

## *Chapter-1*

### **Introduction**

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Foreign policy of a country is determined by both domestic and external factors of that states. Consequently, international milieu represents one of the major components in the making of any country's foreign policy. This becomes all the more important when external environment undergoes significant transformations.

The end of the cold war and simultaneous growth of globalization are indicative of such a change, as they have changed the political and economic structures and processes of the world in a substantial manner. Politically the world is no more bipolar as it used to be during cold war, rather a peculiar situation having edge towards unipolarity and hegemonism is being witnessed. Even the nuclear club of P-5 has been extended to P-8(though not recognized) with the addition of India, Pakistan and North Korea. New permutation and combinations are being framed in the form of regional groupings. Existing global institutional organization is being marginalized to the extent of facing crisis of its relevance. Third worldism has also become insignificant with the reduced status of the forum like NAM. Consequently, these developments have influenced the study of foreign policies of states in a significant way.<sup>1</sup>

At the global level, the bio-polar system has been replaced by one significant pole, i.e. USA. It has neither brought about an 'end of history' or an era of "American Century" as perceived by some American scholars , nor established a "New World Order", establishing US hegemony as perceived by George Bush..<sup>2</sup> Secondly, the end

of cold war has brought about a paradigm shift in the market strategy from competition to cooperation among the nations. The 1990s have witnessed several changes in the world economic order. Regional integration through the policy of globalisation has brought a sea change in the international trade. In this context, regional economic blocs in the form of European Union (EU), North Atlantic Free Trade Area (NAFTA), South Asia Free trade Area (SAFTA), ASEAN, Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC), and Asia –Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) emerged or was strengthened. With the success of the EU and the ASEAN, most of the countries of the world are converging towards regional cooperation with the result that today, more than 40% of the global trade is conducted through about 150 Regional Trade Associations ( RTA) throughout of the globe. The situation today has arrived at such a stage that no country in the world can prosper by keeping her doors closed to the outside world.<sup>3</sup>

India is fast emerging as an important player in regional and international arenas. However, it continues to be beset by a number of security challenges, both internally and externally. On the fact, that every sovereign country has its foreign policy. It depends on some principles, interests and objectives which a country promotes while interacting with other countries. Even though there are certain basic features of a foreign policy it is not a fixed concept. The thrust of foreign policy keeps on changing according to changing international conditions. India's foreign policy is shaped by several factors including its history, culture, geography and economy. Our Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, gave a definite shape to the country's foreign policy. Preservation of national interest, achievement of world peace, disarmament, independence for Afro-Asian nations has been important objectives of India's foreign policy. Indian foreign policy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century guided by the changes at the global

and regional level, particularly in Asia which is witnessing the rise of the two Asian powers China and India. Driven by a strong economic performance growing political awareness a changing Asian power structure, India is seeking a larger role for itself both in the region and the global level. A combination of international and domestic factor is defining the contours of India's foreign Policy. <sup>4</sup>

India's foreign policy is no exception of above changes. Hence it becomes important to know how India's foreign policy has been able to adjust with the new international milieu. Recognizing the global shift from geo-politics to geo-economics India introduced structural reforms in the country. As a result ,it adopted the policy of "look east" to forge deeper economic ties with the countries of East and Southeast Asia on the one hand and on the other hand, it facilitated the improvement and strengthening of ties with countries like china and the USA. A three pronged approach towards this region has been adopted by India. First, political contacts are being renewed through exchanges of visits by political leaders so as to make India relevant to the balance of the power system. Second, economic linkages are being established with the countries of this region, especially ASEAN, to strengthen its economic capabilities in the post –cold war era. Third, the thrust is on developing strategic partnerships through various confidence-building measures and bilateral defence cooperation to work towards common security.<sup>5</sup> The emergence of India from a gloomy to a glowing position in the global arena, coupled with a number of virtues like enormous size, huge population, convenient geostrategic location, progressive military might, meteoric economic growth inspired various states including South-East Asian nations to devise collaborative ties with India.

Given India's geopolitical proximity with the countries of Southeast Asia, with a shared maritime boundary with at least three countries, the greater proximity of

the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal to Southeast Asia than to mainland India, and the fact that Indian southern tip is astride some of the most critical sea lanes of communication in the Indian Ocean connecting Southeast Asia with West Asia and Europe, through which nearly 40 per cent of the world's trade passes. Southeast Asia has always figured prominently in India's external relations since ancient times. India has had extensive cultural, economic and political ties with the Southeast Asian nations. The names such as 'Indonesia' and 'Indochina', for instance, signify the Indian connection with Southeast Asia. Connected with one of the oldest and most prominent trade routes, India-Southeast Asia relations, in many ways, are unique with a history of more than two millennia and with wide-ranging facets of culture and civilisation, language and script, art and architecture, spirituality and religion. <sup>6</sup>

But in the years after independence, this region was completely overlooked by India because of various reasons. The tumultuous relationship with Pakistan affected India's policy considerations as India looked to develop and maintain good relations with the Western world, so that they supported India's views on Kashmir. The Cold War syndrome dampened the relevance of Southeast Asian nations in Indian foreign policy. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) afforded a greater degree of interaction between India and many countries which it had neglected in the immediate years after its independence. India supported the anti-colonial movement in Southeast Asia—the convening of the Asian Relations Conference in 1947, a special conference on Indonesia in January 1949, Chairmanship of the International Control Commission on India-China in 1954 and the sponsoring of the Bandung Conference—all these reflected India's deep involvement in the freedom struggle being waged by the countries of the region. But the growing pro-Soviet tilt in India's foreign policy drove

a wedge between India and the Southeast Asian nations. Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines were strongly anti-communist. India's proposal for a security arrangement in the region also did not go down well with the ASEAN countries as it was seen to be part of the Soviet Union's attempts to bring the region under its influence. ASEAN also did not support India's cause during the 1971 Indo-Pak war.<sup>7</sup>

The end of the cold war marked a turning point in India's relations with ASEAN. The resolution of the Cambodian conflict brought about a change in Indo-ASEAN relations. The then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's path-breaking visit to China in 1988 also marked a tremendous shift in Sino-Indian relations and had a bearing effect on Indo-ASEAN relations as well.<sup>8</sup> Although ASEAN countries were economically vibrant in 1990's but to consolidate the regional forum, they foresaw their future in bringing close economic, political and security cooperation with key major players in the world.

Since 1991, when India brought into the form the policy of liberalisation and globalisation, it became necessary for it to find potential which can further boost up their trade and foreign investment. This period saw the beginning of its Look-East Policy which was intended to reach out to the countries of East and Southeast Asia which had been neglected by India in spite of cultural, religious, geographical proximity and historical links.<sup>9</sup>

India's keenness to develop smooth economic ties with Southeast Asian countries is based on many aspects. The economic strength of South East Asia, which has tremendously increased due to the rise in its intra-regional trade and, it is in India's interest to take measures to boost its trade with this region. India could make

use of the investment opportunities in Southeast Asian states which are likely to shift the “flying geese” pattern of investment away from ASEAN countries towards neighbouring country like India. Reflecting the deepening engagement both in degree and intensity, the Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao noted,

*“In global terms, we are witnessing a shift in economic and political power to Asia. The Asia-Pacific region, including Southeast Asia, needs much more attention by us, and this must seep into our defence and foreign planning as never before. There is a palpable desire on the part of the countries of the region to enhance cooperation with us which we must reciprocate”.*<sup>10</sup>

The need for economic cooperation has been a two-sided affair, as the Southeast also rated India very high on its economic priorities. Because, India with its large and sound human resources base, could provide ample opportunities to ASEAN to surplus its capital and to reap advantage by investing in India. India’s track record of economic reforms and the liberalization process with its democratic form of government coupled with the availability of cheap labour and ample scientific and technical manpower is looked upon by many Southeast Asian countries as a better place for investment.<sup>11</sup> To make it real, India unveiled ‘look east policy’ to accelerate their economic relations with Southeast Asian countries which were till now remained unexploited. The first step in this arrangement came when ASEAN introduced the concept of dialogue partnership with major trade partners and immediate neighbours to institutionalise the mechanism for cooperation.<sup>12</sup> Under the arrangement of sectoral dialogue partnership four areas were embarked for mutual cooperation between India and ASEAN, namely trade, investment, tourism and science and technology. In the

following two years the status of 'sectoral dialogue partner' upgraded to 'full dialogue partner' in December 1995 and India was invited to participate in ASEAN post Ministerial Conference in Jakarta in July 1996. Thus compulsions of both of them have brought them closer to each other. . It is important to not down that the two way merchandise trade between India and ASEAN had witnessed a significant leap from a paltry US\$7 billion in 2000-01 to US\$ 57 billion in 2010-11, representing an impressive eight fold increase in a span of 10 years. The trade between India and ASEAN in 2011-12 increased by more than 37 percent to 70 US\$ 79 billion, which was more than the target of US\$ 70 billion set in 2009. After the 10<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-India Summit in New Delhi, on Dec 20, 2012, India and ASEAN concluded negotiation for FTAs in services and investment and decided to increase the two side bilateral trade to US\$ 100 billion by 2015 and US\$ 200 billion within a decade.<sup>13</sup> This way, ASEAN accounts for roughly 10 percent of India's global trade resulting in the former becoming India's 4<sup>th</sup> largest trading partner behind the European Union, the people of Republic of China and the U.S.A. Emerging cooperation between them could be discerned from the growth of their cooperation in trade, investment, services and the finance sector. At another level, this cooperation materialized with the support of well-augmented institutions. The main institutional infrastructure has been extended by ASEAN, which recently converted itself into a true representative of the whole of Southeast Asia. Cooperation through ASEAN has not only consolidated economic ties between India and Southeast Asia, rather both may use this mechanism for playing a greater role in Asia-pacific in the future.<sup>14</sup>

Since India became a Dialogue Partner of ASEAN, the collaboration has transcended the realm of functional cooperation to cover political and security dimensions. India participates in a series of consultative meetings with ASEAN which

include the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Post Ministerial Conferences (PMCs) 10+1 and 10+10. Since July 1996, India has been an active participant of the ARF. It views the ARF as valuable process in promoting stable relationships between the major powers, and as a useful complement to the bilateral alliances and dialogues between India and ASEAN Member Countries, which are at the heart of the region's security architecture. ASEAN and India committed themselves to jointly contribute to the promotion of peace, stability and development in the Asia-Pacific region and the world, and respond positively to the challenges of a dynamic regional and international environment. ASEAN and India are now intensifying their political and security dialogue to add a new dimension to a mutually beneficial economic and commercial relationship. Reflective of India's interest in intensifying its engagement with ASEAN, both sides now are in the process of jointly developing an India-ASEAN Vision 2020, as a roadmap to mutually desired objectives.<sup>15</sup>

Similarly, the post cold war scenario in Southeast Asia is very conducive for the growth and development of strategic cooperation with India. In the post cold war era, due to the removal of American military from this region, Southeast Asian countries were more concerned towards expansion of Chinese impact on this region. In this region, in order to stop political encroachment by China, these countries have expectations from two nations-India and Japan. But seeing Japan's previous history and its present military policies, they were reluctant to believe on it. On the other hand, they also feared from Japan on economic front. So these countries have only one option left to improve strategic relations with India. But there had been doubts in Southeast Asian countries about India's position due to its policies towards Afghanistan and Cambodia. But in 1979, after the return of forces of Vietnam from Cambodia and in 1988, after the return of military forces of Russia from Afghanistan,



the obstacles were removed from their way.<sup>16</sup> In early 1990s India marched towards new approach in foreign policy matters with advent of “Look East Policy”. In its LEP India tried to take first step to improve relations with Asia-Pacific countries in general and with major emphasis on ASEAN countries in particular. Withdrawal of American military from this region and adopting cooperative security policies and military to military alliance policies with India in Asia Pacific region, are steps which gave clear indication of improvement of strategic relations with India. India’s thrust towards Southeast Asia has been due to a changed strategic milieu in the region.<sup>17</sup> The strategic significance of this region was given due to recognition by India even before independence. In 1945, the then leading Indian Strategic thinker wrote: The Gulf of Malacca is like the Mouth of crocodile, the peninsula of Malaya being the upper jaw and jutting end of Sumatra being the lower jaw. For security of its sovereignty India has to think with multidimensional approach. First of all, its 7000 km long land border with China and Pakistan has to be protected along with its sea border of nearly same size in Indian Ocean. Secondly, India explores oil and natural gas from its sea coast. It has many oil wells in this area. Along with this, it has EEZ up to 200 km from sea coast .Therefore security of its ocean has to be strong. Thirdly, nearly 97%of India’s trade depends on sea .Therefore sea routs in Indian Ocean has to be kept safe. Along with external security, some internal security activities like terrorism, proxy wars, separatism, fundamentalism, smuggling of drugs, etc. are also important from security point of view and has to be kept in control.<sup>18</sup> India and Southeast Asia have similar security concern for this region in the post cold war era. Proximity of the two provides an ample scope for the military cooperation. Joining hands with India might also serve Southeast Asia’s interest of balancing of China and Japan in the changed regional milieu. That is why it has been rightly observed that “a more connected India will be

equally benefited because its maritime cooperation and peacekeeping experiences will boost its scope for further cooperation with the Asia-Pacific states. Besides, it will get the opportunities to explain that India has no intention to compete with other powers to fill the perceived power vacuum<sup>19</sup>.

The enhanced military capabilities, along with Southeast Asia's arms acquisition programme in the post cold war era, brought India closer to them. By engaging Southeast Asian states through dialogue and defence exercise, India also hoped to reduce suspicions regarding its naval build up, check Chinese influence in the region and complement its economic ties with the region through its 'Look east Policy', first declared in Singapore during Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's official visit in 1992. From the perspective of Singapore and other Southeast Asian states, security ties with India would give New Delhi a stake in regional stability and counter-balance the rising China influence and power. Because, after more than three decades of peace and tranquillity, Southeast Asia now confronts a period of great turbulence, marked by mounting tensions among the major powers and the deepening regional conflicts. China's deepening territorial conflict with Japan and its new rivalry with the United States have injected fluidity into Asia's great power relations. Beijing's relations with some of its Southeast Asian neighbours, especially Vietnam and the Philippines, have headed south amid competing territorial claims in the South China Sea. The coherence of the ASEAN itself is under question as member states take divergent approaches to dealing with a rising China. Individually and collectively, then, the ASEAN members are looking to restore the balance of power in the region. Some of them are turning to the US to strengthen their security and others are deeply wary about the dangers of being caught up in a new Cold War between Beijing and Washington. All of them are importing advanced weapons systems and

paving the way for an arms race in Southeast Asia. In seeking a larger role from India in regional security, the ASEAN has no illusion that India is the white knight that will ride to the rescue of the region threatened by China. It was in India's interest also to ensure that Southeast Asia would not be dominated especially by China once it became obvious that the superpower would reduce their presence, which coincided with a similar thinking with Southeast Asia.<sup>20</sup> As Babtyal says,

*India – ASEAN mutual security concern is guided by two broad factors: first, reconciling US military supremacy in the Asia-Pacific; and second to balance the ascending power of China in the region.*<sup>21</sup>

A mutual interest in maintaining a balance of power in the region provided both Southeast Asian states and India with the incentive to cooperate in security and defence-related areas. It was mainly due to that Singapore championed, with support of other ASEAN member-states, India's inclusion in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1996, the same year that India also became ASEAN's Dialogue Partner.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, India became increasingly pro-active in Southeast Asia, by strengthening its defence ties with countries in the region. In April 2004, India unveiled its new maritime doctrine. According to this doctrine, India's new maritime areas extended from "the arc of the Persian Gulf to the Strait of Malacca, even though this did not entail the exclusion of other great powers from the region". The document released by India's navy chief, identified some key roles for the Indian navy in supporting New Delhi's foreign and defence policies. First, the military function emphasised the development of the capability to project force and the building of trust and inter-operability with foreign navies. Second, the navy's diplomatic function was to enhance India's relations with its neighbours and with Southeast Asian countries.

As well as, the doctrine emphasised the navy's humanitarian role, which included search and rescue missions and assistance during calamities such as floods, tsunamis and earthquakes.<sup>23</sup> Though India's attitude on CTBT and later Pokhran-2 in May 1998 have developed some suspicions among the Southeast Asian states, its relations continue to remain warm despite some divergences on the nuclear issue between India and Southeast Asia.<sup>24</sup>

Critical remarks with regard to the ambitions of the Indian Navy were replaced by many instances of greater defence cooperation. A number of confidence building measures (CBMs) that India undertook and greater appreciation by the Southeast Asian countries of Indian maritime concerns ushered in a new era of cooperation which began to transcend beyond the naval contours. At multilateral level, India is an active participant in the regional security mechanism, the ASEAN Regional Forum and since 1995 the Indian navy has been hosting a biennial naval gathering called MILAN at Port Blair.<sup>25</sup> At bilateral level, India has entered into bilateral defence cooperation agreements with Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, Laos, and Indonesia. India has also been actively involved in assisting the armed forces of Myanmar and Thailand. For instance, Singapore has not only made use of India's missile testing range to test its own guns and missiles, but also uses Indian facilities to train its naval personnel- the first time ever that India has done for a foreign country.<sup>26</sup> Singapore was the first among the South-East Asian states to become operationally involved with the Indian navy with their SIMBEX exercise taking place mostly in the Bay of Bengal, but also in the South China Sea at the times. An important military operation that followed the 1998 defence agreement was the 11 day ASW (Anti-Submarine joint Warfare) exercise between the two navies in the Andaman Sea, which was independent of Singapore participation in MILAN. In November 2008, a three week

long joint air force training exercise was conducted, which Singapore, Ministry of Defence Considered as yet another significant milestone in bilateral defence relations.<sup>27</sup>

Similarly, the Thai pilots are being trained in India to gain experience to operate their aircraft carrier, and the Myanmar gets anti-insurgency training. India and Indonesia have also frequently conduct joint patrolling in the critical straits of Southeast Asia ensuring security of sea-lanes of communication. It is notable that India's strategic engagement with Southeast Asia is the strongest compared to any other Asian power. One reason why India has been relatively more successful is that, apart from the absence of any border/territorial disputes and any historical baggage, India is seen to be not having any 'ambitions' in and posing no security threat to the region. Defence and Security is a major area of future co-operation between India and ASEAN. No longer is security of South Asia and Southeast Asia separate. Both the region has suffered from new threat of terrorism.<sup>28</sup> Thus, to get rid of it, a global alliance for Counter Terrorism is need of the hour, where both India and ASEAN can play the major role. The tsunami in the recent years has brought the issue of Disaster Mitigation as another possible area of cooperation. Besides, other transnational crimes such as trafficking particularly in women and children, cyber crimes, international economic crimes, environmental crimes, sea piracy and money laundering needs to be checked through effective institutional linkages and programmes of cooperation giving priority to information exchange and capacity building.<sup>29</sup> The nucleus of the module would be "capacity-building" for these and related aspects of maritime security. Thus, the prospect of cooperation in this area is tremendous. Another convergence of interest to foster closer cooperation in reforming of and democratizing the UN and its institution by making them more reflective of the contemporary

realities, might strengthen the bond between India and ASEAN in 21st century. In fact, both sides are eager for a multilateral world order with genuine role of the UN.<sup>30</sup>

India has deliberately widened the scope of its Look East Policy. In 2003, India's then External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha called,

*“This ‘phase two’ of India’s Look East policy; whereas ‘the first phase’.....was ASEAN- centred and focused primarily on trade and investment linkage, the ‘new phase of this policy is characterized by an expanded definition of “East”, extending from Australia to East Asia....the new phase also marks a shift from trade to wider economic and security issues. East Asia was specifically considered as part of India’s ‘extended neighbourhood,’ towards which India had stakes in issues ranging ‘from the stand-off in North Korea to the violence in Philippines”.*

### **The China Factor: India Getting Preference over China**

In the cold war era, South East Asian nations perceived China as dangerous because of its military expansionist scheme in Asia. While now the “peaceful rise” of China is being considered more of an opportunity despite the challenges. China is virtually dominating the South East Asian region. The ASEAN-China Free Trade Area created by an accord in 2004 has come into effect from January 2010. This covers nearly 1.9 billion people.<sup>31</sup> In terms of economic value this is the third largest regional agreement, after only the EU and the NAFTA. “A new talking point in East Asia is that of the multi-literalism or, more precisely, the likely enlargement of the Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI) later this year. The CMI is basically a currency pool of the ASEAN+3 countries (China, Japan and South Korea).The move was a direct

response to the recent outbreak of the US-induced global and financial economic crisis, which has not fully blown away as now”<sup>32</sup> China is predicted to overtake Japan as the world’s second largest economy some time in 2010. India must be aware of the fact that it has not been invited to the EAS because of its rising economic potential alone but more as a balancing force to offset the China factor. Prime Minister Man Mohan Singh has repeatedly mentioned that in a global environment, India is not afraid of competition and it can complement rather than compete in the East Asia Summit (EAS). China is virtually dominating this region. By the ASEAN-China Accord entered into in November 2004 (during the 10th ASEAN Summit in Vientiane), the world’s biggest free trade area has been created removing all tariffs.<sup>33</sup> The tariff cuts that began in 2005 will be completed by 2010 drawing the ASEAN’s combined economies of US \$ 1 trillion closer to China’s US \$ 1.4 trillion. In the Cold war era, India perceived China as dangerous country because of its high military expenditure and ambitious plans in this field. But now the image of China has changed and now is seen as an economic powerhouse. To gain confidence and to build trust among the Asian countries Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, said in a speech during the last ASEAN Summit that,

*“China will continue to seek peace and development through cooperation and will strive to achieve development that will bring about peace, openness, cooperation and harmony as well as benefit to it and other countries”.*

Despite the remarks of the Chinese Premier some analysts are of the opinion that China preferred a smaller Asian grouping (without U.S., India, Australia and New Zealand) that can integrate quickly on the economic front and which China can

influence more significantly. Perhaps it is this increasing influence of China and its motives that had prompted countries like Singapore and Indonesia to cooperate with India, Australia and New Zealand into the EAS. Hence India must be aware that it has not been invited to EAS because of its rising economic potential alone but more as a balancing force to offset the China factor. Although it is being said that India and China are not rivals and they can complement rather than compete in the E.A.S.<sup>34</sup>

China's growing presence and influence in the region, economic and strategic makes diversified relationship with India necessary for Southeast Asia. With the US down-scaling its relations with the region, many believe that India will provide added stability and security to the region. In the immediate future, India and ASEAN countries must intensify their cooperation both at the bilateral and regional levels to combat common threats to security that have the potential of shaking the very foundations of the polity. Since India's north-eastern region is being recognised as the 'corridor to South East Asia, integration with the traditional neighbouring regions like Myanmar, Bangladesh and Thailand should be facilitated through transportation networks and this would contribute to sustained peace and development.<sup>35</sup> It may be stated therefore, that changing political, economic and security considerations condition the bilateral or multilateral policy ties of any country and India-Southeast Asia relations is no exception to this. The potential of the relations must be carefully cultivated by policymakers and strategists as Southeast Asia is likely to remain a viable foreign and security policy option for India in its quest to establish its geopolitical and economic prowess in the years to come. As India deepens its ties and employs pragmatic diplomacy to increase its influence in South-East Asia, the repercussions in India-China relations are inevitable. China considers itself the unchallenged "dragon" of the Asian Continent; hence the Indian "elephant" strides



would be unsettling. But if Indian foreign policies manage to ruffle feathers and unsettle the Chinese strategic community, then India must have been doing something right.<sup>36</sup>

### **The South China Sea Disputes and Indian Policy**

In October 2011, statements by Chinese officials reasserting China's "indisputable sovereignty" over the South China Sea and warnings to India against investment in the region are seen as signs of Chinese aggressiveness that would inevitably precipitate conflict. Suggestions for greater Indian involvement in the South China Sea disputes are made on the grounds that India must be forceful in its dealings with China. The continuation of ONGC Videsh Limited's (OVL) investments in Vietnamese energy fields is certainly advisable. In fact, there is nothing to indicate that the Indian government is thinking otherwise. OVL's presence in Vietnam is not a recent phenomenon. Its first joint-venture for offshore oil and natural gas exploration in Vietnam's Lan Tay field along with Petro Vietnam and BP became functional in 2003. Deals for the investments now in the headlines were signed in May 2006; this is a project that will not be halted because of oblique Chinese statements. India simply need not take heed of Chinese views on Indian economic ventures.<sup>37</sup>

In the aftermath of statements by the US and skirmishes over fishing vessels, ASEAN and China agreed upon the guidelines on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea at the Bali Summit in July 2010. Recent tensions may well prod the parties towards a more binding code of conduct. This is not to suggest that territorial claims and sovereignty issues will be resolved, but certainly can become more manageable to prevent military conflict. A

revision of Indian policy on the issue should be based on a clear understanding of what India stands to gain and how Indian national interest is strengthened. India's relationships with South East Asian countries are not uni-dimensional. They are not geared only towards checking the Chinese imprint in the region but are reflective of India's multifarious interests globally. As regards military support for OVL's operations, the issue should be reflected upon seriously. It is one thing to build capabilities in order to deter misadventure, quite another to back investment with military might. This is a matter that will affect Indian ventures globally.<sup>38</sup>

Look east policy has helped India in strengthening its place in the global economy and gets a better deal in its interactions outside the region. America and European countries had entered into a lot of different mutual agreement which has further increased their reputation and bargaining power. India was in danger of isolation in the global economy. India was not getting its due importance. But due to its Look east policy India economy is getting integrated with the Asian economy, so India gets support from Asian countries which have increased India's importance at global level.<sup>39</sup>

Each ASEAN nation has its own characteristics – some are supportive of India, some are predominantly Muslim, some are economically more developed than India, some are underdeveloped and one is a close neighbour influencing the security of India. Hence India should tailor the bilateral relations with every country in different way to suit the requirements of that particular country and that of India. ASEAN holds great promise for India. Adequate interaction with these groupings will result in better integration with this region and facilitate India economic development. Indian businesses which are looking to go global will get huge markets in other

countries. They will be able to export their goods and get a market share because of low tariffs due to the pacts, agreements and FTAs. Although foreign companies will also get this advantage but Indian companies will be able to compete with these because of their competitiveness.<sup>40</sup>

Indian policy-makers should create such a scenario where India's arrival as a major power in the international system should not be seen as a liability but as an asset by the ASEAN countries. In recognizing India's stature in regional Asian and international politics, these countries should see a reflection of their rising opportunities for their own countries in an inclusive, healthy and peaceful Asian order. To make them realize their own success in the success of India would indeed be the litmus test for present and future Indian policy-makers. India's objectives in Look East Policy can be furthered through areas—education (human resources development), democracy and culture—where it has a comparative advantage over Asian countries.

### **Significance of the Study**

It is widely accepted that 21st century belongs to Asia. The growing importance of India as an upcoming economy increases its responsibility in the development of peace, stability and prosperity in the region. Similarly ASEAN deserves to be commended for the way it has established itself in the Asian diplomacy. The strategic, economic and political importance of ASEAN and India in achieving the objective of making Asia the centre of world politics provides an academic and political justification for exploring the challenges and prospects of India-ASEAN relations in a holistic way. The present study has been undertaken keeping in mind this objective.

## **Review of Literature**

In present times, bilateral relations can be well understood in terms of nature and types of initiatives taken by both the states to resolve the problems. Consequently, a review of writing of different aspects of India- ASEAN relations becomes essential. To understand the relationship of both, the study of India's Look east Policy is necessary.

To understand the meaning and evolution of India's Look east policy, Rajiv Sikri's<sup>41</sup> article is of immense use. He discussed the look east policy of India in greater detail. Naidu<sup>42</sup> in his pioneering work analyses various aspects of the concept of India's look east policy. He also discussed about the effect of globalization on its bilateral ties with Southeast countries.

The work by Parkesh Nanda<sup>43</sup> explains the strategic relation between India and ASEAN and explains the Mekong Ganga Corporation Project and BIMSTEC. This also deals with the role of Myanmar, China and Pakistan in the region of ASEAN and India. It also discusses the strategic triangle of these nations in India's point of view. It defines the journey and dialogue between the ministers of their respective nations and explains the topic of dialogues. It also tells about the trade relations and gives light on different treaties between each other.

V.P. Dutt<sup>44</sup> explains the Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's visits, Economics dimension and other relation between Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam and Cambodia. In this book the writer tells us about the defence and strategic relation. It also tells about the political relation as well as different kind of journey. Lieutenant General Yoginder Mohan Bammi (Retd.)<sup>45</sup> explain strategic relation with ASEAN countries and special focus on A.R.F. It discusses the concept of security in 21<sup>st</sup> century and

security threats to the region. It also defines the India's role in the region during past and proposed 'Look East' for India 2035.

P.V. Rao<sup>46</sup> explains the relation in different sector between India and ASEAN countries as science and technology, Tourism etc. It describes the MEKONG-GANGA cooperation project BIMSTEC and RIM and in Indian point of view and tell the role of India in these regions. It also deals with the relation between different sectors in these nations and defines the challenges against India to develop the relation with these nations.

Frederic Grare and Amitabh Mattoo<sup>47</sup> describe the India's look east policy and its terms and conditions as well as terms and conditions as well as emerging economic opportunities between India and ASEAN countries and it also defines the India-ASEAN trade properties and the economic partnership between India and ASEAN. This study also deals the relations of India— ASEAN nations and present these countries as a Global Economy in this world. It also defines the effect of Globalization on India's adoption of look east policy and defines the look East Policy in details and investment relations between India and ASEAN,

Frederic Grare & Amitabh Mattoo (eds.)<sup>48</sup> explain various sectors as trade and investment, science and technology, tourism, human resource and explain India's role in the A.R.F, by the different article of different author. Nagesh Kumar, Rahul Sen and Mukul Asher<sup>49</sup> deal with India—ASEAN economic relations and given focus on F.D, I, between India and ASEAN and they also define the F.T.A, between these nations. This book give an overview of India—ASEAN relation in the era of Globalization as well as the studies of challenges and prospects cooperation in the

context of W.T.O. It also defines the sub-regional economic cooperation between the India and ASEAN.

Atul Sharma & Pardeep Kumar Mehta<sup>50</sup> define the rapid explanation of India's trade and investment relation with ASEAN states, as also several arrangements toward laying institutional foundation for strengthening the economic partnership in some sense. This work carries out in the context of the rapid changes in the international trading environment in general and in east-Asia in particular. R.S, Yadav<sup>51</sup> defines India and South-East Asia relation in three stages and describes the economic, political, strategic and cultural relations with ASEAN and discusses the main reason of adopting Look East Policy also.

Isabelle Saint- Mezard<sup>52</sup> explains evolution of trade and its cultural and religious links with these countries and challenges to Look East Policy against India. It discusses the ongoing effect of Look East Policy of India and ASEAN countries also. Bijoy Deb and Reddy<sup>53</sup> discuss the evolution of India's Look East policy along with problems and prospects. Bijoy Deb considered terrorism, drug and human trafficking and China's interference as obstacles in the way to develop mutual cooperation between India and Southeast Asian countries.

K. Raja Reddy<sup>54</sup> describes India's foreign policy, focuses mainly on India's 'Look East' policy. This book is divided into three sections. The First section highlights India's 'Look East' policy in details. The papers explore the causes which led to the launching of this policy. Manifest in the vigorous pursuit of Look East Policy since the last decade of the previous century and India's impressive progress in the field of economy, strategy and cultural relations with ASEAN. It critically

examined the fruitful synergy in the relation between India and the countries of south East Asia and south Pacific.

I.K. Gujral<sup>55</sup> deals with regional cooperation between Indian and ASEAN and describes the role of ASEAN- Indian JCC (Joint co-operation committee) in dialogue mechanisms. It also describes the action plans and business agenda on trade and investment.

Sudhir Devare<sup>56</sup> defines energy co-operation with CLMV countries, and Asia-pacific economic co-operation (APEC) and Monetary cooperation between India and ASEAN countries. This study gives main focus on political cooperation as well as security concern also. ShriPrakash, Vanita Ray & Sanjay Ambetkar<sup>57</sup> define India ASEAN trade relation and investment, regional trade arrangements and APEC between India and ASEAN countries this study describe investment partnership in following sectors (i) Telecommunication (ii) Aquaculture (iii) Orchids (iv) Power generation (v) Crude oil and natural gas (vi) housing and real estate (vii) Tourism and discuss the political relations between India and ASEAN.

Nancy Jetly<sup>58</sup> deals with India's foreign policy and describes the nuclear and security challenges economic diplomacy trade and strategic relations with ASEAN countries this book defines the India's foreign policy and discusses its aim and strategies. It also deals with the major concern of India's securities and main issues in South Asian region related India's securities.s

M.D. Dharamdasani<sup>59</sup> deals with Asia's role in global polities in which it covers the emerging trend of economic cooperation of the India and ASEAN countries. It also covers overall trade performance of India with ASEAN countries in post cold war era. At this time India on its part also started thinking about the

concepts of ASEAN nations and ASEAN values to have better relations with both china and Japan.

Kripa Shridhran<sup>60</sup> deals with India's foreign policy in ASEAN region and it covers the historical prospective of India's foreign policy towards ASEAN countries. The article by Man Mohini Kaul<sup>61</sup> assesses India's approach to regional cooperation in the extended neighbourhood with a view to understand its Look east policy to develop closer ties with ASEAN countries. Amit singh's<sup>62</sup> article critically analyses the impact of Indian dispora policy with regard to ethnic Indians in Southeast Asia.

A. Lakshmana Chetty<sup>63</sup> in his book a compendium of papers presented at a seminar. This book contains around seventeen papers which cover a wide range of issues like India's nuclear explosion and ASEAN countries' reaction, India's role in Cambodian problem during Cold War years, India-Vietnam relationship and importance of Vietnam as an attraction to foreign investors. One of the papers explores non-military threats faced by Southeast Asia and India. A few papers focus on Southeast Asian economic crisis and India's relations with Vietnam and Cambodia.

Asis Kumar Majumdar<sup>64</sup> in his book explores India and Southeast Asian countries relations from 1962-82 in detail. However as a background the developments since 1947 have also been discussed. He has discussed Nehru's role in organizing integration of Asia through Asian Relations Conferences. The role played by super powers in Indian Ocean region as well as India and Southeast Asia's economic relations from 1947 till 1971 have been analysed. Indo-China war and its impact on India and Southeast Asia relations too gets the author's attention.



Smitha Francis<sup>65</sup> in her paper presents an overview of the pattern and composition of India's growing trade with ASEAN countries in detail. It also examines the tariff reduction commitment under the AIFTA and analyses the extent of potential market access that will be gained by ASEAN countries, in India's agriculture and non agriculture areas.

### **Hypothesis**

India ASEAN Relations is based on mutual interests; the proximity between the two regions became more important after the beginning of Look East Policy.

1. With the end of Cold War, the strategic and political factor have lost their earlier importance in the relations among different countries. India ASEAN Relations must be seen in the same perspective.
2. In the age of globalization the economic factors have become more important.
3. Dynamic leadership can forge closer relations between India and ASEAN.
4. India is acceptable to ASEAN countries because they have nothing to fear. Diplomatic efforts and channels have greater role and potential in establishing closer relations between India and ASEAN countries.

### **Methodology**

In this research work, the historical- analytical and comparative method is used. The problem is evaluated in a holistic manner by using all the dimensions relating to the issues. The data has been collected from different sources. But the study mainly depends on secondary source. Primary sources also have been used for support like, foreign affairs records, annual reports, government documents, statement

and speeches of various leaders of both states etc. has been consulted. All the secondary sources available in the form of books and articles published in various journals, newspapers, magazines and internet services has been used. The research methods used for the study have been descriptive and analytical. For this purpose both primary sources and secondary sources have been used. Primary sources included ASEAN-Documents: Reports, Charters/Declarations, Joint Press Releases, Foreign Affairs Records, Annual Reports, Statements by Indian or Foreign Leaders/Ministers and unpublished materials, etc.

### **Structure of Thesis**

The study has been divided into following chapters:

1. Introduction
2. India's Look East Policy: A Theoretical Overview
3. India's Political Relations with ASEAN
4. Challenges and future prospects
5. Conclusion

The first chapter discusses about the changed global environment after the end of the cold war. After the disintegration of Soviet Union, the world order has been replaced by bi-polar system to uni-polar system. The ideological barriers were demolished. Now the centre of attraction has been shifted towards Southeast Asia and Asia- Pacific. The end of the cold war represents a significant development in international relations, which had serious implications for both India and the Asia-Pacific. This development has a far-reaching implication for India and has led to the reorientation of India's foreign policy. The major change adopted by India has been

the beginning of economic reforms and adjustment with the emerging euphoria of globalization and liberalization. It resulted into the emergence of “Look East Policy”.

The second chapter discusses about the theoretical aspect of India’s Look East policy. After the end of the bi-polar conflictual world order, a new trend emerged in the international environment in the form of regionalism. A number of regional organisations were emerged or strengthened as like, EU, ASEAN, and African Union etc. These organisations were not based on military compulsions. After the end of cold war, India started moving towards South East Asia to build strong economic, strategic and political ties with them. On the other hand, South East Asia, by leaving all inhibitions of the past, came closer to India to develop warm and friendly relations with them. The need for economic cooperation has been a two-sided affair, as South East also rated India very high on its economic priorities. On the one hand, ASEAN is emerging economically as the world’s most dynamic region. The per capita income of ASEAN is twice that of India and ASEAN is rapidly opening up its market opportunities. Because of its rich bases of natural resources, India eyes the possibilities of integrating into the value of chain of multi-national companies thriving in ASEAN. Similarly, India with its large and sound human resource bases could provide ample opportunities to ASEAN surplus capital to reap advantages by investing in India. Thailand and some other countries have adopted "Look West Policy" to reciprocate India's "Look East Policy", and have proposed to build roadways, railways and waterways to India in the economic and strategic partnership.

The third chapter is related to the political relations between India and ASEAN. The Look East policy adopted by India is a multi pronged approach to evolve political relations with ASEAN countries and to develop strong economic bonds with the region. In bilateral discussion, India’s attempt was to enhance political

understanding, identify areas of mutual interests and initiate moves to harness these interests. India –ASEAN relations have deepened and intensified significantly in recent years. India became a sectoral dialogue partner in 1992 and full dialogue partner in 1995. It participated in the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM), the Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in July 1996. These political level interactions are further strengthened through the Senior Official meeting, as also specialized working groups in the functional areas. Apart from this dual track diplomacy, people to people contacts have also been encouraged to cement the ties between India and ASEAN. Promotion to tourism, trade, cultural activities, academic exchanges etc has been enhanced to develop friendly contacts between the common men of two regions. Thus this three tier approach to diplomacy has been helped in bringing about closer ties between India and Southeast Asia. In the same chapter, the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of India's Look East policy is also discussed. Beyond the ASEAN, India has also developed close strategic understanding and cooperation with Japan, Australia, Korea and even China.

The fourth chapter comes with the discussion on challenges and prospects in the way of India and ASEAN's relations. An objective assessment of nearly the past two decades of India's Look East Policy would suggest that while notable progress has been made, there is still a long way to go and tremendous potential remains to be harnessed. There are a number of challenges in the form of global terrorism, instability of financial institutions like FTAs, growing gap between announcements and implementation of policies, the China factor, non-traditional security threats in the form of smugglings of drugs and narcotics, trafficking of human beings, natural disasters etc are some important hurdles in the way of their smooth relations. Exploitation of the emerging synergies between India and ASEAN to foster a much

deeper social, cultural, political and economic interface and meeting the common challenge require an accelerated program of mutual cooperation.

The last chapter concludes whole thesis, with the suggestions for the betterment of India- ASEAN relations. There are a number of areas in which both can cooperate with each other like, trade and investment, hospitality and tourism, infrastructure, science and technology, education etc. The areas of cooperation should be looked into so that regional integration gets a new thrust. The ASEAN partners should think about affirmative action vis-à-vis India and important gaps should be filled up to balance the situation.

## Endnotes

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