



# Summary

# International Relations



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# 1. DYNAMICS OF CHANGING WORLD ORDE

## 1.1. Emerging World Order

### Why in the News?

India, at BIMSTEC, highlighted a shift toward regional and agenda-specific global order.

### Factors behind New World Order

- ◆ Post-war institutions like the UN struggle in modern crises.
- ◆ Global polycrisis (wars, pandemics, climate change) reshapes priorities.

Opportunities for India	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Leads Global South; enabled AU in G20.</li> <li>◆ Champions green diplomacy (ISA).</li> <li>◆ Engages in multipolar platforms (BRICS, QUAD).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Dysfunctional WTO hampers trade.</li> <li>◆ Climate finance divides persist.</li> <li>◆ Regionalism hinders consensus.</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

India's vision promotes resilient, multipolar partnerships through strategic autonomy and regional focus.

## 1.2. India's Role in Global Diplomacy

### 1.2.1. India's Role as a Global Peacemaker

#### India's Position on Ukraine

- ◆ Urged immediate cessation of violence and ensured humanitarian access.
- ◆ Stressed global order must be anchored in law and sovereignty.
- ◆ Advocates resolution through dialogue and diplomacy.

India's Contributions	Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Raised Global South's voice (e.g., AU in G20).</li> <li>◆ Mediated Sri Lanka civil war.</li> <li>◆ Development-led peace (e.g., Salma Dam in Afghanistan).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Border tensions with Pakistan/China.</li> <li>◆ Internal conflicts and resource constraints.</li> <li>◆ Perceived Western alignment and limited diplomatic reach.</li> </ul>

### Way Forward

- ◆ Lead via Vishwa Bandhu identity.
- ◆ Build partnerships (e.g., Brazil, Norway).
- ◆ Create dedicated peace units.
- ◆ Apply 5-S approach (Samman, Samvad, Sahyog, Shanti, Samridhi).

### Conclusion

India's peace diplomacy marks its emergence as a credible Global South voice and growing international mediator.

### 1.2.2. India and the Global South

#### What is Global South?

- ◆ **Definition:** Less developed countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, often in the Southern Hemisphere.
- ◆ **Brandt Report:** Proposed the North-South divide based on GDP, technology, and development.

#### Challenges of Global South:

- ◆ **Underrepresentation:** No permanent UNSC seats for Africa/Latin America.

- ◆ **Debt Crisis:** Developing nations' debt grows twice as fast as developed ones (UNCTAD).
- ◆ **Climate Vulnerability:** Pacific Islands at high risk from rising seas (WMO).
- ◆ **Ideological Divides:** Conflicts with Global North over democracy/human rights norms.

Significance OF Global South for India	India's Positioning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Supports</b> India's global leadership aspiration.</li> <li>◆ Counters China's influence via <b>"multidirectional alignment"</b>.</li> <li>◆ <b>Offers resource</b> access and export markets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Projects and aid</b> (e.g., Vaccine Maitri, Operation Brahma).</li> <li>◆ <b>Capacity building</b> (India-UN initiative).</li> <li>◆ <b>Climate leadership</b> (ISA, CDRI).</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

India promotes **inclusive, tech-driven, people-centric leadership**—shifting from aid to equitable cooperation via G20 and Global Development Compact.

## 1.3. Rise of Minilateralism

### Why in the News?

'Squad' (U.S., Japan, Australia, Philippines) formed in response to Chinese aggression in Indo-Pacific.

### More on the News

- ◆ Reflects growing preference for informal, targeted coalitions like QUAD, AUKUS, I2U2.

### What are Minilateralism?

Small, focused groupings (3–4 members) addressing specific threats or agendas.

Reasons Behind the Rise of Minilateralism	
Failure of Multilateral Institutions	Advantages of Minilateralism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Unable to address emerging threats <b>(e.g., ASEAN's inaction on China)</b>.</li> <li>◆ Great-power rivalries block reforms <b>(e.g., WTO, UNSC)</b>.</li> <li>◆ Rising Chinese assertiveness fuels alliance-building <b>(e.g., QUAD, AUKUS)</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Agile and consensus-friendly compared to rigid multilateralism.</li> <li>◆ Enables targeted cooperation <b>(e.g., India-Japan-Australia Supply Chain Initiative)</b>.</li> <li>◆ Effective under deglobalization and trade conflicts <b>(e.g., bypassing U.S.-China tensions)</b>.</li> </ul>
Benefits for India	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Maintains strategic autonomy <b>(e.g., QUAD)</b>.</li> <li>◆ Promotes Global South voice <b>(e.g., IBSA)</b>.</li> <li>◆ Trilateral engagement <b>(e.g., India-Iran-Armenia on INSTC)</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Excludes broader Global South <b>(e.g., India-France-Australia)</b>.</li> <li>◆ Weak resource and enforcement capacity.</li> <li>◆ Fuels bloc politics</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

India must balance multilateral reform with minilateral agility, guided by "Sarvajan Hitaya, Sarvajan Sukhaya."

## 1.4. Geopolitical Risk to Global Economy

### Why in the News?

IMF's Global Financial Stability Report flagged elevated geopolitical risks affecting macro-financial stability.



Geopolitical Risks	Implications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trade weaponization (e.g., U.S. secondary tariffs on Russian oil buyers).</li> <li>Supply chain threats (conflicts, cyberattacks).</li> <li>Tax fragmentation (global minimum tax vs unilateral moves).</li> <li>Workforce stress (aging, AI disruption, cultural divides).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial contagion via global linkages.</li> <li>Macro disruptions (capital flow reversal, inflation).</li> <li>Lower investor confidence (e.g., U.S.-China trade war).</li> <li>Institutional erosion (WTO's weakened authority).</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

GEF-linked risks demand buffers, strategic preparedness, and de-risking global economic dependencies in a fractured trade world.

### 1.4.1. China-Plus-One Strategy

#### What is the China-Plus-One Strategy?

A global strategy encouraging companies to diversify beyond China to reduce overdependence on Chinese supply chains.

Key Drivers Behind the Shift	Why Has India Lagged?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>US-China trade tensions.</li> <li>Rising labour and compliance costs.</li> <li>Geopolitical distrust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weak global supply network integration.</li> <li>Trade protectionism and self-reliance tilt.</li> <li>Avoided major FTAs (<b>e.g., RCEP</b>).</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

If 5% of \$4 trillion in US outflows reach India, it could mean \$200 billion/year, doubling India's foreign inflow to 2.5% of GDP.

## 1.5. Space Diplomacy

#### What is Space Diplomacy?

**Use of space science for global cooperation**, strengthening international ties and advancing foreign policy through collaborative projects.

#### India's Efforts Towards Space Diplomacy

- ◆ **Global Collaborations:** NISAR, Artemis, ISS; 60+ international partners.
- ◆ **Satellite Launches:** 163 foreign satellites (2019–24); tech-sharing with Nepal.

Significance	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Tackles Global Challenges</b> (e.g., satellite-based disaster response).</li> <li>◆ <b>Prevents Conflict</b> (e.g., Outer Space Treaty bans WMDs).</li> <li>◆ <b>Shapes Law &amp; Governance</b> (e.g., UNCOPUOS).</li> <li>◆ <b>Reduces Debris Risks.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Balancing Leadership vs Dependence</b> (e.g., SAARC tech sensitivities).</li> <li>◆ <b>Technological Gaps</b> vs U.S./China.</li> <li>◆ <b>Dual-use Tech Scrutiny</b> (e.g., ASAT).</li> <li>◆ <b>Private Sector Integration</b> hurdles.</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

India must lead **inclusive, peaceful space diplomacy**, ensuring fair global rules as Global South capabilities grow.

## 1.6. Rise in Nuclear Weapons Arsenal

### Key Findings (SIPRI Yearbook 2024)

- ◆ **India's Nuclear Arsenal Growth:** Warhead increase from 164 (2023) to 172 (2024)
- ◆ **Global Nuclear Landscape:** Total 12,121 Warheads worldwide, with 2,100 on high alert (ready for launch)

### Why Nations Pursue Nuclear Weapons?

- ◆ To balance threats from rivals (e.g., China-Pakistan axis)—a strategy rooted in “balance of terror.”
- ◆ “Nuclear lobbies” (military, scientists, politicians) often influence decisions to expand nuclear arsenals.
- ◆ Nuclear weapons act as symbols of great power, often linked to geopolitical influence.

### Nuclear Threat Mitigation Proposals

- ◆ **No-First-Use (NFU) commitment**—especially from NATO, U.S., Russia.
- ◆ **Centralized storage** for tactical nukes with third-party verification.
- ◆ **Gradual arms reduction and bilateral freeze** on nuclear material production.

### Conclusion

As reiterated by the P5 Joint Statement, nuclear weapons must serve solely for deterrence, and a nuclear war must never be fought, due to its catastrophic consequences.

## 1.7. Indian Diaspora

### Indian Diaspora

- ◆ India lacks an official definition but includes **NRIs and OCI cardholders (merged with PIOs in 2015)**.
- ◆ **Engagement guided by 4Cs:** Care, Connect, Celebrate, Contribute.

Significance of Indian Diaspora	
For India	For Host Countries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Cultural Preservation:</b> Promotes traditions through festivals, language schools.</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Growth:</b> \$125B remittances (3.4% of GDP), tech leaders like Sundar Pichai.</li> <li>◆ <b>Political Influence:</b> Leaders like Rishi Sunak, Kamala Harris elevate India's global standing.</li> <li>◆ <b>Diplomatic Ties:</b> Lobbies for stronger relations (e.g., Indo-US Nuclear Deal).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Cultural Diversity:</b> Enriches local societies with Indian traditions.</li> <li>◆ <b>Workforce Contribution:</b> Fills labor gaps in Gulf (construction, healthcare).</li> <li>◆ <b>Entrepreneurship:</b> Drives innovation and job creation (e.g., 1M Indians in Kuwait).</li> </ul>

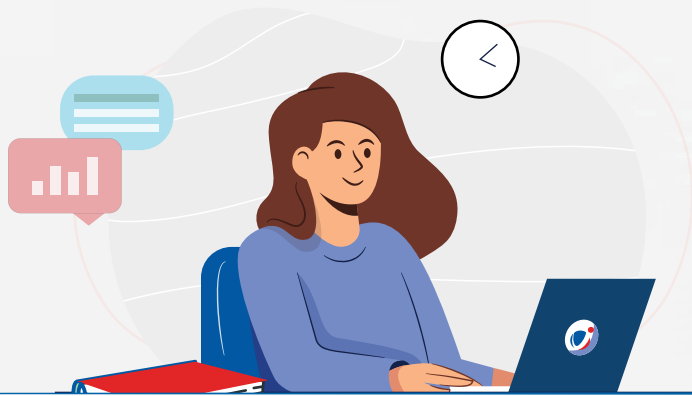
### Way Forward for Strengthening Diaspora Engagement

- ◆ **Legal & Policy Reforms:** Finalize Emigration Bill 2023, enhance diaspora registration
- ◆ **Knowledge & Skill Utilization:** Launch skilling programs, link diaspora professionals with Indian firms.
- ◆ **Safety & Security:** Enable benefit portability, strengthen MLATs for legal assistance and victim protection.

### Conclusion

The diaspora acts as “**living root bridges**”, deepening India's global cultural, diplomatic, and economic engagement.





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## 2. REGIONAL, AND GLOBAL GROUPING AND AGREEMENTS INVOLVING INDIA AND/OR AFFECTING INDIA'S INTEREST

### 2.1. India-Indo Pacific at a Glance

#### About Indo-Pacific (IP)

- ◆ Handles **50% global trade**, **40% oil shipments**, and **90% of India's trade**.
- ◆ Focal point of **US-China rivalry**, with major powers prioritizing IP strategies.

India's IP Vision	India's Policy & Initiatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Advocates <b>free, open, inclusive</b> region with ASEAN centrality.</li> <li>◆ Promotes <b>rules-based order</b>, dialogue over force.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Security Provider:</b> Strengthens maritime roles (e.g., <b>First Responder</b>).</li> <li>◆ <b>Naval Strategy:</b> Enhances <b>Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)</b> via IMAC.</li> </ul>
India's Interests	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Expands presence in <b>Africa, Middle East, Southeast Asia</b>.</li> <li>◆ Counters <b>China's hegemony</b>, maintains <b>net security provider</b> role.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Limited <b>naval capacity</b>, no overseas bases.</li> <li>◆ Slow progress on initiatives, <b>no IP definitional consensus</b>.</li> </ul>

#### Conclusion

IP is pivotal in global politics, with India as a key player.

### 2.1.1. Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)

#### About IPOI

- ◆ **Non-treaty voluntary initiative** launched by India (2019, East Asia Summit) for a **free, open, rules-based Indo-Pacific**.
- ◆ **Aim:** Foster partnerships via practical cooperation, aligned with SAGAR (2015) vision.

Significance	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Holistic Approach:</b> Integrates security, economy, environment (e.g., ASEAN synergy).</li> <li>◆ <b>Counters China:</b> Promotes rules-based order (e.g., India-Vietnam pact).</li> <li>◆ <b>Maritime Governance:</b> Enhances security &amp; sustainable resource management (e.g., rare earths).</li> <li>◆ <b>Flexible Framework:</b> Adapts to emerging challenges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Institutional Gaps:</b> Unclear pillar agendas (e.g., marine ecology).</li> <li>◆ <b>Geopolitical Pushback:</b> China views IPOI as containment.</li> <li>◆ <b>Resource Limits:</b> Funding shortages, policy divergences.</li> <li>◆ <b>Representation Issues:</b> Underrepresented regions (East Africa, Gulf).</li> </ul>

#### Conclusion

IPOI reflects India's **Act East Policy**, balancing inclusivity with strategic partnerships (Japan, Australia). It champions **freedom of navigation** and cooperative regional frameworks.



## 2.2. QUAD

<b>Significance for India</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Counters China's influence</b> in Indo-Pacific</li> <li>◆ <b>Boosts maritime security</b> (Malabar exercises, UNCLOS compliance)</li> <li>◆ <b>Supports Aatmanirbhar Bharat</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Strengthens Act East Policy</b> ties</li> </ul>	<b>Challenges</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>No formal structure</b> (meeting-based, risks long-term cohesion)</li> <li>◆ <b>Diverging priorities</b> among members</li> <li>◆ <b>China's "Asian NATO" accusations</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Competition with ASEAN/IOA</b></li> </ul>
<b>India's Concern Regarding Quad</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Avoids formal military alliance</li> <li>◆ Resists framing QUAD as anti-China bloc</li> <li>◆ New groups (e.g., <b>SQUAD</b> with Philippines) risk diverting QUAD's original goals.</li> <li>◆ Maintains ties with <b>SCO, Russia, Iran too</b></li> </ul>	<b>Way Forward</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Create permanent secretariat</b> for stronger coordination</li> <li>◆ <b>Partner with ASEAN/others</b> (Vietnam, Indonesia)</li> <li>◆ <b>Focus on non-military areas</b> (climate, health) to reduce tensions</li> </ul>

## 2.3. AUKUS

### About AUKUS

- ◆ **Members:** Australia, UK, US (2021 defence pact)
- ◆ **Pillar I:** Nuclear submarine tech for Australia
- ◆ **Pillar II:** Joint development of AI, quantum, cyber tech

### Indo-Pacific Implications

- ◆ **Strategic:** Reinforces "free & open Indo-Pacific" vision
- ◆ **US Role:** Signals renewed security focus in region
- ◆ **UK Comeback:** Reasserts British presence in Indo-Pacific

AUKUS vs QUAD	
AUKUS	QUAD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Defence-tech focused (submarines, AI)</li> <li>◆ 3 members (excludes India/Japan)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Broader cooperation (health, climate, security)</li> <li>◆ 4 members (includes India/Japan)</li> </ul>

India's Stance	
Opportunities	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Complements QUAD's China deterrence</li> <li>◆ Boosts tie with France/Europe (e.g., India-France-UAE 2023 pact)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Nuclear subs may reduce India's influence in Indian Ocean</li> <li>◆ US excludes Africa/Middle East from Indo-Pacific definition</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

AUKUS presents India with tough choices: deepen US defence reliance or risk ceding leadership in regional security.

## 2.4. Expansion of BRICS

Significance of Expansion	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Multipolar World Order:</b> Strengthens role of middle powers in global governance</li> <li>◆ <b>Global Footprint:</b> Now includes Middle East (Saudi, UAE), Africa (Egypt, Ethiopia), Latin America (Argentina)</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Clout:</b> BRICS PPP now exceeds G7; new members boost inclusivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Development Gaps:</b> Wide economic disparities among members</li> <li>◆ <b>China's Dominance:</b> Perceived as Beijing's tool to expand influence</li> <li>◆ <b>Political Differences:</b> Mix of democracies &amp; authoritarian regimes</li> <li>◆ <b>Reform Paralysis:</b> No concrete progress on UNSC restructuring</li> </ul>

### Way Forward

- ◆ **Institutionalize:** Establish permanent secretariat for cohesion
- ◆ **Economic Unity:** Combat protectionism, boost investments
- ◆ **Innovate:** BRICS visa, space consortium, traditional medicine database
- ◆ **Global South Leadership:** Amplify development-focused agenda

### Conclusion

Despite internal contradictions, expanded BRICS accelerates multipolarity, offering alternative financial/political frameworks for emerging economies.

## 2.5. Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

Strategic Value of SCO for India	India's Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Central Asia Access:</b> Advances Connect Central Asia Policy</li> <li>◆ <b>Resource Security:</b> Secures Kazakh uranium, supports INSTC connectivity</li> <li>◆ <b>Controlled Engagement:</b> Uses SCO-RATS for counter-terrorism, avoids BRI endorsement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>China's Overreach:</b> SCO increasingly mirrors BRI ambitions</li> <li>◆ <b>Expansion Flaws:</b> New members (Belarus) weaken regional focus</li> <li>◆ <b>Limited Impact:</b> No enforcement mechanism, akin to NAM</li> </ul>
SCO's Global Role	India's Balancing Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Demographic Heft:</b> Covers 42% world population, 80% Eurasia</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Weight:</b> 25% global GDP</li> <li>◆ <b>Afghan Focus:</b> Addresses post-NATO security vacuum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Selective Cooperation:</b> Engages on development agendas (traditional medicine, startups)</li> <li>◆ <b>Russia Leverage:</b> Aligns on non-controversial initiatives</li> <li>◆ <b>Red Lines:</b> Blocks anti-Western or China-centric proposals</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

India treats SCO as a pragmatic platform for Central Asia ties but resists its transformation into a China-led anti-West bloc.

## 2.6. ASEAN

ASEAN's Strategic Importance for India	ASEAN's Regional Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Economic Ties:</b> 4th largest trade partner (\$122.67 billion in 2023-24)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Geopolitical Balancer:</b> Mediates US-China rivalry in Indo-Pacific</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Indo-Pacific Focus:</b> ASEAN centrality in Act East Policy, secures Malacca Strait</li> <li>◆ <b>Connectivity:</b> Projects like Kaladan Multi-Modal Transport link Northeast India</li> <li>◆ <b>Soft Power:</b> Tourism, education exchanges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Rules-Based Order:</b> Promotes MPAC 2025 for regional connectivity</li> </ul>
Challenges	Way Forward
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Trade Deficit:</b> \$43.57 billion (2022-23), worsened by RCEP exit</li> <li>◆ <b>China's Shadow:</b> BRI dominance in ASEAN infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Economic Upgrades:</b> Revise ASEAN-India FTA, reduce trade barriers</li> <li>◆ <b>Maritime Security:</b> Indo-Pacific Maritime Partnership to counter China</li> <li>◆ <b>Connectivity:</b> Expedite India-Myanmar-Thailand Highway</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

ASEAN remains pivotal to India's Asian Century ambitions, blending economic pragmatism with strategic counterbalancing against China.

## 2.7. SAARC

Why SAARC Stalled	Case for Revival
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Last Summit:</b> 2014 (Nepal); 2016 summit cancelled after Pulwama attack</li> <li>◆ <b>Pakistan's Role:</b> CPEC violates Indian sovereignty, supports cross-border terrorism</li> <li>◆ <b>Structural Flaws:</b> No conflict resolution mechanism, unanimity rule paralyzes decisions</li> <li>◆ <b>Trust Deficit:</b> Members fear India's dominance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Shared Challenges:</b> Climate change (world's most climate-vulnerable region), poverty</li> <li>◆ <b>Untapped Trade:</b> Only *5% intra-regional trade* (vs ASEAN's 25%)</li> <li>◆ <b>Past Successes:</b> SAFTA, SAARC Development Fund, regional centers</li> </ul>

India's Dual Track
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>SAARC Efforts:</b> South Asian Satellite, South Asian University</li> <li>◆ <b>Alternatives:</b> Prioritize BIMSTEC, Act East Policy</li> </ul>

### Way Forward

- ◆ **Issue-Based Cooperation:** Focus on health, climate, disaster relief
- ◆ **Sub-Regionalism:** Boost BBIN (Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal) initiatives
- ◆ **Isolate Pakistan:** Advance SAARC-minus-Pakistan projects

### Conclusion:

SAARC remains vital for South Asia's collective survival but needs structural overhaul to bypass Pakistan-led deadlocks

## 2.8. BIMSTEC

### Why in the News?

**6th BIMSTEC Summit** was held in **Bangkok** under **Thailand's** chairmanship.

BIMSTEC	India's Strategic Gains
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Members:</b> 7 nations (India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Nepal, Bhutan)</li> <li>◆ <b>India's Role:</b> Leads security pillar, aligns with Act East/Neighbourhood First policies</li> <li>◆ <b>Strategic Value:</b> Bridges South &amp; Southeast Asia, excludes Pakistan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>SAARC Alternative:</b> Functional despite SAARC's Pakistan-led deadlock</li> <li>◆ <b>Maritime Security:</b> Supports SAGAR vision for Bay of Bengal</li> <li>◆ <b>Trade Potential:</b> Aims to raise *6-7% intra-regional trade* via unimplemented FTA</li> </ul>

### Challenges

- ◆ **Slow Progress:** Only 6 summits in 27 years, delayed IMT Highway/BBIN
- ◆ **BRI Shadow:** All members except India/Bhutan part of China's BRI
- ◆ **Political Volatility:** Myanmar crisis, India-Nepal tensions

### Way Forward

- ◆ **Fast-Track Connectivity:** Complete IMT Trilateral Highway
- ◆ **Revive FTA:** Implement stalled BIMSTEC Free Trade Agreement
- ◆ **Crisis Management:** Address Rohingya, Nepal-India border issues

### Conclusion:

BIMSTEC advances India's Indo-Pacific leadership while circumventing SAARC's limitations.

## 2.9. India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor

Strategic Value for India	Key Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Trade Boost:</b> Cuts Europe shipment time by 40%, costs by 30%</li> <li>◆ <b>Geopolitical Leverage:</b> Counters China's BRI, reduces reliance on Malacca Strait</li> <li>◆ <b>Global Ambitions:</b> Bridges EU-GCC-India for economic &amp; political influence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Funding Gaps:</b> No clear financial commitments</li> <li>◆ <b>Regional Instability:</b> Israel-Hamas war, Houthi attacks disrupt plans</li> <li>◆ <b>Logistical Hurdles:</b> High costs, underdeveloped manufacturing hubs</li> <li>◆ <b>Limited Reach:</b> Excludes key economies like Iran, Iraq</li> </ul>

### Way Forward

- ◆ **Stabilize West Asia:** Resolve conflicts to unlock investments
- ◆ **Secure Funding:** Clarify PGII commitments
- ◆ **Expand Membership:** Include overlooked regional players

### Conclusion:

IMEC offers India a BRI alternative with faster Europe access, but requires conflict resolution and funding to move beyond MoUs.

## 2.10. G20 Summit

About G20	Rio Summit Highlights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Founded:</b> 1999 post-Asian financial crisis</li> <li>◆ <b>Members:</b> G7 + AU, BRICS, EU, and major economies (85% global GDP)</li> <li>◆ <b>2024 Host:</b> Brazil (3rd straight Global South host after India, Indonesia)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Historic Inclusion:</b> African Union granted permanent membership</li> <li>◆ <b>Global South Focus:</b> Brazil-India-South Africa troika bridges *G20-BRICS-IBSA*</li> <li>◆ <b>Future Host:</b> South Africa (2025) to complete Global South leadership cycle</li> </ul>



India's Strategic Gains	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Diplomatic Clout:</b> 2023 Delhi Summit showcased India's Global South advocacy</li> <li>◆ <b>Policy Influence:</b> Pushed AU inclusion, championed DPIs, green development</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Leverage:</b> G20 drives 85% global GDP, boosts IMEC trade prospects</li> <li>◆ <b>Soft Power:</b> Used 2023 events to promote tourism, culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Fragmentation:</b> Russia/Saudi no-shows, Argentina's anti-climate stance</li> <li>◆ <b>Structural Flaws:</b> No binding decisions, rivalry with BRICS/SCO</li> <li>◆ <b>Unresolved Issues:</b> Wealth tax resistance, slow climate action pre-COP29</li> </ul>

### Conclusion:

G20 remains vital for India to reform multilateralism, amplify Global South voices, and advance trade-climate-tech agendas despite institutional weaknesses.

## 2.11. G7

About G7	Geopolitical Relevance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Members:</b> US, Canada, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan (industrialized democracies)</li> <li>◆ <b>Role:</b> Coordinates sanctions (Russia), global governance (OECD/FATF), and rules-based order</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Security Leadership:</b> Financed Ukraine using frozen Russian assets</li> <li>◆ <b>Tech Governance:</b> Leads AI ethics via GPAI, Hiroshima Process</li> <li>◆ <b>Global South Outreach:</b> Engages India, Brazil despite underrepresentation</li> </ul>
Challenges	India's Strategic Play
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Economic Decline:</b> GDP share fell from 70% (1980s) to 44% (2021)</li> <li>◆ <b>Policy Rifts:</b> No 2025 joint communiqué due to US disagreements</li> <li>◆ <b>Legitimacy Crisis:</b> Excludes Global South voices (India, Nigeria)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Bridge Role:</b> Balances West &amp; Global South ("southwest country")</li> <li>◆ <b>Autonomy:</b> Avoids anti-Russia/US rhetoric in *BRICS/G7*</li> <li>◆ <b>Bilateral Gains:</b> Canada's 2025 invite eased Khalistan tensions</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

G7 remains a values-based forum but struggles with economic decline and representation gaps, while India leverages it for strategic balancing.

## 2.12. NATO

Implications for Europe	India's Strategic Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Security Risks:</b> Russia views NATO growth as existential threat</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Strains:</b> Diverts funds to military, deepens EU divides</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Countering China:</b> NATO's Indo-Pacific focus aligns with QUAD/India's interests</li> <li>◆ <b>Tech &amp; Security Ties:</b> Collaboration via NATO's SPS Program, space ops (2024 Space Symposium)</li> <li>◆ <b>Values Alignment:</b> Reinforces democratic norms, counterterrorism efforts</li> </ul>

### Challenges for India

- ◆ **Balancing Act:** Must reconcile NATO engagement with Russia ties
- ◆ **Autonomy Concerns:** Over-reliance could limit non-aligned diplomacy

### Way Forward

- ◆ **QUAD-NATO Synergy:** Joint Indo-Pacific exercises, intel-sharing
- ◆ **Climate-Cyber Focus:** Align with NATO 2022 Strategic Concept

### Conclusion

India should leverage NATO's anti-China stance while preserving strategic flexibility in multipolar engagements.

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## 3.1. INDIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST POLICY

### 3.1. India's Neighbourhood First Policy

Key Achievements	Strategic Importance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Connectivity:</b> Mongla port access (Bangladesh), Akhaura-Agartala rail, INSTC (Afghanistan)</li> <li>◆ <b>Diplomacy:</b> PM Modi's 2014 Nepal visit (first in 17 years)</li> <li>◆ <b>Humanitarian Aid:</b> Vaccine Maitri (Bhutan, Maldives first recipients)</li> <li>◆ <b>Energy Security:</b> India-Bangladesh-Nepal power trade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Economic Leverage:</b> South Asia's 5% intraregional trade potential</li> <li>◆ <b>Security Buffer:</b> Stable neighborhood critical for internal security</li> <li>◆ <b>Soft Power:</b> Shared cultural ties bolster people-to-people bonds</li> </ul>

#### Challenges

- ◆ **China's Inroads:** Hambantota Port (Sri Lanka), BRI projects in Nepal/Bangladesh
- ◆ **Political Volatility:** Maldives' pro-China tilt, Myanmar coup, Taliban takeover
- ◆ **Perception Issues:** 2015 Nepal blockade backlash, project delays (Malé bridge)
- ◆ **Unresolved Disputes:** Teesta River, Kalapani

#### Way Forward

- ◆ **Crisis Support:** Humanitarian aid during instability (e.g., Sri Lanka crisis)
- ◆ **Track-II Diplomacy:** Engage civil society to mend "Big Brother" perception
- ◆ **Trade Push:** Revive SAFTA, fast-track connectivity projects

#### Conclusion

NFP anchors India's regional leadership, but requires faster execution and trust-building to counter BRI and instability.

### 3.2. India-75 Years of India-China Relations

Current Context	Why Stability Matters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Symbolism:</b> "Dragon-Elephant Tango" reflects coexistence despite rivalry</li> <li>◆ <b>Trade Ties:</b> China is India's largest trade partner (\$118.4B) but \$85B deficit (2023-24)</li> <li>◆ <b>Strategic Value:</b> Collaboration in BRICS, SCO, global governance reform</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Regional Peace:</b> Eases LAC tensions, fosters Indo-Pacific prosperity</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Interdependence:</b> China supplies 90% of India's APIs, rare earths for tech/solar</li> <li>◆ <b>Global Challenges:</b> Joint climate/health action</li> </ul>

#### Key Concerns

- ◆ **Border Disputes:** 3,488 km LAC clashes (Doklam 2017, Galwan 2020)
- ◆ **China-Pak Nexus:** CPEC in PoK, trilateral talks with Bangladesh/Afghanistan
- ◆ **Encircling India:** "String of Pearls" (Maldives, Sri Lanka), dam-building on Brahmaputra
- ◆ **Trade Imbalance:** Over-reliance on Chinese semiconductors, electronics

#### Way Forward

- ◆ **Diplomatic Channels:** Leverage G20, SCO for dialogue
- ◆ **Economic Diversification:** Reduce API/semiconductor dependence
- ◆ **CBMs:** Expand hydrological data sharing, cultural exchanges
- ◆ **Strategic Autonomy:** Balance engagement with Quad/Indo-Pacific alliances



## Conclusion

While PM Modi advocates “peaceful borders”, India must diversify partnerships and secure sovereignty amid China’s assertive rise.

### 3.2.1. China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

#### About IPOI

- ◆ **Non-treaty voluntary initiative** launched by India (2019, East Asia Summit) for a **free, open, rules-based Indo-Pacific**.
- ◆ **Aim:** Foster partnerships via practical cooperation, aligned with SAGAR (2015) vision.

Recent Development	About CPEC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>CPEC Extended to Afghanistan:</b> China–Pakistan–Afghanistan trilateral agreement intensifies regional concerns</li> <li>◆ <b>New Agreements:</b> Six pacts signed to fast-track CPEC projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>BRI Flagship:</b> \$62B, 3,000–km corridor linking Xinjiang to Gwadar Port</li> <li>◆ <b>Dual Routes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Silk Road Economic Belt (Land: China–C.Asia–Europe)</li> <li>▶ Maritime Silk Road (Sea: China–SE Asia–Africa–Europe)</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ <b>Sovereignty Violation:</b> Traverses PoK’s Gilgit–Baltistan, undermining India’s territorial integrity</li> </ul>
Threats to India	India’s Countermeasures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Strategic Encirclement:</b> Strengthens China–Pak–Afghan axis, challenges India’s Chabahar Port and INSTC</li> <li>◆ <b>Security Risks:</b> Afghan Taliban may enable cross-border terrorism</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Leverage:</b> CPEC infrastructure could militarize Pakistan against India</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Chabahar Port:</b> Bypasses Pakistan, connects to Central Asia</li> <li>◆ <b>INSTC:</b> Trade route to Europe via Iran–Russia</li> <li>◆ <b>IMEC:</b> Counters CPEC with India–Middle East–Europe corridor</li> <li>◆ <b>Quad Alliance:</b> Ensures free Indo-Pacific, checks BRI</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

CPEC’s Afghan expansion demands India fast-track Chabahar–INSTC, deepen Quad/IMEC ties to break China’s strategic noose.

### 3.3. Indus Water Treaty

Recent Development	About IWT (1960)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>India’s Decision:</b> Puts IWT “in abeyance” until Pakistan stops cross-border terrorism</li> <li>◆ <b>Impact on Pakistan:</b> Threatens 80% food crops, *\$5B agri-exports*, and energy security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Water Sharing:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Eastern Rivers</b> (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej): India’s full use</li> <li>▶ <b>Western Rivers</b> (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab): Pakistan’s share; India limited to non-consumptive use</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ <b>Dispute Mechanism:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Permanent Indus Commission</li> <li>▶ Neutral Expert (World Bank-appointed)</li> <li>▶ Court of Arbitration (7-member tribunal)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Key Issues	Strategic Message
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Pakistan's Violations:</b> Skipped Neutral Expert, approached Permanent Court of Arbitration for Kishanganga/Ratle dams</li> <li>❖ <b>Ecological Risks:</b> Shahpurkandi/Ujh dams may harm Indus dolphins</li> <li>❖ <b>Terrorism Link:</b> India's stance: "Water and blood can't flow together" (Post-2016 Uri attack)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Abeyance is not Termination:</b> Signals political leverage without scrapping treaty</li> <li>▶ <b>Future Steps:</b> May renegotiate terms or halt data sharing to pressure Pakistan</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

IWT's suspension reflects realpolitik—treaties require credible partners. India balances hydro-diplomacy with security imperatives.

### 3.3.1. Shimla Agreement

Importance of the Shimla Agreement	Impact of Suspension
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Bilateralism as a Diplomatic Framework:</b> To counter Pakistan's attempts to internationalize the Kashmir issue.</li> <li>❖ <b>Shimla Agreement led to formalisation of LoC.</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Prospect of cultural, scientific and economic cooperation and exchange:</b> Such as the Kartarpur corridor, New Visa Agreement, 2012, etc.</li> <li>❖ <b>Rebuilding trust and dialogue:</b> Through processes such as non-interference in internal matters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Symbolic Blow:</b> Erodes already weakened pact after Pulwama/Kargil violations</li> <li>❖ <b>Security Risks:</b> May embolden Pakistan to alter LoC status quo</li> <li>❖ <b>Diplomatic Fallout:</b> Validates India's stance on Pakistan's unreliability</li> <li>❖ <b>Strategic Opportunity:</b> India could reassert claims on PoK, harden counter-terror stance</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

While suspension undermines regional stability, India retains moral-diplomatic high ground to pursue bilateralism or tougher measures.

## 3.4. India – Sri Lanka Relations

Strategic Partnership	Economic Ties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Political Support:</b> India backs Sri Lanka's BRICS bid; Sri Lanka supports India's UNSC seat (2028–29)</li> <li>❖ <b>Security Collaboration:</b> Joint exercises (SLINEX, MITRA SHAKTI), MILAN naval drills</li> <li>❖ <b>Multilateral Engagement:</b> Active in IORA, BIMSTEC, Commonwealth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Largest Partner:</b> Top trade partner, FDI source, and tourist origin for Sri Lanka</li> <li>▶ <b>Crisis Support:</b> \$4 bn aid (2022–23), enabled \$2.9 bn IMF bailout (2023)</li> <li>▶ <b>Infrastructure:</b> Developed Kankesanthurai Port</li> </ul>

### Challenges

- ❖ **China's Shadow:** Hambantota Port debt-trap concerns
- ❖ **Fishermen Disputes:** Kachchatheevu Island sovereignty, bottom trawling bans
- ❖ **Tamil Issue:** Delayed 13th Amendment implementation (1987 Accord)

### Way Forward

- ❖ **5S Framework:** Samman, Samvad, Sahyog, Shanti, Samriddhi
- ❖ **Conflict Resolution:** Bilateral mechanisms for fishermen, dialogue on Tamil rights
- ❖ **Soft Power:** Promote Buddhist Circuit, Ramayana Trail tourism

## Conclusion

Shared history and crisis solidarity (“blood is thicker than water”) anchor ties, but balancing China’s influence and resolving legacy issues is critical.

### 3.5. Shift in India–Afghanistan Relations

Why the Shift?	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Geopolitical Opportunity:</b> Afghan–Pakistan rift (airstrikes) opens space for India</li> <li>◆ <b>Counter China:</b> Prevent Beijing’s monopoly via BRI projects</li> <li>◆ <b>Security &amp; Connectivity:</b> Secure Chabahar–INSTC routes to Central Asia</li> <li>◆ <b>Protect Investments:</b> Safeguard \$3B+ in dams, schools, Parliament building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Taliban’s Human Rights Record:</b> Bans on women’s education/work</li> <li>▶ <b>Terrorism Risks:</b> Haqqani Network’s anti-India leanings, drug trafficking (Death Crescent)</li> <li>▶ <b>China’s Foothold:</b> Taliban’s growing ties with Beijing</li> </ul>
Strategic Importance for India	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Gateway to Central Asia:</b> Critical for TAPI pipeline, trade corridors</li> <li>◆ <b>Border Security:</b> Stable Afghanistan = fewer terror hubs near J&amp;K/Punjab</li> <li>◆ <b>Soft Power:</b> Historic ties with Afghan people (UN-backed humanitarian aid)</li> </ul>	

## Way Forward

- ◆ **Act West Policy:** Leverage Chabahar Port, expand INSTC
- ◆ **Targeted Aid:** Focus on health, education to counter China’s BRI
- ◆ **Diplomatic Balance:** Engage Taliban without recognition, uphold UN resolutions

## Conclusion

India’s pragmatic engagement aims to secure regional stability while navigating Taliban’s governance flaws.

### 3.6. India–Bangladesh Relations

Strategic Importance of Bangladesh	Key Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Economic Partner:</b> \$18B trade (2021–22), largest in South Asia</li> <li>◆ <b>Connectivity Hub:</b> Critical for Northeast access via Chattogram/Mongla ports</li> <li>◆ <b>Act East Policy:</b> Anchor for BBIN, BIMSTEC integration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Water Dispute:</b> Teesta River sharing deadlock</li> <li>◆ <b>China’s Inroads:</b> Golden Friendship 2024 drills, arms supply to Dhaka</li> <li>◆ <b>Security Concerns:</b> Rohingya refugee influx, Bangladesh–Pakistan thaw</li> <li>◆ <b>Domestic Spillover:</b> CAA/NRC backlash, minority persecution risks</li> </ul>

## Way Forward

- ◆ **Economic:** Fast-track CEPA, operationalize Indian SEZs in Bangladesh
- ◆ **Water Diplomacy:** Interim Teesta solutions via Joint Rivers Commission
- ◆ **Connectivity:** Implement BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement (172% export potential)
- ◆ **Multilateralism:** Boost BIMSTEC/IORA role for Dhaka

## Conclusion

Despite friction, shared prosperity goals (Viksit Bharat 2047/Smart Bangladesh 2041) demand revived engagement on trade, water, and security.



### 3.7. India–Nepal Relations

Strategic Significance	Recent Thaw Efforts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Civilizational Ties:</b> Shared “Roti-Beti ka Naata” (cultural, religious kinship)</li> <li>◆ <b>Resource Partnerships:</b> Kosi/Gandak/Mahakali treaties govern water sharing</li> <li>◆ <b>Energy &amp; Connectivity:</b> Cross-border power trade, Jaynagar–Kurtha rail link</li> <li>◆ <b>Defense Cooperation:</b> Joint Surya Kiran military exercises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>6th Joint Commission (2024):</b> Focus on power, tourism, water resources</li> <li>◆ <b>Soft Power Push:</b> Buddhist Vihara in Lumbini, community projects</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Lifeline:</b> India absorbs 80% of Nepal's trade deficit</li> </ul>
Key Challenges	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>China’s Shadow:</b> BRI projects, Nepal’s BRI membership (2017)</li> <li>◆ <b>Border Disputes:</b> Kalapani/Lipulekh tensions</li> <li>◆ <b>1950 Treaty Stalemate:</b> Nepal seeks revision, cites “Big Brother” perception</li> <li>◆ <b>Unregulated Borders:</b> Strain local industries, security</li> </ul>	

#### Way Forward

- ◆ **Economic:** Address trade deficit via SEZs, hydropower investments
- ◆ **Connectivity:** Fast-track Raxaul–Kathmandu rail, BBIN Motor Agreement
- ◆ **Diplomacy:** Revise 1950 Treaty to reflect equity
- ◆ **Multilateralism:** Leverage BIMSTEC, SAARC for regional synergy

#### Conclusion

While “Punya Bhoomi–Karma Bhoomi” bonds endure, India must counter China’s influence through economic diplomacy and people–first connectivity.

### 3.8. India–Maldives Relations

Geostrategic Importance	Economic & Political Ties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Maritime Lifeline:</b> Controls 50% of India’s trade and 80% energy imports via Indian Ocean SLOCs</li> <li>◆ <b>Security Buffer:</b> Counters China’s “String of Pearls” (e.g., Sinamale Bridge)</li> <li>◆ <b>Neighbourhood First Anchor:</b> Key to SAGAR/MAHASAGAR vision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Trade Surge:</b> *\$1B+ bilateral trade* (2023), top tourist source</li> <li>◆ <b>Crisis Support:</b> Operation Cactus (1988) thwarted coup; *COVID-19 aid*</li> </ul>
Challenges	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Anti-India Sentiment:</b> “India Out” campaign, Uthuru Thila Falhu project suspicions</li> <li>◆ <b>China’s Inroads:</b> BRI debt traps, infrastructure dominance</li> <li>◆ <b>Radicalization:</b> Islamic State recruitment risks</li> </ul>	

#### Way Forward

- ◆ **Infrastructure:** Fast-track Greater Malé Connectivity Project
- ◆ **Security:** Boost naval patrols, counter-terror intel sharing
- ◆ **Soft Power:** Leverage diaspora, Bollywood, medical tourism
- ◆ **Debt Diplomacy:** Offer grants to counter BRI loans

## Conclusion

Despite China's shadow, Maldives remains vital for India's maritime security and Neighbourhood First policy.

### 3.9. India-Bhutan relations

Strategic Partnership	Economic & Developmental Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Treaty-Based Ties:</b> 1949 Friendship Treaty (updated 2007) forms bedrock of relations</li> <li>◆ <b>Security Shield:</b> 2017 Doklam standoff demonstrated India's commitment to Bhutan's territorial integrity</li> <li>◆ <b>Hydropower Backbone:</b> Joint projects (Chukha, Tala) supply 70% of Bhutan's revenue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>13th FYP Backing:</b> India funds *Bhutan's 2024-29 development plan*</li> <li>◆ <b>Infrastructure:</b> Project DANTAK built 80% of Bhutan's roads</li> <li>◆ <b>Investment Dominance:</b> 50% of Bhutan's FDI comes from India</li> </ul>
Emerging Challenges	Future Pathways
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>China's Creeping Influence:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Now 25% of Bhutan's trade</li> <li>▶ 2021 border roadmap threatens Doklam buffer near Siliguri Corridor</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ <b>Security Vulnerabilities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ ULFA/NDFB militants using Bhutan as hideout</li> <li>▶ Stalled BBIN Motor Agreement over environmental concerns</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Tech Partnerships:</b> Expand into fintech, space, biotech sectors</li> <li>◆ <b>GNH-Aligned Development:</b> Invest in happiness economy projects like Gelephu Mindfulness City</li> <li>◆ <b>Cultural Bonding:</b> Leverage Buddhist ties through pilgrimage circuits</li> <li>◆ <b>Trilateral Dialogue:</b> Engage China to resolve border disputes</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

While shared civilizational bonds make this a "natural partnership," India must counter China's inroads with accelerated economic and strategic cooperation.

### 3.10. Indian Ocean Region

Strategic Importance of IOR	India's IOR Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Economic Lifeline:</b> Handles *1/3rd global bulk cargo*, *2/3rd oil shipments*</li> <li>◆ <b>Chokepoints:</b> Controls Strait of Malacca, Hormuz, Bab el-Mandeb</li> <li>◆ <b>Resource Hub:</b> Polymetallic nodules, oil/gas reserves for Blue Economy 2.0</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Guiding Policy:</b> SAGAR (Security and Growth for All)</li> <li>◆ <b>Naval Prowess:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Anti-piracy ops (Gulf of Aden)</li> <li>▶ Malabar exercises with QUAD</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Challenges	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>China's Dominance:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ *350+ warships* (world's largest navy)</li> <li>▶ Port investments (Hambantota, Gwadar, Djibouti)</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ <b>Capacity Gaps:</b> India's 130 warships vs China's fleet</li> <li>◆ <b>Non-Traditional Threats:</b> Piracy, drug trafficking, maritime terrorism</li> <li>◆ <b>US Distractions:</b> Reduced focus due to Ukraine, Middle East crises</li> </ul>	

## Way Forward

- ◆ **Naval Modernization:** Accelerate indigenous shipbuilding, boost fleet size
- ◆ **Island Development:** Strengthen Andaman & Nicobar, Lakshadweep as strategic hubs

- ◆ **Capacity Building:** Expand training programs for littoral states
- ◆ **Minilateral Partnerships:** Deepen QUAD, IMEC, France-UAE-India trilateral

**Conclusion:**

India's SAGAR vision and people-centric approach position it as a trusted IOR leader, but countering China's expansion requires urgent naval upgrades and cohesive strategy.

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## 4. BILATERAL GROUPING AND AGREEMENTS INVOLVING INDIA AND/OR AFFECTING India

### 4.1. India-West Asia

India's West Asia Policy Framework	Strategic Significance for India
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Gulf seen as part of <b>India's proximate neighbourhood</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Look West Policy (2005)</b>: Deepens cooperation with West Asian nations</li> <li>◆ <b>De-hyphenation Approach</b> with both Israel and Palestine</li> <li>◆ Frequent visits to UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, etc.</li> <li>◆ <b>Pakistan Factor</b>: UAE's diplomatic backing post-Pulwama, Balakot, and Article 370</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>UAE</b>: Energy partner, \$85B trade, 3.5M Indians, major remittances source</li> <li>◆ <b>Iran</b>: Chabahar Port, INSTC connectivity, vital despite sanctions</li> <li>◆ <b>Saudi Arabia</b>: \$43B trade, energy hub, security ties (e.g., 26/11 arrests)</li> <li>◆ <b>Israel</b>: Defence tech (Phalcon, BARAK-8), water &amp; agri innovation, I2U2 multilateralism</li> <li>◆ <b>Kuwait</b>: First Indian PM visit in 43 years; key LNG source</li> </ul>
Key Challenges in Relations	Suggested Way Forward
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Trade Imbalance</b>: Large deficits with Saudi Arabia, UAE</li> <li>◆ <b>Labour Concerns</b>: Kafala-linked exploitation; migration stress</li> <li>◆ <b>Security Risks</b>: Red Sea crisis, Houthi attacks on shipping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Neutral Diplomacy</b>: Balance amid emerging blocs and conflicts</li> <li>◆ <b>FTA Acceleration</b>: Speed up trade agreements</li> <li>◆ <b>Migrant Rights</b>: Institutional mechanisms for labour and HR issues</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

India's nuanced, multi-vector diplomacy with West Asia secures energy, trade, and diaspora interests, despite turbulent geopolitics—building on trust with Saudi Arabia, UAE, Israel, and Iran.

#### 4.1.1. India's Foreign Policy Balancing in West Asia

West Asia Crisis	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Escalation in <b>Israel-Palestine conflict</b> post Hamas attacks during Yom Kippur anniversary</li> <li>◆ <b>Houthi attacks</b> on Red Sea shipping lanes and Israel</li> <li>◆ Collapse of Assad regime (Syria, Dec 2024), creating a major-power proxy battlefield</li> </ul>	
Impact on India	Global Ramifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Energy Security</b>: Over 66% of India's crude oil comes from the Gulf-West Asia-North Africa region</li> <li>◆ <b>Diaspora &amp; Remittances</b>: 8–9 million Indians reside in West Asia; key remittance source</li> <li>◆ <b>Strategic Projects</b>: IMEC corridor, Chabahar Port threatened by instability</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Ties</b>: GCC is India's top trading bloc (15.8% share)</li> <li>◆ <b>Maritime Concerns</b>: 80% of India's trade flows through regional waters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Diplomatic Setbacks</b>: Abraham Accords and Israel-Saudi détente may collapse</li> <li>◆ <b>Maritime Risks</b>: Indo-Pacific trade at risk from naval confrontations</li> <li>◆ <b>Nuclear Arms Race</b>: Rising nuclear threats can fuel global insecurity</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Turmoil</b>: High oil → food inflation → downgrade of vulnerable economies</li> <li>◆ <b>Humanitarian Crisis</b>: Civilian deaths, displacement, war crimes (e.g., Rafah offensive)</li> <li>◆ <b>UN Credibility</b>: Global scrutiny of UNSC's effectiveness</li> </ul>

### Stability Measures in West Asia

<b>Immediate: UNSC Resolution 2728 Compliance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Ceasefire in Gaza</li> <li>◆ Hostage release</li> <li>◆ Humanitarian access</li> </ul>	<b>Long-Term: Structural Reforms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Establish a WMD-Free Zone.</li> <li>◆ Resolve Israel-Palestine via Two-Nation Theory</li> <li>◆ India-GCC synergy for economic and peace initiatives</li> </ul>
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### Conclusion

As West Asia edges toward conflict, India must act as a **regional balancer**, safeguarding its **energy, trade, and diaspora** interests. Backing **UNSC-led peace** and deepening **GCC ties** are vital to avert a wider geopolitical meltdown.

## 4.2. India-Japan Relations

### Core Pillars of Cooperation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Strategic Alignment:</b> Convergence between Japan's FOIP and India's IPOI visions</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Ties:</b> \$22 billion bilateral trade, Japan as India's largest bilateral donor</li> <li>◆ <b>Infrastructure:</b> Collaborative projects like Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail</li> <li>◆ <b>Defense:</b> Regular military exercises (Dharma Guardian, JIMEX) and ACSA logistics pact</li> <li>◆ <b>Technology:</b> Joint space mission (LUPEX) and industrial partnerships</li> </ul>	
Challenges	Future Prospects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Limited trade growth despite CEPA agreement</li> <li>◆ Differing approaches to China and Russia</li> <li>◆ Delays in key projects implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Strengthening supply chain resilience</li> <li>◆ Enhancing defense technology cooperation</li> <li>◆ Aligning multilateral strategies in Quad, G20</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

The partnership remains crucial for regional stability and economic resilience.

## 4.3. India and South East Asia

Malaysia	Indonesia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Upgraded from Strategic to <b>Comprehensive Strategic Partnership</b></li> <li>◆ Founding member of the <b>International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)</b></li> <li>◆ Key to <b>Sea Line of Communication (SLOC)</b> via the Strait of Malacca</li> <li>◆ Vital for <b>oil palm imports</b> (1/3rd of India's intake)</li> <li>◆ <b>Diaspora:</b> 3rd largest Indian community globally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Deep-rooted cultural ties via Ramayana and Mahabharata</li> <li>◆ Co-founder of NAM with India</li> <li>◆ <b>Defence Cooperation:</b> Garuda Shakti joint exercises</li> <li>◆ <b>Connectivity:</b> Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT)</li> </ul>
Vietnam	Thailand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Plan of Action (2024-28):</b> To operationalise the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership</li> <li>◆ India extended <b>\$300 million credit line</b> for maritime security</li> <li>◆ <b>Cultural Linkages:</b> Restoration of My Son heritage site</li> <li>◆ <b>Joint Exercises:</b> Includes PASSEX, VINBAX, MILAN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Elevated to <b>strategic partnership</b></li> <li>◆ Shared Indo-Pacific goals: Free, open, rules-based regional order</li> <li>◆ Important member of <b>BIMSTEC</b>, enhancing sub-regional connectivity</li> </ul>

### Singapore

- ◆ Comprehensive Strategic Partnership since 2015
- ◆ India's **largest ASEAN trade partner**
- ◆ **Fintech Collaboration:** RuPay–PayNow integration
- ◆ **Diaspora:** 9.1% of Singapore's population is ethnic Indian
- ◆ Key player in **semiconductor supply** (10% global share)
- ◆ **SIMBEX joint exercises** bolster naval ties

### Conclusion

India's Southeast Asia policy thrives on **historical roots and contemporary convergence**, enriched by cultural affinity, spiritual traditions, and strategic cooperation. These relations are instrumental in shaping a resilient and inclusive Indo-Pacific order.

#### 4.3.1. 10 Years of India's Act East Policy

AEP in Action	Convergence in Strategic Interests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>From East Asia to Indo-Pacific:</b> Transitioned from Look East to Act East Policy, now encompassing Indo-Pacific vision</li> <li>◆ <b>Multilateral Engagements:</b> Partnerships with ASEAN, BIMSTEC, ACD, IORA, etc</li> <li>◆ <b>Institutional Ties:</b> Collaboration with US and allies (e.g., IPEF, SCRI)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Regional Partnerships:</b> With Indonesia, Vietnam, Japan, South Korea, Australia</li> <li>◆ <b>India–Taiwan Ties:</b> Growing unofficial engagement</li> <li>◆ <b>Strategic Alignment:</b> Parallels with Japan's FOIP, Korea's NSP, ASEAN's AIOP</li> </ul>
Challenges to AEP Implementation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Infrastructure Bottlenecks:</b> Kaladan Project delays and cost overruns</li> <li>◆ <b>Refugee Crisis:</b> Northeastern unrest, esp. Manipur</li> <li>◆ <b>China's Maritime Presence:</b> Influence via ports like Mongla restricts Indian access</li> </ul>	

### Way Forward

- ◆ **Trade:** Renegotiate ATIGA to narrow deficits
- ◆ **Infrastructure:** Fast-track regional connectivity
- ◆ **Security:** Enhance Indo-Pacific maritime cooperation
- ◆ **Cultural Diplomacy:** Engage Buddhist-majority nations

### Conclusion

In 10 years, AEP has deepened India–ASEAN ties in trade, defence, and climate. Going forward, closing infrastructure gaps and boosting strategic partnerships will be key to its success.

## 4.4. India–Pacific Islands Nations Relations

Strategic Significance for India	India's Key Engagements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Indo-Pacific Vision:</b> Ensures a free, open, inclusive maritime region</li> <li>◆ <b>Geo-strategic Role:</b> Enhances India's maritime presence</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Leverage:</b> Access to large EEZs for resource security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Oceans Initiative (2019):</b> For blue economy and sustainability</li> <li>◆ <b>Aid &amp; LoCs:</b> For renewables, climate, and vaccine delivery</li> <li>◆ <b>Election Facilitation:</b> Technical support in Papua New Guinea</li> </ul>



### Challenges in Cooperation

- ◆ **China's Influence:** Strategic competition (e.g., pact with Solomon Islands)
- ◆ **Resource Limits:** Domestic needs restrict India's external aid
- ◆ **Geographical Distance:** Hinders frequent interaction

### Way Forward

- ◆ **Diplomatic Dialogue:** Regular exchanges to deepen trust
- ◆ **Maritime Security & Environment:** Joint action on piracy, fishing, pollution
- ◆ **Targeted Projects:** Cybersecurity, IT, desalination on demand

### Conclusion

India–PIN partnership is anchored in **mutual aspirations, shared challenges, and inclusive global vision**, setting a global example of equitable cooperation.

## 4.5. India and Central Asian Republics Relations

About Central Asia	Strategic Significance for India
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Central Asia, part of India's extended neighbourhood, offers strategic depth for India's <b>political, economic, and security outreach</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Includes five landlocked nations:</b> Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Energy Security:</b> Access to Turkmenistan's gas, uranium from Kazakhstan &amp; Uzbekistan, and the TAPI pipeline</li> <li>◆ <b>Connectivity:</b> INSTC, Ashgabat Agreement offer alternatives to China's BRI</li> <li>◆ <b>Regional Peace:</b> CAR stability linked to Afghanistan's security</li> </ul>
Key Challenges	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Trade Gap:</b> India–CAR trade is ~\$2B vs China's ~\$100B</li> <li>◆ <b>Geopolitical Competition:</b> Presence of Russia and China limits India's influence</li> <li>◆ <b>Connectivity Issues:</b> No direct overland route, slow INSTC execution</li> </ul>	

### Way Forward

- ◆ **30-Year Vision Plan:** Define short-, medium-, and long-term engagement goals
- ◆ **Strength-Based Projects:** Focus on sustainable, cost-effective initiatives
- ◆ **Tourism & People Connect:** Promote cultural and person-to-person exchanges

### Conclusion

India–CAR partnership can be a powerful **regional force multiplier**, shaping outcomes on energy, connectivity, and Eurasian geopolitics.

## 4.6. India–Africa Relationship

### Why in News?

- ◆ PM's recent visit to African nations like **Ghana** and **Namibia** revived focus on India–Africa engagement

Significance of India–Africa Ties	Key Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Historical Solidarity:</b> Shared colonial struggle; strong NAM legacy with Egypt</li> <li>◆ <b>Trade &amp; Economy:</b> India is Africa's 4th largest trading partner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Project Delays:</b> Slower than China; allegations of agribusiness exploitation</li> <li>◆ <b>China's Dominance:</b> 20% of exports go to China; military base in Djibouti</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Mineral &amp; Energy Security:</b> Africa holds 30% of world's minerals; 4% of India's oil imports</li> <li>◆ <b>Development Cooperation:</b> \$12B concessional credit; e-VidyaBharti, ITEC, Pan-African e-Network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Investment Hesitation:</b> Overestimated risks and limited awareness hinder Indian business</li> </ul>
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### Way Forward

- ◆ **Institutional Dialogue:** Start India–AU Track 1.5 summits
- ◆ **Tech Sharing:** Promote Triple A (Affordable, Appropriate, Adaptable) models
- ◆ **Innovative Financing:** Use blended finance, PPPs, pension investments

### Conclusion

India–Africa ties go beyond strategy—they are built on **emotional solidarity and mutual respect**, laying the foundation for an equitable global order.

## 4.7. India–U.S.A Relations

### Why in News?

- ◆ PM's visit to the **USA** reaffirmed bilateral commitment across trade, tech, defence, and strategic sectors

Significance of the Partnership	Challenges in the Partnership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Economic Ties:</b> US is India's top export destination; India joined 3 IPEF pillars</li> <li>◆ <b>Strategic Alignment:</b> Quad counters China in Indo-Pacific</li> <li>◆ <b>Defence Cooperation:</b> 4 foundational pacts signed</li> <li>◆ <b>Tech &amp; Innovation:</b> iCET (2023), <b>Artemis Accords</b>, and <b>NISAR</b> space mission</li> <li>◆ <b>Energy &amp; Nuclear:</b> LNG supply; revival of <b>Civil Nuclear Agreement</b> post-Entity List removal</li> <li>◆ <b>Counterterrorism:</b> US extradited <b>Tahawwur Rana</b> (26/11 accused)</li> <li>◆ <b>Global Support:</b> US backs India in <b>UNSC, NSG, IEA</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Climate Action:</b> Via <b>SCEP</b> (2021) and clean energy initiatives</li> <li>◆ <b>Industry:</b> MoUs on <b>semiconductor fab</b> plant, ASIA alliance, and Quad-linked production</li> <li>◆ <b>Culture:</b> First <b>Cultural Property Agreement</b> to stop antiquities trafficking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Trade &amp; Tariffs:</b> GSP revoked; India on 2024 Priority Watch List (IPR concerns)</li> <li>◆ <b>Geopolitical Gaps:</b> Divergence on Russia–Ukraine and militarization of Quad</li> </ul>

### Way Forward

- ◆ **Bilateral Trade Pact:** Resolve IPR issues and expand market access
- ◆ **Defence Roadmap:** Finalize 2025–35 strategic framework

### Conclusion

Rooted in innovation and shared democratic values, the India–US relationship is poised to **shape the 21st-century global order**.

### 4.7.1. USA's Protectionist Measures

#### Why in News?

The US, under its '**America First**' policy, has withdrawn from key global institutions such as **WHO, ICC, Paris Agreement**, and most recently **UNESCO** (third exit citing anti-Israel bias).

Context and Precedents	Global Impact of Protectionist Moves
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>WHO Withdrawal (2020)</b> and reversal (2021)</li> <li>◆ <b>Paris Agreement exit (2017)</b>, rejoined (2021)</li> <li>◆ <b>TPP withdrawal (2017)</b>; <b>NAFTA replaced</b> by USMCA (2020)</li> <li>◆ Blocked appointments to <b>WTO</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Multilateral Weakening:</b> Undermines global rules due to US's sovereigntist legal stance</li> <li>◆ <b>Threat to Global Research:</b> Withdrawal from <b>WHO pandemic treaty talks</b></li> <li>◆ US was <b>15.6% of WHO's 2022–23 budget</b>.</li> </ul>
Impact on India	
Positive	Negative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Strategic Gains:</b> US-China tensions boost India's role in <b>IT, pharma, electronics</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Indo-Pacific Synergy:</b> Strengthened via <b>QUAD, IPEF, IMEC</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Tech Transfer:</b> Enhanced through <b>iCET</b>, civil nuclear cooperation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Export Pressure:</b> Indian goods face <b>higher US tariffs</b>; third-market competition from diverted Chinese exports</li> <li>◆ <b>Immigration Curbs:</b> <b>H-1B restrictions</b> hurt Indian tech workers</li> <li>◆ <b>'Buy American' Impact:</b> Reduced access to US market hits <b>Make in India/PLI goals</b></li> </ul>

### Conclusion

US withdrawal from multilateralism weakens global governance but opens **strategic, technological, and supply chain opportunities** for India. New Delhi must capitalize on this shift while defending against protectionist trade and immigration policies.

## 4.8. India–Canada Relationship

### Why in News?

India and Canada decided to reinstate **high commissioners**, signalling efforts to **normalize diplomatic ties** after nearly two years of tension.

Reasons for Fallout	Significance of the Relationship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Khalistani Extremism:</b> Canada's alleged support and safe haven</li> <li>◆ <b>Security Disregard:</b> Non-cooperation on extradition and terror cases</li> <li>◆ <b>Trade Deadlock:</b> Stalled <b>CEPA negotiations</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Vote Bank Politics:</b> Use of Sikh diaspora in domestic campaigns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Strategic:</b> Rule-based Indo-Pacific cooperation (China factor)</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic:</b> Bilateral trade &gt;\$19B (goods + services) in 2023</li> <li>◆ <b>Investment:</b> Canadian pension funds invested <b>\$75B+ in India</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Diaspora:</b> 1.8 million Indians in Canada</li> <li>◆ <b>Defence:</b> MoU between DRDO and Canada for tech collaboration</li> </ul>
Fallout Consequences	Steps to Rebuild Ties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Trade/Investment Disruption:</b> Delay in CEPA and business confidence</li> <li>◆ <b>Diaspora Concerns:</b> ~230,000 Indian students affected</li> <li>◆ <b>Visa Issues:</b> Processing delays</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Diplomatic Dialogue:</b> Resume high-level discussions</li> <li>◆ <b>Counterterrorism Cooperation:</b> Enforce 2018 framework</li> <li>◆ <b>Trade Talks:</b> Restart CEPA negotiations</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

Despite tensions, the India–Canada relationship remains rooted in **democracy, people-to-people ties, and economic synergy**.

## 4.9 India-Europe

### 4.9.1. India-United Kingdom Relations

#### Why in News?

India and Canada decided to reinstate **high commissioners**, signalling efforts to **normalize diplomatic ties** after nearly two years of tension.

Converging Areas of Cooperation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Strategic Partnership:</b> Elevated to Comprehensive level in 2021</li> <li>◆ <b>Defence Ties:</b> Joint exercises – Ajeya Warrior, Konkan, Cobra Warrior</li> <li>◆ <b>Health Cooperation:</b> AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine collaboration</li> <li>◆ <b>Trade &amp; Investment:</b> UK is India's <b>6th largest investor</b>, 12th largest trading partner</li> <li>◆ <b>Tech Partnership:</b> <b>Technology Security Initiative (TSI)</b> launched in 2024</li> </ul>	
Growing Significance of Bilateral Ties	Challenges in the Relationship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Vision 2035 Framework:</b> Upgraded from Roadmap 2030 for deeper cooperation</li> <li>◆ <b>Security in Indo-Pacific:</b> UK-India Act as Net Security Providers</li> <li>◆ <b>IOR Focus:</b> UK has 7 permanent bases in Indian Ocean</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Colonial Hangover:</b> Anti-colonial sentiment limits strategic potential</li> <li>◆ <b>Security Lapses:</b> Inaction on flag desecration and anti-India protests</li> </ul>

#### Conclusion

India-UK ties have traditionally lagged behind other Western partners, but recent efforts reflect **upward momentum** built on shared democratic values and economic complementarity.

### 4.9.1.1. India-UK Vision 2035 and Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)

India-UK Vision 2035 Framework	Key Highlights of CETA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Trade &amp; Economy:</b> CETA signing; progress on <b>Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT)</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Tech &amp; Innovation:</b> Establishment of <b>UK-India Research &amp; Innovation Corridor</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Defence &amp; Security:</b> Co-develop <b>JEACT</b> &amp; electric propulsion; convergence in <b>Indo-Pacific</b> strategy</li> <li>◆ <b>Climate Collaboration:</b> Joint work on energy storage, offshore wind, grid reforms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Trade Expansion:</b> Aims to double trade to <b>\$120B by 2030</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Tariff Removal:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>India:</b> Gains in textiles, toys, marine products, engineering goods</li> <li>▶ <b>UK:</b> Benefits in whisky, salmon, chocolate, advanced manufacturing</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ <b>Customs &amp; NTB Simplification:</b> Smoother trade operations</li> </ul>

#### Conclusion

The **India-UK CETA and Vision 2035** mark a transformational upgrade, building a **fair, future-ready, and innovation-driven partnership** between two democratic powers.

### 4.9.2. India-European Union (EU) Relations

#### Why in News?

A high-level meeting between the **EU Trade Commissioner** and **India's Commerce Minister** outlined a **6-point roadmap** to deepen India-EU ties.



Significance of India–EU Relations		
Mutual Gains	Benefits for India	Key Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Historic ties since 1962</b>; strategic partnership since 2004</li> <li>◆ <b>EU is India's largest trading partner; India is EU's 9th largest</b></li> <li>◆ Joint initiatives: <b>Clean Energy Partnership (2016)</b>, etc.,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ \$107.27B <b>FDI inflow (2000–2023)</b></li> <li>◆ Boost for <b>exports</b> (IT, pharma, textiles, agriculture)</li> <li>◆ Strategic value: e.g., <b>Airbus C-295 manufacturing</b></li> <li>◆ Innovation: <b>Trade &amp; Tech Council (2022)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Lack of trade diversification</b> due to <b>non-tariff barriers</b></li> <li>◆ <b>FTA Delays</b>: Differences on digital rules, CBAM, labour and human rights</li> <li>◆ <b>EU's China Dependence</b>: Limits urgency for Indian engagement</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

India and the EU—**unions of diversity**—must build on shared democratic values to uphold a **rules-based global order**, boost trade, and deepen multilateral cooperation.

### 4.9.3. India–France Relations

Strengthening Bilateral Ties	Challenges in Ties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Defense Cooperation</b>: 2nd largest arms supplier (33%, SIPRI)</li> <li>◆ <b>Indo-Pacific Strategy</b>: Joint 2023 roadmap enhances maritime cooperation</li> <li>◆ <b>Tech &amp; Space: Missions</b>: TRISHNA, AI roadmap, Sister Innovation Hub</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Trade underperformance (\$15.8B, 2022)</li> <li>◆ Visa barriers for journalists/professionals</li> <li>◆ <b>Stalled Jaitapur plant</b> over liability &amp; funding</li> <li>◆ Strategic autonomy mismatch, esp. on China</li> </ul>

### Way Forward

- ◆ **Bridge Autonomy Gaps**: Align sovereignty with Indo-Pacific balancing
- ◆ **Expand Security Ops**: Boost drills, counterterrorism cooperation

### Conclusion

India–France ties span “**sea to space**,” blending strategic, technological, and civilizational cooperation. As per France's envoy, the partnership is “**universal**”—rooted in history, aimed at global leadership.

### 4.9.4. India–Russia Relations

#### Why in News?

PM Modi's **official visit to Russia** in July 2024 for the **22nd Annual Summit** set new benchmarks for trade and regional cooperation.

Contemporary Significance of Ties	Challenges in the Partnership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Multipolar Vision</b>: Shared opposition to global unipolarity; Russia backs India's <b>UNSC bid</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Multilateralism</b>: Active coordination in <b>UN, BRICS, SCO</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Defence Ties</b>: Russia supplies <b>36% of India's defence imports</b>; e.g., <b>S-400, Tushil frigate</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Joint Production</b>: Shift from buyer-seller to <b>co-development</b> (e.g., BrahMos, AK-203)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Geopolitical Balancing</b>: Navigating ties with both US (QUAD, sanctions risk) and Russia</li> <li>◆ <b>Russia–China Nexus</b>: \$240B+ trade &amp; outreach to Pakistan (INSTC invite)</li> <li>◆ <b>Trade Imbalance</b>: Imports at \$61.4B vs exports at \$4.3B (2023–24) complicate Rupee–Rouble deal</li> <li>◆ <b>Military Interoperability Issues</b>: Postponed Indra drills, few new defence deals post-S-400</li> <li>◆ <b>Far East Connectivity Limits</b>: Corridor constrained by <b>Japan, South Korea sanctions</b></li> </ul>

## Way Forward

- ◆ **Diversify Trade:** Include metallurgy, chemicals, and space tech
- ◆ **EAEU–India Talks:** Fast-track FTA negotiations
- ◆ **Logistics Pact (RELOS):** Enhance military exchange and access
- ◆ **Broaden Regional Cooperation:** Joint projects in third countries (e.g., **nuclear plant in Bangladesh**)
- ◆ **Tier-II Diplomacy:** Promote youth and academic exchanges

## Conclusion

Despite global flux, India–Russia ties continue to **adapt and evolve**, offering enduring value for **regional stability and mutual prosperity**, as highlighted by EAM S. Jaishankar.

### 4.9.5. India–Eurasia Relations

#### Why in News?

PM Modi's visit to **Poland, Croatia, Cyprus, Austria, Greece, and Ukraine** marks a diplomatic shift towards **Central and Eastern Europe (CEE)**.

India's Outreach to Eurasia	Restoring Bilateral Normalcy	Challenges Ahead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Diplomatic Expansion:</b> India enhances ties with CEE nations</li> <li>◆ <b>Poland as Key Partner:</b> India's largest trading &amp; investment partner in CEE (\$6B in 2023)</li> <li>◆ <b>IMEC Corridor:</b> To link Asia, Europe, and Middle East</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Strategic Ties:</b> Renewed engagements with Russia and Armenia</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Potential:</b> India's two-way trade with Eurasia could hit <b>\$170B</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Connectivity Gaps:</b> IMEC and INSTC face geographic and infrastructure delays</li> <li>◆ <b>Pakistan Obstacle:</b> Land access limits direct links to Eurasia</li> <li>◆ <b>BRI Competition:</b> Undermines India's <b>Connect Central Asia Policy</b></li> </ul>

## Way Forward

- ◆ **Enhanced Connectivity:** Join Greater Eurasian Corridor and Northeast Passage
- ◆ **EU Engagement:** Broaden India's Eurasian policy to include the EU

## Conclusion

India's Eurasia engagement must reconcile its historic ties with new strategic realities. As Shyam Saran notes, maritime and land links—both **East** and **West**—are critical to India's extended neighbourhood vision.

### 4.9.6. India–Nordic Relations

Overview of Ties	Key Areas of Cooperation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ India–Nordic ties are grounded in <b>democratic values</b>, innovation, and climate action</li> <li>◆ Nordic nations: <b>Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland</b></li> <li>◆ Trade Growth: Exports to <b>Finland and Norway</b> rose by over 100% and 80%</li> <li>◆ 4 out of 5 Nordic countries are top 20 Indian trade partners in Europe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Blue Economy:</b> Indo–Norway ocean research initiative</li> <li>◆ <b>India–Nordic Summits (2018, 2022):</b> Nordic countries have <b>exclusive summit-level engagement</b> with India</li> </ul>
Significance of Relations	Challenges in the Relationship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Sustainability Collaboration:</b> Nordic support to India's Smart Cities Mission</li> <li>◆ <b>Innovation Ecosystem:</b> Finland-led FinNode partnership; India among top 5 global innovation hubs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Russia–NATO Dynamics:</b> Nordic NATO ties (Finland, Sweden) vs India–Russia ties</li> <li>◆ <b>Divergent Interests:</b> Complex joint stances on policy issues</li> <li>◆ <b>Trade Barriers:</b> Tariffs, NTBs, and regulations hinder deeper economic ties</li> </ul>

### Way Forward

- ◆ Deepen people-to-people engagement
- ◆ Co-develop in climate, health, energy, tech
- ◆ **Tech Partnerships:** Work with Nordic startups in food, health, and clean tech
- ◆ **Diplomatic Frequency:** Promote regular high-level dialogues

### Conclusion

India–Nordic ties reflect a **convergence of innovation, sustainability, and strategy**, enriching both bilateral cooperation and the broader global order.

## 4.10. India–Australia Relations

Significance of the Bilateral Partnership	Key Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Strategic:</b> India designated a “top-tier security partner” in Australia’s <b>2024 Defence Strategy</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Defence Ties:</b> Exercises like <b>AUSTRAHIND, AUSINDEX, Pitch Black</b>; mutual logistics and tech agreements</li> <li>◆ <b>Economic Relations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>ECTA (2021)</b> boosted trade</li> <li>▶ Australia aims to make India a <b>top-3 export market by 2035</b></li> <li>▶ New roadmap launched for deepened economic engagement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Trade Issues:</b> CECA delays, NTBs, pharma price controls</li> <li>◆ <b>Nuclear Gap:</b> Uranium trade yet to begin</li> <li>◆ <b>Khalistani Extremism:</b> Rising incidents strain trust</li> <li>◆ 125% fee hike burdens Indian students</li> </ul>

### Way Forward

- ◆ **Economic Expansion:** Finalize CECA, scale investment in **tech, mining, green energy**
- ◆ **Security Focus:** Enhance maritime, cyber, and counterterrorism cooperation
- ◆ **Indo-Pacific Collaboration:** Partner under **ASEAN, PIF**, aid small island nations

### Conclusion

India–Australia ties go beyond **cricket, curry, and Commonwealth**—they are grounded in **democracy, diaspora, dosti (friendship), and mutual trust**, as PM Modi aptly remarked.

## 4.11. India and LAC (LATIN AMERICA and Caribbean) Region Relations

Significance of LAC for India	Challenges in the Partnership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Trade &amp; Market Access:</b> LAC ranks <b>8th among India’s import sources</b>; CEPA signed with Chile</li> <li>▶ <b>South–South Cooperation:</b> India hosted <b>Global South Summit</b> with 29 LAC nations</li> <li>▶ <b>Strategic Resources:</b> Region supplies <b>40% copper, 35% lithium</b></li> <li>▶ <b>Geopolitical Alignment:</b> Supports India’s ambitions in <b>UNSC, NSG</b></li> <li>▶ <b>Food &amp; Energy Security:</b> Brazil and LAC region are vital for <b>fertile land, ethanol, and storage tech</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Diplomatic Gaps:</b> Lack of high-level attention and embassies</li> <li>◆ <b>Tariff Issues:</b> Indian tariffs on LAC agri goods are 5x higher than China’s</li> </ul>

## Way Forward

- ◆ **Trade Expansion:** Aim to reach **\$100B trade by 2027**; convert PTAs to FTAs
- ◆ **Focus LAC:** Revive engagement initiatives; set up **Ministerial Council on Strategic Technologies**

## Conclusion

Latin America offers India a spot in the **"goldilocks zone"**—a stable, promising market with fewer entry barriers than the West and higher purchasing power than Africa—making it a critical partner in India's global ascent.



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## 5. IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, AGENCIES, AND FORA, THEIR STRUCTURE, MANDATE

### 5.1. International Humanitarian Law

Core Principles	Enforcement Challenges	India's Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Distinction:</b> Civilians vs combatants must be clearly differentiated</li> <li>◆ <b>Proportionality:</b> Anticipate and minimize collateral damage</li> <li>◆ <b>Precaution:</b> Constant care to protect civilian lives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>State Non-Compliance:</b> National security prioritized over IHL (e.g., Syria, Myanmar)</li> <li>◆ <b>Non-State Actors:</b> Armed groups often ignore IHL</li> <li>◆ <b>Institutional Barriers:</b> UNSC veto power (Russia/China in Syria).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Constitutional Mandate:</b> Article 51 commits to international peace</li> <li>◆ <b>Military Training:</b> IHL integrated into armed forces programs</li> <li>◆ <b>Peacekeeping Leadership:</b> Top 3 UN troop contributor</li> </ul>

#### Way Forward

- ◆ **UNSC Reforms:** Limit veto use, expand representation
- ◆ **Domestic Legal Integration:** Enshrine IHL in national laws
- ◆ **Tech Governance:** Regulate autonomous weapons, cyberwarfare rules

#### Conclusion

While IHL faces veto politics and new-age warfare challenges, India's peacekeeping clout and diplomatic heft can drive reforms for a more humane world order.

### 5.2. United Nation Security Council

Foundational Role of UNSC	Functional Relevance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Established by UN Charter in 1945 as one of six principal UN organs</li> <li>◆ Comprises 5 permanent and 10 elected non-permanent members (2-year term)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Peaceful Dispute Resolution:</b> Primary mandate of international peace and security</li> <li>◆ <b>Sanctions &amp; Peacekeeping:</b> Oversees 11 missions across 3 continents</li> </ul>
Why Reform is Needed	Obstacles to Reform
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Lack of Representation:</b> No permanent seat for Africa, Latin America; Asia-Pacific underrepresented</li> <li>◆ <b>Credibility Crisis:</b> Failure in conflicts like Russia-Ukraine war</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Charter Amendment:</b> Requires UN Charter revision</li> <li>◆ <b>Group Opposition:</b> L.69/G4 proposals blocked by Coffee Club (Italy, Pakistan, etc.)</li> </ul>

#### Conclusion

Despite rising multipolarity, UNSC reform is stalled by power politics. India's push reflects growing calls to democratize global governance.

### 5.3. India and UN Peacekeeping

India's Global Contributions	Strategic Benefits for India
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Troop Deployments:</b> '287,000+ personnel' sent since 1950s</li> <li>◆ <b>Training Hub:</b> CUNPK trains 12,000+ troops annually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Diplomatic Leverage:</b> Bolsters UNSC permanent seat bid</li> <li>◆ <b>Security Footprint:</b> Protects energy/economic interests in conflict zones</li> </ul>
Systemic Challenges	India's Reform Agenda
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Power Imbalance:</b> Troops excluded from decision-making</li> <li>◆ <b>Redundant Missions:</b> UNMOGIP (India-Pakistan) lacks relevance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Smarter Deployment:</b> Clear exit strategies, realistic mandates</li> <li>◆ <b>Regional Partnerships:</b> Empower AU, ASEAN in conflict mediation</li> </ul>

#### Conclusion

As the top contributor to UN peacekeeping, India blends operational excellence with reform advocacy, shaping a more effective global conflict-resolution framework.

### 5.4. ICC

ICC's Role in Accountability	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Prosecutes Grave Crimes:</b> Genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity when national courts fail</li> <li>◆ <b>Victim-Centric Approach:</b> Trust Fund for Victims aided *26,000+ beneficiaries* (2023)</li> <li>◆ <b>Global Governance:</b> Assembly of States Parties ensures democratic decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>Enforcement Gaps:</b> Reliant on state cooperation (e.g., Sudan's al-Bashir evaded arrest)</li> <li>◆ <b>Political Bias:</b> *47/54 indictments target Africans*, raising colonialism allegations</li> </ul>

#### Way Forward

- ◆ **Strengthen Arrest Mechanisms:** Interpol cooperation, sanctions for non-compliance
- ◆ **Reform UNSC Referrals:** Limit veto power in atrocity cases
- ◆ **Diversify Prosecutions:** Address perceived anti-African bias

#### Conclusion

While ICC advances "universal justice" (Kofi Annan), its efficacy hinges on overcoming geopolitics and enforcement deficits to protect global civilians.

### 5.5. World Health Organization (WHO)

#### Mandate & Functions

- ◆ UN health agency founded post-1946 Health Conference; active since 1948
- ◆ Coordinates global health emergencies, promotes well-being, and expands healthcare access

Key Contributions	Global Initiatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ UHC (e.g., Global Drug Facility), eradication of polio</li> <li>◆ Declares health emergencies (PHEIC)</li> <li>◆ Regulates international health laws</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Emergency response frameworks</li> <li>◆ Health action plans (e.g., TB, polio, nutrition)</li> <li>◆ Wellness promotion (e.g., suicide prevention, aging)</li> <li>◆ Vaccine tech &amp; genomic surveillance innovation</li> </ul>

Shortcomings	Reforms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political pressure (esp. China, USA)</li> <li>Weak coordination &amp; overlapping departments</li> <li>Poor financing, pharma influence, and limited legal powers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2017 agenda for leadership support</li> <li>2024 sustainable financing round</li> <li>Output-based progress tracking</li> <li>Partnerships with Google, FIFA</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

WHO remains critical for India's UHC and disease control, despite reform needs in autonomy and efficiency.

## 5.6. Commonwealth

India's Role in the Commonwealth	Strategic Benefits for India	Challenges Ahead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Leading Voice:</b> Largest member with nearly 60% of Commonwealth population</li> <li><b>Event Host:</b> Organized 1983 CHOGM Summit, 2010 Commonwealth Games</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Soft Power Boost:</b> Reinforces ties with Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific nations</li> <li><b>Trade Advantage:</b> 21% lower costs with member nations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Colonial Legacy:</b> Allegations of legitimizing imperialism</li> <li><b>Weak Crisis Response:</b> Poor coordination during COVID-19</li> <li><b>Funding Dependence:</b> Over-reliance on UK aid</li> </ul>

### Conclusion

The Commonwealth offers India a platform for inclusive diplomacy, South-South cooperation, and sustainable development leadership.



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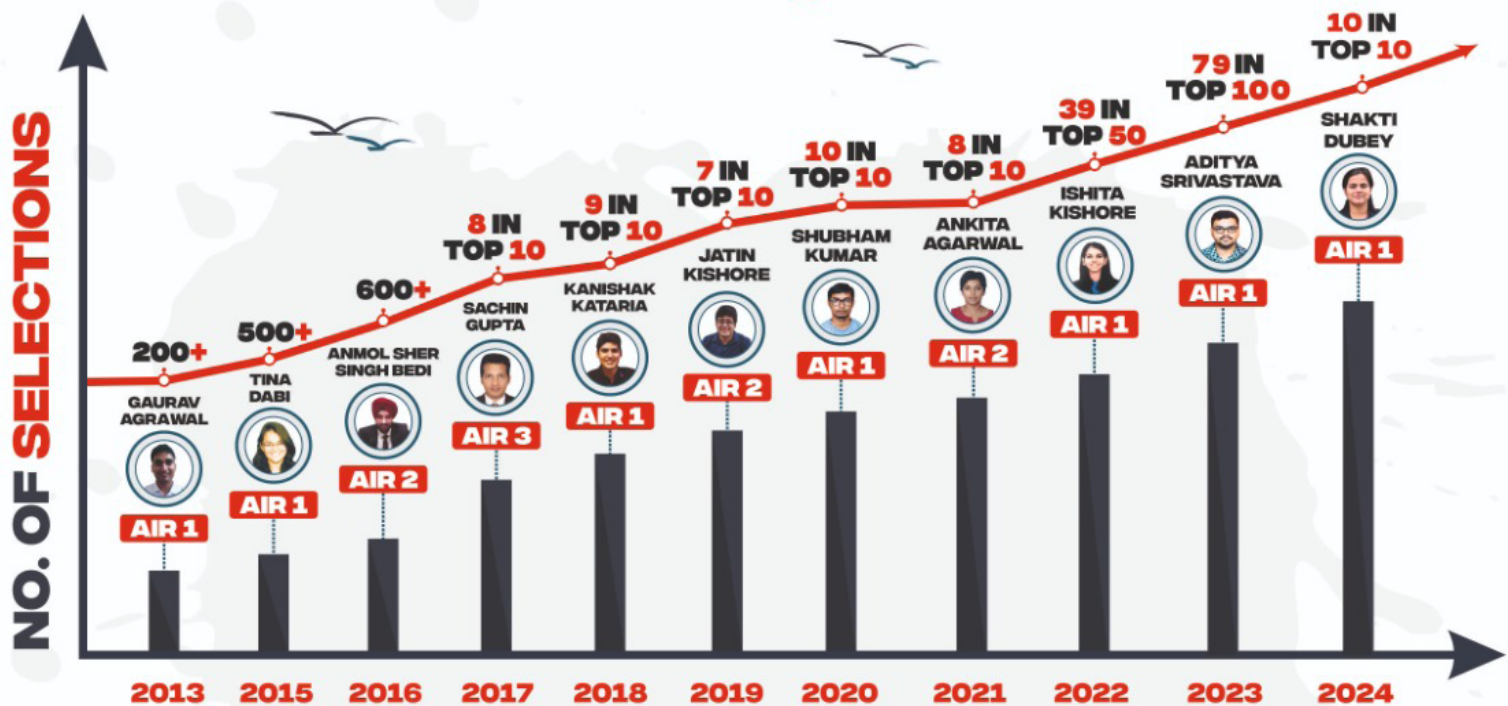
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► प्रारंभिक, मुख्य परीक्षा और निबंध के लिए महत्वपूर्ण सभी टॉपिक का विस्तृत कवरेज

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JAIPUR : 20 जुलाई

JODHPUR : 10 अगस्त



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# Heartiest Congratulations

to all Successful Candidates

# 10

in TOP 10 Selections in CSE 2024

from various programs of Vision IAS

# 1

AIR



**Shakti Dubey**

# 2

AIR



**Harshita Goyal**

# 3

AIR



**Dongre Archit Parag**

# 4

AIR



**Shah Margi Chirag**

# 5

AIR



**Aakash Garg**

# 6

AIR



**Komal Punia**

# 7

AIR



**Aayushi Bansal**

# 8

AIR



**Raj Krishna Jha**

# 9

AIR



**Aditya Vikram Agarwal**

# 10

AIR



**Mayank Tripathi**

# 79

Selections

in TOP 100

in CSE 2023

# 1

AIR



**Aditya Srivastava**

# 2

AIR



**Animesh Pradhan**

# 5

AIR



**Ruhani**



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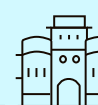
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