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## Crucial Problems and Strategies in India's Foreign Policy

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### ABSTRACT

India's foreign policy in the twenty-first century must navigate a complex international landscape characterized by shifting geopolitics, the emergence of multipolarity, and regional instability. Rising globally, India must reconcile its strategic autonomy with growing foreign ties. Among the main issues are border tensions with China, shifting relations with Pakistan, managing connections to long-standing friends such as the US and Russia, and navigating the changing geopolitical landscape amid the Ukraine crisis and Indo-Pacific rebalancing. Particularly in light of COVID-19, India also needs to address climate promises, global supply chain disruptions, and the demands of economic diplomacy. India has responded by reorienting its foreign policy through multi-alignment strategies, increasing its involvement in multilateral forums (including BRICS, G20, and QUAD), and supporting initiatives such as "Act East," "Neighbourhood First," and "Vishwa Guru" diplomacy. The rise of soft power and digital diplomacy via diaspora, culture, and developmental cooperation adds even more to its worldwide significance. The need to combine moral standards, security needs, and economic objectives still limits strategic coherence nonetheless. This article examines how India's foreign policy is pursuing strategic resilience, autonomy, and influence while adapting to meet the demands of the global landscape. It severely assesses the policy's

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adaptability and ability to influence India's global position in a world that is becoming increasingly erratic.

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A complex interplay between internal imperatives and external factors has always shaped Indian foreign policy. Following its independence in 1947, New Delhi's diplomatic posture has undergone significant evolution in response to local conditions and global events. India's foreign policy was initially characterized during the Cold War by its non-alignment posture, in which it sought to maintain a precarious balance between the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. By demonstrating a commitment to national sovereignty and pursuing an autonomous global presence, this approach enables India to establish relationships with a wide range of countries and promote decolonization and disarmament on the world stage.

The end of the Cold War marked a significant turning point in India's foreign policy, prompting a reassessment of its geopolitical strategy. India's economy opened up early in the 1990s, which led to a review of its foreign policy and an emphasis on ideological alignments for economic engagement. This change has enabled India to establish closer ties with Western nations and emerging economies, aiming to maximize its commercial and demographic potential for further global integration. India's foreign policy has, therefore, begun to emphasize pragmatism and strategic diplomacy, focusing on the growth of bilateral connections and multilateral alliances to safeguard its national interests.

Many significant global events influence India's foreign policy. Regional dynamics—especially in South Asia—remain a crucial influence considering India's complex relationship with China and continuous tensions with its neighbor, Pakistan. Together with Pakistan's terrorist threat and unsolved territorial concerns, China's territorial claims and economic expansion via initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative need a proactive and competent foreign policy approach. Moreover, India's diplomatic calculations depend much on the dynamic character of regional organizations such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), which seeks to balance China's influence by strengthening its regional leadership.

The rise of other superpowers, particularly China and the United States, further complicates India's foreign policy. Particularly in China, the strategic partnership with the United States—based on similar democratic values and mutual security interests—has become increasingly important in addressing regional difficulties. Devoted to the United States, Japan, Australia, and India, the Quad alliance is a cohesive response to China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific region. It indicates India's will to a multipolar world order. However, India's foreign policy must also navigate the complexity of its relationship with Russia, a long-standing friend, in light of changing geopolitical allegiances and the resurgence of great power competition.



Geopolitical changes, including the influence of technology on international relations, global health concerns, and climate change, continue to complicate the Indian foreign policy landscape. Since the COVID-19 epidemic underlined the necessity of worldwide cooperation, India has actively participated in international conferences and initiatives aimed at the epidemic response and vaccination distribution. Moreover, emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and cyber capabilities are altering the security paradigm and need a flexible response from Indian decision-makers to preserve national security in an age that is becoming more digital.

India's foreign policy is influenced generally by regional factors, historical legacies, changing global power dynamics, and general impact. Indian diplomats have to constantly adapt their strategies to fit new opportunities and challenges in an interconnected and multipolar global society, as the complexity of balancing national interests with international commitments calls for constant change. Changing geopolitics, regional dynamics, and ties to significant countries all help to form India's present foreign policy. The demands of global governance, regional security concerns, and the intricacy of their national interests all represent India's many challenges in this regard.

One of the main challenges is the relationship between India and its neighboring neighbors, particularly China and Pakistan. The residue of historical grudges, geographical disputes, and contradicting national narratives hamper diplomatic efforts. The continuous insurgency in Kashmir, exacerbated by Pakistan's support of non-governmental organizations, causes significant security concerns. Moreover, border disputes between India and China expose how fragile Chinese relations are, especially with reference to the 2020 event in the Galwan Valley. As both nations establish themselves as rising powers, their strategic acumen in Asia raises concerns about regional security.

India has reacted to these forces by putting a strategy that gives multilateralism and diplomatic dedication top priority in an attempt to boost its regional influence. With an eye on bolstering security cooperation and business ties with countries like Australia, Vietnam, and Japan, Act East's approach is a strategic one towards Southeast Asia. Clear instances of this change include initiatives related to commercial organizations, such as the Integral Economic Association (RCEP) regional debates, and military cooperation, like the Quad, which comprises the United States, Japan, and Australia. India utilizes these organizations to underline its role as a stabilizing actor in the Indo-Pacific area in the face of mounting maritime tensions and China's assertiveness.

The dynamics of the great power relations shapes also the framework of Indian foreign policy. India has traditionally had a non-aligned posture throughout the Cold War, but since 1991, its emphasis has switched to closer ties to the US. Rising economic interconnectedness, democratic values, and common strategic aims have expanded bilateral ties—marked by defense alliances and technical exchanges. The United States' designation of India as a great defense friend marks a significant change in the balance of power in southern Asia as it enables the best access to high-tech weaponry and cooperation in defense research.

However, this new alliance is complex as it asks India to negotiate the challenges posed by its long history with Russia. Russia has always been a close friend of India, providing military and diplomatic support, but given the circumstances in Ukraine, India has changed its strategic dependence on Russian weaponry.



India's commitment to a multilateral foreign policy complicates its foreign policy objectives as it calls for a delicate balancing act between honoring its past cooperation with Russia and developing relations with the West.

Geographic changes brought on by economic crises, climate change, and technological developments further complicate the Indian foreign policy landscape. The COVID-19 epidemic made clear the need for firm corporate plans and flaws in worldwide supply chains. India has tried to boost self-sufficiency by leveraging its large industrial base under the Atmnirbhar Bharat initiative.

Therefore, India's present foreign policy is a response to the complex interactions among regional dynamics, major power dynamics, and global geopolitical changes. India's need to adapt strategically to this environment emphasizes the challenges it has in maintaining its position as a dominant player in a world that is fast evolving. A vast spectrum of problems influencing India both domestically and internationally shapes its present foreign policy. Among the most important unresolved territorial conflicts between India and its neighbors are those long-standing causes of discontent. Border disputes with China led to a state of military preparedness maintained along India's northern boundary; these issues were further emphasized by the Sino-Indian War in 1962 and the following skirmishes. The controversial character of the real control line (LAC) aggravates the tensions in the area as both nations are increasing their military presence in disputed areas like Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh. India changed its regional policy after the fighting in the Galwan 2020 valley, which claimed lives on both sides, showing the continuous fragility of this bilateral relationship.

Moreover, India's foreign policy still suffers significant challenges from the long-running Kashmir conflict with Pakistan. Apart from generating animosity between the two countries, the territorial conflict over Jammu and Kashmir also led to an international inquiry and pressure from interventionists, therefore challenging India's stance. Frequent violations of ceasefire along the control line run the risk of turning into more major conflicts, therefore aggravating relations and generating security concerns. Pakistan's alleged support for cross-border terrorism aggravates the problem as it causes India to adopt a defensive foreign policy based on counterterrorism actions, which often entail isolating Pakistan politically on the international scene.

Apart from these obvious territorial problems, regional volatility greatly influences India's decisions on foreign policy. After the Taliban returned to rule, India is strategically worried about Afghanistan's erratic political environment. India now has to negotiate a reality in which the security dynamics in South Asia brought about by the withdrawal of American forces and the Taliban's subsequent resurgence look to have reduced its power and compromised its investment pledges. This instability raises Pakistani influence within Afghanistan, therefore compromising India's regional strategic objectives.

Moreover, the development of China as a significant military and economic power changes geopolitics calculations in South Asia and beyond. Confronting China's assertive posture in the Indian Ocean region (IOR) calls for a mixed approach. The Chinese Belt and Road Initiative's (BRI) growing impact on the area, especially via infrastructure projects in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, begs strategic encirclement questions. As shown by its interactions with organizations like the Quadrilateral Safety



Dialogue (Quad) in the US, Japan, and Australia, India has actively tried to strengthen bilateral connections in order to counteract China's influence.

Finally, the comeback of nationalism via changing alliances and regional factors still tests Indian foreign policy. The changing character of international relations, which is defined by the dynamics of shifting power and the growth in multipolarity, calls for strategic reevaluation. The rise of non-state actors and transnational threats, as well as the consequences of climate change on national security, call for a more complete strategic vision, including diplomatic, military, and financial elements.

India's present foreign policy is much influenced by the complex interactions among unresolved territorial conflicts, regional instability, and the changing global geopolitical scene. Examining India's interactions with the big international powers—especially the United States, China, and Russia—helps one to understand better the factors impacting its foreign policymaking. Dealing with these difficulties requires innovative solutions that reconcile national security needs with a more general diplomatic dedication. More general geopolitical changes and regional considerations now shape India's allegiance to these countries than just historical connections or economic necessities.

India's relationship with the United States has evolved drastically over the last 20 years from a time of mutual mistrust to one of increasing strategic cooperation. The strategic alliance draws attention to shared goals in counterterrorism, maritime security in the Indo-Pacific area, and restricting China's influence. Measures like the American-Indian Civil Nuclear Agreement and the Defence Framework Agreement helped to formalize it. India's participation in multilateral forums such as the Quad (quadrilateral security discussion), which consists of the US, Japan, and Australia, shows its quest for a free and open Indo-Pacific in accordance with American objectives. Complications abound in this cooperation, however. Apart from its historical dedication to non-alignment, India is still cautious of depending too much on the US because of concerns about the erratic foreign policy of the US, which is exacerbated by changes in domestic policy (Ikenberry, 2024).

On the other side, the relationship with China is characterized by deep strategic competition and historical hostility, as indicated by border conflicts and continuous military battles in the Ladakh region. Given China's climb to regional hegemony, India's foreign policy objectives have to be reassessed. Security concerns contrast with the economic relationships that have expanded dramatically as a consequence of trade, which has driven India to seek tighter ties with other big nations, notably the US. India has, therefore, adopted a two-pronged posture towards China: boosting its military capacity and assembling friends to offset China's influence while also engaging in the dialogue to help lower bilateral tensions (Ikenberry, 2024).

Strong defense cooperation and a long-standing strategic partnership define India and Russia's relationship, which comprises many complex factors influencing foreign policy. India keeps buying Russian military weapons, but its growing links to Western countries raise questions about their long-standing alliance with Moscow and may cause conflict. The invasion of Ukraine has complicated this dynamic even if India supports a realistic approach that gives commitment and communication top priority despite pressure from other nations to punish Russia. This strategy reflects India's primary objective of



maintaining strategic autonomy while negotiating a sharply split global environment: the preservation of strategic freedom (Ikenberry, 2024).

Moreover, India's greater aspirations to be a key actor on the global scene affect the convergence of relations with other superpowers. This objective directs its strategic choices as India seeks to leverage its ties to improve its own security and economic situation. India is expected to keep cooperative ties with Russia in order to satisfy its defense needs and seek a global multipolar system while concurrently interacting with the United States and its allies to counter the declaration of China's affirmation (Ikenberry, 2024).

India's interactions with these nations essentially show a delicate balance between cooperation and competition, therefore offering unique opportunities and challenges vital to the foreign policy strategy. Even as these geopolitical narratives evolve, India's standing in the world and its capability to project regional and global dominance will be much affected by its capacity to control this complexity. India's regional dynamics are modeled by its historical and cultural links as well as present geopolitical concerns, especially in relation to Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan, its near neighbors. Each of these alliances has complex interactions among strategic goals, cooperation, and conflict that significantly affect India's foreign policy direction.

India's foreign policy's most formidable challenge still remains its relationship with Pakistan. This bilateral dynamic centers on historical grievances resulting from the partition and the wars that followed, especially those affecting Kashmir. The relations being challenged by the continuous transfrontier terrorism originating from Pakistan have India adopting a more assertive posture in recent years. India's strategy involves diplomatically isolating Pakistan and using the most significant force, as demonstrated by the surgical strikes executed in response to terrorist operations attributed to Pakistani-based outfits. India has also tried to strengthen its links with the key regional actors, particularly the United States, in order to balance the influence of Pakistan and the energizing cooperation with China.

Conversely, the relationship between India and Bangladesh has been better in line with common goals in economic cooperation and security. India has participated in several initiatives with its eastern neighbor since the historic 1971 war that led to Bangladesh's independence, including river resource sharing and international crime and terrorism prevention. One shining example of India's goal to promote peace and collaboration with Bangladesh is the 2015 terrain boundary settlement that resolved long-standing territorial disputes. Enhanced initiatives include business connections, and the India-Bangladesh Friendship Power Company shows India's economic dedication and its awareness of the need for stability in Bangladesh for regional security.

One particular example where the growing Chinese influence is juxtaposed with India's historical and cultural ties is Nepal. Long-standing friendship between India and Nepal has resulted from geography, family ties, and trade. However, what was regarded as Indian intervention in Nepal's internal affairs—especially in the years after the new Constitution's adoption in 2015—also exacerbated already existing tensions, particularly in relation to intense nationalist fervor. India's reaction has changed to one more diplomatic commitment with Nepal, stressing development cooperation and respecting Nepal's



sovereignty. Initiatives such as the India-Nepal Intergovernmental Committee highlight India's attention on improving infrastructure and connectivity in an attempt to offset China's increasing impact on Nepal.

It is hard to overlook the greater background of southern Asia as these exchanges take place within a framework of regional dynamics, including both bilateral and multilateral problems. Although the competition between India and Pakistan has undermined its effectiveness, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SARC) provides India with a venue to pursue regional integration. Common regional concerns like public health, economic inequality, and climate change call for a cooperative framework, but geopolitical competition makes this effort more challenging.

Finally, India's regional foreign policy is modeled by a sophisticated perspective on its relations with Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan. Notwithstanding India's policies ranging from an aggressive posture in the face of threats to more cooperative commitments driven by shared interests, the general challenge remains the balance of influence in a geopolitical environment increasingly dominated by external actors like China and the United States. India's attitude toward its neighbors is, therefore, continually evolving as it negotiates the thin line separating regional stability from national interests. Especially in the framework of South Asia, which is characterized by various political environments and economic objectives, it is hard to overestimate the relevance of regional institutions in forming India's foreign policy and promoting regional cooperation. Using two important regional frameworks—the Association of South Asia for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Bengal Bay Initiative for Multisectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)—India handles its contacts with its neighbors while resolving a number of complex problems.

Members of SAARC, which was established in 1985 with an eye towards promoting regional development and cooperation, eight southern Asian nations are eight countries. However, political unrest, especially between India and Pakistan, as well as questions about the validity of its systems to handle regional problems such as poverty reduction, climate change, and cross-border terrorism, have sometimes compromised its efficacy (Gadhiya et al., 2024). Notwithstanding these obstacles, India takes part in the SAARC framework as a strategic imperative in order to show its leadership and impact by means of initiatives supporting social and economic development. India's engagement approach depends critically on initiatives aimed at improving connectivity, trade, and infrastructure development as they strive to create a more stable regional environment that promotes collaboration.

India has also underlined recently the importance of BIMSTEC, a regional group founded in 1997, including countries in southern and southeast Asia. This organization is particularly significant to India as it allows it access to regional economies with whom it has significant commercial links. Using BIMSTEC, India intends to create a platform for cooperative interaction, particularly in sectors such as technology, security, and energy (Gadhiya et al., 2024). India can use comparative advantages in a way that promotes regional connectivity and group resilience against outside forces like China's growing influence in the area by using the more flexible platform provided by the organization's strategic and geographic location than SAARC.



Thanks to these regional bodies, India can manage many problems resulting from changing geopolitics and the relationships among the big nations. Rising geopolitical concerns involving China, for example, have forced India to rethink its foreign policy approach within the SAARC framework and support a larger regional union to offset outside aggression (Gadhiya et al., 2024). Understanding the need for regional collaboration in safeguarding national interests, India has acted to improve its defense and trade ties within BIMSTEC.

Moreover, India's dedication to BIMSTEC becomes crucial as it aims to boost its economic impact in Southeast Asia and beyond Southern Asia by means of initiatives like the Act East policy. Apart from resolving the security concerns resulting from its close proximity, India might also pledge to create growing economies using BIMSTEC's operational capacity, thus supporting their strategic reach and economic growth.

India's foreign policy is directly correlated with its participation in regional groups such as SAARC and BIMSTEC. These forums provide India with means for collaboration, allowing it to negotiate the complexities of its ties to the big international powers using a varied approach to regional concerns. Launched by China in 2013, the Belt and Road (BRI) project is a multifarious worldwide development plan meant to increase regional connectivity and embrace more extensive economic cooperation along the historical paths of the Silk Road. The function of these regional instruments is probably basic in the configuration of future diplomatic strategies as India keeps asserting itself on the global scene, fostering stability and cooperation in an increasingly linked and competitive geopolitical environment (Khanal & Zhang, 2024). India's stance on the BRI is affected by several factors, including geopolitical challenges, economic competitiveness, and national security considerations, as well as others. The BRI seriously complicates India's foreign policy, given its strategic position in southern Asia and aspirations to become a regional leader.

Geopolitically, India views the BRI as China's means of rebalancing the regional power distribution by increasing its influence over Asia and beyond. Particularly worried about the Pakistani component of the BRI is India, particularly with regard to the Chinese-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The CPEC covers Gilgit-Baltistan's disputed region and increasingly links Pakistan's economy with China, therefore directly impacting India's territorial and geopolitical interests (Khanal & Zhang, 2024). Apart from enhancing Pakistan's strategic posture against India, this BRI component boosts the Sino-Pak partnership, hence exerting a check on Indian hegemony in the region.

India's economic worries over the Belt and Road Initiative come from the likelihood of more Chinese competitiveness in regional markets. The project's contributions to the building of ports, railroads, and roads have helped China's economic situation in southern Asia to grow. India suffers as a consequence as it competes with its neighbors for economic ties, particularly in key sectors of development like commerce, energy, and transportation. The imbalance of investment, wherein Chinese state companies oversee projects, begs problems about financial reliance and sovereignty, hence complicating India's economic predicament (Khanal & Zhang, 2024).



Moreover, the BRI affects India's geopolitical orientation in the Indo-Pacific region. China wants to create a network of economic corridors linking Asia, Europe, and beyond; India has to control its own maritime safety and commercial channels. The growing Chinese naval presence in the Indian Ocean, partly the outcome of BRI expenditure, raises questions about freedom of passage and access to vital maritime lanes necessary for India's commerce and economic security. Given this situation, India's maritime strategy needs to be reassessed, and the support of regional allies like the US, Japan, and Australia in order to counterbalance China's aggressive posture (Khanal & Zhang, 2024).

India has to handle its foreign policy holistically if it is to satisfy the strategic challenge the Belt and Road Initiative presents. Engaging in regional diplomacy to enhance connections with southern Asian countries while supporting alternative development programs, including the Act policy and the development of the northeast area (Khanal & Zhang, 2024), is an important technique in opposition to China's growing influence. India also has to advocate regional economic cooperation that gives fair and sustainable development a top priority and become more involved in already-existing international organizations like the Quad as a counterpoint to the BRI.

One illustration of the intricacy of present geopolitical changes is the BRI's possible aggravation of relations between China and India. As India negotiates these challenges, its participation strategy will have to carefully balance expanding regional connections, safeguarding national interests, and positioning itself as a key actor in the world arena. The changing dynamics of the BRI reflect the most intense rivalry between China and India, therefore underlining the need for India's foreign policy to be adaptable to these continuous changes on the global scene (Khanal & Zhang, 2024). The Israeli-Palestinian conflict's comeback in 2023 had a significant impact on world financial markets, therefore highlighting the complex link between geopolitics and economic stability. Rising violence has made investors more nervous, which has affected stock prices and changed market attitude. Clues like the S&P 500 and FTSE 100 have varied in many financial centers, especially in the US and Europe, as investors try to ascertain how extended conflict might influence oil supplies, world trade, and projections of economic development. The consequences of the war have extended to sectors sensitive to geopolitical risk; energy stocks exhibit notable volatility due to worries about the disturbance of the market by regional unrest.

Given these changes, India's role in Middle Eastern geopolitics has become even more significant. Using its diplomatic relations to promote corporate partnerships and call for a peaceful solution to the conflict, India has always held a fair position towards Israel and Palestine. India had a difficult challenge in the 2023 crisis: It had to maintain its long-standing foreign policy values—support of a two-state solution and the development of regional stability—while navigating its economic interests in a strategically crucial territory.

India's initial response to the issue was calls for de-escalation and a return to conversation between the conflicted parties. This is consistent with his long-standing diplomatic style, which gives negotiations on military alternatives first priority. India underlined, hence, the significance of maintaining bilateral trade and investment relations with Arab and Israeli nations. With yearly sales estimated at over \$1 billion, India is becoming one of Israel's largest consumers. Hence, these economic ties are rather important. Still,



India recognizes the importance of maintaining its close cultural and commercial links to the Arab world, particularly with regard to its sizeable expatriate population—necessary for its diasporic diplomacy.

The regional dynamics of the Middle East, especially the changing postures of Saudi Arabia and Iran, complicate India's foreign policy situation even more. Given India's significant dependence on Gulf oil imports, the Iranians' capacity to affect the Gulf cooperation to the point of instability directly jeopardizes not just regional but also India's energy security. Saudi Arabia's attempts to realign its foreign policy and interact with Israel provide India with opportunities as well as obstacles. Geopolitical changes compel India to balance enhancing its connections with Israel, which reflects the more general challenges facing its foreign policy agenda, with boosting its oil links to the Gulf States.

Moreover, the general involvement of big countries, especially China and the United States, complicates this complex geopolitical shortpoint even more. With a long history of US backing of Israel and simultaneous promotion of Middle East stability, India's foreign policy may be changing, as demonstrated by its growing alignment with US strategic aims via initiatives like Quad. Care should be taken, however, to avoid disturbing strong local players. China's strategic connections with numerous Arab nations and its growing ties with Iran provide a competing narrative that makes it challenging for India to show its agency in a geopolitical environment that is fast shifting.

Managing the many obstacles thrown by the changing geopolitical environment throughout the conflict in 2023 would depend on India's proactive commitment and diplomatic validation. The use of economic sanctions as a foreign policy has become more significant in modern society and calls for careful examination of their effects on the dynamics of global commerce. The choices taken during this pivotal period would define not only India's immediate reaction to Middle Eastern problems but also the long-term plans ingrained in its search for a foreign policy with many strong aspects. One of the fastest-growing economies in the world, India has to sail the challenging waters of global trade while juggling shifting sanctions policies, particularly those related to the European Union's anti-coercion instrument (ACI). With the use of this instrument in response to oppressive economic policies that third countries see, the EU's approach to protecting its economic interests and projecting its geopolitical power has evolved drastically (Freudlsperger & Meunier, 2024).

The ACI provides the EU with a structure for handling activities judged to be economic coercion—that is, taxes on corporate retribution. This approach might have an impact on India, one of the EU's most excellent economic partners and a leading partner as well. The effectiveness of the ACI might inadvertently influence India's foreign trade policies, especially as it balances its relationships with other strong countries free from EU rules. India's strategic dependence on the EU for technology and market access, for example, emphasizes the delicate nature of its links to international trade, as did its growing economic ties to Russia amid the Ukrainian conflict (Freudlsperger & Meunier, 2024).

India's attitude to ACI reflects its general foreign policy posture, which is pragmatic in preserving commercial interests while negotiating complex geopolitical issues. India uses a variety of strategies to minimize the adverse effects on its trade relations, just as other nations under economic sanctions. Through diversifying its economic partners, one may reduce dependency on any one block and simultaneously



increase awareness via bilateral negotiations and regional trade agreements. By means of initiatives like the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework and platforms like the Regional Economic Partnership (RCEP), India seeks to raise its strategic autonomy and commercial resilience.

Moreover, the Atmanirbhar Bharat project, which reflects India's emphasis on self-report, aims to lower the vulnerability of the economy to outside shocks like sanctions. India wants to minimize dependency on imports and boost local manufacturing so as to mitigate the potential interruptions linked with sanctions in the commercial flow. This method becomes increasingly crucial when the EU abuses economic coercion, lessening its relevance. Moreover, India's commitment to maintain open trade routes and engage in international forums helps it to be more suited to resist any unilateral economic coercion within the framework of ACI.

For Indian exporters, particularly in sectors where EU standards are significant, the ACI offers significant challenges. For Indian companies operating in the EU and other approved countries, the extraterritorial application of sanctions and the threat of additional penalties add levels of difficulty. The implications for compliance and the risk of market exclusion, which strains sectors depending on exports to the EU markets even more, demand that Indian companies have more regulatory expertise (Freudlsperger & Meunier, 2024).

Even as India strives to negotiate these challenging issues, its foreign policy changes show a nuanced awareness of the interdependence of the world economy and geopolitics. In this evolving diplomatic and economic narrative, India is positioned as a major actor. Apart from altering the scene of European security, the continuous conflict in Ukraine has affected the geopolitics of the world and compelled the countries to rethink their objectives of foreign policy. The success of the ACI relies not only on its capacity to discourage coercive policies but also on its capacity to change the scene of international commerce. Especially regarding the alliances for energy safety and defense, the conflict has offered India both challenges and significant opportunities that call for a review of its foreign policy structure.

India's energy security, which has traditionally depended on a mixed energy import strategy, has suffered dramatically from the disturbances caused by the war and the following limits on Russian energy supplies. India and Russia had a close connection before the conflict, with India buying a large amount of its natural gas and oil from Russia. India was obligated to search for other energy sources as international sanctions reduced the availability of reasonably priced Russian oil. In this sense, New Delhi has strengthened relations with long-standing friends like the US and Saudi Arabia, as well as broadening its import base by strengthening links with nations like Iraq and the UAE. This strategy change captures India's primary objective to increase its energy security against growing global prices by lowering any conceivable vulnerability arising from an over-reliance on Russian energy exports (Mello, 2024).

Apart from energy security, the situation in Ukraine has made India more focused on defense alliances—especially with the big international powers. Recognizing the necessity of a comprehensive military strategy, India has committed firmly to the US and its allies in the Quad—Australia, Japan, and the United States—to increase regional security in the Indo-Pacific. The increased competition between China and Russia on one side and the United States and its allies on the other makes the need for India to maintain a



careful act of diplomatic balance even more clear. By participating in cooperative military exercises and defense technology exchanges like the Memorandum of Exchange Logistics Agreement (Lemoa) with the United States (Mello, 2024), India seeks to increase its military preparedness and discourage any threats in the region.

Moreover, the geopolitical consequences of the war made India rethink how it handled its near neighbors, particularly by underlining its allegiance to the larger Indo-Pacific Region and the Association of Southern Asia for Regional Cooperation (SARC). India has been obliged to provide more regional cooperation as a top priority because of the alleged issues of regional instability, which are marked by economic disturbances and war-related refugee flows. Two projects aiming at enhancing the cooperative security environment and economic ties of the area are the expansion of maritime security artwork and the Trilateral Highway India-Myanmar-Tai India.

India's strategic actions to navigate the complexity of the contemporary world mirror its larger goals to become a regional power with a significant worldwide impact. India's involvement in multilateral organizations, especially BRICS Plus, shows a strategic approach in its foreign policy backed by the overall aim of increasing its sovereign influence in the change of the world scene. India is positioning itself not only to withstand shocks from the present war in Ukraine but also to play a fundamental role in the geopolitical dynamics in the evolution of the 21st century by adopting a shaded approach that matches its energy diversification strategies with greater defense cooperation and a regional commitment (Mello, 2024). For many reasons—including the fact that it supports the de-dollarization movements gathering steam as nations seek to reduce their dependence on the US dollar for world banking and trade—this commitment is very vital.

Under BRICS Plus, the BRICS—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—have aggressively expanded to include additional countries. Growing economies are cooperating to solve world problems, as a consequence of which the planet is becoming increasingly multipolar (Saaida, 2024%). Together with a distinct view of the Western financial institutions, the BRICS nations' combined economic prowess makes them strong participants in the global governance scene.

One of the most significant problems India has in this regard is the predominance of the US dollar in international transactions—a legacy primarily preserved by Western financial architecture. This dependency influences India, particularly in view of the Western nations' sanctions and developments in the global economy. India's strong participation in BRICS Plus thereby helps the de-dollarization projects by encouraging local currency trade among the Member States and offering a venue for defending systematic reforms.

India's de-dollarization initiatives deliberately increase its bargaining position worldwide, not just in response to foreign pressures but also in defiance of simple yielding. Thanks to the adoption of currency exchange policies, India and other BRICS members are able to engage in trade free from intermediate recourse to the dollar. This practical approach helps India to achieve greater financial autonomy and improve regional economic resilience. Recent discussions on the likely use of national currencies for trade



between BRICS countries underline the relevance of this and expose a common knowledge of the geopolitical factors guiding this change.

Moreover, India's BRICS leadership transcends beyond economic considerations to incorporate political and security dimensions. The company has developed into a platform for debating issues like reform of international institutions, global governance, and the progress of sustainable development objectives. By engaging in these more general dialogues, India is positioned as a key player with the capacity to influence outcomes on the main world problems, hence strengthening its image among developing countries.

Moreover, given the geopolitical changes occurring in the Indo-Pacific and the restructuring of their relations with giants like the United States, China, and Russia require the coordinated policies multilaterals like BRICS PLUS provide. The consequences of China's growing assertiveness in many spheres for regional stability call on India to properly handle its foreign policy. Participating in BRICS Plus allows India to deliberately oppose unilateral pressure by means of consultative talks with nations with differing priorities.

The importance of India's participation in the additional BRICS will grow as the dynamics of world power keep shifting. Although depoliticization is a necessary economic development, it also fits more general political objectives by establishing India as a proactive builder of a new international order in which rising economies can jointly exercise agency to mold their future and as participants in world multilateral mechanisms. India's attitude to renewable energy projects reflects, in its larger framework of foreign policy, a strategic junction between environmental sustainability and economic development. The importance of these multilateral pledges cannot be emphasized, particularly as the global power configurations realign and countries try to set their foot on the changing terrain of international relations. India, a quickly expanding economy with a vibrant population, has to handle significant energy needs that need sustainable solutions to lower environmental impact and develop society. Apart from a local objective, the government's promise to increase the capacity for renewable energy has consequences for India's geopolitical position, especially with cooperation with the most influential regional players.

Under the International Solar Alliance (ISA), a program co-guided with France, India's ambitious goal of 500 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030 is specified. This is one of the most remarkable undertakings in this respect. This global initiative aims to promote the use of solar energy technologies globally, especially in sun-rich countries, thereby positioning India as the leader in international cooperation of renewable energies and intends to By projecting itself as a significant participant in the expanding worldwide renewable energy industry, India improves its diplomatic connections and strengthens its energy security—especially with nations keen to address climate change. This strategy shows India's determination to promote group climate action and conforms with international environmental treaties.

Moreover, India's renewable energy initiatives serve to reduce its dependency on imports of fossil fuels, therefore improving national security and economic resilience. Reducing dependency on energy is very important, given the unstable global energy markets and geopolitical issues around energy supply chains.



Investing in renewable infrastructure—such as solar and wind farms—which is crucial for shielding against foreign economic shocks—helps India create a more varied energy budget.

The connection of green energy initiatives with economic growth opens up new paths for foreign investment. India's aggressive action in building a conducive environment for renewable energy has attracted foreign direct investments to the sector as global companies seek to seize the great possibilities of the Indian market. Two advantages of this financial flow that reinforce India's socioeconomic basis and raise its soft power abroad are the creation of jobs and the easing of technological transfer. Still, there are inherent challenges in integrating renewable energy into India's foreign policy. Aiming for short-term internal resources, the change to a green economy calls for large financial outlay and infrastructure improvements. The quest for technological self-sufficiency in renewable energy technologies also creates difficulties as India must negotiate alliances with current players while making sure it does not become too dependent on technology and foreign expertise.

Moreover, regional dynamics are complex and influence India's objectives for renewable energy, particularly in southern Asia. Cooperation projects like the SAARC framework for energy cooperation are very vital if we are to extend the security and sustainability of regional energy. Nonetheless, geopolitical disputes with surrounding countries—especially China and Pakistan—limit such cooperative attempts. As India shapes its foreign policy, the balance between regional stability and energy cooperation will become rather important.

Ultimately, India's renewable energy initiatives show a dual emphasis on economic growth and environmental sustainability, so they are intriguing for its foreign policy ambitions. Apart from advancing home interests, the change to a greener economy significantly affects India's foreign policy and confirms its importance as a major actor in regional and international energy affairs. India's capacity to negotiate these obstacles and impact the prospects in the renewable energy industry (Raihan et al., 2024) would primarily define its foreign policy course on the current world scene. Determining India's dedication to overseas markets now depends much on the interaction between foreign policy and entrepreneurship. As the nation tries to realign its position in a world becoming increasingly multipolar, the link between government strategic endeavors and entrepreneurial dynamism has become stronger. A complete understanding of this crossroads helps elucidate many crucial questions and strategies influencing India's foreign policy.

Historically, geopolitics, national security issues, and economic interests have influenced India's foreign policy mostly. However, the growth of a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem required a more complex plan combining diplomatic with commercial goals. The Indian government has been driven to focus on enhancing its international policy in order to help home company owners through globalization, technological developments, and increased rivalry on worldwide marketplaces. As demonstrated by projects like Make in India, which aim to increase manufacturing and position India as a global manufacturing powerhouse, foreign policy may be utilized to create an entrepreneurial environment that promotes international collaboration and investment.



One of the main challenges confronting this environment is the fragmentation of world markets, which has been exacerbated by recent geopolitical tensions and the development of protectionist attitudes in some of the big countries. The continuous trade conflicts and changing alliances force Indian decision-makers to protect not just the interests of home companies but also to detect and grab possibilities for collaboration with foreign partners. Usman et al. (2024) claim that to maintain competitiveness in such a complicated environment, foreign policy measures have to be strategically matched with the creative and flexible capacities of Indian companies. Political decision-makers, therefore, find it challenging to choose CEOs who uphold supply chain ties, support worldwide joint ventures, and simplify market access.

India has deliberately targeted to enhance its foreign policy by supporting entrepreneurship in fields that match its more general economic aims. Seeking to create an environment fit for Indian businesses, the government actively supports regional alliances via initiatives like the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and participates actively in international forums, including the G20 and the BRICS. This prosecution emphasizes how political decision-makers have diplomatic responsibilities to meet, which will provide Indian companies the actual opportunity to maximize their ability for innovation and market penetration.

Moreover, as new technologies alter the global picture, India's foreign policy has also taken care of digital entrepreneurship and cyber security needs. Initiatives centered on the digital economy, such as the Digital India campaign, mark a strategic change in foreign policy, supporting not just traditional sectors but also strengthening India's worldwide technological startup ecosystem. In addition to attracting foreign investments, these strategies assist Indian companies in establishing their name in international marketplaces, claims Usman et al. (2024).

The Indian government also has to grasp the changing geopolitical interests of the big nations, which frequently influence the dynamics of trade agreements and diplomatic connections, if it is to negotiate these challenges properly. India's objectives might conflict with those of countries with geopolitical aspirations of their own, like the US, China, and members of the EU. Thus, a reactive foreign policy devoid of the entrepreneurial sector in its plan may compromise India's long-term economic ambitions. Combining the roles of foreign policy and entrepreneurship makes it abundantly evident that India needs to deliberately position itself in the global framework by giving programs supporting local company owners top priority and concurrently engaging with global markets. Even though the global scene is constantly changing because of geopolitical changes and the complexity of the global economy, the junction of foreign policy and entrepreneurship will be vital in determining India's attitude to the commitment to the global market. The two-edged blade that represents both great possibilities and challenging ethical questions is the integration of new technologies, especially artificial intelligence (AI), with India's commercial and medical sectors. The adoption of artificial intelligence becomes a more important ethical factor influencing India's foreign policy direction as it aims to improve its bilateral and multilateral international contacts.

Applications of artificial intelligence technology in the business sector might increase production, inspire creativity, and streamline procedures. However, concerns about algorithmic bias, data security, and job displacement restrict these advantages. The World Economic Forum (2023) raises grave questions about



fair representation and equitable access to the advantages of technology should artificial intelligence (AI) be able to improve trade efficiency. Given India's varied population and different economic levels, the ethical consequences of these technologies must be carefully thought of as they might either worsen or reject present inequities. India has to show a dedication to the use of ethical artificial intelligence that gives inclusiveness and fairness first priority as it negotiates its economic alliances, especially with big countries like the US and the EU, thereby strengthening its reputation as a responsible global player.

Likewise, the use of artificial intelligence in healthcare has the potential to transform India's healthcare system but also begs ethical concerns. Emphasizing how artificial intelligence may improve patient care, diagnostic, and treatment approaches, the Indian Ministry of Health (2023) But depending too heavily on artificial intelligence in healthcare raises significant concerns about data security, patient permission, and algorithmic decision-making accuracy. Particularly in view of the COVID-19 outbreak, political decision-makers have to build solid ethical frameworks as India aims to improve its healthcare offerings. These leaders had to ensure that artificial intelligence applications maintained patient rights while promoting health capital if India was to gain leadership in international health ethics.

Ethical questions of artificial intelligence so significantly influence India's foreign policy and international relations. The major international powers are increasingly examining the moral consequences of technological development. Initiatives such as the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI), for example, in which both rich and underdeveloped countries take part, show a common understanding of the need to guide the evolution of artificial intelligence properly. Apart from allowing India to influence ethical artificial intelligence standards and international norms, its active attendance at these conferences is a deliberate action meant to increase its soft power all around. Moreover, ethical methods of using technology have to be reassessed considering the changing geopolitical setting. India struggles to stand apart from the democratic values of other nations in the face of the worldwide expansion of digital authoritarianism. By helping moral artificial intelligence development methods, India may prove itself as a distinct paradigm that gives democratic principles and human rights first priority. In particular, in its contacts with underdeveloped countries, India has the chance to present itself as a pioneer in promoting the use of ethical technology in the pursuit of sustainable development.

In the end, ethical questions about artificial intelligence in business and healthcare are fundamental in determining India's foreign policy, considering the present global scene. Through fair and sustainable technology initiatives, India not only improves its position globally but also shows itself as a proactive and major actor in the creation of norms controlling the worldwide technical environment by tackling urgent problems. Even as India battles these radical transformations, the interaction between ethics and technology will definitely affect outside commitments and alliances in the years to come. To grasp India's shifting strategic stance, one must first understand how global economic developments impact foreign policy—particularly in relation to post-standard recovery. After the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the interdependence of world markets and susceptibility in many nations, India had to rethink its foreign policy aims in response to new economic realities. Scholars claim that the epidemic has fundamentally changed geopolitics, corporate dynamics, and global supply networks, all of which India needs to take into account when determining its foreign policy path (MAHMOOD et al., 2024).



India's pre-existing issues—such as slowing down economic growth, increasing unemployment rates, and more inequality—were exacerbated during the first outbreak. This economic crisis led the Indian government to search for policies to raise self-esteem, including ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT, which seeks to increase indigenous output and reduce dependency on imports. As foreign policy projects more closely match economic imperatives as the Indian economy recovers, the concept that economic security is a vital component of national security is being strengthened.

Moreover, India wants to participate actively in the areas of digitalization and green technologies, which have fundamentally changed the scene of the world economy. The post-standard recovery phase has put India under pressure to engage with foreign partners interested in technology transfer and sustainable development, hence reaffirming the importance of transforming cooperation in these sectors. India has increased its efforts to create alliances in the sphere of renewable energy, for example, with initiatives like the International Solar Alliance meant to position the country as a world leader in green technologies.

Moreover, the opposing economic interests of the big countries significantly shape India's foreign policy strategies. Aiming to change their domains of influence in the post-standard world, the US and China sought to match the two most significant economies. Notwithstanding continuous border conflicts, India's approach to these nations usually shows a mix: working with the US on shared democratic values and safety institutions while dealing with China on economic concerns. Given internal economic challenges, this complexity calls for a different foreign policy that responds to local and outside factors.

Regional dynamics aggravate the impact of global economic trends on India's foreign policy even more. Southern Asia, nevertheless, remains a significant site for India's influence and expansion, given its varied political conflicts and economic circumstances. By means of initiatives meant to promote regional integration, such as the Southern Regional Cooperation Association (SAARC), India seeks to maintain its status as an economic partner in the area. However, the economic aspirations of its neighbors and the growing involvement of foreign nations like China via the Belt and Road Initiative projects provide both geopolitical prospects and difficulties for India.

Finally, India's participation in global institutions such as the G20 and BRICS emphasizes its will to create a rule-based international system that underlines long-term economic development. As international institutions provide more weight on recovering from and addressing climate issues, India's foreign policy is shifting to support communal economic governance while reiterating its distinct development ambitions. These dynamics show the complicated nature of India's foreign policy, in which navigating the present global environment is primarily dependent on economic concerns but also involves other elements. These components, taken together, show the significant influence of world economic developments on India's foreign policy orientation. Cyber security has become a significant component of national security in the present global scene and calls for a review of India's foreign policy approach. India's approach to cyber security now recognizes the link between national security and technology, linking itself to both external threats and the geopolitical environment that is progressively supporting actors of the technophile state (Oyewole et al., 2024). Having changed from a historically unlined stance,

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