

NATIONAL INTEREST

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INTRODUCTION:

- ✘ National Interest is the most crucial factor in International politics which largely shapes the actions of the Nation-States in their interactions with other states.
- ✘ It is a very vague concept and hence, it is very difficult to define it precisely.
- ✘ Hans Morgenthau is the one who dealt with it at great lengths.
- ✘ It is a bundle of goals & aims towards which nation moves.
- ✘ These are the wide interests of the people of a nation.

INTRODUCTION....

- ✘ The Foreign policy of a nation has to be framed in such a way as to uphold its national interest.
- ✘ The national interest of a nation are influenced by a number of factors like –
 - a. National leadership,
 - b. Governmental set up & Ideologies,
 - c. Customs & Cultural Values,
 - d. Predominant social groups,
 - e. Geographical locations,
 - f. Neighbour States & their attitudes,
 - g. General global trends, etc.

DEFINITIONS:

- ✘ Different people defined it differently –
- ✘ “National Interest is an interest which the states seek to protect or achieve in relation to each other.” – Dyke.
- ✘ “It is the sum total of all the national values.” – Joseph Frankel.
- ✘ “National Interest is the political tradition & the total cultural context within which a nation formulates its foreign policy.” – Hans Morgenthau.

MEANING:

- ✘ National Interest is comparatively a new concept.
- ✘ The term National Interest gained currency only with the emergence of the nation- state system.
- ✘ In the initial days, it meant the interest of a particular monarch in holding on to his territories & also in the expansion of the state through the conquest of other states.
- ✘ With the emergence of democracy the concept of national interest became popular in political and diplomatic circles.
- ✘ Thus, National interest is the interest of a nation in promoting what is in its best interest.

MEANING.....

- ✘ According to Morgenthau, National Interest implies, protection of a nation state's physical, cultural & political identity against the encroachment by other nation states.
- ✘ Preservation of **physical identity** is the protection of territorial integrity & sovereignty of a nation.
- ✘ Preservation of **political identity** means preserving the existing politico-economic regimes in existence.
- ✘ Preservation of **cultural identity** implies the maintenance of existing ethnic traditions & precedents of the nation – states.

TYPES OF NATIONAL INTEREST:

- ✘ According to Thomas W. Robinson the national Interest can be broadly classified into 6 categories –
 1. Primary Interest,
 2. Secondary Interest,
 3. Permanent Interest,
 4. Variable Interest,
 5. General Interest,
 6. Identical Interest,
 7. Specific Interest,
 8. Conflicting Interest
 9. Complimentary Interest

1. PRIMARY INTERESTS:

- ✘ These are the vital interests of a nation like that of security & Survival.
- ✘ These includes the preservation of physical, political & cultural identity of the state against the possible encroachment from outside powers.
- ✘ These are permanent interests and the states must defend them at all costs.
- ✘ These interests cannot be compromised at all.

2. SECONDARY INTERESTS:

- ✘ These are less significant than the first category but quite important to the existence of the state.
- ✘ These include the protection of the citizens abroad, protection of the diplomatic immunities to the diplomatic staff, etc.

3. PERMANENT INTERESTS:

- ✘ These refers to relatively the long term interests of the state which rarely changes.
- ✘ For example, Great Britain wanted to maintain the freedom of navigation for many centuries for the protection of her overseas colonies & growing foreign trade.
- ✘ To cite another example, to be a economically self-reliant nation is the permanent interest of every nation.

\$. VARIABLE INTEREST:

- ✘ Refers to those interests of a nation which are considered vital for national good in a given set of circumstances.
- ✘ These are largely determined by the cross-currents of personalities, public opinion, sectional interests & partisan politics, and so on.

5. GENERAL INTERESTS:

- ✘ These refers to those positive conditions which apply to a large number of nations or in several specified fields such as economics, trade, diplomatic intercourse, etc.
- ✘ For example, It was the general interest of Britain to maintain the balance of power in European continent.

6. SPECIFIC INTERESTS:

- ✘ It is the logical outcome of the general interest but are defined in terms of time or space.
- ✘ For example, Britain maintained the independence of many nations for the sake of preservation of Balance of power in Europe.

7. IDENTICAL INTERESTS:

- ✘ These refers to interests which are held in common by a number of states.
- ✘ For example Countries of western Europe did not want the expansion of Soviet influence & its ideology in the region.
- ✘ Third world Countries wanted to join the NAM when it was formed.

8. COMPLIMENTARY INTERESTS:

- ✘ These are not identical interests but form some kind of basis for agreements & compromise.
- ✘ For example, Britain wanted independence of Portugal against Spain for control of Atlantic Ocean and Portugal accepted the hegemony of Britain as a safe means of defense against Spain.
- ✘ USA & Pakistan had a complimentary interest in containing Soviet Union in Afhghanistan.

9. CONFLICTING INTERESTS:

- ✘ These are opposed Interests. These conflicting interests some times becomes complimentary interests or identical interest.
- ✘ For example, Kashmir issue is a conflicting interest between India and Pakistan.

METHODS FOR THE PROMOTION OF NATIONAL INTEREST:

- ✘ There are 5 familiar methods or instruments employed by nations to achieve her national interests. They are –
 1. Diplomacy,
 2. Propaganda,
 3. Economic Aid & loans,
 4. Treaties and Alliances &
 5. Coercive means like wars., etc.

IMPORTANCE OF NATIONAL INTEREST:

- ✘ It is the most crucial in international politics –
 1. It is very crucial to understand the behaviour of nation-states in international politics.
 - the nations influences the world environment to their advantage through its national interests.
 2. It is also crucial in understanding the nature of foreign policies, the kind of approaches it adopts in dealing with the nations.
 - National interest of a nation serves two purposes –

IMPORTANCE OF NATIONAL INTEREST....

- ✘ National interest of a nation serves two purposes like –
 - a. It gives Policy a general orientation towards the external environment.
 - b. It also serves as the controlling criterion of choice in immediate situations(Lerche & Said, 1972).
- ✘ It also indicates the nature of a states long term efforts in foreign policy.
- ✘ It also governs what the state should do in the short term context.
- ✘ Thus, national interests gives consistency to a nations foreign policy.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NATIONAL POWER & NATIONAL INTERESTS:

- ✘ National power and national interests are complimentary to each other.
- ✘ Every nation seeks to improve its national power for the fulfillment of national interests.
- ✘ As long as nation-state system exists the national interests will remain the key concept of world politics.
- ✘ And national power and its foreign policy functions to promote, protect and fulfill its interests.
- ✘ Sometimes, certain basic national interests occupying prominent positions in the foreign policy, subject to change due to the change in the national power.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN N.P. & N.I.

- ✘ For example, Sometimes, leaders use national interests as a tool to strengthen their international position – Sukarno of Indonesia did it.
- ✘ Ultimately, in the global community of nations, it is the national power which determines the extent to which the realization of its national interests possible.