

Non-Aligned Movement

Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

The Non-Aligned Movement emerged after the Second World War. After the Second World War, the world was divided into two blocs—the capitalist bloc led by USA and the socialist bloc led by USSR. Many Asian and African nations who had become independent after the Second World War refused to join either of the blocs and followed the policy of non-alignment.

Meaning of Non-Alignment

Non-alignment was an international policy in which many Asian and African nations refused to align themselves with any of the blocs. These countries aimed at promoting international peace, harmony and cooperation.

Main features of NAM:

- Not to join any powerful military bloc
- Opposed to any kind of military alliances such as NATO, SEATO, Warsaw Pact
- Freedom to take independent decisions related to country's foreign policy
- To participate in world affairs
- To judge issues on merit



Division of the world into two main blocs increased the race of armaments among Western and Eastern European countries which disturbed world peace several times.

Factors Leading to the Rise of NAM

Factors responsible for the development of NAM:

Global tension caused by Cold War: Many newly emerged independent Asian and African nations did not want to join any of the power blocs as they realised it would hamper world peace.

Struggle against imperialism and neo-colonisation: Asian and African nations had become independent after long years of struggle against the colonial powers. They did not want the Western and European nations to dominate their foreign policy after they become a part of any bloc.

Independent foreign policy: The non-aligned members discarded the idea of any outside interference in their domestic and international affairs.

Moderation: The newly independent nations of Asia and Africa wanted to promote peace and goodwill among them and to work for increasing mutual interests by establishing friendly relations with all countries.

Restructuring international economic order: Most of the Asian and African countries were economically backward. They needed capital and technological know-how to improve their economic conditions. Thus, they wanted to keep themselves off from every political alliance and pursue the policy of NAM.

Formation of Capital Force: The Asian and African nations realised that they need to form a collective force. Being common victims of economic exploitation and political domination by European countries, they had a sense of affinity which led them to cooperate with each other.

Evolution of NAM

- At the New Delhi Conference held in March 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru highlighted upon the dangers posed by the hostility between the two power blocs and stressed upon the need for the Asian countries to work for maintaining world peace.

- Another summit was held in 1949 at New Delhi. This conference was attended by 19 countries who asked the immediate withdrawal of Dutch troops from Indonesia.
- In 1954, India and China signed an agreement which contained the 'Panchsheel' or five principles of peace co-existence. These principles later became the guidelines of NAM. These were
 - Non-interference in each other's internal affairs
 - Mutual non-aggression
 - Equality for mutual benefit
 - Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty
 - Peaceful co-existence
- The next important step in the formation of NAM was taken at Bandung Conference in Indonesia in 1955. It was attended by 29 countries. Some of these countries were Indonesia, Turkey, China and the Philippines.
- The Conference was presided over by Jawaharlal Nehru (India), Chou En Lai (China) and G. A. Nasser (Egypt). This Conference paved the way for the formation of NAM.

First NAM Summit

- The first summit of NAM took place in September 1961 at Belgrade in Yugoslavia.
- It was attended by 25 countries. Cyprus was the only European country which attended the session.
- The Conference was presided by Prime Minister Nehru of India, President Tito of Yugoslavia and President Nasser of Egypt. They are known as the founding fathers of NAM.
- Various issues related to world peace were discussed in the first summit. They discussed the German blockade, the issue of China's representation in the UN and the issue of apartheid in South Africa. Imperialism was declared as the threat to world peace.



Nehru, Nasser and Tito were the three main founder members of NAM

Objectives of NAM

- Not to join any power bloc or any military alliance
- To eliminate all those causes which may lead to a war
- To oppose colonialism, imperialism and racial discrimination
- To encourage countries to maintain friendly relations with each other
- To stress on peaceful settlement of international disputes
- To oppose the use of nuclear weapons in war
- To work towards strengthening UNO
- To protect human rights and to protect the environment
- To build a new international economic order based on equity, equality and justice

Role of Jawaharlal Nehru in NAM

- India was the first country which initiated the non-aligned policy under the leadership of Nehru.
- Jawaharlal Nehru realised that one of the greatest dangers of India and other newly independent countries lie in joining any of the two power blocs. He advocated all the countries to stay away from the power blocs.
- Nehru with his leadership skills and far sightedness convinced the Asian and African nations to initiate a movement against the division of the world into two powerful blocs.

- He along with Tito of Yugoslavia, Nasser of Egypt, Ho Chi Minh of Vietnam and Kwama Nkrumah of Ghana participated in the Bandung Conference where NAM was given a final shape.
- Nehru is considered the greatest spokesman for neutrality of Asian and African states in the era of Cold War.
- Nehru opposed the formation of military alliances as these were likely to produce race for armaments.
- Nehru rejected the communist state as 'monolithic' and described Marxism as an outdated philosophy. He did not favour capitalism and was tilted towards socialism.
- India played an important role in NAM and world affairs during the Cold War. It supported many countries in the efforts to attain independence.



India under the dynamic leadership of Nehru played a significant role in world affairs during the Cold War.

Achievements of NAM

- NAM helped reduce the tension between two power blocs and played an important role in bringing the Cold War to an end.
- It opposed the race of armaments which existed among various countries during the Cold War.
- It supported and promoted international peace, justice and freedom.
- It advocated a new international economic order which was based on greater economic cooperation and justice.

Future of NAM

- Although NAM lost its importance after the end of the Cold War in 1991, it still stands for securing international peace and security.
- However, NAM could not take substantial measures when Afghanistan was invaded by Russia in 1979 or when Iraq was invaded by US-led coalition forces.
- With the emergence of neo-colonialism (use of economic, political, cultural or other pressure to influence former colonies), many newly independent nations were unable to take concrete decisions in the economic fields because of the pressure exerted by the powerful nations and organisations such as the World Bank, WTO and IMF.
- Under such circumstances, NAM came forward to help these countries in trying to assert their economic rights.
- USA has emerged as a powerful nation. NAM has immense potentialities and experience to prevent the domination of USA over countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Thus, NAM remains an important and powerful force which aims at achieving international peace, disarmament and economic development.