for the reasers and scholars.

Objectives:

This study aims to discuss the principles of Nehru's foreign policy in terms of the steps taken by the first prime minister of India with the motto of World peace.

Method:

This paper is basically descriptive and analytic in nature. The data used is purely secondary according to the need of study

Nehru's Policy of Non-Alignment:

India's foreign policy relies heavily on non-alignment. India's first leader in charge, he is credited with laying the groundwork for modern India and launching the country's now-iconic non-alignment policy. Being non-aligned did not mean taking a stance on issues involving major powers or taking a position midway between the two superpowers. The escalation of hostilities between the United States and the Soviet Union in the 1950s coincided with the rise of independent Asian and African nations from colonial rule, providing the impetus for the adoption of a policy of non-alignment well suited to the needs of these regions.

According to Jawaharlal Nehru, India's policy of non-alignment grew out of the country's protracted fight for independence. Leaders in Asia, Africa, and Latin America were presumably under similar pressures to pursue a policy of non-alignment as a means of promoting their nations' unique identities (*Mohd Azhar Ud Din Malik, Jabeen.H. 2019*).

Non-alignment is not the same as apathy towards or rejection of international politics. It was an inspiring and forward-moving idea. It proposes deciding how to respond to international challenges on an individual basis, while remaining neutral with respect to any particular military bloc. Therefore, independence in foreign policy required staying away from military alliances and major power blocks. Many nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America supported India's policy of non-alignment because it gave them a chance to maintain their foreign policy autonomy despite the Cold War's mounting tensions and pressures. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) owes a great deal to India, which was instrumental in its promotion and growth. In 1947, India's Prime Minister Nehru called for the Asian Relations Conference to be held in New Delhi in an effort to create a unified Asia. As India held steadfast -against the colonial control of other nations, in 1949 it organized another Asian Relations Conference on the topic of independence of Indonesia. The Afro-Asian community was established in 1955 during the Bandung Conference, which brought together 29 Asian and African nations in Indonesia. The conference established 10 core principles of international relations, five of which are based on the Panchsheel philosophy. The leaders committed to fostering peace and emancipation from colonialism as well as cultural, economic, and political cooperation among emerging nations. The NAM's inaugural Summit was held in Belgrade in 1961, with the Bandung Conference serving as its progenitor. The Non-Aligned Movement has not stopped moving forward since that time.

Nehru's Policy of Resisting Colonialism, Imperialism, Racism:

As a country that has suffered under colonialism and racism, India naturally opposes these ideologies in all their forms. Colonialism and imperialism, in India's view, pose a danger to world stability. In 1946, India was the first country to raise Apartheid in the United Nations. India advocated for Indonesian independence by convening the Asian Relations Conference. India's efforts via the NAM and other international forums were instrumental in the independence of 14 African nations in 1964. To eradicate the evil of apartheid in South Africa, India made genuine efforts. In 1986, at India's urging, the NAM established the Africa Fund (Action for Resisting Imperialism, Colonialism, and Apartheid) to aid the frontline nations that had fallen victim to South African aggression due to their participation in the anti-apartheid movement. India has contributed significantly to this pool of money. Success for Indian policy may be measured by the end of apartheid in South Africa in 1990 (*Vijay Jalindar Detha.2018*).

Nehru's Disarmament Efforts:

Nehru argued instead for a more positive strategy, which amounted to nothing more than disarmament via the United Nations. Nehru was a guest at a League of Nations conference in Geneva when Hitler made his war threats. Just like that, the true peace issues were;

The war rumours spread by Hitler

Second, the United Nations has not enough people from Asia and Africa.

Third, the United Nations has structural problems.

Lack of success in United Nations endeavours.

Reason #5: Global divisions, ethnic and religious diversity, etc.

Nehru undoubtedly considered important matters of international policy and India's national interest when he initiated disarmament steps in the 1950s. Nehru's efforts centered on the United Nations. India was excluded from nuclear power politics due to the fact that it does not own nuclear weapons. The years 1953–1954 as well as 1957–1958 and 1962 saw Nehru's disarmament efforts. After the Soviet Union had developed into a full-fledged thermo nuclear power, "Nehru's first major disarmament effort came," as one source puts it. Nehru often said before his death that India would never consent to nuclear testing. This is the true measure of Nehru's stature as a global leader in the cause of disarmament and an apostle of peace.

Nehru's Role in Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes:

India's unwavering commitment to political means as a means to resolve international conflicts peacefully is central to its foreign policy. This idea is enshrined in the UN Charter and is also included in India's Constitution's Directive Principles of State Policy. India has taken the lead in resolving the Korean conflict and has advocated for the peaceful resolution of other conflicts and crises, including the issues of Palestine, Kashmir, and boundary disputes with its neighbours. India now supports peaceful solutions to issues such as the Iranian nuclear dispute, the democratic uprising in the Middle East, and others. When it comes to settling global crises, India has always opposed the use of military force by any outside power. India's policy remains based on this guiding idea (*Yuri Nesenko, 1977*).

Conclusion:

After India gained its independence in 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru became the country's guiding political figure. Nehru's primary contribution was not in domestic policymaking, but in international relations, since he maintained tight control over foreign affairs for seventeen years and made all the important foreign policy choices himself with little input from his advisors and aides. A guy of far-reaching ideas, Nehru was. He is an advocate for global tranquilly. Since only peaceful methods could guarantee the existence and security of the people and countries, according to Nehru, it was crucial to choose the correct ways to address the issues. Nehru believed that commonwealth was more powerful than treaties and alliances. It was a symbol of the kind of foreign cooperation that was most comfortable for India since it was personal, casual, mutually beneficial, and not legally bound.

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