

# NATIONAL INTEREST

- Nation is consisted of the people. So national interest primarily includes the interest of the people. National interest is the **focal point** or the **fundamental pivot** of international politics. Nations justify all their actions on the name of national interest.
- National interest can be defined as protecting the unity and integrity of the nation. This means protecting the territorial integrity. This security can be ensured through:
  - **(a) Acquiring more and more weapons.**
  - **(b) Economic growth of the nation.**
  - **(c) Maintaining political stability.**
- National interest has three dimensions- **Security, Economic and Political.**

# TYPES OF NATIONAL INTEREST

- **(1)Core or Fundamental Interest:**
- Core interest means where nation states are never ready to compromise and even nation states take the risk of war for protecting their core national interests. Core interest includes- Territorial Security.
- **(2)Subsidiary or Secondary Interest:**
- Secondary interest means where compromise is possible between the nations and where nations are ready to give concessions to their opponents.
- **Realist Definition of National Interest:**
- Morgenthau was the first realist scholar to develop a theory of realism.
- Realist define national interest in terms of power. For realists, power and national interest are synonymous to each other.

- For realists, national interest is determined by the capability of the nation states. Therefore, nation state should never engage in a war with country which is more powerful than itself.
- Protecting her own national interest is the fundamental principle or primary but at the same time, recognizing the interest of others is equally important.
- Realists believe that national interest is the fundamental principle for formulating the foreign policies. Therefore, ideologies like democracy, socialism and communalism should be kept away.
- National interest is the central point but it is not static. It changes according to changing time and changing circumstances.

# VERSIONS/INTERPRETATIONS

- There are 2 versions of interpretation of national interest:
- **(1) Objective way or Platonic way**
- Plato says that knowledgeable person should be allowed to become the ruler and knowledgeable person means the **philosopher king**. According to Plato, ruling is an art. It requires specialisation and expertise. Similarly, the formulation of a foreign policy needs expert knowledge. Therefore, no debate and discussion is allowed while making the foreign policy.
- Presently, in non-democratic countries, the foreign policy is decided or determined by the Platonic way. For them, outcome or substance of a foreign policy is more important than procedures.

- **(2) Subjective way or Aristotalian method**
- Subjective way means that nobody can claim monopoly over truth. Therefore, debate and discussion are the only means for knowing the truth.
- In democratic countries, the national interest is defined through dialogue, debate and discussions. Therefore, procedures are equally important to outcome and substance.
- Presently, it is the age of democracy. So the subjective way is more acceptable in the democratic countries and consequently the world.

# DETERMINANTS OF NATIONAL INTEREST

- Size of the country or territory.
- Population of the country.
- Economic development. **RAJESH MISHRA**
- Form of government.
- Political system.
- Historical legacy.
- Regional and Global situation.

# IDEOLOGY AND NATIONAL INTEREST

- Ideology is a tool for furthering national interest. Apart from that following methods are also adopted for protecting national interest:
- (a) Propaganda
- (b) Military alliance
- (c) Promotion of trade
- (d) Divide and rule
- (e) Sponsoring of terrorism