

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA

Organizes International Conference on Indian Foreign Policy

“India and the World: Past Traditions, New Directions”

Date: Wednesday- Thursday, 4-5 February 2015

Venue: Tagore Hall

Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

The past two decades have witnessed the transformation of India from a peripheral player in world politics to one that is more powerful and much more deeply engaged with world affairs. This has come about as a result of major shifts, both in the structure of international politics as well as India's domestic politics. Indian foreign policy has been suitably altered to cater to the country's new goals and aspirations.

Indian foreign policy, in the early years after Independence, was guided foremost by the experience of colonialism. India was focused on forging good relations with its neighbours as a newly formed state. However, it also sought to bond with Third World countries on the basis of a commonality of goals, i.e., state-building in the aftermath of colonialism. It was wary of becoming too close to any major world power, and hence articulated the policy of Non-Alignment. This policy was well-received in much of the newly decolonized world, and gave India the status of a moral leader. Closer home, the two countries that were the axis of attention were Pakistan and China. Successive wars with these countries made them the chief adversaries, and India's security issues revolved around protecting itself from any aggressive overtures made by these players. Since India had adopted a policy of self-reliance in the economic sphere, the conduct of robust economic relations was not a significant part of India's foreign policy.

However, since the mid-1980s, and then more noticeably since the early 1990s, Indian foreign policy started to move away slowly but decisively from its traditional aims. The formation of

SAARC signalled an interest in an incipient form of regionalism, and it was evident early on that India would become the dominant player. The end of the Cold War and the opening up of the Indian economy and its integration with global markets meant that we could no longer afford to be insular, or distant from the world's remaining superpower. The relevance of Non-alignment as a policy came under scrutiny. The early post-colonial affinity with Third World countries *only* was also abandoned. A drastically altered economic environment meant that foreign policy goals were pre-dominantly driven by a need for economic prosperity and development. This has however, not detracted from traditional security issues. While no major wars have been fought, the rise of China and the increasing instability and growth of terrorism in Pakistan have remained concerns that need to be tackled effectively.

India aspires to become a major global power in the coming decades. It has attempted to prove its military prowess by testing nuclear devices, and after initial criticism, has been more or less accepted as a nuclear power state. Its economic growth story, although not without flaws, has been powerful and compelling. Over time, India has moved closer to the United States of America, has established consistent diplomacy with the European Union as well as with a part of the world it had hitherto neglected, i.e., South East Asia. Within the neighbourhood, India has acknowledged the need to establish channels of co-operation with both Pakistan and China, primarily through peace-building measures and trade. While continuing its engagement with Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh, it has started paying greater attention to Bhutan and also, Central Asia. It has also played a pro-active role in BRICS, a collaboration among the fastest developing nations on the otherwise under-developed continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Issue-based foreign policy has also come into sharper focus, as India has parried internationally on climate change and energy security, two relatively new areas of engagement. A continued focus on its old partnerships with the Middle East and West Asia makes sense both historically and strategically.

All these changes demand a thorough assessment of which way Indian foreign policy is headed. An oft-repeated question being asked by strategists and security experts is whether India has a foreign policy at all, or is it merely an amalgamation of ad hoc measures. This necessitates delving into philosophical, civilizational and historical narratives, as well as more contemporary analyses of the sources and goals of our foreign policy. Should we stop paying obeisance to non-alignment, or re-cast it as strategic autonomy? Is there wisdom in getting too close to the US at the risk of abandoning our freedom of decision-making as well as relations with historical allies such as Iran? Will being part of BRICS or G -7 yield any tangible benefits? How significant is increasing trade with Pakistan? Should India make greater diplomatic efforts on the African continent? How will the impending change in domestic regime impact India's foreign policy?

Keeping in view the pressing concerns and challenges of India's foreign policy goals, we invite abstracts covering, but not restricted to, the following themes:

- Historical and/ or philosophical sources of India's foreign policy
- Role of Norms, Individuals and Institutions
- Domestic Imperatives and International Challenges
- Foreign policy towards USA, Pakistan, China, EU
- Foreign policy towards West Asia, Central Asia, South Asia
- Foreign policy towards South East Asia, Pacific, Africa, Latin America
- India and global multilateral institutions and regional organizations
- Trade, Energy Security, Traditional and Non-Traditional security issues

The participants are requested to mail the abstract in not more than **300 words** to **nationalforeignpolicyconf@gmail.com**

Important dates

- **Abstract Submission** **30/11/2014**
- **Notification of accepted abstract** **07/12/2014**
- **Submission of full paper** **21/12/2014**

Registration Fee (students and faculty) - Rs 500

Travel and Accommodation

No TA/DA will be paid. The delegates are requested to make their own arrangements for accommodation.

All queries regarding the conference should be mailed to **nationalforeignpolicyconf@gmail.com**

Organising Secretary

Dr. Krishnaswamy Dara

Assistant Professor

9818679556

Convener

Prof. Mohammad Badrul Alam

Head of Department

Department of Political Science

011-26981717(3530)

9313397023

Co Convener

Ms. Pooja Paswan

Assistant Professor

9818328173

All are cordially invited to attend.