



The Modi government's realistic and assertive approach to India's foreign policy

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Abstract: *The general consensus among observers is that Prime Minister Modi has altered India's diplomatic approach in several significant ways. In an effort to compete with China's expanding sphere of influence in Asia, he has rebooted his country's ties with the West, particularly with the United States. In addition, Modi has adopted a tougher position towards Pakistan, which is accused of providing support to terrorist organizations. He has strengthened interaction with allies in East and Southeast Asia. Additionally, Modi has strengthened India's relationships with nations located in the Middle East. The appeal by India's soaring profile and recently obtained self-confidence in the eyes of other nations are demonstrated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's desire for India to emerge as a recognized and fully accountable dominant power in the world, as well as the decision-making procedure that followed to revamp its foreign policy. These actions show how the top Indian leadership views India's functionality to perform its definitive role in global diplomatic ties and world affairs. This manifests the country's emerging profile and newly acquired self-identity.*

Keywords: *India, foreign policy, PM Narendra Modi.*

Introduction

A country's foreign policy is a well, systematic, predefined, and calculated expression of the goals and objectives of the country, the priority of those aims and priorities, and the methodology that the country will follow to attain those purposes. Any evaluation or analysis of India's foreign policy, in addition to taking into account the conditions under which it evolved in a certain direction, must also take into account the structural problems and their historical contexts, both of which have a major bearing on the success or failure of the same.^[1] Although many other inputs are known as internal factors, such as national history and historical traditions, geography, national character, national economy, convergence on national goals, military preparedness, etc., as well as external factors, such as global or regional scenario, international hierarchy, global economy, and many more, all of which are collectively referred to as internal or external milieus, which require the serious attention of the supreme decision making body or the chief, the internal or external milieus are referred to as internal. As is abundantly clear in this setting, the newly elected Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, started his term by reiterating his unwavering dedication to the goals that have been established for India's foreign policy. These goals “include anti-colonialism, anti-racism, anti-apartheid, non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations, and so on. These goals were rationally and deliberately decided upon by the founder architect and first Prime Minister of independent India, the Late Jawahar Lal Nehru, intending to emphasize the significance of these ideals for laying the foundation of permanent peace and non-violence in a world that had already been torn apart by two World Wars at the time.”^[2]

Nehru boldly declared over All India Radio on September 7, 1946, the prospective course of independent India's appearance in world affairs. At the time, he was serving as Vice-Chairman of the Interim Council, and he was doing so while bringing his speech to the nation. In it, he stated that independent India would steer clear of the struggle-oriented bloc politics being set into motion by the then-emerging two competing ideological camps, capitalism and communism. According to the renowned scholar Prof. Bimal Prasad, even Nehru did not start from scratch, and the current “Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi,” did the same thing. He began with the country's ancient moral, cultural ethos, and long-established socio-cultural legacy, both of which have been carried over so far by the earlier Prime Ministers of India as well, to lay a solid foundation for India so that it might one day emerge as a powerful and respectable nation in the global. It is in this context that the Indian government, “under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has adopted a new approach,” dynamism, and consequent thrust to revisit the potential features of India as a strong nation to present a new, dynamic, energetic, and high-profile foreign policy before the international community.^[3] This foreign policy is based upon realism while not ignoring idealism, and it lays stress upon peace, friendship, and cooperation in addition to other widespread moral and ethical principles. In other words, the Prime Minister of



India, Narendra Modi, firmly believes that there will be growth, companionship and cooperation, equity, justice, well-being, and progress, as well as overall development in the interest of all nations and also that of the entire humanity, if there is peace in the world, then there will be peace in the world. To properly evolve a realist vision and pragmatic approach attached to India's foreign policy, which, therefore, may never fail in its effort because it is based upon adhocism or solely upon idealism, it is necessary to take into account the structural challenges and their historical settings in the internal as well as the external milieu. However, all of these possible accomplishments for the country's foreign policy require this consideration. Naturally, this calls for a concise "analysis of the global landscape that emerged in the Cold War aftermath. This analysis will outline the reasons that led to the consequent compulsions and the constraints India faced, which caused India's foreign policy to undergo significant and even fundamental shifts."^[4]

The study focused on the increasing realism in "India's foreign policy under Prime Minister Narendra Modi," which has the stated goal of following a pragmatic and muscular approach, as already well-practiced by the Indian army in the form of surgical strikes into Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK) against the backdrop of Pakistan's induced cross-border terror strike on the Army Base Camp in Uri in Jammu on September 18, 2016, and which was recognized by the world with widespread support.^[5] The paper discusses the consistently rising stature of India and its so-evolving foreign policy, as well as those compulsions which compelled India to make a transition into the continuing course of the foreign policy from a pro-Soviet Union stance to the USA in the then surfaced "post-Cold War uni-polar world order at the end of 1990." The paper begins by presenting a brief overview of the post-Cold War scenario. It then describes the steadily rising stature of India and so- In the following section, we will examine those distinctive aspects of India that lend credence to the nation's contention that it is entitled to a legitimate position among a variety of influential groups around the world, including a perpetual seat on "*the United Nations Security Council*." After that, an analysis of the undeniable necessity of the United States to secure strength and power for the general unity and integrity of the country follows.^[6] This is particularly important now that the Soviet Union is no longer a major world superpower. After that, it emphasizes the establishment of an efficient and potent structure for India's security concerning the newly established Sino-Pakistan unholy alliance to contain India's meteoric rise in the world, which is highly disturbing for New Delhi, particularly as a result of the United States' ongoing inconsistent foreign policy practice under President Trump as regards India and Pakistan and also as a result of Russia's increasing military cooperation with Pakistan. In conclusion, the paper argues for maintaining the pragmatic approach for the country's foreign policy to establish and project India as a responsible, respected, and leading force globally. This conclusion was reached to establish and project India in such a way that it can create and project India as a major global force.

The situation after the end of the cold war:

However, the necessity of the worldwide outline that developed following "*the Cold War's*" termination in the early 1990s, witnessing the dissolution of the erstwhile USSR; the death of the WARSAW Pact; the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the reuniting of two Germanys; the rapid rise of terrorism and non-state actors, etc., chaotic and volatile times in international affairs in which the USA had pushed forward "from its earlier Super Power status to occupy the global."^[7] It was not the fact that the former Soviet Union had broken up that caused it to become irrelevant and unnecessary for India. On the contrary, the Soviet Union had always provided unequivocal support to New Delhi in its entire most critical and crucial moments, whether "in the United Nations or the Indo-Pak wars, particularly in 1971. The reality of the situation was that the Soviet Union did not possess nearly as much power and influence as was required for it to be in a position to challenge and counterbalance the US hegemony as a counterpole in the world's politics. This was something that the USSR had been successful at doing in the years following the end of the Second World War during the intense cold war years of international politics and relations." On the other hand, even though the unique role that the USSR played in the Cold War had caused to establish and maintain an effective balance of power (sic. balance of terror) in "the post-World War II era of nuclear power," it had also put a consistent and effective check on the US waywardness, which was characterized by military interventions and neo-imperialism, as well as the current ongoing policy of cultural imperialism, particularly in regards to the policy of containing the rising USSR. In such a tense and horrible global environment of bloc power rivalry, the entire world was put at ransom to the Super Power schism.^[8] The poor, under-developed, and developing countries spread over the continents of Asia, Africa, and Latin America were the countries that suffered the most because they were frantically engaged in their national reconstruction efforts following the collapse of centuries of colonialism in these parts of the world. The so-called scenarios in international relations present the context and necessity of the gradual emergence of realism in India's foreign policy. This needs to be appropriately discussed and analyzed for conceptual clarity of the structural constraints and their historical contexts.

**The importance of realism in international affairs, as well as India's growth prospects:**

Realism is also known as an orientation to international relations and politics and emphasizes the competing and conflict-linked or struggle-based features in the international arena. Realists believe that states are the primary actors and that nations are principally concerned with their security, national interests, and the power struggle. With this strategy in hand, Prime Minister Narendra Modi meticulously mapped out his government's priorities in the country's interest as regards India's foreign policy immediately after he assumed office. He did this because he quickly realized the importance and necessity of the United States of America while not ignoring India's traditional and unfailing friendship with the successor Russia of the erstwhile USSR in the prevailing scenario of world politics and affairs to achieve the lofty goals of the nation. In addition, he emphasized the strengthening of India's armed forces, which had previously been given less attention than it deserved. He did this by cultivating close ties with countries that could supply India with weapons, such as the United States, France, England, Israel, and the successor Russia.^[9]

Because of its unique history, classical moral and spiritual tradition, and developed, diverse cultural legacy, India is quickly becoming a global superpower. The significance of Asia is growing in the current era, which is marked by a continuing shift eastward in geopolitics, as a result of some of the key member countries in the East, such as China and India, in addition to Southeast Asian states, such as Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, etc. Asia is undergoing a hectic comeback to have a substantial impact on the entire world due to remarkable successes achieved by some of its member countries, particularly China and India, due to their strengths such as vast geographical expanse, huge population, booming economy, well-qualified and trained human resources, amazing military power, and such other attributes; consequently, the regional scenario has already resulted in a major change signifying a shift.^[10] This is because China and India have their strengths, such as vast geographical expanse. This global shift has resulted in a major change, undoing unjust, selfish, and unethical trends in the then-prevailing world politics. These trends were primarily based on pressuring the emerging states of the Third World to fall in line with the once-dominant hegemonic world powers such as the United States, United Kingdom, France, and the former Soviet Union. This global shift has resulted in a major change that has undone these earlier trends. In such a difficult environment, independent-minded and nonaligned countries, like India and many other countries in the Third World, found it difficult to succeed and realize their independence and the so-called right to self-determination. India was one of the countries that struggled the most with this. This is the case since India, on the one hand, has always desired its rightful place “to play a leading role in the affairs of the world” in terms of the positions of honor and respect in the global community of nations considering its significant achievements after achieving independence in 1947 and also the visible promising potential for growth and development in various fields of human endeavor besides consistently expanding clout in all over the world as a peace-loving, non-violent an ethical nation besides persistently enlarging clout.

Developing realist orientation in India's external relations:

The realism approach's most vital feature is probably its concerted effort to foster a new strategic culture - of insisting and asserting for realizing national interests anyhow, even adopting a muscular foreign policy, which all countries, including “*the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, Israel, China,*” and even smaller powers, always do practice in the name of national interests, but which India has, regrettably, frequently practiced constraints and resorted to soft pedaling, most notably in the case of its. This unfortunate situation has also put a stumbling block in the formation of institutions of experts for serious and meaningful discussions to arrive at the best possible choice for preparing inputs for the final decision-making, which is the non-institutionalization of India's foreign policy.^[11] In addition, this unfortunate situation has led to confusion and directionlessness in the country's foreign policy operation so far. Therefore, if this vision that Prime Minister Modi has ultimately taken root, probably the most significant immediate shift that would have taken place is the imbuing of self-assurance within the Indian polity and its leaders, its elites, as well as the Indian army, police, and para-military forces. And this appears to have emerged to a considerable extent, particularly after the successful surgical operation by the Indian army against a terrorist's hideout inside the POK in 2016 and the careful handling of the Doklam crisis concerning China in 2017, in addition to the Indian leadership's assertions on important issues about human welfare, such as nuclear proliferation and environmental concerns or such other common concerns and carrying them over successfully in terms of policy decision.

Since India is the greatest and most effective democracy in the world, with billions of people that include “world-class intellectuals and professionals in every field of knowledge and work, skilled laborers, booming economies and markets, state-of-the-art research and development facilities, advanced industries and heavy units, and powerful armies, as well as being a founding member of the largest global movement of humanity, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), etc., it (India) very well deserves to be recognized as one of the Even though the international power structure needs to take into account India's growing clout and influence in the world, New Delhi still needs to demonstrate the validity of its claim to be accorded the status that it seeks.”^[12]



This is something that the late Mrs Indira Gandhi demonstrated during the liberation of Bangladesh and the subsequent conflict between India and Pakistan in 1971. The world learned at that time that India's policy of non-alignment does not simply consist of begging before other countries with its hands folded; rather, it stands for bold assertions with the pursuit of meaningful actions by itself to protect and preserve India's national interests against all odds and challenges, such as the then-emerging hostile Super and major power alliance known as the Washington-Beijing-Islamabad axis. This information was made public at that time. Since then, India has not been able to return to its glorious past, despite being severely harmed by Pakistan's sponsorship of decades of massive onslaughts of cross-border tenor and China's constant intrusion into India's territory without any bold and assertive counter-offensives. This is the case despite India's severe suffering from both factors. A lackadaisical approach to the country's foreign policy and inconsistent diplomacy after the late Indira Gandhi put India in a poor light, which led to the emergence of an image of soft power that is unable to stand on its own to pursue its national interests. This put India in a poor light and led to the emergence of an image of soft power. At "the end of the Cold War in 1990," the US-led western countries on an agenda to weaken and eventually eliminate the inherent power of the concept of non-alignment.^[13] This presented an opportunity for China, Pakistan, and the US to end India's burgeoning dominance for good. Because India's self-propounded doctrine of non-alignment and so-designed foreign policy was its real strength, rooted in eternal and immutable moral values, and was beyond any challenge from any corner of the world, that endeavor was a vicious trap unleashed by the western powers headed "by the United States to ensnare India" in such a way that it may never be able to assert of its own for its genuine rights and claims and so-formulated national interests. The goal was to, In point of fact, the cultural influence of India still keeps the United States awake at night out of fear that New Delhi would one day be able to morally and culturally dominate the rest of the world. Because of this, President Trump of the United States has recently requested that President Putin of Russia immediately terminate Russia's ongoing military cooperation with India. New Delhi has no choice but to seek support and cooperation from the United States, given the brute power-based hierarchical and vicious international system and India's economic and technological constraints and compulsions of preserving its national security vis-à-vis mounting threat due to increasing Sino-Pak collusion and also due to the rising threat of macabre ISIS terror menace including global terrorism and racial intolerance. Despite the arrogance and anti-Indian stance of the United States, New Delhi.^[14]

Why India needs it?

The inability to effectively defend India's national security makes it very clear that the country must maintain close relationships with the United States for the foreseeable future, despite the fact that this relationship may be unbalanced. Without Washington's explicit decision in its favour, including the four other permanent Security Council members, it will not be able to accomplish its long-held aim to become a stable member of "the United Nations Security Council." In addition to relying on the United States for cutting-edge technology, cutting-edge military weapons, and other economic benefits, India also needs the support of the United States to exert pressure on several terror outfits with global access, such as Islamic State (ISIS), Jaish-e Muhammad (J-e-M), Hijab-ul-Mujahideen (H-ul-M), the Haqqani terror networks, and Hafiz Sayeed's terror organization; and to put an iron hand upon Pakistan India is among the nations hit most by acts of terrorism. Sadly, India has lost two brilliant "prime ministers" in the past—the inspirational Indira Gandhi and the charismatic Rajiv Gandhi—both of whom tragically died in office. It has also been the target of some of the world's worst terrorist assaults, including the ones on "the Bombay Stock Exchange, the 26/11 attacks in Mumbai," a bakery in Bangalore, and the Delhi High Court. Plus, since India's spectacular surgical strike into POK, they've had to cope with daily terror assaults on top of everything else. The truce along the LOC is often violated, and many brave troops have lost their lives, while schools have been burned in Jammu and Kashmir.^[15]

Towards a more secure nation through smart design:

Therefore, India needs a robust and efficient security infrastructure to protect the country and the region from transnational terrorist threats. In order to avoid a terrorist attack in the nation, it is necessary to keep track of terrorists' whereabouts and prospective targets, as well as share such information with other countries. In addition, India must take both immediate and long-term steps to combat terrorism with equal seriousness. The support of the United States of America and a few of other industrialized western nations like "Russia, England, France, and even Israel" will be crucial to the success of this attempt. India's early participation "in the US-sponsored Kicklighter" pact prompted an outpouring of vehement criticism of the country's increasingly favorable stance towards the US.^[16] With this view in hand, India had already entered the agreement. After that, in 2008, India and the United States came to terms with the Civil Nuclear Deal; this ushered in a new era of strategic partnerships between the two countries, despite very few favorable odds about the sellers' liability issue. In the context of the situation that existed at the time, India overlooked even one of its most trusted friends, Russia. As a consequence, Russia had no choice but to cultivate relations with Pakistan in order to preserve its dominance in "South Asia" and the surrounding regions. There has been much conjecture about India's true intentions and whether or not it has truly forgotten its far ideology of non-alignment, of which it is the broadly forerunner, in light of India's expanding tilting toward the United States and successive



burgeoning distance from Russia, as well as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's conscious choice to skip the 17th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement that was hosted in Margarita, Venezuela. The United States has always continued to play a double game with India's considerations by creating a working ba despite India's enthusiastic support for the establishing of close relations with the United States under Prime Minister Modi in the economic, security, technological, and other strategic fields. As a result, India must abandon its pro-American foreign policy in favour of one that is more forceful and realistic if it wants to maintain the national interests it considers most vital. This has prompted India to reach out to Russia once again in the hopes of renewing its relationship with President Putin, only this time with the full aim of doing so. The relationship between New Delhi and Moscow, which has been stagnating for some time, will get a much-needed boost. China's unwavering backing for Pakistan poses serious challenges for New Delhi since Islamabad looks committed to staging major retribution to humiliate and tear-apart India. India's significant surgical strike into the POK has shattered Pakistan's morale and that of the terrorists housed therein. Even farther, the anti-Indian, brutal, and defiant role that China tends to play, as was apparent in the previous Conference held in Goa, in which Beijing nearly stagnated India's concerted effort for eradication of terrorism, is an additional challenge. This prior meeting clarified China's involvement. China has also blocked India's attempts to have the UN label Maulana Masood Azhar a terrorist and expressed doubt about India's quest to become "a permanent member of the UN Security Council." For the sake of stability and security in the Indo-Pacific region as a whole, these overtures from China and Pakistan are a negative sign, especially for India and South Asia. Although the "International Court of Arbitration in The Hague" has ruled against China's attempt to incorporate the South China Sea into its marine borders, China remains keen on having the area.^[17] This judicial failure has made Beijing exceedingly aggressive and encouraged it to take various unscrupulous techniques while assisting Pakistan in encircling India. China's goal is to encircle India to contain its archrival, India. Given that hostile states are located both to New Delhi's north and West, it should be no surprise that the capital city's efforts to preserve its national security are being severely tested. Therefore, it must make the necessary adjustments to its foreign policy orientation to make it more realistic so that India can become a mighty and influential nation.

Conclusion:

Therefore, India's goal in its foreign policy is to realize its national interests no matter the conditions, even if this requires resorting to aggressive strategies if the situation warrants it. This is accomplished while adhering to a realist perspective pragmatically. India, now led by Prime Minister Modi, is trying to present as a credible and leading state, one that can reduce or eliminate the negative impacts of the structural restrictions and their historical canopies on the country's foreign policy. The objective is to ensure India's national security and other interests, as defined by India, are safeguarded, and for India to take its rightful position among the world's countries as a recognized and powerful superpower. These two aims are intrinsically linked. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's invocation and the subsequent politico-administrative workout to restart and reestablish India's foreign policy for his country to become a foremost power in the world are expressions of India's rising profile and its recently bought consciousness before the international community as to how the top Indian leadership understands its role in international politics and world affairs. In this setting, the country's increasing portfolio and newly acquired. There is no denying that such a comprehensive revision of the nation's foreign policy over the previous four years has already produced the outcomes aimed for in terms of India's ascending status across the globe. Under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, India has shown the world that no issue is insurmountable with the right amount of dedication and honesty, and the world now has a mandate that nothing is beyond the potential of human effort.

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