



Why Bharat Matters: A Book Review

¹Yashasvi Raghav

Abstract "Why Bharat Matters" authored by Dr. S. Jaishankar is an in-depth analysis of the foreign policy of India and its global significance. Printed by Rupa Publications in the year 2024, this 256-page work deals with India's strategic choices and cultural background in international relations. This review assesses Jaishankar's arguments as well as the impact of the book on the world's understanding of India's role on the global stage.

I. INTRODUCTION

This book is an insightful and comprehensive discussion of India's foreign policy, the book appears to draw parallels between India's rise on the global stage and the epic Ramayana, using the latter as a metaphor for strategic thinking, leadership, and diplomacy. Jaishankar, through his rich diplomatic background coupled with academic brilliance, provides an articulation that is neither black nor white, giving a comprehensive and at the same time flexible view of the Indian side of the international stage.

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"Why Bharat Matters" by Dr. S. Jaishankar delivers India's evolution in the world of foreign policy that is depicted in the 11 interconnected essays of the book, the book's structure, which can be seen as a concise and coherent narrative phenotype through the lifetime of India's foreign policy.

In **Chapter 1: Presenting a World View** opens with Jaishankar laying the prologue of India's changed position from a defensive position of non-alignment to an aggressively engaged global posture. **Chapter 2: Foreign Policy and You** links India's foreign policy with its people, pointing out the country's vital need for public awareness and public support in its execution of such policies. **Chapter 3: The State of the World** provides an assessment of the contemporary world, with a discussion of economic discontinuities, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the great power game, and **Chapter 4: Back to the Future** basically tells us that foreign policies in the present are not isolated things because they have been shaped by the past. **Chapter 5: A Transformational Decade** gives an overview of the tectonic changes in India's foreign policy over the decade gone by and a celebration of the same—its rise in the esteem of the international community.

The following chapters develop different dimensions of this framework in an analysis of India's international strategy.

Chapter 6: Making Friends, Influencing People takes its cue from the Ramayana in exploring at greater length the art of diplomacy and alliance-building.

Each chapter is a continuation of the prior ones, building a clear and concise picture of the strategic environment in India.

This mode of connection is extremely palpable in **Chapter 7: Quad: A Grouping Foretold**, the section where Jaishankar shows the relevance of the Quad dialogue in the Indo-Pacific area. By associating this

conversation with much larger subjects, such as alliances and strategic cooperation, Jaishankar highlights the idea of new units tackling common world problems.

Addressing Key Relationships and Security Concepts

Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar frequently touches upon India's most crucial relations and newly developed security concepts in his writing.

In **Chapter 8: Dealing with China**, the author deals with the complexities of the India-China relationship, looking at the strategic implications of their messages on both sides. This chapter is of significant importance as the friction along the border is still there. Jaishankar's analysis is well-rounded, dealing with the adversarial and collaborative elements of this important bilateral relationship.

Chapter 9: Re-Imagining Security becomes Security 2.0 when modern security concepts and the coexistence of traditional and nontraditional threats are their respective topics. Jaishankar takes up the cause for clever ways to guarantee national and international safeness by admitting that security concepts and conditions of the world are ever-changing, hence forging a requisite of a forward-thinking approach which is crucial for policymakers.

In **Chapter 10: The Roads Not Taken**, Jaishankar deciphers other shapes that India might have taken in its foreign policy. This chapter delves into the strategic effects of various diplomatic methods and the chances and risks associated with them. Jaishankar, through these hypothetical situations, challenges readers to critically consider the choices and their long-term consequences.

The concluding **Chapter 11: Why Bharat Matters**, is further proof of India's determination and the respect it is showing to other countries on the world stage. Jaishankar brings forth India's positive contributions to the world in the past and the future ones. This chapter nicely demonstrates the connection of the themes that ran throughout the book, thus, India's strategic choices are a consequence of its cultural, historical and pragmatic considerations.

The book argues that India finds itself in a crucial position, weaving its way through the world. On the one side, the shift to multipolarity is seen as an advantage for India since it will enable India to position itself geopolitically amid the different centers of global power. The book recommends that India be a part of the global rebalancing process in the manner of the US and China, while conversely retaining its identity and autonomy. Therefore, EAM S. Jaishankar asks for increasing Economic engagement and formation of alliances, thus safeguarding its national interests.

India being a committed democratic power should stick to international laws and bring out these values in bilateral relations. The book lays emphasis on India's regulation of multitude interests and ideologies to be a primary issue in the light of regional and global circumstances like the US exit from Afghanistan and China's aggressive stand. The book underscores the need for India to be a demanding leader both at regional and global stage.

"Why Bharat Matters" manifests India as a global player through diplomatic confidence and internal reforms. It highlights India's evolving role in global governance's strategic decisions, like abstaining from the RCEP agreement, to shape its global stance amidst fluctuating international perceptions, emphasizing efficient global engagement under evolving dynamics.

The book, on the one hand, provides valuable information; however, it can also face some criticisms, as a huge part of it represents Sh. Jaishankar's ideas and could be lacking diversity which makes it too subjective. There's also the possibility of a nationalistic bias and Cultural references like the Ramayana may not appeal universally, while the book's India-centric focus could limit global context.

"Why Bharat Matters" is a pretty complex book but it is very elegantly composed in a way that is approachable for a large audience. The great Indian epics and the thrilling episodes taken from them make the

book more involved. It not only attracts the reader, but it also conveys information about India's diplomatic relations with other countries and clear India's position on the global stage where it is standing today.

Overall, "Why Bharat Matters" by Dr. S. Jaishankar is an exceptional and enlightening account of India's foreign policy. It presents a historical view and at the same time linked to contemporary global predicaments and the envisaged future role of India in the world. It has a fact-based and moral dimension to the situation, which on a more emotional and cultural level has an impact on the global community. The book deals with the subject of ethical statecraft and the inquiry into some aspects of life and society which have been referred to in great Indian epics like the Ramayana. This is without doubt the most interesting part of the book: it not only informs one about India's foreign policy and strategic engagement, but also gives a vivid picture of the country's social milieu.

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