

S. Jaishankar, Why Bharat Matters

Deepak Kumar Kashyap

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, School of Social Sciences
Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (A Central University), Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh.

ABSTRACT

The book is an insightful and a cogent examination of Bharat's increasing global prominence and the crafting of its foreign policy is explained in the book titled Why Bharat Matters: Dr. S. Jaishankar. It is a book in which the turn to a more realistic mode of thought that is characterized by interest post 2014 rather than a past idealism is evident. The book is a compilation of eleven interconnected essays, where each essay explains the countries position in the world in a simple manner. Using diplomacy, world politics, history, philosophy, and his own life, he gives a powerful and clear vision of India that is not afraid to secure its position in the world among many great countries in these essays. Even cross-cultural amalgamation of civilizational wisdom is present in this book: The philosophy of statecraft of the period of The Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Arthashastra of Kautilya with the present day statecraft within the frame of Bharat, both ancient and modern, a world powerhouse. It can be the way India treats China, it can be a reconsideration of past decisions, it can be the changing of the security paradigm, but always with the understanding that the foreign policy will be beneficial to the Indian people in a concrete way. It is an artwork that brings to focus developing trust and duties of India to establish a more inclusive and equal world order. It is a wise and strategic vision of the new relationship of India with the rest of the world and a reflection on how Indian foreign policy has become more proactive, realistic and nationalist today than it was yesterday as being reactive and idealistically minded. It represents the shift in the previous decades when India saw the world mostly through the prism of the postulates of sovereignty and freedom and the equality of countries into the situation where India views the world through the prism of its own interests, values, and vision of the multipolar and equitable international order.

Key word: *Bharat Matters, Global Prominence, Countries Position, Statecraft, International Order, Indian People*

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Address for correspondence : Dr. Deepak Kumar Kashyap,

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, School of Social Sciences Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (A Central University), Bilaspur
Email: kashyapdeepak337@gmail.com
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-0563-4227>

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The foreign policy of India under the leadership of PM Modi has changed its idealist and symbolic nature of diplomacy to a practical interest based policy with strategic clarity. This is reflected in five major world tendencies of globalization, power redistribution, multipolarity, technological revolution and increased geopolitical rivalry. India has assumed a prudent policy of engagement not only with major powers such as the US, China, Russia, Japan and the EU, but also to regional neighbors and the Global South. Foreign policy is no longer viewed as an object alien to the civilizational ethos within India; ideals such as Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam are being intertwined with pragmatism and hardheaded strategic thinking to establish a confident and self-assertive global image. Diplomacy

is not an abstract notion as it was before, it is now actually being fulfilled through operations such as the Vande Bharat Mission and Operation Kaveri that brought back home country nationals into the country: So also is the use of military deterrence (Balakot and Uri) to indicate that the defence relationship between India and the world super powers is as strategic as possible. Foreign policy has ceased to be merely the question of international prestige, indeed the main objectives of security, opportunity and national honor in all Indians. It is equally an indication of the new status of India in the global system where its ability to get its own way is manifested in the abrogation of 370 and its presidency in such forums as G20, etc. Concerning Indian diplomacy it has also responded to the weaknesses of globalization. The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed how overdependent on global supply chains has been, and challenging relations with China. It has been translated into national fortitude and tactical self-sufficiency expressed in endeavors such as Aatma Nirbhar Bharat via the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). Act East and SAGAR announce the growing regional implications of the Indo-Pacific; strategic affiliation with the West Asian states and growing connectivity initiatives project a future-focused foreign policy with strong national roots perceived as the key prelude to an effective integration into the world. The other source of Indian foreign policy is its multi-vector diplomacy. India is not only creating new global constituencies, but also deepening relationships with old friends. It is already positively contributing to forums such as BRICS and BIMSTEC not to become just like any bloc but to develop bridges and inclusive global management. This country has the predisposition to become a leader and a partner on common values and address maritime security, infrastructure stability and technological strength of the Indo-Pacific and its role in restoring QUAD alongside the US, Japan and Australia. Similarly, the China policy towards India has also transformed to the metamorphosis into idealism in the historical past to the realism with reference to certain past incidences such as the Galwan clash, the diplomacy has also changed to idealism with the understanding of mutual respect, sensitivity and interests. After all, the rise of India as a global superpower is being packaged in the visual of Bharat -

a civilizational power with ancient writ and global strategic imagination. India does not interact with the world on the basis of episodic response to crisis, but rather on the basis of breakthroughs in science like Chandrayaan-3 or in humanitarian matters like Vaccine Maitri. Nowadays India is not only trying to win the position in the world but actually making an impact on the world with its culture, democratic principles and freedom of choice. Because of the change in the character of international relation and the transference to national security concerns and international objective this has been succeeded by more realistic and forceful pattern of behaviour in international relations.

Further, the illustration of the applicability of foreign policy to the common people is the most important contribution towards this book. Showing some of the realities behind certain of these events, such as the Vande Bharat Mission and Indian response to external threat, the author opens our eyes to the power of diplomacy to shape our daily lives in terms of security, possibilities, and national pride. In addition, the book also places significant emphasis on foreign policy which is congruent with the civilizational identity, and long-run national objectives. It is supposed to represent India as a growing power, but also as a responsible player in the world, a multi-polar India with an inclusive approach to development and cooperation. Though this book is a powerful and authoritative overview of the history of foreign policy in India, it has its weaknesses. Much of the book talks about the achievements and reforms already attained by the present government, and does not talk about what the earlier governments did or the problems that they had. Although much of their policy including Look East or strategic autonomy may have roots in earlier policies, they viewed Turbulent transition as their beginning. Another shortcoming is the shocking and complete absence of critical interaction with other views, and other ways of thinking about foreign policy. The book sweeps under the carpet the flack that India has faced regarding its handling of contentious topics like the border row with China, the blowback on the international stage regarding the abrogation of Article 370 or problems in balancing its relations with the US and Russia under the pressure of global conflict. This

book is also more generally thematic than policy analysis. This is less burdensome to read, but it will not satisfy the reader who has gone to the trouble of reading detailed case-studies, diplomatic history or filler-tales.

Though it is a book about the culture of India and is therefore more elaborated, it still appears an account of the role of India in the world which is too idealistic when we simply do not mention the domestic problem which gives it the wrong image in the outer world. India has become a confident member of the world community, balancing relations with the major powers as well as enhancing regional connections and expanding international contacts. Through the book we have a clue about gaining prominence across the world in organisations such as the G20 and QUAD, India trying to help the rest of the world and how the country is of strong stance on issues relating to national security and economic realise independence. It also associates these actions to the long and rich Indian culture history. The book ends with a bold vision of India in the decades to come and the world-beating superpower it will be by 2030 - one built on subtle diplomacy, alliances, and development across the board. It carries a medium paradigm of custom and innovation to a compound and multipolar world that prize might, duty and the old custom Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam which proclaim faith and cooperation with the similarities of the world as the postulates of world leadership. The book attempts to bust the Western dominated mindsets, supports the idea of strategic independence and consequently the Indians right to take decisions without Western influence in light of their interests and provides a realistic interest-based take on issues in world politics. But this book demonstrates an Indian way and demonstrates global role of India in the global level. Furthermore, this book also highlights the role of India can potentially fulfill in the international scene absorbing the civilizational values of an epic such as Mahabharata and examining the decision Krishna's choice makes when confronted with a dilemma such as the tariff proposed by Trump. In short, this book offers the goals of India on a grander scale, it contains the worldview, and it has the solutions to the problems of the world written in the ethos of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

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