

The Transition In The Foreign Policy Of India And Its Choices In The Russia-Ukraine War

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ABSTRACT

The power transition in the world from unipolar to multipolar in the 21st Century has produced multiple reasons for India to develop its foreign policy. India's Cold War non-alignment foreign policy gave it many opportunities, which it achieved. Within the South Asia region, India is the sole country actively managing and pursuing diplomatic relations with all relevant parties. Consequently, other nations across the globe are closely observing India's involvement in exerting influence and control over the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. The expansion of its foreign policy and economy in the present-day geopolitical landscape, notably under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Mod, has yielded substantial advancements. The Ukraine War has left India's foreign policy choices in the crosshairs of many opponents and allies. Despite the conflict, India is equipped with the policy of promoting diplomacy while it is maintaining to achieve its national interests at the maximum. This research analyses the depth of India's changing foreign policy admirations under the umbrella of Neo-Realism by visualising the state's national interests.

Keywords: India foreign policy shifts, Russia- Ukraine war, India-first policy, Non-alignment, Neutral player, China.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since independence, India has emerged into different phases, such as being poor, non-alignment, economic progress, rising power, and progressing globally as a competitive state. India has gained multiple possibilities due to its willingness to adopt a non-alignment foreign policy during the Cold War; it succeeded in different ways. Then, after the Cold War, transformations came into the formulation of a foreign policy that aimed to keep the autonomous status of an independent state persistent while engaging with Russia and the West simultaneously.

In the Russia-Ukraine war, India has maintained a neutral stance by giving peaceful measures to mitigate the war without affecting its relations with Russia and the US. The strong status of India and its close historical ties with Russia have paved the way for it to play the role of a mediator in the Ukraine war. With the outbreak of this conflict, the changing dynamics can easily be seen in the making of blocs and alliances. After the Russian attack on Ukraine, the global crisis emerged in different dimensions. On the one hand, states are facing various

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problems with different consequences, while on the other hand, some states are flourishing instead. If we look around the globe, at this moment, India is benefiting in different dimensions, either diplomatic, economic, political, or defensive relations.

With the emerging effects of Chinese policies in global affairs, India is also taking a strong place due to its foreign policy stances towards the Ukraine War. Through this cooperation, India has deepened its defensive ties with Japan, the US, and Australia in managing international relations by signing a Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) alliance. Even at the G20 summit, India manifested a theme of unity, "One Earth, One Family, One Future," which confined the Earth to possessing common ground values available to all the nations (Georgieva, 2023).² The closer the look, the more profound evidence of Indian foreign policy flourishments can be seen. India has perceived changes in its decision-making and foreign policy in the multipolar order. The foreign policy advancement, particularly under the leadership of Modi, has supplemented India in the direction of multilateralism, which adheres to the commitment to consideration of national interests. Therefore, India is achieving relative gains by engaging in different directions through alliances and blocs. In this respect, the argument for defensive neorealism better defines the approaches of Indian foreign policy, which neglect the use of force in a time of complex interdependence; hence, states want to secure their survival in such conditions where the proportion of absolute and relative gain is at high interests of states (John Baylis, 2011, pp. 118-120).³

This paper examines different phases of India's foreign policy and diversification from non-alignment to multi-alignment to acquire a position of a leading power with absolute gains. However, in the Ukraine war, it has intended to play the role of a neutral player to attain precedence without halting relations from any side. Afterwards, India's foreign policy shifts in the 21st Century have exhibited significant changes in achieving maximum national interests and securing a powerful status worldwide. To this extent, it has maintained strategic, economic, and defensive relations with Russia to deliver its unbreakable friendship by not standing against Russia. India enjoys historically solid ties with Russia and the West, allowing it to maintain a neutral stance and avoid taking sides. This strategic autonomy positions it as a potential mediator acceptable to both parties.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF INDIA'S TIES AFTER 1947: USSR VERSUS US

2.1 USSR: The phase of the Cold War indicates different situations that brought behavioural and preferential changes between India and Russia. After India became independent, India and the USSR shared differences in foreign policy ideologies. To this extent, the Soviet Union believed India would follow Western capitalism, while India adopted British political norms. This phase was considered the observatory period when both sides contemplated each other politically. On the other hand, the USSR started sharing ideological relations with China by keeping their mutual interest in expanding communism intact (Bernstein, 2014).

After Stalin's death, Khrushchev brought India and the USSR closer. More intriguingly, they increased cultural, historical, philosophical, and economic linkages. Also, India's foreign policy pattern after independence was primarily based on the non-alignment stance, Panchsheel

² Kristalina Georgieva, "Policy Priorities for the G20: One Earth, One Family, One Future." *IMF*. February 22, 2023. <https://www.imf.org/en/Blogs/Articles/2023/02/22/policy-priorities-for-the-g20-one-earth-one-family-one-future>.

³ John Baylis, Steve Smith, and Patricia Owens, *The Globalization of World Politics: An introduction to International Relations*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 118-120.

(Mastny, 2010, p. 53), generally designed by Nehru, and the refutation of joining any military or a strategic bloc. In the 1960s, India got maximum chances to get involved in establishing trade relations and, in this regard, acquired an offer from the East European region and close ally, the USSR (Clawson, 1979). Both offered to trade in their currencies, rupee-ruble, and exchange military equipment without using foreign exchange resources.

Even during China's aggressive measures in 1959 towards the South Asian border, India received multiple arms assistance from the USSR against its foes, mainly during the wars against China in 1962 and Pakistan in 1965 (Chari, 1979). Meanwhile, in 1971, India and the USSR signed a mutual treaty, the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation, to deter any progression against them (Singh, 1979). India also found it suitable to ally with the USSR without meddling in Chinese politics directly (Unnikrishnan, 2021). This treaty paved the way for both allies, India and Russia, to form diplomatic and strategic relations and also wanted to weaken the emerging trilateral axis between the US, Pakistan, and China (Mahapatra, 2011). It created significant ties between China and the US to keep their sphere of influence strong over Pakistan. Collaboratively, Pakistan also worked on improving its security against India and got assistance during the Indo-Pak War in 1971 (Smith, 2011). Consequently, India stabilised its defensive position after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971 and deterred the imperialistic approaches of the US and China by allying with the USSR.

Moreover, India also procured additional support from the Soviet Union, including veto power in the UN resolution against India during the War against Pakistan. In addition to the nuclear program, India received the assistance of heavy water in 1974 from the Soviets, which was sanctioned by the authorities of the USA and Canada (Szalontai, 2011). In return, India supported the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 (Gujral, 2006). The relationship between India and Russia is evident in depth and complexity based on their military and technological advancements exchanges.

2.2 The US: During the Cold War, alliance division precluded different conditions for states' relations towards each other. Indo-Soviet and U.S-Pak alliances made different circumstantial for India and the US. In the early stages of independence, India preferred to remain neutral on either side. Later, India allied with the Soviet Union after providing US arms to Pakistan in 1954 (Carina van de Wetering, 2016), and considering India a pro-communist signified India to be associated with the Soviet Union. However, the Indian democratic political system has always encouraged the US to develop relations with it. During the 1950s and 1960s, India and the US urged bilateral ties based on aid; however, their economic concerns halted due to the opposite sides of alliances (Kux, 2002).

Consequently, after independence and securing its position as a sovereign state, India did not surrender its foreign policy narrative to be colonised again after the British rule. The inspiration of India's non-alignment policy led the US to capitulate to an anti-communist stance to counter the position of the USSR during the Cold War. However, after independence, the policy of non-alignment was not to apprehend India's perspective as neutral but to make it recognised as a powerful state that can accumulate its foreign policy independently without joining any anti-based camp.

After the USSR collapsed, India's ally state split, straining relations. The new Russia's foreign policy changed to favour US capitalism and followed its economic system to restore its status. States followed the US in forging ties due to the unipolar international structure. The then-Russian President Boris Yeltsin mismanaged the state's affairs by not engaging with the national interest (Arbatov, 1993). Russia strained trade relations with India due to billionaires'

disregard for foreign policy. After the USSR collapsed, the globe turned to the US for unification and cooperation. India tried diversifying its foreign policy and strengthening connections with the US through democratisation, while Russia saw significant economic and political upheavals. The increasing US-Pakistan relationship helped India build linkages to operate against Pakistan and China strategically. The US maintained an imperialistic and containment foreign policy during the Cold War. In this context, the US sought a better alliance and discovered Pakistan to challenge the Soviet Union.

In expanding its importance as a strategic and defensive ally, India maintained its relations with the US and Russia. With Russia, it has signed several defence, energy, and space agreements. Both partners, India and Russia, depend on exchanging their national interests through energy and military. The two countries have also launched joint projects, such as developing a fifth-generation fighter aircraft (Gady, 2016). In the field of defensive means, India has always been looking for the best opportunity to grab beforehand. For this purpose, it has maintained cordial relations with the USA and Russia after the Cold War to militarise its defensive system as much as possible. Therefore, India is now considered the successive state in the international system concerning its advancements in technology and military, including nuclear capability and economy.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Neo-realism is also known as “Structural Realism,” which promotes “Power” as the main factor in international relations. This theory explains the importance of architecture in a world where anarchy is the main character. Ultimately, the foremost argument of egoistic human nature by Classical Realism was succeeded by the founding father of neorealism, Kenneth Waltz, in his book “Theory of International Politics (1979) (Waltz, 1990).” This theory prominently advocates the evident nature of the absence of global government, which plays a significant role in formulating the state’s behavior. In explaining the primary feature of neo-realism, Self-help is the utmost necessity through which states seek their national interests by considering their security and survival (Lundborg, 2019). Also, to secure and manage their security, states are highly concerned with the threatening positions of archnemesis. The core assumption and scope of neorealism is to clarify why and how states expand and manage power to respond to another power structure in the anarchic system and how states contrive to interact internationally despite their different power structures in the geopolitical environment (Lundborg, 2019, pp. 234-235).

States tend to seek their position in the changing power distribution under geopolitical changes. Furthermore, Neo-Realism is further divided into two types that define security studies differently: Defensive Realism and Offensive Realism. Both types focus on the security of a state as a necessity to survive in the anarchic structure. Offensive neo-realism is basically more inclined to Realism, which extends the efficacy of the security policies that help states influence and weaken their enemies. Therefore, John Mearsheimer advocates using influence, expansionism, and power to acquire absolute gains to fulfill the state’s approaches to power maximization (Toft, 2005).

In comparison, Defensive neorealism suggests that states act as balancers in threatening situations. Here, the power of a state, as a balancer, focuses on maintaining relative gains rather than advancing absolute gains. Robert Jervis and Jack Snyder further share thoughts on the efforts of powerful states that illustrate their security concerns by maximizing power while preserving the balance of power through cooperation (Lobell, 2010). They reject the use of

force and expansionism, which are security strategy features the leaders do not favor due to the interconnectedness among states (Lobell, 2010, pp. 2-3).

Indian foreign policy shifts in the 21st Century, particularly under the administration of Modi; it has progressed more toward materialistic national interest by replacing the ideational factors in the case of Indian foreign policy and its strategy to maximise its position and encourage the other units strongly. The foreign policy of the state changes and is managed under significant factors, internationally and domestically; also, cultural and individual decision-making persists in the formation of foreign policy choices. The strategic intentions of foreign policymaking also tend to achieve goals in the presence of available means to demonstrate the state's national interests. Defining state behaviour in the international community relies upon the international relations between states. These factors change the capabilities of a state that tries to achieve relative gains by advocating national interests. These factors include military strength, economic power, political measures, geographical location, and territorial integrity.

After independence, its foreign policy revolved around non-alignment, later a neutral approach, but cooperation has always been considered an important tool to demonstrate its foreign policy features. Moreover, India has stabilized its position by not being involved in any military alliance where it has to choose between any one ally, either Russia or the US. But here, foreign policy criteria entail the gain of relative gains despite the conflict. In this regard, India has chosen diplomatic means and cooperation under the umbrella of Defensive Neo-Realism because diplomacy tends to enhance the collaboration among states in the international political system, which helps attain national interests.

The theory of defensive neo-realism describes an international political system that comprehends alliances based on the importance of national interests. It is a bargaining of associations of any nature in line with the requirement of involving states. This international system presents an idea of self-help that is majorly confined to the state's foreign policy choices. However, it depends on the state's need for choices, whether observing cooperation or aggressive means, even in a conflict (John Baylis, 2011, pp. 86-87). From the perspective of Neo-Realism, this theory focuses on the strength of the state rather than ideology—this strength and power of a state lead to coexistence and recognition in the international political system.

India mainly focuses on its strategic importance in the region to become a leading power and surround itself in a neutral balancer position against any conflict. Therefore, it is successfully maintaining its relative gains. Also, it is aligning on both sides, Russia and the US, who have veto power in the UNSC. The strategic maintenance of Indian foreign policy clearly describes its priorities of stabilization in the Indo-Pacific Ocean, securing its seat on the UNSC, countering China in South Asia, and performing cooperative relations through multiple alliances. Hence, it plays the role of a balancer who acquires relative gains.

4. INDIA'S STANCE ON THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

In the current geopolitical situation, the Ukraine war has strayed India's position as a central spot among many foes and allies regarding its foreign policy choices. Different opinions and analyses are judging the quest of India, whether it is only maintaining diplomatic means not to take either side, Russia or the US. Or is it only refraining from taking any action in the war that may halt its economic, military, and strategic relations with Russia and the US?

Traditionally, India is a neutral player in the matters of the Russia-Ukraine war but also maintains cordial relations with the West, Europe, Asian Countries, Russia, and even Ukraine.

However, India is enjoying, at the same time, cordial relations with like-minded democratic states and progressing under the alliances to retain its position in the Indo-Pacific Ocean. On the other hand, it is also not making any firm decisions against Russia, which may cause disruptions in their strategic relations. In all such circumstances, the foreign ministry of India has preserved its narrative to avoid any aggression and holding a side of diplomatic initiatives to prevent a territorial war and keep peace globally. It is worth noting that India is the largest buyer of Russian military arms and is also getting defence equipment manufactured at the domestic level to boost its defensive position (Sagerstrom, 2021). With the abstention from the UNGA and UNSC resolutions and resistance to any pressure from the US and Ukraine, India is still maintaining ties with Russia.

4.1 Military Interaction: India and the US have maintained a significant mutual relationship in expanding their interests toward defensive cooperation. Respectively, the US urged India to detach from Russia, presenting the fear of Washington that India's political and economic link allows Russia to engage in malign behaviour, which the US considers a major global threat. India has a robust democratic system like the US's and shares common interests. Even the US warned that India would face sanctions under the CAATSA (Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act) if it purchases S-400 from Russia (BBC, 2023). Moreover, the US called out Russia as an unreliable partner of India and forced it to stop its dependency on Russian arms and technology. Primarily, another concern of the US is linked to the intelligence and technology of Russian equipment to India, which may affect the US defense deliveries to India. However, the negligence of sanctions by the Indian government indicates the strong continuity of relations with Russia.

Despite the global pressure on India to strike off Russia's military endorsement, India will first adhere to its security interests. Significant concerns are related to the Indian defensive spares, notably associated with the Russian exchanges of military armaments. Thus, the involvement of India in the ongoing conflict with China and the neighbouring issues with Pakistan has also raised heed to keep maintaining relations with Russia without disrupting it in signing a UN resolution against Russia. Defence acquisitions and co-production with Moscow continue to be a backbone of India's military hardware, despite investments in the QUAD by the foreign policy of the Indian establishment, advanced interoperability exercises, and foundational agreements with the United States.

Indirect action from the Indian side, such as opposing resolutions and prescribed Western sanctions against Russia, has also been seen. Still, on the other hand, it is accepting sanctions feasibly. In this way, on March 22, 2022, the State Bank of India limited trade with Russian companies supplying Russian crude oil to India, facing Western sanctions (Mahapatra, India's Approach to the War in Ukraine, 2021). Hence, this way of adopting continuation in the strategic and economic partnership towards both sides, the US and Russia, has culminated the traditional roots of Indian foreign policy of maintaining a neutral position and keeping relationships.

4.2 Balancing Act as a Neutral Player: India's diplomatic balancing act is already precarious in the aftermath of deteriorating relations between Russia and the West, especially the US. Many observers were reminded of India's perceived tendency to stay on the fence when, on January 31, 2022, it abstained from a procedural vote on Ukraine at the United Nations Security Council (Press, 2022). India's resolve to avoid the conflict between Russia and the West was motivated by factors considerably more nuanced than a simple adherence to the country's long-held ideology of non-alignment (Mohan, 2022). In adhering to its traditional approach to the integrity of territorial sovereignty, it opposed the policy of involvement in any state's politics

and policy choices. Therefore, it continues with the cooperative ties with states to play a role as a balancer by suggesting diplomacy. Hence, India's approach remained crucial to maintaining cordial relations with the West, European Nations, and Russia during global political and security shifts. In such a way, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs considered remaining on the path of peace and diplomacy instead of taking any particular side, which may negatively impact Indian diplomatic relations with any side (Mahapatra, India's Approach to the War in Ukraine, 2021, pp. 96-97).

This peaceful solution provides benefits to India in the form of cheap oil from Russia. According to the International Energy Agency, India purchases two million barrels daily, calculating its imports to about 45 per cent (Lazaro Gamio, 2023.).

Now India is forthcoming with solid foreign policy initiatives, which tend not to halt its ties with Russia due to the condemnation of war and prevent Russia from minimising Russia's inclination towards China. Both allies, India and Russia, publicly seek a more equitable, multipolar world, so their relationship has benefits beyond the military and economic. India will need to evaluate how well it can maintain its current equilibrium. This war has also manipulated states concerns to show India's response towards Russia must be against it. Still, the deft diplomacy has appeared to make extensive relations strategically with the US and its (US) arch nemesis countries, Russia and Iran. Also, India has already discussed the constructive tool of diplomacy by mentioning "Quiet and Constructive diplomacy" (Menon, 2020) to resolve Ukraine's war issue without provoking both rivals, Russia and Ukraine.

4.3 Economic Advancements: Indian dependency also makes its foreign policy look in different directions to procure its economy. According to IMF data, India is already becoming the third largest oil consumer country and will become the third most powerful country, economically, following the US and China. According to the report, Russia has been India's biggest oil supplier, resulting in 15 per cent more purchases in 2022 (Verman, 2023). In such a context, India condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine's bloodshed and loss of life without outright criticising Russia's behaviour. India's realpolitik playbook advises it to avoid confronting profound historical and geopolitical origins in the unfinished work of the post-Cold War European security order, NATO's eastward advance, and Russia's unease (Tourangbam, 2022). Even Russian fertilisers are increasing, more than eightfold, towards India at maximum.

5. PM MODI'S ROLE

The complexity of the Ukraine war has led India to seek its national interest first. The widespread global catastrophe will also affect India without geographical connectivity between India and Ukraine. In such a way, PM Modi reiterated the evacuation of its young students stranded in Russia and Ukraine because there is no evident conflict relations between India and any side, whether Russia, Ukraine, or NATO (Reed, 2022)

Nonetheless, many states, including India, rely on Russian oil and gas in the ongoing war. Increased prices will likely affect India's economy despite having close economic relations with Russia; however, India has maintained its oil trade despite the US sanctions, indicating an almost 9 per cent growth in business between them (Mohan C. R., 2022). Moreover, excessive inflation has always caused political unrest in Indian politics, even domestically. Therefore, PM Modi has devised a strategy to adopt diplomatic means to discuss Ukraine's War without endangering his political position and country. There is always a winner in a crisis. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has maintained his position in Russia's invasion of Ukraine. By

not joining Western-led sanctions on Russia and refraining from condemning Moscow, Modi has increased India's international standing.

The fact is that the Ukraine issue is directly affecting Russia, an Indian long-standing ally, and making the situation complex for India, especially regarding India's new ties towards the West. Notably, India kept relations unchanged with Russia even after the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, the relationship between New Delhi and Washington is questioning the reliability of their defensive cordial ties, which have been influenced by the US sanctions warning upon India after the purchase of Russian S-400 missiles (Rajagopalan, 2021). However, under the Modi administration, Indian defensive ties have grown more than the previous Indian government, so India has shown little concern towards Ukraine rhetorically by giving an idea of negotiations between warring states, Russia and Ukraine. Simultaneously, he has also shifted the narrative of "legitimate security," (Mohan C. R., 2022, p. 4) once proposed by former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, into legitimate security interests for all states (Tirumurti, 2022) from a Ukrainian perspective.

While preserving the firm stance of condemnation towards Russia, India also more profoundly showed sympathy towards the Russian annexation of Crimea through a referendum that occurred in 2014 (Raafi, 2014). The consistent position of India in emphasising unity and territorial integrity indicates its willingness not to interrupt any other state's concern of territorial legitimacy, particularly that of its allies. Under this scenario, the neutrality of India insinuates the weakened commitment towards the Indo-Pacific developed by the mutual powers of Europe. Because at the moment, all the European and Western sides are showing perseverance in sanctioning Russia while India is avoiding it. After analysing India's behaviour and policy choices, it indicates its restrained approaches towards the Ukraine war due to the current geopolitical scenario, national interests, and historical relationships.

6. CHINA FACTOR

Strategic autonomy maintenance is India's central bias to maintain its position in the South Asian region. Still, it must overlook another two nuclear powers surrounding it with security threats, China and Pakistan. However, in all such scenarios, China has successfully managed its footprints in the Indo-Pacific Ocean with the maximum military and economic aspects. Meanwhile, India seeks continuity of close ties with the US to maintain its South Asian position. Because the geopolitical rivalry between India and China is one of the concerns that Indian authorities constantly consider. Despite the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, India still has avoided its open condemnation of Russia due to the rising interests of China and Pakistan's ties towards Russia. India prefers to prevent the Pakistan-Russia alliance and balance China to stabilise its position as an emerging economic power in competition with China.

Furthermore, Ukraine's loss of significant parts, particularly the Eastern side of its country, has also shown major concerns for India. The Ukraine war has created manifestations of Russia's dependency on China in the shape of managing closer ties. Also, the Indian inclination, strategic and security alliances, towards the US has affected the Russian authorisation of its foreign policy towards India. The relationship between Russia and China is the product of their continuity of relationship from the 1990s. Explaining and endorsing this relativity of continuation by the president of both sides, Putin and Xi Jinping have kept their relationship with the highlighting feature of "no limits" to their friendship (Lin, 2023). And this friendship has elongated with the mission to expand cordial relations to diminish the influential power of the US and its allies. The outbreak of the Ukraine war has already shifted Russia's position towards China.

Additionally, Putin encouraged closer relations with China in 2012 by neglecting his presence at the G8 conference in Camp David (Shullman, 2022). Moreover, in the contemporary geopolitical tensions, Russia is playing the role of China's junior partner. It can be challenging for Russia to choose either side due to the worsening relations between China, the US, and India. But there are plenty of offers from India and China for Russia in exchanging their interests.

India and China have a shared border of 2000 miles of the disputed area; as a result, they also clashed with each other for this in June 2020 (Singh S. , 2022). Given the continued escalation of border conflict against China, India is likely more concerned than ever with keeping the peace with Russia. If it were going to happen, India would defend itself through Russian arms.

Russia's isolation and predisposition towards Beijing due to US sanctions is problematic for New Delhi. Chinese geopolitical and economic initiatives directly endanger Indian national security, including the US. Thus, the US views India as a key ally in preventing the China-Russia alliance and restraining Xi-Putin's Ukraine War military transactions.

The main reason for Russia is to prevent the US sphere of influence that is exacerbating the EU's and NATO's approaches toward Ukraine. But here, India does not support any objection regarding the influential behaviour of any state because India is also seeking to raise its hegemonic stability in the region with the maximum power. From Jawaharlal Nehru to Modi, Indian prime ministers opposed foreign influence in their neighbours and foreign participation in their issues. While fending off intervention from its neighbours, India tries to divert the Chinese expansion in South Asia because India marks the strategic relations between China and Pakistan as a significant hindrance to its progression in the region.

7. CONCLUSION

India is achieving maximum interest in performing a diplomatic role in the rivalry between Russia and US and the war between Russia and Ukraine. In the face of the Ukraine War, India is diversifying its priorities in advancing technology and military without halting relations with either side, Russia and the US. Somehow, India is dependent upon the Russian military armaments. Moreover, the adoption of neutrality in the Ukraine war was not for convenience but showed the essential part of Indian foreign policy as a principle. India's position indicates its relativity of power in maintaining cordial relations through cooperation; in such a way, it can play the role of a balancer and keep maximizing its chances of securing the status of a powerful state in the region.

India exclusively follows the rule of *realpolitik*, which encompasses the maximum possibility of cooperation to strengthen its nation and state. The primary concerns are related to expanding India's strategic relations to diversify its position in the anarchical structure. Its dependency on Russian weapons has also deepened its roots to mutually show diplomatic suggestions by maximizing its interests. Also, its reliance on Russia for strategic or military concerns can not be seen as a wholly independent state strategically. There have been manifold policymaking decisions in Indian foreign policy to maintain its relations with the US and Russia. Despite the geopolitical turmoil, for India, the status of strategic autonomy has always been a significant goal in achieving national interest. In its quest for its due place in the global system, modern India is both more monetarily wealthy and openly more ambitious.

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