

The NWICO

The New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) is a term coined in a debate over the poor state of communication technologies in most of the developing nations of the world in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The term was used by the MacBride Commission. The commission had made several proposals to create NWICO to sort out the problems related to the free flow of information across the boundaries of different nations. The commission deemed a tool for enhancing the power of states to control the free collection and distribution of news.

NWICO grew out of the New International Economic Order (NIEO) of 1974. The non-aligned nations drew up a charter for creating a New International Economic Order, which was approved by the UN General Assembly in May, 1974. The concerns related to mass media had sparked during the Algiers Summit in 1973 where in the non-aligned nations discussed the communication related problems.

The leaders of NAM clearly pointed out that the changes in international economic milieu demanded the active cooperation and concrete action of the members of this movement. Emphasising upon the free flow of information the NAM nations created a non-aligned pool. The free flow concept was amended to 'free and balance flow', when a declaration of the role of the media in the promotion of international understanding and peace was approved by the UNESCO in 1978. 'The right to know' was transformed into 'the right to communicate'.

Factors that Pushed NAM Countries to Adopt NWICO

- Several new nations had emerged post World War II as a result of dissolution of colonial empires in the world.
- The new nations lacked economic sustainability and bore asymmetrical economic relationship with the developed Western nations.
- The new nations realised that the underdevelopment was directly related to their dependence upon the developed Western nations. Hence, they pursued remedial measures to correct the differences and imbalances in world trade, commerce etc.
- The coming together of new nations under the umbrella of non-alignment in the wake of aggressive bloc-building by the US and the USSR.
- Their gaining strength in international organisation such as UN and the UNESCO.

The non-aligned nations raised their concerns over the poor state of communication in the member states. India played a significant role in the development of the NWICO and realisation of its objective and goals.

Both within the non-aligned movement in international for a, such as the UNESCO, India persistently pursued the policy of advancing, defending and reshaping NWICO tenets and aims.