



# FOREIGN POLICY

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# Introduction:

- Every country must have a foreign policy for the systematic involvement in international affairs.
- A state without a FP is like a ship without rudder which drifts aimlessly without any goal, according to the waves of the sea.
- Today, states are expected to behave in a particular manner towards other states.
- This study of the behaviour of the states is nothing but the content of FP.
- FP is the substance of foreign relations.
- It is the process of making decisions on issues of inter-national importance.

# Introduction.....

- In other words, it is a set of norms which a nation adopts while dealing with other nations.
- In the broader sense, FP include the objectives, plans & actions taken by a nation in relation to other nations.
- In the narrow sense, FP implies only the action aspect i.e. the action taken by the state in its external sphere.
- “FP will be there as long as sovereign states are there.” says Prof. Taylor.

# Definitions:

- Following are some important definitions –
- “FP is a systematic statement of deliberately selected national interests.” Prof. Hartmann.
- “Reduced to its most fundamental ingredients FP consists of two elements, national objectives to be achieved and means for achieving them.” Crabbe
- “FP now is the bundle of principles and practices that regulates the intercourse of a state with other states.” Prof. Ruthnaswamy.

# Definitions....

- “FP is the key element in the process by which a state translates its broadly conceived goals & interests into concrete courses of actions to attain these objectives & preserve its interests.” Padelford & Lincoln
- From the above definitions it makes very clear that FP is either a plan of action or the policy as executed. But all agree that FP is concerned with the behaviour of a state towards other states.

# Nature of Foreign Policy:

- FP of a nation has the following characteristics
  1. Extension of Domestic policy,
  2. FP is dynamic,
  3. FP is a compound of many elements,
  4. It includes all ranges of activities of a state,
  5. FP is connected to National interests,
  6. Study of FP is complex, etc.

# I. Extension of domestic policy:

- FP and Domestic policy are the two aspects of National policy.
- FP is the extension(continuation) of domestic policy.
- FP is intimately related with domestic policy as it has been reflected in its behaviour pattern.

## 2. FP is dynamic:

- As FP requires the states in the systematic involvement in international relations in accordance to certain well defined principles.
- These principles are based on the limits of their strength and realities of the world situations.
- So states tends to have flexible principles which undergoes change depending on the struggle for power in the world.



### 3. FP is a compound of many elements:

- FP of every country is a compound of many factors & forces of both inside and outside country.
- Elements of FP are innumerable – subjective as well as objective, internal as well as external, permanent as well as temporary.
- Hence, FP is said to be a compound of various elements.



It includes all ranges of activities of a state:

- Policy of a state in its external affairs is going to be influenced by all range of activities of a state for the promotion of its national interest.
- FP of every state involves co-operation, conflict or neutrality or co-existence with other states which cover a wide range of activities of a state.
- Even a decision to have no relation with other states is also a FP.

## 5. FP is connected to National Interest:

- FP cannot exist in a vacuum.
- It can exist only in the context of national interests & national objectives.
- FP cannot ignore the national interest of a nation.
- In fact FP is a course of action for achieving the national interests

## 6. Study of FP is Complex:

- FP is a complex phenomenon as one has to go deep into motivations of a nation to understand it.
- Since it is treated as a very complex phenomenon that Felix Gross calls for treating it as a discipline or a science.
- More over, FP of a nation towards different nation is different.
- For example FP of US is not same towards all nations and regions. It has different policies towards different nations.
- Thus the nature of FP is a very complex one as every nation aims at a multitude of goals at one and the same time.

# IMPORTANCE OF FOREIGN POLICY:

- FP is a set of principles & actions to achieve a country's national goals, in its dealings with other states.
- It provides a sense of direction to a state in its dealing with other states.
- FP is very significant due to the following reasons –
  1. To preserve a nation's Independence,
  2. Helps in operating international politics,
  3. Promotes National Interests,
  4. Promotes stability in international system,
  5. Promotes Economic development,
  6. Enhances the influence of States, etc.



# I. To preserve a nation's Independence:

- Only an independent nation can have a FP of its own in order to preserve its national independence.
- It seeks to protect the territorial integrity of a country & protect the interest of its citizens both within and outside the country.
- Generally for this purpose the states prefer to follow the policy of status-quo.

## 2. Helps in operating international politics:

- It is one of the wheels with which international politics operates.
- It help in the maintenance of link with other members of international community in order to promote its own interests.
- For example, India has deliberately avoided the exchange of diplomatic relations with Israel so that its relations with the Arab countries do not get strained, primarily because of the close trade relations with the Arab countries.

### 3. Promotes National Interest:

- The FP of a country seeks to promote its National interests.
- The primary interest of each state is self preservation, security & well being of its citizens.
- In the event of a clash of Interest among nations, each nation tries to protect its own interests.



## 4. Promotes stability in International system:

- FP of most of the countries aims at preserving the existing international system as each nation realizes that their own existence is dependent on a stable international system.
- The necessity of survival is the main spring of FP.

## 5. Promotes Economic Development:

- FP aims at the promotion of economic interests of the country.
- The status of a state in the international arena is largely determined by its economic status and therefore, the states pursue a FP which can contribute to their economic prosperity and enable it to play a more effective role in international politics.
- For example, India adopted the policy of non-alignment during the cold war era in order to concentrate on economic development and also get support from both the super powers.

## 6. Enhances the influence of the states:

- FP is significant to understand the impact of a state in international politics.
- Each nation tries to expand its area of influence and reduce the influence of other states to a position of dependence.
- For example, the policy of US & Soviet Union in the Post world war II period have been largely motivated by these considerations.

# FACTORS INFLUENCING FOREIGN POLICY

- The FP of a country is determined by a number of factors which may be broadly classified into two categories namely, objective and subjective.
- The objective factors include the environmental factors within the framework of which the FP of a country has to operate.
- On the other hand, the subjective factors reflects those specific developments or particular situations which influence the FP of a country.
- Like the elements of national power, the elements or factors of FP are many and closely resembles each other.

# Factors of Foreign Policy:

- Factors influencing FP are divided into two categories for the convenience of our study, they are – I. Internal factors & II . External factors.

## I. **Internal factors:**

1. Geographical factors,
2. Historical Factors,
3. Natural Resources,
4. Population Factor,
5. Role of the press,
6. Industrial development,
7. Military Power,
8. Good Government & Leadership,
9. Quality of Diplomacy,
10. Public Opinion, etc.



## II. External Factors:

- I1. International organizations,
- I2. International Law,
- I3. Alliances,
- I4. World Public Opinion,
- I5. Power structure of the world, etc.

# I. Internal factors- I. Geographical factors:

- It is a permanent and stable factor influencing the formulation of FP.
- Topography, size, situation, climate & location of the state influences its FP.
- “FP of a country is determined by its geography.” said Napoleon Bonaparte.
- USA could follow a policy of isolation until the world war I, because of its geographical isolation.
- Powerful neighbors compelled India to follow a policy of Non-alignment.
- French concern for security is determined by her neighboring Germany.

## 2. Historical factors:

- FP of a state is a legacy of her history or her past.
- Historical background tunes the FP of a nation.
- For example, Panchasheel principle of India's FP is a legacy of her past heritage.
- To cite a few more examples are the British habit of meddling, the French concern for security, German ruthlessness, Soviet secrecy, American moralism have definite historical root.
- Thus, the historical antecedents exert a crucial influence on the FP of a state.



### 3. Natural Resources:

- Scarcity or availability of resources influences the objectives of a country's FP.
- For example, Germany wanted a quick-win in the II world war due to the shortage of food reserves.
- The attitude of the super powers towards Middle-east was largely dictated by their desire to control the oil resources.
- In short, the natural resources & raw materials greatly influence the formulation of FP of a country.

## 4. Population Factor:

- Human resources are considered in the formulation of FP.
- Size, Character, distribution of its population conditions its FP.
- For example, importance of India and China in Asia is due to their size of population.
- Falling birth-rate was the main cause for the weakness of FP of France.
- Man power constitute an important element of military power.
- Educated and skilled population is a source of strength influencing FP.

## 5. Industrial Development:

- Industrial development also determines the FP of a nation.
- Industrially advanced countries like USA, Russia, Japan, Germany, Britain are able to exercise great influence in INRs.
- Developing countries depend upon advanced countries for the transfer of technology and capital for their industrial development.

## 6. Military Power:

- Military strength of a country also determines the effectiveness of its FP.
- A country with great military strength has more bargaining power in international affairs.
- Military power includes arms & ammunitions, defense personnel, sophisticated military technology, transport network, etc.
- Militarily strong nations have an imposing FP while militarily weak state tend to pursue a subdued policy.
- It is the military strength that enabled Israel to survive despite the combined opposition of Arab Nations.

## 7. Good Government & Leadership:

- It is one of the very important factor in determining the FP of a nation.
- A good government provides the muscles and sinews of power, whereas the leadership provides the brain and determines how the strength will be used.
- In fact FP decisions are taken by the leaders and FP changes according to the changes in leadership.
- It is a fact that the government leaders who convert the potential power of a state into an actual power.

## 8. Quality of Diplomacy:

- The quality of diplomacy has a profound influence on FP.
- There are many e.g. in the history of nations which succeeded in attaining their objectives through wise diplomacy despite the lack of many elements of power.
- Wise diplomacy helps in the clear understanding of the national goals and the ability to make use of the appropriate tools of statecraft for the attainment of these goals.
- There are e.g. of powerful states which failed to attain their goals due to weak diplomacy.
- It helps in understanding the conflicting situations and has the ability to convert it in to its advantage.

## 9. Role of the Press:

- It also plays a vital role in the formulation of FP.
- In fact it supplies useful information on the topic and thereby help the people to come to a decision.
- Press publishes specialized articles on current international affairs & developments which enable the people to understand these issues and their consequences in their country.
- It is also useful in analyzing the policy of the government with regard to foreign affairs.
- The effectiveness of the press is dependent on the attitude of the government and the rate of literacy in the state.

# 10. Public opinion:

- It plays an important role in a democratic system in influencing the FP especially on issues of war and peace or maintenance of friendship or hostility with other nations.
- It may be of two types – domestic or world public opinions.
- Powerful public opinion can even reverse the major FP decisions.
- However in an authoritarian regimes public opinion is ignored in the formulation of FP.



## II External Factors:

Entire world has become much interlinked due to many reasons and therefore if any incident takes place in some countries, it has its impact on other countries of the world.

Some of the external factors that has a say over the formulation of FP can be listed as under -

1. International Organizations,
2. Alliances,
3. World Public Opinion,
4. Power Structure of the World,
5. International Law, etc.

# I. International Organizations:

- No nation can ignore the existence of World Organizations like the UNO and its specialized agencies in the formulation of its FP decisions.
- The main objective of the UNO is to maintain international peace and security and removal of any threat to peace.
- Though it cannot interfere in the internal matters of any state except when there is a threat to peace, still it can put a check on the unfair and unlimited use of power by the states.
- Every member state has to abide by the principles laid down in its Charter.

## 2. Alliances:

- Both military as well as non-military alliances also influences to a great extent the formulation of FP of a state.
- The states which are parties to the alliance have to respond to the request and demands of their allies.
- States have to keep themselves away from formulating policies which are offensive to alliance partners.
- Thus, it takes away part of their freedom to formulate FP.
- A number of regional organizations like the OAU, Arab League, SAARC, etc. also influence the FP of the member states.

# 3. World Public Opinion:

- World public opinion and strong reactions on certain events have a great impact on FP formulation.
- Every country needs to take note of the reactions of other states to its FP.
- For e.g. Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor produced a strong reaction from America leading to its counter action.
- Similarly US governments Vietnam Policy was also hostile to World public opinion.
- Bush's policy on Iraq and against Saddam Husain produced a strong public opinion against it.

## 4. Power Structure of the World:

- Existing power structure of the world has a great impact on the FP of a nation.
- For example, the smaller powers tend to be dominated by the super powers.
- And if there are only two super powers in the world, the entire world will become bipolar with nations aligning with each super power as per its requirements.
- If there are many nations with the super power status then the Balance of power takes place.

## 5. International Law:

- No country can ignore the influence of International law while formulating its FP.
- Most of the countries in the world are bound by international laws, international treaties and agreements and so their FP is formulated accordingly.
- Thus, apart from the domestic determinants of FP, the international environment also plays an important role in formulating the FP of a nation.