



What are we going to learn in this chapter?

We have got introduced to the international system and its nature and the cold war in the last century and its effects. We shall now get introduced to other related issues. Thus, we shall learn about the meaning of foreign policy, factors that make an impact on it and the nature of India's foreign policy.

Foreign Policy

Meaning and Importance : All countries are members of the international system. We have already studied that none of these countries is completely self-reliant and hence there is mutual interdependence in the international system. Only this interdependence should not be of benefit to a few countries. Efforts need to be made to ensure that it benefits every nation. Each country has to decide the nations with which it should be friendly, in which bloc it should participate or what position it should take in international relations. Such decisions should be made thoughtfully. The theoretical framework in which such decisions are taken is called foreign policy. Every sovereign and independent country decides its own foreign policy. Hence in the discipline of international politics, which studies the international relations between nations, foreign policy has an important place.



Do you Know?

When we have to study a country, it is necessary to understand its Constitution and its foreign policy.

National Interest: We have briefly understood what foreign policy means. National interest and foreign policy are closely connected to each other. National interest is fostered through foreign policy. Therefore, before studying foreign policy further, we need to understand the meaning and significance of national interest.

National interest implies the means through which the independence and sovereignty of our country can be safeguarded. National interest also includes efforts to achieve our economic development and to take steps towards increasing our national power. When decisions are taken after giving a careful thought to what is beneficial and good for our country, we say that we are nurturing our national interest. In this sense, the following factors are included in the national interest of any country.

- Defence, i.e. the protection of our country's independence, sovereignty and integrity is the highest national interest.
- Economic development is also an important national interest. An economically weak nation will not be able to maintain its independence. Hence economic development is understood to be an important national interest, next only to defence.

National interest and Foreign Policy:

Foreign Policy is drawn up to foster the national interest of defence and economic development. National interest is considered to be the goal and foreign policy is considered to be the means to achieve it. Goals of nations change with changes in conditions and time. Accordingly, national interest also changes.

These changes are reflected in the foreign policy. Therefore, foreign policy is always dynamic.

Let's discuss!

Even though some changes happen in the foreign policy due to changing circumstances and times, foreign policies of some nations are based on some eternal principles. For example, India's foreign policy is based on values like international peace, human rights and security. What provisions should be included in the foreign policy to achieve these values according to you?

Factors influencing Foreign Policy :

Foreign policy decides what kind of relations to have with which country in the international system. But several factors affect foreign policy while it is being decided.

(1) Geographical Location : You must have seen the globe or map of the world. You can see the geographical location of any nation from that. Some countries are far away from other countries, while there are several neighbouring countries around some countries. Some nations have a long coastline, while some have plenty of mineral wealth. In sum, the size, population, topography, coastline, availability of natural resources, all these factors need to be considered while deciding the foreign policy of any country.

(2) Political System : In a democratic political system, the nation's parliament plays a major role in evolving foreign policy. When different aspects come up for discussion in parliament, the opposition parties try to regulate the foreign policy

by raising questions about the same.

Federal political systems have to take into account the inclinations of the constituent States while shaping foreign policy, because the affairs in neighbouring nations affect constituent States. For example, events in Sri Lanka may affect Tamil Nadu and those in Bangladesh may affect West Bengal and the North-east Indian States.



Why should this be done?

The peace and stability in the neighbouring countries is as important as that within our own country. Hence, India has to take efforts to create democracy in neighbouring countries.

(3) Economy : In modern times the economic condition of any country has acquired great importance in deciding foreign policy. As a result, the economy impacts foreign policy in two ways :

(1) Foreign policy is shaped by the need to establish economic relations with other countries, import-export, participation in world trade, all aimed at strengthening the economy of the country.

(2) In today's world, the issues of economic security are as important as national security. A country is recognised to be powerful in proportion to the economic security it enjoys. Countries having a strong economy are less dependent on others and they can have an independent foreign policy as well.

(4) Political leadership : The President, the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, the Defence Minister, the Finance Minister and the Home Minister have a

Do you agree? If yes, why and if not, why not? Write in detail.

In order to increase the economic power of the nation, instead of focusing on alleviation of poverty, efforts should be made to increase the wealth and the buying capacity of the people.

role in deciding foreign policy. The persons holding these positions try to maintain the continuity in foreign policy and to improve upon it. For example, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru contributed the policy of non-alignment to India's foreign policy. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee contributed a great deal to improving Sino-Indian relations.

Complete the list.

Complete the list by writing the contribution made by the following leaders. For example, Lal Bahadur Shastri : Tashkent Agreement

- (a) Indira Gandhi :
- (b) Rajiv Gandhi :
- (c) Atal Bihari Vajpayee :

Name the Prime Minister who followed these policies?

- (a) : Look East
- (b) : Efforts to increase Foreign Direct Investment

(5) Administrative Factors : Ministry of External Affairs, Foreign Secretary, Embassies in different countries, Diplomatic officers, etc. are the administrative factors involved in creating foreign policy. Even though the final

decisions about foreign policy are taken by the Prime Minister and the Minister for External Affairs, the administrative machinery helps to arrive at that decision. The administrative officers collect information needed to shape the foreign policy, analyse it and give appropriate advice based on it. The National Security Advisor also completes this task.

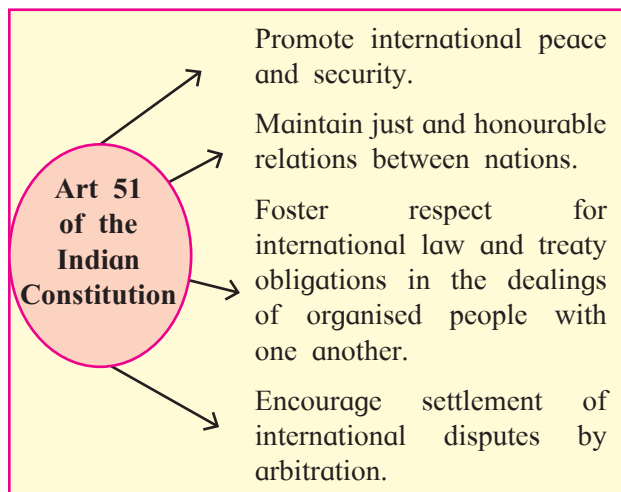
What will you do?

You are working as Foreign Secretary. The Prime Minister is going on a visit to China. As Foreign Secretary from the Ministry of External Affairs, what topics will you suggest the Prime Minister for discussion?

India's Foreign Policy :

After taking this preliminary information about foreign policy, we shall now get to know more about India's foreign policy.

India got independence in 1947 and from then onwards we started shaping our foreign policy independently. The Directive Principles of State Policy have laid down guidelines about how to shape foreign policy. Art. 51 among the Directive Principles of State Policy lay down the broad framework for foreign policy. According to it, India should give priority to safeguard international peace and security, and resolve our international problems and disputes by peaceful means. The objectives of our foreign policy should be to maintain friendly relations with other nations and respect international law. India's foreign policy till now has been developed in this framework.



Some more objectives of India's Foreign Policy are as follows :

- * While maintaining friendly relations with neighbouring countries, ensure that the defence and security of India is not affected. Not to compromise about the geographical boundaries of the nation.
- * Protect the unity and integrity of the country.
- * Protect the interests of India's citizens living in other countries. This responsibility is fulfilled by the Indian embassies there.
- * To establish economic and commercial relations with other countries for achieving economic development of India.

A review of India's Foreign Policy :

We shall take a review of India's Foreign Policy in two stages. The period from independence to 1990 can be considered as the first stage. Second stage would be from 1990 till date.

India's Foreign Policy : Early Phase

Prime Minister Pandit Nehru shaped India's foreign policy in the early period. He opposed colonialism through India's foreign policy. He took an internationalist

position and gave priority to global peace and security. Three things influenced India's foreign policy in this period.

(1) We made an effort to understand all international events and developments independently, without any pressure from any power. Peace has always been a central feature of India's foreign policy.

(2) The threats from China and Pakistan were also taken into account.

(3) One more feature of India's foreign policy at this time was the insistence on self-reliance.

In the beginning, India decided to improve relations with countries in Asia. Efforts were taken to cooperate with Asian countries in order to achieve development and to keep our independence intact. This concept of regional development later expanded to include Africa as well. But some Asian-African countries participated in the military pacts led either by America or the Soviet Russia. This stopped the process of regional development. After this, countries of Asia and Africa, which did not participate in these military pacts supported the concept of Non-alignment. Peace and freedom became the fundamental principles of Non-aligned policy.

In this period, India had to face conflict with neighbouring countries. Wars happened between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir question in 1947-48 and 1965. In the third war, that happened in 1971, Pakistan broke apart and independent Bangladesh was created.

In the decade of the 1970s, there came about some stability in India's foreign policy. India had risen as a powerful regional power in South Asia. By conducting nuclear tests in 1974, India

had also proved her nuclear capability. From 1980, however, some changes began to take place. In order to increase cooperation among South Asian countries, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was established. India initiated a dialogue to improve relations with China. India also started interaction with America for cooperation in the field of security.

First Stage : 1947-1990

- * India adopted the policy of non-alignment in the context of the cold war. As a result, priority was given to maintaining friendly relations with all nations and to taking the help required for development from different countries. Due to the policy of non-alignment, India could get aid from both the super powers.
- * There was a lot of stress on improving/strengthening India's defence. The technology required for this was imported. Soviet Russia, France and Germany helped India in this matter.

In this period, India had to face some challenges. These included the conflict with Pakistan, creation of Bangladesh and conflict with China.

Contribution of Pandit Nehru to India's Foreign Policy :

- His stand was that India should independently understand the global or international affairs.
- He followed up with the policy of peace.

Second Stage : 1991 till date

- * India's foreign policy became more comprehensive and dynamic in the second stage. In the post-cold war period, the priority no longer remained to political and military relations. Several other dimensions like economy, trade, education and technology got included in foreign policy. After 1991, India reduced the government controls over the economy and adopted the free market policy. Naturally, there was an increase in trade with neighbouring countries. Our share in world trade increased. Efforts began to be made to increase the rate of economic growth.

Can you find out?

- * What is the meaning of economic growth rate ?
- * Prepare a chart of the economic growth rate of India, Nepal and Bhutan.
- * In the decade after 1990, our relations with the South Asian countries like Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, etc. became stronger. Our trade exchange with Israel, Japan, China and European Union increased.
- * India began to participate in organisations at the international and regional levels more than before. For example, G-20 and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa).





Let's do it !

There are a lot of similarities between India and America. For example, both are democracies. Find more such similarities and prepare a project on it.

- * Our relations with America strengthened. Mutual trust grew. India's status rose in the international community.
- * India's nuclear policy is an important part of India's foreign policy. You must have studied the meaning of nuclear energy and its uses in subjects like History, Geography or Chemistry. Having understood the importance of nuclear power, India undertook the nuclear energy programme immediately after independence. For this we established the Department of Atomic Energy and the Indian Atomic Energy Commission. The first Chairman of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission was Dr Homi Bhabha. Even though electricity generation was the main purpose behind the programme, it also aimed at creating military capability. As a consequence of this, India conducted her first nuclear tests in 1974. India built nuclear weapons and conducted nuclear tests in 1998. We have also made missiles carrying nuclear weapons and the Air Force and the Navy have been enabled for carrying them.



Do you know ?

Nuclear Weapons are extremely destructive. Hence, it is necessary to make consistent efforts so that they are never used. Two treaties have been made to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. (1) Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NNPT) (2) Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). The conditions of both these treaties are of benefit to big nuclear powers and they put unfair restrictions on developing countries, hence India has not signed either of these treaties.



Let's do it!

The number of countries making nuclear weapons is growing. Prepare a statement from your class to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Try to get it published in a newspaper.

India is now a country which has nuclear weapons. We have accepted the role of a responsible nuclear power. India has been consistently supporting efforts for disarmament, because it is India's position that there should be peace and security in the world.

Having taken a survey of foreign policy in this way, we are going to study India's defence system.



Exercises

1. Choose the correct option from the given options and complete the statements.

- (1) This was the main objective behind establishing the Indian Atomic Energy Commission –

- (a) enhance military capacity
- (b) conduct nuclear tests
- (c) to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons
- (d) production of atomic energy

- (2) The following is now the objective of all the nations of the world –
 - (a) atomic development
 - (b) economic development
 - (c) nuclear test
 - (d) security system
- (3) The is an important aspect of India's foreign policy –
 - (a) free economic policy
 - (b) interdependence
 - (c) non-alignment
 - (d) nuclear development
- (4) India conducted nuclear tests in 1974 at –
 - (a) Shriharikota
 - (b) Thumba
 - (c) Pokharan
 - (d) Jaitapur

2. State whether the following statements are true or false. Give reasons for your answer.

- (1) Pandit Nehru contributed towards improving Sino-Indian relations.
- (2) Atal Bihari Vajpayee took lead in improving relations with Pakistan.

3. Explain the following concepts.

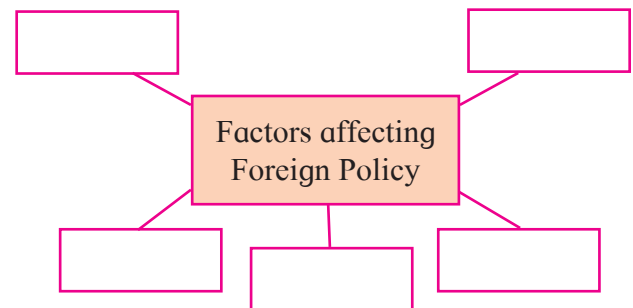
- (1) India's Foreign Policy
- (2) National Interest
- (3) World Peace

4. What is your opinion about the fact that world peace is threatened due to nuclear preparedness?

5. Answer the following questions in brief.

- (1) On what principles is India's foreign policy based?
- (2) Who has contributed to improving Sino-Indian relations?
- (3) Write the objectives of India's foreign policy.

6. Prepare the following concept map.



Project

Find some information about the countries with whom India had trade relations in ancient times.

