



India-ASEAN Relations: With special reference to strategic and security factors

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Abstract

India and South-East countries were having good relationship even in ancient period. So they were also co-operating in security and strategic fields also. During the rule of Cholas, Cholas were having the presence of their navy even in South Asia and South-East Asia. Although India never adopted colonial and imperialistic approach, but it made it clear that it can play important role in providing security and help during emergency to them.

Keywords: India, ASEAN, strategic, security

Introduction

No policy originates in vacuum, certain factors definitely motivate it. India, Policy of LEP (Look East Policy) is also not exception to this rule. The origin of LEP can be traced out in early years of 1990. The disintegration of Soviet Union resulted in the end of Cold War. Now Russia was not in a position to give political and economic help to India. India had already adopted free market economy, hence then was need for new economic partner and new markets. It led to the adoption "Look East Policy" which brought to an end the long separation between India and South-East Asia.

End of Cold War brought number of changes in World Politics. It led to the formation of various regional economic organization. In the early years of 1990 number of consequences of globalization were witnessed. Then results created number of political and economic compulsions for various countries. It encouraged international compulsion and also created a new wave of regionalism. Under these circumstances India decided to adopt the Look East Policy.

On 8th August, 1967 it was declared in Bangkok Resolution that the three main objectives of ASEAN are:

1. To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavors in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of South East Asian Nations.
2. To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rules of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter.
3. To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields.

In the post cold war era, India realized that there is a wave in favour of regionalism, therefore, it decided to revisit its Look East Policy towards ASEAN. At that time the economy of South East Asia was growing with drumfire rapidity, therefore, it attracted not only India, China, Europe and

United States of America. Thus because of the following reasons India needs close relationship with ASEAN:

1. Indonesia is the largest exporter of Coal in the world, So it can meet out the requirements of India.
2. Myanmar is extremely rich in Natural Gas resources about 90 Trillion Cubic feet. Thus it occupies 10th position as far as Natural Gas resources are concerned.
3. Malaysia and Indonesia are respectively second and third exporters of liquefied Natural Gas in the world.
4. The recent researches and explorations expect that east Natural Gas Fields are very rich in Natural Gas resources.
5. It is also estimated that in future Vietnam can emerge as the chief exporter of Crude Oil. (dPpk rsy)
6. India want to be profited to secure co-operation with fast growing economies of South East Asia.
7. To accelerate the process of Regional Economic integration after watching the success of ASEAN.
8. ASEAN may prove to be an important link for India in Indian Ocean.
9. ASEAN can also prove to be a good market for Indian products and capital.
10. ASEAN can also be important for India to give impetus to the process of development and trade.
11. By promoting cordial relationship with ASEAN, India wants to out Pakistan from this region and thus compete with China.
12. ASEAN members can be important for investment to development infrastructure.
13. North eastern states of India have their boundaries with Myanmar which is a member of ASEAN. Thus ASEAN may be important for development and security of north-eastern states of India.
14. India, further needs ASEAN for the sake of unity of Third World countries on the platform of W.T.O. This argument is also applicable for the purpose of promoting the interests of third world countries.
15. India, a relationship with ASEAN is also needed to give a positive direction to the process of expansion and democratization of U.N. and its various organs and

specialized agencies.

16. To implement the demand of the establishment of New International Economic under following introducing reforms in International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organization (W.T.O.) and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (I.B.R.D. also known as World Bank).
17. To secure the permanent membership of Scarcity Council, the support of ASEAN will be crucial.
18. ASEAN is a gateway for India to deal with the nations of Asia-Pacific region.

India and South-East countries were having good relationship even in ancient period. So they were also co-operating in security and strategic fields also. During the rule of Cholas, Cholas were having the presence of their navy even in South Asia and South-East Asia. Although India never adopted colonial and imperialistic approach, but it made it clear that it can play important role in providing security and help during emergency to them.

Nehru had given the message of Asian unity even before independence. It had encouraged the freedom movement of S.E Asian countries. In 1947 first "Asian Relations Conference" was held at New Delhi and in 1947 second Asian Conference was held regarding the issue of freedom of Indonesia. The colonial powers were given this message that Asian Countries will unitedly fight against them. South East Asian countries were also under the rule of colonial power. India raised the issue of their independence also. Because of Indian efforts and help South-East Asian countries like Burma, Malaysia, Indonesia, Indo-China, and Philippines got independence. Now India tried to improve relations with them. In 1950 Prime Minister Nehru paid a visit to Indonesia through a ship. In 1955 Bandung Conference was held to secure the goal of Asian Unity. This conference laid the foundation of NAM. In order to combat the challenges of expansion of communism SEATO, a military organisation, was formed under the umbrella of USA. India was invaded by China in 1962. Indo-Pak war of 1965 also created tension in this region. Thus Nehru's reputation was on decline in South-East Asia region. During Indo-Pak war of 1965 South-East Asian nations followed anti-India approach. When ASEAN was set up in 1967, India remarked that its purpose was to challenge communism, so after the Indo-Soviet Trading of 1971 India did not show its inclination towards south-East Asian countries. Since ASEAN was pro-capitalism, hence, the distance increased in the relationship between the two. In 1973 Arab-Israeli war had taken place. Now India was worried about its energy requirements, hence it gave preference to middle East nations.

But globalisation and disintegration of Soviet Union in 1991 changed the entire scenario. Now both India and ASEAN were keen to develop relations with each other. In 1994 ASEAN Regional Forum was formed. In 1995 at Bangkok Summit India was given the status of Full Dialogue Partner. In 1996, India was given the membership of ARF. China was still not a member of ARF. It showed that ASEAN was having more tract to India and ASEAN accepted and recognised India's economic and military influence. Now ASEAN feels that India naval strength is essential for the security of

ASEAN and Indian Ocean. India conducted joint naval exercises with Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore in the decade of 1990. In Feb. 1993 India-Malaysia signed M.O.U. for defense co-operation. India and Malaysia also decided to extend this co-operation in the field of Air-Forces, co-operation in the field of security also started between India and Thailand, Philippines. Both India and Indonesia are also co-operating to fight against piracy and terrorism on sea. Now Indo-ASEAN are co-operating in Asia-Pacific region to balance Chinese influence, when Sunami hit Indonesia, India gave medical and food assistance to Indonesia. Dr. Man Mohan Singh paid a visit to Japan in May 2013 to further its policy of L.E.P. Extradition Treaty was signed, on the eve of 11th Indo-ASEAN relations, India declared to set up Diplomatic Mission in Jakarta.

Thus it is clear that under the changed political scenario SEA nations not only want to improve economic relations with India but they also want that India should also help them in security field also.

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