

## DYNAMICS OF INDIA-U.S.A. RELATIONS SINCE COLD WAR

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### Abstract

India and the United States have seen many ups and downs since 1950s. Sometimes there was bitterness in their relations and sometimes they shared a healthy friendly bond. Although this presentation of mine focuses on periods of Cold War and Post-Cold War. The end of the Cold War, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the victory of the United States-led United States in the Gulf War pushed the whole world into a new world order. With the end of the Cold War, epoch-making changes are being reflected in the relations between India and America. With the end of the Cold War, now both the countries can openly talk to each other on International issues, leaving behind the skeptical view of the past. America's strategic importance has diminished. For the first time, the US is in a position to engage directly with the nations of South Asia. Economically, with the failure of the communist system, other countries of the world have also turned towards market-oriented economic reforms like the Indian government. Which is the desire of America, some of the features of the new world order that is emerging after the Cold War are globalization, liberalization, market-oriented economy, information technology, restructuring of a polar world order. In such a situation, in the light of the characteristics of some of the above mentioned new world order in Indo-American relations, new issues are important from human, economic, social, and environmental point of view. This paper gives a brief overview of the strained ties, ideological contrasts, and divergences in national interests, initial misunderstandings, and ups and downs in the relationships between two democracies-India and the US-during the Cold War era.

**Keywords:** Cold War, Economic, Social, Environmental, India, USA.

### Introduction

The most interesting thing in this presentation is that India and United States of America are the two biggest democracies of this world and we very well know that U.S.A. is a superpower and every country in this world wants to be friends with U.S.A. on the terms and condition which U.S.A. wants them to. But, then also India is not compromising with its ideology to please U.S.A. as U.S.A. is a capitalist country and India is a socialist one, then obviously there can occur some kind of disagreements in their ideology and foreign policy. India-U.S.A. relationship is influenced by many other factors like U.S-Pakistan relationship, India- Soviet Union relationship and U.S-

China relationship during cold war period. And India-Russia, U.S- Pakistan and India- China relationship influenced Indo-U.S relationship post-cold war.

**The objectives of my presentation would be:-**

1. To find out the real chemistry of bilateral relationship between the world's two largest democracies;
2. To find out why India and the U.S.A. regard each other as diplomatic collaborators;
3. To find out the reasons why the two nations have a mutual strategic interest in having close relations;

**Testing of Hypotheses: The present study is based on the following hypotheses:**

1. During the Cold War period India was in support of non-alignment policy and thus joined non-align countries which clearly showed that India was not in support of either of the groups of cold war.
2. During Cold War India was getting support from Soviet Union which tilted India more towards Soviet Union.
3. After the Cold War India is not getting hardware and diplomatic support from Russia and other Republics of the former Soviet Union. So India was rather forced to unveil a new chapter of relationship with the U.S.A. to suit its national interest.
4. In the post –Cold War period, India has adopted a new bilateral economic policy.
5. The U.S.A. being a victim of global terrorism wants India to support its fight against terrorism.
6. Both Washington and New Delhi have separate interests in concluding the Civil Nuclear Deal.

**Beginning with Misperception and Contradictions (1947-1960)**

It is a well-known fact that a country's foreign policy does not evolve all of a sudden rather it is a product of numerous factors and forces. Bilateral ties between India and the United States of America are no exception to this phenomenon. It becomes imperative to understand and evaluate the historical perspective about the origin of their relationship. This is also important to know about the issues of convergences and divergences in these years. One can analyze the real nature of India-U.S.A. ties. This will be beneficial for foreign policy makers and strategists also.

Commonality in form of legacies of British Rule and National Movement for independent and democratic beliefs provided them the platform for common understanding. But it could not happen and remained to be unexplored for most of the time. But in recent times, this relationship has shown some flexibility and common understanding. In order to make an objective analysis of all these initiatives, it is better to start with brief acknowledgement of their relationship from early past till date.

After Second World War America emerged as super power in world politics. Economic and Military power surpassed all the competitors whereas newly independent state was giving utmost attention to Nation building and was busy in making tackle the issues of colonialism and imperialism. Basic objectives of India's foreign policy at that time was national security, economic development and world order which created some type of misperceptions in the mind of U.S.A. policy makers. In the era of 1950s Cold War has started which had a great impact on world politics and established Bilateral and Multi-lateral security and economic arrangements with countries of Western Europe and Asia.

India openly affirmed its faith of Non-Alignment. India's policy towards China was also responsible for bad beginning as America had not granted recognition to Mao's leadership to China instead it stood on the side of Chiang Kai-shek government of China. India not only supported People's Republic of China but also supported its stake as a member of UNO. It created some strain in the mind of US leadership and hampered their bilateral ties.

Korean conflict also played an important role in hampering the relationship of India and U.S.A. as India did not take part with U.S.A. in any action against North Korea and remained neutral in this offence and demanded regional settlement of this problem. Indian leadership wanted permanent solution of this problem, they were of the view that it could not be attained without the active participation of Soviet Union and China. All these approaches annoyed US strategic think tank.

As India was involved in Non-Aligned movement but there was a little tilt of India towards Soviet Union. During the period of Cold War America was having closer relation with Pakistan and not so constructive role played by U.S.A. in security council during Kashmir dispute and in the 1971 war. America's Pakistan policy had always proved to be a main hurdle in the consolidation of India-U.S.A relations from the beginning. Military alliance and aid to Pakistan rattled the relationship between the two.

### **Cold War: Cooperation and Firm Dissent (1960- 1992)**

The first phase of this period reflected some type of common understanding in their relations. But the next phase was totally different in all respects. In the first dozen years of Indian independence (1947-1959), the U.S. provided \$1.7 billion in aid, including \$931 million in food. The Soviet Union provided about half as much in monetary terms, however made much larger contributions in kind, taking the form of infrastructural aid, soft loans, technical knowledge transfer, economic planning and skills involved in the areas of steel mills, machine building, hydro-electric power and other heavy industries especially nuclear energy and space research.

In 1959, Dwight D. Eisenhower was the first U.S.A. President to visit India to strengthen the staggering ties between the two nations. He was so supportive that the New York Times remarked, "It did not seem to matter much whether Nehru had actually requested or been given a guarantee that the U.S. would help India to meet further Chinese communist aggression. What mattered was

the obvious strengthening of Indian-American friendship to a point where no such guarantee was necessary.”

To this end, the U.S. gave India substantial economic assistance, particularly as the U.S. ties with China deteriorated. During 1962 Sino- India war, the U.S. publically supported India's interpretation of its border with China in the eastern Himalayas and was also ready to dispatch certain amount of military support if required. U.S's main reason was that it wanted to limit the spread of communism during the cold war.

However, despite its potential importance and occasional periods of Indo-U.S cooperation, it was clear from early on that India would not serve as an active U.S. ally in the battle against global communism. For its part, India refused to join either the American or the Soviet side. In the cold war conflict and instead created its own “non-align” course largely independent of either super powers. From the U.S perspective, the main problem with India's policy was that “non-alignment”, in practice did not translate into genuine neutrality. Instead, India tilted away from the U.S. and more into the Soviet Union's ambit, especially after 1970s at the time of Kashmir issue and the India-Pakistan war of 1971.

At the strategic level, the Soviet Union offered India crucial protection against regional adversaries. In 1971 New Delhi and Moscow signed a treaty of “Peace, Friendship and Cooperation” under which the two parties promised to aid one another in the event of a perceived

After the treaty, 1971 war took place and U.S. asked India to retreat hastily from Bangladesh but India refused to step back and has send U.S. Enterprises in Bay of Bengal but before it could reach India defeated Pakistan.

America alleged India's role behind the Bangladesh problem. When the war broke out, U.S.A. deployed naval warheads in the Bay of Bengal. In UNO also, America took anti-India stance and want to use its force against India. But due to Soviet veto power, any type of UN sanction or offensive activities could not took place. All these issues created a vacuum in bilateral relations.

Rupee-Ruble agreement signed between India and Soviet Union in 1978 in which it was made clear that India could buy defense weapons from Soviet Union in rupees. So it was easy to buy weapons from Soviet Union as now India has to less use its foreign exchange reserves for buying weapons. And Soviet Union decided to use its rupee currency in buying some other goods from India.

In return India continued to support the Soviet Union on a variety of controversial international issues. New Delhi withheld criticism of Soviet Union of Afghanistan in 1979, just as it has done with the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. India's “non-aligned” foreign policy thus became a source of considerable irritation to the U.S. in containing Soviet power, but they also actively cooperated with the Soviet Union in significant ways. Beyond these strategic problems, India was economically unattractive during the Cold War period in essence,

during the Cold War India refused to promote U.S. grand strategic goals and offered few economic benefits, while posing little direct military threat to Americans interests.

Pakistan, nationally supported Americans grand strategic goals, including participating in anti-communist military alliances such as the Central Treaty Organization and the South-East Treaty Organization. Pakistan also allowed Washington to use its territory as a base for over flights to eavesdrops on the Soviet Union, in addition to serving as a vital power for American arms shipments to Anti-Soviet Union in Afghanistan. In return, Pakistan received substantial American economic and military assistance.

Various activities were going on international platform during this period. India had emerged as an important power in "Shimla Agreement" and Indo-Soviet treaty. U.S.A also improved its ties with China and President Nixon declared American policy towards Asia in which a better relationship with all main stake holders in this continent was the key feature.

U.S.A provided financial aid by enacting P.L.-480 rule of economic policy to India. Foreign secretary Henry Kissinger visited India and a joint commission was formed for better cooperation in the field of the following:-

- Economic
- Trade
- Science
- Technological
- Educational
- Cultural Spheres

The picture was not that clear as it looks like, there were also many issues of contrary approach. President Nixon's view in Shanghai declaration had triggered a serious dissent in Indian point of view. The issue of Diego Garcia and increasing intervention in Indian Ocean, India's Atomic Nuclear test of "Pokhran" and in retaliation. American denial of fuel export for Tarapur Thermal power were the also the key feature which affected Indo-U.S. relationship.

Indira Gandhi tried to settle India's position as non-alignment. She was not only wanted to change its position in the Third World countries but also in Western world that is why she changed her approach and made distance from USSR. Economic need also influenced this change. As economic modernization started in the early decade of 1980. It required financial aids, technology, trade initiatives and these were the conditions made India to open channel towards U.S.

Emergence of Rajiv Gandhi in Indian politics was also played an important role in Indo-U.S. relation as he was a man of scientific temper, to bring India into 21<sup>st</sup> century he supported the use of technology and modernization in every aspect of life and that's why he was firm supporter of better tied with U.S.A.

The change in relation with two super powers and recall of Soviet army from Afghanistan had decreased the cold war tension. India got a sight of relief as it could follow more object based policy. Sudden change in international politics also compelled U.S.A. to change its stance towards India.

### **Post-ColdWar: Cooperation and Sharp Differences (1992-2000)**

Influenced by changing international politics dynamics. With the sudden demise of USSR and the end of the cold war period, economic issues became more important than the political one. Globalization has made the traditional issues and their means irrelevant. The collapse of Soviet Union forced India's policy makers to recalculate their strategic options. No longer they could rely on their super power ally's military and diplomatic protection. Nor the Russian made clear that would they be selling arms under exceptionally favorable Cold war terms.

India realized that a closer relationship with U.S.A. would help them to fill the vacuum left by the Soviet Union's fall and balance against rising power of China. U.S. for its part was no longer to view India from Russia's lens and now can reevaluate Indo-U.S. relation on their own. Russia also called off the Rupee-Ruble agreement and asked India to buy defense weapons in dollar only.

Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG regime) was introduced in India also post-Cold War period, which proved that India's market would be open to American export companies also. Changed in international milieu like U.S. Presidential election, opening of Indian economy, FDI and MNCs pressure were the main deterrents to decide the future course of action in bilateral ties. President Bill Clinton and P.M. Narshimha Rao were busy in economic transformations at domestic level. These internal dynamics had prepared the platform for more comprehensive and close ties between India and United States of America.

But, some major events took place in decade of 1990s which played an important role in sharp differences between India and U.S. Alike President Clinton's comparison of Kashmir with Bosnia and Somalia has exaggerated the suspicion between the two countries. Nuclear Disarmament also proved an issue of bone of contention in these days between India and American administration. India's denial to sign C.T.B.T and N.P.T for indefinite time had raised the eyebrows of U.S policy makers towards India as India thought this as a dual parameter.

Second Pokhran explosion on 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of May 1998 done by India was also condemned by U.S.A. and U.S. administration imposed some sanctions against India in field of Foreign aid, Defense related export, Space industry, Atomic energy, Missile programme, Computer, Research and development, Ban on collaboration with Indian Companies, Financial aid from U.S banks and Export of Atomic fuel.

In 1999 infiltration of Pakistan's army in L.O.C. of Jammu and Kashmir, due to which "Kargil War" took place at that time when Pakistan's P.M. Nawaz Shareef went to U.S. for help and U.S. refused to intervene, this laid a base for strong relation between the two nations.



## Conclusion

It should be noted that the United States is the only economic and military power in today's emerging polar new world order. He is the only policeman, grandfather or superhero in the world. No one can match him, he has no rival, and no one can challenge or challenge him. He has so much power that he can give orders to any country and can also punish them for not obeying the orders. Not only does it have a huge stock of nuclear weapons, but it also has enormous economic potential. It is in a position to force the nations to change their policies by putting pressure on them. He can bring arbitrariness and one side restrictions on the import of nations on the pretext of unfair trade, not only the United Nations, but also the international and financial institutions like the World Bank are in his hands.

Relations between India and the US must be shaped by both countries equally. Both nations must seek to improve their mutual understanding, especially those areas where it requires improvement. There are numerous strong reasons for both nations to develop closer ties. This will significantly contribute to representing the two countries' strong democratic and secular beliefs. It is important to let India-US relations develop naturally. As in any wholesome and dynamic partnerships, squabbles are inevitable. Being honest and critical while also showing a more informed interest in one another are essential. In order to meet the problems of the future, resilience needs to be improved.

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