

India's Foreign Policy Since 2014-2024

Ananya Ganguli

Ph.D. Scholar

*Department of Political Science
University of Gour Banga, Malda, (W.B.)
Email: ananyaganguli890@gmail.com*

Abstract

This study focuses on Indian Foreign Policy in a contemporary scenario. It will be explored from various primary and secondary sources, including data from the Ministry of External Affairs, Press Trust of India, Centre for Policy Research, etc. In the Contemporary scenario, India is one of the largest democratic countries in the world. The geopolitical nature of India is represented by its distinctive natural and political qualities with a unique civilisation since ancient days. India's foreign policy has changed its paradigm in the last 75 years of Independence. It provides an all-round socio-political development, bilateral relations, negotiations, pacts, etc. The present study explores the foreign policy over the last eleven years. It explores new areas that arise from recent developments in India's relations with foreign states.

Keywords

Foreign, Policy, External, Affairs, Bilateral, Look, East, West, Asia, Doctrine, BRICS, ASEAN.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Received: 11/08/25
Approved: 15/09/25

Ananya Ganguli

*India's Foreign Policy
Since 2014-2024*

*RJPP Apr.25-Sept.25,
Vol. XXIII, No. II,
Article No. 25
Pg. 193-200*

Online available at:
[https://anubooks.com/
journal-volume/rjpp-sept-
2025-vol-xxiii-no2-261](https://anubooks.com/journal-volume/rjpp-sept-2025-vol-xxiii-no2-261)

[https://doi.org/10.31995/
rjpp.2025.v23i02.025](https://doi.org/10.31995/rjpp.2025.v23i02.025)

Introduction:

Foreign Policies are certain goals, regulations, rules and actions taken by the government and its agencies. It is a kind of public policy negotiation between two or more states. In foreign policy, a government can identify problems that arise with the state and various agencies. Andrew Heywood calls it a “course of action for government and its various agencies” (Heywood,2011, P.129). Trade liberalisation, globalisation and privatisation of economic and public policies denote a significant change in India’s foreign policy. After 2014, the National Democratic Alliance-led government strengthened India’s Foreign policy with large and small nations. The Extended Neighbourhood Policy, the Act East Policy, and the Look West Policy are those policies that enhance India’s International politics. Earlier, India’s foreign policy adopted ‘strategic autonomy’. Now it focuses on ‘multi-alignment’ with different nations. It is observed that India’s strategic partnership has changed from the ‘age of strategic autonomy’ to the ‘age of multi-alignment’(Chandra,2017, P.104). The study explores foreign policy under Modi’s Prime Ministership. Modi’s foreign policy explores a wide range of economic partnerships and initiatives for international business with foreign states. To enhance foreign policy Prime Minister visited India’s immediate neighbours. In the present study, I am applying the case-study method to explore and analyse specific events to study India’s Foreign Policy between 2014 to 2024. Besides, I also tried to explore archival data regarding foreign policy.

I. India’s Foreign Policy from 2014 -2019:

In 2014, after the sixteenth general election, the National Democratic Alliance was elected as the ruling party of India. Narendra Modi was selected as the prime minister of India. At his inauguration, Modi invited all state leaders of South Asia. It was Modi’s diplomatic as well as governmental engagement in front of the world to strengthen bilateral cooperation. Under the Prime Ministership of Narendra Modi, India’s Foreign Policy strengthened and re-shaped its various policies. “Look West” policy with Iran, Israel and the Gulf regions was introduced this time. The “Look East Policy” was renamed by the government as “Act East Policy”. To increase economic cooperation, a strategic partnership with ASEAN countries is needed. During this time, Home Minister Rajnath Singh visited Israel (Pate,2020, P.8). In the question hour session of the parliament, Union Minister Rajnath Singh officially banned ISIS. India has made a notable contribution to the Overseas Indian crisis. A large number of migrant workers are engaged in Western Asia and Arab countries in the health sector and other public sectors. ISIS is a transnational Salafi jihadist organisation. It is a terrorist organisation referred to by the UN and various Muslim

and Non-Muslim countries. On May 20, 2014, then US President Barack Obama invited Modi to the USA. At that time, Obama renewed his visa to enter the USA. Earlier, Modi. On 26th September 2014, he visited the USA for the enhancement of the Indo-US Partnership. Obama and Modi signed an agreement on the Export-Import Bank. Another agreement was signed between the USA and the Indian Energy Agency (Council on Foreign Relations,2025). In June 2014, ISIS occupied different cities in Iraq, like Mosul, Tikrit, etc. It occurred 'direct threat to security and territorial integrity' in Iraqi cities. In that situation, a group of nurses were trapped within ISIL. The nurses were later freed with the initiative of the International Red Crescent volunteers and the Indian government (IANS,2014).

In January 2015, an Indo-US civil nuclear deal was announced by Obama and Modi. Manohar Parrikar and Ashton Carter signed a ten-year Indo-US defence framework deal (Council on Foreign Relations,2025). In 2015, the Bharatiya Janata Party wanted to replace Panchasheel with Panchamrit. The policies are: Samman or dignity, Samvad or dialogue, Samriddhi or Shared prosperity, Suraksha or Regional and Global Security, and Sanskriti evam Sabhyata or Culture and Civilisation (Press Trust of India, 2015). In 2015 December, Modi made a surprise visit to Pakistan to meet Nawaz Sharif during his return from Kabul (Reuters,2015). In 2015, India became a full member of the SCO or Shanghai Cooperation Organisation to strengthen its relationship with Central Asian nations. In 2016, Indian Foreign Policy adopted the policy of 'extended neighbourhood'. It was a modernised conceptualisation of "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*". On 4th May 2016, Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs of India in the Lok Sabha session said 'Gulf and West Asia and North Africa' are the extended neighborhood (Pate,2020, P.20). Such policy was taken to the enhancement of various economic developments, political opportunities, strengthening of maritime borders, interconnectedness with diaspora, etc. India suffers from different external tensions from far-off territories and the Indian Ocean region and sea borders like the East China Sea, South China Sea, and the Mediterranean (Kumar, MEA,2016). On 4th June 2016, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Afghan President H.E. Ashraf Ghani inaugurated the Salma Dam. It was a reconstruction and development project of the India-Afghanistan partnership. In May 2016, a trilateral agreement was signed between India, Iran and Afghanistan regarding international transport as a part of the Chabahar Agreement. India signed such an agreement to increase connectivity with Central Asia. On June 7th,2016, India and the USA agreed on deeper military cooperation. On 8th July 2016, Kashmir was affected by unrest after the killing of a militant, Burhan Wani. In September 2016, militants attacked the Uri Sector in Kashmir and killed Indian soldiers. Indian

Government resorted 'surgical strike' to demolish jihadi bases in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (Sarkar, et al,2018, PP.171-172). Home Affairs Minister Rajnath Singh called Pakistan a "terrorist state" (BBC News,2016). On 25th December 2016 Prime Minister of India visited Afghanistan. It was a high-level delegation that provided military and defence materials, aircraft, and helicopters to the Afghan Air Force (MEA,2020).

In June 2017, President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Modi gave a joint statement on defence partnership, counter-terrorism, and economic partnership. From 4th to 6th July 2017, Modi visited Israel. An agreement signed between India and Israel for cooperation in space, water management, agriculture, science and technology. It was a kind of bilateral relation that took place under Modi's 'Make in India' and 'Digital India' projects to enhance its sectors, technologies and science. Besides, it was the global message of India's foreign policy to end an insignificant relationship with West Asia (Pate,2020, P.8). NDA's government wanted a revamped 'West Asia Policy'. Modi offered reverence to Theodor Herzl suggested by Benjamin Netanyahu. Theodor Herzl was the founder of Zionism (Press Trust of India, 2017). On 24 October 2017, the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, H.E. Ashraf Ghani, presented on a day visit to meet the President and Prime Minister of India (MEA,2020). In 2017, Ukrainian foreign minister Pavlo Klimkin visited India for joint working interactions on trade and economic cooperation. Indo-Ukraine relations are enhanced on the grounds of Yoga, Ayurveda, Tourism, etc (Embassy of India, 2025). The Johannesburg Declaration was focused on multilateralism, global governance and challenges to immediate threats like terrorism, climate change, cybersecurity, etc. The tenth BRICS summit focused on the threat of USA-dominated trade. In August 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Rwanda for bilateral talks and economic development for the first time (NDTV,2018). On 6th September 2018 "two-plus-two" dialogue was organised and an agreement was signed between Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj with U.S Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Secretary of Defence Jim Mattis (Council on Foreign Relations,2025).

II. India's Foreign Policy from (2019-2024):

In June 2019, the USA ended preferential trade status with India. Earlier, it allowed duty-free access to products for developing countries. To counter it, India applied tariffs on twenty-eight products. In 2019 COMCASA agreement was signed between India and the USA for the advancement of communication technology and real-time information. In 2020, India and Ukraine's exports increased in pharmaceuticals, boiler machinery, edible oil, inorganic products, etc. In 2020, India

gave monetary funds of 1 billion USD in a connectivity project in the Dushanbe-Chortut highway in Tajikistan (Pant&Wani, 2024). The USA-India BECA Agreement was initiated to enhance military and geospatial data. In 2021, state leaders of the USA, India, Australia and Japan participated in the QUAD informal security dialogue. In the dialogue, the state leaders agreed on various issues like the COVID-19 vaccine and low-carbon shipping (Council on Foreign Relations,2025). In May 2022, the Prime Minister visited Germany, Denmark, and France for the expansion of bilateral relations with central and Scandinavian Europe. The Central Asian Republics wanted to improve bilateral and multilateral connectivity with India. A trilateral initiative was introduced in Chabahar to link with the International North-South Transport Corridor. It is a part of the Ashgabat Agreement in which India desired to set up a transport corridor between Iran, Oman, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, etc. In 2023, in a joint statement of Modi and Joe Biden, India and the USA adopted various policies and infrastructures like space cooperation, a MoU on semiconductor supply chain, etc. Indo-US Quantum Coordination Mechanism was initiated to enhance collaboration in different sectors like academia, government, etc. A comprehensive Quantum Information Science and Technology agreement was signed between India and the USA(MEA,2023). On 31st January 2023. iCET or Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies was signed between India and the USA. In 2023, the G20 summit was organised in India, and the leaders of the G20 discussed increasing investment and Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment.

III. Indian Foreign Policy from (2024–continuing):

In 2024, Indian Foreign Policy presented a New Testament. India's recent aim in global politics is to become a "Vishwa Mitra", or an approach of universal friendship. In the scenario of Indian foreign diplomacy, the Vishwamitra possibly strengthens the bilateral concerns. Besides, it will enhance India's mightiest presence in South-Asian politics. The Indian foreign policy wants to re-emphasise the earlier policies of NDA-I and NDA-II. The 'Neighbourhood First Policy', 'SAGAR vision', and 'Viksit Bharat' continued a prosperous economy and a self-reliant country up to 2047. In 2024, a significant step was taken in India and China's relations. An agreement was signed on patrolling arrangements in the line of actual control (NDTV,2025). A significant political change is observed in the politics of Bangladesh. The internal politics of Bangladesh were in turmoil after Sheikh Hasina's Awami League won the election in January 2024. It is concerned with various political adversities. It caused nationwide eviction of the Awami League government. It influences anti-Indian propaganda in Bangladesh. It affects both domestic politics and bilateral failure. The emergence of cyberattacks in different nations became a

rising threat to the internal security of the country. Hacking, Phishing, and various means of cyber fraud tried to disable IT infrastructure by terrorist organizations. The government of India has aimed to build a *Cyber Surakshit Bharat*. On 9th July 2024, in the 24th SCO summit in Astana, delegations discussed robust connectivity, terrorism, etc. At the summit of the SCO, India advocated counter-terrorism and criticised state-sponsored terrorism. Besides, Indian external minister Jaishankar gave some stick to the matter of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. As the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor becomes a threat to India's internal security and sovereignty (Pant&Wani, 2024).

On February 12, 2025, Modi and Trump discuss catalysing opportunities for Military Partnership and nuclear modular. Trump's reciprocal trade agenda is a kind of tax imposed on foreign goods by the US on foreign countries. To counter the reciprocal trade tariff of the USA, India's NITI Ayog challenged it with a "dual-track approach". It is India's strategic stand to consider the gaps that arise with the US tariff system. It is "considered to selectively reduce high tariffs on non-sensitive imports and negotiate non-tariff safeguards...." (PTI, June,3,2025). On 22nd April 2025, in Pahalgam, a group of five militants targeted tourists in Baisaran valley. The militants killed Hindu tourists and left their family members, especially women and children. The foremost objective of the terrorists is to warn the Indian Government. It raises questions regarding the security of the citizens of India within Indian territory. The government of India organised "Operation Sindoor" on 7th and 8th May 2025. This military and air force operation was a challenge against the influence of terrorists in Pakistan and Pakistani-occupied Kashmir. The government announced an operation to abolish terror in South Asia. Pakistan reacts with several drone attacks, but all are destroyed by India's powerful Air defence system (PIB India,2025).

Concluding Observations:

After the above analysis, I found that Indian Foreign Policy has changed in the past twelve years. This decade of foreign policy opened India's opportunity to meet with those continental regions which was not possible in earlier years. India plays an important role in the infrastructural development, trading, and economic enhancement in the far-off places of Asia, and other continents. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's adoption of various regional policies advanced the strategic and diplomatic partnership politically. His charismatic leadership enriched global partnerships and bilateral relations over the years. The military advancement also improved in the last ten years, that proven India's marshal strength in the South Asian region as a major power. The immediate action and surgical strikes, and air strikes against anti-national terrorist organisations proved India's strengthening power

pattern. Therefore, India has become a prominent supporter of anti-terrorist activities on the global stage. Indian Foreign policy plays an important role in Data privacy. It becomes an important factor in a multilateral concern. Indians took the initiative in cybersecurity to counter data piracy. It is a positive effect that the foreign policy initiatives for the last ten years have been more focused on global partnership and bilateral relations with different big and small states. Under NDA's tenure, Indian Foreign Policy was less focused and free from Western dependence and more focused on global partnership.

Reference:

1. Heywood, A. (2011). *Global Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, United Kingdom.
2. Chandra, V. (2017). *Modi Government and Changing Patterns in Indian Foreign Policy*. Jadavpur Journal of International Relations.
3. Pate, T. (2020). Re-(Modi) flying India's Israel Policy: An exploration of practical geopolitical reasoning through re-representation of 'India', 'Israel' and 'West post-2014'. *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*.
4. Council on Foreign Relations (2025). *U.S.-India Relations(1947-2025)*, <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/us-india-relations>.
5. Press Trust of India. (2017, July 5th). Modi makes an impromptu visit to the grave of Zionism's founder. *The Hindu*. Retrieved from <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/modi-makes-impromptu-visit-to-grave-of-zionisms-founder/article19211811.ece>
6. Kumar, Y. (2016). *India's Policy towards its extended neighbourhood and the larger context of national foreign policy challenges*, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Government of India. Distinguished Lectures.
7. Press Trust of India. (2015, April 4th). Panchasheel gives way to Panchamrit, New Pillars of Foreign Policy, *The Telegraph Online*, Retrieved from <https://www.telegraph.com>
8. *India-Afghanistan Relations*, Embassy of India, Kabul, Bilateral Brief (2020). Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).
9. Reuters. (2015, Dec 25th). Indian Prime Minister Makes Surprise Stopover In Pakistan, *The Guardian*, Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/25/indian-prime-minister-makes-surprise-stopover-in-pakistan>
10. Sarkar, B., Manna, S.S., Sahoo, J.(eds.) (2018). *Politics, Trends and Issues in India*, Levant Books, Kolkata.

11. British Broadcasting Corporation News. (2016, September 18th). Militants attack Indian army base in Kashmir, killing 17, BBC News, Retrieved from <https://www-bbc-com.cdn.ampproject.org/>
12. Embassy of India(2025).Kyiv, Ukraine <https://www.eoiukraine.gov.in/political.php>
13. NDTV India (2018). BRICS Summit 2018 Highlights: PM Modi Speaks At Africa Outreach Programme, <https://www.ndtv.com>
14. IANS (2014, June 17th). India Condemns Attack and Seizure in Northern Iraq by Terrorists, <https://news.biharprabha.com/>
15. NDTV India (2025). A Look at How India's Foreign Policy Progressed in 2024, <https://www.ndtv.com>
16. Pant, H.V., Wani, A. (2024). India's Balancing Act in the SCO, Observer Research Foundation, <https://www.orfln.org>
17. Ministry of Defence (2025). Operation Sindoor: Indian Armed Forces Carried Out Precision Strike at Terrorist Camps, 7th May 2025, PIB Delhi, <https://www.pib.gov.in>
18. Press Trust of India (June,03,2025). Amid reciprocal tariff row, NITI Aayog backs' dual-track India-US trade, Business Standard, Retrieved from <https://www-business-standard-com.cdn.ampproject.org>