

Covid-19 and its impact on Indian Foreign Policy: A Study

Mr. Jignesh B Patel

Assistant Professor, Kalol Institute of Management, KIRC Campus, Kalol-382721. Gujarat

Abstract

The pandemic has been the most devastating event for the world since the Second World War. The pandemic as well as several geopolitical issues has made an already complex world even more complex. Its imbalance in the international system has increased. The second reality is that multipolarity is more relevant today than it was before. The pandemic has brought to the fore the importance of bringing diversity and resilience to supply chains, as well as the economic consequences of geopolitics and the risks associated with efforts to centralize power.

India has always followed the ancient philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. Today there is an open society and democratic sentiments and cognizance of our responsibilities on the world stage. During the pandemic, India increased its drug production capacity to meet the demands, especially of paracetamol and hydroxychloroquine. Provided medicines to more than 150 countries, of which more than half were free or non-commercial. We have deployed our medical teams in the neighboring 4 countries. This sends a message to the whole world that India has the ability to not only help itself but to build good international relations. Prime Minister Modi has given a call for self-reliant India, which is important for the world. But after the second wave of Covid-19, foreign aid has also had to be accepted. The dire consequences of the pandemic have raised questions about regional primacy and leadership, which will have implications for the health of India's foreign policy in the years to come.

Keywords: Paracetamol, Epidemic, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam

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*Author's Correspondence

 Mr. Jignesh B Patel

 Assistant Professor, Kalol Institute of Management, KIRC Campus, Kalol-382721. Gujarat

 jigneshpatel2411@gmail.com

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Foreign Policy

Foreign policy is a set of principles and decisions that a nation adopts in the course of its relations with other nations in order to achieve its national goals. Presently, due to increasing international interdependence, the nature of international relations has become very complex and accordingly the determination of foreign policy is also a complex process. In the words of Felix Gross – “Foreign policy in its functional form is the specific method adopted by one government towards another government, by one state towards another, or by one government towards an international federation.”

Covid-19 and India's foreign policy

Prime Minister Modi attended the virtual summit with the countries of the West. During the first phase, we announced \$266 billion in incentives and support to help low-income groups, migrants, marginal farmers, and small businesses and those in the informal economy who are impacted by the lockdowns, who use 10% of our products. is the percentage. Launched the Food Transfer Programme, providing additional rations to 800 million people, which continues to this day:

1. Within only 6 months, we have increased the production capacity in PPE, Testing Kits, Medicines etc. and are also sharing to other countries. Today we are making N-95 masks for global supply.

2. India gave Paracetamol and Hydroxychloroquine to more than half the countries free of cost to 150 countries in the world.
3. Provided medical teams to four neighboring countries.
4. Has dealt with the crisis with China after several decades on its border.
5. The Indo-Pacific region, an inclusive state, is emerging as a network hub of opportunities. Our vision is cooperative, inclusive, as stated by Prime Minister Modi in his SAGAR VISION, for the safety of all and development of all in the region. We have also increased diplomatic security ties in the Southeast Asian region. Progress has been made in realizing our shared vision with Australia, Japan, America.

Impact on the Indian economy during the Covid-19 era-

In terms of international trade, India exports 7500 items from 190 countries of the world and imports about 6000 items from 140 countries. India's trade is with the United States, Bangladesh, China, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia countries. There has been a crisis of 1.5 trillion revenue loss in the banking sector.

No.	Sectors	Deficit (in million dollars)
1.	chemical sector	120 million dollars
2.	Textiles and apparel	\$64 million
3.	Automotive Sector	\$34 million
4.	Electricals Machinery	\$12 million
5.	Leather Products	\$13 Million
6.	Metal Products	\$13 million
7.	Furniture and Wood Products	\$15 million

The above table shows India's losses due to restrictions in international trade. It is clear from the table that India is the largest exporter and importer of chemical or related products. That is why the deficit has been shown the most in this sector, while India has suffered a lesser amount in the field of electricals.

Policy towards Covid-19 and neighboring countries-

1. The Role of Empathy.
2. Recourse to self-reliant diplomacy.
3. Production work started in the nation.
4. Medicine, health provided medicine to more than 7 countries.
5. Establishment of Emergency Fund (Covid-19) for 7 countries.

Possible effects of Covid-19 on India's foreign policy-

1. Regional Politics-

Due to Covid-19, there will be a negative impact on material aid to neighboring countries and political dominance will be challenged.

2. China's intrusion-

China's "checkbook diplomacy" is India's biggest challenge. Due to Covid-19, physical strength, balance of power, political will is a difficult stage for India.

3. India's capability in the "Quad" gets affected due to reduction in military expenditure.

4. Economy affected by-

India's economic crisis with foreign direct investment, decrease in industrial product, unemployment has affected the economy of India.

5. US-China relations-

Due to China's increasing dominance in the Indo-Pacific region and the difficulties and infections related to Covid-19 in India, the US may try to normalize economic relations with China.

Challenges-

1. Border Security, Air Travel
2. Bringing back the diaspora.
3. 13 May 2020 (Return of 14800 citizens)
4. Corona pandemic measures.
5. Unemployment, economic slowdown
6. Defense of civilians.
7. The morale of the youth dropped.
8. Maintaining your old image.
9. To deal with the changing international scenario.
10. The situation of the dead bodies shed in the river by the second wave of Corona revealed a weak foreign policy.

Positive Result-

1. India's pharma industry could develop and face the problem.
2. Be able to determine the position and direction of the world.
3. Has played a strong role of collaborator at the international level.
4. Efforts were made to raise the morale of the poor.
5. prevented from fleeing.
6. Emerging from the rising power of Asia.
7. Became a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2021.

Conclusion-

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected India's political capability, economic capability, limiting Indian ability to achieve foreign policy goals. There is a possibility of change in India's foreign policy in the coming time. COVID-19 has provided some new opportunities for South Asia. The pandemic has spurred change on a global scale and will lead to increased geopolitical competition and tensions. But India encourages all countries to work together while respecting the sovereignty of others and at a global level in line with international norms.

The events of the present times have taught that it is necessary for like-minded countries to be coordinated to meet various challenges. This pandemic has brought us in front of us as we are all looking for a way out of this uncertain situation.

Suggestions

1. In the era of this global pandemic, "SAARC" will have to be strengthened again, this will increase the opportunities for cooperation between the countries.
2. Attention will be given to regional and multilateral health.
3. To consider the issues like geopolitical, health, environment regional connectivity going on in South Asia.
4. To promote internal democracy and participation.

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