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# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



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# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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## Syllabus

- India and its neighborhood- relations.
- Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.
- Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.
- Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.

## Previous Years Questions

2024

1. 'The West is fostering India as an alternative to reduce dependence on China's supply chain and as a strategically to counter China's political and economic dominance.' Explain this statement with examples.
2. Critically analyse India's evolving diplomatic, economic and strategic relations with the Central Asian Republics (CARs) highlighting their increasing significance in regional and global geopolitics.
3. 'Terrorism has become a significant threat to global peace and security.' Evaluate the effectiveness of the United Nations Security Council's Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC and its associated bodies in addressing and mitigating this threat at the international level.
4. Discuss the geopolitical and geostrategic importance of Maldives for India with a focus on global trade and/energy flows. Further also discuss how this relationship affects India's maritime security and regional stability amidst international competition?

2023

1. 'Virus of Conflict is affecting the functioning of the SCO' In the light of the above statement point out the role of India in mitigating the problems.
2. Indian diaspora has scaled new heights in the West. Describe its economic and political benefits for India.
3. 'The expansion and strengthening of NATO and a stronger US-Europe strategic partnership works well for India.' What is your opinion about this statement ? Give reasons and examples to support your answer.
4. 'Sea is an important Component of the Cosmos' Discuss in the light of the above statement the role of the IMO (International Maritime Organisation) in protecting environment and enhancing maritime safety and security.



2022

1. India is an age-old friend of Sri Lanka.' Discuss India's role in the recent crisis in Sri Lanka in light of the preceding statement.
2. Do you think that BIMSTEC is a parallel organisation like the SAARC? What are the similarities and dissimilarities between the two? How are Indian foreign policy objectives realized by forming this new organisation?
3. How will I2U2 (India, Israel, UAE and USA) grouping transform India's position in global politics?
4. Clean energy is the order of the day.' Describe briefly India's changing policy towards climate change in various international fora in the context of geopolitics.

2021

1. "If the last few decades were of Asia's growth story, the next few are expected to be of Africa's." In the light of this statement, examine India's influence in Africa in recent years.
2. "The USA is facing an existential threat in the form of a China, that is much more challenging than the erstwhile Soviet Union." Explain.
3. Critically examine the aims and objectives of SCO. What importance does it hold for India?
4. The newly tri-nation partnership AUKUS is aimed at countering China's ambitions in the Indo-Pacific region. Is it going to supersede the existing partnerships in the region? Discuss the strength and impact of AUKUS in the present scenario.

2020

1. What is the significance of Indo-US defense deals over Indo-Russian defense deals? Discuss with reference to stability in the Indo-Pacific region.
2. 'Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD)' is transforming itself into a trade bloc from a military alliance, in present times – Discuss.
3. "The incidence and intensity of poverty are more important in determining poverty based on income alone". In this context analyze the latest United Nations Multidimensional Poverty Index Report.
4. 'Indian diaspora has a decisive role to play in the politics and economy of America and European Countries'. Comment with examples.
5. Critically examine the role of WHO in providing global health security during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2019

1. “What introduces friction into the ties between India and the United States is that Washington is still unable to find for India a position in its global strategy, which would satisfy India’s National self-esteem and ambitions” Explain with suitable examples
2. The time has come for India and Japan to build a strong contemporary relationship, one involving global and strategic partnership that will have a great significance for Asia and the world as a whole.’ Comment
3. ‘Too little cash, too much politics, leaves UNESCO fighting for life.’ Discuss the statement in the light of US withdrawal and its accusation of the cultural body as being ‘anti-Israel bias
4. The long-sustained image of India as a leader of the oppressed and marginalized Nations has disappeared on account of its newfound role in the emerging global order” Elaborate.

2018

1. “India’s relations with Israel have, of late, acquired a depth and diversity, which cannot be rolled back.” Discuss.
2. A number of outside powers have entrenched themselves in Central Asia, which is a zone of interest to India. Discuss the implications, in this context, of India’s joining the Ashgabat Agreement, 2018.
3. Indian and the USA are two large democracies. Examine the basic tenets on which the two political systems are based.
4. What are the key areas of reform if the WTO has to survive in the present context of the ‘Trade War’, especially keeping in mind the interest of India?
5. In what ways would the ongoing US-Iran Nuclear Pact Controversy affect the national interest of India? How should India respond to its situation?

2017

1. Indian Diaspora has an important role to play in southeast Asian country’s economy and societies. Appraise the role of the Indian Diaspora in South-East Asia in this context.
2. The question of India’s Energy Security constitutes the most important part of India’s economic progress. Analyze India’s energy policy cooperation with West Asian countries.
3. ‘China is using its economic relations and positive trade surplus as tools to develop potential military power status in Asia’. In the light of this statement, discuss its impact on India as her neighbour.
4. What are the main functions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)? Explain different functional commissions attached to it.

2016

1. What are the aims and objectives of the McBride Commission of UNESCO? What is India's position on these?
2. "The broader aims and objectives of WTO are to manage and promote international trade in the era of globalization. But the Doha round of negotiations seems doomed due to differences between the developed and the developing countries." Discuss in the Indian perspective.
3. Evaluate the economic and strategic dimensions of India's Look East Policy in the context of the post-Cold War international scenario.
4. "Increasing cross-border terrorist attacks in India and growing interference in the internal affairs of several member-states by Pakistan are not conducive for the future of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation)." Explain with suitable examples.

2015

1. Terrorist activities and mutual distrust have clouded India – Pakistan relations. To what extent the use of soft power like sports and cultural exchanges could help generate goodwill between the two countries? Discuss with suitable examples.
2. The increasing interest of India in Africa has its pro and cons. Critically examine
3. Discuss the impediments India is facing in its pursuit of a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.
4. Project 'Mausam' is considered a unique foreign policy initiative of the Indian Government to improve relationships with its neighbours. Does the project have a strategic dimension? Discuss.

2014

1. India has recently signed to become a founding member of the New Development Bank (NDB) and also the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). How will the role of the two Banks be different? Discuss the strategic significance of these two Banks for India.
2. WTO is an important international institution where decisions are taken affect countries in a profound manner. What is the mandate of WTO and how binding are their decisions? Critically analyze India's stand on the latest round of talks on Food security.
3. With respect to the South China Sea, maritime territorial disputes and rising tension affirm the need for safeguarding maritime security to ensure freedom of navigation and overflight throughout the region. In this context, discuss the bilateral issues between India and China.
4. The aim of Information Technology Agreements (ITAs) is to lower all taxes and tariffs on information technology products by signatories to zero. What impact would such agreements have on India's interests?

5. Some of the International funding agencies have special terms for economic participation stipulating a substantial component of the aid to be used for sourcing equipment from the leading countries. Discuss on merits of such terms and if, there exists a strong case not to accept such conditions in the Indian context.

2013

1. What is meant by the Gujral doctrine? Does it have any relevance today? Discuss.
2. The World Bank and the IMF, collectively known as the Bretton Woods Institutions, are the two intergovernmental pillars supporting the structure of the world's economic and financial order. Superficially, the World Bank and the IMF exhibit many common characteristics, yet their role, functions, and mandate are distinctly different. Elucidate.
3. Economic ties between India and Japan while growing in recent years are still far below their potential. Elucidate the policy constraints which are inhibiting this growth.
4. The protests in Shahbag Square in Dhaka in Bangladesh reveal a fundamental split in society between the nationalists and Islamic forces. What is its significance for India?
5. Discuss the political developments in the Maldives in the last two years. Should they be of any cause of concern to India?
6. In respect of India-Sri Lanka relations, discuss how domestic factors influence foreign policy
7. The proposed withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) from Afghanistan in 2014 is fraught with major security implications for the countries of the region. Examine in light of the fact that India is faced with a plethora of challenges and needs to safeguard its own strategic interests
8. What do you understand by 'The String of Pearls'? How does it impact India? Briefly outline the steps taken by India to counter this.

## Recommended Approach to IR

- Really important topic for GS-2, constituting about 100 marks in the paper
- Importance of IR is not limited to Mains but extends to Essay, prelims and interview as well.
- It is one of the most dynamic portions (current affairs based) of the UPSC Mains syllabus
- One needs to be constantly updated about the recent developments and happenings around the world that affect India directly or indirectly
- One should avoid having superficial knowledge in IR
- It is important to master the basic concepts related to the syllabus before proceeding to the current developments

## Our Approach

- We will start with basic understanding and historical background of relationships with another country.
- Then we go into the current dynamics, challenges, and state of relationships.
- Thereafter, we understand the way forward.
- Wherever necessary we have added Nation's map, for dealing with questions on location-based geography, which are majorly being asked in Prelims lately.

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# INDIA-CHINA RELATIONS



## Galwan Valley Clash



## Deadly clash in Galwan Valley escalates border tensions

### Sumdorong Chu Incident



### Tensions rise over border encroachment in Arunachal Pradesh

## Nathu La Clash



Armed skirmish at Nathu La border crossing

## Sino-Indian War



Major military conflict over disputed border regions

## Dalai Lama Refuge



### India grants asylum to Dalai Lama after Tibetan uprising

### Bonhomie Period



Era of friendly bilateral relations  
and cooperation

## Recognition of PRC



India among first to recognize  
People's Republic of China

Made with  Napkin

- 
- A curved timeline illustrating the evolution of the term 'gender' over time. The timeline is represented by a grey arc with colored dots and labels:
- 1950s** (Yellow dot)
  - 1950** (Green dot)
  - 1962** (Red dot)
  - 1967** (Grey dot)
  - 1987** (Blue dot)
  - 2020** (Grey dot)

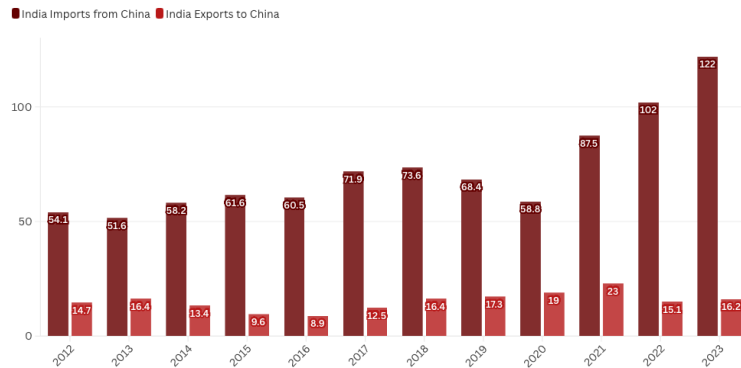


## 13. China's Defence Tech Advancement

### Recent developments

- PM Modi-Xi Jinping met at 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan (Russia) on 23 Oct 2024: 'India and China have agreed to restore patrolling rights to each in the Depsang Plains and Demchok region'.
- Dr. S Jaishankar met Chinese FM Wang Yi during the G20 summit in Brazil on 18th Nov 2024 and discussed to carry forward discussions.
- National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, the India and China Special Representatives for the border mechanism met in Beijing on 18th Dec 2024 agreeing to resume some services between two nations.

India-China Bilateral Trade, 2012-2023 (US\$, Billion)



Source: United Nations COMTRADE

Main Products Exported from India to China, 2023

Product category	Value (US\$) billion
Ores slag and ash	3.42
Fish, crustaceans, molluscs, aquatic invertebrates	1.25
Organic chemicals	1.24
Articles of apparel	1.18
Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins	0.92

Source: COMTRADE, 2023

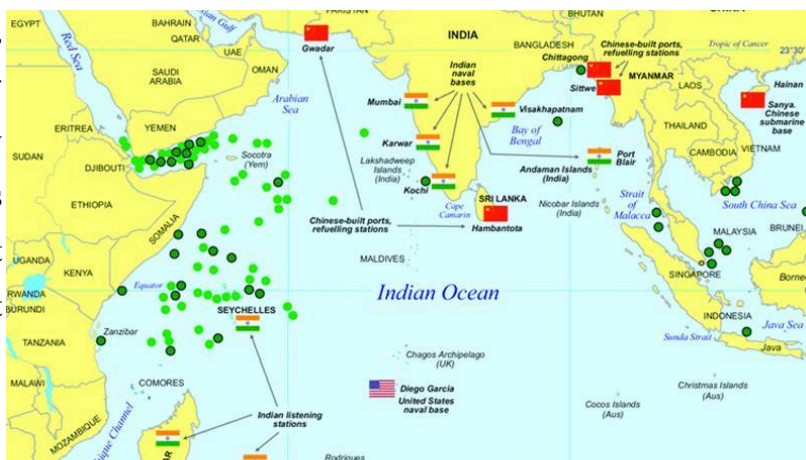
Main Products Imported from China to India, 2023

Product category	Value (US\$) billion
Electrical, electronic equipment	44.15
Machinery, nuclear reactors, boilers	24.70
Organic chemicals	13.27
Plastics	5.93
Optical, photo, technical, medical apparatus	2.63

Source: COMTRADE, 2023

## How India is countering China in the region?

- **Frontier Highway Construction:** India is fast-tracking the construction of the "Frontier Highway" in Arunachal Pradesh, aimed at improving border connectivity and enhancing military logistics along the LAC. This initiative is perceived as a significant step to bolster India's position against China's aggressive territorial claims



- **Strengthening Alliances:** India is deepening its diplomatic ties with countries in Southeast Asia and engaging with Quad nations (the United States, Japan, and Australia) to enhance collective security measures. This includes organizing more maritime drills and joint military exercises to improve deterrence capabilities against China
- **Act East Policy:** The Indian government has emphasized its Act East Policy, which seeks to expand India's influence in Southeast Asia, thereby countering China's regional dominance through strategic partnerships and economic collaborations

- **Enhanced Military Capabilities:** India is focusing on modernizing its military forces with improved weapon systems and surveillance capabilities. This includes increasing troop deployments in border areas and preparing for potential dual-front engagements with both China and Pakistan



- **Necklace of Diamonds Strategy:** In response to China's "String of Pearls" strategy, which aims to encircle India through a network of alliances and bases, India has adopted the "Necklace of Diamonds" strategy. This involves enhancing naval presence and establishing military bases across the Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific regions to counter Chinese influence
- **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC):** As a counter to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), India is pursuing the IMEC project, which aims to strengthen connectivity between India, the Middle East, and Europe. This initiative seeks to provide an alternative trade route that enhances India's geopolitical standing while limiting China's economic reach
- **Naval Collaborations:** India has been forming strategic partnerships with countries like Indonesia and Singapore, establishing naval bases that enhance its operational capabilities in critical maritime regions such as the Strait of Malacca. These efforts are part of a broader strategy to secure vital shipping lanes against potential Chinese encroachment.
- **Border Village Development:** Through Vibrant Villages Programme, India is trying to ensure border villages are well connected and developed with livelihood opportunities so that they act as an eye on the border.

## Way Forward

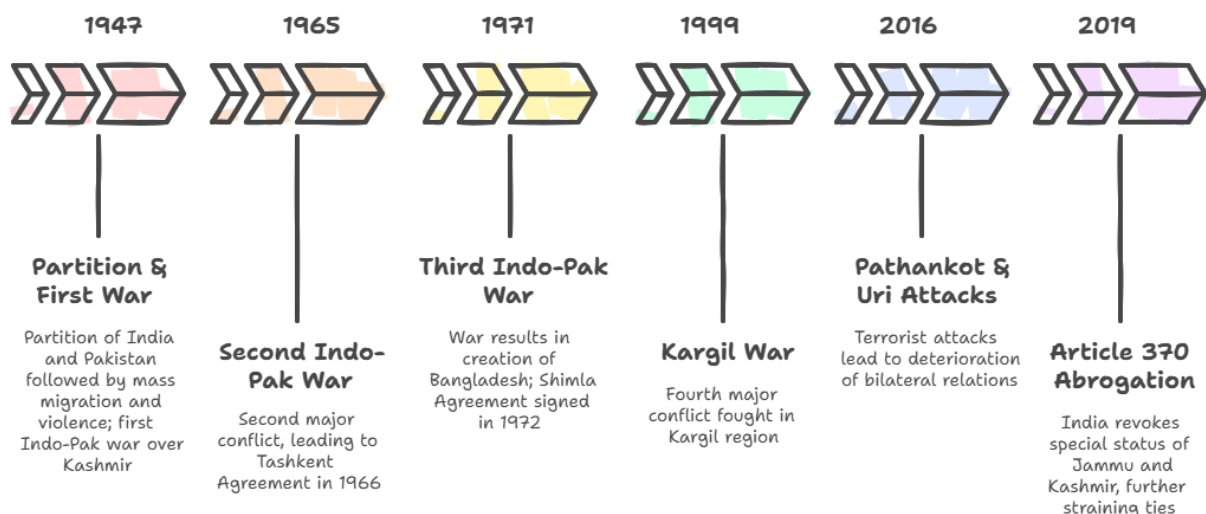
- Adversary vs Enemy
- Prudence not Provocation
- Disengagement and De-escalation
- Strengthening Quad
- Border Infrastructure Development
- Clear Communication
- Project India as leader of Global South
- Diversifying Supplying Chains/Decoupling

# INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS





## Key Events in India-Pakistan Relations (1947-2019)



Made with Napkin

## Major Issues

- Kashmir Issue
- Cross-Border Terrorism
- Boundary Dispute
- Water Sharing Dispute
- Siachen Issue
- J&K Reorganization
- CPEC
- Dysfunctional SAARC
- Kulbhushan Jadhav Issue
- Lack of Access by Pakistan impairing connectivity

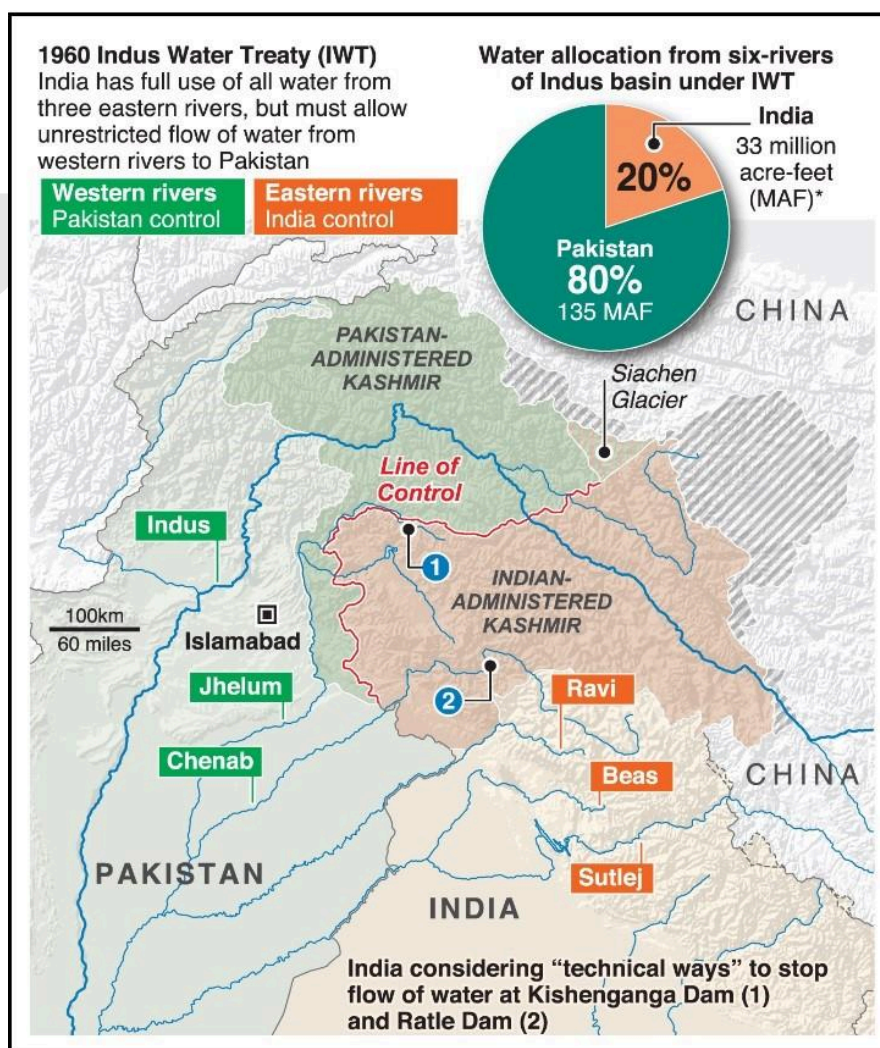


## Recent developments

- India's Perspective: India maintains that any future engagement hinges on the stability and willingness of Pakistan's military establishment. The Indian government believes that

Pakistan's ongoing economic crises, including a significant budget deficit and high inflation (around 40%), limit its capacity to engage in aggressive foreign policy maneuvers against India. India has also made strategic advances in isolating Pakistan diplomatically, particularly within the Gulf Cooperation Council and South Asian regional frameworks

- Pakistan's Position: Conversely, Pakistan remains fixated on the reversal of India's 2019 actions regarding Kashmir as a prerequisite for any meaningful dialogue. The Pakistani leadership expresses concerns over India's actions, such as water diversion from the Ravi River and military maneuvers along the Line of Control (LoC), viewing them as provocations that undermine bilateral trust





## Way Forward

- Increase pressure on Pakistan on Global Platforms
- Global Consensus against Terrorism
- Highlighting Pakistan's Human Rights record
- Act against Terror Infrastructure
- Directly Engaging with Taliban
- Find Alternate Routes for Connectivity

## INDIA-NEPAL RELATIONS



## History

- India-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950 forms the bedrock of the special relations

- Nepalese citizens avail facilities and opportunities on par with Indian citizens
- Nearly 8 million Nepalese citizens live and work in India
- 'Roti-Beti ka Rishta'

## Nepal's strategic importance

- Strategic Location
- People-to-people contact
- Ensures Internal Security
- Floodwater management
- Development of Hydropower
- Partner in Multilateral Forums: BBIN, BIMSTEC, SAARC
- Trade Partner

## Challenges in relations

- Nepal's territorial claim of Kalapani region
- Growing Chinese influence
- Aggressive assertion over border dispute
- Nepal part of BRI
- Porous border with Free Movement
- Nepal's Trade deficit
- Nepal's internal political instability



## Recent developments

- Foreign Minister's Visit: Dr. Arzu Rana Deuba, Nepal's Foreign Minister, visited India from August 18 to 22, 2024. This visit was aimed at revitalizing relations and seeking

developmental support from India, highlighting Nepal's commitment to strengthening ties with its neighbor.

- **Foreign Secretary Engagements:** India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visited Nepal on August 11-12, 2024, discussing multifaceted cooperation and reviewing progress on bilateral initiatives. This visit underscored the importance of ongoing dialogue between the two nations.
- **Trade Relations:** India remains Nepal's largest trading partner, with bilateral trade reaching approximately \$8.85 billion in the fiscal year 2022-23. The relationship is characterized by India's significant exports to Nepal, which account for about 64.1% of Nepal's total trade.
- **Development Projects:** India has committed to various infrastructure projects under the 'HIT' model (Highways, Information ways, and Transmission lines), focusing on enhancing connectivity and economic integration.
- **Revival of Bilateral Mechanisms:** In September 2024, during a meeting between Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New York, both leaders agreed to reactivate mechanisms for addressing outstanding issues such as trade, border management, and energy cooperation. This meeting marked a significant step in resuming high-level communications and setting the stage for future discussions.

## Way forward

- India's accommodative stance wrt China
- Introduce new developmental initiatives
- Further engagement
- 'Fatherly to brotherly stance'
- Engagement with all parties

# INDIA-BANGLADESH RELATIONS



BANGLADESH ON MAP

## History of Relations

- India fought war with Pakistan in 1971 for liberation of Bangladesh
- India was also the first state to recognize Bangladesh (along with Bhutan) as a separate nation
- Land Boundary Agreement in 2015 made India-Bangladesh relations even stronger

- India has maintained strong relations with Awami League/Sheikh Hasina govt. (now removed)

## Bangladesh's Strategic importance

- Bridge to South-East Asia
- Securing Sea lines of Communication
- Security of North-east
- Connectivity to North-East
- Balancing China
- Fight Terrorism and De-radicalization
- Trading Partner
- Important Regional Player

## Challenges

- Political Instability
- China trying to make inroads
- Increasing radicalization/ Attacks on Minorities
- River Disputes
- Illegal Immigrants
- Border Management
- Slow implementation of projects



## Recent developments

- Change in Leadership: The interim government led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus has taken a confrontational stance towards India, diverging from Hasina's historically



cooperative approach. This shift has led Bangladesh to strengthen ties with India's rivals, notably Pakistan and China, amidst rising domestic unrest and economic instability

- **Communal Violence and Minority Rights:** There has been an increase in communal violence targeting minorities, particularly Hindus, in Bangladesh. This situation has exacerbated tensions with India, which has expressed concerns over the treatment of minorities and called for protective measures from the Yunus administration. The recent arrest of Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das has further strained relations, as India expects Dhaka to address these issues seriously
- **Diplomatic Protests:** India has lodged formal protests regarding inflammatory statements made by members of Yunus's interim government. Notably, a social media post by Mahfuz Alam, an aide to Yunus, claimed certain Indian territories should belong to Bangladesh, prompting a strong reaction from New Delhi. India's External Affairs Ministry emphasized the need for responsible public discourse from Bangladeshi officials and reiterated its commitment to a constructive relationship based on mutual respect
- **Calls for Elections:** Yunus has indicated that parliamentary elections could be held between late 2025 and early 2026, contingent upon necessary reforms being implemented. This timeline has raised concerns about the political stability of Bangladesh and its implications for bilateral relations with India
- **High-Level Talks:** India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri recently visited Dhaka, marking the first high-level engagement since Hasina's ouster. During this visit, he discussed various bilateral issues, including security concerns related to minority treatment in Bangladesh. Misri's discussions aimed at reinforcing India's desire for a stable and mutually beneficial relationship with Bangladesh

## Way forward

- Securing our borders
- Ensuring Minority safety in Bangladesh
- Deportation of Illegal Immigrants
- Better border cooperation
- Discussion and managing relations with all stakeholders
- Ensure Political stability



## INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONS



SRI LANKA ON MAP

### History

- IPKF conducted operation Pawan in Jaffna region, resulted casualties
- 13th amendment was proposed to be implemented
- Assassination of Former PM Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 changed India's attitude towards ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka
- The Civil War in Sri Lanka ended through military operation in 2009.

### Relations: Current Status

- Economic aid by India

- India helping to get IMF aid
- Developmental Cooperation
- Infrastructure Cooperation
- Economic Cooperation

## Recent Development

- Anura Kumara Disanayake (AKD), the newly elected President of Sri Lanka, made his inaugural overseas trip to India from December 15 to 17, 2024. This visit is significant as it reflects a shift in diplomatic relations between the two nations, particularly in light of Sri Lanka's recent economic challenges and its balancing act between India and China.
- Diplomatic Significance: AKD's visit aligns with the tradition of newly elected Sri Lankan leaders visiting India first. It underscores India's strategic importance to Sri Lanka, especially following the latter's economic crisis in 2022. The visit was framed as a reaffirmation of India's commitment to its "neighbourhood-first" policy and aimed at enhancing bilateral ties
- Meetings with Indian Leadership: During his stay, AKD met with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar. Modi expressed India's support for Sri Lanka's economic recovery and stability, emphasizing the importance of regional cooperation. The discussions included potential projects such as housing initiatives, renewable energy collaborations, and digital integration efforts like Aadhaar and UPI implementation in Sri Lanka
- Economic Cooperation: AKD acknowledged India's role in stabilizing Sri Lanka's economy during its recent crisis. He discussed converting loans for completed projects into grants, which is crucial for Sri Lanka's financial recovery
- Geopolitical Context: The visit comes at a time when Sri Lanka is navigating its relationship with China, which has historically been a significant ally. AKD assured India that Sri Lankan territory would not be used for activities detrimental to India's security interests, addressing concerns over Chinese influence in the region

- Cultural Engagement: Unlike many previous Sri Lankan leaders who visited religious sites in South India, AKD chose to worship at Bodh Gaya, a significant Buddhist pilgrimage site. This decision was noted as a departure from tradition and may reflect his administration's focus on cultural diplomacy

## India's role in Sri-Lankan economic crisis

- First country to hand over its letter of support
- \$4 bn in food and financial assistance
- Shipments of essentials
- India conducted talks with IMF, SL govt, Paris club for debt relief

## Significance of relations

- Trade
- Geopolitical interest
- Military significance
- Cultural Significance

## Challenges

- China factor
- Ethnic issue
- Fishing disputes
- Chinese research vessels in region
- Political Transition

## Way Forward

- Continued aid and financial support
- Sri Lanka should be sensitive to India's concerns
- Close Cooperation with New government
- Implementation of 13th amendment

### Previous Years Questions

Q) 'India is an age-old friend of Sri Lanka.' Discuss India's role in the recent crisis in Sri Lanka in the light of the preceding statement. (2022)

Q) 'China is using its economic relations and positive trade surplus as tools to develop potential military power status in Asia'. In the light of this statement, discuss its impact on India as her neighbour. (2017)

Q) "Increasing cross border terrorist attacks in India and growing interference in the internal affairs of several member states by Pakistan are not conducive for the future of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation)." Explain with suitable examples. (2016)

Q) Project 'Mausam' is considered a unique foreign policy initiative of the Indian Government to improve relationship with its neighbours. Does the project have a strategic dimension? Discuss. (2015)

Q) Terrorist activities and mutual distrust have clouded India – Pakistan relations. To what extent the use of soft power like sports and cultural exchanges could help generate goodwill between the two countries? Discuss with suitable examples (2015)

Q) What do you understand by 'The String of Pearls'? How does it impact India? Briefly outline the steps taken by India to counter this. (2013)

Q) In respect of India-Sri Lanka relations, discuss how domestic factors influence foreign policy (2013)

### Practice Question

**Q) *Discuss the significance and challenges of India's 'Neighbourhood First Policy' in fostering regional cooperation and addressing geopolitical dynamics.***

## India's Neighbourhood First Policy

India's 'Neighbourhood First Policy' is a cornerstone of its foreign policy, aimed at strengthening ties with its immediate neighbors.

However, while the policy holds significant potential in fostering regional cooperation and addressing geopolitical dynamics, it also faces several challenges.

### Significance of Neighbourhood First Policy

- Strategic Importance:
  - India's neighborhood comprises countries that are strategically crucial for its security and economic interests. Strengthening ties with these nations enhances India's geopolitical standing and security.
  - India-Bangladesh relations have seen significant improvement in recent years, with cooperation in areas such as trade, security, and connectivity. (till recently)
  - The Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) and the Teesta River water-sharing agreement are examples of successful bilateral initiatives.
- Trade and Economic Opportunities:
  - Proximity to neighboring countries provides significant trade and economic opportunities.
  - Enhanced cooperation can lead to increased trade volumes, investment flows, and economic growth for all parties involved.
- Regional Stability:
  - Building strong relationships with neighboring countries contributes to regional stability by addressing common challenges such as terrorism, extremism, and cross-border crimes.
- Cultural and People-to-People Ties:
  - India shares deep cultural and historical ties with its neighbors. Strengthening people-to-people connections fosters mutual understanding and trust, laying the foundation for durable diplomatic relations.

## Challenges in Implementing Neighbourhood First Policy

- **Historical Baggage:**

- Historical conflicts and territorial disputes pose significant challenges to fostering cooperation. Deep-rooted distrust and animosities hinder progress in bilateral relations.
- Despite numerous attempts at dialogue, India-Pakistan relations remain strained due to issues like cross-border terrorism and Kashmir.
- The lack of progress in resolving these contentious issues highlights the complexities involved in implementing the Neighbourhood First Policy.

- **Chinese Influence:**

- China's growing influence in the region presents a challenge to India's Neighbourhood First Policy.
- Beijing's economic investments and infrastructure projects often compete directly with India's initiatives, creating geopolitical tensions.

- **Internal Instabilities:**

- Many neighboring countries grapple with internal instabilities, including political unrest, ethnic conflicts, and governance issues. These internal challenges hamper efforts to build sustainable partnerships.

- **Asymmetric Power Dynamics:**

- India's size and capabilities sometimes lead to perceptions of hegemony among smaller neighbors, creating resistance to Indian initiatives and interventions.

- **Infrastructure Deficits:**

- Inadequate connectivity and infrastructure deficits hinder regional integration efforts.
- Improving physical connectivity through projects like the BBIN (Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal) initiative is crucial but faces implementation challenges.

## Strategies to Overcome Challenges

- **Diplomatic Engagement:**

- Continuous diplomatic engagement at various levels is essential to address concerns and build trust. Regular high-level visits, diplomatic dialogues, and Track II diplomacy can help overcome historical mistrust.
- China's BRI projects in South Asia, such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), pose challenges to India's influence in the region.
- India's response through initiatives like the International Solar Alliance (ISA) demonstrates its efforts to counterbalance Chinese influence through alternative development models.

- **Economic Cooperation:**

- Emphasizing economic cooperation can mitigate geopolitical rivalries. Initiatives such as the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) and regional connectivity projects like the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) promote economic integration.

- **Soft Power Diplomacy:**

- Leveraging India's soft power through cultural exchanges, educational scholarships, and tourism can help bridge divides and foster people-to-people connections.

- **Multilateral Approaches:**

- Engaging in multilateral forums such as SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) and BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) allows for broader cooperation beyond bilateral constraints.

- **Conflict Resolution Mechanisms:**

- Prioritizing conflict resolution mechanisms and confidence-building measures can address territorial disputes and historical grievances. The importance of dialogue and negotiation cannot be overstated in resolving long standing conflicts.

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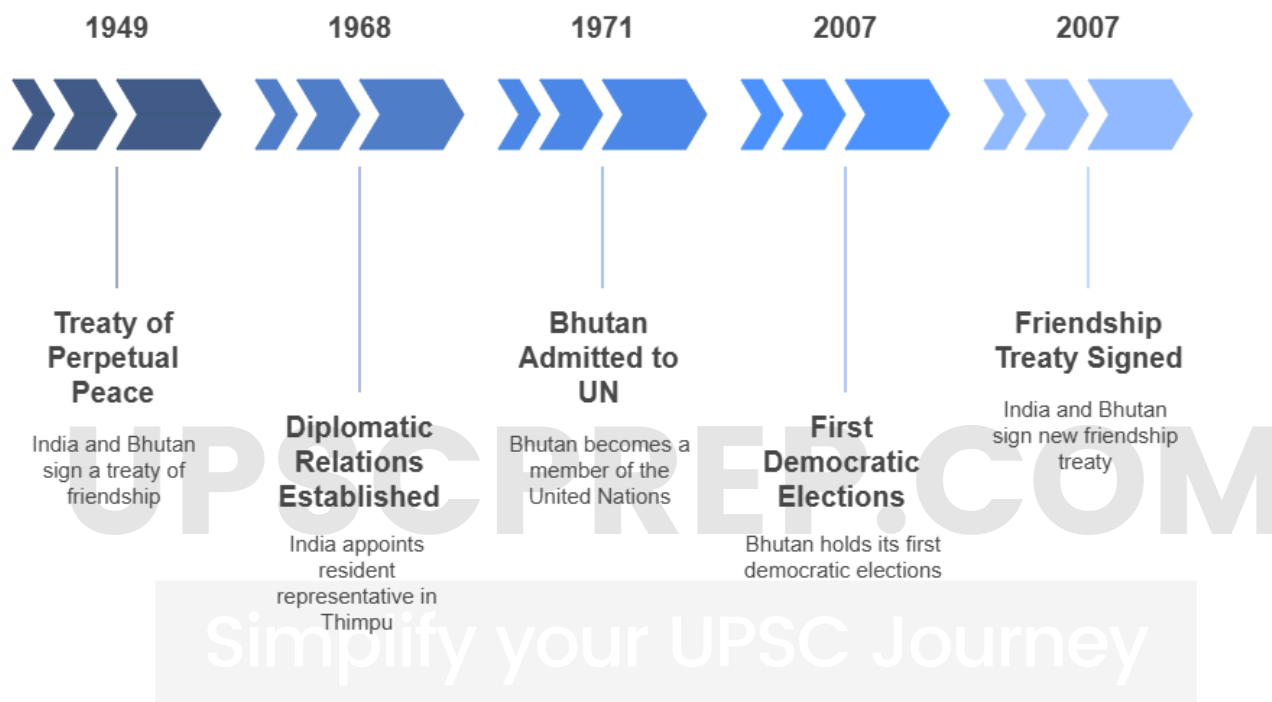
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## India-Bhutan Relations

### Key Milestones in India-Bhutan Bilateral Relations



### Focus Areas in relationship

- Hydropower: 3 Projects with Indian help
- Economic Cooperation: India largest trade and development partner of Bhutan
- Security Partnership: Standoff in Doklam highlighted security cooperation
- Education and cultural cooperation: Scholarships, cultural exchanges and people to people ties
- Connectivity: Recent MoU to connect Kokrajhar to Gelephu by rail link

## Challenges in India-Bhutan relations

- India's paternalistic attitude
- India's Interference
- China's asserting influence: New claim in Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary
- Slow implementation of projects
- Recent formalization of China-Bhutan Relations

## Recent Developments

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Visit: In March 2024, PM Modi made his third visit to Bhutan, coinciding with the newly-elected Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay's visit to India earlier that month. This sequence of visits underscores the close ties and mutual respect between the two nations

- In 2024, the King of Bhutan conferred Prime Minister Modi with Bhutan's highest civilian award. It was the first such award to a non-Bhutanese

- Financial Assistance: During the visit, India pledged a significant financial support package of Rs 100 billion (approximately \$1.2 billion) for Bhutan's development, which includes Rs 85 billion for the 13th Five-Year Plan (FYP) and Rs 15 billion as an economic package. This assistance marks a substantial increase compared to previous years, reflecting India's commitment to Bhutan's growth.

- MoUs Signed: Eight Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed to enhance cooperation in various sectors, including trade, connectivity, space cooperation, and people-to-people



relations. Notably, agreements were made to establish two railway lines—Kokrajhar-Gelpehu and Banarhat-Samtse—to improve connectivity between the two countries

- Energy and Food Safety Initiatives: Agreements were also reached in areas such as petroleum supply, food safety collaboration, and energy efficiency. These initiatives aim to bolster economic ties and ensure sustainable development in
- Bhutan.
- Bhutanese king also visited India in Dec 2024.

### Way Forward

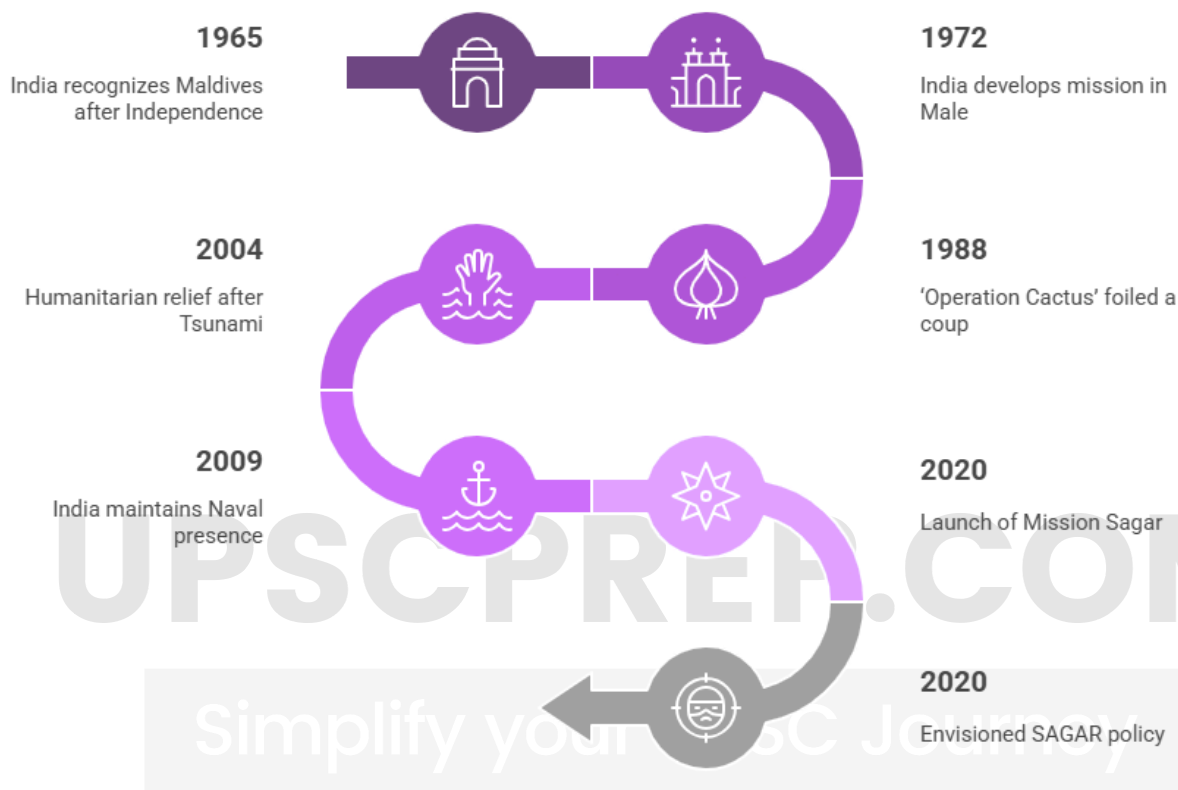
- India should continue to assist Bhutan militarily, economically and politically
- Bhutan should be treated as Independent nation not India's pawn
- Aspirations of Bhutanese people should be kept in mind
- Non-interference in domestic politics
- The above steps will help India in avoiding Chinese influence on Bhutan

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## India-Maldives relations

### Key Milestones in India-Maldives Relations

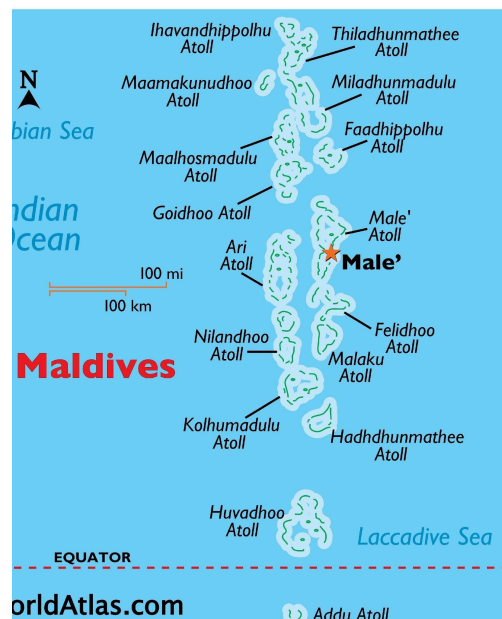


## Strategic Importance of Maldives

- Proximity: Close to India
- Strategic location: Lies on Commercial sea lanes, 97% of India's trade by volume passes through it
- India's vision of net-security provider
- Countering China's presence
- Defence Cooperation
- Development assistance
- HICDPs
- 2nd Largest expatriate community

## Challenges

- New Government in Maldives
- China's Debt Trap Policy
- Increasing Radicalization
- Political Instability



## Recent Developments

- **High-Level Meetings:** In October 2024, President Muizzu visited India and held discussions with PM Modi. They agreed to transform bilateral relations into a Comprehensive Economic and Maritime Security Partnership, focusing on economic cooperation and regional stability
- **Economic Support:** India has committed substantial financial assistance to the Maldives, including a \$400 million currency swap agreement and ₹30 billion to help stabilize the Maldivian economy amidst its financial challenges
- Additionally, both countries are exploring a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to enhance economic ties further
- **Continued Cooperation:** Despite previous tensions, both nations are working towards strengthening their partnership through various development projects across sectors such as infrastructure, healthcare, and education. The recent agreements signal a willingness to move past earlier disputes and focus on mutual benefits



- Political Engagement: Both countries have agreed to increase political exchanges and cooperation at various levels, indicating a commitment to maintaining dialogue and addressing any emerging issues collaboratively

## Way Forward

- Establishing good relations with the new govt.
- Regional Cooperation through Common platform like IORA, IONS
- Effectively implementing SAGAR and Neighbourhood First policy
- Reviving SAARC

## India-Myanmar relations

### History

- 1935-Both India and Myanmar were part of British India
- 1951-Treaty of Friendship signed
- 1987-PM Rajiv Gandhi visit further cemented the ties
- 2002-Indian Consulate in Mandalay was reopened, Myanmar's in Kolkata
- 2014-Myanmar became part of Neighbourhood First and Act East Policy





## Importance of Myanmar for India

- Strategic Location: 1643 km long boundary
- Gateway to southeast Asia
- Counter China: Sittwe port vs Kyaukpyu port. CMEC also flourishing
- Necessary for Internal security: Insurgents and Drugs
- Economic Cooperation
- Historical/Cultural Ties



## Areas of Cooperation



Made with Napkin

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## Issues/Challenges

1. Military Coup
2. FMR discontinued
3. Rohingya Issue
4. Insurgency in North East
5. Issues/Challenges
6. Porous border
7. Widening Trust deficit
8. BRI initiatives in Myanmar



## What was FMR?

The Free Movement Regime (FMR) between India and Myanmar allowed people residing close to the Indo-Myanmar border to venture 16 km into each other's territory without any documents. FMR was a bilateral agreement between India and Myanmar, implemented in 2018 as part of India's Act East policy.



## Challenges to stop FMR

- Recent media reports have highlighted that India is planning to spend US \$3.7 billion to fence its international border with Myanmar, spanning over 1,610 kms.
- This initiative follows the Indian government's decision to revoke the Free Regime Movement (FMR) agreement with Myanmar which previously allowed people from both sides to cross the border up to 16 kms without a visa.
- The cessation of the FMR and the implementation of stringent military checkpoints along the border are being considered as timely measures to mitigate the persisting challenges in India's North East Region (NER), such as drug trafficking and the influx of Myanmar refugees.
- However, it is essential to acknowledge the potential limitations of this decision. The complex topography along the Indo-Myanmar border, coupled with the shared ethnic ties among communities residing on either side, complicates the effective implementation of this decision.





## Recent Developments

- **Fencing the Border:** In response to security challenges, including illegal immigration and drug trafficking, India has announced plans to fence its entire border with Myanmar. This decision aims to regulate the movement of people across the 1,643 km border, which traverses several northeastern states
- **Refugee Influx:** The ongoing civil unrest in Myanmar has led to an influx of over 45,000 refugees into Indian border states. India is reassessing its Free Movement Regime (FMR) with Myanmar as part of its strategy to manage this humanitarian crisis while ensuring national security
- **Engagement with New Stakeholders:** As Myanmar's internal conflict evolves, India is reconsidering its diplomatic approach. The resistance against the military junta has gained momentum, prompting India to potentially engage with new political entities within Myanmar, including ethnic armed groups that have emerged as significant players in the ongoing conflict
- **Humanitarian Assistance:** India has been proactive in providing humanitarian aid during crises in Myanmar, reflecting its commitment to regional stability and support for the Myanmar populace amidst political turmoil



## Way Forward

- Handle Rohingya Issue with Care
- Cultural Diplomacy

- Engage with Junta Government
- Better Border Management
- Scope of immediate improvement in trade

## India-Afghan/Taliban relations



## History

- 1980-India only South Asian nation to recognize Soviet backed Afghan govt.
- 2005-India proposed membership of SAARC
- 2011-Strategic Partnership agreement was signed
- 2021-India conducted operation Devi Shakti to evacuate Indian citizens from Afghanistan after Taliban took over

## India's investments in Afghanistan

- Afghanistan's Parliament in Kabul
- HICDP program
- Reconstruction of Salma Dam (Afghan-India Friendship dam)
- Construction of Zaranj-Delaram Road
- Scholarships to Afghan Students
- Training of Afghan soldiers, police, and civil servants

## Need for India's engagement with Taliban

- Rising International Engagements: China, Russia, Iran has resumed projects
- National Security: Opportunity to convey India concerns directly
- Greater possibilities for diplomatic engagement
- Better outreach with people
- Important stakeholder in Afghanistan: Indian development assistance
- Counter Pakistan





## Recent Developments

- **First Official Talks:** On November 7, 2024, India conducted its first official meeting with the Taliban's acting defense minister, Mohammad Yaqub Mujahid, in Kabul. This meeting marked a notable step in India's diplomatic engagement with the Taliban, despite not officially recognizing their government. The discussions focused on expanding bilateral relations, particularly in humanitarian cooperation and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan
- **Humanitarian and Security Interests:** India has been gradually increasing its presence and influence in Afghanistan since the Taliban took power in August 2021. Although New Delhi does not recognize the Taliban as a legitimate government, it has engaged in dialogues aimed at ensuring that Afghan territory is not used for anti-India activities. The Taliban has assured India of this commitment, which has led to a cautious optimism about deepening ties
- **Technical Mission and Diplomatic Presence:** India has established a technical mission in Kabul to coordinate humanitarian assistance and has participated in regional meetings involving the Taliban alongside other countries like China and Russia. The presence of a Taliban envoy in Mumbai suggests an evolving diplomatic relationship, albeit under careful scrutiny to avoid formal recognition
- **Geopolitical Context:** The changing dynamics of regional politics, particularly strained relations between the Taliban and Pakistan, may be influencing India's approach. Experts suggest that India's engagement with the Taliban could also serve to counterbalance Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan and facilitate trade links with Central Asia through Iran's Chabahar port
- **Public Perception and Strategic Calculations:** While some analysts view this engagement as pragmatic given the geopolitical landscape, there are concerns about how this might affect India's historical standing among Afghans. Previously seen as a friend to Afghanistan, India's current strategy may lead to perceptions of it being a self-interested actor amidst complex local dynamic

## SAARC



1985: SAARC charter signed with 7 members

2005: Afghanistan included as 8th member

### SAARC importance

- 3% world area, 21% world population
- World's most densely populated region
- One of the most fertile regions of the world
- Common culture
- Common issues: poverty, illiteracy, hunger etc.

### SAARC Achievements

- SAPTA signed in 1995
- SAFTA was signed but never totally implemented (excludes services)
- SATIS (For services)
- SAARC university
- Currency swap agreement

## Significance for India

- Pushes India's Neighbourhood First policy
- Help India counter China
- Ensures regional stability
- India gets a platform for global leadership role
- Engagement platform for Bilateral issues

## Recent Developments

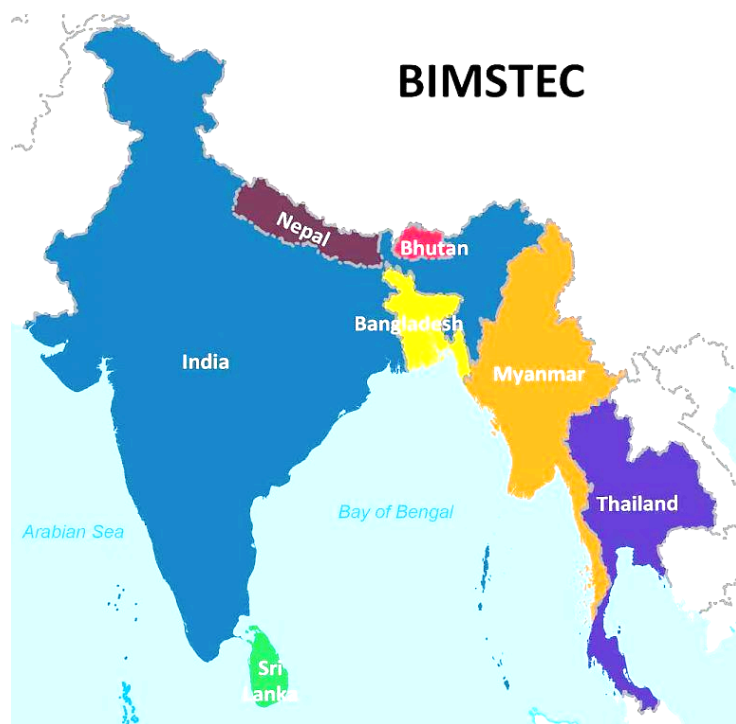
- SAARC's 40th Charter Day Commemoration: On December 8, 2024, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) celebrated its 40th Charter Day. Leaders from member states, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, emphasized SAARC's role in fostering regional cooperation and solidarity. They reaffirmed their commitment to a peaceful and prosperous South Asia, highlighting the progress made in institutional structures and program implementation over the past four decades
- Calls for Revival: Recent discussions have focused on reviving SAARC to address pressing regional issues. Muhammad Yunus, head of Bangladesh's interim government, advocated for a renewed spirit within SAARC to tackle challenges such as security concerns and economic cooperation. The need for a more active SAARC has been echoed by various leaders who stress that the organization can play a crucial role in addressing humanitarian crises and enhancing intra-regional trade

## Challenges

- Less meetings
- India-Pak relations

- SAFTA limitations

## BIMSTEC



BIMSTEC is a regional organisation comprising seven Member States: five deriving from South Asia, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and two from Southeast Asia, including Myanmar and Thailand.

This sub-regional organization came into being on 6th June 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration. The BIMSTEC Secretariat is in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

## Significance of BIMSTEC

- Significant Global Weightage: 22% of World Population, high growth countries
- Regional strategic incentives: Connectivity between South and South-east Asia, opportunity for landlocked countries like Nepal and Bhutan to access Bay of Bengal
- Importance for India: Neighbourhood First and Act East policy realized, alternate to SAARC

- Crucial against China: a new battleground for India-China dominance

**Comparison Table: SAARC vs BIMSTEC**

Feature	SAARC	BIMSTEC
<b>Type</b>	Regional organization focused on South Asia	Interregional organization connecting South Asia and Southeast Asia
<b>Year Established</b>	1985 (Cold War era)	1997 (Post-Cold War era)
<b>Member Relations</b>	Members suffer from mistrust and suspicion	Members maintain reasonably friendly relations
<b>Regional Politics</b>	Suffers from regional politics	Focuses on economic cooperation, less affected by regional politics
<b>Power Balance</b>	Asymmetric power balance	Balanced power with both Thailand and India present
<b>Intra-regional Trade</b>	Only about 5%	Increased to around 6% in a decade

**Practice Question 1**

***Q) Assess the importance of the India-Maldives relationship. Identify the challenges within this bilateral relationship and suggest strategies to overcome them. (250 words)***

**Approach**

1. Start the answer with a discussion that sets a context for the question.
2. Discuss the importance of the India-Maldives relationship.
3. Discuss the challenges within this bilateral relationship.
4. Suggest strategies to improve the bilateral ties

## Importance of the India-Maldives relationship

- **Strategic Significance**

- Maldives' proximity to the west coast of India and its situation at the hub of commercial sea lanes running through the Indian Ocean imbues it with significant strategic importance to India.

- **Economic Engagements**

- India is amongst the largest sources of visitors to the Maldives, which is heavily dependent on tourism to run its economy.. In 2023, India topped the chart in sending the largest number of tourists to the Maldives (2,09,198), with around 11.8 % market share.

- **Trade Agreements**

- India emerged as Maldives' 2nd largest trade partner in 2022. The bilateral trade had crossed the USD 300 million mark for the first time in 2021.

- **Infrastructure Projects**

- In August 2021, Afcons, an Indian company, signed a contract for the largest-ever infrastructure project in Maldives which is the Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP).

- **Cultural Connectivity**

- India and Maldives share ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and religious links steeped in antiquity. According to anthropologists, the origins of Dhivehi (the Maldivian language) harken back to Sanskrit and Pali.

## Key Issues in the India- Maldives Relationship

- **Lakshadweep Issue**

- The controversy ensued when three deputy ministers from the Maldives made derogatory comments about India and the Prime Minister following his recent visit to Lakshadweep.
- This controversy has led many Indians to cancel their holiday bookings in Maldives. The incident underscores the dangers of hyper nationalism in the region.



- **The India Out Campaign In Maldives**
  - The 'India Out' initiative seeks to amplify animosity by instilling scepticism regarding India's investments in the Maldives, the defence partnerships between the two nations, and India's security provisions in the region.
- **Sovereignty and Security Dilemma**
  - The democratic system in the Maldives is still in its early stages, grappling with regional socio-political instability influenced by major global players.
  - The opposition in Maldives strongly feels that the Indian military presence in the Maldives is a threat to the country's national security and sovereignty.
- **Revocation of Hydrographi**
  - Survey Agreement: Maldives has apprehensions about India's hydrographic activity being a form of intelligence collection.
  - Maldives' recent decision to revoke the agreement with India for joint hydrographic surveys in its waters, causing concern in Indian strategic circles.
- **The China Factor in the Indian Ocean Region**
  - The Maldives has emerged as an important 'pearl' in China's "String of Pearls" construct in South Asia.
  - Maldives has massive Chinese investment and became a participant in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

## Way Forward

- **Discover and Develop Tourism Destinations in India**
  - India's coastline is adorned with a mix of well-known and undiscovered beach destinations. It is opportune to explore and cultivate the potential of undisclosed and hidden treasures along India's coast.
  - Possible destinations may include places like Goa, Kerala, Lakshadweep and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- **Political Engagement with Local People**
  - At present, the 'India Out' campaign has support from a limited population, but this should not be taken for granted by the Indian government.

- The strength of bilateral relations hinges on the ability of a partner government to garner public support for its policies.
- The government should engage in effective public diplomacy, which involves not only communicating with foreign governments but also with their own citizens and the international community.
- Unwavering Support for Capacity Building Programmes
  - As a development partner, India should provide unwavering support to the Maldives in realizing their aspirations for broad-based socio-economic development and strengthening of democratic and independent institutions in the region.
- Maximise Maritime Security
  - India should participate in efforts to ensure the safety and freedom of navigation in critical sea lanes, contributing to the overall security architecture in the Indian Ocean.
- Maximize Resources
  - India should keep its commitment to regional security by actively participating in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations. India can actively engage through QUAD to counter Chinese aggression in the region.

## India-US Relations



### Historical Background

- 1954-US made Pakistan member of CENTO
- 1954-India started cultivating strong ties with Soviet
- 1961-India became founding member of NAM
- Post 1990: India started cultivating strong relations with USA
- 2001-Post 9/11, USA and India started working together in area of Anti-terrorism
- 2008-Nuclear deal signed

## Recent initiatives/collaborations

- Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET): The United States and India intend to undertake a midterm review of iCET in September 2023 to continue to drive momentum toward the next annual iCET review, co-led by the National Security Advisors of both countries, in early 2024.
- Multilateral Collaboration: Both countries are working closely on platforms like QUAD, I2U2, G-20 etc.
- INDUS -X: The leaders commended the India-U.S. Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X) team for establishing a robust collaboration agenda to harness the innovative work of the U.S. and Indian defence sectors to address shared security challenges
- Space collaboration: Determined to deepen partnership in outer space exploration, ISRO and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) have commenced discussions on modalities, capacity building, and training for mounting a joint effort to the International Space Station in 2024
- India's candidature for the UNSC non-permanent seat: US reaffirmed support for a reformed UN Security Council with India as a permanent member
- Technology Transfer: between GE Aerospace and Hindustan Aeronautical Limited (HAL) to manufacture GE F-414 jet engines in India
- Major Defence Purchases: MQ 9B Reaper drones
- Joint production: Of Armored Vehicles like Stryker etc.
- WTO dispute settlement: 7th and last outstanding dispute settlement



## Recent Developments

- **Bilateral Meetings:** The recent meeting between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Joe Biden on September 21, 2024, marked a continuation of high-level engagements aimed at reinforcing the partnership. This meeting focused on reviewing progress in various sectors and setting the agenda for future cooperation.
- **Recent developments in India-U.S. relations following Donald Trump's election victory** have highlighted both opportunities and challenges for the bilateral partnership
- **Camaraderie with Modi:** Trump has expressed a strong desire to enhance ties with India, emphasizing his friendship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This relationship is expected to be pivotal in shaping future collaborations across various sectors, including trade and defense
- **Strategic Partnership:** Experts predict that the India-U.S. strategic partnership will deepen, particularly in countering China's influence in the Indo-Pacific region. This alignment is seen as a foundation for continued cooperation, regardless of potential policy shifts under Trump's administration.
- **Trade and Immigration:** While there is optimism about expanding economic ties, there are concerns regarding Trump's proposed tariffs and immigration policies. Analysts suggest that these issues will require careful negotiation to maintain the momentum of the partnership
- **Defense Cooperation:** Under Trump, there is potential for enhanced military collaboration, building on the groundwork laid during his first term. The U.S. designation of India as a Major Defense Partner is likely to continue, facilitating access to advanced defense technologies

## Challenges in India-US relations

- **India's Defence Dependence on Russia:** India Bought S-400 anti-missile system from Russia which USA objected
- **India's stance on Russia-Ukraine war**
- **Human Rights issue:** US concerns



- Trade, Economic and Visa issues: Tariffs, IP and H1B issues
- Uncertainty about US policy: with changing govts.
- Handling China: Nuanced vs Aggressive approach
- Climate Change Policy: CBDR, Phasing out vs Phasing down
- Khalistani violence

## Way forward

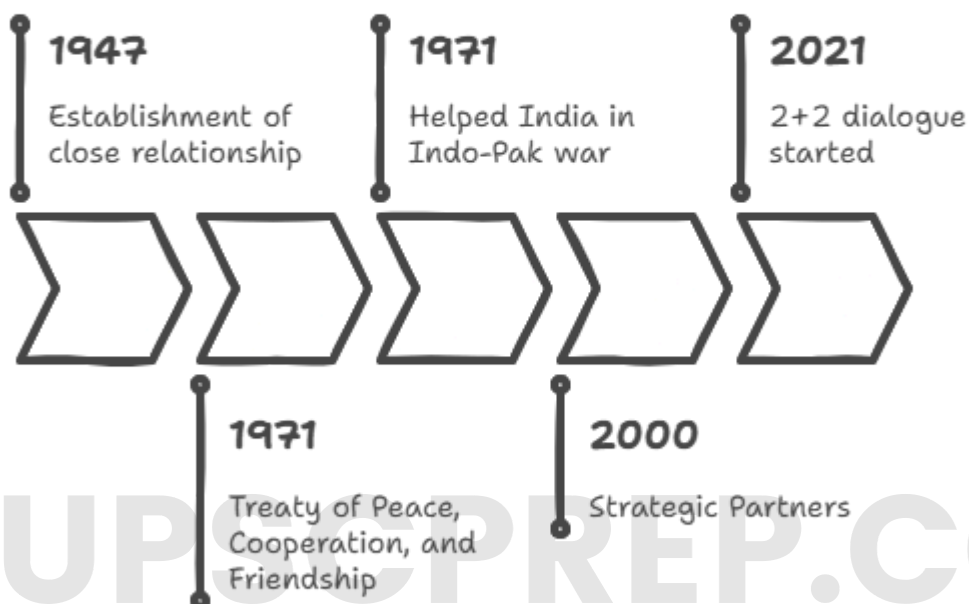
- Strategic Diplomacy and Stance on Global Issues
- Trade disputes resolution
- Defence sector : Further collaboration
- Managing regional politics
- Role in the Quad
- Managing Trump govt.

## India-Russia relations





## Key Milestones in India-Russia Relations



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### Areas of Partnerships

- Defence
  - Technology Transfer
  - Joint Development, marketing and selling
  - Export of Equipment
  - S-400 Missile Defence System
  - 6,00,000 AK-203 assault rifles
- Space Partnership
  - Aryabhata and Bhaskar (1st two satellites)
  - Transfer of Cryogenic technology to build heavy rockets
- Economic Trade

- Record 65 bn \$ in FY 24
- Cultural
  - People-to-people contacts

## Challenges

- Warming of India-US relationship and Russia-China
- India's diversifying Defence Partnerships: USA, France, Italy
- India's Changing Geo-strategic interests: Atmanirbharta, moving away from NAM, Quad etc.
- Russia-Ukraine War: Indian PM stating its not 'era of war'
- China-Russia-Pakistan Axis
- Russia-Taliban Relations



## Way forward

- Work on more avenues of common interest: Eurasia, Arctic, Afghanistan etc
- Diversifying areas of cooperation: Cyber security, counter terrorism, Outer space etc.
- Energy security
- Closely work on INSTC

## Key Highlights of the Recent 22nd India-Russia Annual Summit

- Increasing the Bilateral Trade- India and Russia agreed to increase bilateral trade to



\$100 billion dollars by 2030. This includes the use of national currencies to circumvent Western sanctions.

- New connectivity routes- India and Russia agreed on completion of new connectivity routes like the Chennai-Vladivostok maritime route, Northern Sea Route and the International North–South Transport Corridor via Iran.
- Increasing investment in priority areas- India and Russia agreed on enhancing investments in the energy sector including nuclear energy, infrastructure development.
- MoUs between institutions- India and Russia signed a number of MoUs between institutions on climate change, polar research, legal arbitration and pharmaceutical certification.
- Streamlining Defence Cooperation- The delay in defence supplies was discussed. Both parties have committed to exploring more areas of co-production of defence equipment such as the India-Russia joint venture for assault rifles.
- Facilitation of the Indian Prime Minister- Prime Minister accepted Russia's highest civilian honour, the Order of St Andrew the Apostle.

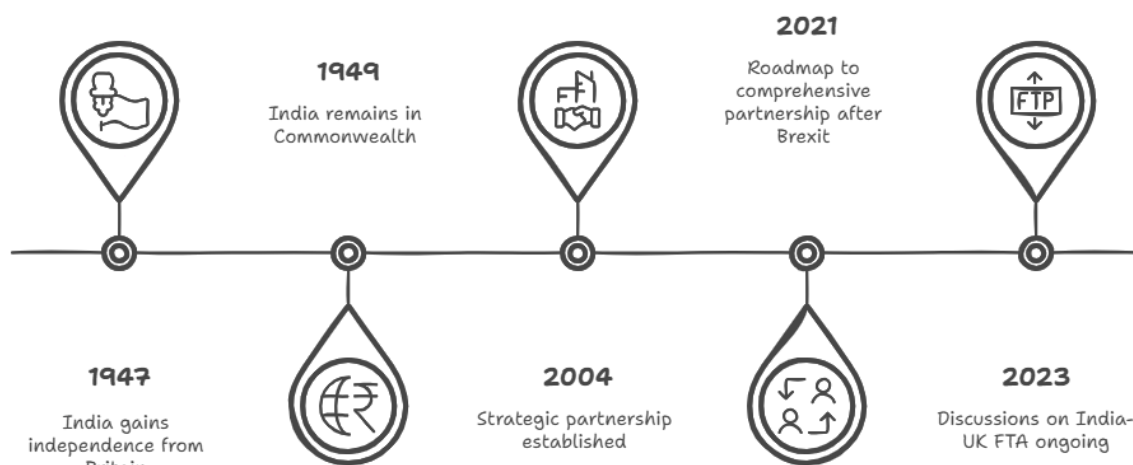
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## India-UK relations



UK on Map

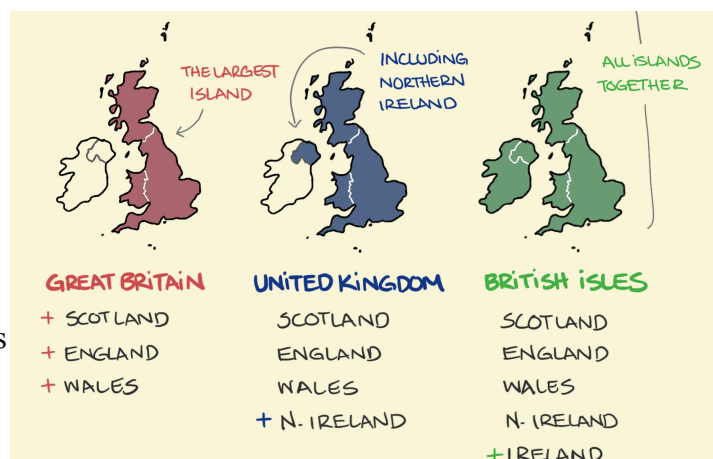
### Key Milestones in India-UK Relations



Made with Napkin

## Areas of Cooperation

- Economic
  - 20bn \$ trade
  - 800 Indian owned companies in UK
- Defence
  - Army exercise: Ajeya Warrior
  - Naval: Konkan
  - Air: Indradhanush
- Educational
  - UK-India Global Innovation Partnership
  - UK-India Education and Research Initiative
- Political
  - Part of Commonwealth
  - Commitments on Cooperation in Climate, Health, Science, Tech and Defence



## Challenges

- Colonial Past
- British companies reluctance to invest
- Chinese imports
- UK'S Immigration Policy
- Brexit challenges for Indian Businesses
- Engagement with the new labour govt.
-

**Way forward**

- Sensitive to India's global aspirations
- UK's domestic economic situation
- Re-invigorate Commonwealth
- Diversified collaboration
- Fast conclusion of FTA talks

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## India-France Relations



### Areas of Cooperation

- **Defence**
  - Rafale deal, Mirage fighter jets
- **Indo-Pacific cooperation**
  - First country to have Indo-Pacific strategy
  - France territories in Indian Ocean (Reunion island, Mayotte)

- **Important support on Multi-lateral platforms**
  - Strong support for UNSC membership
  - G20, support for NSG membership etc.
- **Nuclear cooperation**
  - Civil nuclear agreement signed in 2008
  - To set up six nuclear reactors in Jaitapur
- **Space and Technology Cooperation**
  - France helped India setup Sriharikota launch site
  - Helped develop liquid engine development: Vikas
  - Join satellite missions: TRISHNA
- **Civil aviation orders**
  - Airbus orders by Air India and Indigo
- **Other diverse areas of cooperation**
  - ISA
  - Cooperation on Cybersecurity and Digital Technology

## Significance of Indo-France Relations

- **Indo-Pacific Security:** France's support is crucial for India in maintaining stability in the Indo-Pacific region and countering Chinese assertiveness in this region, This is exemplified by the 2018 India-France Joint Strategic Vision for Indian Ocean cooperation.
- **Mutual Strategic Autonomy:** The relationship is uniquely balanced, free from Anglo-Saxon influences in France and anti-Western sentiments in India. Moreover, after the nuclear tests in May 1998, when India declared itself a nuclear-weapon State, France was the first major power to open talks with India.
- **International Organization Access:** France's backing is vital for India's aspirations to join key bodies like the UN Security Council and the Nuclear Suppliers Group.
- **Global Power Balance:** Indo-France partnership plays a role in moderating Russian influence in Europe and Chinese influence in Asia, contributing to global stability and a balanced world order.

- Defence Cooperation: France holds substantial significance for India's defence sector through robust strategic partnerships and collaborations. The procurement of Rafale fighter jets from France, Additionally, France and
- India engage in joint military exercises, technology transfers, and collaborations in defence research and development,
- Future-Oriented Collaboration: The Horizon 2047 agreement outlines a 25-year roadmap for bilateral cooperation. It emphasises collaboration in advanced technologies like supercomputing, AI, and quantum computing, which are critical for India's future development.

## Challenges Related to Indo-France Relations

- Economic Limitations:
  - The absence of a Free Trade Agreement hinders deeper economic ties and progress on the India-EU Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) has stalled, limiting further economic integration.
- Trade and Intellectual Property Issues:
  - Trade imbalance favours France, with higher exports to India and more often France has expressed concerns about inadequate protection of intellectual property rights for French businesses in India.
  - Some negotiated projects face operational challenges, such as the Jaitapur nuclear project.
- Divergent Geo political Stances:
  - Differing approaches to global issues are evident. For instance, France has openly criticised Russia's invasion of Ukraine, while India has maintained a more neutral stance.

## Steps Ahead to Accelerate Indo-France Relations

- Economic Engagement:
  - Accelerate negotiations on the India-EU BTIA with France as a key supporter within the EU. Explore a bilateral economic partnership agreement
  - measure. The Indo-French Centre for the Promotion of Advanced Research (CEFIPRA) model could be expanded to other sectors.
  - The Japan-India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement could serve as a model.
- Negotiating Trade and Intellectual Property:
  - Establish a joint working group on IP protection and technology transfer. Create sector-specific trade facilitation mechanisms.
  - Involve private sector expertise to overcome technical and financial hurdles. The success of the Rafale jets deal shows how political will can overcome obstacles.
- Managing Geopolitical Positions:
  - Increase strategic dialogues to align perspectives on global issues and collaborate on areas of mutual interest, such as Indo-Pacific security.
  - The India-France-Australia trilateral initiative demonstrates the potential for aligned interests.
- Addressing Emerging Global Tensions:
  - Enhance intelligence sharing and joint strategic assessments, and develop joint crisis response mechanisms. The Quad (India, US, Japan, Australia) framework could be expanded to include France in specific areas.
- Collaborate on humanitarian aid and conflict resolution initiatives.
  - Strengthen naval cooperation in the Indian Ocean against China's Assertiveness, Example: Expand joint naval exercises like Varuna to include other regional partners.

## Way forward

- Engage closely post AUKUS
- India's gateway to Europe

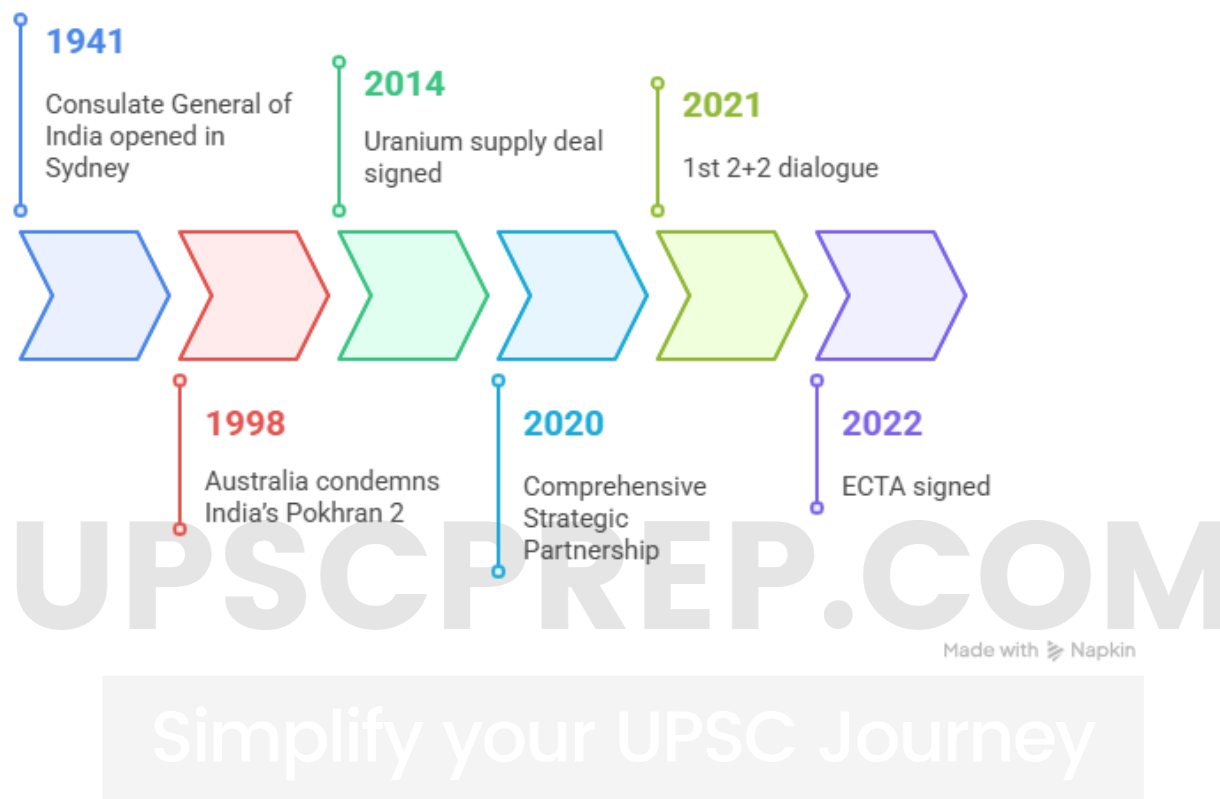
- Fits perfectly in India's vision of Multilateralism

## India-Australia Relations





## Key Milestones in India-Australia Relations



## Dimensions of India-Aus relations

- Shared Values
  - Shared values of pluralistic, Westminster-style democracies, Commonwealth traditions
  - strong, vibrant, secular, and multicultural democracies, a free press, an independent judicial system, and English language
- People to People Ties
  - 9.76 lakh people in Australia reported their ancestry as Indian origin
  - second largest group of overseas-born residents in Australia
- Defence
  - Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA)



- Australia hosted the "Malabar" exercises in August 2023
- China Factor in relations
  - Australia banning Huawei from 5G network, call for enquiry into the origins of Covid-19 and Slamming China's human rights violations in Xinjiang and Hongkong
  - China responded by imposing trade barriers on Australian exports
- Multilateral Cooperation
  - Both members of Quad, Commonwealth, IORA, ASEAN Regional Forum, EAS, G20
  - Cooperating in WTO and Aus. supports India's membership of APEC
- Cooperation in Education
  - Mutual Recognition of Educational Qualifications (MREQ) was signed in 2023
  - Deakin University and University of Wollongong are planning to open campuses in India
  - More than 1 lakh Indian students are pursuing higher education degrees in Australian universities

## Dimensions of India-Aus relations: Economic

- ECTA
  - First FTA among two countries
- Reduction in Duties
  - Immediate reduction of duty to zero on 96% of Indian exports to Australia
  - zero duty on 85% of Australia's exports (in value) to India
- SCRI
  - India and Australia are partners in the trilateral arrangement along with Japan which seeks to enhance the resilience of supply chains in the Indo-Pacific Region
- Bilateral Trade
  - Bilateral trade between India and Australia was US\$ 24 billion in FY24, there is potential for it to reach around US\$ 50 billion in five years

## Challenges

1. ADANI COAL MINE CONTROVERSY
2. VISA ISSUES
3. VIOLENCE WITH INDIAN DIASPORA
4. KHALISTANI ISSUE

## India-Japan relations

### State of Bilateral Relations

- Defence Cooperation
  - 2+2 ministerial dialogue
  - JIMEX, Malabar, Veer Guardian, Shinyuu Maitri and Dharma Guardian
- Common Groupings
  - Quad, G20 and G-4, International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER)
  - India-Japan Act East Forum established in 2017
- Investments and ODA
  - ODA (under JICA) for Delhi Metro,
  - HSR and DFC



- Economic relations
  - 21.96 bn\$ in 2022 trade
- India-Japan Digital Partnerships
  - For promotion of joint projects in IoT (Internet of Things), AI (Artificial Intelligence) and other emerging technologies
- Strategic Clean Energy Partnership
  - For cooperation in areas such as electric vehicles, storage systems including batteries, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, development of solar energy, hydrogen, ammonia, etc.

## Challenges

China Factor: Different approach in their dealing

India emerging as defence exporter

Slow growth in Trade

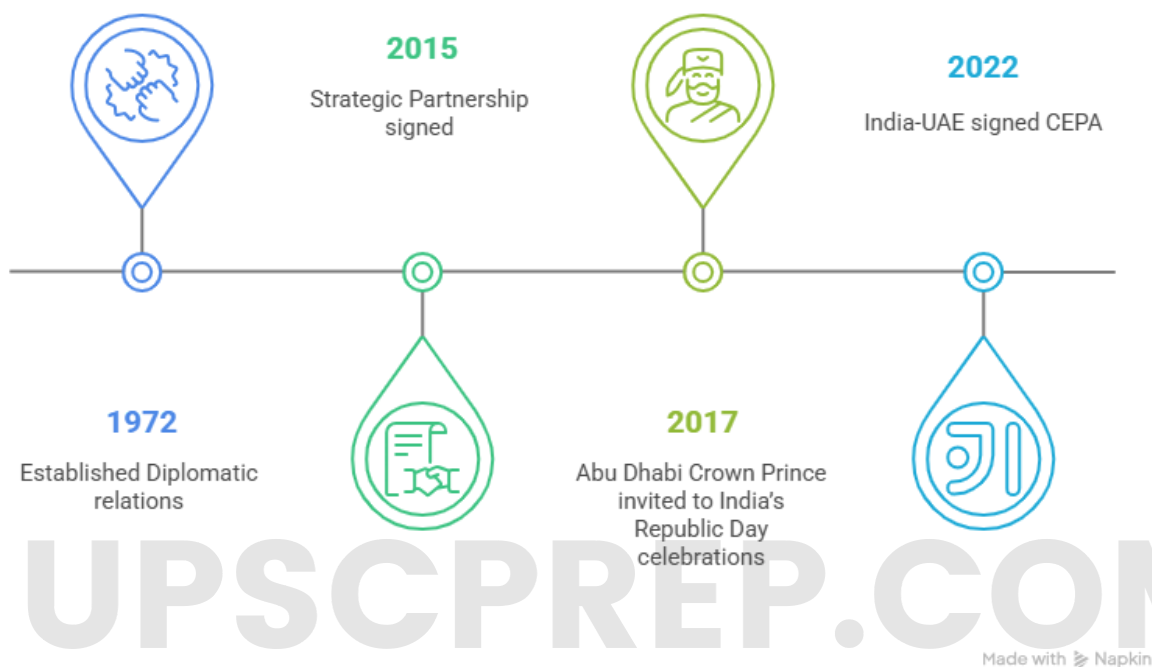
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## India-UAE relations



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## India-UAE Diplomatic and Economic Milestones



### Important Dimensions of relationship

- **Bilateral Trade**
  - 85bn\$ in FY23
  - India is the 3rd largest oil importer in the world and the UAE was its 4th biggest supplier of crude in 2022.
- **Indian Community**
  - UAE is home to an Indian expatriate community of 2.6 million people
  - Around 16bn\$ remittances to India
- **Defence Exercises**
  - In-UAE BILAT (bilateral naval exercise)
  - Desert Eagle-II (bilateral air force exercise).
  - Exercise Desert Flag-VI: UAE

- **LCSS**
  - India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have signed a pact to establish Local Currency Settlement System (LCSS) to promote the use of the Indian rupee (INR) and UAE Dirham (AED) for cross-border transactions
  - enable exporters and importers to pay in their respective domestic currencies
- **UPI-IPP**
  - The central banks of both countries have signed to cooperate on linking India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) with the UAE's Instant Payment Platform (IPP) and RuPay switch and UAESWITCH
- **IIT campus in Abu Dhabi**
  - MoU was signed for establishment of IIT Delhi campus in Abu Dhabi
  - second international IIT campus after IIT Madras Zanzibar, Tanzania

### Previous Year Questions

Q) What is the significance of Indo-US defence deals over Indo-Russian defence deals? Discuss with reference to stability in the Indo-Pacific region. (2020)

Q) Economic ties between India and Japan, while growing in recent years, are still far below their potential. Elucidate the policy constraints which are inhibiting this growth. (2013)

### Practice Ques

Q) *Discuss the concept of "sharp power" in international relations. How does it differ from soft and hard power?*

## Hard, Soft, and Sharp Power

- Hard power relies on coercion, threats, or military force to achieve desired outcomes. It is the classic "stick" approach to diplomacy.
- Soft power is the ability to influence others through persuasion, rather than coercion. It is often associated with culture, diplomacy, and foreign aid.



- Sharp power is a more covert form of influence that seeks to shape the information environment by undermining democratic institutions, manipulating public opinion, and spreading disinformation. It is often associated with authoritarian regimes.

## Sharp Power

- **Manipulation and Censorship:** Sharp power involves efforts to control information and suppress dissenting voices. Authoritarian states use tactics such as censorship, disinformation campaigns, and the co-opting of independent media to distort political environments in target countries
- **Subversion of Democratic Institutions:** The goal is often to weaken the integrity of independent institutions by monopolizing ideas and exploiting vulnerabilities within democratic frameworks. This can lead to a climate where free speech is curtailed, and alternative viewpoints are marginalized
- **Technological Utilization:** Authoritarian regimes leverage modern technologies, including surveillance tools and social media platforms, to enhance their influence. These technologies facilitate the spread of misinformation and enable the manipulation of public opinion on a large scale
- **Global Reach:** Sharp power is not limited to domestic audiences; it seeks to influence foreign societies by targeting cultural, educational, and political systems. This strategic approach aims to create confusion and undermine trust in democratic processes abroad

## Implications of Sharp Power

- **Erosion of Democratic Institution**
  - Undermining of free and fair elections through disinformation campaigns
  - Weakening public trust in democratic processes and institutions
  - Example: Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. elections
- **Distortion of Public Discourse**
  - Manipulation of social media algorithms to spread false narratives.

- Creation of echo chambers and polarization of societies
- Example: China's use of "50 Cent Army" to influence online discussions globally
- **Technological Vulnerabilities**
  - Exploitation of cybersecurity weaknesses to gather sensitive information
  - Use of AI and deep fakes to create convincing false narratives
  - Example: Saudi Arabia's alleged use of Spyware and involvement in the assassination of Jamal Khashoggi
- **Reshaping of International Alliances**
  - Formation of new coalitions to counter sharp power threats
  - Reevaluation of existing alliances based on vulnerability to sharp power

## Ques 2

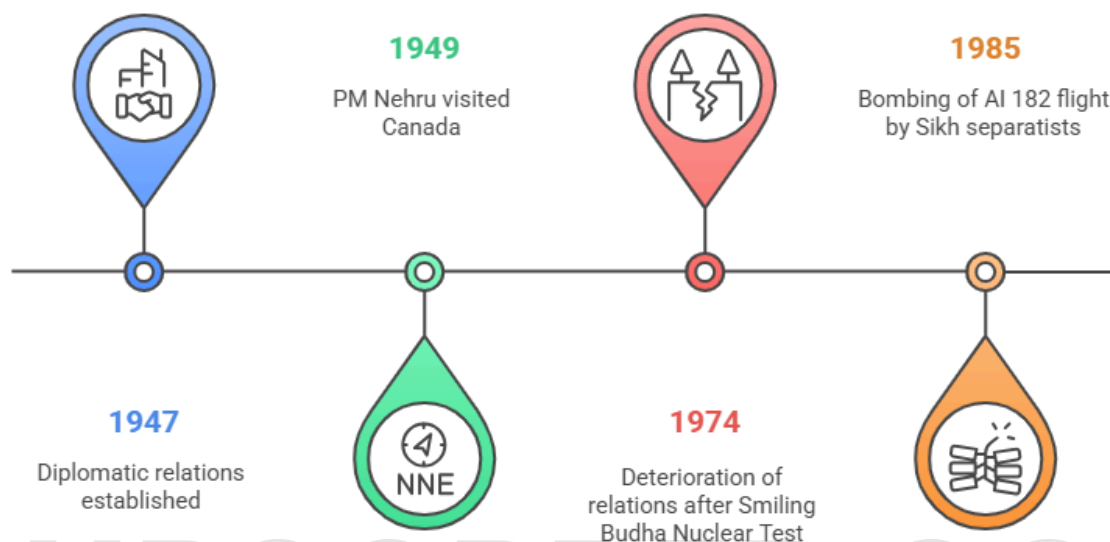
**Q) Discuss the importance and obstacles in Indo-French relations. Propose measures for enhancing their collaboration. (250 words)**

## International Relations

## India-Canada Relations



## Key Milestones in India-Canada Relations



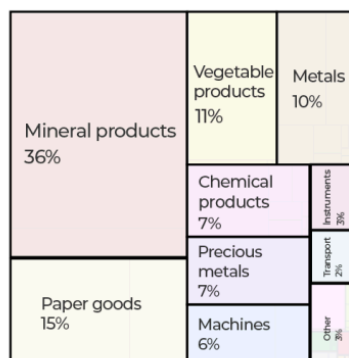
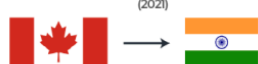
## Bilateral Relations: Areas of Cooperation

- Economic Cooperation
  - Bilateral trade 9bn \$
  - 600 Canadian companies in India
- Diaspora connections
  - One of Largest Indian diasporas: 16 lakh of Indian origin and 7 lakh NRIs
  - Around 4% of Canadian population
- Education and innovation

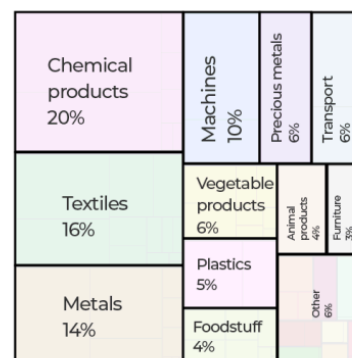
### Canada-India bilateral trade

Canada-India bilateral trade in goods reached nearly \$9bn in 2022, a substantial 57 percent increase over the previous year.

#### Top Canadian exports to India (2021)



#### Top Indian exports to Canada (2021)



- 40% of entire population of International students are Indian
- Strategic importance
  - Important partner under Indo-Pacific strategy
- Science and Technology
  - IC-IMPACTS joint research
  - Programme for exchange of knowledge and scientific research on Cold Climate (Arctic) Studies
- Space
  - ISRO and CSA have signed MoUs in the field of exploration and utilization of outer space.
  - ISRO in its 100th Satellite PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle) launched in 2018, also flew Canadian first LEO (Low earth Orbit) satellite

## Challenges in relationship

- Khalistan issue/Nijjar Killing
- Recalling of Indian High Commissioner
- Safety of Indian Diplomats
- Visa and Immigration policies
- Divergence on global issues
- Agricultural Trade disputes

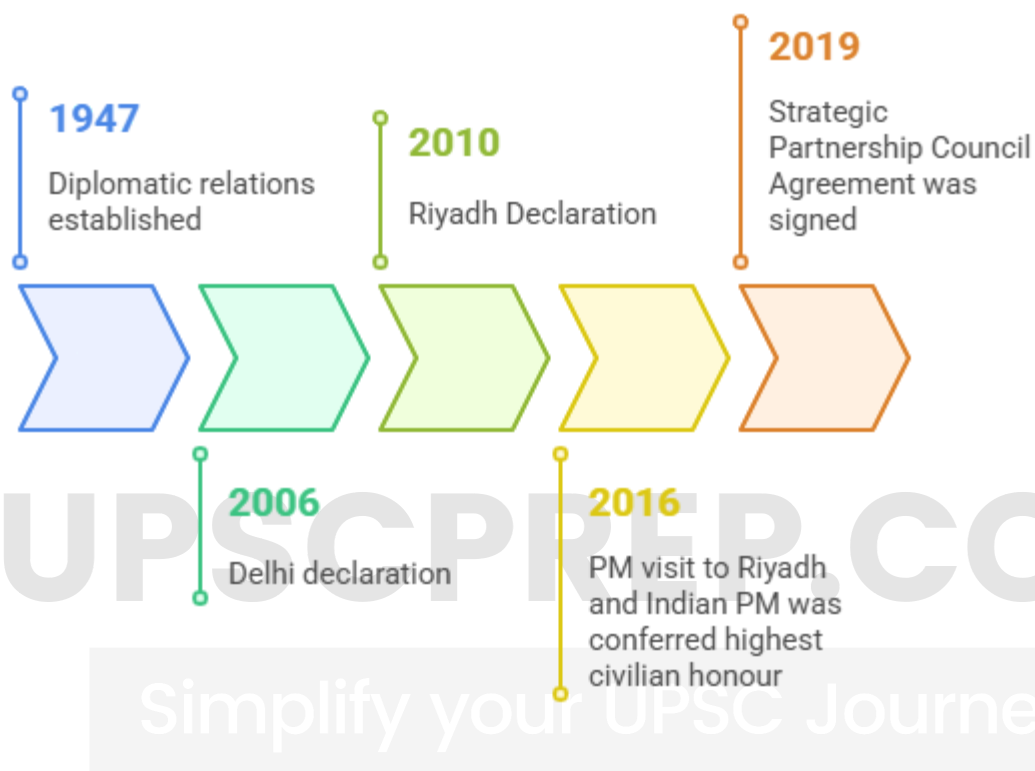
## Way Forward

1. Addressing Khalistan Issue
2. Ensure safety of Indian Diplomats
3. Engage with opposition conservative party
4. Economic Diversification
5. Cultural Exchange
6. Environmental Cooperation
7. Security Cooperation

## India-Saudi Arabia Relations



## Key Milestones in India-Saudi Arabia Relations



## Areas of Cooperation

- Economic
  - India is Saudi Arabia's second-largest trade partner; Saudi Arabia is India's fourth-largest trade partner
  - Bilateral trade in FY 2022-23 was valued at \$52.76 billion.
  - Trade with Saudi Arabia accounted for 4.53% of India's total trade in FY23.
  - 2,783 Indian companies registered as joint ventures/ 100% owned entities with investments worth approximately \$2 billion in the kingdom.
  - Saudi's direct investments in India amounted to \$3.15 billion (as of March 2022).



- Energy
  - Saudi Arabia is a key partner for ensuring India's energy security, and was its third largest crude and petroleum products source for FY23.
  - India's LPG imports from Saudi Arabia stood at 7.85 MMT, and 11.2% of its total petroleum product imports, in FY 23
- Defence
  - Defence partnership has shown tremendous growth in recent years
  - Al Mohed al Hindi : Bilateral Naval Exercise
  - Considering possibilities of joint development and production of defence equipment
- Indian Diaspora in Saudi Arabia
  - The Indian community in the kingdom is more than 2.4 million strong, widely respected for its contribution to the development of Saudi Arabia
  - Also seen as a living bridge between the two countries

## Important Recent engagements

- India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor
  - During the visit he, along with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Joe Biden, announced the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor, a massive infrastructure project that would connect India to Europe via West Asia, and could rival China's Belt and Road Initiative.
  - The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor will deepen India's strategic engagement with the Arabian peninsula.
  - It breaks Pakistan's veto over India's overland connectivity to the West
- India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council
  - The two sides signed eight agreements, including on upgrading their hydrocarbon energy partnership to a comprehensive energy partnership for renewable,

petroleum and strategic reserves, and to create a joint task force for \$100 billion in Saudi investment.

## Challenges

- Aid to Pakistan
  - Riyadh still helps Pakistan with economic aid, even while strategically engaging with New Delhi
- Role of China
  - The country is also engaged with China, moving towards rapprochement with Iran
  - Increasing Chinese influence in the Middle East may indirectly help Pakistan, both economically and strategically

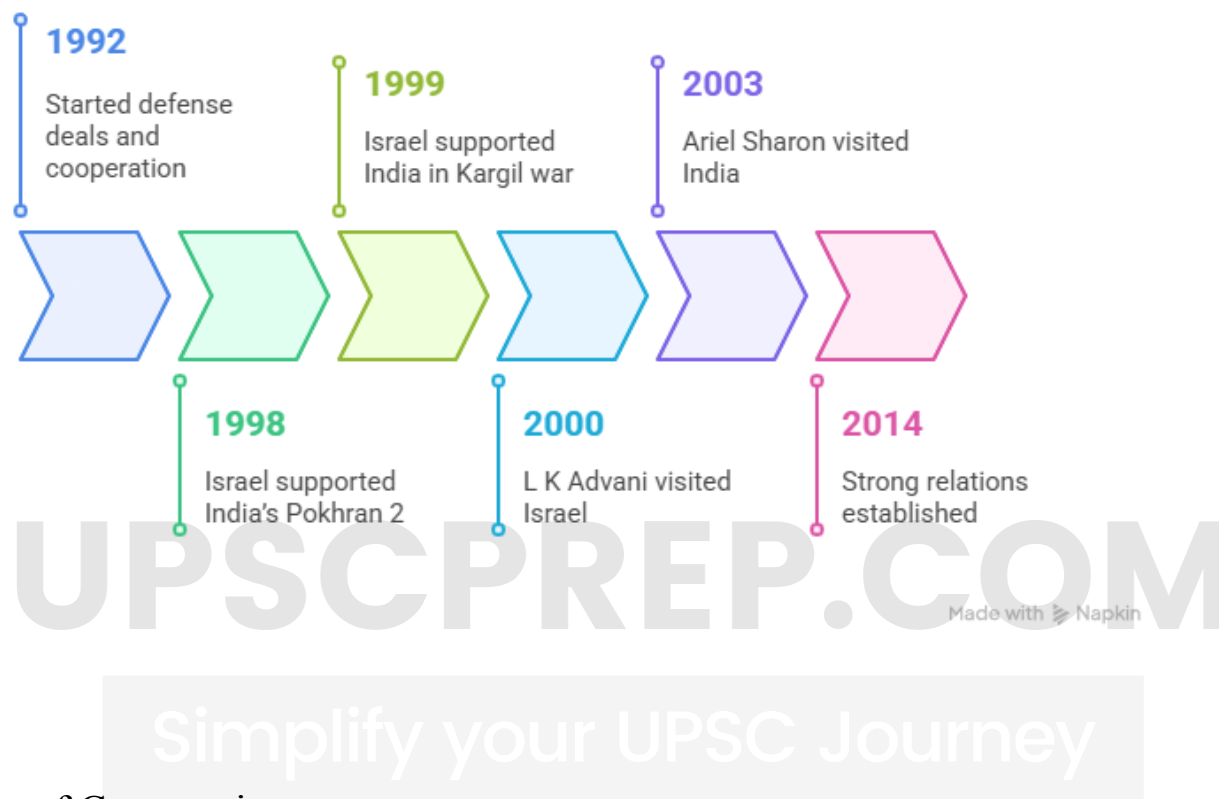
## Way Forward

1. India needs to patiently assess if China's growing involvement in the Gulf is detrimental to its long-term security interests and the regional balance of power.
2. The I2U2 partnership between India, Israel, the UAE, and the U.S. has already put India on the region's alliance canvas.
3. At the same time, recent developments also provide a window of opportunity for India to embed itself as a significant player in the Middle East.

## India-Israel relations



## Strengthening India-Israel Relations Over the Years



### Areas of Cooperation

- Economy and Commerce
  - Bilateral merchandise trade grew from USD 200 million in 1992 to USD 6.35 billion (excluding defence) during the period 2021-2022
  - India is Israel's third-largest trade partner in Asia and seventh largest globally
  - Bilateral trade has diversified into several sectors such as pharmaceuticals, agriculture, IT and telecom, and homeland security
- Defence
  - India imports critical defence technologies from Israel.
  - There are regular exchanges between the armed forces.
  - There is cooperation on security issues, including a Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism.

- Indian armed forces use Israeli Phalcon AWACS (Airborne Warning And Control Systems), Heron drones to Barak anti-missile defence systems
- Agriculture
  - A three-year joint work program has been signed
  - India has benefited from Israeli expertise and technologies in horticulture mechanization, orchard and canopy management, micro-irrigation and post-harvest management
  - Israeli drip irrigation technologies and products are now widely used in India
- Science and Technology
  - India-Israel Industrial R&D and Technological Innovation Fund (I4F) has been set up to secure cooperation
- Energy
  - Tamar and Leviathan gas fields off the coast of Israel were explored recently and India has been one of the first countries to bid for an exploration license in order to extract and import natural gas from the fields.
  - India's ONGC Videsh, Bharat PetroResources, Indian Oil and Oil India were awarded an exploration license by the Israeli government

## Israel-Palestine Conflict

- It is a decades long dispute between Israel and Palestine that began in the middle of the twentieth century when the Jews from various parts of the world were granted the homeland in present-day Israel by Britain.
- It is one of the world's longest conflicts where Israel has occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip which the Palestine state claims.
- Numerous attempts have been made to resolve the conflict as part of the peace process by various groups of countries and the United Nation.
- With time, the countries around have normalised the ties with Israel through the Abraham Accord, Oslo Accord, etc. (PLO itself).

- But the deadlock still persists and the world community is persistent in its effort to attain the two-state solution.
- The situation has become full fledged humanitarian crisis after Israel-Palestine conflict

## India's position on Israel-Palestine Conflict

- Post independence: vowed support for Palestinian cause as they rejected idea of two nations based on religion
- Vote against Israel at UN: partition of Palestine plan was put to vote at the UN, India voted against
- Recognition of Israel: New Delhi, however, recognised Israel in 1950. In 1953, Israel was allowed to open a consulate in Mumbai
- Recognition of PLO : India recognised PLO as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and permitted it an independent office at New Delhi . First non-Arab state to recognize
- The end of the Cold War weakened the Non-Aligned Movement and reduced the ideological hostility towards Israel
- India has often called for immediate halt of violence

## Significance of India's role

- Siding with Israel at the same time sensitive to Palestinian national aspiration (2 nation theory)
- India's engagement in West Asia
- Conflict can impact India's exports



## India Kuwait Relations



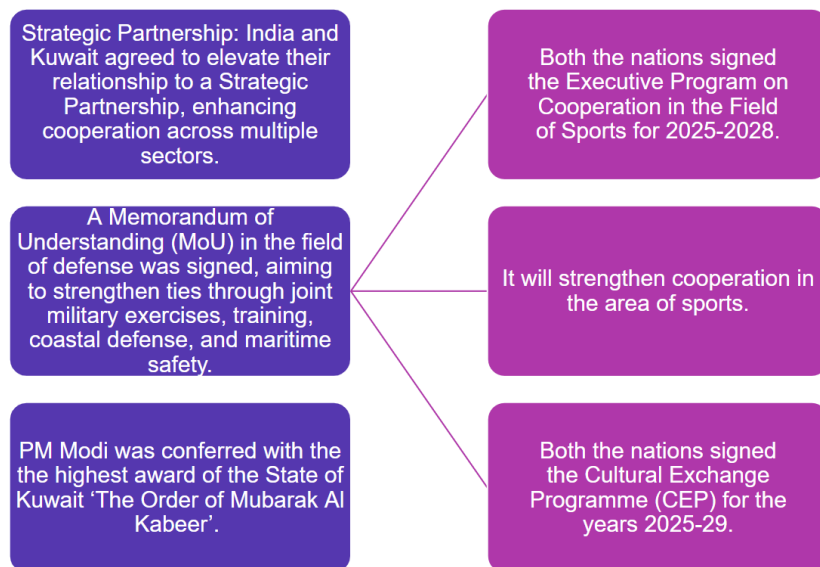
Prime Minister Modi paid an official visit to Kuwait marking a historic moment in India-Kuwait relations.

The last Indian prime minister to visit Kuwait was Indira Gandhi in 1981.

## History of Relations

- Political Relations
  - India was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Kuwait following its independence from the British Protectorate in 1961.
  - Recently a Joint Commission on Cooperation (JCC) was established between India and Kuwait, to review and monitor the entire spectrum of the bilateral relations between the two countries.
- Energy Partnership
  - Kuwait is a significant energy partner, serving as India's sixth-largest crude oil supplier and fourth-largest LPG supplier.
  - It holds approximately 6.5% of global oil reserves, underlining its strategic role in India's energy security.
- Indian Community
  - Indians constitute 21 per cent (1 million) of the total population of Kuwait and 30 percent of its workforce (approximately 9 lakh).
  - Indian workers top the private sector as well as the domestic sector workforce list.
- Trade relations
  - Kuwait remains one of India's top trading partners, with bilateral trade valued at \$10.47 billion in the financial year 2023-24.
- Medical Cooperation
  - An MoU on Medical Cooperation was signed in 2012, with a Joint Working Group set up to review progress.
  - During the COVID-19 pandemic, Kuwait supplied over 425 metric tons of liquid medical oxygen, oxygen concentrators, ventilators etc.

## Key Highlights



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Both the nations signed the Executive Program on Cooperation in the Field of Sports for 2025-2028.

## India-Italy Relations

Prime Ministers of India and Italy reviewed the progress on the sidelines of G7 and G20 Summit and agreed to strengthen cooperation in global and multilateral initiatives, including India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)

### Areas of Cooperation

- Political
  - Political relations between the two countries were established in 1947 which was elevated to Strategic Partnership in 2023.

- In a Virtual Summit in 2020, 2020-2025 Action Plan was adopted that set an ambitious agenda for an enhanced Partnership between the countries.
- Economic
  - Italy is India's 4th largest trading partner in the EU, after Germany, Belgium, and Netherlands.
  - Indo-Italian Joint Economic Commission Cooperation has been in existence since 1976.
  - Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement signed in 2023 to ensure safe and legal migration.
- Technology
  - News Science & Technology Co-operation Agreement signed in Nov 2003, with prime areas of joint research including Electronics, Biotechnology, Energy, etc.
  - New Executive Programme of Cooperation for 2025-27 to promote joint research and development in Science & Technology.
- Defence and Security
  - In 2023, Italy joined the Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative's Science and Technology Pillar.
  - Joint Military exercises: PASSEX Exercise, MILAN (Naval Exercises).
- Cooperation in Multilateral bodies
  - Italy joined the India-led International Solar Alliance, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, Global Biofuels Alliance, and IMEC.

## India-Poland Relations

Recent developments in India-Poland relations have marked a significant shift towards enhanced cooperation, highlighted by the elevation of their bilateral ties to a Strategic Partnership during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Poland on August 21-22, 2024.

This visit was particularly notable as it was the first by an Indian Prime Minister to Poland in 45 years, coinciding with the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

## Key areas of cooperation

- **Strategic Partnership:** The two nations agreed to elevate their relationship to a Strategic Partnership, emphasizing mutual commitment to strengthening cooperation across various sectors, including defense, trade, and technology
- **Five-Year Action Plan (2024-2028):** A comprehensive Action Plan was established to guide collaboration over the next five years. This plan includes:
  - **Political Dialogue and Security:** Regular high-level contacts and annual dialogues to enhance security cooperation.
  - **Trade and Investment:** Efforts to balance trade and explore opportunities in high-tech and green technologies.
  - **Healthcare Collaboration:** Addressing Poland's need for healthcare professionals through potential exchanges and collaborations
- **Defense Cooperation:** Both countries expressed a strong commitment to expanding defense ties, with Poland aiming to support India's domestic defense production efforts. A Joint Working Group for defense cooperation is scheduled to convene in 2024
- **Social Security Agreement:** A landmark agreement was reached to protect the interests of cross-border workers, facilitating easier movement of skilled professionals between the two nations
- **Cultural and Educational Exchanges:** Plans were announced for initiatives such as the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar Youth Exchange Program, aimed at fostering people-to-people connections and cultural understanding
- **Trade:** In 2023, bilateral trade between India and Poland was \$5.72 billion, a 192% increase from 2013. In 2022, trade between the two countries reached a record high of over \$5.6bn.
- **Investment:** India is Poland's second largest destination for foreign direct investment in Asia.
- **Balance of trade:** India has a trade surplus with Poland

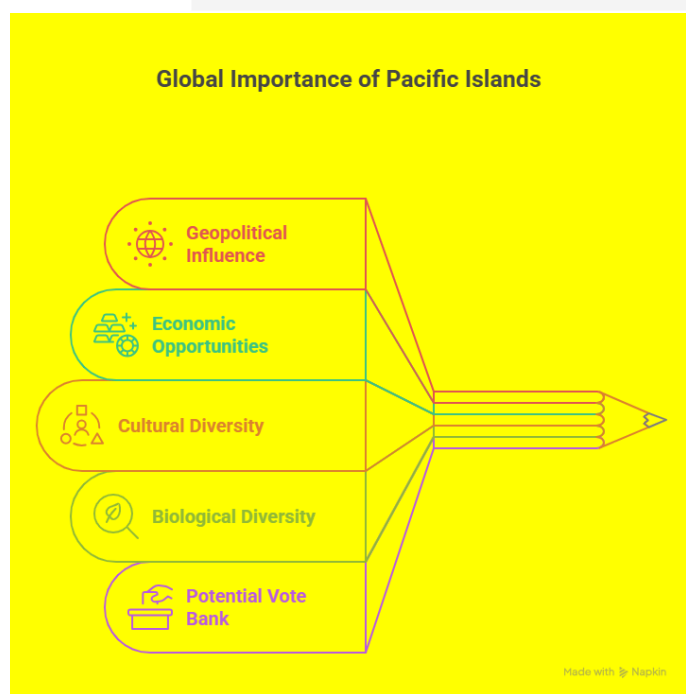


## Geopolitical Significance

- The strategic partnership is seen as a recalibration of India's foreign policy, aiming to strengthen ties with Central European nations amid shifting geopolitical dynamics, including the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.
- Poland's growing economy presents numerous opportunities for India in sectors such as trade, investment, and technology

## FIPIC (Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation)

- India's engagement with the PICs is part of India's Act East Policy.
- A major initiative launched under the rubric of the Act East Policy for the PICs is the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC).
- FIPIC is a multinational grouping developed for cooperation between India and 14 PICs, namely Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.
- It was launched in November 2014





## Highlights of 3rd FIPIC summit

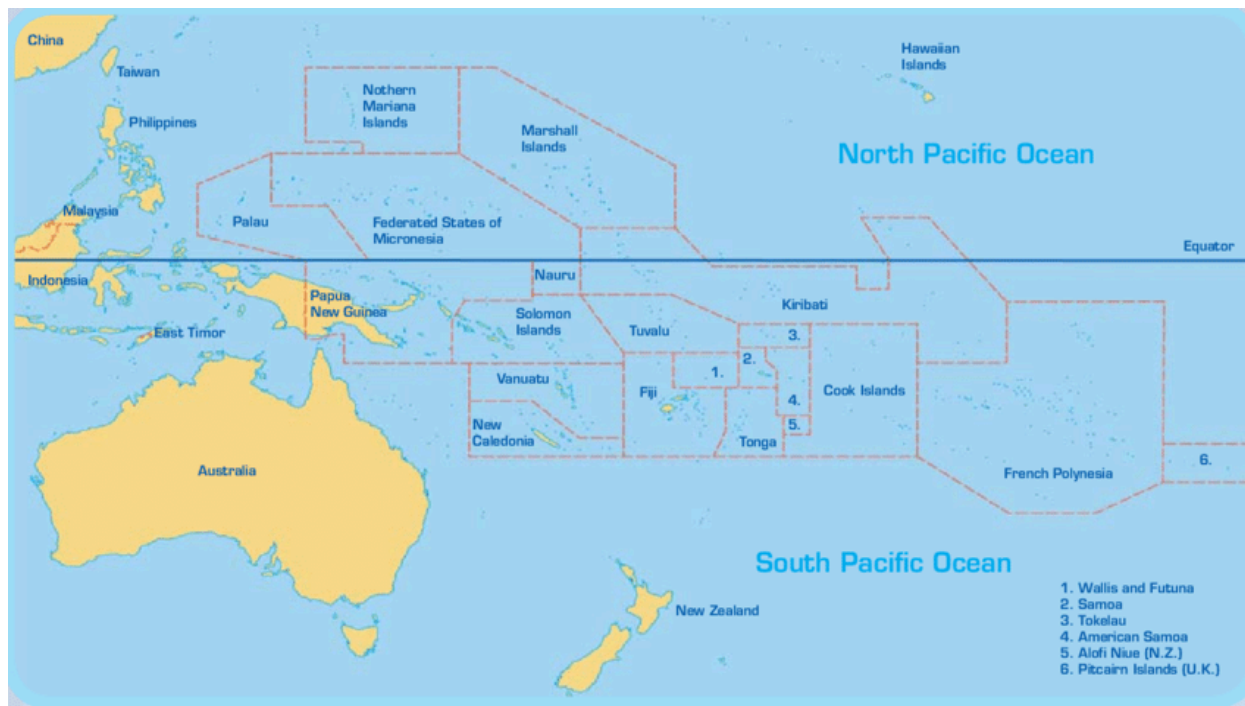
- India's firm stand with PIC
  - India supports the sovereignty and integrity of all countries
  - shared priority of reforming international institutions to amplify the voice of the Global South
  - leaders from the Quad nations have announced plans to implement Open Radio Access Networks (RAN) beginning with Palau in the Pacific Region
  - The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea also urged India to be an advocate for the PICs in the G-7 and the G-20 summits
- 12 point Formula
  - India also unveiled a 12-point development programme in areas of healthcare, cyberspace, clean energy, water and small and medium enterprises in PIC

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## India's relations with PICs

- Historically close
- Assistance during Covid-19
- Mission Sagar Initiative
- Growing economic relations
- Good Future prospects

## Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)



- Shanghai Cooperation Organisation encompasses approximately 60% of the Eurasian area and 40% of the global population.
- The combined GDP of its member states accounts for around 20% of the world's GDP.
- Its main goals are to promote cooperation in politics, security, economics, and culture.
- It has a permanent secretariat in Beijing, China.
- Shanghai Cooperation Organisation has a number of affiliated organizations, including the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) and the SCO Business Council



## Historical Background

It emerged as a successor to the Shanghai Five, which was established in 1996 by China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan.

These countries, along with Uzbekistan, came together on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai to announce the formation of a new organization aimed at deepening political and economic cooperation.

Over time, the organization expanded its membership to include eight states, with India and Pakistan joining on 9 June 2017.

Iran officially became a member in 2023.

The SCO is governed by the Heads of State Council (HSC), which serves as its highest decision-making body and convenes once a year.

## Members

- Shanghai Cooperation Organisation has 10 members, including China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan.
- Belarus joined in July 2024

## Strategic Cooperation Framework

### Cooperation on Security and Terrorism- RATS structure

Focuses on regional security and counter-terrorism efforts.

### Economic Cooperation

Aims to enhance trade and economic growth among member states.



### Military Cooperation

Involves joint military exercises and strategic partnerships.

### Cultural Cooperation

Promotes cultural exchange and understanding.

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**Practice Ques 1**

***Q. Discuss the challenges associated with the political developments in West Asia on India's energy security and suggest ways to address these challenges. (250 words)***

**Introduction:**

West Asia is a strategically significant region for India, accounting for over **50% of its crude oil imports**. However, ongoing **political instability and conflicts**, such as the **Israel-Hamas war**, **Iran-Israel tensions**, and **Houthi attacks in the Red Sea**, have heightened uncertainties around India's **energy security**.

**Challenges:****1. Disruption of supply chains:**

The Houthi rebels' targeting of shipping lanes in the **Bab el-Mandeb Strait** has led to **delays and increased freight costs**, directly impacting oil imports and India's trade routes.

**2. Price Volatility:**

Escalation in Israel-Iran tensions has triggered **global oil price fluctuations**, making India's energy imports costlier and burdening the current account deficit.

**3. Dependence on few suppliers:**

India's reliance on West Asian countries like **Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and UAE** makes it vulnerable to regional political shocks and production cuts orchestrated by **OPEC+**.

**4. Geopolitical balancing act:**

India's ties with **Israel, Iran, and Arab states** require delicate diplomacy. Any perceived tilt could affect bilateral energy deals or political goodwill.

**5. Impact on Indian diaspora:**

Escalating tensions can endanger the large Indian workforce in the Gulf, leading to remittance decline and humanitarian challenges.

**Way Forward:**

- **Diversification of energy sources and suppliers**, including greater investment in Africa and Latin America.
- Strengthening **Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPRs)** to buffer short-term shocks.
- Accelerating the **energy transition** towards renewables and biofuels.
- Enhancing maritime security cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region.

**Conclusion:**

India must adopt a multi-pronged strategy combining **diplomacy, diversification, and domestic resilience** to navigate West Asia's evolving geopolitical landscape and safeguard its energy security.

**PYQ Practice Question**

*Q. 'Virus of Conflict is affecting the functioning of the SCO' In the light of the above statement point out the role of India in mitigating the problems. (Answer in 150 words, UPSC Mains 2023)*

**Conflicts within SCO**

- India and Pakistan: India's long-lost cousin never seems to want to end its conflict with its neighbour.
- India and China: China's aggressive stance of claiming territories of its neighbours as its own has led to problems with its adjacent nations including India.
- The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) too is a problem since it violates India's territorial integrity and is also seen as an aggressive debt-trap move.
- Economic Disparities: With members having huge income disparities, internal friction is bound to arise.

## How India can mitigate problems?

- **Dialogue Promotion:** India has been known as a proponent of dialogues and diplomatic solutions.
- **Cultural Diplomacy:** India enjoys a great number of cultural ties with most of the SCO countries. India should look to properly leverage this soft power.
- **Backchannel Diplomacy:** Track II diplomacy can help create an environment conducive for conflict management.
- **Joint-military Exercises:** These are a great way to familiarise militaries and create healthy relations between nations. For example, Joint SCO anti-terror drill.

## G20

### What is the G20?

The Group of 20 is made up of 19 of the world's biggest economies, as well as the European Union. It formed in 1999 to discuss policy matters and financial stability.





## 19<sup>TH</sup> G-20 SUMMIT BRAZIL

- The 2024 G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, held on November 18-19, marked Brazil's first presidency of the group and focused on significant global issues under the theme "Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet."
- **Social Inclusion and Poverty Alleviation:** One of the summit's primary focuses was addressing hunger, poverty, and inequality. The Global Alliance against Hunger and Poverty was launched, aiming to assist 500 million people in low-income countries through cash transfer programs by 2030
- **Sustainable Development and Energy Transition:** Discussions emphasized the need for sustainable development across economic, social, and environmental dimensions. The summit coincided with COP29 in Azerbaijan, where leaders aimed to enhance climate action commitments
- **Reform of Global Governance Institutions:** Brazil advocated for comprehensive reforms in institutions like the World Bank, IMF, and WTO to better represent the Global South. This includes enhancing decision-making processes that affect developing nations

## 18<sup>TH</sup> G-20 SUMMIT





- 18th G20 Summit was held in New Delhi, India on September 9th and 10th, 2023. The summit was the first time India hosted the G20 Leaders' Summit.
- The theme of the summit was "**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**", which means "**The world is one family**".
- G20 Leaders' New Delhi Declaration achieved unanimous consensus, addressing diverse global issues, from Russia-Ukraine tensions to sustainable development, food security, and launching the Global Biofuel Alliance

## NEW DELHI LEADERS DECLARATION

Key Areas	Highlights
<b>Ukraine War</b>	All states must act in line with the UN Charter. Refrain from threats or use of force.
<b>Grain/Food/Energy Security</b>	Call for unimpeded deliveries of grain, food, and fertilizers/inputs from Russia and Ukraine.
<b>Gender Equality</b>	Creation of a working group on women's empowerment to prioritize gender equality, women empowerment, and leadership.
<b>Food Security</b>	G20 leaders aim to eliminate hunger and malnutrition, address rising commodity prices, and promote transparent and fair trade in agriculture.
<b>Economies &amp; Markets</b>	Commit to protecting the vulnerable through equitable growth. Financial Inclusion Action Plan aimed at advancing financial inclusion for individuals and MSMEs.
	Global Value Chains: A generic framework for mapping global value chains to identify risks and build resilience.
	Reaffirmation of commitment to the twin pillars of the international tax package, including profit allocation and nexus and global minimum taxation.
	A roadmap for implementing the recommendations of the G20 Independent Review of MDBs' Capital Adequacy Frameworks.






Key Areas	Highlights
Technology	Crypto-Assets: A joint roadmap to support a coordinated policy and regulatory framework for crypto-assets.
	Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI): Establishment of a Global DPI Repository to share best practices and experiences in DPI development and deployment.
Climate Change	Accelerate efforts to phase down unabated coal power
	Aim to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030
	Call for ambitious, transparent, and trackable climate finance goals from 2024
	Recognition of the need for about USD 6 trillion in the pre-2030 period for developing countries to implement their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for climate action.
Global Vulnerabilities	Debt Commit to addressing debt vulnerabilities in developing countries. Call for swift conclusion of debt treatment for Ethiopia.
Health	Commit to strengthening global health architecture.
	Emphasis on building a climate-resilient healthcare systems, integrating traditional medicine, and adopting a one-health approach.

## G20 Outcomes

Outcome	Description
 <b>African Union Admittance</b>	Increased developing countries representation
 <b>Global Biofuels Alliance</b>	Promotes biofuels globally
 <b>India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor</b>	Alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative
 <b>India-Mercosur Preferential Trade Agreement</b>	Collaboration to expand economic ties
 <b>G20 Chairmanship Handover</b>	From India to Brazil

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## Cultural Highlights

Highlight	Description
 <b>Bharat Mandapam</b>	Anubhav Mandapam inspired showcase
 <b>Bronze Nataraja</b>	Lord Shiva's cosmic dance
 <b>Konark Chakra &amp; Nalanda</b>	Odisha's Sun Temple displays
 <b>Thanjavur &amp; Dhokra Art</b>	Traditional paintings and metal casting
 <b>Brass Buddha Statue</b>	Buddha meditating under Bodhi tree

## GLOBAL BIOFUELS ALLIANCE

**About:** India led an initiative to develop an alliance of governments, international organizations and Industry to facilitate adoption of biofuels.

**Aim:** To position biofuels as a key to energy transition and contribute to jobs and economic growth.

**Member:** 19 countries and 12 international organizations have already agreed to join

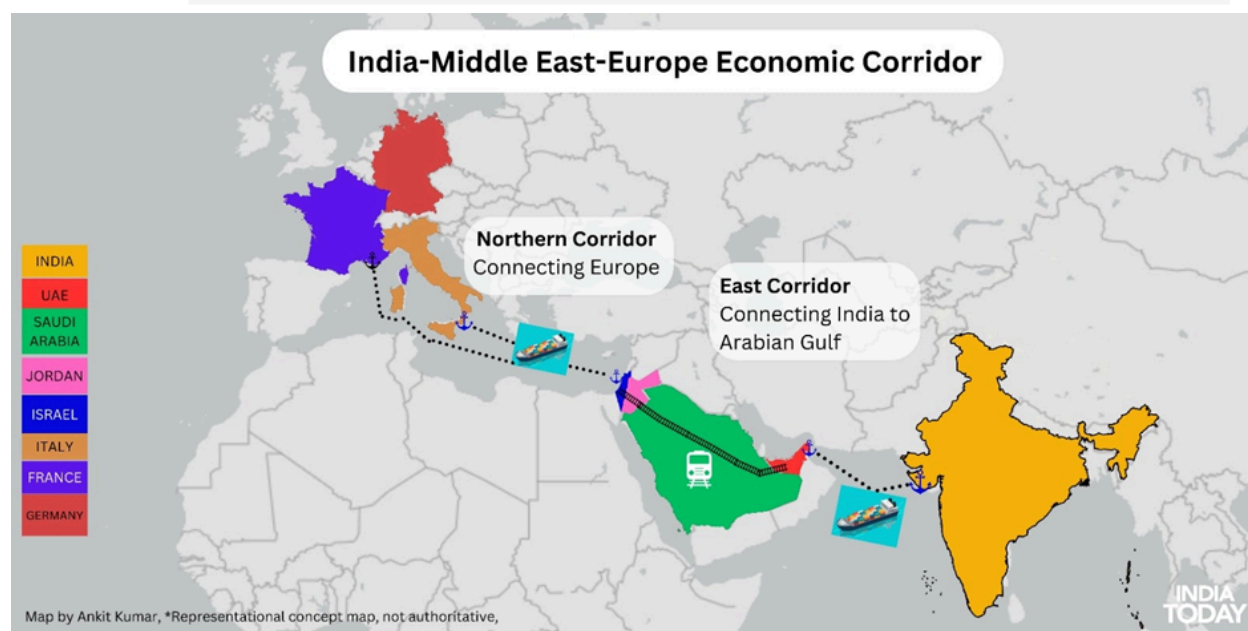
**Working:** Will support worldwide development and deployment of sustainable biofuels by offering capacity building exercises across the value chain, Technical support for national programs and promoting policy lessons- sharing.

## Significance for India

- Tangible outcomes of G20, will strengthen India's position globally
- Provide additional opportunities to Indian industries
- Help accelerate India's existing Biofuels program
- PM-JIVAN
- SATAT
- GOBAR Dhan Scheme
- There will be 3.5-5X biofuels growth potential by 2050 due to Net Zero targets, creating a huge opportunity for India.

## IMEC

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## About

### Participants

- The MOU was unveiled by the governments of India, the United States, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, France, Germany, Italy and the European Union.
- It is expected to attract additional Asian Countries in future.

### Objectives

- The IMEC is a planned economic corridor that aims to bolster economic development (manufacturing, food security, supply chains) by fostering connectivity and economic integration between Asia, the Arabian Gulf and Europe.

### Components of IMEC

- The project would involve the building of a railway line across the Arabian Peninsula through the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia
- Develop shipping connectivity to India and Europe on either end of this corridor.
- The corridor could be further developed to transport energy through pipelines and data through an optical fiber link.

### Significance of IMEC

- Alternative to BRI
- Deepen strategic engagement with Arabian peninsula
- Indo-US collaboration in the Middle East
- Stability in Middle East : Infrastructure for Peace
- Integration of Europe
- Engagement with Africa
- Bypasses Pakistan

## I2U2

- New Strategic partnership between 4 countries
- Referred to as the West Asian Quad/Middle East Quad/New Quad
- To enhance cooperation and collaboration in various sectors
- Main objective of this grouping is to promote economic development, scientific innovation, and regional stability

## OBJECTIVES OF I2U2

- To Reinvigorate and re-establish American partnerships globally
- To enhance collaboration and engagement among the four nations
- To promote deeper economic and trade relations
- To leverage the technological expertise of India, Israel, USA, and UAE
- To examine the possibilities of security cooperation

## FACTORS THAT LED TO FORMATION

- Abraham Accords
- Countering Turkey's assertiveness in the region
- Countering China
- More Focus on Economic Cooperation

## Areas of Cooperation

- **Economic**

Special Focus on economic Cooperation

- **Six Identified Focus Areas**

Water, energy, transportation, space, health, and food security

- **Clean Energy**



Mobilize private sector capital and expertise to help development of critical emerging and green technologies

- **Connectivity**

It aims to advance physical connectivity between countries in the Middle East region.

- **Finding solutions for waste management:**

Strives to jointly create new solutions for waste treatment and explore joint financing opportunities.

- **Strengthening startup ecosystem:**

The four countries will try to connect the startups to I2U2 investments.

- **Security and defense cooperation:**

India and the US are already members of the QUAD, and India has individual bilateral defence cooperation with each of the countries.

- **Climate diplomacy:**

All the members are part of the Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate initiative (AIM for Climate).

## Significance for India

- Improve India's position in global politics
- Market Benefits
- Help improve Strategic Autonomy
- Improve investments in India
- Benefit Indian Diaspora living in these countries
- More flexibility to India in the region
- Diplomacy shifts from bilateral to regional mechanism

# INDO-PACIFIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK (IPEF)

## EVOLUTION

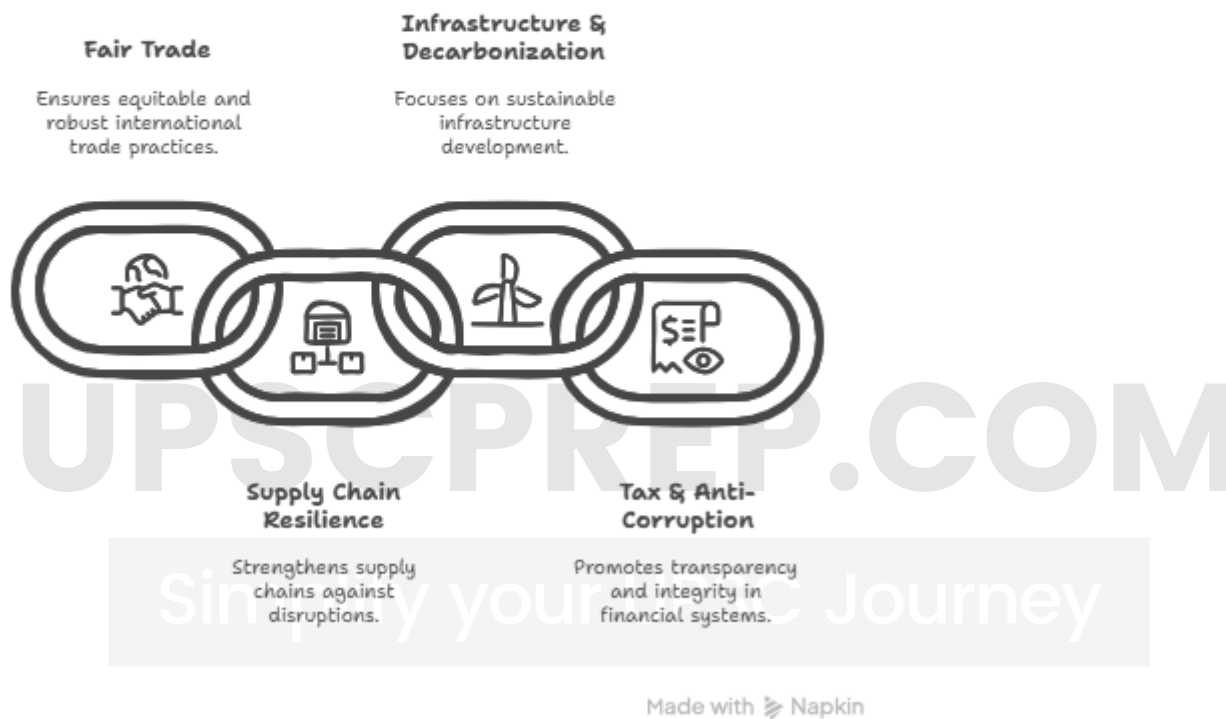
- US President Biden first spoke about the IPEF at the October 2021 East Asia Summit



- Launched in Tokyo, in May 2023, IPEF aims to strengthen economic engagement among the member countries to advance growth, peace and prosperity in the region
- This framework will define our shared objectives around:  
Trade facilitation, standards for the digital economy and technology, supply chain resiliency, decarbonization and clean energy, infrastructure, worker standards, and other areas of shared interest.
- The IPEF has 14 partner countries including Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and the US.

## FOUR PILLARS OF IPEF

### Foundations of Economic Stability



Countries would have to sign up to all the components within a module (pillar), but do not have to participate in all modules.

# INTERNATIONAL SOLAR ALLIANCE

## ABOUT

- The International Solar Alliance is an action-oriented, member-driven, collaborative platform for increased deployment of solar energy technologies as a means for bringing energy access, ensuring energy security, and driving energy transition in its member countries.
- Initially conceived as a joint effort by India and France, ISA was conceptualized during the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) in 2015.
- With its framework Agreement amended in 2020, all UN member states are eligible to join ISA.
- Currently, 120 countries are signatories, with 100 having completed the necessary ratification to become full members
- It is guided by its “Towards 1000” strategy which aims to -
  - Mobilize USD 1000 billions of investments in solar energy solutions by 2030
  - Delivering energy access to 1000 million people using clean energy solutions
  - Resulting in installation of 1000 GW of solar energy capacity.
  - Help mitigate global solar emissions to the tune of 1000 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> every year.
- The assembly is the apex decision making body of ISA, in which each member country is represented
- Headquarters: Gurugram, Haryana

## 7TH ASSEMBLY OF ISA

- The Seventh Assembly of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) took place from November 3 to November 6, 2024, at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, India. This assembly brought together representatives from 120 member and signatory countries, focusing on enhancing global cooperation in solar energy initiatives.



## Key Highlights

- **Leadership Changes:** The assembly re-elected India as President for the term 2024-2026, with France serving as Co-President. Additionally, Ashish Khanna from India was elected as the new Director General of ISA, marking a significant leadership transition within the organization
- **Demonstration Projects:** ISA showcased its success in completing 21 out of 27 demonstration projects, which are crucial for illustrating the potential of solar energy, particularly in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). These projects aim to facilitate the adoption of solar technologies across member nations
- **High-Level Conference:** A key feature of the assembly was the High-Level Conference on New Technologies for Clean Energy Transition, held on November 5, 2024. This conference aimed to promote dialogue and collaboration on advanced solar technologies and their role in achieving sustainable development goals
- **World Solar Reports:** The assembly also saw the launch of the third edition of ISA's World Solar Reports, which included critical insights into solar technology, finance, and market trends. These reports are intended to guide member countries in their solar energy strategies and investments
- **Focus Areas:** Discussions during the assembly centered on three main themes:
  - **Energy Access:** Strategies to improve energy access for underserved populations.
  - **Energy Security:** Enhancing the reliability and sustainability of energy sources.
  - **Energy Transition:** Facilitating a shift towards renewable energy sources globally

# COALITION FOR DISASTER RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE (CDRI)

## ABOUT

- CDRI is India's second major global initiative after the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
- The CDRI Secretariat is based in New Delhi, India
- Independent International Organization consisting of global partnership of national governments, United Nations agencies and programs, multilateral development banks and financing mechanisms, the private sector, and academic and research institutions
- It aims to increase the resilience of infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks, thereby ensuring sustainable development

## MEMBERS

- Since its inception, 31 countries, 6 international organizations and 2 private sector organizations have joined CDRI as members.

## SIGNIFICANCE FOR INDIA

- CDRI provides a platform for India to emerge as a global leader in **climate action and disaster resilience**.
- It boosts India's soft power

## Initiatives of CDRI

- **Infrastructure for resilient Island states (IRIS)**

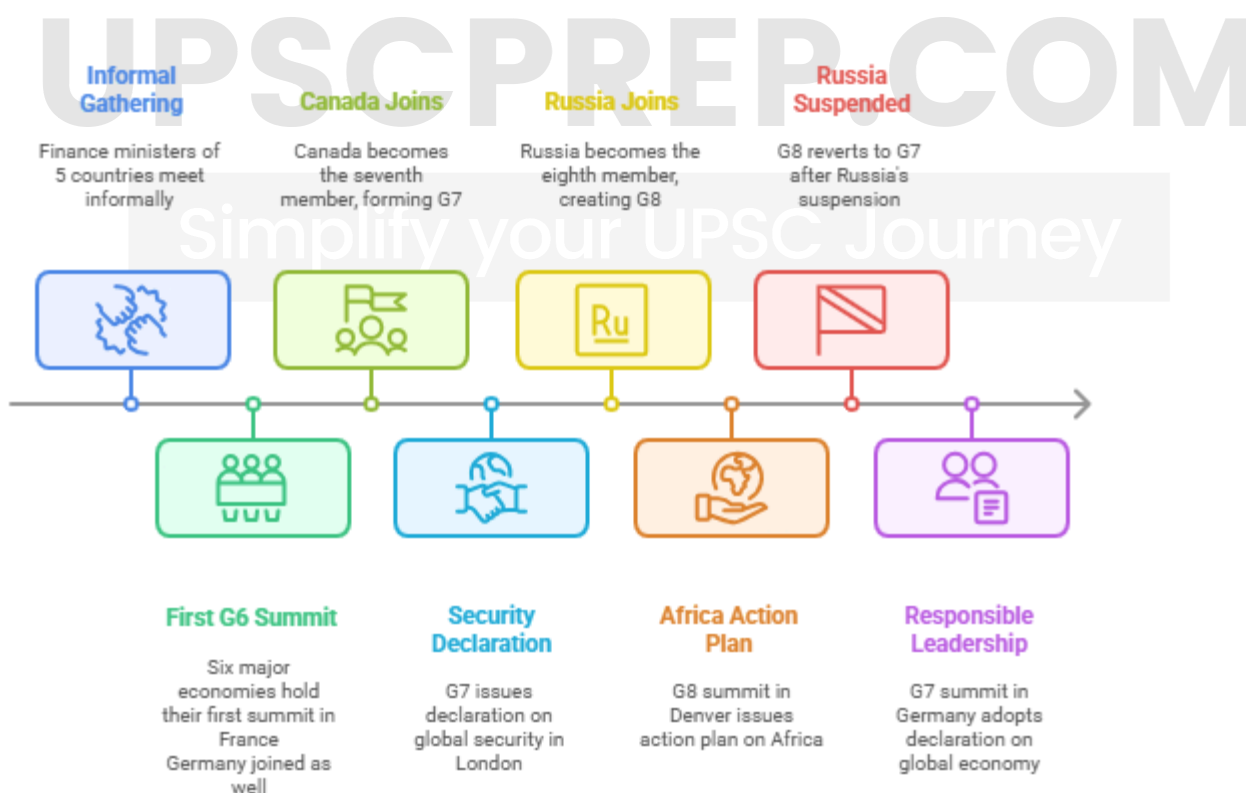
India launched this initiative as a part of the CDRI that would focus on building capacity, having pilot projects, especially in Small Island Developing States or SIDS.

- **Infrastructure Resilience Accelerator Fund**

- The Infrastructure Resilience Accelerator Fund is a fund supported by both the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).
- It is a trust fund that will be managed by the United Nations Multi Partner Trust Fund Office (UN MPTFO) to help in improving the ability of infrastructure systems to withstand disasters with a special focus on developing countries and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

## G7

### Key Milestones in the Evolution of the G7/G8



## Functioning

**Membership:** Apart from the 7 member countries, the European Union (EU) has also participated fully in the G7 since 1981 as a “non-enumerated” member.

**Presidency:** It rotates annually among the member countries, with each country hosting the summit and setting the agenda for the year.

**Meetings:** The G7 holds annual meetings.

**Informal nature:** The G7 does not have a formal charter or secretariat. Decisions are made through consensus, and there is no formal voting system or legal obligations.

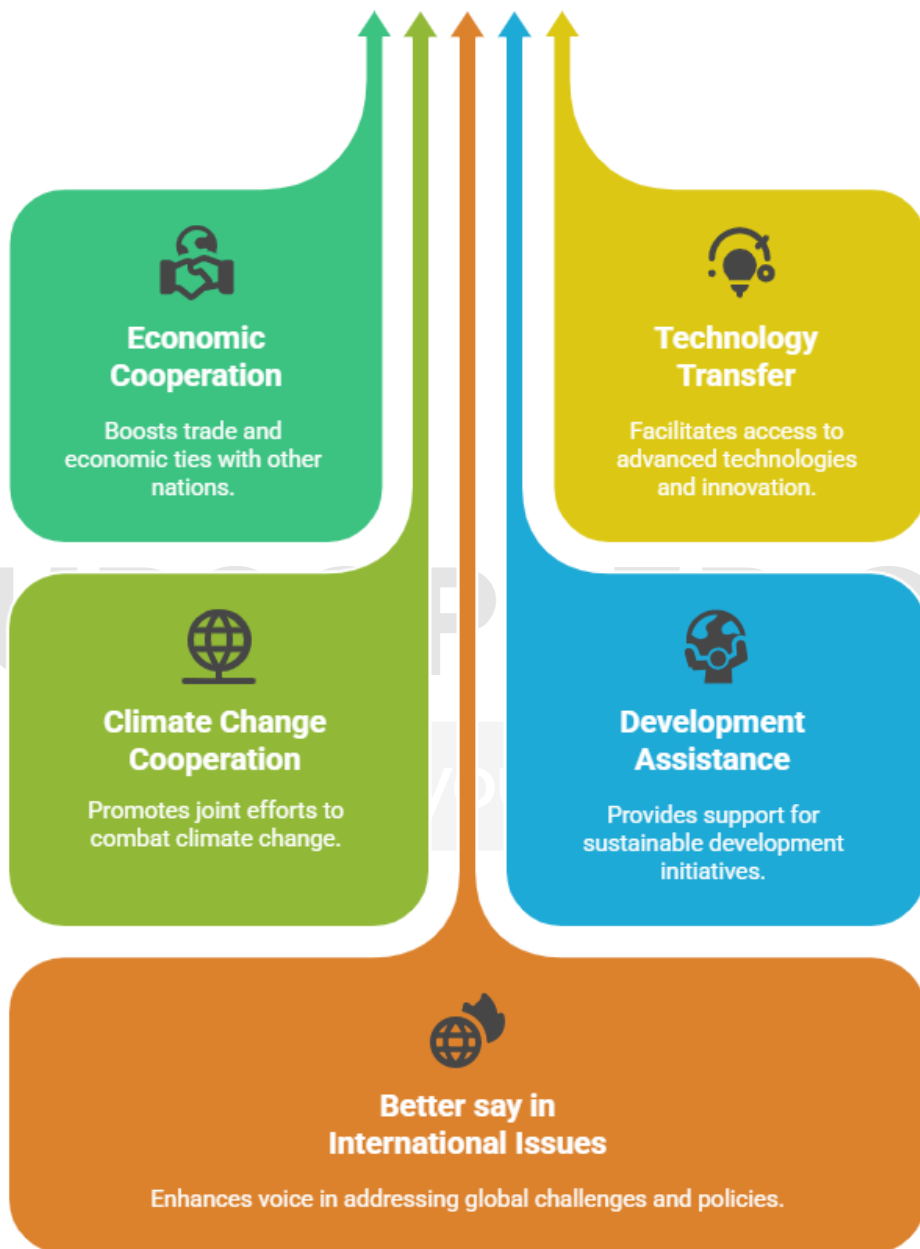
**Focus areas:** The G7 focuses on a range of global issues, including economic growth and stability, climate change, international security, health, gender equality, and humanitarian assistance.

**Outreach:** The G7 has also established outreach programs to engage with non-member countries and organizations,

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## India's Global Impact



## Challenges

- Economic uncertainty among G7
- Climate change: Different approaches
- Challenges during Covid: criticized on vaccine distribution
- Geopolitical tensions
- Rise of China
- G8 to G7

## Outcomes of Italy G7 Summit 2024

- Promotion to G7 PGII (Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment):
  - In the 50th G7 Summit, leaders decided to promote concrete G7 PGII (Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment) initiatives.
  - This initiative was launched by the US and G7 allies at the 48th G 7 Summit in 2022 that aims to narrow the USD 40 trillion infrastructure gap in the developing world.
  - It is a “values-driven, high-impact, and transparent infrastructure partnership to meet the enormous infrastructure needs of low and middle-income countries.
  - Under this, G7 will mobilise USD 600 billion by 2027 to deliver infrastructure projects to developing and middle-income countries.
- Support and Promotion to India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC):
  - G-7 nations committed to promoting the IMEC.
  - IMEC aims to create a comprehensive transportation network, comprising rail, road, and sea routes, connecting India, the Middle East, and Europe.
- Support to Infrastructure Projects: G7 also extended support for the Lobito Corridor in Central Africa and Luzon Corridor and the Middle Corridor.
- Lobito Corridor:
  - It extends from the port city of Lobito on the Atlantic coast of Angola through the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and into Zambia.
- Luzon Corridor
  - It is a strategic economic and infrastructure corridor located on the island of Luzon in the Philippines. Luzon is the largest and most populous island in the Philippines.

- Middle Corridor
  - It is also referred to as the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR), a vital logistics and transportation network connecting Europe and Asia.
  - This route serves as an alternative to the traditional Northern and Southern corridors, enhancing trade and economic cooperation between the regions it traverses.
- The Great Green Wall Initiative
  - It is a project aimed at combating desertification and land degradation in the Sahel region of Africa.
  - It aims to create a wall of trees stretching across Africa from west to east to help prevent the spread of the Sahara Desert, improve biodiversity, and provide economic opportunities for local communities.
- Enhancing Interoperability of AI Governance:
  - The G7 leaders commit to step up efforts to enhance interoperability amongst their AI governance approaches to promote greater certainty, transparency and accountability.
  - It focuses on managing risks in a way that supports innovation and promotes healthy, inclusive, and long-lasting economic growth.
- Extraordinary Revenue Acceleration (ERA) Loans for Ukraine:
  - The G7 agreed to provide financing of approximately USD 50 billion in additional funding to Ukraine by the end of 2024.

## QUESTION 1

**Q) How will I2U2 (India, Israel, UAE and USA) grouping transform India's position in global politics? (2022)**

### HOW I2U2 GROUPING TRANSFORMS INDIA'S POSITION IN GLOBAL POLITICS

- Strategic alliances: This grouping could lead to strategic alliances among the four countries, which could strengthen India's position in the Middle East and provide access to Israel's advanced military technology.
- Countering China's influence: The I2U2 grouping could serve as a counterweight to China's growing influence in the region, as all four countries have concerns about China's aggressive policies.



- **Diplomatic leverage:** This grouping could provide India with greater diplomatic leverage in multilateral forums, such as the United Nations, where these four countries could potentially work together to advance common interests.
- **Strengthened strategic partnerships:** The alliance could strengthen India's strategic partnerships with Israel, UAE, and the US, leading to increased cooperation in areas such as defence, security, and intelligence sharing.
- **Economic benefits:** The partnership could also bring significant economic benefits for India, as it would allow for greater access to the markets of Israel, UAE, and the US, which could boost trade and investment opportunities.
- **Enhanced regional influence:** With Israel and the UAE being important players in the Middle East, the alliance could give India greater influence in the region. The US, on the other hand, is a global superpower, and a partnership with it could boost India's standing on the global stage.
- **Increased geopolitical leverage:** A partnership with the US and Israel, which are seen as influential players in the global community, could give India greater geopolitical leverage, particularly in its relations with China and Pakistan.
- **Potential challenges:** However, the alliance could also face potential challenges, particularly with regard to India's relations with Muslim-majority countries in the Middle East and its traditional stance of non-alignment. India will need to carefully balance its relationships with different countries to avoid alienating any important partners.

## QUESTION 2

**Q) 'Clean energy is the order of the day.' Describe briefly India's changing policy towards climate change in various international fora in the context of geopolitics. (2022)**

## INDIA'S CHANGING POLICY TOWARDS CLIMATE CHANGE IN VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL FORA

- Paris Agreement and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)
  - India played a crucial role in the negotiations and ratification of the Paris Agreement. It committed to reducing its emissions intensity and increasing the share of non-fossil fuel-based power generation in its NDCs.
- International Solar Alliance (ISA)
  - India took the initiative to establish the ISA, a platform for cooperation among solar-rich countries, to promote solar energy deployment. This move showcased India's commitment to clean energy and positioned it as a global leader in renewable energy.
- Geopolitical Influence
  - India's active participation in climate change discussions and commitments reflects its desire to enhance its geopolitical influence. By aligning with global climate change goals, India aims to position itself as a responsible and influential player on the world stage.
- Clean Energy Transition
  - India has launched several domestic initiatives to promote clean energy, such as the National Solar Mission and the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana for clean cooking fuel. These initiatives demonstrate India's commitment to transitioning towards cleaner energy sources and reducing its carbon footprint.
- International Cooperation
  - India has sought international cooperation in clean energy technology transfer, capacity building, and financing. It has engaged with countries and organizations, including the United States, European Union, and International Solar Alliance members, to foster collaborations and secure support for its clean energy goals.
- Climate Finance
  - India has emphasized the need for developed countries to fulfill their commitments of providing financial and technological assistance to developing nations to support their climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. This reflects India's concerns about equitable burden-sharing and the need for financial support to implement clean energy projects.

# India-Egypt Relations

## History of Relations

Ancient Connections: Contact from Mauryan Period

Mahatma Gandhi and Egypt: Inspired lot of Egyptian nationalists

1947: Diplomatic relations established

1955: Friendship treaty was signed

1956: India condemned attack on Egypt during 1956 Suez crisis

1961: Both are founding members of NAM



## Recent Important Developments

- PM visit
- Strategic Partnership Agreement
- India unit in Egyptian Govt.
- Defence Trade and Cooperation
- Economic engagement and trade opportunities
- G20 invitation to Egypt
- Award recognition for PM Modi
- Historical connection in WW-I

## Significance of India-Egypt Relations

- Strategic Location
- Counter Terrorism Cooperation



- Economic Potential
- Cultural and Historical Ties
- Regional Influence
- Defence Cooperation
- Education and knowledge sharing

## Challenges of India-Egypt Relations

- Egyptian Economic Instability
- Political Differences
- Regional Instability
- Navigating regional politics
- China's growing influence
- Competition with other powers

## Way forward

- Enhanced bilateral trade and investment
- Strengthening defence cooperation
- Cultural and educational exchanges
- Cooperation on regional and global issues
- Managing third-party relations

## AUKUS

- Trilateral security partnership for the Indo-Pacific
- Sharing of US nuclear submarine technology to Australia
- Alliance against China's assertive actions in the South China Sea
- Cooperation across emerging technologies (applied AI, quantum technologies and undersea capabilities)

## Concerns related to AUKUS grouping for ASIA

- **Regional Security**
  - Perceived as a challenge to the security and stability of the region, particularly by China
- **Diplomatic Implications**
  - Also been viewed as a diplomatic setback for countries such as India, Japan, and South Korea which have been sidelined
- **Impact on Non-Proliferation**
  - Involves the transfer of nuclear-powered submarine technology to Australia, which has raised concerns about its impact on global non-proliferation efforts
- **Economic Consequences**
  - Raised concerns about its economic implications, particularly for countries such as India that have significant defence industries

## Strategic Consequences for India

- **Strengthening ties with Australia**
  - There is an opportunity for India to deepen its S&T cooperation with Australia
- **Recognizing the Continuing Global Strategic Salience of Britain**
  - AUKUS deal may boost UK's profile in Asia
- **Embracing the idea of an "Anglosphere"**
  - AUKUS deal has brought enduring geopolitical bonds between the US, UK, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand back to life
- **Developing a Unique Set of Arrangements**
  - India has a rare opportunity to develop its own set of arrangements with the US and its allies

## How can India Safeguard its Strategic Interests?

### 1. Exploring Opportunities for Collaboration

India can seek collaborations with AUKUS countries in areas such as maritime security, cybersecurity, and intelligence sharing

### 2. Maintaining Balance

India should maintain a balance between its engagement with AUKUS and other key partners, such as Russia, France, and Japan

### 3. Strengthening Quad

India should work towards strengthening the Quad, which could provide a counterbalance to AUKUS

### 4. Ensuring the Interest of Smaller Countries

India needs to ensure that the interests of smaller countries in the region are not overlooked in any engagements with AUKUS

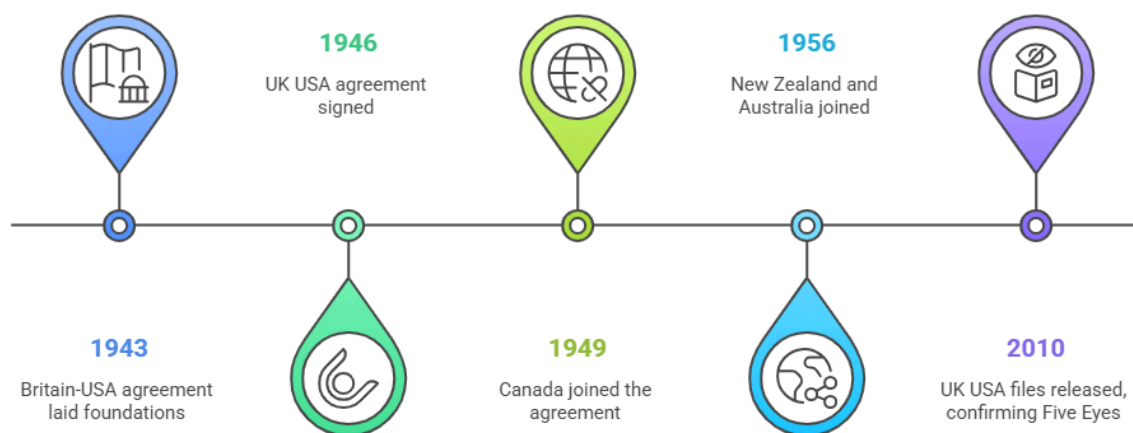
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## Five Eyes Alliance

### About

- An intelligence alliance comprising nations including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the US.
- These countries are parties to the multilateral UK-USA Agreement, a treaty for joint cooperation in signals intelligence
- These partner nations exchange a wide spectrum of intelligence within one of the world's most tightly-knit multilateral agreements as part of the collaboration.
- Following its origin, the agency later enlarged its core group to 'Nine Eyes' and 14 Eyes alliances as well, encompassing more countries as security partners.
- The 'Nine Eyes' group expands to cover the Netherlands, Denmark, France and Norway, whereas the 14 Eyes bloc further includes Belgium, Italy, Germany, Spain and Sweden.

### Evolution of the UKUSA Agreement



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### Working

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- Countries often engage with each other on matters of intelligence gathering and security.
- In recent years, common interests, such as balancing the rise of China, have led to a closer alignment among the Five Eyes countries.
- Their closeness has also been attributed to a common language and mutual trust built over decades of association.
- In 2016, the Five Eyes Intelligence Oversight and Review Council came into being. It includes the non-political intelligence oversight, review, and security entities of the Five Eyes countries

### Role Five Eyes can play in Indo-Canada ties

- Any info which Canada claims it has, had been shared by Five Eyes



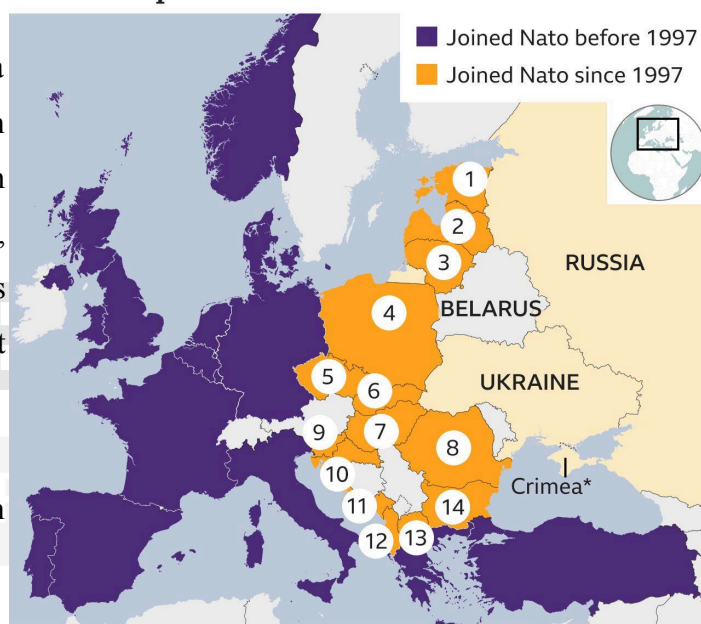
- outright support for India or Canada is unlikely and not has been seen till now, diplomatically isolating Canada
- Given the state of ties, these countries, particularly the US, could play a mediating role in the issue once they have clear intelligence and information on the matter

## NATO

### About

- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a military alliance established by the North Atlantic Treaty (also called the Washington Treaty) of April 1949, by the United States, Canada, and several Western European nations to provide collective security against the Soviet Union
- currently 32 member states
- Recently, Sweden has also joined NATO in 2024
- Finland also joined in 2023
- Headquarters: Brussels, Belgium.
- Headquarters of Allied Command Operations: Mons, Belgium

### Nato's expansion since 1997



- |             |                  |              |                   |
|-------------|------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| ① Estonia   | ⑤ Czech Republic | ⑨ Slovenia   | ⑬ North Macedonia |
| ② Latvia    | ⑥ Slovakia       | ⑩ Croatia    | ⑭ Bulgaria        |
| ③ Lithuania | ⑦ Hungary        | ⑪ Montenegro |                   |
| ④ Poland    | ⑧ Romania        | ⑫ Albania    |                   |

\*Russia annexed Crimea in 2014

### Objectives of NATO

- **Political**

NATO promotes democratic values and enables members to consult and cooperate on defence and security-related issues to solve problems, build trust and, in the long run, prevent conflict

- **Military**

NATO is committed to the peaceful resolution of disputes. If diplomatic efforts fail, it has the military power to undertake crisis-management operations

## NATO Origin

- 1948: United States launched the Marshall Plan, which infused massive amounts of economic aid to the countries of western and southern Europe on the condition that they cooperate with each other and engage in joint planning to hasten their mutual recovery
- 1948: under the Brussels Treaty of 1948, the United Kingdom, France, and the Low Countries—Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg—concluded a collective-defence agreement called the Western European Union
- 1949: These discussions were eventually joined by France, the Low Countries, and Norway and in April 1949 resulted in the North Atlantic Treaty
- 1955: Soviet Union signed up socialist republics of Central and Eastern Europe to the Warsaw Pact. The Pact was officially disbanded in early 1991 after the dissolution of the Soviet Union itself

## How does NATO function?

- NATO has an integrated military command structure but very few forces or assets are exclusively its own.
- Most forces remain under full national command and control until member countries agree to undertake NATO-related tasks.
- All 30 allies have an equal say, the Alliance's decisions must be unanimous and consensual, and its members must respect the basic values that underpin the Alliance, namely democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.
- NATO's protection does not extend to members' civil wars or internal coups.
- NATO is funded by its members. The U.S. contributes roughly three-fourths of NATO's budget.

# RCEP

## About

- The RCEP is a significant economic agreement between ASEAN members and Free Trade Agreement (FTA) partners.
- RCEP is the world's largest trading bloc. It is designed to promote economic integration, trade liberalization, and cooperation among member nations.
- The RCEP negotiations began in 2012. It was officially signed in November 2020, marking a major milestone in regional trade. It was entered into force on January 1, 2022.
- Coverage Areas: The RCEP negotiation includes trade in goods, trade in services, investment, economic and technical cooperation, intellectual property, competition, dispute settlement, e-commerce, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and other issues.



## Objectives and Benefits of RCEP

### Objectives

- Facilitate trade and investment among member nations.
- Reduce or eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers to trade.
- Enhance economic cooperation and regional supply chains.

### Benefits

- Promotes economic growth and regional stability.
- Streamlines trade procedures and regulations.
- Encourages foreign investment.

- Enhances competitiveness and innovation.

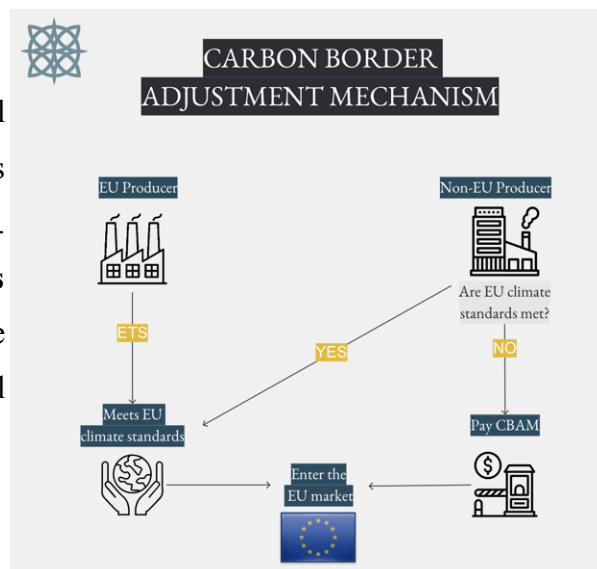
## India and RCEP

- India was a founding member of the RCEP. In 2019, India decided to withdraw from the RCEP negotiations.
- India's decision to exit the RCEP was based on concerns about the impact on its domestic economy.
- Primary concerns included fears of an influx of Chinese goods into the Indian market, affecting local industries.
- Issues related to mobility in services and reservations from the agriculture sector and small businesses were contributing factors.

## Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism

The **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)** is a landmark policy tool introduced by the **European Union (EU)** to tackle carbon leakage and promote global climate responsibility. It aims to impose a **carbon price on imports of certain goods** from countries that do not have equivalent carbon pricing mechanisms. By aligning the carbon cost of imported goods with that of EU-produced goods, CBAM seeks to ensure that climate efforts within the EU are not undermined by cheaper, carbon-intensive imports.

This mechanism marks a significant shift in global trade and climate policy, as it intertwines environmental standards with international commerce. For countries like India, CBAM poses both **challenges and opportunities**—from concerns over trade competitiveness and compliance costs to the potential for green innovation and transition financing.



## Arguments in favor of implementation of CBAM

- Promotes decarbonisation globally
- Prevents carbon leakage
- Level playing field for businesses
- Revenue generation for climate initiatives
- Stimulates innovation in clean technologies
- Encourages other countries to adopt carbon pricing

## Arguments against the implementation of CBAM

- Discrimination against developing countries
- Contradiction with multilateral agreements
- Potential for trade disputes
- Complicated implementation
- Possibility of retaliatory measures
- Questionable justification

### CARBON BORDER ADJUSTMENT MECHANISM

A CBAM **adds a tariff** to imports equal to the carbon price domestic manufacturers face. An **export rebate** allows domestic manufacturers to be competitive in international markets.

$$\begin{array}{lcl} \text{Imported product} & + & \text{Tariff} \\ \text{carbon price} & & \\ \hline & = & \text{DOMESTIC MARKET carbon price} \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{lcl} \text{Exported product} & - & \text{Rebate} \\ \text{carbon price} & & \\ \hline & = & \$ \end{array}$$

## Reasons for India's worry

- Potential Impact on key industries
- A Barrier to free trade
- Transparency Concerns
- Risk of retaliation and trade disputes

## India's plan to tackle

- Conducting sectoral analysis
- Engaging relevant departments

### RIISING TENSION

The proposed tax has raised concerns among Indian metal producers, who fear it will create a new trade barrier for exports to Europe.

Share (%) of CBAM products in India's exports



India's total exports of CBAM products to EU:

**\$8.22 bn**

Impact on sectors covered under CBAM

	Number of tariff lines affected	EU's share (%) in India's exports of CBAM products
<b>↑ HIGH</b>		
Iron ore, concentrates	16	19.9
Steel products	163	20
Iron and steel	473	31.4
Aluminium and products	85	27.7
<b>↓ LOW</b>		
Cement	14	6.1
Fertilizer	24	0.7
Hydrogen	1	0
Electrical energy	1	0

CBAM: Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism

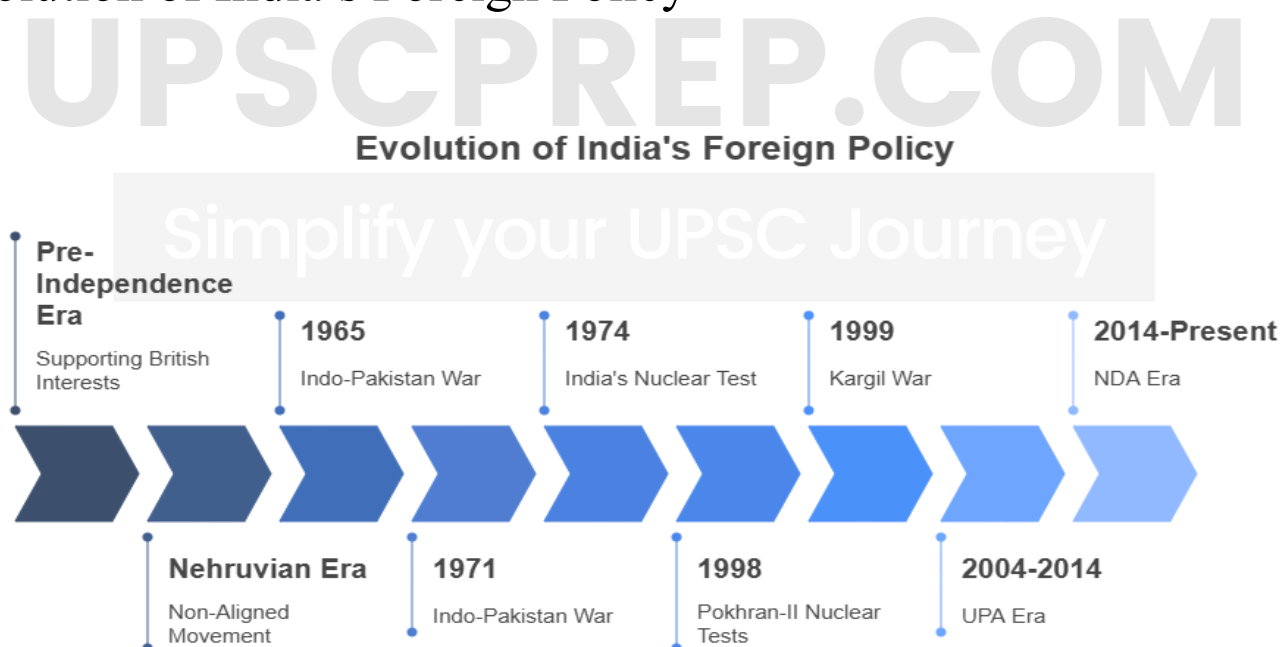
Source: Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI)

- Incorporating CBAM into FTA Negotiations
- Demanding transparency
- Building alliances with developing nations

## Way Forward

- Adopting uniform carbon pricing
- Capacity building in developing countries
- Balancing trade and climate action
- Revisiting multilateral agreements
- Establishing clear rules of origin

## Evolution of India's Foreign Policy



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## Genesis and Pre-Independence Approach

- Supporting Britishers Interest
- Limited Diplomatic Engagement
- Role of INC
- Promotion of India's Interests

## Nehruvian Era

- Independence and partition
- The Panchsheel (Five Principles)
- United Nations Membership
- Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)
- The Sino-Indian War
- India's relations with the Soviet Union

## Lal Bahadur Shastri's era

- The Indo-Pakistan War of 1965
- The Tashkent Declaration
- India-Soviet Union relations
- Public Law 480 (PL 480) program

## Indira Gandhi's Era

- The Indo-Pakistan War of 1971
- Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation (1971-1991)
- India's nuclear test, 1974
- SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation)



## Janata party Era

- The Desai government re-established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, which had been severed due to the Sino-Indian War of 1962.
- The Desai government ended India's support for the guerrillas loyal to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founding leader of Bangladesh, who had been assassinated in 1975 by military officers and replaced by a military regime that sought to distance itself from India.
- India also sought to improve relations with the United States, which had been strained due to the latter's support for Pakistan during the 1971 war and India's subsequent proximity with the Soviet Union.

## Rajiv Gandhi's Era

- India-Soviet Union relations
- Sri Lankan civil war
- The 1985 Air India bombing
- India's economic liberalization: initial beginning

## Foreign policy in 1990s

- LPG (Liberalization Privatization and Globalization) reforms
- Gujral Doctrine
- Look East Policy
- WTO Participation

## Gujral Doctrine

- It was a set of five principles to guide the conduct of foreign relations with India's immediate neighbours in South Asia.

- Non-reciprocity with neighbours.
- Territory should not be used against the interest of another country.
- Non-interference in internal affairs.
- Respect each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty.
- Settle all disputes through peaceful bilateral negotiations.

### NDA-I (1998-2004)

- The Pokhran-II nuclear tests in 1998
- Kargil War 1999
- India-US Relations improvement

### UPA-I and UPA-II (2004-2014)

- Indo-US 123 Agreement
- Increased engagement with China
- Land Border Agreement with Bangladesh
- Increased push to Look East Policy
- The India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement
- Push for UNSC reforms

### NDA-II & III (2014 till Present)

- Neighbourhood First Policy
- Act East Policy
- Membership of SCO
- India-US Strategic Partnership
- Climate Commitments
- SAGAR initiative

- QUAD, I2U2, IPEF
- Formed ISA, CDRI and GBA
- Multilateralism

## Current Challenges to India's Foreign Policy

- Russia-Ukraine Issue
- Refugee Issue
- China's Assertiveness
- Balancing its old commitments with new
- National Interests vs International Commitments
- Unstable Neighbourhood
- Global Slowdown
- Israel-Hamas Conflict

## Way Forward

- Balancing Internal and External Development
- Balancing Internal and External Development
- Pouring Ethical Values in Foreign Policy
- Policy Evolution Along with Maintaining Basic Principles
- Shaping the Global Agenda
- Diplomacy for Development

## Effect of China's Policies on India

### Global Security Initiative (GSI) of China

- Principle of Indivisible Security

- Asian Security Model
- Opposing Sanctions
- Tackling New Cold War

## Reaction of QUAD

- Quad is not a Military Alliance: The members of the Quad have rejected the notion that it is an Asian NATO or a military alliance, and pointed to its broad-based cooperation, including on vaccines and technology.
- Double Standards of China: Chinese criticism of unilateralism, hegemony and double standards is usually aimed at the US.
- Impact of Russia-Ukraine War: China's new advances in the Pacific could be related to the stagnation of the Belt and Road Initiative, due to the Ukraine war.

## Global Development Initiative of China

- The stated purpose of GDI is to galvanise worldwide attention to development, strengthen global development partnership, promote international development cooperation, and give a fresh impetus to the realisation of the 2030 sustainable development goals (SDGs).
- China will enhance consultation with other emerging markets and developing countries, and hold a high-level meeting on global development at a proper time to discuss ways to promote development
- China will increase input in development and further ramp up support for the South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund and the China-UN Peace and Development Fund.
- China will build on the consensus to establish a pool of GDI projects to be participated by all parties, and seek early harvest

## Global Civilizational Initiative of China

- As part of this broader framing effort, Beijing introduced the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI) in March 2023, which promotes a state-focused and state-defined values system and marks another effort by Beijing to eliminate universal values in areas such as human rights and democracy, in line with principles in the GSI
- In this future, China will be in the lead, and the international system will be friendlier to autocratic governments; sovereignty will come at the expense of individual liberties, while universal values such as democracy and human rights, which have been at the core of world affairs for decades, will be stripped from global governance

## Impact on India of these policies

- It will increase competition with India of who could be leader of Global South
- Direct security challenge to India
- It will increase China as a Soft power nation
- Can lead to more disputes with China in future

## Global South

### About

- The term 'Global South' began by loosely referring to those countries that were left out of the industrialisation era.
- These countries had a conflict of ideology with the capitalist and communist countries, accentuated by the Cold War.
- It includes countries that are in Asia, Africa and South America.

- 'Global South' is just the opposite of 'Global North', defined essentially by an economic division between the rich and poorer countries.

## Challenges Before Global South

- International Disputes
- Securing Supply Chains
- Adequate Energy Supply
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Multilateralism

## India's approach to global South

- Leader of NAM: History of Support
- Voice of Global South Summits
- Proactive stand on issues wrt climate change, energy transition, taking a stand on normative issues or protecting the Global South's interest
- bringing out an alternative narrative to global geopolitics.
- Global Partnerships which are inclusive like ISA, CDRI and GBA

## United Nations

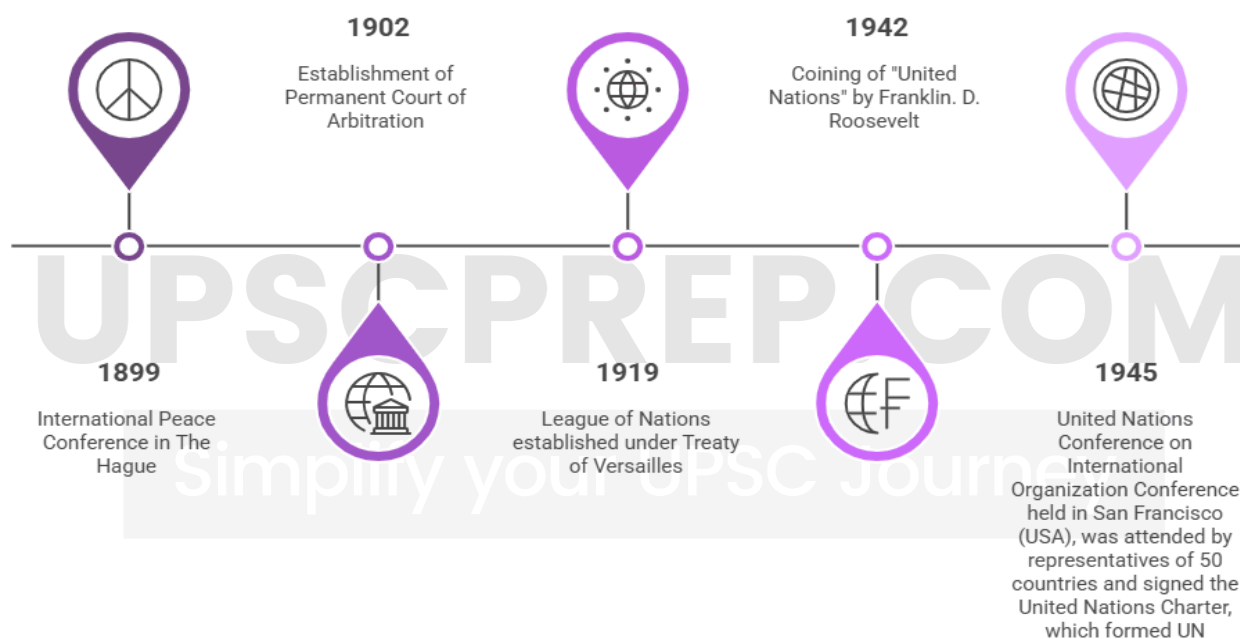
### Introduction

The United Nations (UN) is an international organization founded in 1945. It is currently made up of 193 Member States. Its mission and work are guided by the purposes and principles contained in its founding Charter and implemented by its various organs and specialised agencies. Its activities include maintaining international peace and security, protecting human

rights, delivering humanitarian aid, promoting sustainable development and upholding international law.

## Timeline of Formation

### Key Milestones in International Peace and Cooperation



## Main Organs of United Nations

- General Assembly
- Security Council
- Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
- Trusteeship Council
- International Court of Justice (ICJ),
- UN Secretariat



## UN SECURITY COUNCIL STRUCTURE LOCKS INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

UN Security Council's five permanent members' use of their veto power for their national interests leads to questioning of the legitimacy of the UNSC

### UNSC STRUCTURE

- Use of force **at UN** is decided **by UNSC**
- **Five permanent** members have the right to veto a draft resolution
- To adopt a draft resolution, none of the permanent members should veto it and **9 countries** should vote in favor



China and Russia have vetoed four draft resolutions **on Syria** since 2011

The U.S. has used its veto right 42 times **for Israel** since 1972

**Palestine** has not become a UN member, as full membership requires **UNSC approval**

China **blocks Taiwan's UN membership**, not recognizing Taiwan as a sovereign country

### CRITICISM OF UN STRUCTURE

- Permanent membership system
- Five permanent members' veto right and weak equal representation due to a small number of members

### PERMANENT MEMBERS



### REFORM PROPOSALS

- Increasing the number of non-permanent members
- Restricting veto right

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## United Nations General Assembly

- Main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the UN
- Universal representation of 193 member states
- Annual General Assembly session in September every year in New York
- Decisions on important questions: 2/3rd majority reqd.
- Decisions on other questions are by simple majority
- The President of the General Assembly is elected each year for a year period
- Total six main committees

## ECOSOC

### ECOSOC Functions

- Assist the General Assembly
- Assist the Security council when requested
- Create commissions
- Convene international conferences
- Conduct follow up and review the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and other UN Summits and Conferences
- Coordinate the work of specialized agencies along with funds and programmes
- Provide a platform for engagement with non governmental organizations
- Issue studies and reports
- Make recommendations

### Trusteeship Council

It was established in 1945 by the UN Charter, under Chapter XIII. Trust territory is a non-self-governing territory placed under an administrative authority by the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations. A League of Nations mandate was a legal status for certain territories transferred from the control of one country to another following World War I, or the legal instruments that contained the internationally agreed-upon terms for administering the territory on behalf of the League of Nations.

United Nations trust territories were the successors of the remaining League of Nations mandates and came into being when the League of Nations ceased to exist in 1946.

It had to provide international supervision for 11 Trust Territories that had been placed under the administration of seven Member States and ensure that adequate steps were taken to prepare the Territories for self-government and independence. By 1994, all Trust Territories had attained self-government or independence. The Trusteeship Council suspended operation on 1 November 1994.

## International Court of Justice (ICJ)

The International Court of Justice is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations.

It was established in June 1945 by the Charter of the United Nations and began work in April 1946. The ICJ is the successor of the Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ), which was established by the League of Nations in 1920.

## Secretariat

The Secretariat comprises the Secretary-General and tens of thousands of international UN staff members who carry out the day-to-day work of the UN as mandated by the General Assembly and the Organization's other principal organs.

The Secretary-General is chief administrative officer of the Organization, appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council for a five- year, renewable term.

UN staff members are recruited internationally and locally, and work in duty stations and on peacekeeping missions all around the world.

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## Various Funds and Programmes under UN

### UNICEF

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), originally known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, was created by the United Nations General Assembly in 1946

Mandate: To address the long-term needs of children and women in developing countries everywhere

Executive Board: A 36-member board establishes policies, approves programs and oversees administrative and financial plans.

UNICEF relies on contributions from governments and private donors.

UNICEF's Supply Division is based in Copenhagen (Denmark) and serves as the primary point of distribution for essential items

## UNFPA

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), formerly the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency.

Its mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, 'every childbirth is safe' and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

In 2018, UNFPA launched efforts to achieve three transformative results, ambitions that promise to change the world for every man, woman and young person:

Ending unmet need for family planning

Ending preventable maternal death

Ending gender-based violence and harmful practices

## UNDP

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the UN's global development network.

UNDP was established in 1965 by the General Assembly of the United Nations. It provides expert advice, training and grants support to developing countries, with increasing emphasis on assistance to the least developed countries.

The UNDP Executive Board is made up of representatives from 36 countries around the world who serve on a rotating basis. It is funded entirely by voluntary contributions from member nations.

UNDP is central to the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG), a network that spans 165 countries and unites the 40 UN funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other bodies working to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## UNEP

The United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) is a global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system.

It was founded by the UN General Assembly as a result of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm Conference) in June 1972.

UNEP and World Meteorological Organization (WMO) established the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1988 to assess climate change based on the latest science.

Since its founding, the UNEP has played a key role for the development of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs)

## UN-Habitat

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is the United Nations programme working towards a better urban future. Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.

It was established in 1978 as an outcome of the First UN Conference on Human Settlements and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat I) in Vancouver, Canada, in 1976. The 2nd United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1996.

**Twin Goals - Habitat Agenda:** *Adequate shelter for all +Development of sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world.*

The 3rd United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) was held in 2016 in Quito, Ecuador. It elaborated on Goal-11 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG): "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable."

## World Food Programme (WFP)

World Food Programme (WFP) is the leading humanitarian organization saving lives and changing lives, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience. The **WFP was established in 1963 by the FAO (The Food and Agriculture Organization) and the United Nations General Assembly.**

## UN Specialized agencies

The UN specialized agencies are autonomous organizations working with the United Nations. All were brought into a relationship with the UN through negotiated agreements. Some existed even before the First World War. Some were associated with the League of Nations. Others were created almost

simultaneously with the UN. Others were created by the UN to meet emerging needs. Articles 57 and 63 of the UN Charter provide for the creation of specialised agencies.

## FAO

In 1945, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was created In **Quebec City**, Canada, by the first session of the newly created United Nations. **FAO is a specialized agency of the United Nations** that leads international efforts to defeat hunger. FAO is also a source of knowledge and information and helps developing countries in transition modernize and improve agriculture, forestry and fisheries practices, ensuring good nutrition and food security for all.

## ICAO

Under the Chicago convention, the international civil aviation organization (ICAO) was **established in 1944**, as a UN specialized agency. It manages the administration and governance of the convention on international civil aviation (Chicago convention). It provides the principles and techniques of international air navigation and fosters the planning and development of international air transport to ensure safe and orderly growth.

## IFAD

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) was **established as an international financial institution in 1977 through the United Nations General Assembly Resolution as one of the major outcomes of the 1974–World Food Conference**. This conference was organized by the United Nations in response to the food crises of the early 1970s, when global food shortages were causing widespread famine and malnutrition, primarily in the Sahelian countries of Africa. It was realized that food insecurity and famine were not so much failures in food production but structural problems relating to poverty



## ILO

It sets **international labour standards**, promotes rights at work and encourages decent employment opportunities, the enhancement of social protection and the strengthening of dialogue on work-related issues. The International Labour Organization (ILO) is a United Nations agency whose mandate is to **advance social justice and promote decent work by setting international labour standards**.

## IMF and World Bank

### IMF

UN Monetary and Financial Conference (1944, also called Bretton Woods Conference), Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, United States was held to regulate the international monetary and financial order after the conclusion of World War II.

It resulted in foundation of International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1945

### World Bank

UN Monetary and Financial Conference (1944, also called Bretton Woods Conference), was held to regulate the international monetary and financial order after the conclusion of World War II.

It resulted in the foundation of IBRD in 1945. IBRD is the founding institution of World Bank

## IMO and ITU

### IMO

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) – is the United Nations specialized agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships

### ITU

International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) that is responsible for issues that concern information and communication technologies (ICT). It is the oldest among all the specialised agencies of the UN.



## UNESCO and UNIDO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was founded in 1945 to develop the “intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind” as a means of building lasting peace. It is in Paris (France).

In this spirit, UNESCO develops educational tools to help people live as global citizens free of hate and intolerance.

By promoting cultural heritage and the equal dignity of all cultures, UNESCO strengthens bonds among nations.

### UNESCO

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) promotes industrial development for poverty reduction, inclusive globalisation and environmental sustainability.

### UNIDO

## UNCTAD and UNODC

### UNCTAD

UNCTAD supports developing countries to access the benefits of a globalized economy more fairly and effectively. It helps to use trade, investment, finance, and technology as vehicles for inclusive and sustainable development.

### UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is a global leader in the fight against illicit drugs and international crime.

It was established in 1997 through a merger between the United Nations Drug Control Programme and the Centre for International Crime Prevention.

UNODC is mandated to assist Member States in their struggle against illicit drugs, crime and terrorism

## WHO

The World Health Organization (WHO) is the United Nations’ specialized agency for health.

It was established in 1948, and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

It is an intergovernmental organization and works in collaboration with its Member States usually through the Ministries of Health.

The World Health Organization (WHO) is responsible for providing leadership on global health matters, shaping the health research agenda, setting norms and standards, providing evidence-based policy options, providing technical support to countries, and monitoring and assessing health trends.

## UNHCR and ESCAP

### UNHCR

The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was created in 1950, during the aftermath of the Second World War, to help millions of Europeans who had fled or lost their homes.

In 1954, UNHCR won the Nobel Peace Prize for its groundbreaking work in Europe.

The start of the 21st century has seen UNHCR help with major refugee crises in Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

It also uses its expertise to help many internally displaced by conflict and expanded its role in helping stateless people.

### ESCAP

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is the main economic and social development centre of the UN in the region, headquartered in Bangkok (Thailand) in 1947.

It responds to the development needs and priorities of the region through its convening authority, economic and social analysis, normative standard-setting and technical assistance

## UN Contribution to World

- Peace and Security
  - Maintaining Peace and Security
  - Preventing Nuclear Proliferation
  - Supporting Disarmament

- Preventing genocide
- Economic Development
  - SDGs
  - Alleviating Rural Poverty
  - Focusing on African Development
  - Promoting Women's Well-being
  - Fighting Hunger
  - Commitment in Support of Children
  - Developing Tourism
  - Global Think Tank
- Social development
  - Preserving Historic, Cultural, Architectural and Natural Sites
  - Taking the lead on global issues of women, Environment, Population
- Human Rights
  - UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948
  - Fostering Democracy
  - Ending Apartheid in South Africa
  - Promoting Women's Rights
- Environment
  - Taking issues wrt Climate Change
  - Protecting the Ozone Layer
  - Banning Toxic Chemicals
- International Law
  - Prosecuting War Criminals
  - Helping to Resolve Major International Disputes
  - Stability and Order in the World's Oceans
  - Combating International Crime
  - Encouraging Creativity and Innovation

- Humanitarian Affairs
  - Assisting refugees
  - Aiding Palestinian Refugees
  - Reducing the Effects of Natural Disasters
  - Providing Food to the Neediest
- Health
  - Promoting Reproductive and Maternal Health
  - Responding to HIV/AIDS
  - Wiping Out Polio
  - Eradicating Smallpox
  - Fighting Tropical Diseases
  - Covid-19 coordination

## India's Contribution in UN

By 1946, India had begun voicing strong opposition to colonialism, apartheid, and racial discrimination on international platforms. It emerged as one of the most vocal critics of apartheid, advocating for equality and justice. India played an active role in the drafting of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)**, reflecting its commitment to global human rights norms. However, India's experience with the United Nations has been mixed. On the Kashmir issue, Prime Minister Nehru's deep faith in the UN system and its principles proved to be a diplomatic setback, as the forum was influenced by powers sympathetic to Pakistan's position. Despite these challenges, India continued to engage constructively with the UN. Notably, **Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit** became the first woman to be elected President of the UN General Assembly in **1953**, marking a historic moment. India's role as a founding member of the **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)** and the **Group of 77 (G-77)** further strengthened its stature in multilateral diplomacy. In addition, India has been a consistent contributor to **United Nations Peacekeeping Operations**, reinforcing its commitment to global peace and security.

## Need for Reforming UN Structure

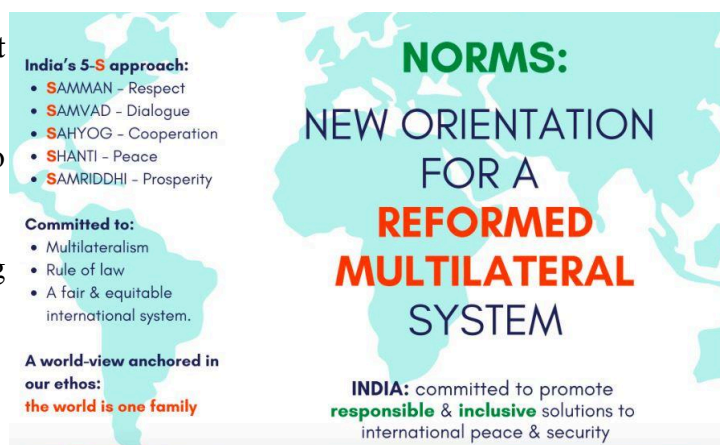
- **Outdated Structure and Decision-Making Processes**
  - P5 and Power Imbalance
  - Lack of representation and inclusivity
- **Ineffectiveness and Inefficiency**
  - Bureaucracy and Red Tapism
  - Duplication of Efforts Among Specialized Agencies
- **Financial Instability**
  - Financial Constraints and Arrears
  - The Equitable Distribution of Financial Burdens

## Proposals to Reform UN

- **Reforming the UNSC**
  - Expanding Permanent Membership
  - Abolishing or Limiting the Veto Power
  - Inclusive Representation for the Global South
- **Streamlining Bureaucracy and Decision-Making**
  - Reducing Inefficiencies in Administrative Processes
  - Enhancing Accountability and Transparency
- **Strengthening Financial Stability**
  - Fair and Equitable Distribution of Financial Contributions
  - Addressing Arrears and Fiscal Constraints

## Political Challenges to Reform UN

- **Resistance from Current Permanent Members**
  - Veto-Wielding Countries Reluctant to Cede Power
  - The Need for Consensus Among Permanent Members



- **Geopolitical Tensions**

- The Impact of Global Conflicts on UN Reform Efforts
- The Role of Regional Powers in Influencing the UN's Agenda

## **Relevance of the UN in 21st Century**

- **The Global Response to Contemporary Crises**

- COVID-19 Pandemic Response
- UN's Continued Role in Humanitarian Assistance

- **Looking Towards the Future**

- Adapting to Evolving Challenges
- The Potential for a Reinvigorated UN through Reforms

## **Indian Diaspora**

The Indian Diaspora is one of the largest and most influential in the world. The diverse group includes Non Resident Indians (NRI), Overseas Citizens Of India (OCI's) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIO's). The migration patterns span centuries- from indentured labour during colonial times to the modern movement of skilled professionals and entrepreneurs. The Indian Diaspora not only contributed significantly to the global economy and cultural exchange but also played a vital role in India's development through remittances, diplomacy, soft power and investment. Understanding who constitutes the diaspora and how they are legally categorized is essential to comprehending India's global footprint and its engagement with its overseas community.

Country	Population of Indian Diaspora (approximate)
United Arab Emirates	Around 3.5 million
United States of America	Around 2.7 million
Saudi Arabia	Around 2.5 million

<b>Malaysia</b>	Around 2 million
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Around 1.4 million

<b>Country</b>	<b>Percentage of population (approximate)</b>
<b>Qatar</b>	Around 30.5 %
<b>United Arab Emirates</b>	Around 27 %
<b>Bahrain</b>	Around 19 %
<b>Oman</b>	Around 18 %
<b>Kuwait</b>	Around 17.5 %

<b>Country</b>	<b>Share in Remittances</b>
<b>USA</b>	23.4%
<b>United Arab Emirates</b>	18%
<b>UK</b>	6.8%
<b>Singapore</b>	5.7%
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	5.1%

## Who constitutes the Indian Diaspora?

The Indian Diaspora is a vibrant and diverse community that spans across the globe, encompassing individuals with Indian heritage and connections to India. This document outlines the key constituents of the Indian Diaspora, including Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), Overseas Citizens of India (OCI), and People of Indian Origin (PIOs), highlighting their definitions and interrelations.



## 1. Non-Resident Indian (NRIs)

A Non-Resident Indian (NRI) is defined as an Indian citizen who resides outside India for more than 182 days in a financial year. Despite their physical absence from the country, NRIs maintain strong ties to their homeland, often engaging in cultural, economic, and social activities that connect them back to India.

## 2. Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI)

Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) is a form of permanent residency granted to individuals of Indian origin and their spouses. This status allows them to live and work in India indefinitely, providing a bridge for those who wish to maintain a connection with their ancestral homeland while residing abroad.

### 2.1 People of Indian Origin (PIOs)

People of Indian Origin (PIOs) are individuals of Indian birth or ancestry who hold citizenship in other countries. They may not be Indian citizens but share a cultural and historical connection to India.

### 2.2 Merger of PIO and OCI

In 2015, the Government of India merged the PIO category under the OCI programme, streamlining the process for individuals of Indian origin to obtain residency and strengthen their ties with India.

In conclusion, the Indian Diaspora is a multifaceted community that includes NRIs, OCIs, and PIOs, each playing a significant role in fostering connections between India and the global landscape.

## Characteristics of Indian Diaspora

- Diversity
- Large Population

- Economic Success
- Cultural Preservation
- Political Involvement
- Strong family values
- Strong Sense of Identity

## Factors that led to large Indian Diaspora

- Historical Factors
- Economic factors
- Social Factors
- Culture: Vasudhaiva Kutumbukam

## Timeline of Government Initiatives for Indian Diaspora

2003

- **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD):** Launched as an annual event to celebrate the contributions of the Indian Diaspora and provide a platform for networking between NRIs, PIOs, and India.
- **Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award:** Established as the highest honor for NRIs and PIOs, recognizing their outstanding contributions to society.

2005

- **Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) Scheme:** Introduced to allow foreign nationals of Indian origin to apply for a lifelong visa to visit India without restrictions on the duration of stay. It also provides benefits such as the ability to open bank accounts, buy property, and invest in India.

2006

- **Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojana:** A mandatory insurance scheme aimed at safeguarding the interests of Indian migrant workers under the Emigration Check Required (ECR) category going for overseas employment to ECR countries.

2021

- **Swarna Pravas Yojana:** A new plan scheme launched to enhance the employability of Indian workers abroad by providing them with necessary training.

## Ongoing Initiatives

- **Tracing the Roots:** A program designed to assist PIOs in tracing their roots in India, fostering a deeper connection with their heritage.
- **Voting Rights for Citizens Abroad:** Initiatives to facilitate voting for Indian citizens residing overseas, ensuring their voices are heard in the democratic process.
- **Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF):** A fund established to support Indian nationals in distress abroad, providing assistance in emergencies and welfare needs.
- **Know India Program:** A program aimed at connecting young PIOs with their roots and promoting awareness about India's culture, heritage, and development.

This timeline encapsulates the Indian government's commitment to fostering a strong relationship with its diaspora, ensuring their welfare, and recognizing their contributions to both India and the global community.

## Measures needed for welfare of Indian Diaspora

- Consular services
- Employment opportunities
- Cultural Programs
- Legal assistance

- Education
- Financial assistance
- Health services

## Conclusion

India's journey on the global stage reflects a dynamic blend of strategic autonomy, cooperative diplomacy and value based engagement. As a rising power in a multipolar world, India's foreign policy is increasingly shaped by its national interests, soft power influence, and global responsibilities. From promoting a **rules-based international order** to leveraging platforms like **QUAD, BRICS, and G20**, India seeks to balance traditional alliances with emerging partnerships.

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