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भारत 2023 INDIA

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

ONE EARTH • ONE FAMILY • ONE FUTURE

Message from the BJYM President



Namaskar!

Foreign policy has been one of the strongest pillars of the Modi government. The last eight years have seen India adopting a multi-pronged foreign policy designed to defend Indian interests and promote consensus building to meet the pressing challenges facing the international community.

Prime Minister Modi started his tenure in 2014 by inviting leaders from neighbouring countries to his swearing-in ceremony. The India-Africa summit of 2015 saw the participation of all 54 African members of the United Nations for the first time. Similar summit-level engagements with Central Asia, Nordic countries, Pacific islands, and the Caribbean attest to the renewed thrust of multilateral Indian diplomacy to take everyone on board.

India has increased its diplomatic outposts in Africa by more than a third. It has upgraded its relationship with the West without undermining relations with Russia. We have redefined our relationship with the Arab countries while strengthening our relationship with Israel and Iran. We have been forging new structures of international cooperation like QUAD or the international solar alliance. PM Modi is the first Indian PM to visit Israel. He is the first Indian PM to make an official visit to Palestine. PM Modi is the first Indian PM to preside over a United Nations Security Council meeting.

India has deftly navigated the uncertainty and instability resulting from the pandemic and the Ukraine-Russia war. It adopted a principled stance on the tough questions of the day, be it the availability of vaccines to developing countries and the poor or ensuring access to affordable energy in a time of geopolitical turmoil. We have also responded kinetically to aggression against our core interests and territorial integrity.

And in 2023, India will have the honour of presidency of the G-20. Presidency comes at a time of great flux and uncertainty in the world, and only India can provide an anchor drawing from its civilizational wisdom and democratic traditions. The theme of India's G20 Presidency – “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” or “One Earth, One Family, One Future” reflects the driving idea behind the foreign policy of India.

This edition of the BJYM magazine focuses on the foreign policy of the BJP government under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi. The articles written by our cadre and young supporters will enrich your knowledge and perspective.

Vande Mataram

Tejasvi Surya
National President
Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha



संपादकीय

अंतरराष्ट्रीय परिदृश्य बहुत तेजी से बदलता है। उसके अनुरूप अपनी नीतियों में फेरबदल करना भी आवश्यक हो जाता है। इसके लिए पर्याप्त लचीलेपन की आवश्यकता होती है। अतीत में भारतीय विदेश नीति में इसका एक प्रकार से अभाव दिखा, लेकिन मोदी सरकार की विदेश नीति व्यावहारिक मोर्चे पर पूरी तरह पारंगत दिखती है। इसमें कोई संदेह नहीं कि भारत के आस-पड़ोस में अक्सर अस्थिरता हावी रही। इस कारण भारत का रवैया भी प्रायः प्रतिक्रियात्मक रहा, परंतु मोदी सरकार में इस रीति-नीति में बदलाव आया है। विदेश नीति में आया यह बदलाव उपयुक्त एवं तार्किक है, क्योंकि सदा परिवर्तनशील विदेश नीति को किसी एक लकीर या सांचे के हिसाब से चलाया भी नहीं जा सकता। प्रत्येक मामले के हिसाब से अलग नीति अपनानी होगी। तभी राष्ट्रीय हितों की पूर्ति संभव हो सकेगी। मोदी सरकार विदेश नीति की इसी व्यावहारिक राह पर चल रही है।

अपने प्रथम शपथ ग्रहण समारोह में प्रधान मंत्री मोदी ने पाकिस्तानी प्रधानमंत्री नवाज शरीफ सहित दक्षिण के सभी नेताओं को आमंत्रित किया था। इतना ही नहीं, अपने पहले विदेश दौरे के लिए उन्होंने भारत के पड़ोसी मुल्क भूटान को चुना तो दूसरी बार पीएम बनने के बाद वह पहली विदेश यात्रा पर मालदीव गए। यह सब कुछ अनयास नहीं था। उनकी यह कार्ययोजना एक रणनीति के तहत थी। मोदी की विदेश नीति में पड़ोसियों को प्राथमिकता देने का जो सिलसिला शुरू हुआ है।

मोदी सरकार के प्रथम कार्यकाल में पुलवामा हमले के बाद पाकिस्तान में एयरस्ट्राइक का मामला हो या दूसरे में अनुच्छेद 370 हटाने का मसला भारत ने अपने कूटनीतिक कौशल का परिचय दिया है। दोनों मसलों पर भारत ने कुशलता से अपना पक्ष विश्व-पटल पर रखा। भारत ने रूस और अमेरिका दोनों विरोधी देशों के साथ अपनी रिश्तों में निकटता बनाए रखी। यह विदेश नीति का बड़ा कौशल था।

रूस यूक्रेन जंग के मामले में भारत ने तटस्थता की नीति का पालन किया और राष्ट्र-हितों पर समझौता नहीं किया। कोरोना-काल में भारत की वैक्सीन डिप्लोमेसी ने वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् के विचार को सिद्ध किया। पहले की सरकारों में विदेश नीति का मूलमंत्र था गुटनिरपेक्ष होना जिसका अर्थ था सभी गुटों से समान दूरी। अब परिदृश्य बदल चुका है। अब भारत की नीति है सभी गुटों से समान नजदीकी। तेजी से बदलते वैश्विक आर्थिक और सामरिक परिदृश्य में भारत आज अपनी एक अलग पहचान रखता है। आज भारत आत्मनिर्भर बनने की राह पर तेजी से बढ़ रहा है। नरेंद्र मोदी के नेतृत्व वाली ये सरकार भारत की भावी पीढ़ियों को एक वैभवशाली कल देने का दमखम रखती है।



India's Foreign Policy Achievements under Modi Government



Image credit: The Indian Express

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, New Delhi has left behind decades old dogmatic approaches which shaped India's international relations for a long time. Ideological preferences have become the things of the past and pragmatic foreign policies have acquired the centre stage. National interest is the key driver of India's diplomatic relations with the world. New India believes in multilateralism and challenges the world order where few nations have the privilege to shape the global agenda.

Current world order, largely dominated by Western countries and Russia, leaves hardly any space for third world countries to make independent decisions. The West has its own schema which puts every country either in 'this camp' or 'that camp.' In such a polarized world and hierarchical international order defending one's strategic autonomy is a challenging task.

The Ukraine Crisis has become a litmus test for India's strategic autonomy and undoubtedly India has passed this test successfully. On the one hand, it has sent

a clear message to Moscow that this is not the era of war; on the other hand, its abstentions on UN resolutions against Russia has shown that strategic autonomy and national interests are of paramount importance for the Narendra Modi government. New Delhi's courage to take independent decisions has earned praise from many leaders across the globe. At the same time, India continues to buy crude oil from Russia which not only saves India's foreign exchange and stabilizes the price of fuel under control, not only for India but also for the world.



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The world has started to recognize India as a key player in shaping the new global order. This recognition is in resonance with India's increasing stature at global level. India is taking the role of leadership in tackling climate change issues, managing the crisis of pandemic and in promoting the interests of the Global South at various platforms like BRICS, G20 and SCO. As far as climate change is concerned, India has taken several steps in collaboration with other countries. Along with France, India has made the International Solar Alliance and it has also joined one sun, one world, one grid project. During the pandemic crisis, India took a humanitarian initiative under the Vaccine Maitri scheme to provide COVID-19 vaccines to many countries across the globe.

India has also achieved remarkable success in projecting its soft power through Yoga. The recognition of June 21 as the annual International Day of Yoga by the United Nation General Assembly was a big success. India's soft power is also projected through its vibrant diaspora which has a sizable presence in different parts of the world. The Modi government has proactively engaged with the diaspora in order to improve diplomatic relations.

One of the major objectives of India's foreign policy is to make India a major economic power. To achieve this goal, India has realigned its foreign policies to domestic needs. To attract investments, on the one hand, the Modi government has signed treaties with different countries; on the other hand, at the domestic level it has paved the way for structural reforms. Mantras like 'Make in India' and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' have brought a new life to the Indian economy. To give momentum to the manufacturing sector India needs cutting edge technology. For the present government, the sharing of technology is a major clause in bilateral treaties with

Russia, Israel, France and other countries.

New Delhi has sent strong signals to the world community that it cannot compromise with National Security. Surgical strikes at terror camps in Pakistan and action against insurgents at Myanmar's land show the firm determination of Modi government in safeguarding India's security interests. India has tackled the security problems through a unique blend of hard and soft power. Standoff with China was a critical situation, which was handled with dialogues and diplomacy. The Modi government has adopted a pragmatic approach towards security and it knows how to wisely manage conflicting interests. To contain China in the Indo-Pacific region, India has joined the Quad; at the same time it has reassured Russia that India is its old friend. Despite objections raised by the US, India continued its deal with Russia for S-400 missile defence systems. In the West Asia region, Israel and Arab countries have a long history of animosity, but both are important for India. The former is a major supplier of defence equipment and the latter fulfills energy needs of India. Narendra Modi is the first Prime Minister who paid a visit to Israel in 2017 and de-hyphenated India's diplomatic relations with Israel and Arab countries. Modi also visited the UAE in 2015 and Saudi Arabia in 2019.

Despite these achievements, there are challenges ahead and India has to craft its foreign policies to successfully tackle these problems. India cannot remain oblivious to the rise of a major power in its neighbourhood. De-globalization, decoupling, shorter supply chain, stronger nationalism, new technology- all these are disruptive forces, which have potential to change global order. Foreign Minister Dr S Jaishankar rightly puts that the issue is not whether India will continue rising,

the question is how to do it optimally. He further elaborates that India has to engage America, manage China, cultivate Europe, reassure Russia, bring Japan into play, draw neighbours in and extend the neighbourhood. The experience of the past eight years shows that the Narendra Modi government is an achiever at all these fronts. The countries which were neglected due to policy paralysis are also getting a new attention. Prime Minister Modi became the first PM to visit Mongolia, he visited Canada (after 42 years gap), Seychelles (after 34 years), UAE (after 34 years), Fiji (after 3 years), Australia (after 28 years), Sri Lanka (after 28 years) and Nepal (after 17 years).

Presence of thirty million plus Indian diaspora in every part of the world is one of the strengths of India. No other Prime Minister has connected with the Indian diaspora the way PM Modiji has done in last year's. His interaction with the Indian community worldwide has not only reenergized the diaspora but also raised their stature in their country of residence. PM Modiji has effectively motivated them to be unofficial ambassadors of India.

As a part of his soft diplomacy, PM Modiji has re-established our global civilisational connection. He has visited Janakpur (birthplace of Sita), Lumbini (birthplace of Lord Buddha), Dakeshwari temple in Dhaka, Gurudwara in Canada Budhhist site in China, etc exemplifies how he is trying to bring ancient connections in limelight.

In short, the current global affairs is full of challenges and uncertainties. In the world that is in flux, PM Modiji is not only effectively navigating India, protecting Indian interests but also leading the world towards stability and peace. No wonder he is following the ancient mantra by our forefathers "Vasudahaiva Kutumbakam".

**Author: Dr Vijay Chauthaiwale,
In-charge, Foreign Affairs Department, BJP**



A New World Order

In the background of the war between Russia and Ukraine, there now emerges a new world order. India is poised to regain its position as Vishwa Guru, with important steps taken by PM Narendra Modi. The foreign policy changes implemented under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi from 2014 has created a paradigm shift, earning global praise as well as strengthening India's position domestically. The entire process has earned India's foreign policy a new name – the '*Modi Doctrine*'. The Prime Minister's personal commitment to foreign engagement reflects in the fact that he has become the most travelled Prime Minister of India so far, with 118

trips to a total of 63 countries until May 2022.

India's first big foreign policy initiative post independence was the Non Alignment movement. However, one of the greatest flaws of the Non – Alignment movement was that India would often have to keep aside her own interest in order to stay non aligned. The Non-Aligned Movement had become an effective means of promoting India's diplomatic presence and the means of securing economic assistance internationally. But the fall of the USSR led to a world order dominated by the United States of America. India's New Economic Policy and inclination towards the USA raised questions over

India's seriousness over non-alignment. NAM continued losing relevance for India in an aligned world, especially after the founding members failed to support India during crises. During the 1965 and 1971 wars, Indonesia and Egypt took an anti-India stance and supported the Pakistani side.

The new world order has been necessitated by two recent events. The Covid -19 pandemic and the Russia - Ukraine war. Both these events have seen the alignment and creation of new partners and partnerships, in addition to creating tremendous stress and questions on post World War II organisations such as the WHO and NATO. India has walked a tight role through these black



Image credit: forbes.com



ARTICLE

swan events, leaning on two principles throughout – an assertive foreign policy will be positioned so that it benefits India's interest first, and India's new strengthened economic and diplomatic position will be used to assist other nations in need.

FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

India extended help to many countries in the global fight against the Covid-19 pandemic by delivering medical equipment and facilitating the evacuation of Indians and other South Asians from virus hotspots.

The biggest show of strength for the Modi government in this context was the introduction of a proposal to temporarily suspend global rules protecting intellectual property rights for the manufacture of COVID 19 vaccines in order to make them more accessible. As the developed world dug in its heels against the proposal, arguing that vaccine manufacturers will suffer as a consequence, the Modi government spearheaded an unprecedented fightback, leading the fight with the

support of over 100 nations.

In January 2021 – still in the peak of the pandemic, India launched the Vaccine Maitri initiative - a major diplomatic effort to gift and supply made-in-India vaccines to low-income and developing countries globally. Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Brazil, Morocco, South Africa, Afghanistan, Mexico, DR Congo, Nigeria, United Kingdom, and many other countries were among some of the beneficiaries of the Vaccine Maitri initiative. India kicked off international shipments of the vaccines on January 20, 2021, only four days after starting its own vaccination program. Bhutan and Maldives were the first countries to receive vaccines as a grant from India.

Under the vaccine 'Maitri' initiative, India has supplied over 235 million total supplies of Covid-19 vaccines to 98 countries of the world

ASSERTIVE FOREIGN POLICY

India pursued an assertive foreign policy aimed at demonstrating the country's strength. The country has managed to

balance several issues in the region. Further, despite mounting pressure from the West to condemn Russia or to support sanctions against Iran or Russia, India handled the situation in a measured manner.

The disruption of the energy supply following the Russia-Ukraine war has led to an unprecedented increase in oil prices and has disrupted the global energy system. International news agencies from the west have made a concerted effort to pressure India into taking an 'anti Russia and pro West' stance. However, under the new Modi Doctrine, the Indian government stated, 'The Indian government has a moral duty to provide energy to its people. India has not been told by anyone to stop buying oil from Russia.'

A marked difference from a bygone era that would have seen India crumble under western pressure.

Besides the Russia – Ukraine war, on matters of economic diplomacy, India has junked the multilateral approach. Case in point, India exited talks on a Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in 2019 at the last minute, arguing that it was doing so to safeguard its national interests. Billed as the largest regional pact, the mega trade pact also included the 10-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), along with developed economies such as Japan, Australia, South Korea, and New Zealand. India's unique economic and demographic situation meant that it would not fit in with the trade agenda of most other nations in the grouping.

In an unstable world, on the back of two black swan events, India is poised to lead the new world order by aligning the national political will with new international possibilities. An India – centric world view at the global stage is now closer to reality.

**Author: Madhukeshwar Desai,
National Vice-President, BJYM**



The priorities that shape Prime Minister Narendra Modi's foreign policy



Image credit: PIB / Alamy Stock Photo

Eight years into his term in office, one of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's most popular successes has been India's foreign policy under his leadership. This is a consequence of PM Modi's relentless pursuit of India's national interests. His policies are characterised by an uncompromising stance on national security, nurturing of strategic partnerships, leveraging diplomacy for development, confident representation of India's civilisational identity, providing leadership in tackling global challenges, among others.

National security accorded top priority

Under PM Modi, India has taken a number of concrete actions in the interest of its national security. Following the attacks in Pulwama and Uri by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists, India delivered a befitting response to Pakistan in the form of surgical strikes and air strikes, conveying in very clear terms that India has zero tolerance

towards terrorism. In the case of Chinese aggression at the LAC, India mounted unprecedented damage on the Chinese army in Galwan and made a powerful statement by capturing the strategic heights in the Kailash range in Ladakh.

Beyond these tactical moves, India has undertaken a range of activities to strengthen its strategic position in its region and globally for the long term. At our border areas, there has been a welcome push for building reliable and resilient infrastructure, which will greatly benefit our armed forces. The Modi government has embarked on a quest for Aatmanibharta, or self-reliance, in the defence manufacturing sector. In order to fulfil this vision, India has successfully attracted some of the world's top defence manufacturers to 'Make in India'. Meanwhile, at multilateral fora, India has successfully mobilised the international community for punishing Pakistan for its sponsorship of terrorism. The most

recent reflection of this was the unprecedented public expose of Pakistani terrorism at the UN counter-terrorism meet held in Mumbai.

Stronger strategic and economic relations

In our neighbourhood, our relations have grown stronger with every passing year. From concluding the Land Boundary Agreement with Bangladesh in 2015 to coming to the assistance of our neighbouring countries in times of crises, the Modi government has walked the talk with respect to its Neighbourhood First policy. This has boosted our friendship with our neighbours and deepened mutual trust and fraternal ties.

Meanwhile, in the wider region, India has played a pivotal role in initiatives that promote a free and open Indo Pacific. One of the most important of these is the Quad grouping, which brings together like minded democracies of India, Australia, Japan and the US.



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Owing to India's proactive engagement under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, the Quad has strengthened defence, economic and technological ties between its constituent members as well as other consequential players in the region. These efforts will go a long way in securing the region from potential aggressors and rule breakers in the decades to come. Furthermore, India has strengthened its various strategic partnerships, from West Asia to ASEAN. It has rejuvenated its bilateral ties using high level visits, with countries across continents, from Brazil to Mauritius to Russia.

The Modi government has also been steadfast in its promotion of India's economic and developmental interests. This is illustrated by its consistent efforts to attract foreign investment, technology transfers and new economic partnerships. The Foreign Direct Investment received by India has doubled in the past eight years to reach \$83 billion in 2021-22. Foreign governments like Japan have extended large amounts of infrastructure financing to facilitate path breaking projects in India, including the bullet train project. From international organisations to governments to multinational companies, India has been a recipient of investment from all quarters. Under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, India has also concluded several trade pacts, with the most recent ones being with Australia and the UAE. India is also fast emerging as a defence exporter, with our share of global arms exports increasing by 228% in 2016-2020 compared with 2011-2015. The deal with the Philippines earlier this year for the supply of BrahMos missiles demonstrates how the Modi government is successfully pushing India's strategic and economic interests effectively.

Leadership on global challenges

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, India has taken the lead in

addressing global challenges such as climate change, sustainability, terrorism and most recently, in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic. Right from the Paris Climate Agreement in 2016 to the climate conference in Sharm El Sheikh in 2022, India has demonstrated that it is going to be the driver of solutions that will address climate change, even though we were never the cause of the problem. India's approach to the pandemic too has been on similar lines, as we have emerged as the healing force for the world. India has supplied over 235 million Covid vaccines to the world, through various mechanisms. Throughout the pandemic, India remained a reliable supplier of several other medical goods too. One of the most remarkable stories during this time has been how India went from an importer of PPE kits to one of the largest exporters in the world. As we step into 2023, India has taken on a new leadership role, that of the G20, to steer the world's collective economic agenda amidst challenging geopolitical and economic headwinds.

Furthering India's soft power and global status

In recent years, we have seen a significant push by the Modi government to promote Yoga across the world. From getting a record 177 countries to co-sponsor the resolution to adopt June 21 as International Yoga Day to the celebration of the day every year globally, the impact of Modi government's impetus to Yoga has been felt far and wide. India has also made notable efforts towards strengthening our Ayurveda sector at home as well as promoting it abroad. In April this year, the World Health Organisation established a Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in Gujarat's Jamnagar, following diplomatic efforts of the Modi government. At the inauguration, Prime Minister Modi gave a clarion call of "Heal in India" to the

world, and positioned India as an attractive healthcare destination.

The Modi government has put our culture and civilisational identity at the forefront of its diplomacy and foreign engagements, something that is a refreshing change from the past governments. Prime Minister Modi has emphasised India's civilisational links in our neighbourhood and beyond. Following the diplomatic efforts of the Indian government, a number of foreign governments, from the US to Australia, have facilitated the return of our Murtis that were long lost or stolen. Islamic countries like the UAE and Bahrain have announced the construction of Hindu temples in their territories, which is a welcome development for millions of Indian migrants who work in the region.

Meanwhile, the power of the Indian passport has also rapidly grown. In 2022 itself, India climbed seven places in the Henley Passport Index. Indian passport holders today can visit 59 destinations worldwide without obtaining a visa, and the visa process for many of the remaining countries has also been greatly simplified. The Modi government has also practised a unique brand of public diplomacy that is accessible to all. As a result, the Indian public today has been invested and interested in the country's foreign policy like never before.

From the strengthening of strategic relations to the increased status and respect for India across the world, all these developments have been made possible by the rising stature of India under Prime Minister Modi's leadership. The New India of today speaks to the world with utmost confidence and capability and its rise has been welcomed by large and small countries alike.

**Author: Kamal Madishetty,
PhD Research Scholar in International
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“Modi”fying India's Foreign Policy in the Indo Pacific



Since assuming office in 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has turned India into a strategic player with a highly effective foreign policy. He has done this by shifting New Delhi away from its old strategy of strict nonalignment, paving the way for stronger ties with great and middle-sized powers. Under his watch, India has embraced the United States and its Indo-Pacific strategy in an effort to balance a rising China and keep the region open and free from coercion.

QUAD is a 'Force for Good'

As a leading voice of the global south, India brings a special political legitimacy to U.S. plans for a new Indo-Pacific balance of power. New Delhi's engagement with the QUAD, bilateral cooperation with Washington, London, and Paris, and collaboration with Europe prevent attempts by Beijing to paint the

problem in the region as between Asia and the West. India's presence in the Quad is the clearest affirmation that the problem in the East is about something else: the Chinese quest for hegemony driven by a massive power imbalance with its Asian neighbours. The summit among the leaders of Australia, India, Japan and the United States took place exactly three months after Russia launched the invasion of Ukraine which has sent shockwaves across the geopolitical system affecting energy, and food markets. The leaders of the Quad countries announced the formation of the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) which will build a “faster, wider, and more accurate maritime picture of near-real-time activities in partners' waters.”

“The benefits of this (maritime) picture are vast: it will allow tracking of “dark

shipping” and other tactical-level activities, such as rendezvous at sea, as well as improve partners' ability to respond to climate and humanitarian events and to protect their fisheries, which are vital to many Indo-Pacific economies,” a fact sheet regarding the summit announced. This common operating picture will integrate three critical regions — the Pacific Islands, Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean region - in the Indo-Pacific.

The First ever in person QUAD Summit.

This was Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first trip after the onset of the pandemic. A lot has changed since 2020. India faces an ultra-aggressive China, global supply chains have broken down, change in the leadership of the United States of America, the formation of the new alliance in the Indo Pacific AUKUS





Image credit: Rawf8

and Taliban is back in power in Afghanistan. Where does India feature in this new order? What are the big priorities for New Delhi?

India's Priorities

- 1 Firm commitments on the fight against terrorism.
- 2 Easing of trade barriers and new stable supply chains.
- 3 More clarity on vaccines and travel restrictions.
- 4 The future of the QUAD. What are its objectives? Does the QUAD need military teeth?

The Fight against Terror

ISIS Khorasan is reemerging in Afghanistan in India's backyard. Reports says foreign terrorists are pouring in and

more than 6000 Lashkar and Jaish terrorist have become active in Afghanistan. Joe Biden must promise to continue the war on terror, whether its intelligence sharing, joint activities and other collective security measures excluding India will prove to be counterproductive as observed in the previous Afghan QUAD. Also, USA must admit one key principle, there is no "good terror". It cannot tacitly support the Taliban while it is feeding anti-India terrorism. The same applies for Pakistan where for years India talked about Pakistan's double game. The US ignored it and paid a heavy price in Afghanistan.

Easing of Trade Barriers

India trades considerably with the US, Japan and Australia and there is a lot of untapped potential in this sector. India

and Australia are negotiating a Free Trade Agreement. Australia's trade minister will visit India next week. A trade deal is within reach. However, the India- US trade agreement is not so simple. President Biden is not a fan of the free trade agreement. India wants to export more engineering components, agriculture-based products whereas the US wants access for their dairy and farm products. However, agriculture is a highly protective sector in India as it employs more than 45% of the population. The US must be sensitive to this reality. The scope of cooperation in the Indo-Pacific ranges from security, ecology, trade, disaster relief, development and so on. There is a need to build a coalition of like-minded states to encourage an observance of the rule of international law, peaceful settlement of disputes, tackling climate change or trade and industrial policies. But the scope of the policy needs to cover the entire Indo-Pacific, not just one part of it.

The Road Ahead

Given the expansive nature of the Indo-Pacific, its cohesiveness will be put to certain test in the days to come. However, it is important to remember that the Indo-Pacific is a conceptual framework and not a regional organisation. The term is also often erroneously used interchangeably with the QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, comprising Australia, India, Japan, and the US). While the Indo-Pacific is a region that highlights economic and security interdependence, the Quad is a minilateral framework of leading democracies within the region. The security architecture of the Indo-Pacific region is still evolving, and the Quad constitutes an important pillar of it.

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INDIA: Making its Own Choices & Calling out the West Blind Spot!



Image credit: GUGLIELMO MANGIAPANE

“Unless India stands up to the world, no one will respect us, in this world, fear has no place, strength respects strength.”- Former President Shri APJ Abdul Kalam.

India has come a long way after 400 years of British plunder and colonization. There are only a few former colonies that have a stable democracy like India. The so-called "morally superior European countries" practiced a 'divide and rule' policy in their former colonies, be it in terms of religion, tribes, or ethnicities. They too drew the borders of new countries and did not consider at all which group of people lived there. After independence, India's foreign policy was more or less

dependent on Western support on various issues of global importance and even in India's internal affairs. After 2014, India's foreign policy has undergone a revolutionary transformation, both in terms of approach and achievements. The world witnessed a glimpse of the start of the Modi Government's foreign policy, when Narendra Modi became PM for the first time in 2014 and the SAARC head of states were invited for PM's swearing in ceremony. PM Narendra Modi did exceptionally well in India's foreign policy with the help of the then Minister of External Affairs Late Smt. Sushma Swaraj. India got a long due and much deserved global recognition that it never

had ever. PM Modi was continuously criticized for his official foreign trips; however his efforts were visible, when India-Pakistan tensions were high and whole world leaders were with India and supported India's surgical strike after Pulwama incident. The PM got the nerve of the common citizen of this country and he said that, “A country's best friend is its own citizens”. So, PM Narendra Modi chose not to be mere spectator, rather played an engaging & aggressive role in creating a space and stance for India, and the world has seen it during the India-China Doklam conflict or India's purchase of S400 from Russia in the face of likely US sanctions.

India is a witness of an assertive and



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confident foreign policy, which helped it to organize the first-ever summits of International Solar Alliance, Summit with Central Asian Nations, Summit with Pacific Island nations and India-Nordic Summit. India has been shouldering its global responsibilities by supplying Indian made vaccines and medicines to the world amid the Covid - 19 pandemic, at the same time providing humanitarian help to Ukraine and also supplying wheat to Egypt & other nations in need. It was PM Narendra Modi's personal rapport with World leaders and his out of the box approach to connect with the global personalities; that has been a boon in rescuing Indian students stuck in Ukraine during the Russia-Ukraine crisis.

PM Narendra Modi is the first Indian PM in the history of Independent India to actively promote India's ancient culture, tradition and arts. We all have seen him playing the drums in Japan, getting a special day assigned to Yoga by the UN, speaking Hindi at global forums, and striking impressive economic deals for India. PM Modi made sure India is noticed as a strong and confident but a peace loving power. The purpose of foreign policy is not to provide an outlet for our own sentiments of hope or indignation. It is to shape real events in a real world. For the first time ever, India has seen herself standing confidently & successfully to the western moral supremacy. Two of the main architects of present day foreign

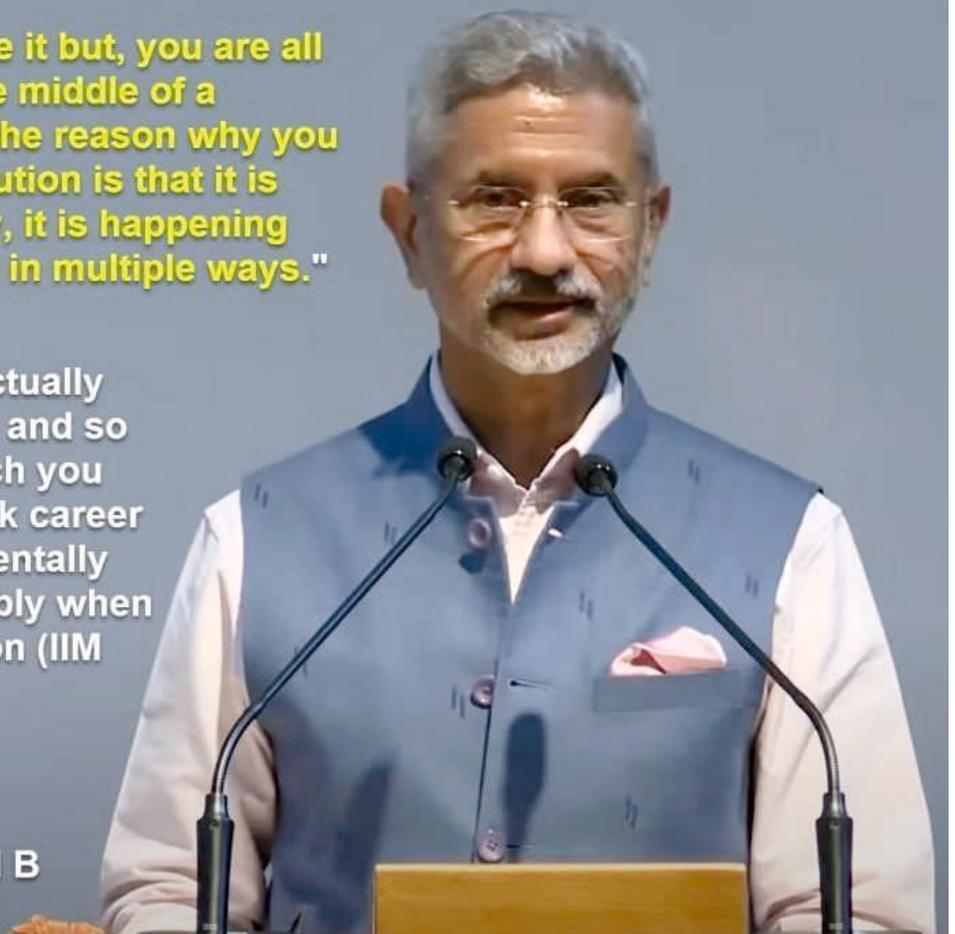
policy for India are PM Narendra Modi and Minister of External Affairs Dr S. Jaishankar. The External Affairs Minister is an articulate and adept leader in answering tricky questions, when it comes to conveying India's take on the world platform, as he is the best person to convey the tough but the right message. He always emphasized on the hard fact of India being on the side of its people and their interests.

The world is desperate for India to take a global role. India is continuously working towards creation of partnerships on equal terms with generosity towards smaller nations, proactively being the disruptor and shaping the global agenda and challenges, actively exploring and leveraging foreign relationships for

"I don't know if you realize it but, you are all actually living today in the middle of a revolution. And possibly the reason why you don't think of it as a revolution is that it is happening democratically, it is happening every day, it is happening in multiple ways."

"So, life around you is actually changing so dramatically and so deeply that the India which you will step into as your work career will actually be a fundamentally different India than possibly when you entered this institution (IIM Bangalore)."

Dr. S. Jaishankar
10 June, 2022 at IIM B



"In the Trump vision of the world, allies have disappointed America and competitors have cheated it. India is fortunate in being neither."

"Europe's problems are World's problems; World problems are not Europe's problems." - Dr. S. Jaishankar.



Image credit: GETTY IMAGES

indigenous development, creating people-centric foreign policy and use of Indian culture and thoughts in influencing international initiatives and discourses. Through these initiatives, India aims to strengthen its internal and national security and bring more prosperity by economic development. The Russia-Ukraine crisis is a brilliant reminder of the fact that success in a conflict depends not only on a nation's economic and military strength, but also on the number of its friendly nations. This could be the deciding factor between India and China. While China is losing friends, global trust and credibility, India is actively building, strengthening global partnerships and deepening bilateral commitments. Apart from being part of QUAD, I2U2 and Indo Pacific Economic Framework, India is also working on reviving BIMSTEC.

India is actively gaining momentum in making the right partnerships, for not just to ensure national security concerns for the future, but also relentlessly pursuing to serve national economic interests at the moment, like the establishment of "integrated food parks" and renewable energy projects in India by I2U2 partners, a supply chain resilience initiative with Japan and Australia, signing a pact on the transfer of critical defense technologies with the US, accepting American investments and technologies in key areas, selling missiles to Vietnam and the Philippines, signing free trade agreements with the UAE and Australia, Japanese partnerships in infrastructure, technology, innovation and startups and implementation of projects in cooperation in other countries in South Asia and Africa region, exponential growth of India- Israel defense

cooperation and cooperation in the development of new generation technologies and active cooperation of France in "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" in defense projects.

The World is lauding India's stand. Recently, Russian President Vladimir Putin praised India's independent foreign policy and described PM Narendra Modi as a great patriot. A Minister of UAE recently also praised Dr. S. Jaishankar and India's foreign & independent policy. The foreign policy of India could be summarized in a quote from Dr. S. Jaishankar, "We are Indians, we are a 5000-year-old civilization which is a modern-era nation-state, which is reclaiming its place in the world, but it's still a process, a very challenging process."

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Narendra Modi's Videsh Niti - The Art of Balancing the World

Since PM Modi assumed office in 2014 India's role has grown widely in formation of a stable world order in volatile conditions. His invite to the swearing in ceremony to the SAARC state leaders gave out a loud statement that India will play a much more proactive role in geo-politics. Under his watch India moved away from a pseudonym and built a strategic alliance with the United States of America. The previous government which followed a heavy Russian reliance and maintained its distance from NATO and US were successfully rectified and paving way for successful inclusion in groups like MTCR , formation of

QUAD while at the same time balancing the old friend in need Russia. Under Namo India is playing a pivotal role in maintaining strategic autonomy in a multi polar world. The rise of the dragon under Xi Jinping faced tough times in China's grab and sit on acquired land policy. Whether it was Dokalam or Galwan the dragon will have a hard time finding its feet while dancing with the Airavata.

India sits atop a match box soaked in gasoline. Having 2 arch enemies armed to the teeth with nuclear arms is a tough balancing act. Pakistan which is focused on building stronger alliances with

China is a volatile state with political financial unrest alongside terrorism. Like a global statesman PM Modi tried to mend the ties by making a goodwill visit to Pakistan in December 2015, two weeks after his unscheduled meet in Paris. This was followed by usual treachery of Pakistan sponsored terror attack in URI in which 19 Indian soldiers were martyred. This was given a befitting reply by India in a never before seen manner in a surgical strike deep inside POK where a mixed group of special forces and special assault team of different regiment eliminated 100+ terrorists in training camps , The leadership and Valour of the PM to



Image credit: dw.com



avenge was another testimony to the prowess of “Naya Bharat”, that a bullet for a bullet will be the answer to any hostility.

China on the other hand tried to behave like the biggest bully in someone else's backyard. PM Modi's clear message to Xi through a secure hotline of vacating Doklam otherwise the Indian armada would move forward toward Shanghai was a big assertion of intent. The infamous Galwan clash again threatened the world of a possible Nuclear fallout but the visionary leader gave our braves in olive camo a free hand to avenge their fallen brothers. This instilled fear in Beijing and the Chinese Army was successfully pushed back to Aksai Chin after several levels of military dialogues. This episode established India as the biggest face against China's bullying which helped India in successfully building alliances with countries such as Vietnam & Philippines, making east policy a grand success.

India's friendship with countries like Nepal, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka reached new heights. Like a responsible guardian of South Asia and IOR, India extended its helping hand to financially crippled Sri Lanka aiding its

economic stability and welfare of our Sinhalese neighbour. Recently Afghanistan witnessed the help of its guardian angel wherein India provided grains, libraries, infrastructure projects to Mi-24 guns to form a stable state which alas due to hasty withdrawal of US and NATO landed the proud Afghanistan in the hands of a much more better equipped Taliban creating volatility in India's north western neighbourhood.

A possible bridge between Europe and Russia, PM Modi's foreign policy focuses both on maintaining alliance with Russia and joining Western alliances, such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, alongside the United States, Australia, and Japan. From Brussels to Tokyo to Washington, governments are determined to lower their dependence on Beijing. At a time when instability in China is being questioned, shifting geopolitical realities offer India an opportunity to shine. Coupled with its geopolitical stance, India's economic condition is looking favourable for the rest of this decade. The recent oil purchase from Russia which was being questioned by the west was strongly answered and a mirror was shown to Europe about their hypocrisy.

Europe was given the taste of the proverb “The sieve asks the needle why do you have a hole”.

PM Modi, like a guardian, extended helping hand in efforts to feed the unfed and to provide an umbrella for those suffering from the Covid outbreak. The whole human civilization came to a pause, while the biggest of developed nations shied away from lending a helping hand; India extended 250 million Dollars to Maldives. India became the pharmacy of the world according to the words of Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya. India supplied COVID vaccines to 150 countries while maintaining its own need too. The leadership of PM Modi helped India establish itself as a different kind of world leader.

India continues to grow at a steady pace. It also continues to bolster ties with the important middle eastern nations. Following heavy reliance on imports of crude oil from Iraq, India continues to maintain healthy relations with other strategic players of the region like Saudi Arabia and UAE. India's all weather friend Israel embraced a much more proactive role in bilateral ties in the sector of agriculture and defence.

India under PM Modi projected its power in different ways, whether it be holding hands with Benjamin Netanyahu to Hosting Donald Trump. The Modi Magic continues to sweep the world off its feet and under the visionary leader India's independent foreign policy is a huge success. His tours of different nations in his initial years in office established a deeper bond which continues to grow and will bear more fruits in years to come and by 2047 Modi's India will be the biggest saviour of the world through 'Adar' and 'Satkar' of the one's in need.

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The New Geometry of Indian Foreign Policy under the Modi Government

Increasing globalization and interdependence between nations across the globe have enhanced the need for healthy diplomatic relations among all countries. Today sound and strategic foreign policy are crucial for having a voice in international platforms, for effective trade and investments, and for achieving consistent domestic progress.

Since India gained independence, the world has changed beyond recognition. From the bipolar world of the U.S. and Soviet Union to a brief unipolar period when American hegemony reigned, to one where China and the United States are moving toward another bipolar competition, distracted by multipolar illusions.

According to India's point of view, India is already a leader in the developing world and wants its status recognized in

the developed world. And its foreign policy of aims to maintain international peace and security, oppose imperialism, stand against the apartheid policy, propagate the peaceful and political settlement of international disputes, foster peaceful coexistence, remain non-aligned and non-committed, and maintain the unity and solidarity of the third world. The important objectives of India's foreign policy invariably adhere to a set of basic principles on which no compromise is made securing. The objectives and policies are as:

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (The World is One Family): India views the entire world community as a single large global family, where members live in harmony, work and grow together, and have trust in one another.

India First Policy: With 75 years of independence, and one-fifth of the

world's population, India has a greater sense of confidence and optimism in articulating an "India First" foreign policy. India decides for itself, and its independent foreign policy cannot be subject to intimidation.

Global Problem-Solving Approach: India advocates a global debate and global consensus on issues of global dimensions such as the world trade regime, climate change, terrorism, intellectual property rights, global governance, and health hazards. For example, when the world was facing the horrible disease of COVID-19, India under the inspiring leadership of Sh. Narendra Modi developed the COVID-19 vaccine and provided it to many nations and saved a million lives.

Act East and Neighbourhood First Policy: India's "Look East Policy", rechristened as the "Act East Policy" by



Prime Minister Narendra Modi led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Government, has been lauded as the country's most successful foreign policy initiative taken in the past two decades. India shares its borders with countries like Pakistan, China, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and Bhutan. Currently, the Modi Government has greatly emphasized the need to prioritize ties with its immediate neighbours. It is being implemented through Neighbourhood First and Act East policies. These policies focus on the implementation of projects for stronger regional integration, security, and defence. Following are some examples of such initiatives:

- India has signed various MOUs amongst **SAARC** nations for cooperation in areas of trade, infrastructure, commercial linkages, and transit facilities. These agreements ensure a free flow of resources, energy goods, labour, and information across borders.
- With India's initiative Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal are grouped together (**BBIN**) for energy, development, motor vehicles, water power management, and inter-grid connectivity.
- To strengthen the relationship with Southeast Asian countries, India has done immense work in multiple dimensions such as infrastructure, investments in bridges and highways, improved access to gateway spots, and technology transfer. **The India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway** and the **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transport Corridor** is going to be a milestone in the fields of trade and commerce. Apart from it, the promotion of tourism in various cultural and religious sites and preservation of ancient manuscripts, heritage sites, and artifacts. As well as India has strengthened its

economic ties with these countries through decisive bilateral trade agreements.

Multi-Aligned Approach: India is on its path to becoming a regional superpower with considerable influence in global affairs. An important aim in the present foreign policy is to participate and take the lead in several international governance platforms. India is already a member of the **G20**, the **East Asia Summit**, and the **BRICS** collision and aims to increase its authority at these forums. The government also aspires to permanent membership in the **United Nations**

Security Council. As of March 2007, India was the 3rd largest provider of peacekeeping forces to the United Nations (UN). Meanwhile, India continues to lead the **G77** and the Non-Aligned Movement and in this capacity negotiates on behalf of the developing nations in the UN General Assembly and WTO Doha talks. And under the leadership of visionary PM **Sh. Narendra Modi** the **international solar Alliance** was started by India in the year 2015 and has a membership of more than 120 countries committed to creating solar technology and supporting the use of solar power. Other examples of India's global efforts under the Modi Government are the **Indian Ocean Rim Association** and **BBIN**.

National Security: It is certainly a basic tenet of international relations that national interests are paramount, and India too, like other nations, has pursued its interests when it comes to foreign and national security policies. Security is necessary for any nation; India's principal priority is ensuring conventional security for its country and its people. In recent years, India has built up a strong and capable Army, Navy, and Air Force: the third, fourth, and seventh largest in the world respectively. India's military is not only large but effective, well-trained, and

increasingly well-equipped. India's Air Force has been known to best that of the United States in combat air exercises.

In addition to reinforcing and strengthening close defence partnerships with some of the foremost military powers of the world including the US, Russia, France, and Israel among others, the Modi Government has sought to allow the armed forces to work with the best in the business. Whether it is INS Vikrant or Rafael fighters under the Modi Government Indian forces are getting stronger.

Economic Policy: Today, India is the world's fifth largest economy and increasingly engaging with the Association for South East Asian Nations (**ASEAN**) including working on a Free Trade Agreement (**FTA**), and continues to engage bilaterally with the members and others with trade agreements completed or in process with countries such as Thailand, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Korea, Singapore, and Japan. Although it appears that India is focusing most of its energies and attention on bilateral economic initiatives, it continues to support regional and even multilateral agreements such as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (**BIMSTEC**), and the new South Asian Free Trade Agreement (**SAFTA**), and taking a very active role in the World Trade Organization (**WTO**) Doha negotiations. With PM Narendra Modi's game-changing visionary policy **Make in India**, India has attracted many global players and bagged a large amount of FDI.

Energy Resources: In an effort to ensure access to energy resources, India will continue to focus on the Middle East region (which supplies two-thirds of its oil), and particularly on Iran. Iran currently provides 10% of India's oil (it's fourth largest provider after Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, and Kuwait).





Today India only gets 3% of its electricity generation from nuclear power (compared to 30% in Japan and 78% in France); it wants to expand its nuclear energy production by 9% a year through to 2050. This current low level of production was one of the driving factors behind the July 2005 civilian nuclear agreement between India and the United States.

Nuclear Capability and Non-proliferation: India has two nuclear weapons powers on its borders: China and Pakistan and one would-be nuclear weapons power in its immediate locale Iran. Its relations with these first two powers are unstable; India has fought wars with both in recent decades and tensions rise and fall over border disagreements. In this context, India continues to attend to its own nuclear resources and is very sensitive to the intimation of control by any other power.

In addition to India's concerns regarding a direct nuclear threat, it is also extremely sensitive to the possibility of the proliferation of nuclear weapons or technologies given the region's history in

this area. When the U.S.-India civil nuclear agreement is complete, requiring a consensus vote of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, India will be able to take a more active role in promoting nuclear nonproliferation goals.

Despite India's nuclear weapons status today, it is likely that they will continue to promote the long-held goal of a nuclear weapons-free world. Meanwhile, they remain extremely concerned regarding the addition of any new nuclear power.

Security of non-resident Indians: In recent times, the Modi Government has shown serious concerns about the security and human rights of non-resident Indians. Modi Government has rescued more than one lakh Indians in the last eight years stranded in different parts of the world. The most prominent of these rescue missions were from regions hit by civil war such as Syria, Yemen, and Iraq.

Recently during the Russia-Ukraine war, India has evacuated safely more than an estimated 18,000 Indian nationals under Operation Ganga, which is truly a

commendable task. The world has seen how the Indian Tricolor became a protective shield not only for Indians but also for other nationals. This is the Power of New India and Strong Indian Foreign Policy.

In the broad area of counter-terrorism, whether through interdiction, intelligence sharing, military training, or teaching about multi-ethnic and religious engagement, India has enormous resources and experience from which to draw. Various reports from different global agencies predict that India will become the third-largest economy in the world by 2030. Despite this India has to fill huge gaps in the areas of health, education, and agriculture. As the government finds ways to address these problems and disparities, India will have a role to play in teaching and educating others. Definitely, the willpower, vision, and innovation of the Modi Government reflects in India's foreign policy and are going to make India a superpower.

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Foreign Policy of PM Modi: An Era of Energetic Engagement



Image credit: US Embassy, New Delhi

The world today is truly a global village where challenges are shared as are opportunities. Bilateral diplomacy amongst nations is giving way to multilateral engagements as an alternate mechanism of conducting foreign policy. For multilateral groupings as diverse as the QUAD, G20, SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) & BRICS; what is the common glue that binds each of these? The glue for global good is India. Challenges are aplenty but the global commons look towards India for pragmatic & enlightened leadership on a host of issues from climate change to UN reforms. This has truly been the hallmark of the Modi era. When 1/6th of humanity moves forward responsibly in achieving its economic emancipation while taking its fair share of global burdens; the world sits up & takes notice. The reader could also ponder on

what is common between former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov & UAE's Minister for Artificial Intelligence Omar Sultan Al Olama? Three individuals from very different nations. Unsurprisingly they've all lavished praise on PM Modi's independent minded conduct of Indian foreign policy ably stewarded by Sushma Swaraj & subsequently by Dr. S Jaishankar.

The foundation of a proactive foreign policy abroad is a self-reliant domestic policy at home. As the former American President Abraham Lincoln said "A house divided against itself cannot stand". India is healing all its divisions; real & imagined: From reducing stark socioeconomic differences between communities to forging permanent peace with domestic rebel groups. When India stands united free of internal fissures,

the global comity accepts us as a voice for sense & sanity in a global polity marked by rancour & discord. The difference in the resolve of our leadership is for all to see. A clearly bilateral issue which could have been settled by the just use of force was internationalised for perpetuity involving the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir in '48. Our quest for misplaced idealism over hard nosed realism made us forego precious Indian territory. India gave up its gains from the battlefield at the negotiating table of Tashkent post the Indo-Pak conflict of '65. The return of the hard won & strategic Haji Pir pass being a case in point.

The benefits of being a declared nuclear weapons state by the early 70's was squandered away by imagined pressure from global powers. PM Vajpayee successfully resisted international



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pressure & ensured nuclear tests giving us confidence to never be cowed down by nuclear blackmail from across our northern & western borders. PM Modi followed in his footsteps to ensure that reasonably priced Russian crude reached the Indian consumer post the Ukraine conflict despite continued pressure from the Western bloc. Foreign policy is the fist that works effectively when the armed forces act as its arm so that when challenged a knockout punch can be delivered to an adversary. The UPA government's policy of isolating Pakistan diplomatically post 26/11 Mumbai attacks failed because our adversary knew that diplomacy was not backed by military might. The Modi government has given a stellar account of itself by first extending an arm of friendship by inviting our neighbours including Pakistan at his swearing in ceremony as Prime minister & flying down to Pakistan as well. When India was confronted by Pakistan sponsored terror attacks in Uri & Pulwama. India responded diplomatically by naming & shaming Pakistan in global forums thus ensuring it's grey listing by FATF (Financial Action Task Force) for terror financing combined with retaliatory surgical & air strikes. This has led to a much-weakened Pakistan which has immense nuisance value but is no longer a strategic peer to India. The World saw India extending an olive branch to an adversary but when efforts for peace were sabotaged the world also saw India take decisive action. This is a true manifestation of Chanakya Neeti in our foreign & security policy when our strategic calculus gives us a plethora of options rather than placing constraints on our choice of actions.

The ultimate end goal of an effective foreign policy is securing our national interests & protecting our citizens abroad; come rain or shine. From launching operation Rahat during the Yemen-Saudi conflict to mission Devi

Shakti in the wake of the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan; the Government of India used our navy & airforce to evacuate our citizens & those of neighbouring nations as well from active zones of conflict. India's call for restraint was exemplary when Russia & Ukraine mutually stopped hostilities so that Indian citizens could be evacuated. A far cry indeed from the days India had to seek food aid from the US government in the form of PL 480 before the onset of the green revolution. The advice of only a self-reliant or "aatmanirbhar" nation proud of its rich legacy & traditions yet embracing modernity is heeded to by both the belligerents in a conflict situation. In line with our age old ethos of treating all nations big or small as equals; regions with minimal diplomatic presence & no high level visits in decades is getting much needed attention.

From Gabon to Guinea Bissau & from Argentina to Australia our national leadership is making it a point to proceed for bilateral visits to revive much neglected relationships. The CARICOM (a grouping of Caribbean states) & the African Union are getting the desired level of attention with the conduct of summit level meetings with all member states. Diplomatic presence is being increased across the globe with new missions opening up in Rwanda, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea & Burkina Faso among others. We are not just keeping pace with China in our diplomatic presence but outpacing them when it comes to providing development assistance to developing nations of the global south. Smaller nations see India's presence as a benign friend extending a helping hand unlike China's wolf warrior tactics combined with debt trap diplomacy creating neo- imperial colonies. India has reached out with vaccines to poorer 3rd world countries who would otherwise have to wait for their turn at the end of the queue if they

solely depended on 1st world nations. This aptly demonstrates our civilizational commitment to save lives & livelihoods. As our Hon' PM put it succinctly 'जान है तो जहान है' i.e If there is life then there are limitless possibilities.

While we have come a long way & completed a full circle from the time former United States National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger referred to Indians in derogatory terms to today when the US foreign secretary Anthony Blinken terms Indo-US relations as the most consequential of the 21st century. This has been the combined effort of our political leadership starting from PM Modi to the faceless diplomat manning our far-flung diplomatic posts in some remote corner of the globe. India's call for UN reforms starting with an expanded permanent membership of the security council in line with today's global realities will be a reality far sooner than any of us could contemplate. Integrating our neighbourhood is a work in progress with trans-border railway lines & transmission lines being a reality today & perhaps a free trade agreement being a reality tomorrow. India has continued to play the part of a concerned friend without involving itself in the bitter domestic politics of neighbours. From ensuring essential supplies reach Sri Lanka during its worst economic crisis to not appealing against an order of a UN tribunal ruling in favour of Bangladesh shows our pragmatism is coupled with grace & generosity. As Dr Jaishankar so aptly states in his book *The India Way* "This is a time to engage America, manage China, Cultivate Europe, reassure Russia & bring Japan into play'. We have been doing all of this & more with all the energy & enthusiasm at our command.

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Foreign Policy under The Modi Government

Despite underlying 'one size fits all' assumptions, western worldviews have been accepted as gospel and adopted unquestionably without considering either the grassroots realities of each nation-state or the potential risks and uncertainties. The inherent optimism of the American global order can be mesmerizingly charming until one realizes that it can also be incredibly naïve.

At the turn of the century, globalization was widely touted as the panacea for the world economy. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that President Clinton's speech in Congress, in 2000-01 when China became a member of the W.T.O. is treated with considerable derision for stating that "*Membership in the W.T.O., of course, will not create a free society in China overnight or guarantee that China will play by global rules. But over time, I believe it will move China faster and further in the right direction, and certainly will do that more than rejection would*". Two decades later, the world shook its head in dismay over the unabashed suppression of democracy in Hong Kong – the same democracy Mr. Clinton had hoped that free trade would foster. Internal dissent, an aging population, and an economy that is showing distinct signs of crumbling under the weight of its debt, make it increasingly likely that Mr. Xi Jing Ping will not only tighten his iron grip over his people, but also dispatch a fleet of fishing boats to Taiwan. American strategists are now left debating - despite Mr. Biden's strongman utterances – whether it would be such a bad thing after all if China were to be allowed to annex an island that is less than 0.5% of its land mass. Because the other option

is to risk humiliation in a limited conflict in the South China Sea – a risk that can be mitigated only by escalating rapidly to a wider global war. Mr. Clinton's foolishly innocent wide-eyed naivety which has led the U.S. into this strategic dilemma is matched only by America's rigid insistence on staying its course with Pakistan, despite acknowledging that it is not to be trusted.

These mercurial (some might say infantile) features of American diplomacy have not prevented Mr. Modi's Government from forging a strong partnership with the Anglophile world – a sub-set of 'the West' which Indian diplomacy seems to understand better than its European alter ego. And this is despite the fact that the ever-spiteful elements such as Congresswoman Jaipal and more recently Ms. Braverman, who showed distinct signs of suffering from the 'coconut mindset'. India's importance to

the Anglophile world has been underscored and perhaps belatedly enhanced, not just because of China's increasing intransigence and Pakistani two-faced delinquency but also by a more confident and 'brook-no-nonsense' messaging from a new breed of Indian diplomats.

The resounding success of India's foreign policy challenge is visibly apparent not just when it comes to the West but also its neighbors in South Asia and the region. Having solidified the Indo-Japan partnership, and with the success of its outreach to the Sunni Arab states while at the same time reiterating its friendship with Israel is not an achievement to be sneezed at. The only blot on the copybook is Nepal – a relationship now fraught with suspicion, but which is borne out of the fact that a communist Government at the helm in Nepal is instinctively more comfortable hitching its fortunes onto the Chinese



bandwagon than its own traditional ally. Regardless of these and other diplomatic successes stories such as in the Indian Ocean Island states, the Modi Government will ultimately be judged by how it is able to navigate its course during the new turbulent phase that the world has entered since the beginning of 2022, following close on the heels of a devastating pandemic over two years.

Change, they say, is constant. As recent developments on the global stage have demonstrated, it can also be unforeseen and chaotic when ushered in with bewildering speed. History will surely judge the Modi Government's foreign policy performance based on how well it negotiates the great upheaval. Apart from the consequences of a war in Europe, which has raised the spectre of a nuclear conflict for the first time since the nineteen-fifties, the conflict is turning the global order upside down. Everything we took for granted last year is now in need of re-evaluation. By putting long-standing supply chains at peril, it has irreversibly destroyed the rationale of globalization. Other challenges include the question mark on India's strong reliance on Russia for its defense needs. However, while these aspects will no doubt evoke a strategic long-term response, the immediate concern is the axis between Russia, China, and Pakistan which clearly seems to be emerging, no doubt based on the self-interests of those states rather than any ideological consensus. At the same time, New Delhi is under increasing pressure to take sides and its refusal to do so is seen as exposing India to a position where it is not an ally of either side and therefore not a priority when help and co-operation is needed.

Detractors of the Modi Government may cry themselves hoarse about the increasing proximity between Pakistan and China, raising the sceptre of a looming two-front war. China's determined attempts to isolate India,

resulting in downright hostile neighbors or its debtors, too feeble to resist ceding either facilities such as ports to China or worse, territory which is historically Indian fuels the skewed perception of being encircled.

However, even if one is inclined to forgive these critics for their sense of foreboding, these Cassandras of doom cannot escape censure for their feeble intellect and lack of appreciation of the holistic reality. Nations are expected to act in their own self-interest. Mr. Modi's foreign policy cannot be evaluated by what India's adversaries are attempting to do or perceived to have achieved. The statesmanship, marked by an unwillingness to meekly follow the path set out by any country, friend or foe, unless it is the in the nation's own self-interest is a very distinctive feature of Mr. Modi's diplomacy, which is the product of a strong sense of independence and a refusal to be influenced by any interest group. India will do as it suits India and what is in India's own self-interests. If this sounds like new ageism in geopolitics, it is only because the last century and a half have been characterised by blocs, alliances, treaties, and partnerships that have proved to be transitory and prone to unravel.

The utility and benefits of this frank down-to-earth diplomacy are evident. While the rest of the world debates the question of whether it was NATO expansion or Russian adventurism which caused the war in Europe, India's position remains unapologetically pragmatic and cannot at the same time be morally faulted. Refusing to endorse or support the war in any form or manner, India has reiterated on more than one occasion that we are no longer in the era of warfare. Failure to see that humanity has (or at least should) evolved into a new epoch can result in untold suffering. Having said that however, if the world chooses to remain

at war, then India is entitled to shrug its shoulders and look to its own needs and priorities.

Western nations, looking at the world as composed of different interest groups and alliances, are astounded by India's approach and are - as yet - unable to see sense in India's approach. They fail to realize that such stereotyped thinking, seeped in the tradition of '*either you are with us or against us*' is passe and illogical.

It would be easy to characterize this approach as non-alignment, especially given India's history of being a part of the non-aligned movement, then comprised of some of the most renowned dictators and terrorists known to history. A reflective consideration of India's position, however, will show stark differences between the non-alignment of the sixties and seventies and its stand on the present war in Europe. The non-alignment movement emerged in the era of the cold war when both warring sides were willing to offer protection and patronage for tacit support, leading sometimes to proxy wars across the globe.

To characterize the emerging policy of non-interference is not a revival of non-alignment nor an attempt to seize an unoccupied moral high ground but is a view expressed from a position of strength and confidence. It is predicated on the premise that having expressed the right view India will go about its own business instead of attempting to impose its view on other countries. Ultimately, the West is coming around to the view that Mr. Modi was correct in asserting that this is not the era of war. As one commentator put it "*The Modi government is redefining strategic autonomy as an objective that is attainable through strengthened partnerships rather than the avoidance of partnerships. By doing so, it is underlining that in today's complex global scene, strategic autonomy should*





not necessarily be a twin of non-alignment”.

The issue was aptly summarized by Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale at the 2019 Raisina Dialogue in January this year, who declared, “*India has moved on from its non-aligned past. India is today an aligned state—but based on issues.*”

Nevertheless, challenges remain. A former RBI Governor who, it turns out, did not really understand economics after all, is still waiting in the wings for the Indian economy to implode. He must never be proved right – an eventuality that is closer to reality now owing to the turbulence arising from the high price of oil and commodities. The breakdown of supply chains must be turned into a big opportunity – for which India needs a new generation of reform to shed the

culture of indecision and delay which became second nature with the advent of a left-leaning Government immediately after independence, but which must surely now be strongly reversed.

Meanwhile, on the foreign policy front, China remains the biggest challenge, even more so than a floundering Pakistan. The border skirmishes in 2020 were not over a piece of grassland. It was driven by China's urge to flex muscles and demonstrate that it is the predominant power in Asia, and has emerged as a superpower able to match the U.S.A. To put it bluntly – China acts as a bully, just because it can. Or thinks it can. It would have of course leaned that this is not the India of 1962 and that India does not flinch at its Wolf Warrior brand of diplomacy. Despite this, however, China continues to

unrelentingly oppose India much like an elder brother would scorn an up-and-coming sibling and underplay his achievements.

However, while shunning conflict, the Modi Government has not hesitated to make symbolic gestures to show that it is no longer a pushover. It has made it abundantly clear that the inclination of the previous regime to make the Line of Control a permanent border is no longer considered an acceptable solution and also stated in Parliament its ultimate objective of integrating Gilgit-Baltistan into 'Akhand Bharat'. Surely, critics who may believe that this is what induced Chinese hostility, are not just naïve but ignorant of China's long-term game plan for complete global dominance – a spectre that should never mature into reality as long as a resurgent democratic India remains a credible alternative.

The Glory of 8 years of Modi Government: Sweeping transformation in India's Foreign Policy

A renewed interest in the Bhartiya Janta Party was perceived to be growing around June 2013 when Narendra Modi was declared the chief of the party's election campaign for the 2014 general elections. In the days and months to come, Modi would weave an impressive and dominant narrative that would give rise to a strong and compelling emotion for a change. This would eventually grow into a massive wave that would sweep away the Congress dispensation which had ruled India for a decade, from 2004 to 2014.

Since, May 2014, worldwide interest both in the Narendra Modi-led government and the party BJP has kept growing. Modi's election to the centre was particularly significant, given that it was for the first time in 3 decades that a single party won the majority seats to form the government at the Centre. BJP racked up a stunning 282 seats on its own, the highest number of seats won by any party since the 1984 Lok Sabha elections when the Congress, led by then prime minister Rajiv Gandhi won a decisive victory.

Earlier, the Manmohan Singh-led UPA failed on many fronts. The entire nation witnessed the myriad of scams. During the UPA tenure, the nation was failing on many fronts be it the nation's foreign policy, chronic economic distress and a general sense of policy paralysis at the centre. All this sparked anger among the people.

The entire nation has witnessed that

before the Modi government was elected to power there have been many blunders committed by the previous prime ministers in terms of the foreign policy of India, for instance, during the tenure of Jawaharlal Nehru India's foreign policy was a disaster this fact is evident from the fact that UNSC seat to China was served on a platter in the Nehruvian period, not only this but the Nehru led government mutely spectated the attacks by Pakistan and the capturing of Jammu and Kashmir and the failure of Indo-China war of 1962 are all the events that

showcase the poor decisions of Jawaharlal Nehru with regard to the foreign policy. Similarly, during the tenure of Indra Gandhi, various trade barriers were imposed in India and on the other hand, other Asian countries like China, Japan, South Korea etc. worked on privatisation as a consequence of which they become one of the great economies in the world, had there been no trade barriers at that time then India could also have made it to that level.

But India's foreign policy has now



become more dynamic and vibrant under the Modi Government. It is for the first time that India has a strong standing in the international fora. Now, the entire world considers India's stand on various global issues and India's decisions have a huge impact on the entire world.

Safeguarding the National Security against terrorism:

India carried out Surgical Strikes across the border, both in the east and west, to demonstrate its willingness to go beyond the conventional methods to deal with the scourge of terrorism. With the Balakot airstrikes, it showed that gone are the old days when India was just a silent spectator under the previous UPA Prime Ministers. One of the key features of Modi's foreign policy is the zero-tolerance policy for terrorism emanating from neighbouring countries, especially Pakistan. In the UPA regime, India and its citizens were silent victims of the terrorism emanating from Pakistan, national security of India was compromised which is evident from the fact that the incident of the 26/11 Mumbai Taj attack took place which shook the entire nation, even after this devastating event no action was taken against Pakistan but now, PM Modi authorized an audacious surgical strike against the terror launchpads responsible for sending terrorists that carried out the Uri terror attack in 2016. Days after the terror attack, the Indian Armed Forces launched a counter-operation, inside Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, and destroyed the terror launchpads, showcasing the fundamental shift in its policy on tackling terror attacks in India.

Covid Vaccinations: Emerging as the ray of hope for the entire world

Not only national security but India portrayed its prowess in medical science also in the International Fora. During the Covid outbreak, the entire world was working on vaccines to counter the pandemic and India leveraged its prowess in vaccine manufacturing,

developing its vaccine in record time and rapidly scaling its capacities to manufacture vaccines developed by western organisations. India exported around 65 million doses of vaccines to more than 100 countries which portrayed India's commitment to humanity.

Evacuation Operations:

The Modi-led government not only considers the safety of the citizens living within the territories of India but also rescues those who reside outside of India in time of distress. In 2015, India executed rescue operations in strife-torn Yemen, pulling out its citizens from at least 26 other countries. At that time Maldives also joined the 25 countries requesting India for help this established India's capability and confidence of the other countries in the international fora. Recently, when the war broke out between Ukraine and Russia many students studying in Ukraine were facing problems in the war-torn nation in response to their plight Modi-led government carried out Operation Ganga. India evacuated almost around 20,000 nationals, mostly students, on 90 flights under the mission. Narendra Modi's government stepped up its effort to make sure every individual comes home alive. From late-night meetings to sending over cabinet ministers to oversee operations from neighbouring countries, the government did it all. India brought back its nationals from Romania, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Moldova after they crossed over to those countries from Ukraine through land border transit points.

Importance to India's Self-Interest:

India's stand in the Russia-Ukraine conflict showcased that India prioritises its self-interest the most rather than seeking validation from the West. Russia has been India's oldest and most reliable defence partner and when the whole West aligned against Russia in the war India stood by Russia and cleared its

stance that for seeking validation from other countries it cannot compromise with the cordial relations with its friend. Despite various sanctions against Russia India bought more than twice as much crude oil from Russia. All this proved that India's foreign policy is rooted in the country's self-interest and not in abiding by the hypocritical standards of morality preached by the West.

Increase in FDI Inflows: India's foreign policy has also attracted foreign investments in India. India got the highest annual FDI inflow of USD 83.57 billion in the financial year 2021-22. It has rapidly emerged as a preferred investment destination. In 2014-15, FDI inflow in India stood at a mere 45.15 USD billion as compared to the highest ever annual FDI inflow of USD 83.57 billion reported during the financial year 2021-22 overtaking last year's FDI by USD 1.60 billion despite military operation in Ukraine and Covid-19 pandemic.

Concluding Remarks:

India under Modi is emerging to be a global power. Its strong stand in the international fora, stand against terrorism, increase in the flow of international trade, bringing a ray of hope in the difficult times of COVID in the form of the vaccine and rescuing the Indians stranded in foreign countries in the times of distress showcases that many things have positively evolved under the Modi's reign. One important aspect of India's foreign policy is now that India's friendly relations have improved with many countries. Modi's tour to different countries benefits India in many aspects which the nation witnesses from time to time. India under PM Modi's government is rising exponentially and the foundation to become a major global power in the country has been laid.

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The Modi Doctrine: Reshaping the Indian Foreign Policy



Image credit: Credits: cgtn.com

"It is not my intention to be written in history with golden words... All I want is for my country to be remembered, I want the rest of the world to proudly say that India holds the potential to resolve global crises and manifest humanitarian welfare ... I do not want to glorify myself; I want to dedicate myself for the glory of India..."

-Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Before the end of the cold war, the link between economics, security and stability was defined differently based on the balance of power and confrontations between the major powers. Bharat, after gaining independence in 1947 woke up to this bipolar world order wherein it became the leader of the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM), choosing neither side. Nonetheless, on the foreign policy and national security front, three dramatic wars with Pakistan & China including the Himalayan blunders of 1962, misreading Beijing's intentions vis-à-vis Aksai chin and Arunachal Pradesh and daunting terrorism were the highlights of Nehruvian and UPA's

foreign policy.

It is pertinent to note that for any country's stability, internal and social security, law and order, economic opportunities and secured frontiers are of paramount importance. From the Himalayan blunders of 1962 to maintaining the status quo during the Galwan valley confrontations in 2020, India's ability to protect its borders has most certainly dramatically increased. Besides, there is a paradigm shift in international relations that occurred due to the change from a bipolar to multipolar world order.

India, under the craftsmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in these changing dynamics, has emerged as an

important stakeholder in international politics. The drastic, dynamic, and 360-degree shift in foreign policy can be traced back to 2014 when the Indian government under the leadership of PM Modi took charge. Today, with the rise of emerging major powers like Beijing & New Delhi, and the augmenting significance of the Indo-Pacific region, the current world order has been challenged and we are now stepping into a new world order. Therefore, under the given circumstances, the foreign policy also requires a paradigm shift in its approach.

In brief, a foreign policy is nothing but a mere extension of national interests that are majorly detected by the purpose of ensuring national security. In the Indian context, under the leadership of PM Modi, this definition has changed to 'foreign policy manifesting national interests as well as world peace and global good.' In addition, where there is often a debate over the binaries of 'socialism' and 'capitalism,' the Modi doctrine adopts Antyodaya, a term coined by Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Ji, means the 'rise of the last person.' Speaking of the binaries and maintaining strategic autonomy, more recently, during the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, India clearly stated its stand of being against the war but at the same time maintained its neutrality and did not succumb to international pressure for 'choosing sides.' At the same time, India asserted the use of diplomatic channels for settling any dispute.

On the other hand, India's neighbourhood policy has a history from Kautilya's Arthashastra to the present. New Delhi's neighbourhood policy of PM Modi's government has revolved around its national security and

economic development encouraged by its historical strategic culture, prompted by its geopolitical location and furthered by the desire to become a global power. Similarly, as per its "Act East" policy, New Delhi has been pushing its connectivity projects in two sub regional groupings — the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) or the Mekong–Ganga Cooperation (MGC) to further integrate with Southeast Asia.

As far as the role of defence and armed forces are concerned, the Indian government gave a much-needed and befitting response to the Pak-sponsored terrorist activities with the surgical strike. The timely procurement of Rafale, Sukhoi, and MiG jets as well as the indigenization of defence are some of the appropriate examples of how the current government prioritises national security and national interests. In the 2022-23 Budget, the Indian government has announced a defence budget of INR 5.25 trillion (USD 70.2 billion), an increase of almost 10% over the initial allocation in 2021-22. As for Indian defence exports, India achieved exports of defence items and technology worth a record Rs 13,000 crore in 2021-22 and this figure is likely to rise to Rs 17,000 crore in 2022-23.

Furthermore, with active border disputes with two hostile neighbours that have led to hand-to-hand combat in recent years, required the need for a young force, particularly for the Indian army. Thus, the Agnipath scheme introduces a new era of bold reforms to strengthen India's defence preparedness. Under his leadership, keeping national security as the highest priority and Chinese aggression in mind, India is giving a major push to boosting connectivity and use of high-tech surveillance along the nearly 1,350-km Line of Actual Control in the Arunachal Pradesh sector to ensure quick mobilisation of troops and

heavy weaponry to deal with any eventuality in the face of the standoff with China in eastern Ladakh.

Another interesting factor of PM Modi's foreign policy is the focus on India's maritime security. PM Modi's strong personality, together with Bharatiya Janata Party's majority status in Lok Sabha, helped lay a solid foundation for his concept of Indian Ocean policy. If we look at the Indian map upside-down, India is more of a maritime country than a landlocked country. Hence, with five central components, the initiative of Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) was first proposed by Modi in March 2015. The Indian Ocean, as rightly described, is the backyard of India and with the emergence of the term 'Indo-Pacific,' India due to its geographical and geopolitical placement has gained significant importance. India is now advancing its foreign policy goals in the Indo-Pacific region through the newly emerging 'minilateral' groupings like QUAD. It plays a key role as these minilateral groupings provide a mechanism for small, goal-oriented, and target-based approaches to the challenges of the region.

It is noteworthy that PM Modi is the first of many- The first PM to invite SAARC heads of government to his swearing-in ceremony is PM Modi; the first PM to host a US President as the Chief Guest to the Republic Day Parade; the PM first to receive a foreign dignitary Chinese President Xi Jinping outside Delhi; the first PM to deliver a public speech at Madison Square Garden in New York; the first Indian PM to visit Canada in 42 years and the first to visit Mongolia; the first Indian PM to visit Nepal in 17 years; first Indian PM to initiate International Yoga Day which was later endorsed by UNGA; the first Indian PM to set foot in Jaffna in Sri Lanka's Tamil-dominated Northern Province; On 24 December 2019, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) formally established

the post of Chief of Defence Staff etc. Moreover, during the testing times of the COVID-19 pandemic, India extended help to all corners of the world. Vaccine Maitri, a humanitarian initiative undertaken by the Indian government, provided vaccines to countries from north to south and east to west.

The intentions of the Modi Government and its foreign policy can further be understood by looking at the recently released theme for India's upcoming G20 presidency. While Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam denotes India's compassion for the world, the Lotus on the logo portrays the cultural heritage, pro-planet approach to life and faith of India in bringing the world together.

As President, ICCR, Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe rightly says, "India is not only the largest and oldest democracy but also a spiritual democracy," the democratic principles echo the cultural values and civilizational ethos of India. The message of world peace, वसुधैव कुटुंबकम and global good, सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनि: is manifested in PM Modi's foreign policy.

While there are many significant aspects of the Modi Doctrine, from being the first respondent to provide humanitarian aid during the Covid-19 pandemic, maintaining neutrality dictated by national interests and to the G20 presidency, this gradual change is noteworthy as Indian foreign policy evolves from a mere 'responsive foreign policy' to 'proactive foreign policy'. Thus, based on the above discussion, it can be said that as opposed to the ineffectiveness of the previous government's efforts, the current government under the Modi Doctrine emphasises developmental foreign policy that holds the strong message of Indian intentions of global good and harmony.

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India's Foreign Policy has undergone a Paradigm Shift

Managing logically and rationally international relations and politics is a complicated process. The power game and exploitation of natural resources and consumer markets in developing and underdeveloped countries by a few developed countries complicates matters. Prior to 2014, India was on the receiving end, forced to purchase weaponry and other obsolete machinery at exorbitant prices. Our opinions on various important topics were not taken seriously, and unnecessary controversies and statements were issued in India's internal affairs.

When the BJP named Narendra Modi as its PM face in 2013, many intellectuals, media outlets, and opposition parties expressed concerns and questioned his credibility in handling foreign policy if he becomes Prime Minister in 2014.

Even the harshest critic admits today that the Modi government manages foreign relations, global policies, and

issues in the best way that any previous government has ever managed. PM Modi, late Sushma Swaraj ji, and current EAM S. Jaishankar are receiving applause from around the world for their policies, well-balanced actions, and intentions for the global good, sustainable development, and environmental protection.

The policy was not only to develop and maintain relations with superpowers and developed countries, but also to give equal importance to developing and underdeveloped countries, as PM Modi demonstrated when he visited Nepal after being elected in 2014. Except for Pakistan, the neighbours have been given priority and assistance in developing socially and economically. He also redoubled efforts to strengthen ties with India's neighbours, under the banner of 'Neighborhood First.' He ratified the Land Border Agreement with Bangladesh, putting an end to the long-standing issue of adverse enclaves.

PM Modi's concept of 'effective multilateralism,' which captures the reality of many nations' rise and accepts that many voices, not a few, should shape the global agenda. This also undermines any power's hegemony. Based on this premise, India began to cultivate relations with countries that were receiving less attention, owing to policy paralysis. In 2015, he became the first Prime Minister to visit Mongolia, and the comprehensive partnership was upgraded to Strategic Partnership. Modi elevated the relationship with Vietnam to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership status in 2016. Modi made the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Israel in 2017, during which the relationship was elevated to the strategic level. He was the first Prime Minister to visit Canada and the UAE since 1986.

India today is accused of many things, but not of "strategic innocence." It seeks great power relationships, each on its own merit. It is unwilling to give up any



Image credit: dnaindia.com



control over its relations with its rivals. Delhi will not allow Moscow to define India's relations with the US, and will not allow Washington to limit the nature of India's engagement with Russia. This was not always the case. Previously, Delhi was frequently tempted to limit its relationship with the US and Europe for fear of offending Moscow and Beijing's sensibilities. This was done either for ideological reasons or out of fear of negative consequences in relations with Russia and China. The Modi Government has risen above its defensive and deferential posture. Putting national interests ahead of political correctness has yielded significant strategic dividends for Delhi.

Investment and Security

The diverse diplomatic outreach in recent years was not about pomp and pageantry, but was part of a well-planned strategy to integrate foreign policy with national development and resurgence. Apart from raising India's global profile, this comprehensive diplomatic engagement resulted in foreign collaborations and financial support for flagship national renaissance initiatives such as Make in India, Aatmanirbhar Bharat, Skill India, Digital India, Namami Gange, and Start-up India. Increased engagement with India's

external partners has resulted in tangible benefits for people through foreign investment and technology partnerships, which have resulted in the establishment of factories and the creation of jobs. The formation of green energy partnerships with countries such as the United States, France, and Denmark has laid the groundwork for Indian citizens to live clean, low-carbon lives.

Modi's foreign policy success is evident in how it has handled the country's archrivals, China and Pakistan. With surgical strikes, the Modi government ended Pakistan's nuclear threat and restored the country's security interests to their previous position.

Be it combating the threat of terrorism emanating from Pakistan or rescuing its diaspora caught in a conflict zone, resisting Chinese aggression, or navigating a complex global crisis in the aftermath of Russia's war in Ukraine, the Modi government's foreign policy has served as an instrument of India's national security.

Act East Policy

PM Modi has also turned India's "Look East" policy into a more aggressive "Act East" policy, with the goal of connecting India to East Asia through improved infrastructure, trade, and regional

institutions. Unlike other diplomatic efforts, the Act East policy prioritises both economic and security interests. As a result, India has become more vocal in support of free maritime navigation and a rules-based maritime security order, particularly in the South China Sea.

Shaping Global agenda

Looking ahead, with India's growing global stature and the world's growing expectations of a resurgent India, Prime Minister Modi has advocated for reformed multilateralism to create a new world order that reflects the ongoing shift of power and realities of the twenty-first century. India has also taken the lead in combating climate change by fulfilling its Paris Accord commitments and launching a series of initiatives to promote a low-carbon economy. More countries are joining the International Solar Alliance, which seeks to usher in a white revolution for a clean and green world, in recognition of New Delhi's leadership role in this area. India has launched a new international initiative known as the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, which is gaining traction around the world.

Brand Bharat

Cultural diplomacy and civilisational values will be given greater prominence in Bharat's foreign policy in the future. The idea of Bharat as a vibrant pluralistic society, home to all major religions and diverse cultures, has struck a chord, making the world more receptive to Bharat's aspirations. This cultural connection is reflected in a variety of ways, including worldwide celebrations of International Day of Yoga and UNESCO's designation of the Kumbh Mela as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The 25-million-strong Bharatiya diaspora, spread across different countries and continents, will play an important role in constructing a new Bharat.

**Author: Pankaj Jagannath Jayswal,
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Modi Government is Transforming India into a 'Force for Global Good'



Image credit: nbcnews.com

In increasingly challenging times, the Prime Ministership of Mr Narendra Modi has transformed India into a 'Force for Global Good' in the world with an exceptional evolution of her foreign policy and national security. The mass social and political support for PM Modi, and the international community's admiration for his dynamic leadership, have led India to rise to its rightful place. India's foreign policy has developed a strategic culture in the past eight years, demonstrating civilizational values, national consciousness, a security-first approach, and a commitment to responding to global issues like cross-border terrorism, pandemics, climate change, and economic recessions. PM Modi's intelligence and high risk-taking capacity have induced renewed energy in India's diplomacy instrumental for asserting domestic priorities like

Atamirbhar Bharat and Make in India. Withstanding the U.S.-China Rivalry, India has projected a culture of strategic autonomy and alignment based on its national interests. Undoubtedly, accountability to 1.4 billion Indians and their welfare is the cornerstone of India's foreign policy under the experiential leadership of PM Modi.

Cultural Identity at the Forefront

Modi's India is a spiritual democracy with "unbroken civilizational continuity for 5000 years", whose struggle for freedom was itself cultural and civilizational as written by renowned Journalist, Shri Swaminathan Gurumurthy. The book titled *Random Thoughts 2021- Emerging Paradigm Shift in the Changing Global, Political and Economic Order* (published by Vivekananda International Foundation in 2021) accounts for India's historical

values and their compatibility with the democratic model of governance. India's civilizational dimension has several manifestations including religion and philosophy. In the book titled *Communicating India's Soft Power: Buddha to Bollywood* (published by Palgrave Macmillan Series in 2013), celebrated author, Daya Kishan Thussu captures the essence of Indic civilization and the formations of four of the biggest religions in the world- Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. Today, India's coalescent religious discourse is at the forefront of its associations with the world, particularly South Asia, Southeast Asia, Eurasia, and Africa.

During the early days of his Prime Ministership, Modi accentuated India's cultural identity as a soft power tool that is ingrained in her institutions, bureaucracy, and governance. India's

motto of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, meaning the world is a family, reflects her ancient past and worldview. To serve the world for the global good is the central aphorism and mission of India's foreign policy under the Modi government.

A Pragmatic Foreign Policy Posture

The eight years of the Modi government have drastically altered the vision and direction of India's foreign policy establishment making it pragmatic, realist, muscular and independent. Until 2014, India's foreign policy posture failed to respond to national security threats emanating from China's expansionism and Pakistan-sponsored terrorism. Additionally, India continued to be viewed as a soft state excessively concerned about international opinion, particularly of the West. Modi's confident and strategic approach to external affairs has helped India develop a foreign policy culture closely aligned with India's military, political and economic interests. At a time when power blocs are emerging in the world order, with the rivalry between the United States and China, the Modi government has not only advocated for India's national interests and independent foreign policy on the global forums but also voiced concerns about Global South countries from Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

India's rise to a developed economy, pushing back against colonialism, reform of the global institutions like the United Nations and World Trade Organisation, and multilateralism that addresses transnational threats like pandemics, terrorism and climate change are the Modi government's foreign policy priorities. During adverse episodes like the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war and Cross-strait tensions between Taiwan and China, India has displayed strategic autonomy and interests-based alignment.

Modi has catalysed coordination

between India's foreign policy establishment and the Armed forces to effectively respond to national security challenges threatening national sovereignty and territorial integrity without any political restraint. In the book titled *Crunch Time - Narendra Modi's National Security Crises* (published by Rupa Publications India in 2022), renowned political and social scientist, Professor Dr Sreeram Chaulia has given a detailed account of Modi's visionary leadership during India's diplomatic and military response to disastrous national security crises in the episodes of Surgical Strikes, Doklam, Balakot and Ladakh. Inarguably, Modi has revolutionized India's strategic culture and thinking. Additionally, the Modi government has transformed India's defence diplomacy by introducing new initiatives such as the Defense Acquisition Policy, the creation of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), the establishment of the Department of Military Affairs and focusing on Make in India and Aatmanirbhar Bharat Program. Today, India is not only emerging as the prime security provider in the Asian region but also assisting friendly countries in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

Maritime Diplomacy and the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

In the 21st century, maritime security and diplomacy have become key areas of convergence with economic development. Unfortunately, Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and maritime interests have long been underemphasized in India's foreign policy priorities. Only in recent years has the Modi government attributed importance to India's maritime neighbourhood and recognised India's ancient maritime traditions. Today, India's maritime neighbourhood extends to island countries in the Indo-Pacific region, ASEAN countries, Australia, Japan, Taiwan, and Gulf countries.

In an address at the virtual seminar on Connectivity Cooperation for Free, Open and Inclusive Indo-Pacific (March 2018), The former Foreign Secretary of India, Mr Harsh Vardhan Shringla mentioned, "Robust connectivity with countries of the region, near or far, is deep-rooted in Indian civilizational history. Indian culture has been enriched by ancient linkages with the rest of the world, just as the light of Indian culture has shone in lands connected across land and seas by emissaries and merchants" to revive the story of India's rich maritime past. India's ancient past had naval powers like the Sri Vijaya and Chola empires. Additionally, Gujarat had been the epicentre for India's maritime trade with West Asia and Eastern Africa in the medieval age (works of K.M. Panikkar).

India's maritime policies are aimed at securing its maritime borders, curtailing any country's hegemonic influence, and leveraging the sea lanes to promote blue economy initiatives. In the last few years, India's multilateral engagement with countries in the IOR is strategic and reflective of its ancient past.

Under the Modi government, India has advocated for an open, free, rule-based Indo-Pacific region that respects the sovereignty of states and the rule of law.

Referring to the speeches of PM Modi, the work of Vivekananda International Foundation titled *Talking Points on Foreign Policy* (published in 2022) mentions, "The ancient Indian tradition, the Vedas, mention India as an oceanic entity (उत्तरो यत् समुद्रस्य meaning, the land which lies to the north of the seas) and the Indo-Pacific is a way to reclaim that legacy. India's Indo-Pacific extends from Eastern Africa to the Western Pacific. "We are inheritors of Vedanta philosophy that believes in the essential oneness of all, and celebrates unity in diversity एकम सत्यम्, वपिः बहुधावदन्ति (Truth is one, the learned speak of it in many ways). That is the





Image credit: WOLFGANG RATTAY

foundation of our civilizational ethos – of pluralism, co-existence, openness, and dialogue. The ideals of democracy that define us as a nation also shape the way we engage the world.”

India's policy in the Indo-Pacific has five elements namely, Samman (respect), Samvad (dialogue), Sahyog (cooperation), Shanti (peace) and Samruddhi (prosperity). India's engagement in multilateral forums such as Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) and Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) is guided by mutual respect and shared future.

International Organisations and Global Issues

The Modi government has displayed a

commitment to multilateralism and global issues on regional and international levels. The reform of the United Nations, particularly the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) remains a top priority of India's foreign policy in international organisations. Additionally, India has advocated for inclusivity and openness in global financial institutions like the World Trade Organisation (WTO), World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). From time to time, India has advocated for the Global South countries and questioned the biases of these organisations.

Under the leadership of PM Modi, India has taken key initiatives to assist countries across the world including Vaccine Maitri, supplying food grains to neighbouring countries like Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan and establishing global

forums like the International Solar Alliance (ISA) to address the grave international security challenges like climate change. Additionally, India has emerged as the net security provider through its healthcare diplomacy and disaster relief initiatives. PM Modi has transformed India into a force for global good.

The past eight years of the Modi government have revolutionised India's foreign policy culture. With confident leadership, and a strong political will, India's emergence as a world power is consequential. Today, India's foreign policy not only serves its core national security interests but also reflects India's rich civilizational heritage. Under the experiential leadership of PM Modi, India is poised to rise to its rightful place in the world order.

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Paradigm Shift in India's Foreign Policy: New India Gives as Good as It Gets



Image credit: BRENDAN MCDERMID

Prime Minister Narendra Modi led NDA Government came to power by swearing in of Prime Minister on 26 May 2014. The shift of power from the UPA to the NDA government in 2014 was also momentous due to the general sense of Failure of Foreign Policy, Chronic Corruption and Policy Paralysis. Continuity is part of India's Foreign Policy, and even after that with the change in leadership change in expectations is a bit natural. The Foreign Policy of the Narendra Modi government is keenly watched, analysed, and expected to be different in style, direction, and substance. The Eight years of the Modi government have made a paradigm shift in India's Foreign Policy from a “Soft Power State to a Hard Power with Softness” that can be sensed even by the normal public.

Internally with Economic Development, Foreign Direct Investment, Growth of Gross Domestic Product, Make in India, an external sphere with Improvement in Border Security, Major Push to China by improving border infrastructure, Looking Dragon (China) in eyes and communicating with China in no uncertain terms that India values its territorial integrity more than anything else. On the North-West frontier of India, Pakistan has been a major exporter of terrorism to India. The Modi government adopted the policy of Zero Tolerance for terrorism emanating from Pakistan; the result of the policy was a Counter Operation inside Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK), an Airstrike in Balakot to eliminate Terror Camps of *Jaish-e-Mohammad*. On the North-Eastern border of Myanmar, in the year

2015, the Indian Army ran a military operation based on a *hit-and-run raid* style based on precise inputs. Indian Army 70 Commandos finished the operation within 40 minutes, neutralising 38 insurgents.

It is very true that even previously India has conducted Cross-Border Counter Insurgency Operations, i.e. *Operation Golden Bird* in 1995, and *Operation All Clear* in 2003. But, these operations were *hammer-and-anvil* operations. Whether it is Airstrike in Balakot, vengeance act on the Army Base Camp of Uri, or the Operation in Myanmar in 2015 are classic cases of surgical strikes.

Pakistan made to understand the way it understands: It has been made very clear by the Indian Government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's



leadership, that India won't be accommodating terror attacks the way previously has been. India seemed to be very firm to tackle the problem of terrorism emanating from neighbouring countries. Pakistan tried to test India's conviction. Uri Terror Attacks, an act of sheer cowardice were committed on the 18th of September 2016 and India avenged by committing audacious Surgical Strikes and Destroying 7 Terrorist Launched Pads, and 38 Terrorists along with 2 Pakistani Soldiers were killed, without any causality on the Indian Side, that too within 15 days of Terrorist Attack. Defence Minister of India Sh. Rajnath Singh Ji said it gave a clear message that "we can kill terrorists on this side as well as by crossing the border if the need arises". In response to the Pulwama Terror attack, India committed unprecedented Air Strikes in Balakot deep inside Pakistan. The world saw India as no longer yester India that will heal its wound by licking it, the way it happened after the 26/11 Terror Attacks.

India being uncompromising Towards its Territorial Integrity: China's expansionist policy is well known to the world. And China also does not want India to develop India's border infrastructure on LAC (Line of Actual Control). India's construction of a new road to a high-altitude air base is considered to have triggered tensions. The clash of June 2020 was fought with Sticks and Clubs and left troops of both sides injured. In August India accused China of provoking military tension and in September China accused India of firing shots at its troops. Since then, India's foreign policy toward China has been shaped by the tense standoff between the militaries of the two nations along the border in eastern Ladakh. Beijing has received a clear message from New Delhi that India respects its territorial integrity and will not hesitate to use military force to thwart Chinese aggression along the border. Though the

tension on China Border (LAC) has de-escalated, a mutual snub suggests it is far from over.

In 1962 Mao told Zhou Enlai that India and China should practice not peaceful co-existence but armed co-existence. Even otherwise for China diplomacy is the art of deception and PM Modi did recognize it when he said that China has an expansionist mindset.

Being hard towards unfriendly and rogue countries, India under Modi's foreign policy shows a large degree of empathy towards friendly countries. Indian neighbours look towards India as a younger state and an older nation with a lot of hope and expectations.

India has played a very pivotal role in the development of Indian neighbours. India has extended bilateral Financial Aid to Sri Lanka worth \$ 4 Billion. India extended financial aid to Bhutan for its 12th Five Year Plan worth Rs. 4,500/- Crore. Over US \$1.75 billion has been invested by India in Myanmar as development aid. Most of this help is supported through grants. India agreed to provide \$25 million in aid to Myanmar over five years as part of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Rakhine State Development Program. In the previous eight years, India has given Bangladesh three lines of credit (LOC) totalling \$8 billion for the construction of roads, trains, shipping lanes, and ports. Since 2017, the Indian government has been educating 1,500 judicial officers from Bangladesh at the National Judicial Academy in Bhopal and numerous State Judicial Academies around the country.

India has supplied the fourth batch of assistance consisting of 3 tonnes of essential life-saving medicines to Afghanistan. The medical supplies were handed over to the Indira Gandhi Hospital, in Kabul. As per the Budget for the Financial Year of 2022 – 2023, an amount of Rs 360 Crore has been earmarked for the Maldives. Mauritius

will get Rs 900 Crore. The African countries will be provided development assistance worth Rs 250 Crore, while Rs 140 Crore has been earmarked for the Eurasian countries, according to the budget documents.

India's *Vaccine – Maître* campaign with the spirit of ancient Indian Philosophical doctrine, *Vashudhaiv – Kutumbakam* (the world is one family), made a remarkable impact globally. India supplied a total of 107.15 Lakh doses of vaccines to 44 Countries as a grant and 357.92 Lakh doses commercially to those who bought from India-based manufacturers. The Quad (U.S-India-Japan-Australia) alliance was looking towards India to supply vaccines in the Indo-Pacific region to curtail China's influence in the region. Where China was suffering from an image problem India enhanced its global standing.

India's increased strength in soft power and hard-power has been reflected in many ways, either is the successful evacuation of more than 18,000 Indian citizens within 13 days from *War-Torn-Ukraine under Operation-Ganga* in 2022 or Successful Evacuation of 800 Indian Citizens from Afghanistan during the deteriorating security citizen under operation *Devi – Shakti* in 2021. India successfully exfiltrated the CRPF contingent amidst escalating tensions in Libya in the year 2019. Even in Modi 2.0, more than 4,500 Indians and 960 foreigners were evacuated from war-ravaged Yemen in 2015. In 2014, 46 Indian nurses were successfully rescued from ISIS captivity in strife-torn Iraq.

Today's India's foreign policy is based on what our Prime Minister Narendra Modi says: "*Na hum aankh jhuka kar baat karenge, na aankh dikhaa kar baat karenge. Hum duniya se aankh mila kar baat karenge*".

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