

International Relations



Classroom Study Material 2024

August 2023-May 2024

Building Mental Resilience for UPSC CSE with VisionIAS Student Wellness Cell

The UPSC Civil Services Examination is one of the most prestigious exams in the country, bringing immense professional and personal satisfaction. However, the journey often involves overcoming loneliness, intense competition pressure, anxiety, and other psychological challenges. These issues can impact both your preparation and overall well-being.

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To support the larger student community, **VisionIAS** is now extending our counseling and wellness support to all students preparing for UPSC CSE, regardless of their coaching institute affiliation. Schedule a session by visiting our office at Apsara Arcade near Karol Bagh Metro Station or emailing student.wellness@visionias.in.

Remember, seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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A NOTE TO THE STUDENTS

Dear Students,

Understanding current affairs can add depth to your perception of intricate issues and help you form nuanced perspectives, especially in the context of the Mains examination.

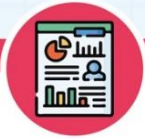
In light of this, Mains 365 International relations document attempt to simplify your mains preparation.

International Relations Mains 365 Key Features:



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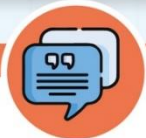


Enhanced Infographics:

Designed for effective understanding of topics and usage of maps in topic such as Northern sea route, India-Middle East Europe Economic corridor, etc.



Topic at a Glance this sentence: This features summarises static topics and recurring important themes, providing a quick review in a single paper.



Quotes: Supplementing your answers with quotes can add value to your answers, giving you the added advantage in mains.



Weekly Focus: QR code-linked list of relevant weekly focus documents, keeping you updated with the latest developments and trends in International Relations.



Appendix and Previous Years Questions (PYQs): Includes an appendix of important facts and data. A segregated list of previous years' questions from 2013 to 2023, organized topic-wise.

We sincerely hope that the Mains 365 International Relations documents will guide you effectively in your preparation and aid you in scoring better in your Mains examination.

**"Learn everything you can, anytime you can, from anyone you can.
There will always come a time when you will be grateful you did."**

All the Best! Team VisionIAS



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1. DYNAMICS OF CHANGING WORLD ORDER

1.1. EVOLVING NATURE OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

1.1.1. INDIA'S ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY AT A GLANCE

INDIA'S ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

- ◉ Economic diplomacy is a foreign policy tool that involves the use of economic instruments in conduct of international relations for serving the country's economic, political, and strategic interests.



In 1964, India established ITEC, arguing, **"relationships are based not only on commonly held ideals but also on solid economic foundations"**



Between 2008 and 2020, India disbursed approximately **US\$8.35 billion** as grants and loans under various development compacts.



Objectives of Economic Diplomacy

- ◉ **Projecting the country as a major economic power:** E.g., US spent nearly \$61 billion on foreign aid (2023)
- ◉ **Securing favourable trade negotiations:** E.g., Recently concluded India-UAE CEPA (2022).
- ◉ **Promotion of exports and businesses abroad:** E.g., Export Promotion Council of Handicrafts
- ◉ **Realization of political objectives through economic actions:** E.g., China resorting to Debt trap diplomacy, CPEC.



India's success in using Economic Diplomacy

- ◉ Various initiatives have been taken like liberalizing FDI norms, **PLI schemes**, and **Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan** to increase the economy's competitiveness on a global scale.
- ◉ **Financing through multilateral platforms:** India-UN Development Fund.
- ◉ **Bilateral development aid to partner countries:** E.g., India extends \$ 1 billion LoCs to CAR for connectivity & Developmental projects.
- ◉ Emerged leader for **South-South Cooperation (SSC)**. E.g. India has built an airstrip and a jetty on Agaléga, Mauritius.



Challenges

- ◉ **Inability to gather majority support for reforms in multilateral platforms.**
- ◉ **Compartmentalized bureaucratic structures** affect the integration of economic and strategic goals.
- ◉ **The decline of the share of merchandise in the Global Value Chain (GVC):** E.g. India is less linked in GVCs than countries like Bangladesh, Vietnam.
- ◉ **Competition from China in the South Asian region:** E.g., Gwadar Port (Pakistan); Hambantota (Sri Lanka)
- ◉ **Emerging issues like protectionism:** E.g, EU's CBAM.



Way-forward

- ◉ **Promoting Internationalisation of Rupee**
- ◉ **Improving aid program:** Focused country-wise strategy, establish International Development Cooperation Agency. E.g., US aid program is linked to its strategic interest.
- ◉ **Climbing-Up the GVC Export Ladder:** Effective implementation of PM Gati Shakti and National Infrastructure Pipeline.
- ◉ **Leverage Emerging opportunities:** Pursue Health diplomacy (Vaccine Maitri); Play leadership role in multilateral organisations.
- ◉ **Promoting Brand India, Flexibilities in policy making.**



Conclusion

- ◉ **Economic diplomacy** should seek for balance between **competition and cooperation, aspirations** and the **achievable, and regional and global**. It should be navigated on the strong foundation of **rules-based collaboration**.



1.1.2. ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN GEOPOLITICS

Why in the news?

National Quantum Mission (NQM) promises to make India one of the leading nations in the development of Quantum Technologies & Applications.

How is Technology influencing Geopolitics?

- **Global Governance:** Technology challenges the traditional concept of state sovereignty (**physical space and territoriality**) due to **emerging issues (Internet governance, AI, biotech, data privacy)**.
- **Economic Influence:** E.g. Fourth Industrial Revolution can shape a nation's economic power and competitiveness.
- **Military Power and Security:** Nations that possess **advanced military technology**, such as **nuclear weapons**, can exert influence on the global stage and can lead to shifts in the **balance of power among nations**.
 - **Threat of Non state actor is increasing.** E.g., Hezbollah in Israel.
- **Communication and Information:** Control over information flow, censorship, and the spread of disinformation can all be leveraged for geopolitical objectives. E.g. **influencing public opinion, election and diplomacy**.
- **Space Exploration:** **Conducting activities in outer space** represents an **important tool of foreign policy**.
- **Energy and Climate Change:** Geopolitics of energy includes **competition for access to resources**, control over **energy transit routes**.

Centrality of technology in India's geopolitics

- **Digital Diplomacy:** Bhutan's and Nepal's adoption of UPI standards
- **Space Technology:** In 2017, the **GSAT-9 satellite** was launched for the **members of SAARC**.
- **IT and Software Services:** **Success and global reach** of India's IT firms contribute to India's **economic strength and influence in the global market**.
- **Energy diplomacy:** E.g., One Sun One World One Grid' (OSOWOG), International Solar Alliance, etc.
- **AI and Emerging Technologies:** India's progress in AI can influence its role in **shaping global standards**.

Challenges affecting India's ability to leverage technology effectively

- **Geopolitical Tensions:** situated in a region with complex geopolitical dynamics. E.g. Tensions with countries like China and Pakistan.
- **Technological dependence:** Reducing dependence on **foreign technology and fostering domestic innovation** is a complex and long-term challenge.
- **Data Privacy and Sovereignty:** India's **data privacy regulations** and **data sovereignty concerns** can have implications for international data-related agreements and cross-border business operations.
- **Environmental Dilemma:** Balancing **technological growth** with **sustainable development** and minimizing the environmental impact.
 - E.g., a single Chat-GPT search consumes **10 times more energy than a similar query on Google**.

Way ahead

- **Regulatory alignment:** Increase bilateral and multilateral engagement with like-minded countries and share best practices.
- **Taking the lead on International technology principles and standards:** To ensure that regulations, especially in areas like **data privacy, e-commerce, intellectual property rights etc.** are just, transparent and consistent.
- **Ethical Use of Technology:** Uphold international norms and work on ethical frameworks that align with India's geopolitical values.
- **Strengthening data diplomacy:** Greater cooperation on **technologies like AI or blockchain**, between different countries through mediation and cooperation across borders.

1.1.3. DISASTER DIPLOMACY

Why in the news?

Recently, 6th edition of the International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (ICDRI) held in India, which emphasized the nation's expanding contribution to global crisis response efforts.

About Disaster diplomacy

- **Disaster Diplomacy** refers to ‘a country’s efforts to provide aid and support to other countries affected by natural/ man-made disasters or conflicts’.
- **The Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief - “Oslo Guidelines”** sets the guiding principles of humanitarian assistance for UN humanitarian agencies.

Significance of India’s disaster diplomacy

- **Soft Power Projection:** foster goodwill and strengthen ties.
- **Improved geopolitical reach:** by responding to crisis stretching from Japan in Far East to Turkey in Middle East.
- **Breakthroughs in bilateral ties:** E.g., India’s **Operation Maitri during the Nepal earthquake of 2015** played a crucial role in India’s outreach to Kathmandu.
- **Strategic Importance of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR):** As opposed to China, India's approach is **typically non-intrusive** and aimed solely at assisting affected nations without violating their sovereignty.
- **It will help in becoming** India to become **regional power and** secure a **UN Security Council permanent membership**

India’ Approach towards disaster relief

Approach	India’s initiatives
First responder to natural disasters	• Launched Operation Dost (Turkiye Earthquake), Operation Karuna (Myanmar cyclone)
Capacity Building	• India assists Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Mauritius in developing Early Warning Systems under the UN's 'Early Warnings for All (EW4All)' initiative.
Helping people in Conflict Zones	• As part of Mission SAGAR, it supplies of essential food items, medicines, Ayurvedic medicines (deployment of Medical Assistance Teams to Mauritius and Comoros)
Post-conflict relief and rehabilitation	• Focusing on relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction in Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan’s return to normalcy years of violent conflict.
UN Peacekeeping	• Significant contribution in peacekeeping missions to facilitate stabilization and reconstruction .
Managing Health Disasters	• India conducted COVID-19 Vaccine Maitri program , which has assisted over 100 nations.

Key challenges faced by India in its Disaster diplomacy

- **Lack of technological capacities:** India’s response to the 2011 Fukushima disaster in Japan was tardy and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) was unable to effectively provide aid.
- **Limited Impact:** India’s assistance to Nepal has also not delivered lasting benefits as the bilateral relationship has become increasingly strained over territorial disputes since 2021.
- **Geopolitical tensions:** Pakistan rejected India’s aid during 2022 floods.

Way Forward

- **Need for Capacity Building:** through investments in platforms like utility helicopters, landing platforms, and hospital ships.

- **Improve budgetary allocation:** to improve emergency preparedness and logistic capabilities.
- **Projection of Achievements:** to improve its projection of humanitarian achievements amidst its ambition to become global power.
- **Utilizing Forums like the Quad:** for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts.
 - This cooperation can lead to capacity building across the Indo-Pacific and **enhance India's image as a growing power capable of administering operations beyond its borders.**

1.1.4. PARA-DIPLOMACY AT A GLANCE

PARA-DIPLOMACY

- Concept was first proposed in 1990 by John Kincaid. Paradiplomacy can be defined as a regional government's involvement in international relations, through establishment of formal and informal contacts.



Foreign affairs is exclusively a "union" subject According to 7th Schedule.



Emerging trends:

- **Greater cross-border trade** through border haats.
- **Rising foreign collaborations** in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana.
- **High-powered ministerial delegations.**



Significance of Para-diplomacy

- **Strengthens the federal structure as it places greater emphasis on states acting** as equal partners in the development.
- **Propels the competitive advantage of sub-national government.**
- **Facilitates globalisation of localism** by bringing regional issues on the global stage.
- **Facilitates resources and cost sharing of foreign policy-making** with federal governments.
- **Rising global importance of cities** necessitates city level diplomacy.



Challenges:

- Lack of coherence in foreign policy when states speak in different voices from centre, Limited financial space of states, lack of data or theory on effective participation of states in international arena, etc.



Sister cities concept

- It is a **long-term, cooperative relationship** between two cities in different countries,
- Such arrangements have allowed for **seamless exchange of resources and expertise.**
- **E.g.,** Mumbai and Ho Chi Minh(Vietnam), Chennai and Guanzhou(China)



Way Ahead for enhancing para-diplomacy

- **Balancing of the roles** of central and non-central governments.
- **Effective institutional mechanisms** through the creation of consulates in individual states.
- **Strengthening existing coordination mechanisms** such as the Inter-State Council.



Conclusion

- Para-diplomacy is still in its nascent stage in India. Indian state should increasingly overcome their relative passivity in foreign relations.



1.5. INDIA'S STRATEGIC AUTONOMY

Why in the News?

Recently, India reaffirmed its Commitment to Strategic Autonomy

About Strategic Autonomy

- **Definition:** It is defined as the capability to make decisions independent from external pressure, especially from great powers, in the main policy areas.
- **Understanding Strategic Autonomy (SA)**
 - **Strategic Autonomy does not call for isolationism.** It calls for **greater engagement** with different **power centres** rooted in **informed national interest**.
 - Moreover, It does not look at **foreign policy as a zero-sum game**, where one party gains something at the expense of others. On the contrary, it's a **positive-sum game**, where **everyone gains**.

Key pillars of India's strategic autonomy and their Significance

- **Foreign policy independence**
 - **Multi-vector diplomacy:** Where a balance is maintained between two ideologically distinct blocs, e.g., Russia and the western bloc led by the U.S.
 - **Issue-based alignment:** E.g., India's relationship with Israel and Palestine. India supports the 'Two-State Solution' and has criticised Hamas attack on Israeli soil.
- **Military self-reliance**
 - **Diversification of arms suppliers:** E.g., India reduces dependence on Russian arms supply and France emerges as one of the top suppliers (SIPRI Report).
- **Strategic decision-making autonomy**
 - **Flexibility in international forums:** E.g., India abstains on Sri Lanka vote at Human Rights Council.
 - **Avoiding entangling alliances:** E.g., US pressure on India to take sides in Russia-Ukraine war.
- **Economic sovereignty**
 - **Balancing trade relationships:** E.g., India has been negotiating FTA with the UK, while also engaging with EU.
 - **Strategic resource management:** E.G., Australia and India sign critical minerals agreement
- **Energy security:**
 - **Diversification of energy basket:** E.g., Russia emerges as highest supplier, reducing dependency on gulf.
 - **India's own terms to reach Net Zero.** E.g., Net Zero by 2070.

What are the issues in following Strategic Autonomy (SA)?

- **Accusation of being a "Fence Sitter":** E.g., With regards to Israel-Hamas Conflict.
- **Allegations of Financing Wars in favour of aggressor:** E.g. European powers accused India of funding Russia's War by buying cheap Russian crude oil.
- **Emergence of New Axis:** E.g. India's movement towards USA is leading to development of Russia-China Pakistan axis.
- **Reputational damage:** E.g. India's non condemnation of USA's withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), pushed Iran towards China.
- **Emergence of Mini-laterals**, such as QUAD, compromises the ideal vision of global cooperation.

Way Forward

- **Emerge as an alternative:** India is suitably placed to emerge as an alternative to the US and China, and also focus on representing **Global South** in an increasingly polarized world order.
- **Strategic Hedging:** E.g. Balancing China involves developing the capacity and linkages to counter China's political and military efforts, despite maintaining civil diplomatic ties and trade.

- **Self-dependency or diversification of risks:** especially needed in critical sectors such as defence, energy etc.
- **Following Internationalist and Multi-aligned foreign policy:** Such policy can be based on issues-based coalition (E.g. BRICS, QUAD, G20, G7, SCO).
- **Playing leadership role in tackling global challenges:** Related to climate change, connectivity, terrorism, supply chain resilience (E.g. Supply Chain Resilience Initiative, Biopharmaceutical Alliance, Asia-Africa Growth Corridor).

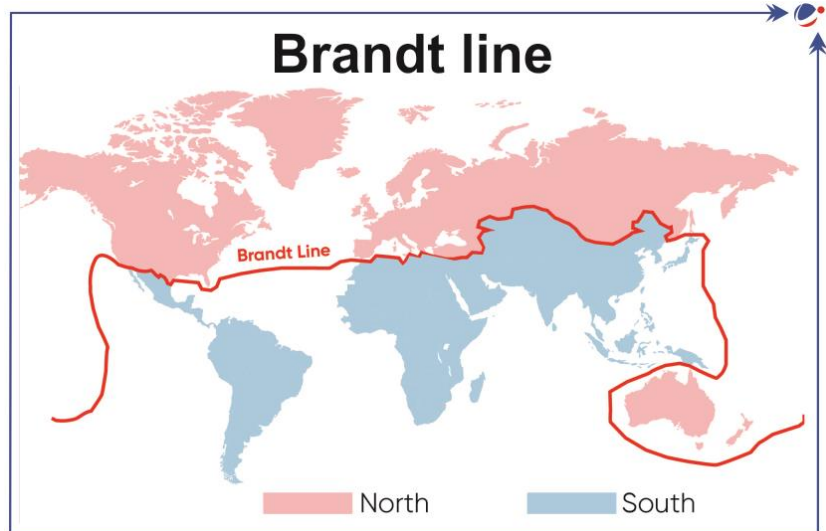
1.6. INDIA: THE VOICE OF GLOBAL SOUTH

Why in the news?

India used the platform of its G20 presidency to champion the cause of Global South also hosted second Voice of Global South Summit (VOGSS).

What is Global south?

- Refers to countries often characterized as **developing, less developed, or underdeveloped**.
 - These countries are primarily located in the **Southern Hemisphere**, largely in Africa, Asia and Latin America.
- **Brandt Report of 1980**, proposed a division between North and South countries based on their **technological advancement, GDP**.



Challenges faced by the Global South

- **Underrepresentation in global forums**, E.g., exclusion from the UN Security Council's permanent membership.
- **Geopolitical conflicts of the Global North impact global decision-making process**. E.g. the Ukraine conflict led to inflation in food and oil prices which adversely affected countries in the global south.
- **Diverging approach of the Global North on normative issues:** E.g. lack of consensus between Global North and Global South over the interpretation of democracy, human rights, agenda for climate governance, etc.
- **Global South is disproportionately impacted** by most of the global challenges. E.g. climate change.

Factors favoring India to act as a voice of global south: Historical and philosophical appeal, economic and geopolitical clout, bridge between developed and developing world, India's leadership in NAM, G77, etc.

How has India positioned itself as the leader of the global south?

- **Gaining goodwill** by utilizing **multidirectional diplomatic engagements**. E.g., India's **Vaccine Maitri initiative** during COVID-19
- **Democratizing climate governance in the global arena:** E.g. supporting **Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR)**.
- **Pushing reform in multilateral institutions to make them more inclusive**. E.g demand for broadening of the **UN Security Council's permanent membership**.
- **Providing alternative approach** on normative issues like democracy and human rights.
- **Capacity building of the Global South**. E.g., **India-UN Capacity Building Initiative** shares India's experiences, best practices with Global South
- **Creating platforms for collaborative dialogue**, e.g., virtual **Voice of Global South Summit**.

Challenges for India in Leading the Global South

- **Balancing national interests** while fulfilling international obligations. E.g., India's recent ban on rice exports.
- **Limited resources** to adequately support countries of the Global South.
- **Chinese competition and interference**, primarily in development finance, infrastructure and trade. E.g., debt diplomacy.

Way Forward

- Ensuring that the **concerns of the Global South are acknowledged and accounted for at multilateral forums**.
 - e.g., **India's 5 pillared approach for multilateral forums**: Samman (Respect), Samvad (Dialogue), Sahyog (Cooperation), Shanti (Peace) and Samridhhi (Prosperity).
- **Develop synergies** in the Global South on trade, technology, tourism, and resources by **investing in connectivity infrastructure and technology transfer**.
- **Reforming global trade and finance institutions** to increase financial independence for the Global South. E.g. Reforms in the World Trade Organization (WTO)
- **India's proposal**: India has called for a **global agenda of 4Rs – Respond, Recognize, Respect and Reform**.
 - **Responding** to priorities of Global South, **Recognizing principle** of CBDR, **Respecting sovereignty** of all nations, and **Reforming international institutions** to make them more relevant.

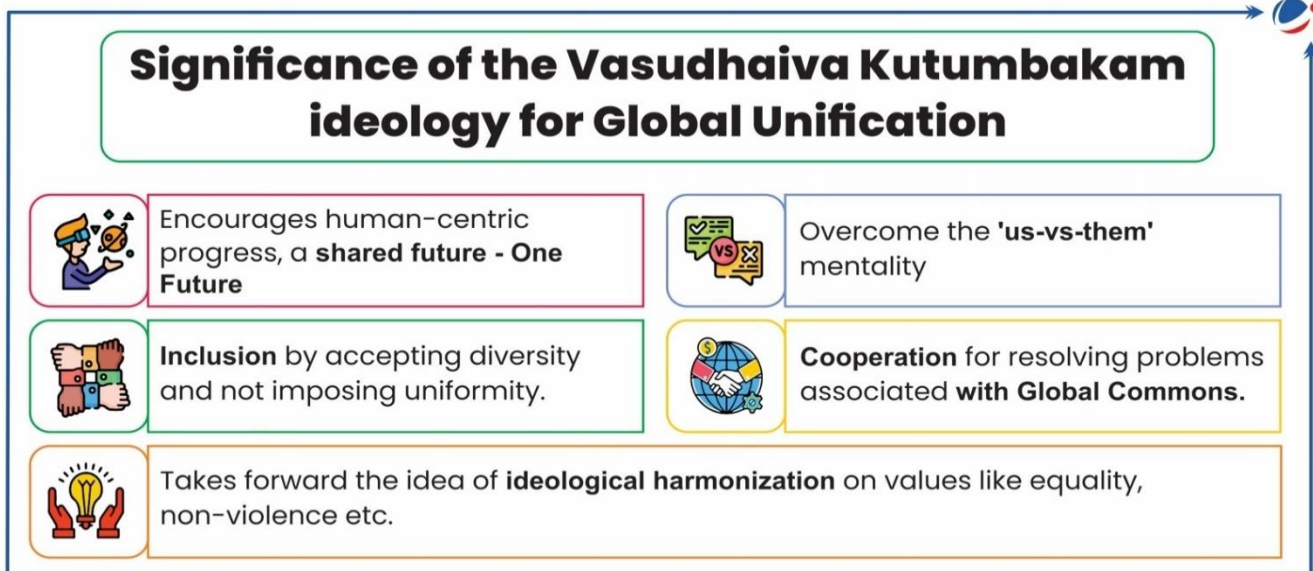
1.6.1. INDIA AS A GLOBAL UNIFIER

Why in the News?

The theme for India's G20 Presidency was “**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam – One Earth, One Family, One Future**”.

Idea of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam

- **Meaning**: the world is one family. It affirms the **value of all life** – human, animal, plant, and microorganisms – and their **interconnectedness** on the planet Earth and in the wider universe.



How India is acting as a Global Unifier through this ideology?

- **Environment conservation**: with Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment), net zero emission targets etc.
- **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**: helping developing countries to adapt, build and scale DPI.
- **Energy Transition**: through initiatives such as the **International Solar Alliance and Global Biofuel Alliance**.

- **Inclusive multilateralism:** E.g. pushed for the **inclusion of the African Union** as a permanent member of the **G20**.
- **Capacity Building:** E.g., Data for Development Capacity Building Initiative for the development of the Global South.
- **Culture:** India's G20 presidency provided ground for **showcasing unique and diverse cultures** from different regions

1.7. INDIA'S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Why in News?

India's Development Cooperation has been an important pillar of Foreign Policy.

Background

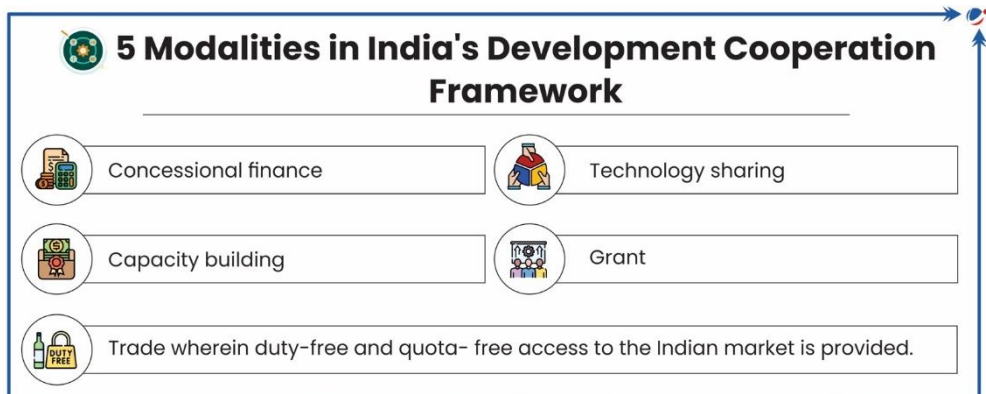
- India's approach is shaped by India's struggle for **independence and solidarity with other colonized nation**.
- The first effort to shape a framework for India's development cooperation was in **2003** with the announcement of the **India Development Initiative (IDI)**.
- Subsequently, the **Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme (IDEAS)** was launched in 2005 for managing credit lines.
- In 2007, Govt suspended IDI and announced the setting up of the **India International Development Cooperation Agency (IIDCA)**, which never took off.
- In 2012, Govt created a **Development Partnership Administration (DPA)** under the Ministry of External Affairs.

Efforts by India in development cooperation

- **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme**, supports sharing of the Indian development experience with partner countries.
- **Concessional lines of credit** to support infrastructure projects worth US\$ 34.4 billion to developing countries.
- **Grant-in-aid projects**, aggregating around US\$ 4 Billion.
- Supplied **162.43 million doses of COVID vaccines** to 97 countries, and two UN entities.

India's development cooperation

- India's development cooperation objectives are broadly **based on the South-South cooperation (SSC) framework**.
- **Although less than 1% of India's budget**, this is a significant contribution when compared to other high-income countries like Australia.
- The **DPA** is responsible for the overall **management, coordination and administration** of India's development partnerships.



Way forward

- **Tailoring approaches:** Ensuring development efforts are context-specific and demand-driven.
- **Institutional coordination:** Improving coordination between various Indian agencies.

- **Innovative financing mechanisms:** Exploring new ways to fund development initiatives. E.g., India-UN Development Partnership Fund.
- **Disaster resilience and humanitarian assistance:** Strengthening rapid response capabilities and long-term resilience through establishing dedicated fund.

1.8. SOFT POWER DIPLOMACY

1.8.1. SOFT POWER AND CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

Why in news?

Recently, Parliamentary committee of external affairs reviewed action Taken by the Government on Its report 'India's Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy: Prospects & Limitations'.

What is soft power and cultural diplomacy?

- **Soft power** is the ability to influence others through appeal and attraction using noncoercive means.
- **Cultural diplomacy** is the “exchange of ideas, information, art, language and other aspects of culture among nations and peoples in order to foster mutual understanding.
 - **For instance,** The tradition of performing **Ram Leela** is still carried in **Trinidad and Tobago islands** by Indian diaspora, who **migrated to the island as indentured laborers**, from India.

Committee observation about smart power engagement of India

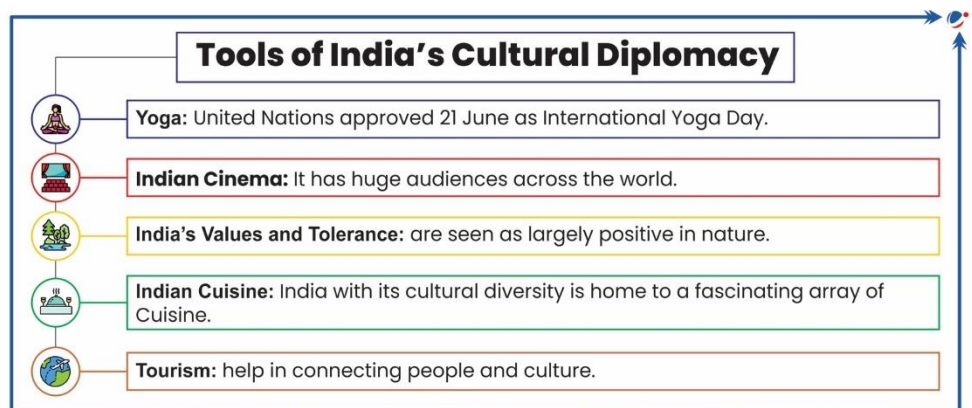
- **Smart power** is the ability of a country to combine elements of both hard and soft power in a way that they can effectively and efficiently contribute to achieve the countries goals.
- **According to MEA,** Smart power is the most representative of India’s current interaction with the world.
- **In the age of interconnectivity and dependence** smart power is the future.

The MEA had highlighted the four key issues inhibiting effective conduct of soft power and cultural diplomacy

- **Lack of timely, adequate budget allocation.**
- **Need for greater coordination and consultation** among multiple institutions, both in the government and private sector, engaged in conduct of cultural and soft power.
- **Shortage of skilled, motivated manpower** in Indian Missions/Posts abroad
- **Lack of clarity about the mandate of Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)** and absence of a national policy often results in ad hoc, unsustainable measures.

Recommendation of the committee

- **Dedicated document:** to delineate India’s soft power toolbox and the manner in which it is being projected abroad.
- **Restructuring Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR):** by increasing ICCR’s budgetary allocation at least 20%.
- **Coordination committee:** between the MEA/ICCR and other line ministries (such as the Ministry of Culture).
- **Interacting with diaspora:** Formulating a mechanism to proactively interact with the Indian diaspora.



- **Focusing on religious and medical tourism:** by adopting a multi-pronged approach by building the requisite infrastructure and skilled expertise.

1.8.2. INDIAN DIASPORA AT A GLANCE

INDIAN DIASPORA

- The Indian Diaspora is a generic term to describe the people and their descendants who migrated from Indian territories.



Diasporas serves as transnational living bridges connecting India and the world and each one of them is country's brand ambassador.



- ♦ India has the largest diaspora population with over 31 million including 13 million NRIs and 18 million PIOs.
- ♦ Major countries: **UAE, USA, Saudi Arabia.**



India received remittance >\$111 billion (2022), first country to cross USD 100 bn mark.



Significance of Diaspora population

- **Economic:** Flow of business ideas, technologies, brings down disguised unemployment (especially in case of West Asia)
- **Diaspora diplomacy:** part of India's "soft diplomacy". **E.g. conclusion of Indo-US Nuclear deals.**
- **Diffusion of experience and exposure:** E.g. Yoga, Ayurveda, Indian Cuisines, BAPS Hindu temple in UAE etc.
- **Development of the host country: E.g. Silicon Valley (USA).**



Steps taken for the betterment of Diapora

- **Dedicated Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Organization of Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas**
- **Overseas Citizenship of India Scheme (OCI):** life time, multiple and multi-entry visa
- **Swarnpravas Yojana-** promoting the employability of Indian workers abroad.
- **Signing of social security agreements with foreign countries, New Embassies in Latin America and African countries**
- **Distress addressal:** MADAD Portal, Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF)



Challenges faced by Indian Diaspora

- **West Asia:** exploitative Kafala labour system, Nitaqat Law (aims to replace overseas workers with locals in Saudi Arabia), etc.
- **US, Canada & UK:** protectionism and Stricter H-1B visa norms in US, revised visa norms in UK post-Brexit,
- **General Economic Issues:** violation of contractual terms, adverse working conditions,
- **Other issues:** racism, xenophobia, criminalization, gender based violence, human rights violations.



Way-forward

- **Negotiating Standard Labour Export Agreements** with the host countries.
- **Compulsory Insurance schemes** covering the risks faced by overseas workers, monitoring overseas workers by Missions.
- **Setting up of Special Economic Zones,** exclusively for projects to be set up by NRIs/PIOs
- **Issuing special infrastructure bonds** for attracting NRI/PIO investments on the lines of the Israel Bonds.



Conclusion

- Overseas Indian community does serve as an important 'bridge' for the development of the country.

1.8.2.1. REMITTANCES TO INDIA

Why in the News?

The World Bank recently released an annual report “Migration and Development Brief: Leveraging Diaspora Finances for Private Capital Mobilization”.

Remittances Flow in India

- **Largest Recipient of the Remittance in the World:** India received an estimated **\$125 billion** in remittances in 2023.
 - According to UN, **around 18 million Indians** now live overseas.
- **Source Countries:** Remittances from the **US, UK, and Singapore (High-skilled migrants)** collectively account for **36 % of total remittances**.
 - **UAE is the second-largest source** of remittances to India after the US, accounting for 18% of the total.
- **Key Driving Factors for Growth in Remittance:**
 - **Easing of historically tight labor market** in the United States.
 - **High employment growth in Europe** reflects extensive leveraging of worker retention programs.

Significance of Remittances for India		
Enable increased savings, and demand in the economy.	Funding Fiscal Deficit and provide critical support to Balance of Payments. E.g., in Tajikistan, remittance inflows represent 48% of GDP.	Improve Country Creditworthiness by improving country's sovereign ratings and its ability to repay debt.

Concerns associated with Remittances

- **Restrictive Measures** by several countries. E.g., **internal checks at the border in the European Union** have been adopted by Italy, Germany, Norway, Sweden etc.
- **High Remittance Cost: Banks continue to be the costliest channel for sending remittances** (with an **average cost of 12%**), followed by post offices (7%), and mobile operators (4.1%).
- **High Inflation and low growth:** Decline in real income for migrants in 2024 in the face of global inflation and low growth prospects.
- **Other concerns:** money laundering, brain drain, etc.

Way Forward

- **Encouraging Remittance Flows through Formal Channels** to bolster reserves and increase the foreign exchange available to the banking system.
 - **Labour markets and social protection policies** in host countries should be inclusive of migrants, whose remittances serve as a vital lifeline for developing countries.
- **Directly mobilizing diaspora finances through diaspora bonds:** Diaspora bonds can be structured to directly tap diaspora savings held in foreign destinations.
 - As of September **2023, NRI deposits in India amounted to \$143 billion.**

1.8.2.2. LABOUR RULES FOR WORKERS ABROAD

Why in the news?

Trade Unions have opposed UP and Haryana governments' recruitment of workers to work in Israel, primarily for construction activities.

Measures taken by India for protection of migrant labourers

- **Bilateral and multilateral arrangements:** India has signed Labour Manpower Agreements (LMAs) with six West Asian countries including Kuwait, Oman, etc.
- **Welfare programmes:** National Pension scheme for NRIs, Indian community welfare fund, etc.
- India has signed **Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (2018)**.

- Additionally, the **Project Promoting Regular Assisted Migration for Youth and Skilled Professionals (PRAYAS)**, was launched in **partnership with MEA for the year 2023-24**.
 - **Objective:** Collaborate to ensure safe, legal migration for Indian workers and students in collaboration with MEA, NITI Aayog, and State Governments.

ILO conventions for protection of migrant workers

- **Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97):** To maintain an adequate and free service to assist migrants for employment.
- **Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143):** For illegally employed migrant workers.

Note: India has not ratified both conventions.

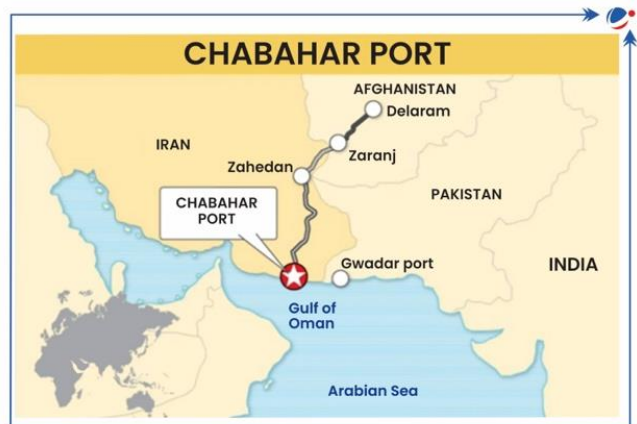
1.9. GEOPOLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF PORTS

Why in the news?

Recently, India signed a 10-year agreement with Iran for the development of the **Shahid Beheshti Port Terminal at Chabahar Port**.

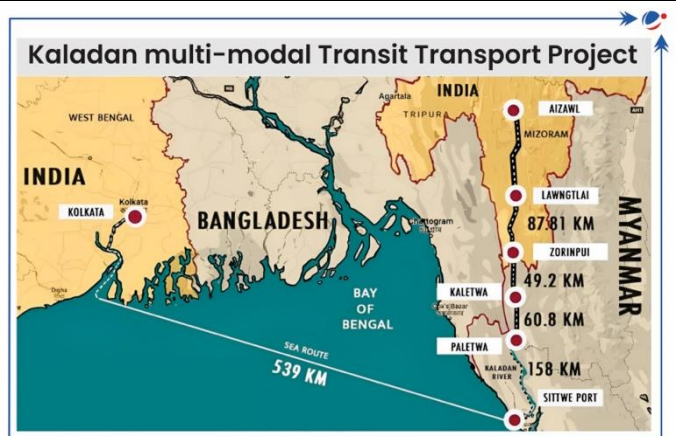
More on the News

- The port will **minimize the distance from India’s west coast to landlocked Afghanistan, Central Asia and European nations bypassing Pakistan**.
- In a related development, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has also approved takeover of the operations of the **entire Sittwe port in Myanmar**.
 - The port is located on the **Kaladan River** and is a component of **Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project**.
- These developments showcase the rising importance of ports as a **strategic tool of geopolitics**.



Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project

- It facilitates movement from the **eastern ports of India (E.g Vizag and Kolkata)** to Myanmar as well as **to the North-Eastern part of India** through Myanmar **bypassing Bangladesh**.
- It aims to **reduce dependency** on the Siliguri Corridor, known as the chicken’s neck, squeezed between Bhutan and Bangladesh.



Strategic Significance of Ports

- **Act as geopolitical assets:** E.g. **Indian Navy’s** staging base at **Agalega Islands** enable patrols over Mozambique Channel.
- **Strengthens Maritime Security:** E.g. **Access to Sittwe port by Myanmar** will improve maritime domain awareness in the **Indian Ocean Region**.
- **Strengthening Bilateral and multilateral relationship:** E.g. Allowing **access to Duqm Port by Oman** has made India’s engagement with Gulf countries easier.

MAINS 365 – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- **Economic significance of ports:**
 - Enhance connectivity, facilitate trade and enable country’s participation in the global value chain
 - Opens avenues for transactions in local currency (e.g. Internationalisation of Rupee)
 - Port cities emerge as global cities.
 - Alternative route to safeguard economic and energy security: E.g. Investment in **Gwadar port (Pakistan)** will help China in surpassing Strait of Malacca and give it a shorter route for Middle East, Africa and Europe.

Challenges in Strategic use of Ports

- **Rivalry among Nations:** E.g. string of pearls (China) and necklace of diamonds (India) strategies.
- **Loss of Sovereignty:** E.g. **China’s debt trap diplomacy (with respect to Hambantota)** was considered an important contributor to **Srilanka’s economic crisis**.
- **Security and Safety concerns:** due to piracy as well as foreign or rival ownership of seaports.
- **Heightened vulnerability:** during periods of heightened geopolitical tension.
- **Challenges related to India:**
 - Smaller neighbourhood nations (e.g. Srilanka, Bangladesh, Maldives) consider themselves **caught in geopolitical rivalry of China and India**.
 - **Limited financial resources** to further expand its geopolitical influence through development of overseas ports.



Way Forward

- **At global level**
 - **Monitoring of risks** which include irresponsible lending and misuse of commercial arrangements at host country ports to support military functions.
 - **Building security partnerships at the global level** to safeguard seaports from opaque economic activity which threatens host country sovereignty and global interests.



- **India Specific measures**
 - **Explore multilateral partnerships** with like-minded countries (e.g. QUAD countries) to protect India's maritime security interests.
 - **Establish a stronger presence in the Western Indian Ocean Region**, where China is at a geographical disadvantage due to its more distant location.

Conclusion

As ports not only connect the two geographical realms of land and sea but also play the dual roles of economic gateways and nodes of geostrategic projection, their management becomes important in the current geopolitical transition.

1.10. CRUDE OIL AS A STRATEGIC TOOL

Why in the news?

Recent events such as Russia-Ukraine war, Israel-Palestine conflict have heightened the importance of crude oil as a strategic tool in geopolitics

Status of Crude Oil in India

- India is 3rd **largest consumer of oil** after the USA and China (2021).
- **Major suppliers of Crude oil to India:** Russia, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, UAE
- India is world's 4th **largest refiner**, 6th **largest importer of petroleum products**, and 7th **largest exporter of petroleum products**.
- India is likely to account for ~25-28% of **global energy demand growth from 2020-2040**.

Strategic Significance of Crude Oil

- **Economic Leverage:** Oil-producing countries, e.g. OPEC can manipulate global oil prices affecting global markets and economies.
- **Strategic Partnership:** with importing countries by long-term supply agreements. E.g. China's investment in Russia's Far East.
- **Showcases Geopolitical Strength:** Control over oil-rich regions allows countries to influence local and global politics.
- **Continuous deployment and projection of military power:** involves reliable oil supplies for fuel to maintain operations
- **As an instrument of Sanction:** E.g. imposition of embargo by oil producing Arab nation on USA during the Yom-Kippur war in 1973

India's Initiative for reducing oil imports

- **Strategic Petroleum Reserves Programme (SPRs):** to maintain energy security and to mitigate supply disruptions E.g. Chandikhol (Odisha), Padur (Karnataka)
- **Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme:** to reduce import dependence on fuel
- **National Policy on Biofuel (2018):** target of 20% blending of bioethanol in petrol by 2025-26
- **Discovered Small Field (DSF) Policy:** to monetizing hydrocarbon resources
- **Reforms in Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy:** for enhancing domestic exploration and production of Oil & Gas
- **Functional freedom to National Oil Companies and promotion of private sector participation:** by streamlining approval processes through electronic single window mechanism

Concerns Associated with India

- **Price Volatility:** due to Russia-Ukraine war, conflict in the Middle East and Houthis attack in Red Sea
- **Low Domestic Production:** Almost half of India's crude oil production is from offshore fields and only 15% of demand is met by domestic production.

- **Supply Chain issues:** limited network of crude oil pipelines, **high operational and transportation cost.**
- **Inadequate Storage:** **current total national capacity** for storage of crude oil and petroleum products is 74 days (IEA mandates 90 days)

Way forward

Recently, Standing Committee on Petroleum and Natural Gas (PNG) submitted its report on the Review of Policy on Import of Crude Oil and made following suggestions:-

- **Diversification of sources:** as majority of India’s hydrocarbon imports are sourced from the Middle East region which is prone to geo-political tensions
- **Reducing import dependence:** by increasing domestic production, promotion of bio-fuel and renewable energy, enhancing energy efficiency, improvement in refinery process.
- **Spot and term contracts:** for assured volumes over an agreed period (for a year or more).
- **Asian premium in crude oil pricing:** use of multilateral institutions to get such charges removed.
- **Exploration of alternatives route of import** with shorter routes and less geopolitical tensions to reduce transportation costs
- **Strengthen the crude oil pipeline network of the country** by ensuring timely completion of on-going pipeline projects and increase the strategic storage capacity of crude oil.

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

2.1. INDIA AND G20

Why in news?

India recently held the Presidency of the G20 summit for the first time at New Delhi, with the theme “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” or “One Earth, One Family, One Future”.

G20

About

Premier forum for **international economic cooperation**, that meets regularly to discuss the most pressing issues facing the global economy.

Genesis

Founded in 1999, following the **Asian financial crisis**, as a forum for finance ministers and Central Bank Governors to discuss global economic and financial issues.

Purpose

Plays an important role in **shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance** on all major international economic issues.

Working

- G20 Summit held annually, under the leadership of a **rotating Presidency**.
- Presidency is supported by the **Troika** previous, current and incoming Presidency.
 - **Troika consists of Indonesia, India and Brazil.** (during India's presidency).
- Consists of two parallel tracks: the **Finance Track** and the **Sherpa Track**.
- Does not have any permanent secretariat or staff.

Represents

85%

Global

75%

GDP Global Trade

2/3rd

World Population

"Data prior to the inclusion of African Union as a member."

Achievements of G20

- **Addressed financial crises** such as the Global Financial Crisis 2008-09, the Eurozone Crisis in 2010, etc.
- A USD 10 trillion **rescue package for the COVID-19** pandemic.
- US-China trade truce in 2018
- Bringing **tax reform** for the benefit of low-income countries.

Significance of G20

- **Support global financial stability:** Through financial regulation, crisis prevention, etc.
- **Address global development challenges:** Like poverty reduction, infrastructure financing, and sustainable development.
- **Human resource development and Employment: E.g.,** At G20 2014 leaders committed to reduce the gender gap in labour force participation by 25% by 2025 compared to 2012.
- **Recast Bilateral ties: E.g.,** India-US, India-Bangladesh, etc.

Significance of G20 Presidency for India

- **Showcase Leadership:** In steering discussions, building consensus, offering solutions. **E.g.,** GBA.
- **Voice of the Global South:** India's presidency elevated Global South priorities.
 - **E.g.,** India's initiative led to African Union becoming a permanent member of the G20.
- **Economic opportunities:** The presidency would facilitate trade opportunities. **E.g.,** IMEC.
- **Expand India's footprint:** As it showcased contemporary technology along with rich heritage.
- **Build trust:** India's pacifist heritage helped in building consensus across spectrum. **E.g.,** Consensus on Ukraine issue.
- **Steered global agenda: E.g.** Prioritized climate agenda, women empowerment, technological transformation, etc.

Challenges for G20

- **Divergent interests and priorities among member countries.**
- **Lack of effective power as** G20 is not a legally binding institution.
- **Geopolitical tensions** between G20 members. **E.g.,** Russia-Ukraine war; US-China tension.
- **Inadequate response to global challenges. E.g.,** lackadaisical approach towards climate change and inequality.
- **Limited accountability and transparency as G20** operate largely behind closed doors.
- **Rising Protectionism** and trade tensions between major economies.

Way forward

- **Inclusivity:** Give voice to concerns of non-member states and non-state actors.
- **Avoiding internal conflicts:** Adopt the principle of Collective for greater good.
- **Effective implementation:** G20 leaders must quickly implement summit promises to strengthen the forum's relevance.
- **Maintaining continuity:** On issues taken up across presidencies.

2.1.1. NEW DELHI DECLARATION

Key highlights of the New Delhi Declaration

Theme	Details
Accelerating progress on SDGs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsed Harnessing Data for Development (D4D) • Emphasis on adopting a one-health approach.
Strong, Sustainable, Balanced, and Inclusive Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G20 2023 Financial Inclusion Action Plan (FIAP). • Adoption of G20 Generic Framework for Mapping Global Value Chains (GVC).
Women empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a full-fledged working group on women's empowerment.
Multilateral Institutions for the 21 st Century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on UNGA 75/1 (UNSC reforms) • Roadmap to implement recommendation of the Multilateral Development Banks Capital Adequacy Framework.

Technological transformation and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> India plans to build a Global Digital Public Infrastructure Repository (GDPIR). Coordinated and comprehensive policy and regulatory framework for crypto-assets.
International taxation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reaffirms commitment to twin pillars of international package. (Profit allocation and nexus and Global Minimum Taxation)
Green Development Pact for a Sustainable Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage efforts to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030. Recognition of the need for about USD 5.8-5.9 trillion in the pre-2030 period for developing countries to implement their NDCs. Launch of initiatives like the Resource Efficiency Circular Economy Industry Coalition (RECEIC), Travel for LiFE etc.
For Planet, People, Peace and Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build consensus on Ukraine issue: States agreed to uphold the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty. Addressed the adverse impact of Russia-Ukraine war on global economy.
Promotion of thematic Roadmaps and Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chennai High-Level Principles for a Sustainable and Resilient Blue/Ocean-based Economy. Gandhinagar Implementation Roadmap (GIR) and Gandhinagar Information Platform (GIP) for strengthening the G20 Global Land Initiative.

2.1.2. INDIA-MIDDLE EAST- EUROPE ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (IMEC)

Why in the News?

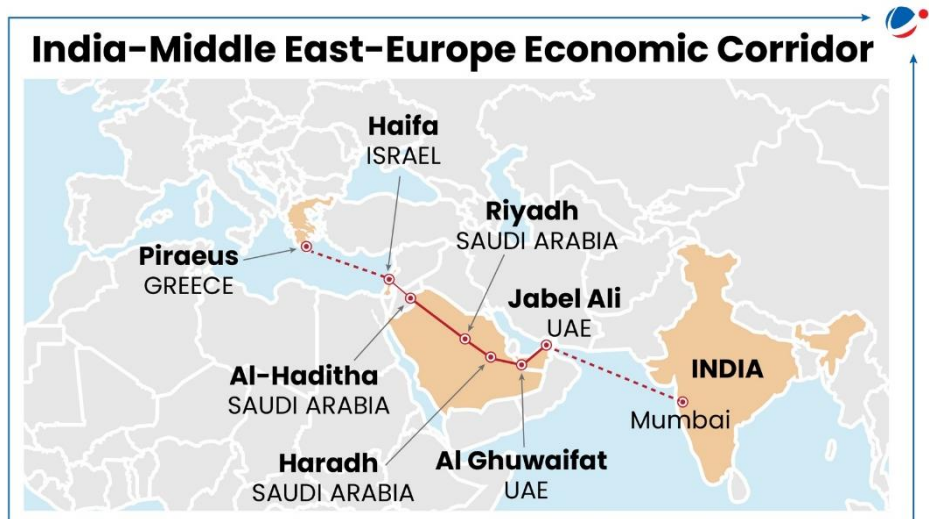
At the G20 Summit, the US joined by the leaders of India, Saudi Arabia, UAE, France, Germany, Italy, and the European Commission, unveiled the multi-modal India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC).

More about the News?

- IMEC includes rail, ship-to-rail, and road routes across two corridors: **East corridor links India to Arabian Gulf; northern connects Gulf to Europe**.
- Aim**: Provide a reliable and cost-effective transit network from, and between **India, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, and Europe**.
 - The Participants will also lay cable for **electricity, digital connectivity** and pipes for **clean hydrogen export**.
- The project forms part of the **Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII)**.

Significance of IMEC

- Establishment of Commitment**: US, Europe, and emerging powers like India and UAE promote balanced, interconnected Eurasian order.
- Trade facilitation and accessibility**: will reduce trade costs, promote market access, etc.





- **Enhanced regional connectivity:** Through improved cross-border cooperation, energy supply, and logistical efficiencies.
- **Economic unity:** As it will integrate economies in India, West Asia and Europe.
- **Diplomatic collaboration:** Close economic ties incentivize security, counterterrorism cooperation.
- **Secure regional supply chains:** It will make the global supply chain more resilient.
- **Sustainable development:** Promote clean energy export, expand energy grids and telecommunications, advance clean energy technologies, and improve internet access for all.

Significance of IMEC for India: Expected to speed up trade between India and Europe by up to 40% , Reduce logistics, Boost to Act West policy of India, etc.

Expected benefits of IMEC over BRI		
Parameters	IMEC	BRI
Design	Based on collaborative consultations with all participants.	Centrally designed.
Benefits	For the common benefit of all in the region	Primarily serves China’s interests.
Employment	Focus on generating employment for the local population	Mainly generates employment for Chinese companies.
Debt practices	Proposes to follow the best international debt practices	Criticized for putting unsustainable debt burdens on participating nations.

Challenges and considerations

- **Complex geopolitics:** It spans nations with diverse political interests and historical tensions.
 - **E.g.,** Historical conflict between Saudi Arabia and Israel relations.
- **Existing rivalries:** China may compete and divert trade to its corridors, thereby challenging IMEC.
 - Also, it poses threat to Egypt’s dominance as it would divert trade from the Suez Canal.
- **Logistical challenges:** Diverse terrains, regulations, protocols will challenge multi-country multi-modal network establishment.
- **Security concerns:** The region is susceptible to various security threats, including terrorism. **E.g.,** menace of Somalian pirates.
- **Challenge with multi-modal routes:** IMEC's land-sea combination may increase costs versus single-mode routes.
- **Financial Commitments:** IMEC lacks dedicated financial commitments.

Way Forward

- **Foster diplomatic dialogue** for unified vision among IMEC participating nations.
- **Harmonize regulatory frameworks, E.g.,** customs procedures and enhance financial connectivity.
- **Enhance regional defense cooperation** through intelligence sharing and joint initiatives.
- **Develop strong financial** structure to attract diverse stakeholder investments.

2.1.3. AFRICAN UNION: A PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE G20

Why in the News?

African Union became the **second regional organization after EU** to become a permanent member of the G20.

Significance of inclusion of African Union in the G20

- **For the G20**
 - **Utilize Africa's Potential:** Holds 60% of global renewable energy assets and 30% of low-carbon technology minerals.
 - **Boost G20's credibility:** AU's inclusion enhances G20's capacity to devise inclusive and equitable solutions.
 - **Reinvent G20's image:** It becomes more representative, fairer, and sustainability-focused with AU inclusion.
- **For India**
 - **Voice of global south:** Inclusion of AU solidifies its image as the Voice of the Global South.
 - **Align with India's aspiration:** Towards a multipolar world and a more equitable and representative international order.
 - **Permanent seat in UNSC:** Will help to leverage AU for Permanent Membership of the UNSC.
 - **Resource diversification:** A resource-rich continent with diverse commodities from oil to metals.
- **For Africa**
 - **Inclusivity:** A platform to raise issues like global tax reforms, debt relief, climate change discussions, etc.
 - **Correcting imbalance:** Africa has been a passive recipient, not active contributor to global economic discussions.
 - **Signal toward Growth of Africa:** It signals the rise of a continent that is painted as a victim of war, extremism, hunger, and disaster.

India's efforts in promoting integration with the African continent



The Pan African E network Project (PANEP): ICT project that connects African countries through a satellite and fiber-optic network to India and to each other.



India Africa Forum summit: It aims for greater cooperation between India and Africa.



The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme: It is the leading capacity-building platform of the Ministry of External Affairs active in the African Union.



Asia-Africa Growth Corridor: Develop infrastructure and digital connectivity in Africa through Indo-Japan collaboration.

About African Union

- **About:** It is a continental body consisting of the 55 member states that make up the countries of the African Continent.
- **Genesis:** Launched in 2002 as a successor to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU, 1963-1999).
- **Aim:** Promoting Africa's growth and economic development by championing citizen inclusion and increased cooperation and integration of African states.
- **Other Key Information:** Collectively the group has a GDP of \$3 trillion with some 1.4 billion people.

2.1.4. GLOBAL BIOFUEL ALLIANCE

Why in the News?

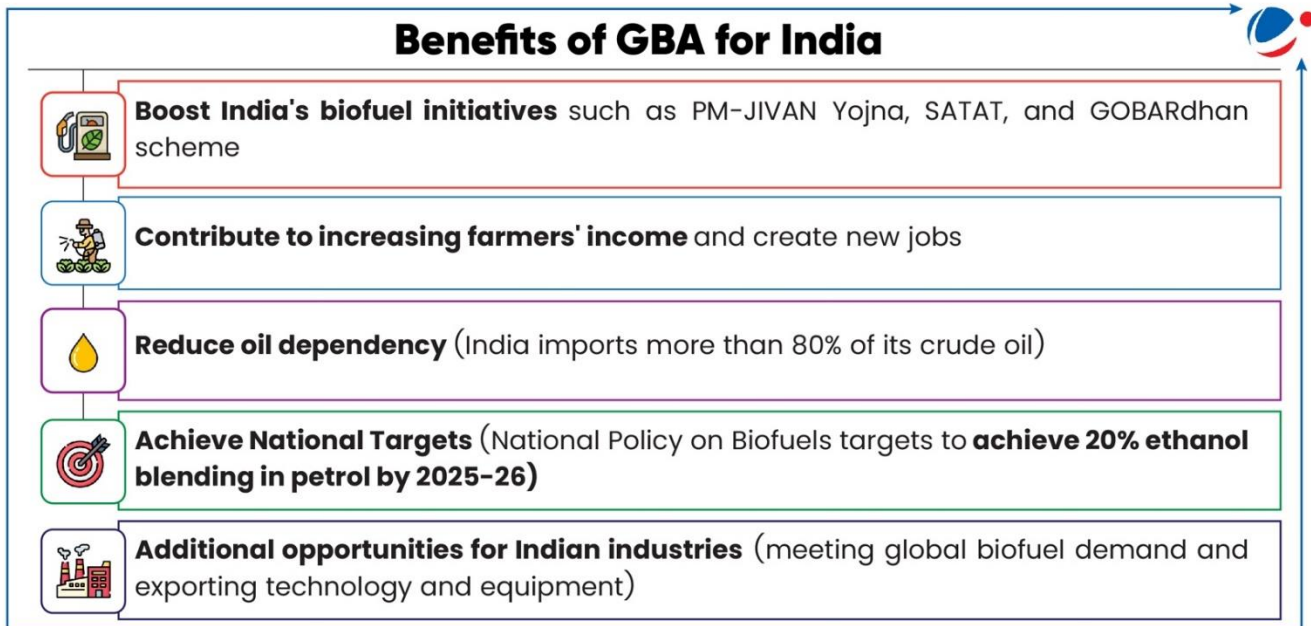
Prime Minister of India along with the leaders of Singapore, Bangladesh, Italy, USA, Brazil, Argentina, Mauritius and UAE, launched the Global Biofuel Alliance in 2023 on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in New Delhi.

More about the News

- The alliance will also act as a **central repository of knowledge** and an expert hub.
- **Aim:** Catalyzing worldwide collaboration for biofuel advancement and adoption.
- **Present GBA Members include:** 24 countries and 12 international organizations.

Significance of GBA

- **Develop a market for biofuels:** GBA connects industries, nations for stable eco-fuel supply and demand mapping.
- **Robust standards:** will implement internationally recognized standards.
- **Contribute to climate efforts:** International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that global sustainable biofuel production would need to triple by 2030 towards net zero emissions by 2050.
- **Decarbonize transport sector:** As it contributes 25% of GHG emissions.



Challenges for GBA

- **Lack of clear definition** of what sustainable fuels are.
- **Technology transfer:** Developed nations' tech secrecy concerns may hinder developing countries' biofuel progress.
- **Geopolitical contestation:** Oil-producing nations might not favor the alliance.
- **Slow growth:** Slow paced deployment of biofuels as compared to solar and wind.
- **Production-related challenges:** Limited availability of quality feedstock, effect on food production and prices, changes in cropping pattern, lack of cost-effective technologies, etc.

Conclusion

The alliance will have to develop sustainable long-term plans, make sufficient investments, resolve supply chain issues, and encourage collaboration.

2.2. EXPANSION OF BRICS

Why in the news?

Recently, five new members namely **Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates** have joined BRICS as full-time permanent members.

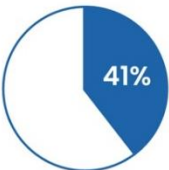
Significance of BRICS Expansion

- **Shaping a multipolar world:** BRICS offers a subtle shift towards a world order, where middle powers are increasingly assuming central roles.
- **Expand global's footprint:** E.g., including the Middle East, Africa, and South America, further enhancing its global footprint.
- **Increased influence in the global economy:** BRICS have **surpassed the G7 countries** in terms of purchasing power parity.
 - Addition of **Egypt and Ethiopia** of the African continent will further lead to global economic inclusivity.
- **Push towards de-dollarization:** Egypt has shared its intent to conduct payments for imports from China, India, and Russia in their respective currencies.

BRICS

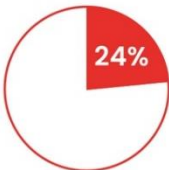
Conception

- Conceived of in the early 2000s in a Goldman Sachs paper **as a grouping of the fastest growing developing economies not in the G-7**
- BRIC countries started their dialogue in 2006, with the induction of South Africa in 2010, BRICS came into existence



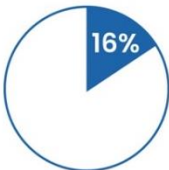
41%

Global Population



24%





Global GDP



16%

Global Trade

Major initiatives of BRICS

 <p>BRICS countries institutionalized New Development Bank (NDB) in 2014.</p>	 <p>Contingency Reserve Arrangement (CRA) of BRICS to provide short-term liquidity support to the members.</p>	 <p>BRICS R&D centre for vaccines to prevent and control infectious diseases.</p>	 <p>Significant growth in BRICS investments and Trade. In 2022, trade between BRICS countries totalled some \$162 billion.</p>
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Issues in Expansion of BRICS

- **Different levels of development** as the added BRICS countries differ significantly in terms of economic development.

- **Geopolitical:** many countries view expansion as China's move to increase its sphere of influence by bringing in more like-minded countries.
- **Vast internal differences among members:** The grouping has mix of democratic and authoritarian regimes.
- **Approach towards institutional reforms** such as at UNSC remains more declaratory in nature.

Way Forward

- **Setting up of a permanent secretariat** with its expanded membership.
- **Collective stand against trade protectionism** as future of BRICS will depend on how much the leaders have agreed to stand collectively against trade protectionism, increase investments and share a global political agenda.
- **Socioeconomic convergence** among the existing member countries must prioritize economic and social cohesion among themselves.
- **Following bottom-up approach** can lead to increase in participation of private sector and citizen involvement. It can include single BRICS visa, increased collaboration among researchers etc.
- **Push for much enhanced multilateral efforts by furthering its deep connects with the Global South** and send a global message of unity and not of polarisation
- **Further expansion of objectives** such as creation of a BRICS Space Exploration Consortium, establishing a repository of traditional medicine etc.

Significance of BRICS for India

- **Amplifies India's voice** for developing nations on global issues. E.g., raise issues on terrorism and Climate change.
- **Neutral platform for dialogue**, managing rivalries even during bilateral tensions. E.g., India-China Dokhlam standoff.
- **Pushes for reforms** in global institutions. E.g., UNSC and WTO
- **Contributes to inclusive** global financial system through initiatives like NDB
- **Helps diversify import** sources, reducing India's high import dependency
- **Facilitates achieving SDGs** through collaborations. E.g., Agricultural Research Platform



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फाउंडेशन कोर्स

सामान्य अध्ययन

प्रारंभिक एवं मुख्य परीक्षा 2025

इनोवेटिव क्लासरूम प्रोग्राम

- प्रारंभिक परीक्षा, मुख्य परीक्षा और निबंध के लिए महत्वपूर्ण सभी टॉपिक का विस्तृत कवरेज
- सीसेट कक्षाएं
- मौलिक अवधारणाओं की समझ के विकास एवं विश्लेषणात्मक क्षमता निर्माण पर विशेष ध्यान
- PT 365 कक्षाएं
- एनीमेशन, पॉवर प्वाइंट, वीडियो जैसी तकनीकी सुविधाओं का प्रयोग
- MAINS 365 कक्षाएं
- अंतर - विषयक समझ विकसित करने का प्रयास
- PT टेस्ट सीरीज
- योजनाबद्ध तैयारी हेतु करेंट ओरिएंटेड अप्रोच
- मुख्य परीक्षा टेस्ट सीरीज
- नियमित क्लास टेस्ट एवं व्यक्तिगत मूल्यांकन
- निबंध टेस्ट सीरीज
- निबंध लेखन - शैली की कक्षाएं
- करेंट अफेयर्स मैगजीन

नोट: ऑनलाइन छात्र हमारे पाठ्यक्रम की लाइव वीडियो कक्षाएं अपने घर पर ऑनलाइन प्लेटफॉर्म पर देख सकते हैं। छात्र लाइव चैट विकल्प के माध्यम से कक्षा के दौरान अपने संदेह और विषय संबंधी प्रश्न पूछ सकते हैं। वे अपने संदेह और प्रश्न नोट भी कर सकते हैं और दिल्ली केंद्र में हमारे कक्षा सलाहकार को बता सकते हैं और हम फोन/मेल के माध्यम से प्रश्नों का उत्तर देंगे।

DELHI: 22 अगस्त, 1 PM | 18 जुलाई, 1 PM

BHOPAL: 23 जुलाई

LUCKNOW: 18 जुलाई

JAIPUR: 16 अगस्त

JODHPUR: 11 जुलाई

2.3. INDIA-INDO-PACIFIC AT A GLANCE

India-Indo Pacific

"Only those whose mindsets are built around spheres of influence and who are uncomfortable with the democratization of world affairs will dispute the Indo-Pacific today"- India's External Affairs Minister (EAM) on "India's Vision of the Indo-Pacific"

50% of the Global Trade and **40% of Oil** passes through IP.

India's **90% trade** and **80% critical freight**.

"We consider Indo-Pacific as a region that extends from the Eastern shores of Africa to the Western shores of America."

—India's External Affairs Minister.



India's Indo-Pacific (IP) Vision and its elements

- Advocates for a **free, open, and inclusive region**.
- Places **Southeast Asia and ASEAN at the center of IP**.
- Supports a **common rules-based order** for the region and **promotes dialogue over force**.



India's policy towards the Indo-Pacific Region

- **Strengthening and preserving traditional roles in IOR** such as Security Provider and First Responder, etc.
- **Naval Strategy:** Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) through institutions like- Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC),
- **Initiatives:** Indo Pacific Oceans' Initiative, Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, etc.
- **Foreign Policy:** **Separate** Indo-Pacific Division (IPD) **under Ministry of External Affairs**, Act East Policy, SAGAR etc.



India's interests in the IP

- **Expanding its presence in the region**, especially in Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia.
- **Maintain its role as a net security provider**
- **Countering China**.



Challenges in pursuing the (IP)

- **Limited Naval Capacity and Lack of military bases**.
- **Slow pace of developments of initiatives**.
- **Lack of definitional consensus of IP**.



Conclusion

Collective efforts will contribute to the maintenance of a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.

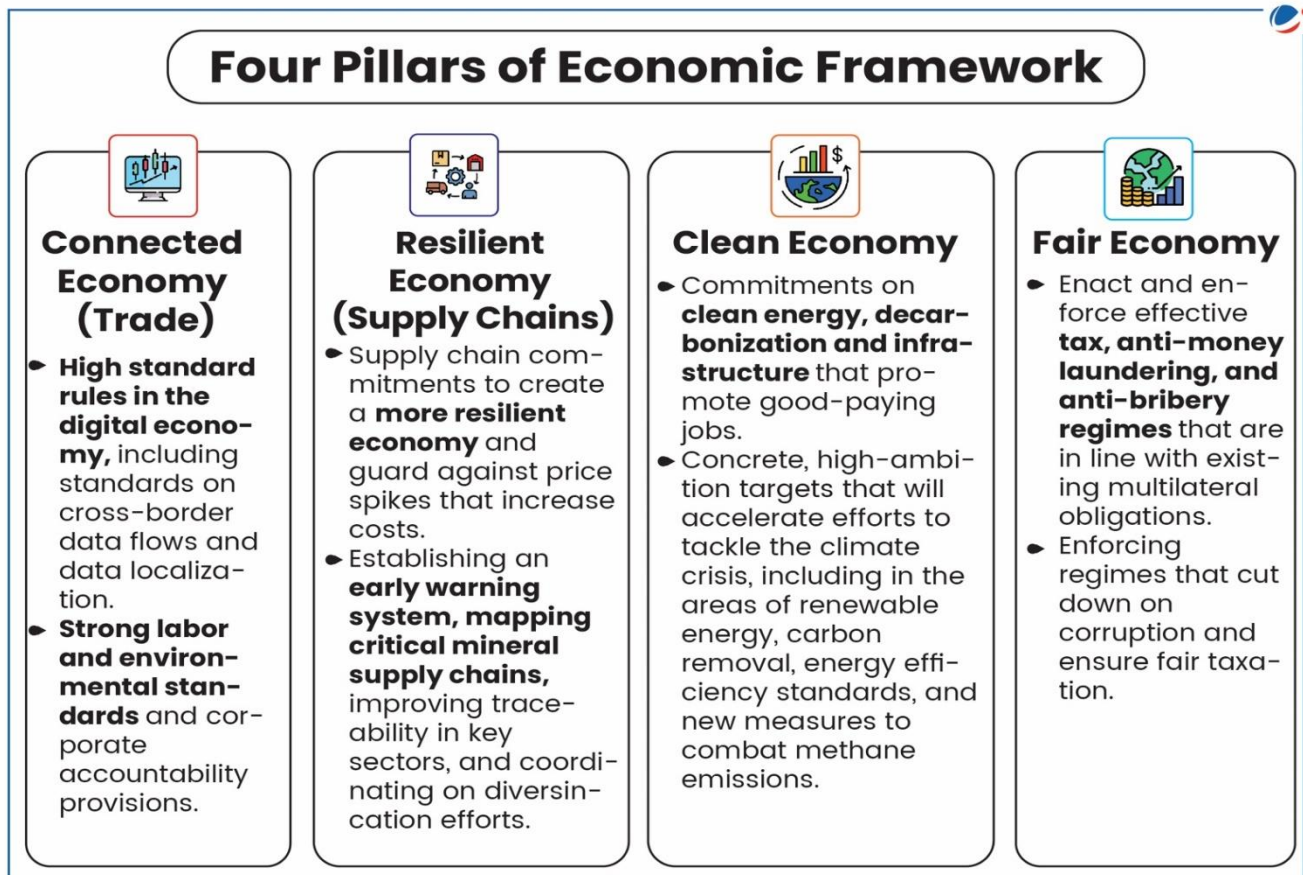
2.3.1. INDO-PACIFIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK FOR PROSPERITY (IPEF)

Why in the news?

The third Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) Ministerial Meeting was held in San Francisco, USA.

About IPEF

- **Genesis:** launched jointly by the **USA and other partner countries** of the **Indo-Pacific region** in May 2022 at Tokyo.
- **Objective:** To **strengthen economic engagement** among partner countries with the goal of **advancing growth, peace and prosperity in the region.**
- **Members:** **14 partner countries** including India
 - Together these countries **represent 40% of world GDP** and **28%** of global goods and services trade.
- **Modules:** The framework is structured **around four pillars (see infographic)**
 - India **has joined all pillars except the trade one.**
- **Lead agency:** The **US Trade Representative (USTR)** is the lead agency for the **trade pillar**, while the **department of commerce** is leading the **other three pillars.**
- **Traditional trade agreements vs IPEF:**
 - **Unlike** Traditional trade blocs (like the RCEP) or Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), **IPEF will not negotiate tariffs or market access.**
 - **Also** unlike in FTAs, where **everything is negotiated under a single umbrella**, IPEF negotiations under the **four module (pillars) are in silos, independent of each other.**
 - ✓ While countries have to **agree to all the components within a module**, they **need not participate in every module.**
 - **IPEF** merely focuses on increasing **regulatory coherence** between the member nations.



Significance of IPEF

- Establishing **new rules of commerce to strengthen economic partnership**
- Building a **free and open Indo-Pacific** that has sustainable and inclusive economic growth.
- Making **supply chains more resilient**, thereby protecting against costly disruptions.
- **Restoring US influence in the region** since its exit from Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).
- Establishing an **alternative to China in the Indo-Pacific**.
- Deeper integration of India **into global value chains**.

Challenges to IPEF: Concerns on durability, De-coupling China is difficult, concerns on reciprocity, venturing into sensitive areas, lack of binding commitments.

Way ahead

- **Strengthen IPEF Credibility:** so that it can provides tangible benefits for economic activity and investment.
- **Incentivize Participation:** Offer incentives to countries already signatories to regional FTAs (CPTPP and RCEP) to make joining IPEF more appealing.
- **Ensure Binding Rules:** Ensure that negotiated rules are binding and consider concerns from all stakeholders.
- **Expand IPEF Membership:** Develop the process and criteria for inviting other countries.
- **Balanced approach towards China:** A pragmatic approach is needed as an overtly anti-China strategy might be counterproductive as many IPEF members in the Indo-Pacific may not support this.

Related news

- India has become **14th member of the Mineral Security Partnership (MSP)**.
- MSP is an ambitious new **US-led partnership to secure supply chains of critical minerals**, aimed at reducing dependency on China.
- Goal is to ensure that critical minerals are produced, processed, and recycled in a way that supports the ability of countries to **realize the full economic development** benefit of their geological endowment.
- The MSP will help catalyse **investment from governments and the private sector** for strategic opportunities across the full value chain.

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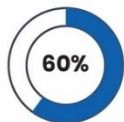
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2.4. SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION (SCO) AT A GLANCE

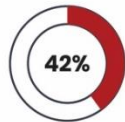
SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION

- It is a **permanent intergovernmental political, economic and military organization** founded in 2001

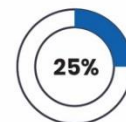
SCO Represents:



Eurasia Territory



World population



Global GDP



Relevance of the SCO for India

- Recognizing the centrality of Central Asia:** E.g. India's Connect Central Asia policy, formulate Eurasian strategy.
- Geopolitics and Geo-economics:** enhance India's international standing, lead to greater access to regional markets.
- Controlling Regional Terrorism:** E.g. Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure(RATS) mechanism
- Afghanistan Issue:** E.g. SCO supported for Afghanistan as an independent State
- Economic:** CAR is mineral rich region (**iron-ore, coal, oil, gas, uranium**)
 - ★ **Energy Cooperation:** E.g. India's access to Eurasia.
- People to People Connect:** E.g. SCO Film Festival, SCO Surajkund Craft Mela, etc,



Challenges for India in the SCO

- Dominance of China:** BRI endorsed by all members except India.
- Eurasia's Emerging Geopolitical Reality:** E.g. Russia-Ukraine War
- Conflicts Among Member Nations:** E.g. India-Pakistan, India-China, Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border issues
- Limited Institutional capacity** & weak decision making processes
- Lack of a Unified Approach for Afghanistan (dealing with Taliban).**



Way-forward

- Maintaining strategic autonomy:** Retain independent voice
- Revitalize Connectivity projects:** E.g. Chabahar port can be used for strong Eurasian presence.
- Constructive role in Central Asian Region:** E.g. de-radicalisation of youths in Central Asia
- Exploring New Areas of Cooperation: Climate Change, AI** E.g. convergence of India's National Strategy on AI, AI Mission with SCO framework on Roadmap on AI cooperation



Conclusion

- SCO provides us a unique platform to unite people, collaborate, grow and prosper together, practicing the millenia old principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam which means 'The World is One Family'.

2.5. QUAD

Why in the news?

US House of Representatives has passed ‘**Strengthen US-Australia-India-Japan Cooperation**’ or **Strengthening the Quad Act**.

Key highlights of the Act

The act aims to strengthen joint cooperation between Quad’s four members, to promote a free, open, inclusive, resilient and healthy Indo-Pacific. Under the act:

- **Quad Intra-Parliamentary Working Group:** Established to facilitate closer cooperation between the QUAD Members in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Guidelines for annual meetings and group leadership** have been established.
- US Secretary of State to submit a **status update on Quad’s activities** and a **strategy for bolstering cooperation** on issues. **E.g.**, preparing for the next pandemic, co-developing new innovative technologies, etc.

About QUAD

- **About:** It is a plurilateral framework comprising **India, Australia, Japan, and the USA**.
- **Purpose:** to work as a **force for global good** and to support an **open, free, and inclusive Indo-Pacific** that is **prosperous and resilient**.
- **Working:** Practical work of the Quad is taken forward through following **six Leader level Working Groups** on following six areas:

Area	Steps taken
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Energy Supply Chains Initiative was announced to facilitate research and development and support energy transition. • Quad Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Package (Q-CHAMP) to increase access to early warning systems and climate data etc.
Critical and Emerging Technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation with Palau to establish a deployment of Open Radio Access Network (Open RAN) capabilities, the first in the Pacific. • Launched Quad Investors’ Network (QUIN) as private sector-led platform to facilitate investments in strategic technologies.
Cyber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quad Joint Principles for Secure Software and for Cyber Security of Critical Infrastructure were released, to strengthen defences against cyber threats.
Health Security Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To evolve Quad Vaccine Partnership into a more comprehensive Health Security Partnership to promote coordination and collaboration.
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quad Infrastructure Fellowships Program, to empower more than 1,800 of region’s infrastructure practitioners to design, build quality infrastructure. • Quad Partnership for Cable Connectivity and Resilience, to strengthen cable systems in the Indo-Pacific
Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To exchange Earth observation satellite data and analysis to help countries better adapt to climate change, prepare for natural disasters, and manage oceans and marine resources.

Significance of Quad for India

- **India’s active engagement in Indo-Pacific:** which accounts 50% global maritime trade, 60% global GDP.
- **Boost to Act East:** E.g., QUAD aids India's East/Southeast Asia ties, maritime security, economic engagement, etc.

- **Diverse areas of cooperation:** E.g., Australia, India, and Japan have announced their intention to launch a supply chain resilience initiative (SCRI).
- **Economic advantage:** Can make India a preferred destination for investment, with supply chain disruptions caused by dependence on China.

Challenges to QUAD

- **Less institutionalisation:** Presently, it is neither a security arrangement nor a trade group.
- **Seen as cold war mentality:** China has criticized it as an attempt to establish an "Asian NATO".
- **Distinguishing Quad's purpose** from other regional groupings remains challenging. E.g., ASEAN, Pacific Islands Forum, and IORA.
- **Problem of delivery:** E.g., it could not deliver promised "800 million COVID-19 vaccine doses".

India's concerns within Quad

- **Possibility of reactivating tensions with China on different fronts;**
- Compromise its **flexible partnerships** with countries, including those antagonistic toward the Quad, like BRICS and SCO;
- India's involvement in Quad could alienate other **Indian partners like Russia and Iran.**

Way ahead for QUAD

- **Focus on regional prosperity:** Quad stabilizes Indo-Pacific and ensure inclusive rules-based order. Hence, more clarity on its contributions to regional prosperity and flexibility on security matters are essential.
- **Augment existing organisations in region:** Thereby, provide an inclusive vision for cooperation.
- **Engage other players:** Like, regional partners in initiatives that resonate with their respective interests and priorities.
- **Balancing clarity and ambiguity:** By not being explicit about potential Chinese military actions, the Quad can focus on areas of shared interests while minimizing the risk of direct confrontation with China.

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2.6. INDIA-ASEAN AT A GLANCE

INDIA-ASEAN RELATIONS

- India's PM attended 20th ASEAN-India Summit and 18th East Asia Summit (EAS) in Jakarta, Indonesia.



ASEAN is India's 4th largest trading partner.



India ASEAN trade: \$122.67 billion (2023-24).



Outcomes of 20th India-ASEAN Summit

- India's PM reaffirmed ASEAN centrality in the Indo-Pacific
- 12-point proposal for strengthening India – ASEAN cooperation**
 - Sharing India's Digital Public Infrastructure Stack with ASEAN Partners.
 - ASEAN-India Fund for Digital Future focusing on digital transformation.



Significance of ASEAN for India

- Geopolitical:** Centrality in India's Act East Policy and Indo-Pacific Vision.
- Economic:** ASEAN comprises 11% of India's global trade, >20% of India's outbound investments go to ASEAN.
 - Financial Cooperation:** ASEAN-India Green Fund, ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund
- Regional Integration and development of Northeast:** India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral (IMT) Highway, Kaladan Multimodal Project.
- Defence and Security Cooperation:** ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting – Plus (ADMM-Plus), ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise (AIME)
- Soft Power Projection:** cultural commonalities e.g., temples, yoga, the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Ayurveda,



Challenges faced by India in its dealings with ASEAN

- Conflicting priorities:** India's opposition to the BRI and its withdrawal from RCEP, division within ASEAN on the issue of Myanmar
- Economic Issues:**
 - Widening of trade deficit:** \$43.57 billion (2022-23) from USD 25.76 billion (2021-22).
 - Competing regional agreements:** engagement of ASEAN with RCEP and the CPTPP.
- Security:**
 - Great power competition:** between US & China
 - Maritime challenges:** China's maritime dispute with ASEAN countries in South China Sea
 - Weakened Centrality of ASEAN in Indo-Pacific:** due to presence of QUAD, AUKUS.



Way ahead to strengthen the relations

- Trade facilitation:** Review AITIGA in time bound manner, establish supply chain networks under the IPEF
- Cooperative approach to address global challenges** such as climate change .E.g. ISA, CDRI, LIFE and OSOWOG.
- Strengthen Comprehensive Strategic Partnership:** better synergy between India's Indo-Pacific Ocean's Initiative (IPOI) and ASEAN's Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)
- Enhanced Connectivity:** Expedite IMT project
- Cultural and Educational Exchanges:** people-to-people ties (by cultural events, tourism) etc



Conclusion

- India supports ASEAN unity, centrality and the ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific and believes that a strong and unified ASEAN can play a constructive role in the emerging regional architecture of the Indo-Pacific.



2.7. THE COMMONWEALTH

Why in news?

The year 2024 marks 75 years since the creation of the **modern Commonwealth**, with the signing of the **London Declaration**.

India's relations with the Commonwealth

- India is the **largest member state of the Commonwealth**, with nearly 60% of the total population of the association.
- It is **the fourth largest contributor** to the Commonwealth.
- India hosted the **Commonwealth Summit (CHOGM)** and **Commonwealth Games (CWG)** in **1983 and 2010 respectively in New Delhi**.
- **Commonwealth Sub Window** (US\$ 50 Million over 5 years) under the **India-UN Development Fund** was established in **2018**

Is the Commonwealth relevant in the present times?

- **Arguments in favour:**
 - **Election Observation Missions:** Since 1967, the Commonwealth has sent 140 missions to monitor elections in around 40 countries, promoting transparency.
 - **Evolving Membership:** Newer members, including non-former British colonies such as Togo and Gabon.
 - **Advocacy for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** Commonwealth committed to the implementation of SDGs, particularly **Goal 16 focusing on peace and development**.
 - **Trade:** Bilateral costs for trading partners in Commonwealth countries are on average 21% less than between those in non-member countries.
- **Arguments against:**
 - Critics points out that its **very existence is legitimizing colonization**. Members, as a sovereign nation, should focus on our international relationships in other platforms such as the UN, ASEAN and other bodies.
 - **Less relevant in addressing contemporary global issues:** For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - **Lack of cohesion among members:** E.g., Nine Commonwealth countries abstained from UN voting **condemning Russia** in the on-going Russia-Ukraine war.
 - **Funding Constraints:** Limited funding to the Commonwealth's international bureaucracy hampers its effectiveness, with British investment primarily bilateral rather than directed to the Secretariat's programs.

Conclusion

Leveraging the Commonwealth network for mitigating climate Change, enhanced business, trade, and people-to-people connections is essential for long-term growth and prosperity.

2.8. NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM)

Why in the news?

Recently, **19th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)** was held in Kampala, Uganda.

More on News

- **Theme of the summit:** 'Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence'
- **Kampala declaration** was adopted at the summit. Under it, member countries,
 - commit to **strengthen the UN** as the primary multilateral organization

- agreed to **make joint efforts to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA)**
- **South Sudan became the new member(121st) of NAM.**

About Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

- **Genesis:** Asia-Africa Conference held in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955.
- **About NAM**
 - **Founding fathers of the movement:** Heads of State of Egypt, Ghana, India, Indonesia and Yugoslavia.
 - The idea was **to declare themselves as "nonaligned"** from either of the two nascent military blocks (NATO and the Warsaw Pact).
- **NAM's first conference** - The Belgrade Conference in 1961.
- The NAM **does not have a formal founding charter** nor a **permanent secretariat**.

Key principles of NAM



Current Relevance of NAM

- **Protecting Sovereignty:** NAM countries support the principles of self-determination, respect for territorial integrity, non-aggression.
- **An integral part of foreign policy:** Many developing countries like India still follow the NAM policy, as **'independence of action' in foreign policy.**
- **Unifying force:** NAM is still applicable as a strict measure to prevent colonization and imperialism of small and developing countries.
- **Promoting Multilateralism and Global Peace:** NAM upholds the principles of multilateralism, diplomacy, and peaceful coexistence;
- **Rising importance of the concept of Active Non-Alignment (ANA):** It embodies a pro-active attitude (instead of passive neutrality) aimed at solving problems.
- **To facilitate UN reform:** to make it a more democratic, transparent and representative organ of the United Nations.

Challenges faced by NAM: Change in world order , Evolving alliances, Regional organizations such as ASEAN, SCO, Lack of leadership.

Non-alignment vs Neutrality

- Non-alignment is a **political concept**; neutrality is a **legal concept**.
- Non-alignment is not **written into a state's constitution**; neutrality can be a **permanent feature of state policy**.
- Non-alignment emphasizes an active role in world affairs, promotes friendship and cooperation with all countries, hence it is a **positive concept**.
 - Neutrality implies non-involvement, does not necessarily involve such positive relationships.

Conclusion

NAM needs to **redefine itself** and reinvent its objectives in the contemporary world system. NAM continues to be relevant so long as there is exploitation, war, hunger, poverty and disease on the earth.

2.9. INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY (IEA)

Why in the news?

International Energy Agency (IEA) to start full membership talks with India.

More about the news

- The announcement was made in a joint communique following the **IEA's 2024 Ministerial Meeting and 50th Anniversary events**.
- India joined the IEA as an **associate member in 2017** and sent a formal request for full membership last year.
 - In 2021, India signed a **strategic partnership agreement with the IEA** to strengthen cooperation in global energy security, stability, and sustainability.
- **Criteria for IEA membership**
 - Must be a member country of the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**.
 - Crude oil and/or product reserves **equivalent to 90 days of the previous year's net imports**.
 - ✓ India has **strategic oil reserves of 9.5 days** of its needs and combined with storage at refineries and depots, it is **equal to the 66-day requirement**.
 - **A demand restraint program** to reduce national oil consumption by up to 10%.
 - **Legislation and measures to ensure that all oil companies** under its jurisdiction report information upon request.
- **The IEA Governing Board** makes the final decision on a country's membership.
- **Significance for India**
 - Recognized **India's 'strategic importance'** in tackling global energy and climate challenges.
 - For energy security as India is the **world's third-largest energy consumer**.

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3. INDIA AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD RELATIONS

3.1. INDIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST POLICY (NFP)

Why in the News?

Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs submitted an Action Taken report on observations/recommendations contained in its 22nd report on India's NFP.

About Neighbourhood First Policy (NFP)

- **Neighbourhood First construct as a policy, is a dynamic policy that came around 2008.**
- **Aims:** To forge strong neighbourhood relations based on a consultative, non-reciprocal, and outcome-oriented approach and delivering benefits like greater connectivity, improved infrastructure, security, etc.

Significance of NFP

- **Strategic imperative:** Enhanced regional integration in South Asia to counter China and promote India's vision.
 - Also, cooperation is **critical as India aspires to be the voice of the Global South and reform Global Governance system. E.g., UNSC, IMF, etc.**
- **Strengthen multilateralism:** Through regional/ sub-regional organizations. **E.g., SAARC, BIMSTEC, etc.**
- **Soft Power:** Leveraging India's cultural and historical ties to promote soft power influence in the region.
- **Regional stability and security:** Improved trust and cooperation **builds capacity to address** security threats. **E.g., anti-terrorism efforts, counter-insurgency operations, transnational organized crimes, etc.**
- **Economic:** Facilitates increased regional trade, investment, and cross-border infrastructure
 - **Ensure India's energy security. E.g.,** Nepal and Bhutan's hydro-power potential.
 - **Address developmental deficit** in India's Northeast. **E.g.,** Kaladan, Akhaura-Agartala Rail Link, etc.

Challenges in India's Neighbourhood

- **Historical baggage and unresolved disputes:** **E.g.,** Unresolved border disputes with countries like Pakistan, China.
- **Big-brother attitude:** Engenders anti-India sentiments leading to strained bilateral relations. **E.g.,** Nepal.
- **Domestic politics:** **E.g.,** Tamil sentiments determining India's Sri Lanka policy.
- **Evolving dynamics in neighbouring countries:** **E.g.,** Political instabilities in Afghanistan and Myanmar.
- **India's capacity and resources:** Delayed project implementation led to mistrust and erosion of credibility.
- **Multilateralism:** Dysfunctional regional multilateral institutions. **E.g.,** SAARC.

5 S Principle of Neighbourhood Engagement



Key Recommendations by the Parliamentary Committee

- **Implementation of developmental projects:** Dedicated Cell by MEA to identify and implement projects.



- **Border infrastructure and connectivity:** E.g., MEA should work in close coordination with Home Ministry and states to address illegal migration.
- **Development Fund:** E.g., regional development fund for connectivity infrastructure under regional frameworks like BIMSTEC.
- **Cultural and People-to-People connect.**
- **Bilateral and multilateral/ regional framework:** Periodic review on the basis of contemporary realities.

3.2. CHINA’S RISE AND THREATS TO INDIA

China's rapid economic and military expansion challenges the existing global order, with implications on international relations. Consequently, India, as a regional power, seeks to balance China's growing influence in Asia and beyond.

China’s Major Strategic Threats to India

- **Immediate territorial threat:** Chinese intrusion in Ladakh and also claim on Arunachal Pradesh.
 - Also, **CPEC** running through Pakistan, a challenge to India’s sovereignty.
 - **Infrastructure development** of settlement along LAC.
- **China’s indiscriminate military spending and its overarching presence across the Indo Pacific:** E.g., **China’s defence budget of \$222 billion Vs. India’s \$75 billion.**
- **Subverting democratic societies from within:** E.g., China has deployed the United Front Work Department (UFWD) to penetrate democratic societies.
- **India’s ballooning trade deficit with China:** E.g., The trade deficit was a little over \$ 99 billion (2023).
- **China using its economic dominance for favourable geopolitical results (called “geoeconomics”):** E.g., Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka.
- **China poses threat to India’s food and water security:** E.g., China to construct hydroelectric projects along the lower reaches of the Brahmaputra River.

India’s efforts to mitigate these threats

- **India’s standing up to Chinese military:** E.g., In Ladakh, in Doklam, etc.
- **India active Indo-Pacific policy:** E.g., Shown their unequivocal support to Philippines, resisting Chinese maritime aggression in South China Sea. First batch of Brahmos Supplied to the Philippines.
 - India’s engagement with Taiwan.
- **Quad transformed into multifaceted tie-up:** Ensure adherence to principles of free, open, inclusive, and responsible conduct.
- **Domestic policy changes to reduce Chinese economic dominance:** E.g., banning TikTok.
- **India emerging as a voice of reason as well as the ‘Voice of Global South’:** E.g., incorporating African Union within G20.
- **India’s exercise of its soft power and launching of multilateral cooperations :** E.g., Yoga popularised across the world; International fora like ISA, CDRI, etc;

China's contestations at global stage	
Regions/Themes	Developments/Threats
Trade Wars with the US	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • US imposed a 10% tariff on 6,000 Chinese products in 2018. A protracted trade war has affected the world economy.
Pacific Islands Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China and the United States compete for influence in the Pacific. E.g., Solomon Islands enters into security pact with Beijing.
South China Sea Disputes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China has built artificial islands on the Spratly Islands, Fiery Cross Reef, and Mischief Reef, to support its territorial claims. • China's naval forces have confronted with the US, Vietnam, and the Philippines, in the South China Sea.

Hong Kong Protests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China imposed a National Security Law on Hong Kong, bypassing the local legislature.
Taiwan Tensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased Chinese military drills near Taiwan, simulating an invasion and putting Taiwan's defense on high alert.
Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Criticisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debt Trap Diplomacy where the participating countries compromise on their sovereignty. • Italy Withdraws from BRI
Africa Debt Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Djibouti: Owes over 80% of its GDP to China, raising concerns about debt distress. • Zambia: Faces debt distress, with Chinese loans accounting for over 50% of its external debt.

Conclusion

For ties (India-China) to return to a positive trajectory and remain sustainable, they must be based on the three mutuals: mutual sensitivity, mutual respect and mutual interest—External Affairs Minister in his book: ‘Why Bharat Matters’

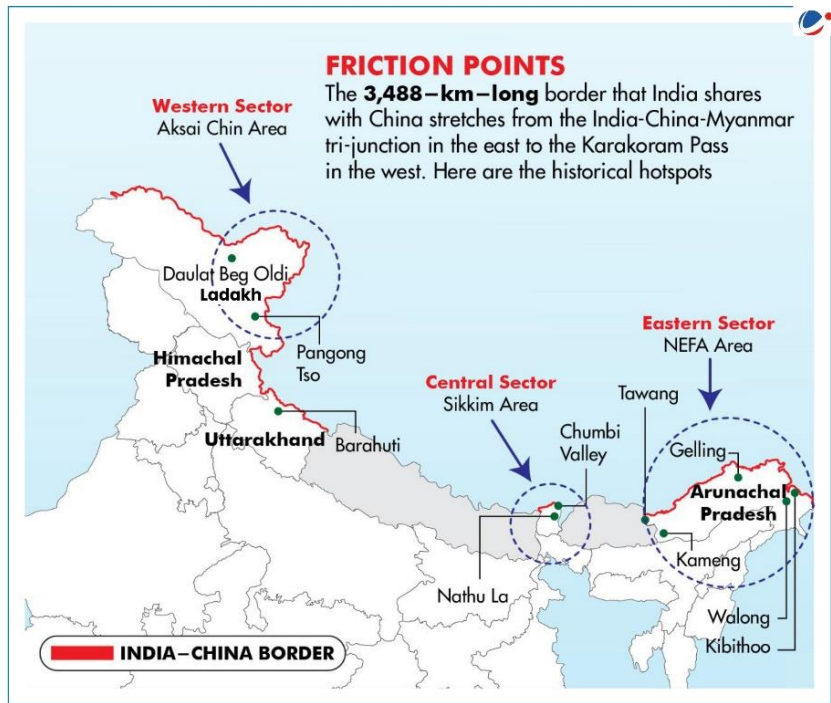
3.2.1. INDIA-CHINA BORDER DISPUTE

Why in the News?

India to rename 30 places in Tibet, in response to China's renaming of Arunachal Pradesh (AP)

More on the News

- The response came after **China renamed 30 places in AP in May 2024, which it calls ‘South Tibet’**.
- **Previously, the Indian Prime Minister and the Chinese President had called for speedy disengagement along Line of Actual Control (LAC).**
 - India and China had agreed to step up efforts to **de-escalate tensions along LAC**.
 - India wanted the first disengagement at **Depsang-Demchok**.



India-China Border Disputes

- **Line of Actual Control (LAC)** is the dividing line between the two nations.
 - However, border between India and China is **not formally demarcated and there is no mutually agreed LAC**.
 - **India** considers the **LAC to be 3,488 km** long, while the **China** considers it to be only around **2,000 km**.
- **LAC is divided into three sectors:**
 - **Western Sector** (Ladakh): **India** considers the **Johnson Line** (of 1865) as the border whereas **China** claims the **Macartney McDonald Line** of 1899.
 - **Middle sector** (Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand): Largely **undisputed** area.
 - **Eastern Sector** (Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim): **China** claims the state of **AP** as part of the **Tibetan Autonomous Region**.

- ✓ LAC in this region is along the **McMahon line** drawn during the **Simla Convention of 1914 (between British India, China, and Tibet)**.
- In 1949 when Communists took power in China, they **pulled out of various international agreements** claiming them to be unequal.
- **Key dispute resolution Initiatives include**
 - **1993 Agreement** on Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the LAC.
 - **1996 Agreement** on Confidence-Building Measures in the Military Field Along the LAC
 - **2005 Protocol** on Modalities for Implementation of Confidence-Building Measures in Military Field.
 - **2012 Agreement** on Establishment of a Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs.
 - **2013 Border Defense Cooperation Agreement.**

3.3. INDUS WATER TREATY (IWT)

Why in news?

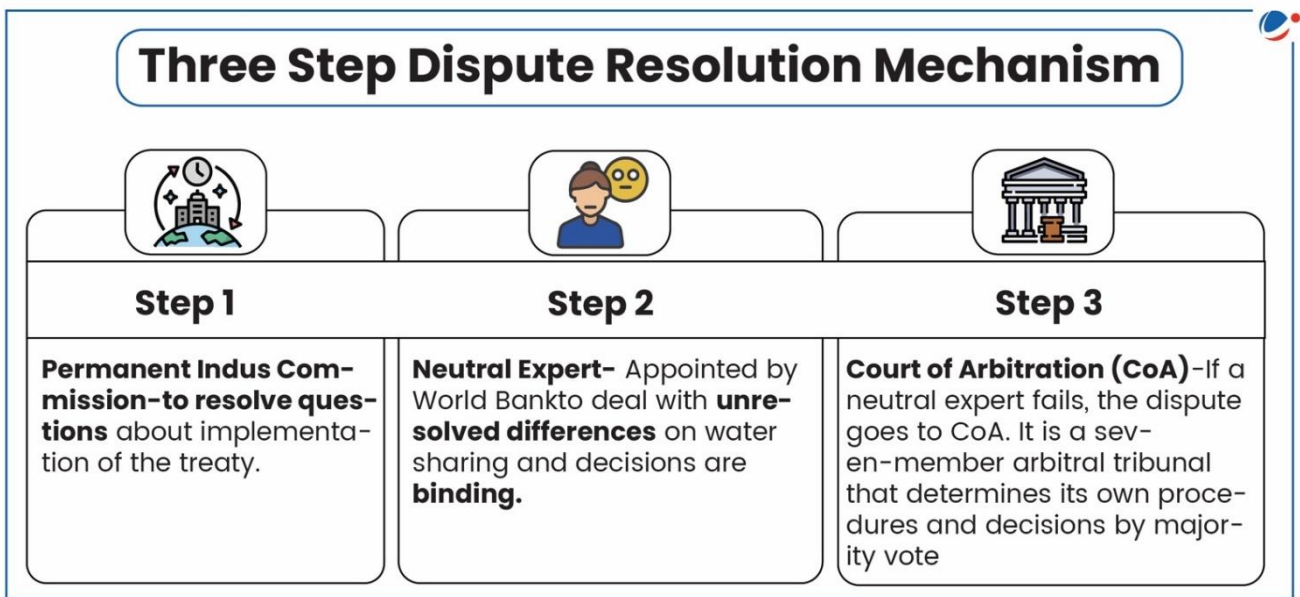
India has marked the completion of the Shahpur Kandi Barrage on the **Ravi River (Punjab)**, **stopping the water flow to Pakistan**.

More on news

- India has exclusive rights to the water of the Ravi River under the **Indus Water Treaty**.
- The Dam will redirect water towards J&K, Punjab and Rajasthan, **bolstering agricultural and hydropower prospects**.

About Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)

- **Genesis:** Signed by **India and Pakistan (in 1960)** and **brokered by the World Bank** (also a signatory).
- **Objective:** Delimitation of rights and obligations regarding the use of the Indus water system.
- **Provisions for water usage rights:**
 - IWT allows India unrestricted use of **three eastern rivers Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej**.
 - Pakistan has control over **three western rivers Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab**.
 - ✓ Can be used by India with certain restrictions (for irrigation, transport and power generation).
- **Implementation:** The treaty required the **creation of a Permanent Indus Commission**, with a commissioner from each country, to maintain a channel for communication and is required to meet at least once every year.





Issues with the treaty

- **Pakistan’s frequent opposition to the Indian projects:** E.g., **Kishanganga** and **Ratle Hydroelectric Project** on Jhelum and Chenab, respectively.
- **Limitations of Judicial Recourse:** As, India prefers neutral expert for IWT; Pakistan favors Permanent Court of Arbitration’s (PCA) strict interpretation.
 - PCA unanimously rejected India's concerns in **July 2023**, rendering a **legally binding** decision
- **Strained bilateral relations:** E.g., Pakistan’s frequent use of state-sponsored terrorism suspended the **biannual talks between the commissioners**.
- **Climate change:** It has altered water patterns thereby challenging IWT's river partitioning.
- **Weak Conflict-resolution method:** WB oversees IWT, however, lack of data distinguishing illegal interventions from natural variations (like low seasonal flows) is challenging.
- **No regular data sharing as planned in the treaty.**
- **Technical nature of the Treaty:** Prompts diverse and wide-ranging interpretations.

Way Forward

- **Revisiting the IWT:** By take into account the technological advances which were absent at the time of drafting the IWT.
 - **Inclusion of Principles of International Water Law:** Principles of Equitable and Reasonable Utilisation (ERU) and No Harm Rule (NHR) can help bridge differences.
- **Empowering Indus Water Commissioners:** So that they make apolitical decisions.
 - **Regular meetings and data sharing** can prevent issues.
- **Implement adaptive water management:** To ensure river sustainability amid climate change challenges.
- **Promoting open data policy** for promoting transparency and applied scientific research.

3.3.1. TRANS-BOUNDARY RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT

Why in news?

Recent flooding in the Brahmaputra has brought to focus **Trans-boundary River Water Management** with neighbouring countries of India.

Major issues involved in Trans-Boundary River Management

- **Advantage of upper riparian states:** Himalayas are called the “water tower” of South Asia. Most of India's northern rivers originate in Tibet. China’s total control over Tibet results into water hegemony by it.
- **Regional imbalances:** among the South Asian countries, mutual hostility, suspicion and the **absence of a universally binding international legal regime**.
- **Federal issues:** E.g., **West Bengal opposing the proposed Teesta Agreement** resulted into status quo between India and Bangladesh
- **Boundary disputes due to rivers:** E.g., India and Nepal separated by MahaKali River.
- **Lack of data sharing:** E.g., China doesn’t share the Brahmaputra river water data frequently with its lower riparian states.

River Water Cooperation between India and neighboring countries

- **Indus Water Treaty (1960):** between **India and Pakistan**.
- **Indo-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission (JRC):** It was set up in 1972 by Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Peace.
- **Ganga Treaty between India and Bangladesh, 1996:** is an agreement to share surface waters at the Farakka Barrage near their mutual border.
- **Koshi Agreement (1954), Gandak Agreement (1959), Tanakpur Barrage Agreement (1991) and Mahakali Treaty 1996:** These treaties have been signed between India and Nepal.
- **India-China Water Data Sharing** – under this China would share hydrological data from May 15 to October 15 every year for the Brahmaputra and Sutlej rivers.

Approach needed

- **Integrative approach:** All the trans-Himalayan co- riparian countries must come together to adopt a system of water governance based on minimum international legal principles.
- **Ensure proper stakeholder participation:** all water commissions can have a minimum number of representatives from the local committees.
- **Transparency in Data:** Transparency will help for shared benefits on the waters, and building ideas of ‘water peace’ rather than ‘water wars’.
- **Institutionalised mechanism:** Creation of a multi-lateral mechanism in which all the co-riparian countries/basins have proportionate power.

Principles of International Water Law

- Based on: The Helsinki Rules 1966 and The UN Watercourses Convention, 1997
 - **The UN Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (the UN Watercourses Convention) is the only treaty governing shared freshwater resources that is of universal applicability.**
 - **It provides a framework of principles and rules that may be applied and adjusted to suit the characteristics of particular international watercourses.**
- **Principle of Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU):** Entitles each basin state to a reasonable and equitable share of water resources for beneficial uses within its own territory.
- **Obligation not to cause significant harm or No Harm Rule (NHR):** No state is allowed to use the watercourses in their territory in a way that would cause significant harm to other basin states or to their environment.

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3.4. INDIA-NEPAL RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

INDIA-NEPAL RELATIONS

- As an important neighbour, Nepal occupies special significance in India's Foreign Policy spanning across historical, cultural and economic linkages.



The religious and cultural ties between India and Nepal are very old and very strong and both should work to accord the relationship the height of the Himalayas—Indian PM.



India is Nepal's largest trading partner, the top-source country for tourists.



Bilateral trade: >US\$ 11 billion (2021-22) {increase of 41% from previous year}



Areas of cooperation

- Defence:** Military exercises E.g. Surya Kiran
- Water resource:** Kosi Agreement(1954), Gandak Agreement(1959), Mahakali Treaty(1996)
- Energy:** Joint Vision Statement on Power Sector Cooperation (2022), Cross-border Petroleum Pipeline, Hydroelectric projects
- Connectivity projects:** Raxaul-Kathmandu Railway project, BBIN
- Culture:** Roti-Beti ka Naata (Historical & cultural linkages in religion, language, cuisine, movies)



Recent Initiatives to restore Normalcy in the bilateral ties

- 6th India-Nepal Joint Commission meeting:** Cooperation in power, oil and gas, water resources, tourism.
- Operationalization of cross-border rail link:** Jayanagar (Bihar) to Kurtha (Nepal).
- Promoting India's soft power in Nepal:** E.g. Buddhist Vihara in Lumbini
- High Impact Community Development Projects in Nepal** (building hospital, schools, colleges)



Challenges in relationship

- China's rising influence:** In Nepal's economy, politics and society, joining of china's BRI.
- Nepal's aggressive stance** over Kalapani boundary issue.
- Huge Trade Deficit of Nepal with India:** ~18% of GDP
- India's alleged Big Brother Attitude:** Distrust towards India, lackadaisical approach towards revisiting Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950
- Unrestricted cross-border movement:** Affects Nepal's domestic industry, law and order.



Steps to be taken

- Strengthening Economic cooperation**
- Focusing on multimodal connectivity**
- Setting Bilateral Mechanisms to address contentious issue:** (Indo-Bangladesh model should be explored)
- Utilization of **Multilateral forums:** E.g. BBIN, BIMSTEC, NAM, SAARC to serve common interests.
- Leverage people-to-people** links to ensure a stable and mutually-productive state-to-state relationship.
- Revisiting Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950**



Conclusion

- Nepal and India enjoy excellent bilateral ties. Founded on the age-old connection of history, culture, tradition and religion, these relations are close, comprehensive and multidimensional.

3.4.1. INDIA-NEPAL TERRITORIAL DISPUTE

Why in the news?

Nepal has decided to introduce a new currency note featuring Indian territories.

More about the news

- New denominations of 100 of Nepalese currency featuring a map that includes Indian territories of **Limpiyadhura, Lipulekh, and Kalapani**.
 - Previously, in 2020, **Nepal passed its second Constitution Amendment Bill** which provided legal status to its claims over these territories.
- **Kalapani** is the **largest territorial dispute** between Nepal and India and is a **tri-junction** between India, Nepal and Tibet (China).
- **Origin of the dispute**
 - **Treaty of Sagauli (1816)** between British East India Company and the then Nepali Gurkha rulers **demarcated Uttarakhand's Kumaon with River Kali as a boundary between India and Nepal**.
 - Key to the disagreement is the **origin of River Kali**.
 - ✓ **Nepal considers the river which flows to the west of Kalapani as the main River Kali**, originating at either Limpiyadhura or the nearby Lipulekh pass. Hence, justifying the area as inherent part of Nepal.
 - ✓ **India, however, argues that River Kali originates from a smaller rivulet named Pankhagad**, lying on the southern portion of Kalapani and the subsequent ridge on the eastern part of this area as true border.
- **India's stand on the dispute:** All these three territories **belong to India** and termed Nepal's constitutional amendment as **unilateral act, artificial enlargement and untenable**.



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3.5. INDIA-BHUTAN RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

INDIA-BHUTAN RELATIONS

- During his visit to Bhutan, the Prime Minister of India was conferred the "Order of the Druk Gyalpo", the highest civilian honor in Bhutan.

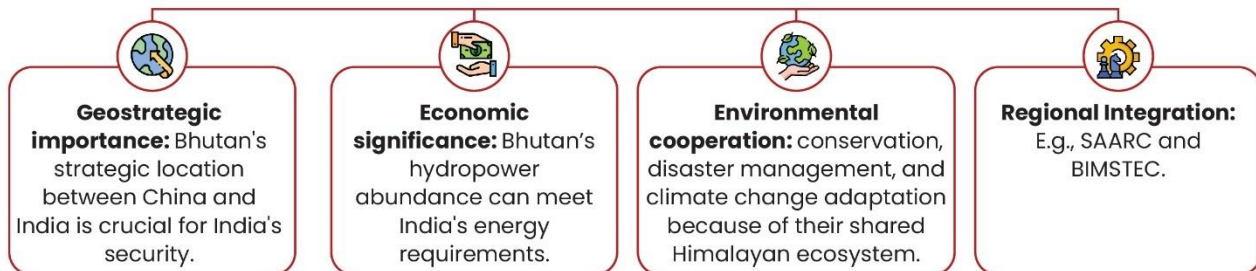
India is Bhutan's **top trade partner**, favoring India's trade balance

Bhutan is **biggest beneficiary of India's external aid** (2023-24)

Areas of Cooperation between India and Bhutan

- Technological cooperation:** Launch of **RuPay, and BHIM app** in Bhutan, ISRO launched India-Bhutan SAT'.
- Hydropower:** E.g., Kurichhu, Tala, Chukha and Mangdechhu in Bhutan supplies electricity to India (ensures energy security).
- Infrastructure:** BRO project 'DANTAK' has built most Bhutanese roads.
- Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation:** It was **signed in 1949** and was renewed in **2007**.

Importance of Bhutan for India



Challenges

- Issues in hydropower trade:** Delay in completion of projects (E.g., Punatsangchhu I & II) by India.
- Militant's hideout:** Militant outfits e.g., ULFA, NDFB, etc.
- BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement:** On hold by Bhutan due to environmental concerns.
- India's shift to 30:70 grant-loan model:** From 60:40 model.



Way forward

- Diversify economic engagements:** India should invest in Bhutan's services sector, aligning with Gross National Happiness.
- Trilogue with China:** Can be a potential to minimize border dispute uncertainties.
- Security measures:** Establish contact points, real-time information sharing mechanisms for security against militants.



Conclusion

The back-to-back visits of Bhutanese Prime Minister to India and the Indian Prime Minister to Bhutan serve as strong reaffirmations of the enduring economic and developmental partnership between the two nations.

3.6. INDIA-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS UNDER TALIBAN REGIME

Why in the News?

Indian Official delegation held talks with Afghan Authorities.

More about the news

- Delegation on a visit to Afghanistan discussed India's **humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan** and **use of Chabahar port (Iran) by Afghan traders**.
- Also, **6th regional dialogue** of officials of **security councils** and **National Security Advisers** on Afghanistan was held in **Bishkek** (Kyrgyzstan).
 - Key participants include **India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan**.
 - **The regional dialogue of security officials** has emerged as an important mechanism for assessing the **situation in Afghanistan** after the takeover of **Kabul** by **the Taliban in 2021**.
 - **India hosted the 3rd regional security dialogue** in 2021.

India – Afghan relations post-Taliban takeover (Aug 2021)

- **Technical Mission in Kabul:** Opened in June 2022, to facilitate and coordinate India's humanitarian assistance endeavors.
- **Education:** India has continued **Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) scholarship scheme** for Afghan students.
- **Trade & Commerce:** Ongoing unhindered including through Chabahar port.
- India, like the US and most of the other nations, **has not yet recognised the government of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan** set up by the Taliban.
 - India stresses on importance of '**Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled**' peace process

Significance of Peace and Stability in Afghanistan for India



Regional connectivity:
Afghanistan is considered as gateway to Central Asian Region.



Energy and resources:
Stability in Afghanistan could pave way for TAPI pipeline.



Security: Stable Afghanistan is essential to combat Pakistan-based terrorist groups.

Challenges

- **Ideological differences:** Taliban's extremist ideology conflicts with India's democratic and secular values.
- **Humanitarian concerns:** Particularly women's rights and access to education and healthcare.
- **Limited engagement:** Recent closure of Afghan Embassy in Delhi, denial of visas to Afghan students, etc.
- **Regional geopolitics:** Pakistan's desire to acquire strategic depth in Afghanistan.

Way Forward

- **Diplomatic pragmatism:** Engage Taliban both bilaterally and as part of regional grouping like SAARC, SCO, etc., to protect India's security and strategic interests.
- **People-to-People contact:** India should continue to host Afghan students and capitalize on its strong goodwill among Afghan people.

3.7. INDIA'S NORTH-EASTERN NEIGHBOURS AT A GLANCE

INDIA'S NORTH-EASTERN NEIGHBOURS

● **Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Nepal have been** India's most trusted global partners along with Japan and members of the ASEAN.

 <p>Northeast Region: International Borders of 5,812 km</p>	 <p>Neighbouring countries in North East: China, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and Myanmar.</p>
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Significance

- **Development of North-East Region (NER):** E.g. through better trade with East Asia
- **Security of North-East:** E.g. drug trafficking, insurgency, terrorism, fake currency
- **Hedge and Maintain India's sphere of influence:** Amidst assertive China
- **Geopolitical:** Stronger diplomatic and economic foothold in the region
- **Improved Connectivity:** Enhancing cultural connections with Southeast Asian countries. **E.g. Act East Policy**
- **Integration with Regional and Global Supply Chains:** E.g. Bangladesh, Vietnam, Malaysia have become major manufacturing hubs.

Measures Taken for North-Eastern Neighbors

- **Act East Policy:** Strengthens interaction with south-eastern neighbours in domains of commerce.
- **Fostering Regional Partnership:** E.g. ASEAN, ARF, EAS, BIMSTEC, IORA
- **Connectivity projects:** E.g. India-Myanmar-Thailand (IMT) Trilateral Highway, Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport.

Major issues/areas of concern

- **Security Concerns:** Porous borders (with Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar) and boundary disputes (e.g. China).
- **Proximity to Narcotics web** of Death Triangle (Thailand, Laos & Myanmar).
- **Refugee crisis in North-East:** E.g. **Rohingya Crisis (Myanmar), Bangladesh illegal migrants.**
- **Delay implementation of Projects:** E.g. IMT trilateral highway.

Way forward

- **Developing Trade and Economic relations** while decoupling these interests from political and strategic interests.
- **Focusing new areas of cooperation:** E.g. digital technologies, exploring North-East Gas Grid (NEGG) integration with Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan.
- **Leveraging cultural linkages:** E.g. India's **"Buddhist Circuit"** initiative, should resonate with East Asian nations.
- **Strategic cooperation:** E.g. in maritime domain, where China demonstrates assertive behaviour.
- **Fostering creation of international institutions and norms:** E.g. space, maritime relations, climate change

Conclusion

● The strategic position of Northeast India as a gateway to Southeast Asia has progressed from mere geographical observation to a crucial element of India's foreign policy and economic development strategy.

3.8. INDIA-SRILANKA MARITIME BORDER

Why in the news?

Sri Lankan fishermen protested against their Indian counterparts for their alleged poaching in the Sri Lankan waters by sailing to the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL).

More on the news

- **The problem has three interrelated facets:** Disagreements over Kachchatheevu island; poaching by Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan waters; and Use of trawlers causing environmental damage.
- While Indian fishermen believe they are simply fishing in their **traditional grounds**, particularly around Katchatheevu, Sri Lanka accuses them of **trespassing into its territorial seas**.
- Indian fishermen claim that **climate change and depletion of fish stocks** on the Indian side.
- In 2023, **240 Indian fishermen were arrested** for alleged poaching in Sri Lankan waters.

About International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL)

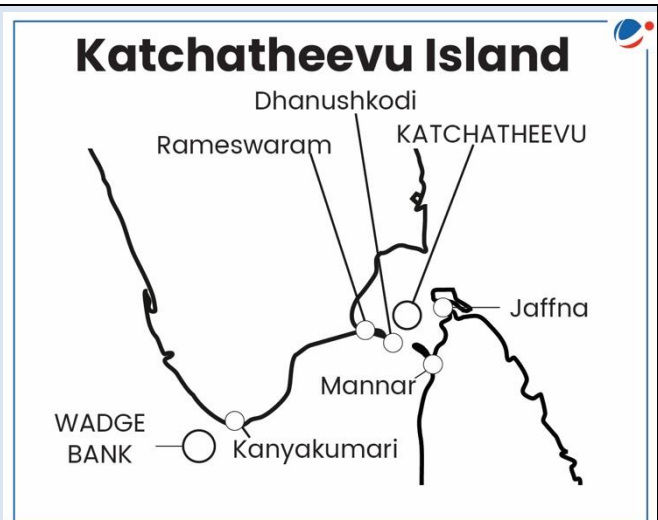
- **The India-Sri Lanka IMBL:** Delineated by the 1974 Maritime boundary agreement, demarcating it in the Palk Strait based on principles under UNCLOS.
- **UNCLOS defines maritime borders:** Using equidistance principle, i.e., drawing medial line equally distant from neighboring countries' coastal areas.
- **Rational to establish a maritime boundary:** It delimits economic zones and territorial waters, preventing jurisdictional conflicts between neighboring countries.

The Katchatheevu Island Issue

• About Katchatheevu and Wadge Bank

- Katchatheevu is a **285-acre patch** in the sea within the maritime boundary line of Sri Lanka.
- It is **located to the northeast of Rameswaram** and southwest of Sri Lanka's **Delft Island**.
- It was created by a 14th-century **volcanic eruption**, is 1.6 km in length and just 300 metres wide at its widest point.
- **Wadge Bank** is **one of the world's richest fishing grounds** and in a much **more strategic part of the sea than Katchatheevu Island**.

- **Article 15 of UNCLOS** allowed exemptions from using the median line to determine maritime boundaries, acknowledging adjustments agreed upon by the contracting nations.
- **1974 Agreement between India and Sri Lanka** established an adjusted equidistant line under this exemption. As a result, Katchatheevu Island fell within Sri Lanka's maritime boundaries.
 - Indian fishermen were given access to Katchatheevu for rest, for drying of nets and for the annual St. Anthony Church festival.
- **Later, the 1976 agreement between the countries** settled the maritime boundary between by giving sovereign rights to India over **Wadge Bank** near Kanyakumari.
 - **Sri Lankan fishing vessels were prohibited from fishing** in the Wadge Bank, except for a limited number under specific conditions.



3.9. INDIA- MALDIVES RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

INDIA-MALDIVES RELATIONS

- Recently, Maldives opted out of Colombo Security Conclave annual meeting (2023), cancelled Hydrography Agreement with India. However, it supported China's Global Security Initiative (GSI) and Maldives-China defense agreement



India emerged as Maldives' largest trade partner (2023).



Bilateral trade: US\$ 548 million (2023), {heavily in favour of India}.



Areas of cooperation

- Economic:** To ease debt of Maldives, India signed **Currency Swap Agreement under the SAARC Currency Swap Framework**
- Connectivity:** Greater Male Connectivity Project (developed by India), **open skies arrangement (2022)**
- Security and Defence:** Annual Defence Cooperation Dialogue, Military Exercises: Ekuverin, Ekatha.
- Developmental Assistance: High-Impact Community Development projects** scheme, Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital, Maldives Institute of Technical Education, etc.
- Humanitarian Assistance:** In coup attempt (1988), **Tsunami (2004)**, water crisis in Male (2014) – Operation NEER, Covid-19



Significance of Maldives for India

- Geostrategic:** Important member of India's **Neighbourhood First Policy** & SAGAR
- Geo-economics:** 50% India's external trade and 80% energy imports transit through SLOCs in the vicinity of the Maldives.
- Counterbalance China:** In the IOR and foster regional balance of power.
- Role of Net security Provider:** Maldives is positioned like a 'toll gate' between western Indian Ocean and eastern Indian Ocean.
- Regional and Multilateral Cooperation:** SAARC, SASEC, IORA and IONS.



Challenges

- High Trade deficit of Maldives**
- Role of China**
 - Maldives growing proximity to China and endorsement of BRI, **undermines India's sphere of influence**
- Domestic Politics: India Out Campaign,** Increased radicalization and extremist violence, terrorist groups like the Islamic State (IS) and Pakistan-based jihadist groups
- Tourism:** Number of India's tourist went decreased by 40-50% after diplomatic tensions



Way Forward

- Open and transparent communication at all levels for building trust
- Deepening security cooperation:** E.g. by Colombo Security Conclave.
- Respect for sovereignty and non-interference: **E.g. Gujral doctrine**
- Exploring option of Free Trade Agreement**
- Increased People to people contacts



Conclusion

- India-Maldives are perfectly placed to complement each other's strategic interests. In accordance with the Neighbourhood First Policy of the government, India remains a committed development partner for a stable, prosperous and peaceful Maldives.

3.9.1. MALDIVES CHINA MILITARY PACT

Why in the News?

Maldives signed military pact with China in further shift away from India.

More on the News

- The decision coincides with its president's announcement that "there will be **no Indian military presence in the country.**"
- **Growing Presence of China in Maldives:** China has **increasingly expanded its footprint in Maldives.** E.g.,
 - A Chinese firm acquired an islet named **Feydhoo Finolhu** on a 50-year lease.
 - **Investment in large-scale infrastructure projects.** E.g. \$200 million **China-Maldives Friendship Bridge.**

Steps Taken by India to Counter China's Influence in Indian Ocean region

- **Strategic Partnerships:** Strengthening alliances with like-minded countries, including the **United States, Japan, Australia,** and other regional partners.
- **Multilateral Engagement:** E.g., IONS and IORA.
- **Enhanced Surveillance and Intelligence:** To monitor and respond effectively to maritime threats and developments. E.g., India navy to monitor Chinese ship in Indian ocean headed to Maldives.
- **Diplomatic Outreach:** Actively participating in regional and international forums to **voice concerns about China's expanding influence.**

3.10. INDIA-SOUTH ASIA

3.10.1. SOUTH ASIA SUB REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (SASEC)

Why in the news?

PM laid the foundation stone of multiple projects in Assam as part of the SASEC corridor connectivity.

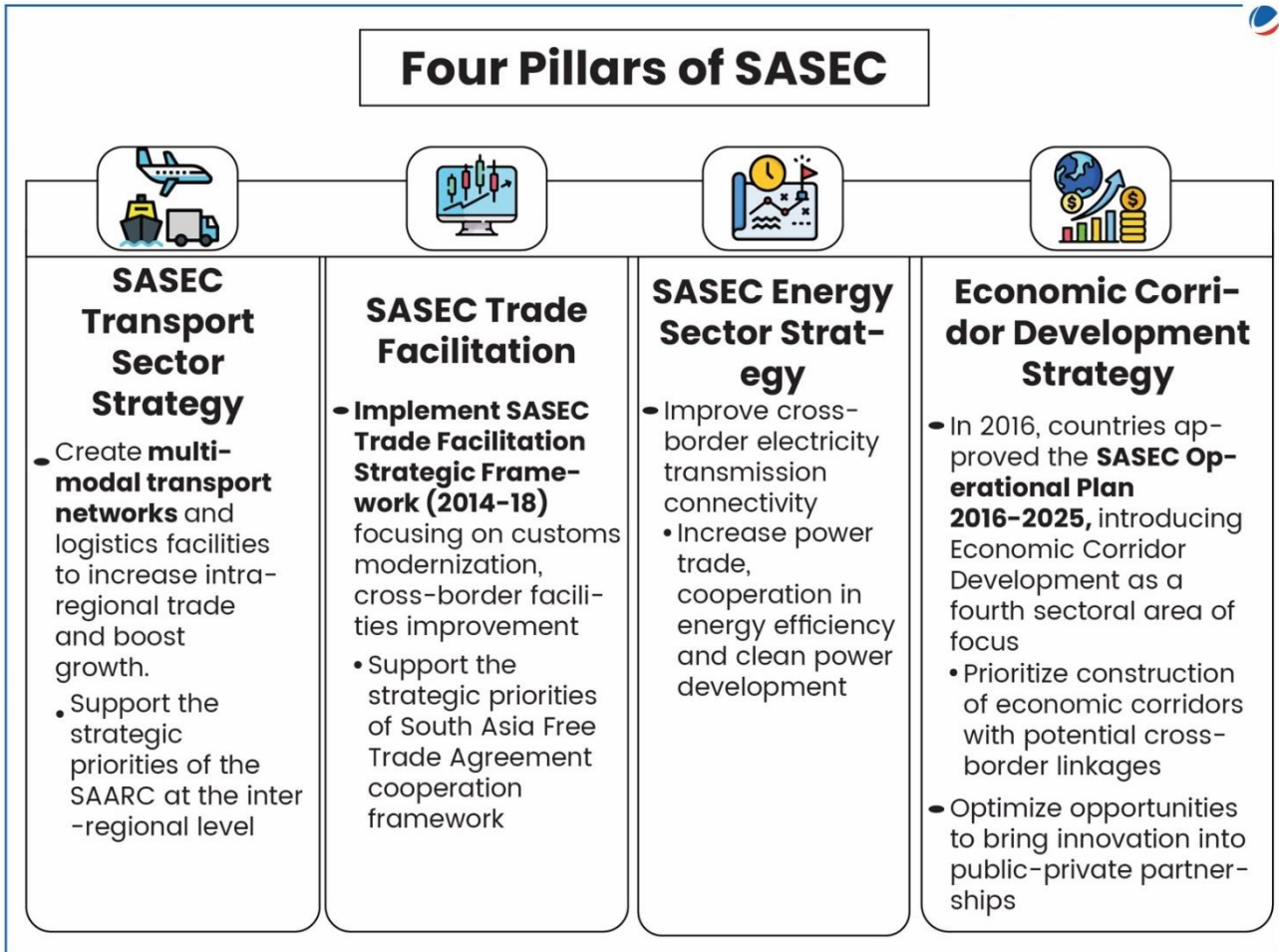
More on News

- It includes projects **worth over Rs 3400 crore** that also includes **four lane projects** which will improve the **connectivity to Itanagar** and boost the **overall economic development of the region.**
- **SASEC was established in 2001.** ADB serves as secretariat.
 - It aim to boost **intra-regional trade and cooperation in South Asia.**
 - **Members:** Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Significance of SASEC for India

- **Link between South Asia and Southeast Asia:** E.g., Road corridors in Myanmar provide India a link between South and South East Asia.
- **Additional gateways to the landlocked North Eastern region** with development of the ports in Myanmar.
- **Development of multi-modal connectivity between North Eastern region of India, Bangladesh and Myanmar** has the potential of unleashing tremendous economic energy in the sub-region.
 - As part of the UNESCAP-developed **Great Asian Highway**, it strengthens India's global position.
 - SASEC supports the **India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway** (connects Moreh (Manipur) to Mae Sot (Thailand) via Myanmar), offering an alternative to China's OBOR.

Challenges of SASEC: Lack of effective cross-border transport infrastructure in South, Outdated border procedure, Underutilized intra-regional trade in South Asia, Red tapism, etc.



Way Forward

- **Efficient multimodal transport connectivity** can boost intraregional trade in South Asia and beyond.
- **Prioritize border infrastructure upgrades**, customs modernization to meet international standards.
- **Implement policy** reforms for to reduce time and make the trade cheaper and faster
- **Regional energy cooperation** enhances security against shocks, improves access to resources, and promotes renewable energy development.
- **Strengthen and connect regional** value chains in supply, trade, and logistics.
- **Synchronize urbanization and industrialization** to enhance productivity and living standards across South Asia.

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

4.1. WEST ASIA CRISIS

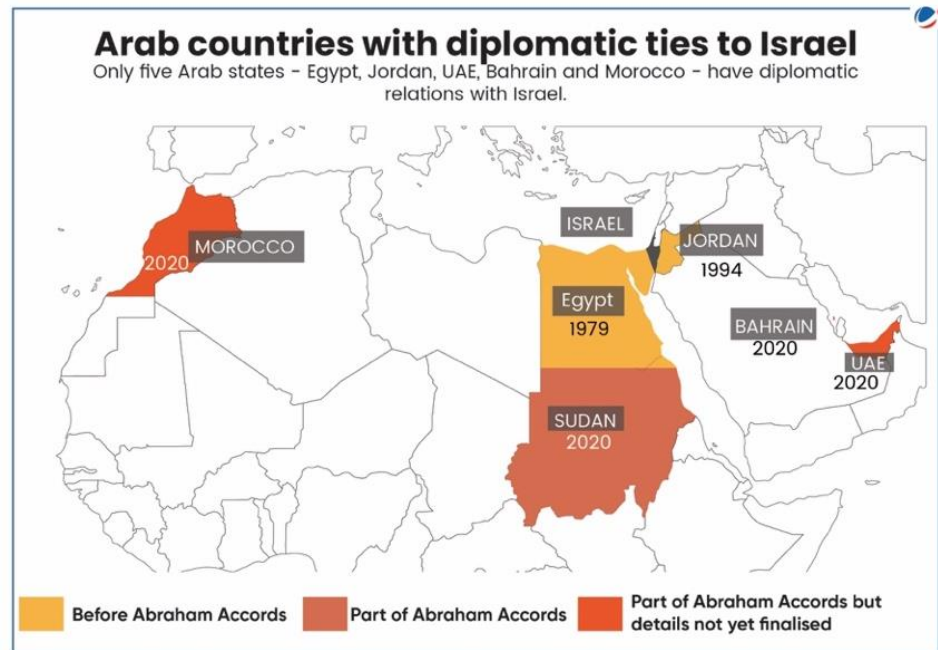
4.1.1. ABRAHAM ACCORDS

Why in the news?

Three years of signing of the Abraham Accords has been completed.

About Abraham Accords

- It refers to the **collective agreement between the United States (US), the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Israel** (signed in September 2020).
 - The Accords was later extended to **Sudan, Bahrain and Morocco**.
- These Accords have two parts:** a declaration for **Middle East peace** and **bilateral agreements**.
 - To promote interfaith and intercultural dialogue to advance a culture of peace among the **three Abrahamic religions and all humanity**.
 - It also strives for **coexistence, understanding, and respect among people of all faiths and nationalities** in the Middle East.
- It marked the **first normalization of ties between Israel and an Arab country** since Jordan in 1994.



Significance of Abraham Accords

- Stability in the region:** Preventing conflict in the Persian Gulf by creation of collective security framework.
- Solution to Israel-Palestine issue:** Can open communication channels between Arab states and Israel.
- Economic significance:** Trade between Israel and other West Asian countries increased by 74% (2021-2022).
- Religious significance:** Opens door for communities to visit the historic religious sites in Israel. E.g. the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.
- Cooperation in technology:** E.g. Prosperity Green & Blue agreement between Israel, the UAE, and Jordan.
- Education:** Shared educational activities (E.g. Emirati students enrolled in Israeli universities).
- Significance for India:**
 - Regional cooperation:** Accords have laid the foundation for expanded regional and multinational cooperation. E.g., establishment of I2U2.
 - Economic Opportunities:** The normalization could potentially open up new economic opportunities for India. E.g., Indian diaspora in the Gulf now has direct flights between the UAE/ Bahrain and Israel.

Emerging Challenges for Abraham Accords



Changing Geopolitical Alliances in West Asia: Due to it being a major source of energy supply as well as involvement of major players (Eg, US, Russia, China, etc.) add to the region's complexities.



Palestinian Issue: The Accord failed to resolve core issues. **E.g.**, Israel Hamas conflict.



Antipathy towards Iran: It seemed that the Accord was motivated by shared concerns over Iran's nuclear program and regional influence.



Internal Opposition: Government ties may improve faster than public relations between nations. **E.g.** Opposition from section of people against the Accord.



China's Saudi-Iran diplomacy: The China backed Saudi Iranian deal is seen as a setback to build a regional anti Iran coalition and could delay Israel's attempt to normalise ties with Saudi Arabia.

Conclusion

The Abraham Accords foster regional integration, but the Israeli-Palestinian conflict impedes further normalization. Resolving this protracted dispute is crucial for sustainable multilateral cooperation and collective security in the Middle East.

4.1.2. ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR

Why in the news?

Israel declared war on Hamas militants following their unprecedented attack under "Operation Toofan Al-Aqsa (Al-Aqsa Flood)". In response, Israel has launched 'Operation Iron Swords' against Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip.

More on News

- The attack by Hamas on Israel coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of Yom Kippur War the fourth Arab-Israel war (1973).
- **The Yom Kippur War (Fourth Arab-Israel War), October 1973.** Herein the coalition of Arab nations, led by **Egypt and Syria**, launched a **surprise, coordinated attack on Israel** on Yom Kippur, a **Jewish holy day**.

Background of Israel-Palestine Conflict

- **Israel-Palestine conflict stems** from competing claims to shared homeland before 1948.
- **Palestinians (Arabs) and Israelis (Jews)** alike consider the territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea as their own.
- **Central to this conflict:** Is the city of Jerusalem (immense significance for Judaism, Islam, and Christianity). **Jerusalem harbours:** Al-Aqsa Mosque (the 3rd holiest Islamic site); Western Wall (holiest Jewish Site); Church of the Holy Sepulchre (Central to Christian beliefs)

Impacts of Instability in the West Asia

On India	At Global level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ India's strategic balancing may be tested due to engagement with countries with conflicting interests (E.g. emergence of Iran-Russia- China axis). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Diplomatic milestones (E.g. Abraham Accords, Israel-Saudi) may get compromised
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Maritime Security challenges include drone strikes, hijackings (Houthis attack in Red Sea) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Intensification of maritime security challenges across the Indo-Pacific region in case of attacks on ships of USA, United Kingdom.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Safety and Security of the Indian diaspora in the middle east 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Competition between nations for arms race or possession of Nuclear weapons may lead to global instability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Threat to Energy Security as India is highly dependent on imports of Crude oil (~85%) and 50% of gas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Impact on Global Economy: Higher oil prices may lead to higher food prices intensifying food insecurity. Economies may get downgraded.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Delay in completion of infrastructure projects E.g., India Middle East Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ International Humanitarian Crisis due to loss of lives, forced displacements, War Crimes (E.g. Rafah Offensive stance of Israel)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Impact on Indian Economy: May lead to a rise in fuel prices; Negative impact on inflation rate, pharma's export; Rise in shipping costs and insurance premiums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Questions on the role of International institutions E.g., United Nations Security Council

Measures to bring stability in West Asia

- **Immediate:**
 - Both Israel and Palestine should meet the demands placed by United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed Resolution 2728, calling for an "immediate" cease-fire in Gaza.
 - **The resolution makes three demands:**
 - ✓ **Immediate** and lasting sustainable **ceasefire**.
 - ✓ **Immediate** and unconditional **release of all hostages**.
 - ✓ The urgent need to **expand the flow of humanitarian assistance** to and reinforce the **protection of civilians** in the entire Gaza Strip.
- **Long term**
 - **Building Normative Framework and Process** through arms control and security negotiations declaration of regional "Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone".
 - **Resolution of the Israel-Palestine** issues based on the Two Nation Theory for long-term peace and security: **UN Secretary-General's remarked**, "Israelis must see **their legitimate needs for security materialized**, and Palestinians must see their **legitimate aspirations for an independent State realized**."
 - **India can emerge** as a net security provider in the region bringing peace in the region.

Conclusion

A comprehensive conflict resolution framework for the Israel-Hamas dispute necessitates addressing structural violence (e.g., **terrorist attack on 7th October, 2023**), territorial disputes (e.g., **Encroaching settlements in the West Bank**), and humanitarian crises (e.g., **present crisis in Gaza**). Effective mediation, coupled with

confidence-building measures and multilateral diplomatic engagement, is essential for sustainable peace-building.

Landmark Peace Agreements between Israel and Arabs

- **1978 Camp David Accords:** The Accords between **Egypt and Israel**, mediated by the US marked a **historic peace treaty between Israel and Egypt**.
- **Oslo Accords (1993):** Signed between **Israel and PLO**, it established the **Palestinian Authority to manage West Bank** administrative matters. In return, the **PLO recognized Israel** based on a two-state solution.
- **Jordan-Israel Peace Treaty (1994):** With this **Jordan** became **the second Arab country**, after Egypt, to make **peace with Israel**. This treaty **settled territorial disputes** and covered diplomatic relations, economic cooperation, etc.
- **Arab Peace Initiative (2002):** Drawn up by Saudi Arabia, the initiative offered **Israel normalized relations** in exchange for a **Palestinian statehood** agreement and a complete **Israeli withdrawal from 1967-captured territory**.
- **Abraham Accords (2020):** It marked the **first normalization of ties between Israel and an Arab country** since Jordan in 1994

4.1.3. NAGORNO-KARABAKH REGION

Why in the News?

Recently, Azerbaijan launched an “**anti-terrorist**” offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh and claimed to have regained full control over the region.

More about News

- Earlier in December 2022, the **Lachin Corridor** was blockaded by Azerbaijan, causing severe shortages of essential goods including food, fuel and water in Nagorno-Karabakh.
 - **Lachin Corridor** is a 5 km long corridor connecting the conclave to Armenia.

About Nagorno-Karabakh Conclave

- **Mountainous region** which is claimed by both Armenia and Azerbaijan.
- However, its **1.2 lakh population** is predominantly ethnic Armenian, having close cultural, social, and historical ties with Armenia.
- **War between Armenia and Azerbaijan:**
 - **First War:** Tension started in **1988**, with its **regional legislature passing a resolution declaring its intention to join Armenia**.
 - ✓ In 1994, Russia brokered a ceasefire known as the **Bishkek Protocol**.
 - ✓ This made **Nagorno-Karabakh de facto independent** with a self-proclaimed government in **Stepanakert**.
 - **Second War:** Started in 2020, this time Azerbaijan managed to wrest control of the territory around Nagorno-Karabakh.
 - ✓ Russia again brokered a deal but Azerbaijan wanted more concessions and no peace deal was inked.
 - Nagorno-Karabakh republic is **formally dissolved**.
- **Initiatives to Maintain Peace in the region**



- **The Minsk Group**, co-chaired by Russia, the U.S., and France, was created by the **Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)** in early 1990s to arrive at a peaceful resolution for Nagorno-Karabakh.
 - ✓ **Madrid Principles by Minsk group** suggested that giving control of seven Karabakh districts to Azerbaijan, Self-governance to the region, etc.
 - ✓ However, they were not accepted, even after another modifications in **2011**.

India's interest in the Region

- **Connectivity:** Armenia is a crucial player in the planned **International North-South Transportation Corridor**.
- **Geo-political interest:** In 2017, Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Pakistan, established security cooperation.
- **Trade:** India's trade relation with Armenia is **134.1 USD million** (2022-2023) and with Azerbaijan **1.882 USD billion in 2022**.

Conclusion

Diplomatic negotiations can be an effective way to resolve conflicts. The Minsk Group can learn from the India-Bangladesh enclave exchange of 2015, to suggest some concrete steps to solve the dispute and bring the peace permanently in the region.

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4.2. INDIA-WEST ASIA

4.2.1. INDIA-ISRAEL RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

India-Israel Relations

India and Israel live in complex geographies and are aware of strategic threats to regional peace and stability. India has suffered first-hand violence, so has Israel. Therefore, collaboration between these two democratic states is no longer a leisure but a necessity.

"India-Israel ties are a marriage made in heaven, practised on earth"- Israeli PM

India is **Israel's second-largest trading partner in Asia** and the **seventh-largest globally**.



The growing convergence India-Israel Relations

- **Bilateral: E.g.,** Strategic partners; India recognised Israel in 1950; full diplomatic relations established in 1992.
- **Defence: E.g.,** India has procured a wide range of equipment, from assault rifles to the Phalcon airborne warning and control systems (AWACS), missiles (BARAK-8), etc.
- **Trade: E.g.,** Merchandise trade diversified and reached US\$ 10.77 billion (excluding defence).
- **Agriculture and water: E.g.,** Israel's drip irrigation technology has helped conserve water and increase crop yields.
- **Multilateral: E.g.,** 2021, India, and Israel, along with the UAE, and the US, established I2U2.



Challenges

- **The Palestine Question:** India supports Two-Nation Solution.
- **Differences on Terrorism:** While for India, Pakistan is the epicenter of terrorism, Israel reserves that status for Iran
- **Arab world:** India's relationships with Arab countries can be affected by its close ties with Israel.
- **Human Rights violation** by Israel against Palestine.



Way Forward

- **Extending collaborations in areas** like semiconductor design and fabrication and space technology with Israel.
- **India can leverage Abraham Accord** to balance relationship between the Arab world and Israel.
- **India can leverage its neutral relations** to ensure ceasefire declaration in the present conflict.



Conclusion

Synergistic convergence of geopolitical interests, democratic normative alignment, and collaborative counter-terrorism efforts fortify India-Israel relations as a robust, dynamic, and resilient strategic partnership.

4.2.2. INDIA-UAE RELATIONSHIP AT A GLANCE

India-UAE Relations

Recently, India and the UAE signed a **Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT)**, during an official visit of Prime Minister of India to UAE.



India-UAE diplomatic relations began in 1972. The year 2015 marked the beginning of a **new strategic partnership**.



Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement was signed in **2022** to boost bilateral trade to **\$100 billion**.



Areas of Convergence

- **Economic & Commercial:** UAE is India's third largest trading partner (2022-23) and second-largest export destination.
 - **Fintech cooperation:** Interlinking of payment platforms - **UPI (India) and AANI (UAE)**, and domestic debit/credit cards.
- **Multilateral Cooperation:** Both are part of BRICS, I2U2 and UFI (UAE-France-India) Trilateral.
- **Diaspora and people to people relations:** UAE has over 3.5 million Indian diasporas constituting roughly ~35 per cent of the country's population.
- **Space Cooperation:** **ISRO** and the **UAE Space Agency** have signed agreement for exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.



Challenges

- **Deteriorating regional peace in region**
- **Rights of emigrant labourers in UAE** due to Kafala system.
- **Trade and Market access barriers in various sectors** E.g., agrochemicals along with biased qualification clauses



Way Forward

- **Welfare of Migrant Workers**
- **Further deepening of defence ties to counter Chinese influence** in the Indian Ocean region.
- **Minimization of Non trade barriers:** so that issues related to India's exports can be addressed.



Conclusion

The relations with UAE are important for India just not in bilateral spheres but also in **India's Extended Neighbourhood and Look West Policy of India**.

4.2.3. INDIA-SAUDI ARABIA RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

India-Saudi Arabia Relations

Recently, the Indian prime minister and Saudi crown prince co-chaired the first summit-level meeting of the **India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council (SPC)**.



Trade with Saudi Arabia **accounted for 4.53%** of India's total trade in FY23.



More than **18% of India's crude oil imports** are sourced from Saudi Arabia.



Significance of Saudi Arabia for India

- **Geostrategic:** E.g., 'Look West' policy and **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor**.
- **Shared interest in multilateral forums and organizations:** Saudi Arabia supports India's call for comprehensive reforms of the United Nations Security Council.
- **Trade agreement:** Saudi Arabia can play a key role in expediting the stalled **India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** negotiations.
- **Indian Diaspora:** There are more than 2.4 million Indian expatriates gainfully employed in Saudi Arabia.



Challenges

- **Regional conflicts in the Middle East:** complex and multidimensional politics of the Middle East
- **Diaspora issues:** Saudi's policy to provide more jobs to its citizens, and more tax on migrants.
- **Influence of Pakistan:** Saudi Arabia's historically close ties with Pakistan
- **Trade deficit:** India's trade deficit with Saudi reached an all-time high in the fiscal year 2022-23.



Way Forward

- **Balanced approach:** strike a balance in dealing with each other's adversaries. E.g. Iran, Pakistan
- **Bilateral engagements beyond trade and commerce:** to realize the vision of a 'strategic partnership'.
- **Labor Welfare:** Ensuring welfare of the large Indian expatriate community in Saudi Arabia is a key priority.
- **Counterterrorism measures:** Strengthen cooperation in counterterrorism efforts and intelligence sharing.



Conclusion

India and Saudi Arabia enjoy cordial and friendly relations reflecting the centuries old economic and socio-cultural ties. India can bring peace along with Saudi Arabia in western asia.

4.2.4. INDIA-GCC RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

INDIA-GCC RELATIONS

- The Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs recommended **legal assistance to Indian nationals imprisoned in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.**

The GCC organisation comprises six countries: Saudi Arabia, UAE, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain

The GCC is India's **largest block trading partner, with bilateral trade close to US\$ 184 Bn** in FY 2022-23.

Significance of India-GCC convergence

- **GCC, a potential investment source:** E.g., Saudi Arabia (\$100bn) and UAE (\$75bn) plan huge investments in India's economy.
- **GCC's cooperation is essential for India's role as a 'Net Security Provider' in the IOR:** E.g., Recent Red Sea attacks,
- **India's regional geo-economic focus:** E.g., Has driven it to engage with the I2U2 and to join IMEC.
- **GCC still provides India the much-needed energy security:** E.g., By 2023, India had already become the world's second-largest crude oil net importer.



Challenges

- **Geo-economic issues:** Economic slowdown in Arab Gulf economies.
- **Geopolitical Constraints:** Pakistan's military ties favor its position in West Asia.
- **Regional crisis:** e.g., Iran-Saudi Arabia rivalry, Israel-Hamas, etc.
- **Chinese influence:** E.g., China's Saudi-Iran rapprochement



Way forward

- **Diversify Economic Ties:** beyond fuel trade by collaborating in technology, healthcare, and renewable energy.
- **Collaborate on Regional Security Issues:** E.g., Piracy and Disaster management
- **Coordination** with the GCC to facilitate **India-GCC free trade agreement.**



Conclusion

Growing strategic convergence between India and the Gulf region has resulted in **deeper political, economic and defence ties, but the deteriorating security environment** in the Middle East may hamper progress in some areas.

4.3. INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

India And Five Central Asian Republics (CARs) Relations

As India looks beyond its borders, **Central Asia (a part of India's extended neighbourhood)** provides **India with the right platform** to leverage its political, economic, and cultural connections to play a leading role in Eurasia.

The five CARs: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

All the **5 countries are land-locked.**



Areas of Convergence

- **Connectivity:** E.g., International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC); Ashgabat Agreement.
- **Energy:** E.g., Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline, Uranium Supply agreement with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.
- **Multilateral:** E.g., SCO, Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), etc.



Significance of India's CAR connect

- **Energy and security.** E.g., Turkmenistan 4th largest gas reserve.
- **A full functioning INSTC** can be an answer to China's BRI.
- **Peace and security in CAR** linked to peace in Afghanistan.



Challenges

- **Trade:** Approx. \$2 Bn compared to Chinese approx. \$100 Bn.
- **Geopolitical contestation:** Due to presence of Russia and China.
- **Fragile connectivity:** The lack of direct overland connectivity and slow-paced INSTC.
- **Sluggish implementation of developmental** as well as economic projects.



Way Forward

- **Can prepare a 30 years roadmap:** Delineate clearly the near, mid and long term aspiration from the relationship.
- **Leveraging our strength:** In delivering projects that have a lasting value both in terms of durability and at optimal cost.
- **Encourage tourism:** For better person-to-person contact.



Conclusion

Overall, in recent years, the contours of the India-Central Asia relationship have been witnessing metamorphosis in an unprecedented manner whereby growing convergence has the potential to bring about a paradigm shift in the geostrategic dynamics of the extended neighbourhood.

4.4. INDIA-SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

India-South Korea Relations

It was found that the economic aspect was the **main driving force for the relations between Korea and India until recently**. With the emergence of the Indo-Pacific era, political and security dimensions have also become important driving forces, especially due to the China factor.



*"In the golden age of Asia,
Korea was one of its lamp-bearers"- Rabindranath
Tagore in his poem: The Lamp of the East*



Bilateral trade in 2023
was of **US\$ 24.4
billion**



Areas of Cooperation

- **Convergence of India's 'Act East' policy and South Korea's 'New Southern Policy (NSP).**
India's Role after World War II: Resolution sponsored by India led to the Korean War ceasefire in 1953.
- **Diplomatic relation: E.g.,** 'Special Strategic Partnership' in 2015; Both support a rules-based Indo-Pacific and share concerns about China's rise and North Korea's nuclearization.
- **Economic and trade relations: E.g.,** launched an initiative '**Korea Plus**' to promote and facilitate Korean investments in India.
- **Strategic convergence: E.g.,** India endorsed the "**Vancouver Dialogue**" to prevent North Korean nuclear proliferation



Challenges

- **Despite being the world's tenth-largest economy,** South Korea has received criticism for being an observer of global politics and not an active player.
- **India is facing trade deficit** (around \$8 billion in 2021-22).
- **Pressure from North Korea** - Any break-out of hostilities on the Korean Peninsula can derail South Korea's Indo-Pacific project.



Way Forward

- **Strengthening Cooperation in the Defense Industry. E.g.,** to collaborate in the field of warship construction.
- **Opportunity for maritime domain awareness (MDA)** - as Indian Navy has also established an Information Fusion Center (IFC).
- **Consolidation of political relations** through frequent high-level visits, expansion of bilateral agenda beyond economic ties to security, science, and technology.



Conclusion

India and South Korea embarked on their diplomatic journey at a slow and strenuous pace and had to overcome historical misunderstandings, geopolitical challenges, and geographical distance.

4.5. INDIA AND SOUTH EAST ASIA

4.5.1. INDIA AND INDONESIA RELATIONS

Why in the news?

In 2024, India and Indonesia commemorated 75 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

Significance of India-Indonesia bilateral relations (For Both Countries)

- **Shared History and Cultural Values** : Both countries had significant role in establishment of the **Non-Aligned Movement (1961)**.
 - **Ramayana and Mahabharata** form source of Indonesian folk art and dramas.
- **Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean region: Joint Exercises: Samudra Shakti (Navy), India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (IND-INDO CORPAT)**
- **Synergy in the vision for the Indo-pacific region:** India's **Act East Policy** and **Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)** and Indonesia's **Global Maritime Fulcrum** vision synergize and enhance geopolitical engagement.
- **Strategic partnership:** Relationship has been elevated to **New Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2018** which allows for collaboration in defense industry, science and technology etc.
- **Cooperation in multilateral forums:** (E.g.G20, Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), East Asia Summit, UN)



For India

- **Enhancing India's Defence exports:** Indonesia has shown interest in the **BrahMos missile and Light Combat Aircraft**.
- **Important trade partner:** Indonesia is **India's largest trade partner in ASEAN region**.
 - **Total Bilateral Trade stands at around USD 38.85 Billion (2022-23)**
- **Internationalization of Indian rupee:** **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Bank Indonesia (BI)** signed MoU to promote the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions.
- **Enhancing maritime Connectivity:** Under **SAGAR initiative**, India is helping in development of port infrastructure. E.g. **Sabang port**(Indonesia).
 - It will allow **India easier access to the Malacca Strait**.

For Indonesia

- **Important export destination:** India is the 2nd largest buyer of coal and crude palm oil from Indonesia.
- **Humanitarian Assistance:** India launched **Operation Samudra Maitri** for humanitarian assistance to Indonesia, in 2018.
- **Development Partnership:** major recipient of capacity-building platforms like ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme), and Technical Cooperation Scheme (TCS) of the **Colombo Plan**.

Challenges in the Relationship

<p>Trade Imbalance: due to India's large imports of palm oil and coal.</p>	<p>Unrealized trade potential: bilateral trade are 33% higher than current trade.</p>	<p>Dominance of China: substantial Chinese investment under the Belt and Road Initiative in Indonesia.</p>	<p>Regulatory and procedural Challenges: Joint production and defense supplies have failed due to differing acquisition processes</p>	<p>Lack of connectivity: have hindered greater people-to-people interactions.</p>

Way Forward

- **Tourism Diplomacy:** Establish 'RICH'- Religious, Cultural & History for theme-based **tourism plan and strengthen people to people exchanges.**
- **Enhancing Trade:** Accelerate **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** to address trade and investment barriers.
- **Enhance strategic Interfaces:** Indonesia can consider joining **International Solar Alliance, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, and Global Biofuels Alliance.**
- **Substantive Cooperation through Engagement:** Utilize regional multilateral forums such as the **ASEAN Regional Forum, Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), and Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS).**

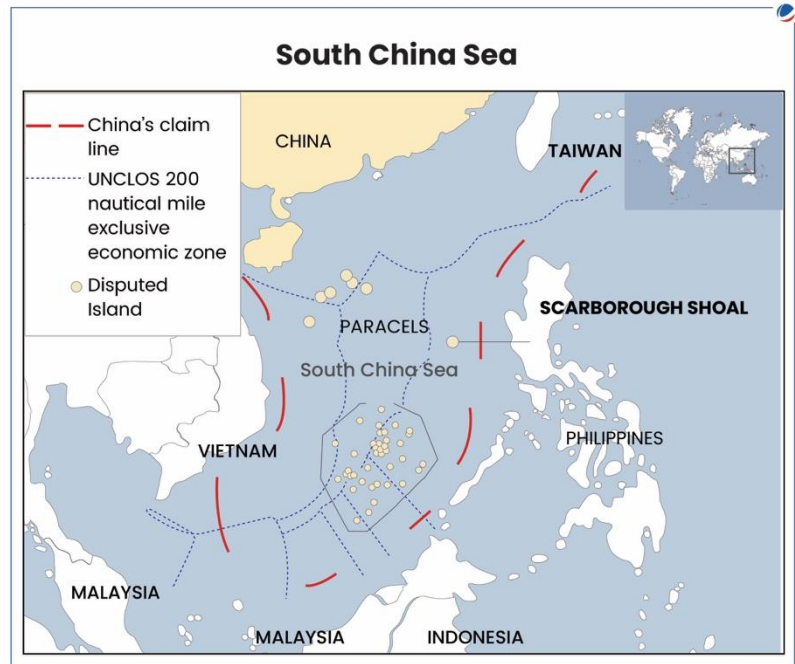
4.5.2. SOUTH CHINA SEA

Why in the News?

Philippines has removed a **floating barrier installed by China** which blocked Philippines fishing boats from entering a contested area in the South China Sea.

More about the news

- Earlier **China installed a floating barrier** near **Scarborough Shoal** claiming it as its territory while **Philippines claims it to be a part of its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).**
- **Nine Dash Lines:**
 - It is a **U-Shaped line that was adopted from Chinese map of 1940's** which represents the Chinese claim over the region. **It accounts for around 90% of the total South China sea.**
 - **Till 1952, it was Eleven dash lines** and the Communist China gave up its claim on **Gulf of Tonkin.**



Significance of South China Sea:

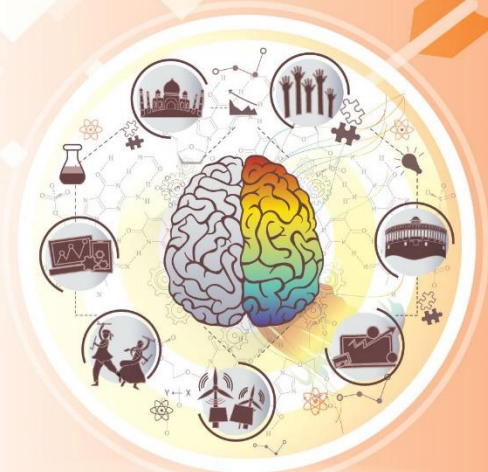
- **Maritime trade:** One of the **busiest sea routes of the world** and more than **60% of the global trade passes through this sea**. Nearly 55% of India’s trade with the Indo-Pacific region passes through these waters
- **Natural Reserves:** Region hosts vast reserves of Oil, Natural Gas, Coral Lime etc.
 - **ONGC Videsh Limited (ONGC-VL) along with PetroVietnam** is exploring oil reserves in the region
- **Fishing grounds:** The sea is **warm throughout the year** and is one of the major commercial fishing regions of the world.
- **Hosts numerous uninhabited islands: which can** be used a ports, military bases, research avenue etc.
- **Freedom of Navigation:** Acknowledging China’s claims will affect the freedom of navigation and also set a **wrong precedent**

Challenges in South China Sea: Chinese aggression, excessive fishing, damage to the marine ecosystem, military drills, etc.

Way Forward

- **By achieving a Code of Conduct in the region:** Revive the stalled code of conduct negotiation process.
- **Practicing Sustainable fishing:** by all the littoral states.
- **Establishing Trans boundary Maritime Peace Parks (MPP):** similar to the **Red Sea MPP (between Israel and Jordan)** to foster peace and conserve ecosystems.
- **Stalling artificial island projects which causes** severe ecological damages should be stalled.
- **Ensure Freedom of passage:** to all civilian and trade vessels crossing the region.

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4.6. INDIA-AMERICAS

4.6.1. INDIA-US RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

INDIA-US RELATIONS

- Based on shared democratic values and **convergence of interests on a range of issues** India and USA enjoys a **Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership** covering almost all areas of human endeavor.



India-USA stands at a new dawn in relationship that will not only shape the destiny of our two nations, but also that of the world. Our trusted partnership is like the Sun in this new dawn that will spread light all around. (PM, India)



- ◆ **Bilateral trade : \$118.42 billion**
- ◆ USA is India's Second largest trading partner after China (2023-24)



Areas of Cooperation

- ◆ **Multilateral as well as Minilateral Cooperation:** E.g. UN, ASEAN, G-20, IMF, QUAD, I2U2, Summit for Democracy
- ◆ **Defense: E.g. India-U.S. Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X)**, signing of LEMOA, COMCASA, BECA
- ◆ **Strategic Cooperation in technology:** E.g. iCET (Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies), NISAR
- ◆ **Collaboration for Global Challenges:** Energy, cyber, space, climate change (India-U.S. Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership), ISA, CDRI



Challenges for India

- ◆ **Trade and Economic:**
 - ★ **Divergences** on IPR (**Priority Watch List** of the USA)
 - ★ **Atmanirbhar Bharat Campaign** (USA views- India is becoming a protectionist closed market economy)
 - ★ USA's withdrawal of **Generalized System of Preferences (GSP)**
- ◆ **Varied Stance on Global Conflicts:** E.g. Russia-Ukraine War, Israel-Palestine War
- ◆ **Defense dependence on Russia:** Fear of CAATSA sanctions (E.g. on buying S-400 from Russia)
- ◆ **Strategic Divergences:** India's long standing commitment to Non-Alignment



Way-forward

- ◆ **Reviving & Reforming Multilateralism:** When world has changed, our institutions must change. E.g. **UNSC, WTO**
- ◆ **Focus on Common Long-term interests:** Asian security and prosperity, Combatting Terrorism
- ◆ **Cooperative region of peace and prosperity:** work with regional institutions. E.g. QUAD, I2U2
 - ★ **Free, open and inclusive Indo Pacific with ASEAN centrality.**
- ◆ **Diversification, Decentralization and Democratization** of supply chains



Conclusion

- ◆ India and USA can together build a region where all nations, small and large, are free and fearless in their choices, where progress is not suffocated by impossible burdens of debt, where connectivity is not leveraged for strategic purposes, where all nations are lifted by the high tide of shared prosperity.

4.6.2. INDIA-CANADA RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

INDIA-CANADA RELATIONS

- India and Canada have a longstanding bilateral relationship based on shared **democratic values**, the **multi-cultural, multi-ethnic** nature of the two countries and strong **people-to-people contacts**.

- Recent development:** Canada asserted that Indian agents were involved in the murder of a pro-Khalistan activist has led to diplomatic strain.

Possible impacts of the crisis



Strategic: The Western countries' response to the ongoing tensions has been relatively restrained, as they view India as a vital counterbalance to China.



Economic: might lead to disruptions in bilateral trade, investment flows, and potentially result in further delays to CEPA.



Diaspora Connection: which has the potential to facilitate cultural and economic relations is currently under strain.



Areas of Convergence

- Diaspora:** Indian Diaspora accounts for >3% of the total Canadian population.
- Economic:** Bilateral trade in goods was ~ \$ 9.9 billion and in services it was 6.5 billion in 2022.
- Strategic cooperation:** Canada's **Indo-Pacific Policy**, acknowledges China as a "disruptive global power" and India as a "critical partner" for collaboration in shared interests



Challenges

- Canada's immigration system:** enables individuals with a **contentious past** to **acquire citizenship**.
- Suboptimal economic cooperation:** CEPA pending since 2010.
- Meddling in India's domestic affairs:** For example, support of protest against Indian government.



Way forward

- Promoting Diplomacy:** Each side should express their **concerns without disrupting the status quo**.
- Responsible freedom of expression:** People endorsing violence, separatism, or terrorism should be held accountable.
- Cooperation on counter terrorism:** Collaborate under **the Framework for Cooperation on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism** (2018).



Conclusion

Both sides should develop a new framework of cooperation that is more pragmatic and emphasizes upon mutually beneficial areas, such as trade, energy etc.

4.6.3. INDIA-LATIN AMERICA RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

INDIA-LATIN AMERICA RELATIONS

- India and Latin America, although shared a post-colonial history, have maintained minimal bilateral ties for decades. However, the region is increasingly gaining importance in India's foreign policy.



LAC (Latin America and Caribbean) accounts for ~3% of India's imports and ranks 8th among India's import sources.



Bilateral Trade: US\$ 49 billion (2022)



Significance:-

- Trade:** Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with MERCOSUR
- Investment:** E.g. ~\$16b Indian investment
- Food and Energy Security:** E.g. Latin America (vast **fertile land**), Brazil (**cutting-edge food storage technologies**), collaboration with Brazil in **eco-friendly ethanol**.
- Strategic Significance:** E.g. produces 40% global copper, supplies 35% of the world's lithium.
- Strategic Orientation:** Important for India's global ambitions. E.g. India's membership of UNSC, NSG
- South-south Cooperation:** E.g. India held first voice of Global South Summit (had 29 Latin American countries)



Challenges

- Insufficient diplomatic attention and Lack of sufficient institutional presence.**
- Trade:** E.g. India's high tariff on Latin American **agricultural goods** (more than 5 times that of China's).
- Lack of connectivity: Absence of direct shipping services.**
- Language barriers:** Lack of fluency in languages, unfamiliarity with India's ethos.
- Competition with China:** China has direct shipping lanes through Panama canal, largest investor in many countries



Steps to be Taken

- Trade diversification and acceleration:** double two-way trade to \$100 billion by 2027, Upgrade PTAs to FTAs,
- Revive 'Focus: LAC' programme** (to encourage business in the region), **Establish Ministerial Council on Trade and Strategic Technologies**
- Forge security and Defense Industry collaboration**
- Development of financial institutions:** for deeper South-South cooperation.
- Redrawal of perceptions to reflect contemporary reality**



Conclusion

- Latin America will continue to have a role in India's ambition to become a global power, and also part of the 'goldilocks zone' (i.e, a sweet spot between highly regulated and competitive market of USA & Europe and less competitive market of Africa with low purchasing power) for business.

4.6.4. INDIA-BRAZIL

Why in the news?

India- Brazil released joint statement at the sidelines of G20 summit.

More about the news

- 2023 year marks the **75th anniversary of diplomatic relations** between Brazil and India and **20th anniversary of IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa)** forum.

Key Highlights of joint statement

- Both sides will work together in **framework of G-4 and L.69.**
 - G4** grouping of **Brazil, India, Japan and Germany** demands UNSC reform.
 - L.69** group includes **developing countries from Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, Asia, and Pacific.** It also supports UNSC reform.
- Brazil **support** to the **Indian candidature** for non-permanent seat of **UNSC for 2028-2029 term.**
- Both countries are **founding member of Global Biofuels Alliance** which facilitates adoption of biofuels.
- India welcomes **Brazil's presidency of BASIC** (grouping of **Brazil, South Africa, India and China**) and **supports Brazilian presidency of 30th Conference of Parties to UNFCCC (COP30)** in 2025.
- Expansion of India-Mercosur Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA)** during Brazil's Mercosur Presidency to leverage full potential of economic partnership.
 - Mercosur is an **economic and political bloc** consisting of **Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay.**
- Establishment of India-Brazil Business Forum** for private sector collaboration.
- Increase joint projects in partnership with **International Solar Alliance** and **CDRI** (Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure) in third countries.



India-Brazil Bilateral Relations

- Political Relations: Strategic Partners** since 2006.
- Cooperation in Multilateral Forums:** It includes UN, G20, BRICS, IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa) etc.
 - G4 (Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan)**, support each other for permanent seats in UNSC.
 - Part of India led alliance such as **International Solar Alliance (ISA).**
 - Also enabling India close cooperation with **MERCOSUR** (regional trading bloc in South America).
- Trade: India** is **5th largest trading partner** of Brazil (2021).
- Space:** ISRO launched Brazil's satellite **Amazonia-1** (2021).
- Security:** Joint statement and action plan for enhancing defense and security cooperation were signed (2020).
- Cooperation in Bio-fuels:** Brazil is the world's second-largest producer of biofuels. It is also part of **Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA)**, an India-led Initiative.

4.7. INDIA-EUROPE

4.7.1. INDIA-EU RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

INDIA-EU RELATIONS

- Factors shaping India-EU relations in current times include changing geopolitical developments such as Russia-Ukraine war, rise of China, Convergence of interests in the Indian Ocean and New emerging world order after COVID-19.



Bilateral trade: **\$135 billion (2022-23)**



EU is one of India's largest source of FDI (\$107b)



Areas of cooperation

- Commercial:** EU is 2nd largest destination for Indian exports
 - Blue Economy:** Convergence of EU's Blue Growth Initiative and India's Blue Revolution
 - India benefits under GSP,** EU-India Trade and Technology Council
- Defending multilateralism and rule based order:** UN, WTO, G20
- Convergence in Indo-pacific:** EU's Indo-Pacific strategy align with India.
- Global Issues cooperation:** climate change, transition to sustainable economy (E.g. Clean Energy and Climate Partnership).
- People to people connect:** EU adopts more favourable Schengen Visa rules for Indians



Concerns in India-EU relations

- Recent Divergence:** Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, Russia-Ukraine War
- Access to Market:** Indian companies face issues of non-tariff barriers E.g. phytosanitary measures
- IPR Issues:** EU demands stronger IPR regime, which may impact India's pharmaceutical and generic drug sector
- Human Rights and Governance:** EU raises concerns about religious freedom, treatment of minorities, etc.
- Trade imbalance:** India accounts for only 2.2% of EU total trade whereas China's Share is 14.6%



Way-forward

- Early conclusion of FTA** i.e. BTIA
- Establish channels of dialogue on multilateral issues** and create a link between foreign and security policy and trade and economic objectives
- Better utilization of India-EU Connectivity Partnership launched in 2021**
- Utilize the opportunities presented in Post Brexit Scenario**



Conclusion

- India-EU should take their relations beyond "trade lens", recognizing their important geopolitical, strategic convergences.

4.7.2. INDIA-RUSSIA RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

INDIA-RUSSIA RELATIONS

- Recently, Indian PM paid an official visit to Russia for the 22nd India – Russia Annual Summit



India-Russia partnership is “subject of attention not because it has changed but because it has not”. (MEA)



Bilateral trade: \$65 billion (2023-24) {Target was \$30b by 2025}



Target of increasing bilateral trade to \$ 100 billion (by 2030)



Areas of Cooperation

- Political:** Annual summits between India's PM and Russian President
- Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security**
- Nuclear Energy:** Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (India)
- Transport and Connectivity:** E.g. Chennai-Vladivostok Eastern Maritime Corridor, INSTC.
- Space Exploration:** Enhanced partnership between ISRO & Roscosmos, cooperation within UNCOPUOS



Significance for India

- Balancing China and its assertiveness in the region**
- Major Supplier of Defence:** E.g. S-400 missile system, INS Vikramaditya
- Trade and Investment Opportunities:** E.g. Russia's Far East & Arctic zone of the Russian Federation.
- Combating Terrorism:** E.g. Both calls for early finalization of the **CCIT at UN**
- Support of Russia at Multilateral Forums:** E.g. UNSC and NSG.



Challenges

- Emergence of Russia-China partnership:** E.g. “No-Limits Partnership”
- Russia's engagement with Pakistan- E.g** Military Exercise “Friendship” (“Druzhba”).
- Diplomatic Dilemma** for India: E.g. Balancing between USA and Russia, Russia-Ukraine war.
- High Trade Imbalance:** Of total trade of ~\$65 billion, India's exports constitute <\$5 billion.
- Russia's criticism:** E.g. QUAD, idea of Indo-Pacific.



Way forward

- Expansion and diversification of bilateral economic relations.
 - Promote bilateral settlement system using national currencies.** E.g. Rupee Rouble Trade, interoperability of financial messaging systems.
- Broaden collaboration on bilateral and regional issues:** E.g. Eurasian region, Arctic, Afghanistan
- Exploration of Logistics links:** E.g. potential of the Northern Sea Route
- Work on Rules-based International Order:** E.g. greater cooperation at UN, BRICS, SCO



Conclusion

- The India-Russia partnership has been among the steadiest of the major relationships in the world in contemporary era with a shared commitment to a multipolar world and continues to expand beyond the traditional areas of military, nuclear and space cooperation.

4.7.2.1. RUSSIA-CHINA TIES AND IMPACT ON INDIA

Why in the news?

China and Russia agreed to deepen the **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Coordination for the New Era** as year 2024 marks the **75th Anniversary of China-Russia Diplomatic Relations**.

China-Russia Relationship

- **Political:** Signed a “no-limits” **strategic partnership** before Russia-Ukraine war.
- **Strategic:** China is **top supplier of dual-use items** (both civilian and military applications) to Russia.
- **Economic:** China became **Russia’s biggest trading partner** (bilateral trade **exceeded \$240 billion in 2023**).

Factors uniting China and Russia: Similar perceptions of US hegemony, common fear of NATO expansion, alternative approaches to exercising international influence and jointly managing shared interests.

Implications of China-Russia Relationship on India

- **Security concerns:** Much of **Indian defence supplies** come from Russia, and concerns related to timely supplies arise during India’s confrontations with China.
- **Diminished support:** Russia’s dependence on China **reduces the likelihood of it pressuring China** in border confrontations with India.
- **India’s Neighbourhood:** Alteration to **regional power dynamics**, potentially **limiting India’s influence** in the region.
- **Recalibrating Strategic Priorities:** China-Russia alliance is directed against the USA and West and **impinges on India’s geopolitical trajectory** in Indo-Pacific and Eurasia.

Global Implications of China-Russia Relationship

- Alliance facilitated the **resurrection of Western unity** under American leadership **along with expansion of NATO**.
- **Geopolitical restructuring** with increasing western military support to Southeast Asian countries and India’s embrace of US led security groupings.
- Highlights **failure of multilateral security system** in preventing conflicts.

4.7.2.2. NORTHERN SEA ROUTE

Why in the news?

Russia has announced to invest **\$24 bn** to develop Northern Sea Route.

About The Northern Sea Route

- The Northern Sea Route (NSR), or the Northeast Passage (NEP), **connects the eastern and western parts of the Arctic Ocean**.
 - The NSR runs from the **Barents Sea, near Russia’s border with Norway, to the Bering Strait between Siberia and Alaska**.
 - NSR is **different** from the **Northwest Passage** which is a **series of possible shipping routes** connecting the **Atlantic and Pacific Oceans** through the **Canadian Arctic**.
- The entire route lies in Arctic waters and within **Russia’s exclusive economic zone**.





- Due to Climate Change, NSR in Russia is **becoming more accessible**. Usually the route only opens for **two months annually**.
- **Significance**
 - **Energy and time savings** compared to the normally used route via Suez Canal are about 30-40%.
 - ✓ It is **one-third of the distance of the traditional route through the Suez Canal**.
 - **Piracy risk is non-existent**.
 - Easier to **explore, exploit and transport natural resources** of the region.
- **Challenges:**
 - Russia exercising its sovereignty over NSR and **denial of the principle of freedom of navigation** might lead to **geo-strategic conflict**.
 - **Arctic fog will reduce sailing time**.
 - **Environmental risks and increased operating costs**.

4.7.3. INDIA-UKRAINE RELATIONSHIP

Why in the news?

Foreign Minister visits amid efforts to seek a peaceful resolution to the more than two-year-old Russia-Ukraine conflict.

More about the news

- "Summit on Peace in Ukraine", was hosted by Switzerland.
- Indian delegation attended the summit but **did not associate itself with any communique/document** emerging from it.

About India- Ukraine Relationship

- **Political:** India was one of the first countries to recognise Ukraine (1991).
- **Trade and Economic Cooperation:** India is Ukraine's major export destination in the Asia-Pacific (2020).
- **Cultural:** Elements of India's soft power such as dances, yoga, philosophy, Ayurveda and spirituality have considerable impact in Ukraine
 - People to people connect through training programs by India such as ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations) scholarship; Kendriya Hindi Sansthan Scholarship program was quite good before War.
- **Education:** One of the most preferred destination for medical education, about 18,000 Indian students were studying in Ukraine before the conflict.

India's stand on Ukraine –Russia Conflict

- India advocates **peaceful resolution** of the conflict through **dialogue** and **diplomacy**.
- It is open to engaging all ways and means that would help achieve to end the war.
- Also, it is providing continuous **humanitarian assistance** to Ukraine.

4.7.4. INDIA-FRANCE AT A GLANCE

INDIA-FRANCE RELATIONS

- India and France entered into **Strategic Partnership in 1998** and both are committed to the shared values of **democracy, fundamental freedoms, rule of law.**

39 of 40 companies listed on the French stock exchange are conducting their business operation in India.

France's Ambassador said that the **India-France partnership is "universal" as it goes from the "sea to the space" and beyond.**



The growing convergence between India-France Relations

- Defense Cooperation: E.g.,** Rafale aircraft purchases.
- Space Cooperation: E.g.,** TRISHNA and Megha-Tropiques satellite, etc.
- Geo-Strategic:** The 2023 Roadmap broadened bilateral cooperation from the IOR to the entire Indo-Pacific region.



Significance of a deepening alliance with France for India

- Balance the assertive China:** E.g. Recently, France joined India's IPOI.
- Help India to modernise its Defence:** E.g., Critical naval nuclear reactor, Rafale.
- Adoption of New Technology:** India has been invited to cooperate on the Jules Horowitz Research Reactor (JHR) and ITER.



Challenges

- Trade at \$15.8bn (2022):** Underperforming compared to other partnerships.
- Jaitapur nuclear project delayed:** Technical, financial, liability hurdles persist.
- India's foreign policy prioritizes multi-alignment** while France engages in pragmatic alliances to balance major powers' influence.



Way forward

- Leverage existing cooperation mechanisms:** E.g., the India-France Joint Working Group on counterterrorism
- Further strengthen minilateral arrangements** with Australia (established in 2020) and UAE (in 2023).
- More flexibility in **accommodating each other's strategic imperatives.**



Conclusion

As **pivotal middle powers**, France and India can leverage their **strategic partnership to enhance multilateral engagement**, fostering a more **balanced multipolar order and advancing India's normative integration with the European Union.**

4.7.5. INDIA-UK RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

INDIA-UK RELATIONS

- Recently, India and UK launched the **Technology Security Initiative' (TSI)** to elevate the strategic partnership.



"Our Free Trade Agreement negotiations is the floor not the ceiling of our ambitions to unlock our shared potential and deliver growth, from Bengaluru to Birmingham."-
(MEA)



Bilateral trade **stood at £36.3 billion during FY 2022-23** (trade balance in favour of India.)



Significance of India-UK Relations

- Balancing out aggressive China:** E.g., joined AUKUS.
- Indian diaspora in the UK:** Over 600 Indian diaspora-owned companies.
- Prospects for collaboration in defence production:** E.g., talks on co-production of next generation VSHORAD missiles and fighter jet engines



India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA)

Potential benefits

- Reduced costs to Indian professionals** by totalisation agreement.
- Boost labour-intensive sectors** like leather, jewelry, etc.
- De coupling from China** by allowing shift of companies to India.

Major concerns in conclusion of FTA: UK seeks commitments beyond the WTO's TRIPS agreement, Liberal Rules of Origin, India's new BIT, etc.



Challenges

- Failure to tackle anti Indian activities:** E.g., vandalism of the Indian flag.
- Issue of sovereignty of Diego Garcia between UK and Mauritius:** India supports Mauritius.
- British Intervention in India's domestic politics.** E.g., Kashmir issue



Way Forward

- Deeper cooperation in technology and emerging frontiers.**
- Promote People-People ties:** E.g., Generation UK-India initiative, India-UK Young Professionals Scheme
- Strengthen **cooperation and coordination in the UN, G-20, WTO, WHO, IMF** etc.



Conclusion

- As India seeks to carve out a new role for itself in the evolving global order as a 'leading power' and the U.K. recalibrates its strategic outlook post-Brexit, this is a unique moment in India-U.K. ties for "quantum leap" in the relations.

4.7.6. INDIA-ITALY RELATIONS

Why in the news?

Recently, the Union Cabinet approved the **Migration and Mobility Agreement** between **India and Italy**.

Key provisions of the agreement:

- **Indian students**, after completing academic/vocational training in Italy, may be granted temporary residence for up to 12 months.
- **For workers**, the Italian side has reserved a quota for non-seasonal and seasonal Indian workers for 2023, 2024, and 2025 under the current **Flows Decree**.
- The agreement will remain **in force for five years and will be automatically renewed** for a successive period unless it's terminated by either signatory.
- **Potential benefits of the agreement:** enhances people to people contacts, foster mobility of students, skilled workers, business people, strengthen cooperation on irregular migration between the two sides.

Major areas of engagement between India and Italy

- **Historical:** Both are ancient civilizations that have interacted and traded for over 2000 years via the spice route.
- **Political relations:** E.g. Italian PM paid visit to India as the guest of honour of Raisina Dialogue (in 2023) and Indian PM paid a visit to Italy to participate in the G7 Summit (2024).
- **Economic Relations:** Italy is **India's 4th largest** trading partner in the EU.
 - Bilateral trade is valued at **US\$ 14.25 billion in 2022-23**, with the **balance of trade being in India's favour**.
- **Defence Relations:** **India-Italy Military Cooperation Group (MCG)**, signed defence cooperation agreement (2023)
- **Strategic Relations:** Relationship has been elevated to **Strategic Partnership in March 2023**.
 - A connection was identified between **the Indo-Pacific** (wherein India plays a leading role), and the **enlarged Mediterranean Sea** (where Italy sits at the center of the Sea and acts as a **natural bridge towards the Indo-Pacific**).
- **Multilateral:** Italy supported India's entry into the **Wassenaar Arrangement and Australia Group** and supports International Solar Alliance (ISA), **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)**

Other Areas of Cooperation

Technology	Space	Diaspora
An Agreement on S&T Co-operation has existed since 1978 leading to initiatives like India-Trento Programme for Advanced Research (ITPAR) .	A joint declaration recently signed between the heads of ASI (Italian Space Agency) and ISRO .	The Indian community in Italy (estimated at 180,000 including PIOs) is the third largest community of Indians in Europe after the UK and the Netherlands.

Issues in India-Italy Relations

- **Low Trade:** despite having historical trade ties dating back to the Roman era
- **Trust deficit due to earlier issues:** E.g. **Italian Mariners case and Agusta Westland helicopter scandal**
- **Unrealized Alliance:** India-Italy-Japan trilateral partnership launched in 2021 is yet to be operationalized.

Way forward

- **Economic Partnership:** Strengthen trade ties to increase trade volume, explore new avenues for investment, and promote economic cooperation.
- **Strengthening EU-India partnership:** If the India and EU sign a trade pact in the coming time, Italy and India can enjoy major two-way trade benefits. It would also add **fodder to the reinvigorated EU-India partnership**.
- **Shared global agenda:** Italy and India **can converge on multilateral issues**, sharing a common imperative to shape and endorse a new global agenda together.
 - E.g., Italy **withdrew from the Belt and Road Initiative**.

4.7.7. INDIA-GREECE AT A GLANCE

INDIA-GREECE

- The Indian Prime Minister recently visited Greece for the first time in four decades **which led to upgradation of bilateral ties to strategic partnership.**



"India-Greece bilateral relations have neither been "diminished" nor has the warmth decreased despite no Indian Prime Minister having visited Greece since 1983"–Indian PM.



Bilateral trade in 2022-23 **was about \$2 billion.**



India-Greece relationship elevated to strategic partnership.



Highlights of visit

- India welcomed Greece into **International Solar Alliance.**
- **Encourage** cooperation within UNESCO and adhere to UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.
- Both countries agreed on the finalisation of **the Mobility and Migration Partnership Agreement.**



Significance of Greece for India

- **Support at International levels:** E.g., India's membership in **NSG** and bid for a **permanent seat on the UNSC.**
- **Geopolitical:** Crucial in the context of an **emerging Turkey-Pakistan-Azerbaijan military axis** and can **counter Chinese presence** in the mediterranean region.
- **Geostrategic Location:** Can help in enhancing India's outreach to the Mediterranean region.
- **Energy Hub:** Greece's has abundant sunshine and robust wind energy capacity.
- **Access to the European Market:** **Greece** is a part of **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (Piraeus port).**



Concerns Associated

- **Lack of bilateral engagements:** Absence of high-level interaction in four decades has resulted in a **lack of strong strategic connections.**
- **China's Presence:** Chinese shipping company COSCO has ~60% stake in the Piraeus.
- **Low Trade and Investment:** Characterised by limited business opportunities, insufficient investment and capital inflow, etc.



Way-forward

- **Enhance engagements:** Greece and Cyprus can act as a bridge between the European Union and India.
- **Developmental aid:** India with Line of Credit as an alternative to China's Debt Trap Policy.
- **Promote Tourism:** Greece is emerging as a popular tourist destination among Indians.
- **Maritime Cooperation:** including information sharing and joint naval exercises.



Conclusion

- Rejuvenation of ties between these two ancient civilizations provides an opportunity to India to have a definitive presence in the Mediterranean where the present conflicts and disputes have elevated the geostrategic importance of this region.

4.7.8. INDIA NORDIC RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

INDIA-NORDIC RELATIONS

- India–Nordic strategic relations are based on strong foundations of democratic values, institutional affinities, trade cooperation, innovation, and climate justice.



Nordic countries are: **Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland.**



Exports to **Finland & Norway**—grown by over **100% & 80% respectively.**



Four of the five Nordic countries are among the top **20 trading partners of India in Europe.**



Areas of co-operation

- Blue Economy:** E.g., India–Norway Integrated Ocean Management and Research Initiative.
- India–Nordic Summit (2018,2022):** After US, with India, Nordic countries have exclusive **collaboration at the summit level**
- Arctic Council:** India is an **observer in the Arctic Council** in which all the Nordic countries are members.
- Multilateral convergence:** Support India's **membership in groups like NSG, Permanent member seat in UNSC**



Significance of India–Nordic countries relations

- Nordic sustainability projects:** E.g., Nordic Sustainable Cities project supports the Indian Smart Cities Mission.
- Nordic Innovation excellence:** E.g., India is one of the centres which host one of the five global centres of innovation run by Finland known as FinNode.
- Sovereign wealth funds of the Nordic countries as a source of investment in India:** E.g., Norway's sovereign wealth fund, worth \$1.4 trillion.
- Heightened India–Nordic relations promote India's Arctic Policy:** It reflects India's strong determination for strategic presence in that region.



Challenges

- Ties with Russia:** Nordic–Russia Arctic tensions contrast with India's good ties with Russia. Also, **Finland (2023) and Sweden (2024) had joined NATO.**
- Varied interests of members:** Achieving a common point of collaboration is difficult with five countries.
- Trade barriers:** Issues such as tariffs, non-tariff barriers, and complex regulations limit trade.



Way forward

- Promoting Cultural exchanges:** Strengthening people-to-people connections.
- Improving Collaboration:** Sharing best practices, expertise, and research in areas such as renewable energy, climate change mitigation, etc.
- Leveraging technology on various fronts** like digital start-ups, healthcare, food processing.
- Facilitating frequent diplomatic dialogues.**



Conclusion

- India–Nordic partnership has metamorphosed over the years marking strategic convergence that significantly impacts bilateral and global geopolitics

4.8. INDIA-AUSTRALIA RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

INDIA-AUSTRALIA RELATIONS

- India and Australia have much in common, underpinned by shared values of a pluralistic, Westminster-style democracies, Commonwealth traditions, expanding economic engagement and increasing high level interaction.



In this complicated world, it is the trust between like-minded partners such as India and Australia that is helping to secure a free, open, peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific region along with a rules-based international order. (MEA)



Bilateral trade: \$27 billion



In FY23, India was Australia's 9th largest trading partner, and Australia was India's 13th largest trading partner



Areas of Cooperation

- Bilateral:** elevated to **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership(2020)**, 2+2 dialogue
- Defence:** India a top-tier security partner (as per Australia's National Defence Strategy (NDS) 2024).
- Security:** Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation and Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, Military exercises-AUSINDEX, Malabar
- Multilateral & Regional Cooperation:** G-20, Commonwealth, WTO, IOR-ARC, ASEAN Regional Forum, QUAD
- Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI):** India, Australia, and Japan to strengthen Indo-Pacific supply chains.
- Science and Technology:** India Australia Biotechnology Fund, **Australia-India Strategic Research Fund, etc.**
- People to People Relations:** India is the second largest migrant group in Australia(>9lakh, census 2021)



Challenges

- High Trade deficit of India:** Mainly due to raw materials import, coal constitutes 74% of Australia's exports to India
- Asymmetric priorities and worldviews:** For India, defense engagements takes precedence in the Indo-Pacific, whereas Australia places high priority on economic engagement.
- Instances of discrimination and racism** against people of Indian origin in Australia



Way-forward

- Deepen India-Australia Security Dialogues and Cooperation** along with partners Indonesia, Japan, and USA
- Enhance coordination in regional institutions and forums:** E.g. East Asia Summit, IORA, IOR-ARC, IONS
- Build on shared interests:** E.g. Antarctic



Conclusion

- The growing importance of the Indian and Pacific Oceans has given new momentum to the 'Indo-Pacific' as a geo-strategic construct. India and Australia being prominent players in the region are suitably placed to anchor a 'Coalition of Middle Powers' in the Indo-Pacific.

4.8.1. ONE YEAR OF INDIA-AUSTRALIA ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND TRADE AGREEMENT (INDAUS ECTA)

Why in the news?

IND-AUS ECTA was the **first Free Trade Agreement of India with a developed country** signed after more than a decade in April 2022 and **entered into force in December 2022**.

Key features of IND-AUS ECTA

- **India will benefit from preferential market access** provided by Australia on 100% of its tariff lines, including key export sectors like gems, textiles, footwear etc.
- Australia gets preferential access to over **70% of India's tariff lines**, including raw materials and intermediaries such as coal, mineral ores and wines.
- Covers areas like **Rules of Origin, Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures, Dispute Settlement**, etc.

Significance of ECTA

- **Raise bilateral trade to USD 45-50 billion** in next five years, up from around \$27 billion.
- Create an **additional employment of at least 10 lakhs jobs** in India.
- Create **opportunities for investment, promotion of start-ups**.

Challenge to IND-AUS ECTA: India's past experience with trade agreements shows **inability of Indian manufacturers to utilise their full potential** due to **lack of industry consultation, logistics** and compliance costs.

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DAKSHA MAINS MENTORING PROGRAM 2025

(A Strategic Revision, Practice, and Enrichment Mentoring Program for Mains Examination 2025)

DATE	DURATION
10 th AUGUST	5 Months

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROGRAMME

- Highly experienced and qualified team of mentors
- Emphasis on score maximization and performance improvement
- Scheduled group sessions for strategy discussions, live practice, and peer interaction
- Personalized one-to-one sessions with mentors
- Well-structured revision and practice plan for GS Mains, Essay & Ethics
- Subject-wise strategy documents based on thorough research
- Access to Daksha Mains Practice Tests
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4.9. INDIA AFRICA

4.9.1. INDIA-AFRICA RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

India and Africa Relations

Unlike China, **India's partnership with Africa** is based on a **model of cooperation** that is **responsive, demand-driven and free of conditions**.

"India's priority is not just Africa; India's priority is Africans – every man, woman and child in Africa." India's Foreign Minister.

Indian investments in Africa reached **\$98 billion in 2023**, with trade totalling **\$100 billion**.



The growing convergence of India- Africa Relations

- **Bilateral:** E.g., India-Africa Defence Dialogue (IADD),
- **Multilateral:** E.g., AU's inclusion in the G20; Egypt and Ethiopia joined BRICS; etc
- **Trade and Investment:** E.g., Doubling bilateral trade to US\$ 200 Billion by 2030; **Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC)**.
- **Infrastructure:** E.g., Pan-African e-network project.
- **Capacity-Building:** ITEC programme since 1964, DIKSHA programme, 2020.
- **Climate:** E.g., supporting solar energy projects in Africa under ISA.



Significance of Africa for India

- **Address Geostrategic concerns:** piracy, organised crime from Horn of Africa Region
- **Geopolitical leverage:** Crucial for India's permanent seat in UNSC.
- **Energy security:** Africa holds 30% of global mineral reserves.



Challenges

- **China has loaned \$134.6bn** to African nations, nearly 11 times more than India.
- **Slow project delivery** by India. E.g., little progress on AAGC.
- **High transport and logistics costs** (over 34% road cost).
- **Piracy, IUU fishing, narcotics.** E.g., recently, Somali pirates were caught and brought to India to stand trial.



Way Forward

- **India's increased** investment in physical and digital infrastructure.
- **Increased penetration of Indian Financial Institutions.** E.g., increase EXIM bank branch footprint.
- Increase frequency of **India-Africa Maritime Exercises and HADR Operations.** E.g., AFINDEX, IMT TRILAT.
- **Taking advantage of the recently signed AFCFTA,** India must diversify export.



Conclusion

In this era of geopolitical competition and realignment, India's multifaceted relationship with African nations is poised for a fundamental transformation.

4.9.2. INDIA-MAURITIUS RELATIONS AT A GLANCE

India-Mauritius Relations

It's a multi-dimensional relationship that remains embedded in a rich shared past, entwined by culture, democratic values and intimate ancestral ties.



Indian origin people comprise **nearly 70% of the island's population** (called little India).



India-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership agreement (CECPA) signed in 2021 which is the first trade Agreement with a country in Africa.



Areas of Cooperations

- **Bilateral agreements:** E.g., Double taxation Avoidance Convention, Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Treaty, etc.
- **Investment:** E.g., FDI worth USD 161 billion from Mauritius (2000 – 2022).
- **Cultural and people-to-people ties:** E.g., The World Hindi Secretariat for the global promotion of Hindi.
- **Geostrategic:** E.g., The upgraded airstrip on Agaléga Island,
- **Mauritius the pivot of India's island policy:** In order to collectively engage with the Vanilla islands.



Challenges

- **China factor:** China growing presence in the Indian Ocean through BRI and its maritime component.
- **Climate Change:** An existential challenge for Mauritius.
- **Agalega Island:** Indian projects on the island caused environmental concerns.



Way Forward

- **Countering china's hegemony** by deepening the existing ties in various spheres.
- **Small Island Developing States (SIDS):** India should work constructively with SIDS for addressing economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities.
- **Strategic cooperation:** Strengthening maritime security collaboration



Conclusion

Mauritius's foreign and economic policy options, amidst changing regional geopolitics, require India to consider Mauritius's concerns and identity as a SIDS.

5. EFFECT OF POLICIES AND POLITICS OF DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ON INDIA'S INTERESTS

5.1. BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE (BRI)- TENTH ANNIVERSARY

Why in the news?

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) celebrated Tenth anniversary.

About BRI

- BRI is a massive **China-led infrastructure project launched in 2013**.
 - It seeks to **connect Asia with Africa and Europe via land and maritime networks**.
 - **Aim:** to improve regional integration, increasing trade and stimulating economic growth.
- **Concerns with BRI**
 - **Unsustainable debts** by China to partner countries lead to a **debt trap** making them vulnerable to Chinese political and economic manipulation.
 - BRI infrastructure project has encountered major **implementation problems, such as corruption scandals, labour violations, environmental hazards, and public protests**.
 - **India's concerns**
 - ✓ It passes through the **Gilgit Baltistan region of India** and thus **violates India's sovereignty and territorial integrity**.
 - ✓ BRI projects will enhance **China's stature and undermine India's influence over smaller South Asian countries** and Indian Ocean littoral states.
- **Efforts to Counter BRI**
 - **Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII)** by the developed countries.
 - ✓ PGII is the repackaged version of the Build Back Better World (**B3W**) initiative
 - **India's efforts**
 - ✓ **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) initiative** during the recent G20 summit.
 - ✓ **International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC)** for connecting India to the Middle east and Russia.
 - ✓ **The Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC)** to enhance cooperation with African countries in partnership with Japan.



5.1.1 CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (CPEC)

Why in the news?

Recently, China and Pakistan entered into **six agreements to expedite cooperation under CPEC**.

About CPEC

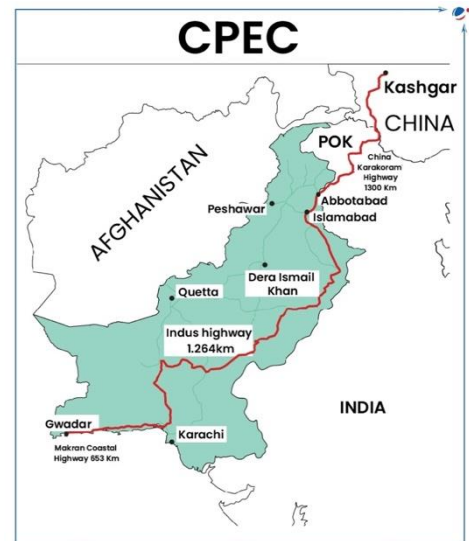
- The CPEC is a **3,000-km-long route of infrastructure projects** connecting **China's northwest Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region** and the **Gwadar Port** in the **western Pakistan province of Balochistan**.
- It passes through the **Indian territory of Gilgit Baltistan**.

Concerns for India

- **Sovereignty concern:** CPEC violates India's sovereignty by passing through PoK without Indian approval.
- **Strategic Concern:** CPEC investments may enable China to use Pakistan as low-cost deterrent against India.
- **Security Concerns:** Enhanced border infrastructure in Pakistan could facilitate cross-border terrorism and illegal smuggling activities.
- **Regional Instability:** Pakistan's economic crisis and Chinese loans increase regional financial instability and Pakistan's dependence.

Way forward

India should engage diplomatically with China and Pakistan to address its concerns about the CPEC. Simultaneously, India can strengthen regional partnerships and participate in initiatives like the Blue Dot Network to promote transparent development in the South-Asian region.



5.2. NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO)

Why in news?

Recently, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) marked 75 years of its formation and **Sweden** has joined NATO as its **32nd** member.

Story of NATO's Expansion in Eastern Europe

- The Soviet Union responded to NATO by creating its own military alliance with seven other Eastern European communist states in 1955, dubbed the **Warsaw Pact**.
- After **collapse of the Soviet Union(1991)**, various Warsaw Pact countries became NATO members. E.g Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia etc.
- NATO's **Open door policy** (Article 10), allows any European country that can enhance and contribute "to the security of the North Atlantic area" to join.

Key achievements of NATO

- **During Cold war:** During the Cold War, NATO played a major role in maintaining the **tense peace of the Cold War** and ensuring the war remained 'cold'.
- **Post-cold war:** NATO encouraged bilateral discussion between the United States and Russia through the Founding Act.
- **The Ukraine War:** Publicly denounced Russian actions in Ukraine
- **Maritime security: Operation Sea Guardian** by NATO contributes to safe and secure Mediterranean Sea.
- **Humanitarian aid:** setting up of temporary shelters (Earthquakes in Türkiye in 2023)



Implications of East ward expansion of NATO

- **Creating mistrust between Russia and West:** seen as an aggressive act by Russia and tilts Russia toward considering an anti-Western alliance with China and Iran.
- **Reverse trend of demilitarization in region:** New NATO members need to devote funds for integrating with western command structure diverting money towards military spending.
- **Sharpening existing divisions in Europe:** between more prosperous North and the less prosperous South and also between Eastern Europe and countries of former Soviet Union.
- **Increased Militarization in Europe:** Russia views NATO's expansion in Europe can act as a destabilizing factor including the possibility of military intervention.

Major challenges faced by NATO

- **Funding Issues:** In 2006, NATO Defense Ministers agreed to a commitment that 2% of their countries' GDP would be allocated towards defence spending. However, the majority of NATO members do not meet this goal.
- **Right-Wing Nationalism:** With the spread of right-wing nationalism across Europe, discontent with institutions such as NATO and the EU is growing.
- **US' commitment to Europe's defence:** Former US President questioned value of the alliance and whether US should honour the **Article 5 commitment**.
 - **Article 5 say** armed attack against one NATO member shall be considered an attack against them all.
- **Russian Aggression:** NATO's admission of several members, despite verbal assurances to Russia regarding no eastern expansion undermines trust between NATO and Russia
- **Rise of China:** Chinese expanding military posture in the Indo-Pacific threatening Europe's industrial and technological base poses challenge to NATO.

Conclusion

Embracing a comprehensive strategy of innovation, resilience-building, and strategic foresight will be imperative for NATO to navigate complex geopolitical realities and sustain its role as a pillar of international security and stability.

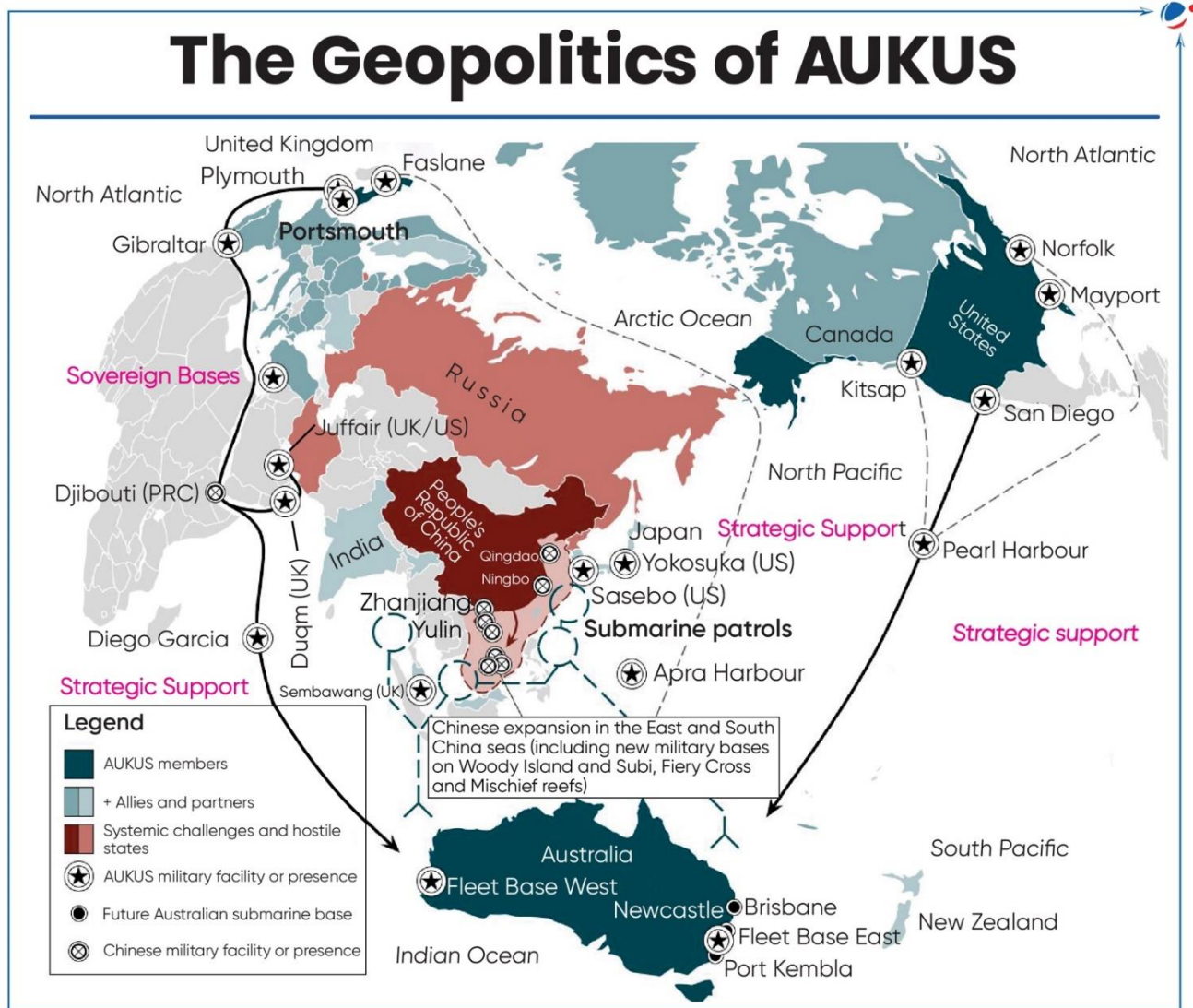
5.3. AUKUS

Why in the news?

AUKUS members are considering **cooperation with Japan on advanced capabilities projects**.

About AUKUS

- **Genesis:** Announced in 2021
- **Nature:** It is a new three-way strategic defence alliance between **Australia, the UK and US**.
- **Aim:** To boost defense capabilities, accelerate technological integration, and expand the industrial capacity of all three countries.
- AUKUS partnership is composed of **two pillars**:
 - **Pillar I – Conventionally Armed, Nuclear-Powered Submarines:** Under it, UK and USA are helping Australia acquire nuclear-powered submarines.
 - **Pillar II – Advanced Capability Development:** Develop joint capabilities to enhance interoperability on cyber capabilities, AI, quantum technologies etc
- AUKUS primarily serves as a framework for advancing defense technologies, rather than an alliance committed to defense during contingencies.
- For facilitating sharing of critical technology, a **legally binding tripartite agreement** known as the Exchange of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information Agreement (ENNPIA) was signed in 2021.

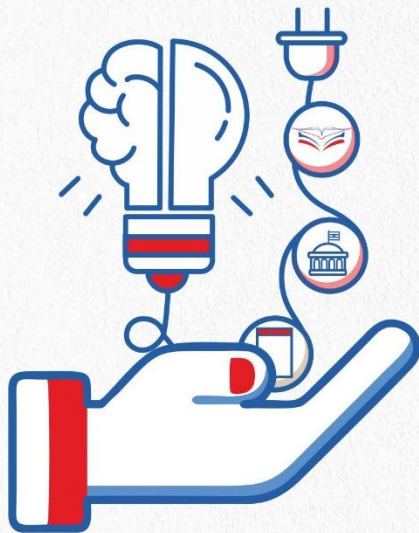


- **Implications of AUKUS**
 - **Strategic implication for Indo-Pacific:** It aims to achieve the vision of free, open, resilient and inclusive Indo-Pacific.
 - **USA’s Renewed push in Indo-Pacific:** AUKUS is seen as US’s strong commitment to security of Indo-Pacific region.
 - **Re-establish UK’s strategic footprint:** It will renew UK’s claim for a long term role in Indo-Pacific security
- **Concerns related to AUKUS**
 - **AUKUS** lacks clarity in its **narratives and strategic purpose**.
 - **China opposes AUKUS**, which may trigger regional tensions in Indo-pacific.
 - Australia’s intent to acquire nuclear-powered submarines also resulted in a **deterioration of Australia’s relations with France** following the cancellation of plans to acquire diesel-electric Attack Class submarines.
 - ✓ **AUKUS has widened the divide in the trans-Atlantic relationship between France and AUKUS states**, especially after USA’s unilateral decision to pull its troops out of Afghanistan.
- **AUKUS is different from Quad:** AUKUS prioritizes defense partnership, unlike Quad, which has a broader focus on strategic cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.
 - **Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad)** is a group of **US, Australia, India, and Japan** which commits for a free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific region that is prosperous and resilient.

India and AUKUS

- **Importance of AUKUS for India:**
 - **Complements the Quad:** AUKUS would strengthen Quad to deal with China as a common threat and to keep the Indo-Pacific region free, open and inclusive.
 - **Strategic collaboration with France:** It also provides a window of opportunity for strategic collaboration with France and deepening trust with European nations.
- **Concerns for India**
 - **Erosion of India's regional influence** in the Eastern Indian Ocean with the crowding of nuclear attack submarines in the future.
 - AUKUS may **shift balance of power in Indo-pacific.**

OPTIONAL SUBJECT CLASSES



- » Geography » Sociology
- » Political Science and International Relations

Starts: **16 JULY, 5 PM**

- » Public Administration
- » Anthropology » Hindi Literature

STARTING SOON



6. IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, AGENCIES, AND FORA, THEIR STRUCTURE, MANDATE

6.1. GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE CHANGING TIMES

Why in the news?

Major global institutions such as the UN System, WTO, IMF, and World Bank (WB) among others have been under scrutiny for not being able to fulfil their desired objectives.

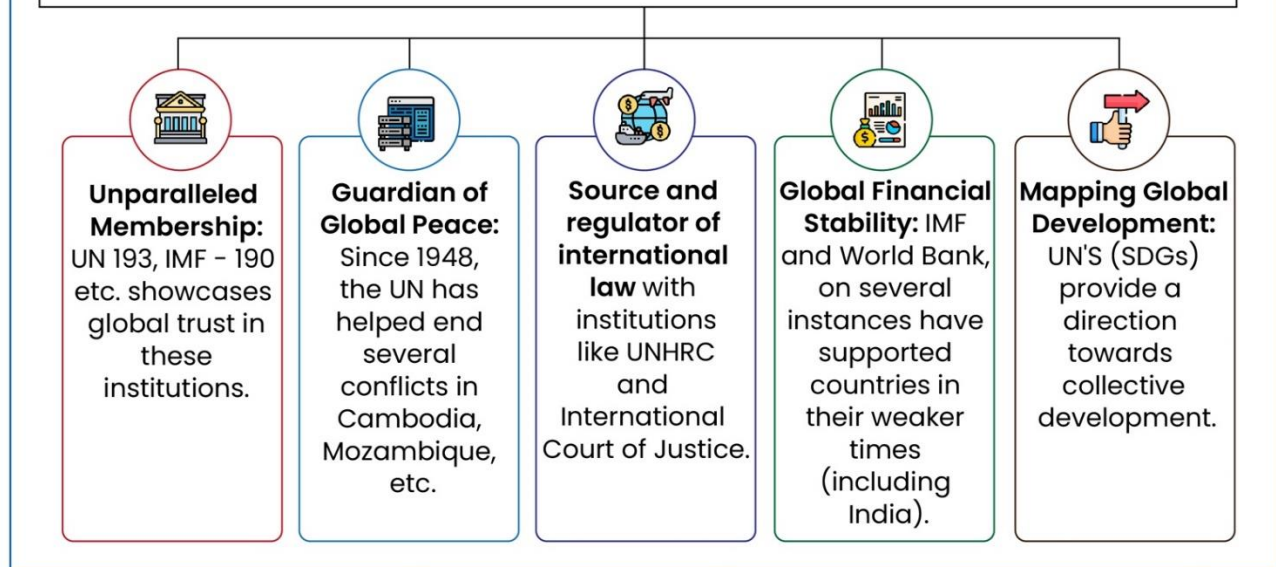
Contemporary Issues and Limitations of Global Institutions

- **Rise of Developing Countries:** In spite of India rising amongst the comity of nations, the institutions still exert the western hegemonic control
 - India with the largest population and 3rd largest (in PPP terms) economy in the world but has only 2.75 % **Special Drawing Rights (SDR)** quota in the IMF.
- **Bilateral and Multilateral Grouping:** Rise of alternative forums have decreased relevance of international organisations. **E.g.**, G20, G7, and BRICS, etc.
 - **E.g.**, BRICS countries established the New Development Bank (NDB), as an alternative to World Bank in funding developmental needs.
- **Protectionist Tendencies:** Trade barriers and policies undermining the effectiveness and legitimacy of International organizations.
 - **E.g.**, US's "America First" approach led to the imposition of tariffs on imported goods, violating WTO rules.
- **Rising conflicts:**
 - **Russia – Ukraine War:** Ukraine invasion exposed Security Council's inability to address major conflicts.; also, war disrupted global trade and finance, challenging WTO and IMF.
 - **Israel-Palestine Conflict:** UN's power imbalances hinder its peace-keeping mandate between nations.

What are the issues in continuing with current structures?

- **Representation & Inclusiveness:** Global institutions are outdated; inadequate representation of developing nations in current power dynamics.
- **Misuse of Veto Power:** Permanent UNSC members **misuse veto to protect self-interest.**
 - **E.g.**, Russia used its veto power to block resolutions condemning its actions in Ukraine.
- **Dysfunctional dispute settlement systems:** **E.g.**, The U.S. blocked the appointment of WTO's Appellate Body.
- **Inability to handle emerging challenges:** Global institutions from last century fail to reflect the issues **such as** climate change, cyber-security, data protection etc.
 - **E.g.**, COVID-19 pandemic exposed UN and WHO structural and functional deficiencies.

RELEVANCE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE CURRENT GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS



Way Forward

- **Governance Overhaul:** Bodies like the UNSC must accommodate diverse voices. **E.g.**, India as a permanent member in UNSC.
- **Financing Revamp:** Financial overdependence on western countries must replace diversified financing models. **E.g.**, raising private investments.
- **Strengthening Enforcement:** Stricter enforceability of rules and regulations. **E.g.**, empowering institutions like UNCLOS.
- **Embracing Technology:** leverage technologies like AI, satellite monitoring, and digital data collection for migration, climate crisis.

6.1.1. INDIA AND MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS

Why in the news?

United Nations Secretary- General Highlights India's Multilateral development banks (MDBs) reform Efforts.

About MDBs:

- MDBs are **international financial institutions** that provide financial and technical assistance to developing countries.
- These banks are owned by **multiple member countries** and **operate globally** to promote economic development, reduce poverty, and support sustainable growth in their member countries.
- **E.g.** World Bank Group, Asian Development Bank, etc.

Need of Reforming MDB's:

- **Adaptation to changing development needs of the 21st century such as** climate change, income inequality etc.
- **Representation and Voice: greater voting power** for developing countries
- **Private Sector Mobilization:** Reforms to leverage private capital to multiply development impact.

Challenges in Reforms: Difficulty in achieving consensus among diverse member countries, limited financial and technical resources for implementing reforms, slow approval processes etc.

Recommendation of independent expert group (IEG) on MDB reform (set up during India's G20 presidency):

- **Tripling the annual lending levels** of MDBs to \$390 billion by 2030;
- **Adopting a triple mandate for MDBs** to eliminate extreme poverty, boosting shared prosperity and contributing to global public goods;
- Expanding and **Modernizing funding models**.
- **Other:** Enhancing engagement with the **private sector** to the center of MDB operations, etc.

6.2. UNITED NATIONS

6.2.1. UNSC AT A GLANCE

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

- UNSC was established by the **UN Charter in 1945 as one of the six principal organs of the UN**. Its primary responsibility is to maintain international peace and security.



The council has **5 permanent members and 10 non-permanent members** elected for two-year term.



India is a **founding member of UN** and has served as a non-permanent member of UNSC for **8 terms**.



Need for reform in UNSC

- **Outdated institution:** with no permanent representation from Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean.
- **Wide-ranging power of UNSC**-e.g. the imposition of sanctions-encroach on state sovereignty.
- **Veto power:** Frequent divisions within the UNSC P-5 end up blocking key decisions.



Significance of UNSC

- **It aims to peacefully resolve international disputes**
- **Imposing sanctions:** to maintain peace and security.
- **Peacekeeping missions:** It oversees 11 operations across 3 continents.



India's Contribution in UNSC

- **India chaired the Taliban and Libya sanctions committees** and the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the UNSC during its tenure.
- Formulation of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**
- First country to **raise apartheid issue at UN**
- Largest **UN Peace Keeping troops provider**.



Challenges in front of India

- **Lack of consensus on the definition of terrorism:** The CCIT is facing a deadlock.
- **Post COVID Global Order:** Recession, narrow nationalism challenges the prospect global cooperation
- **Lack of resources for multilateral diplomacy-** staff, finances, intellectual and institutional infrastructure
- **Regional rivals opposed** to the G4 seeking permanent membership in UNSC



Conclusion

- Reform of the UN Security Council remains deadlocked due to competing interests and rivalries. Aspirants face opposition from peers unwilling to accept their elevated status, perpetuating an outdated power structure in global governance.

6.2.2. INDIA AND UN PEACEKEEPING AT A GLANCE

INDIA AND UN PEACEKEEPING

- Recently, Indian Army commemorated the 76th International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers (2024)



Principles of UN Peacekeeping: Consent of the parties, Impartiality and Non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate.



Mandates: Protect civilians and promote human rights, Assist in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants



Relevance of UN Peace Missions for India

- Shows India's commitment to international peace by containing regional and international conflicts
- Strategic footprints in regions where India has economic/energy/ multilateral interest
- Strengthen claim at International Level: E.g. permanent membership of UNSC
- International exposure to military forces showcasing of proficiency



India's contribution to UN Peacekeeping

- India has contributed services of ~2, 87,000 troops to peacekeeping missions.
- First country to contribute to the **Trust Fund on sexual exploitation and abuse**, set up in 2016.
- 'Group of Friends' launched by India to promote accountability for crimes against peacekeepers
- Role of Women peacekeepers in countries such as Congo, Liberia, South Sudan, Haiti.
- Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK) established by Indian Army to train >12000 troops per year.



Challenges faced by UN peacekeeping missions

- Organisational challenges**
 - Non-inclusive: Troops and police do not have a role in decision-making process.
 - Inadequate power with UN
 - Redundant missions: E.g. UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP)
- Operational challenges**
 - Waning international support.
 - Role of Regional Organisation in brokering Peace: E.g. Organisation of African Unity (OAU)



Reforms proposed by India for the UN peacekeeping mission

- Decision making:** greater role of troops and police contributing countries.
- Prudent deployment** of Missions with full recognition of their limitations.
- Regional approach:** Support regional and sub-regional organisations in mediation, monitoring of ceasefires, etc
- Exit strategy:** Peacekeeping missions should factor in an "exit strategy from their very inception".
- Safety of peacekeepers:** should be ensured by bringing perpetrators of crimes to justice.



Conclusion

- Peacekeeping has proven to be one of the most effective tools available to the UN to assist countries to navigate the difficult path from conflict to peace.

6.2.3. UNHRC AT A GLANCE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

- It is an inter-governmental body established in 2006 replacing the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights. It is made up of 47 States, and is responsible for the promotion and protection of all human rights around the globe.



Establish **international commissions of inquiry and fact-finding** missions investigating human rights violations.



India was re-elected to the **UNHRC (2022-24)** for a 6th term with overwhelming majority.



Significance of UNHRC

- Platform for Dialogue** among states with regard to human rights issue.
- Promote human rights education and learning** as well as advisory services, capacity building, etc
- Reviewing Human rights record of member states** through Universal Periodic Review (UPR).
- Encourages Civil Society Participation in the** promotion and protection of human rights.



Achievements of UNHRC

- The number of country-specific reports** submitted by special procedures increased by 104 percent.
- Adoption of resolution on Internet free speech.**
- Recognition of the **Right to a Healthy Environment as a Human Right.**



Challenges

- Council seats have been held by countries with human rights concerns.** E.g., Saudi Arabia, China, and Syria. They use their position to block scrutiny of themselves.
- Tendency to vote in blocs:** E.g., Organization of the Islamic Conference and Africa.
- Non-binding recommendations:** Countries can easily dismiss recommendations.



Way Forward

- Procedural reforms** such as open ballots in Council elections.
- Provision of timely and accurate information** to reduce politicization and build consensus.
- Ensuring National implementation** of international human rights obligations.
- Protecting **Human Rights Defenders from Reprisals.**



Conclusion

- With ongoing reforms, increased member accountability, and collaborative efforts, UNHRC can more effectively promote and protect human rights worldwide, fostering a more just international order.

6.2.4. INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION (IMO)

Why in the news?

India was **re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council**, with the **highest tally at elections** held for the 2024-25 biennium.

About IMO

- Genesis:** United Nations specialized agency established in 1948.



- Purpose: Promote safe, secure, environmentally sound, efficient and sustainable shipping through cooperation.
- **IMO Council: Executive organ of IMO** and responsible for **supervising the work of the Organization**.

Significance of IMO

- **Environment protection:**
 - **Prevention of pollution from ships:** MARPOL Convention prevents ship pollution-oil, chemicals, sewage, etc.
 - **Protecting marine biodiversity:** By preventing the spread of potentially invasive aquatic organisms.
 - **Address noise pollution: Guidelines on reducing underwater noise from commercial shipping.**
 - **Climate change mitigation:** IMO pioneered mandatory energy-efficiency measures for international shipping sector.
 - **Addresses dumping of wastes at sea:** London Convention regulates sea dumping, including carbon capture and storage in subsea formations.
- **Maritime Safety and Security:**
 - **Safety and security of merchant ships:** IMO adopted **SOLAS Convention, 1974**.
 - It specifies **minimum standards for the construction, equipment and operation of ships**.
 - **Prevent piracy and armed robbery against ships:** Provides assistance to Member States to develop measures to address piracy. E.g. **Djibouti Code of Conduct**.
 - **Suppression of Unlawful activities (SUA) Treaties:** International legal framework enabling action on unlawful acts committed against ships.
 - **Checking drug smuggling:** IMO's **Maritime Safety Committee (MSC)** and **Facilitation Committee (FAL)** cooperate to prevent drug smuggling on international ships.

Challenges faced by IMO

- **Unequal influence of member states:** IMO funding based on tonnage; larger contributors gain more influence, creating imbalance.
- **Disproportionate influence of industry:** IMO favors industry over climate concerns. 57% of committee consultative members are industry groups.
- **Limited capacity to regulate emerging technologies:** due to small organizational strength of IMO.
- **Lack of political consensus during negotiations:** E.g. Argentina, Brazil, India, etc. quote the Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) principle to block GHG regulation.
- **Very narrow regulatory focus:** Policy mix of IMO contains lack economic instruments, and innovative instruments, like, alternative propulsion technologies.

Conclusion

The above challenges set the tone for India as a council member to play an active role in facilitating organizational and governance reforms in IMO to ensure safe and sustainable shipping along with conservation and sustainable use the oceans and seas (SDG 14).

6.2.5. UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION (UNCAC)

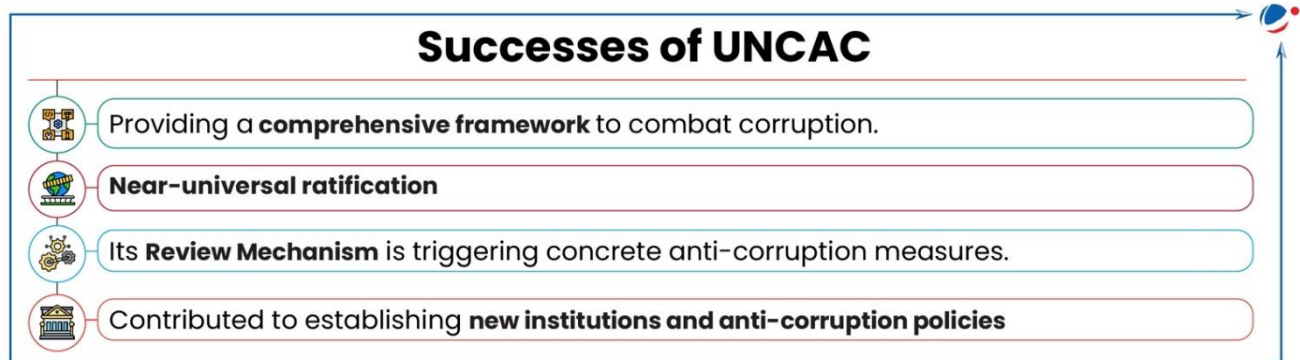
Why in the News?

20 years of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)

Key features of UNCAC

- On December 9, 2003, UNCAC was signed in Mexico. It entered into **force in 2005**.
- Only **legally binding** universal anti-corruption instrument.
- Parties: 190 (including **India**)
- Covers different **forms of corruption**, such as bribery, trading in influence, abuse of functions, and various acts of corruption in the **private sector**.

- It covers **five main areas**:
 - **Preventive measures** (establishment of anticorruption bodies etc),
 - **Criminalization and law enforcement** (States are obliged to establish some offences).
 - **International cooperation** (States bound to render mutual legal assistance)
 - **Asset recovery**, and
 - **Technical assistance** and information exchange.
- The **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)** serves as the custodian of the Convention and as the Secretariat of its Conference of States Parties.



Challenges: UNCAC does not define corruption, Gap between laws, institutions and their effectiveness, UNCAC review process does not require civil society engagement, etc.

6.3. INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT (ICC)

Why in the news?

ICC prosecutor sought arrest warrants for Israel's Prime Minister and Hamas leaders **for committing crimes against humanity and war crimes.**

About International Criminal Court (ICC)

- ICC investigate and prosecute individuals accused of serious international crimes.
- ICC's founding treaty, called the **Rome Statute** grants the ICC jurisdiction over 4 main crimes (see infographic).
- **Membership:** 124 countries are States Parties to Rome Statute of ICC (India is not a member).
- **Enforcement:** ICC's decisions are **binding**.
 - However, it **does not have its own police force** and relies on State cooperation, which is essential to the arrest and surrender of suspects.
- **Complementarity Principle:** The ICC complements national criminal systems and prosecutes only when states are unwilling or unable to do so genuinely.

4 Categories of crimes under ICC

Genocide	Crimes against humanity	War crimes	Crime of aggression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific intent to destroy a national, ethnic, racial or religious group by killing its members or by other means. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious violations committed through large-scale attack against civilian population • 5 forms listed in the Rome Statute includes offences like murder, rape, imprisonment, enforced disappearances, enslavement, torture, apartheid etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grave breaches of the Geneva conventions in the context of armed conflict • Includes use of child soldiers; killing or torture of civilians/ prisoners of war; intentional attacks against hospitals, historic monuments etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of armed force by a State against the sovereignty, integrity or independence of another State.

Jurisdiction of ICC under the Rome Statute

- **In case of Genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes** (committed on or after 1 July 2002) which are-
 - Committed by a **State Party national**, or in **territory of a State Party**, or in a State that has accepted the jurisdiction of the Court.
 - **Referred** to the ICC Prosecutor **UNSC**.
- **In case of Crimes of aggression:**
 - Crimes referred to the ICC Prosecutor by the **UNSC** irrespective of whether it involves States Parties or non-States Parties.
 - Prosecutor may also **initiate an investigation on own initiative** or **upon request from a State Party**.
- **No jurisdiction with respect to any person under age of 18.**

Limitations of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in Criminal Justice

- **Lack of Enforcement Mechanism:** ICC lacks enforcement power, depends on country cooperation.
- **Many State Parties are reluctant to cooperate with the Court's requests** for arrest and surrender. So far, the **ICC has issued 46 arrest warrants, with only 21 detained.**
- **Insufficient Checks and Balances** due to lack of effective oversight on the authority of the ICC.
- **Lack of Retrospective Jurisdiction** as ICC can only address crimes committed after 1st July 2002.
- **Allegations of Bias** with ICC being criticized as a **tool of Western imperialism** and biased against weak states, especially Africa.

Why did India not join the Rome Statute?

- **Subordination of the ICC to the UN Security Council**, may potentially lead to political interference.
- **UN Security Council's power** to bind non-States Parties to the ICC, violates principles of sovereignty.
- Wide competence and **powers of the ICC prosecutor on a proprio motu basis** (without a referral from the Security Council or a state party) **could be misused for political purposes.**
- **Exclusion of nuclear weapons and terrorism from ICC jurisdiction** whose use would constitute a war crime.

Conclusion

For effective functioning of ICC all States Parties should put in place **effective national frameworks** to cooperate fully with the ICC. **There should be Concrete arrest strategies** required to arrest the suspects. **Also, ICC member states should focus on electing highly qualified judges** with knowledge and experience in criminal law and procedure.

6.3.1. GENOCIDE CONVENTION

Why in news?

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) gave its **interim ruling** on South Africa's genocide case against Israel.

More on news

- **South Africa vs. Israel case in ICJ:** South Africa argued that the manner in which Israel was conducting its **military operations in Gaza violated the Genocide Convention**.
- **Provisional Measures by ICJ:** ICJ ruled that **Israel must take all measures to prevent genocidal acts in Gaza (Palestine)**. However, it did not order ceasefire and did not find Israel guilty yet.

About Genocide convention

- **Name:** Officially known as **Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948**.
 - It codified the crime of genocide for the first time.
 - It was also the **first human rights treaty** adopted by the UN General Assembly.
- **Definition of Genocide:** Intentional destruction of national, ethnic, racial, or religious groups. Recognized as a crime during war and peacetime under international convention.
- **Membership:** The Genocide Convention has been ratified by 153 States. **India has signed** the treaty.
- **Responsibility of State parties:** States must prevent, punish genocide through legislation and prosecution. India has not enacted specific laws on genocide, despite international obligations.
- **Jurisdiction:** ICJ hears cases related to the interpretation and application of the convention.

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APPENDIX: KEY DATA AND FACTS









 Economic Diplomacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 2008–2020: India disbursed US\$8.35Bn as grants and loans.
 Role Of Technology In Geopolitics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Technology influencing Geopolitics: Challenges the traditional concept of state sovereignty; 4th Industrial Revolution shape nation's economic power and competitiveness; advanced military technology exerts influence on the global stage ▶ Centrality of technology in India's geopolitics: Bhutan's and Nepal's adoption of UPI, the GSAT-9 satellite was launched for the members of SAARC; OSOWOG, ISA, etc.
 Disaster Diplomacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ India's initiatives: Launched Operation Dost (Turkiye Earthquake), Operation Karuna (Myanmar cyclone); assists Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Mauritius in developing Early Warning Systems; Deployment of Medical Assistance Teams to Mauritius and Comoros
 Para Diplomacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ According to 7th Schedule, 'foreign affairs' is exclusively a 'Union' subject. ▶ Sister Cities Concepts: Mumbai and Ho Chi Minh (Vietnam); Chennai and Guanzhou (China), etc.
 India's Strategic Autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Pillars of Strategic Autonomy: Foreign policy independence; Military self-reliance; Strategic decision-making autonomy; Economic sovereignty; Energy security. ▶ Issues: It runs counter to India's aspirations of being the 'Voice of the Global South'; Accusation of being a "Fence Sitter"; Allegations of Financing Wars; Emergence of Russia-China Pakistan axis.
 India As A Leader Of Global South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The concept of the Global South can be traced back to the Brandt Report of 1980. ▶ India's 5 pillared approach for multilateral forums: Samman, Samvad, Sahyog, Shant and Samridhi.
 India as a Global Unifier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The theme for India's G20 Presidency is "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam." ▶ India a global unifier: Mission LiFE, ISA, GBA, VOSS.
 India's Development Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ India's development cooperation: Grant-in-aid, line of credit; South-South cooperation; Development Partnership Administration (DPA). ▶ Efforts by India in development cooperation: IREC Programme, India Aid Mission, NEST division, better quality germplasm provided to Ethiopia.









 <p>Geopolitical Significance Of Ports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Strategically located Ports: Agalega Islands (Mauritius); Sittwe port (Myanmar); Duqm Port (Oman). ▶ Challenges: String of pearls (China), Hmabantota (China's presence); piracy; Limited financial resources.
 <p>Crude Oil: Strategic Tool</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ India is 3rd largest consumer of oil; India is world's 4th largest refiner, 6th largest importer of petroleum products, and 7th largest exporter of petroleum products. ▶ India's Initiative: Strategic Petroleum Reserves Programme, National Policy on Biofuel, HELP.
 <p>India And G20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Significance of G20 Presidency for India: Showcase Leadership (GBA); Voice of the Global South (AU becoming a permanent member of the G20); Economic opportunities (IMEC); Expand India's footprint; Build trust (Consensus on Ukraine issue); Steered global agenda.
 <p>IMEC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ IMEC includes rail, ship-to-rail, and road routes across two corridors: East corridor links India to Arabian Gulf; northern connect; It forms part of the PGII. ▶ Significance of IMEC: Trade facilitation and accessibility will reduce trade costs; Enhanced regional connectivity; Will integrate economies in India.
 <p>Au: A Permanent Member Of The G20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Significance: For the G20--Utilize Africa's Potential, Boost G20's credibility, Reinvent G20's image; For India-- Voice of global south; Align with India's aspiration; Permanent seat in UNSC; Resource diversification; For Africa--Inclusivity, Correcting imbalance, Signal toward Growth of Africa. ▶ India's effort: PANEP, India Africa Forum Summit, ITEC, AAGC.
 <p>Expansion Of Brics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Significance: Shaping a multipolar world; Expand the group's footprint in the new regions; Increased influence in the global economy; Push towards de-dollarization. ▶ Issues in Expansion of BRICS: Different levels of development; China's move to increase its sphere of influence; Vast internal differences among members.
 <p>India-Indo-Pacific</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 50% of global trade and 40% of Oil passes through IP; India's 90% trade and 80% critical freight. ▶ India's Policy: Security Provider and First Responder; MDA, IMAC; Separate IPO under MEA, SAGAR
 <p>IPEF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ USA and other partner countries of the Indo-Pacific region in May 2022; ▶ Members: 14 partner countries including India: represent 40% of world GDP and 28% of global goods and services trade. ▶ USA and other partner countries of the Indo-Pacific region in May 2022; ▶ Members: 14 partner countries including India: represent 40% of world GDP and 28% of global goods and services trade.

 <p>QUAD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ It is a plurilateral framework comprising India, Australia, Japan, and the USA. ▶ Significance: India's active engagement in Indo-Pacific; Boost to Act East; Defence engagements; Diverse areas of cooperation.
 <p>India's Neighbourhood First Policy (Nfp)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Came around 2008. ▶ Significance: Strategic imperative (UNSC, IMF); Strengthen multilateralism (SAARC, BIMSTEC); Soft Power (Yoga); Regional stability and security (RATS).
 <p>China's Rise And Threats To India</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Threat: Chinese intrusion in Ladakh; CPEC; China's defence budget of \$222 billion Vs. India's \$75 billion; UFDW; widening trade deficit (\$99Bn); Hambantota Port. ▶ Mitigation: Standing up to Chinese military; IPOI; QUAD; banning TikTok; incorporating AU within G20; India's exercise of its soft power.
 <p>India-Nepal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ India is Nepal's largest trading partner, the top-source country for tourists. Bilateral trade: >US\$ 11 billion (2021-22) {increase of 41% from previous year}. ▶ Recent Initiatives: 6th India-Nepal Joint Commission meeting; Jayanagar (Bihar) to Kurtha (Nepal) rail link; Buddhist Vihara in Lumbini.
 <p>India-Bhutan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ India is Bhutan's top trade partner, favoring India's trade balance; Trade, Commerce, and Transit Agreement (2016) establishes a free trade regime. ▶ Cooperation: RuPay, and BHIM app in Bhutan, India-Bhutan SAT'; Bhutan's Gelephu Mindfulness City (connectivity); Tala (Hydropower); MTRAT, DANTAK (security).
 <p>Taliban Regime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Relations post 2021: India does not recognise Taliban regime; Technical Mission in Kabul; ICCR scholarship scheme. ▶ Significance: Gateway to Central Asia; Stability could pave way for TAPI pipeline; Stability important to fight Pakistan based terrorist group.
 <p>INDIA-MALDIVES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ India emerged as Maldives' largest trade partner (2023). Bilateral trade: US\$ 548 million (2023). ▶ Significance: Member of India's Neighbourhood First Policy & SAGAR; 50% India's external trade and 80% energy imports transit through SLOCs; Maldives is positioned like a 'toll gate'.
 <p>Indian Ocean Rim Association's (Iora)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ About: Established in 1997, to strengthen regional cooperation and sustainable development within IOR; Areas: maritime safety and security; fisheries; 'IORA's outlook on Indo pacific' ▶ Significance: 1/3rd of world's population; 95% of India's trade by volume and 68% of trade by value is moved through sea via Indian Ocean; About 250 million people live within 50 Km of coast;

 <p>BIMSTEC CHARTER</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ About BIMSTEC: Established in 1997; Members: Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan. ▶ Charter: Foundational document that outlines the goals, principles, and structure; came into force on 20th May.
 <p>SASEC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ About: Established in 2001; ADB serves as secretariat; Members: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka. ▶ Focus area: Transport, trade facilitation, energy, and economic corridor development.
 <p>Abraham Accords</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ About: Collective agreement between US, UAE and Israel (signed in September 2020); later extended to Sudan, Bahrain and Morocco ▶ Significance: Prevents conflict in the Persian Gulf; Solution to Israel-Palestine issue; Increase in trade among countries; religious integration; Prosperity Green & Blue agreement; First normalization of ties between Israel and an Arab country since Jordan in 1994.
 <p>Israel-Hamas War</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Impact: Strengthen Hamas and weaken Palestinian Authority's, Regional instability, Economic (Escalate oil price as OPEC constitutes ~32% of global oil production). ▶ Measures: Immediate" cease-fire in Gaza; release of all hostages; expand the flow of humanitarian assistance.
 <p>Nagorno-Karabakh Region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Azerbaijan Have Regained Full Control Over The Region. ▶ War: First War In 1988. 2nd War In 2020. ▶ India's Stand: India Stated That Any Lasting Resolution Of The Conflict Can Only Be Achieved Peacefully Through Diplomatic Negotiations.
 <p>India-Israel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ India is Israel's second-largest trading partner in Asia and the seventh-largest globally; Trade in diamonds constitutes close to 50% of bilateral trade. ▶ Significance: counterterrorism and intelligence sharing; Help in 1971 and Kargil War; Support's India's position on Kashmir; UNSC support for permanent seat and IMEC corridor.
 <p>India-Uae</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ UAE signed a BIT; CEPA council; strategic relations 2015. ▶ Convergence: UAE is India's third largest trading partner (2022-23) and second-largest export destination, UAE's investment in India is around US\$ 20-21 Bn; BRICS, I2U2; 3.5 million Indian diasporas, IMEC, ISRO and the UAE Space Agency exploration and use of outer space.

 <p>India-Saudi Arabia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Trade 4.53% of India's total trade; imports 11.4% Saudi oil imported; Expedite implementation of \$50-billion West Coast refinery project. ▶ Significance: Look West policy+ IMEC; supports India in UNSC reforms; expedite GCC reforms; diaspora: 2.4 million; Mecca & Medina the holiest sites in Islam connect the Islamic world.
 <p>India-GCC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ About: Saudi Arabia, UAE, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain; contribute almost 35% of India's oil imports and 70% of gas imports; ▶ India's largest block trading partner, with bilateral trade close to US\$ 184 Bn
 <p>India-Central Asia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ About: 5 land-locked countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan; Trade of goods, ideas and thoughts over the Silk Road from 3rd BC to 15th AD. ▶ Significance: Turkmenistan 4th largest gas reserve; an answer to China's String; Peace and security in CAR linked to peace in Afghanistan.
 <p>South China Sea</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Significance: 60% of the global trade passes through this sea. Nearly 55% of India's trade with the Indo-Pacific region passes through these waters; ONGC-VL exploring oil reserves; Fishing grounds; Hosts numerous uninhabited islands.
 <p>India-US</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Bilateral trade: \$118.42 billion; USA is India's Second largest trading partner after China (2023-24). ▶ Convergence: UN, ASEAN, G-20, IMF, QUAD, I2U2, Summit for Democracy; India-U.S. Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X), signing of LEMOA, BECA (Defence); iCET; NISAR; ISA, CDRI
 <p>INDIA-EU</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Bilateral trade: \$135 billion (2022-23); one of India's largest sources of FDI (\$107b). ▶ Cooperation: EU is 2nd largest destination for Indian exports; Defends multilateralism and rule-based order; EU's Indo-Pacific strategy align with India; Clean Energy and Climate Partnership. ▶ Concern: Indian companies face issues of non-tariff barriers; EU demands stronger IPR regime; India accounts for only 2.2% of EU total trade whereas China's Share is 14.6%.
 <p>India-Russia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Bilateral trade: \$65 billion (2023-24) {Target was \$30b by 2025}; Target of increasing bilateral trade to \$ 100 Bn (by 2030). ▶ Significance: Balancing China; S-400 missile system, INS Vikramaditya; Russia's Far East & Arctic zone of the Russian Federation; Both calls for early finalization of the CCIT at UN.
 <p>India-France</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Strategic Partnership in 1998; France is among the top 11 foreign. ▶ Convergence: Rafale aircraft purchases and the P-75 Scorpene Project; TRISHNA and Megha-Tropiques satellite; Both converge in Indo-Pacific region.

 India-Uk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' in 2021; Bilateral trade stood at £36.3 billion during FY 2022-23. ▶ Significance: Signing of 2030 Roadmap for India-UK Future Relations in 2022; 2+2 mechanism.; Balance China (Aukus); Over 600 Indian diaspora-owned companies and £1bn+ paid corporation tax.
 India Nordic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland; Combined GDP is over \$1.6 trillion, with a per capita income of around \$54,000; ▶ India's exports to Nordic region have grown over 39% from 2018-19 to 2022-23. ▶ Convergence: Blue economy; India- Nordic Summit; Arctic Summit; Support India for UNSC and NSG.
 India- Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Bilateral trade: \$27 billion; India was Australia's 9th largest trading partner, and Australia was India's 13th largest trading partner. ▶ Significance: Elevated to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2020), 2+2 dialogue; India a top-tier security partner; Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation and Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement; SCRI; India is the second largest migrant group in Australia.
 India-Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Indian investments in Africa reached \$98 billion in 2023, with trade totalling \$100 billion; India is the fifth-biggest investor in Africa; The 10 guiding principles outlined by Indian PM. ▶ Significance: Instability in Horn of Africa region; Chinese bases like in Djibouti; 60 per cent under the age of 25; Africa holds 30% of global mineral; South-South Cooperation.
 India-Mauritius	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Indian origin people comprise nearly 70% of the island's population; CECPA signed in 2011; Wakashio Accident. ▶ Convergence: Signed DTAA; Cumulative FDI worth USD 161 billion; India has been among the largest trading partners of Mauritius; India, supplied helicopters, ships, aircraft; The upgraded airstrip on Agaléga Island; Mauritius the pivot of India's island policy.
 BRI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ China-led infrastructure project launched in 2013. ▶ India's concerns: violates India's sovereignty; China's stature and undermine India's influence over smaller South Asian countries
 CPEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 3,000-km-long route of infrastructure projects connecting China's northwest Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and the Gwadar Port ▶ It passes through the Indian territory of Gilgit Baltistan.
 NATO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Sweden has joined NATO as its 32nd member. ▶ Achievements: Maintained tensed peace during cold war; Founding Act; Publicly denounced Russian actions in Ukraine; NATO contributes to safe and secure Mediterranean Sea.

 AUKUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ About: Announced in 2021; three-way strategic defence alliance between Australia, the UK and US; ▶ Aim: To boost defense capabilities, accelerate technological integration, and expand the industrial capacity; Exchange of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information Agreement (ENNPIA) was signed in 2021.
 India And Multilateral Development Banks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ MDBs are international financial institutions that provide financial and technical assistance to developing countries. E.g., WB Groups, ADB, etc. ▶ Need for reforms: Reflect present need; greater voting power for developing countries; leverage private sector mobilisation.
 UNSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ India is a founding member of UN and has served as a non-permanent member of UNSC for 8 terms. ▶ India's Contribution in UNSC: India chaired the Taliban and Libya sanctions committees; formulation of UDHR; raise apartheid issue at UN; Largest UNPKF; instrumental in establishing G77 Drafting of CCIT.
 UNHRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ It's made up of 47 States; Equitable geographical distribution of seats; Establish international commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions investigating human rights violations; India was re-elected to the UNHRC (2022-24) for a 6th term. ▶ Significance: Platform for Dialogue among states with regard to human rights issue; Special procedures to monitor human rights; Universal Periodic Review; Encourages Civil Society Participation.
 UN PEACEKEEPING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Principles: Consent of the parties, Impartiality and Non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate. ▶ India's contribution to UN Peacekeeping: India has contributed services of ~2, 87,000 troops; Trust Fund on sexual exploitation and abuse contribution; 'Group of Friends' launched by India.
 IMO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ United Nations specialized agency established in 1948. ▶ Significance: Prevention of pollution from ships; Protecting marine biodiversity; Address noise pollution; Climate change mitigation; Addresses dumping of wastes at sea; SOLAS, Djibouti Code of Conduct.
 UNCAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ About: It entered into force in 2005; Only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument. ▶ 5 main areas: Establishment of anticorruption bodies; States are obliged to establish some offences; States bound to render mutual legal assistance; Asset recovery, and technical assistance and information exchange.
 Genocide Convention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948. ▶ It codified the crime of genocide for the first time; It was also the first human rights treaty adopted by the UN General Assembly. ▶ India has signed the treaty.



7. PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS 2013-2023 (SYLLABUS-WISE)

India and its neighborhood- relations

- Indian is an old age friend of Sri Lanka. Discuss India's role in the recent crisis in Srilanka in the light of the precedent statement. (2022)
- Do you think BIMSTEC is a parallel organization like SAARC? What are the similarities and dissimilarities between the two? How Indian foreign policy objectives realized by forming a new organization? (2022)
- 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. (2018)
- '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)
- The question of India's Energy Security Constitutes the most important part of India's economic progress. Analyse India's energy policy cooperation with West Asian countries. (2017)
- Evaluate the economic and strategic dimensions of India's Look East Policy in the context of the post Cold War international scenario. (2016)
- "Increasing crossborder terrorist attacks in India and growing interference in the internal affairs of several memberstates by Pakistan are not conducive for the future of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation)." Explain with suitable examples. (2016)
- Project 'Mausam' is considered a unique foreign policy initiative of Indian Government to improve relationship with its neighbours. Does the project have a strategic dimension? Discuss. (2015)
- 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)
- 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 over flight throughout the region. In this context, discuss the bilateral issues between India and China. (2014)
- In respect of India-Sri Lanka relations, discuss how domestic factors influence foreign policy. (2013)
- What is meant by Gujral doctrine? Does it have any relevance today? Discuss. (2013)

Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests

- "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. (2023)
- How will I2U2 grouping transform India's position in global politics? (2022)
- "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.(2021)
- 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. (2019)
- "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. (2019)
- 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)
- "India's relations with Israel have, of late, acquired a depth and diversity, which cannot be rolled back." Discuss. (2018)
- In what ways would the ongoing U.S-Iran Nuclear Pact Controversy affect the national interest of India? How should India respond to this situation? (2018)
- Increasing interest of India in Africa has its pro and cons. Critically examine. (2015)



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

Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests

- '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. (2023)
- Russia and Ukraine war had been going on for the last seven months. What ethical issues are crucial to consider while launching the war and its continuation so far? Illustrate with justification the ethical issues involved in the given state of affairs? (2022)
- 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. (2021)
- "The USA is facing an existential threat in the form of a China, that is much more challenging than the erstwhile Soviet Union." Explain. (2021)
- 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? (2014)
- The proposed withdrawal of 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. (2013)
- 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)
- 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? (2013)
- Discuss the political developments in Maldives in the last two years. Should they be of any cause of concern to India? (2013)

Indian Diaspora

- Indian diaspora has scaled new heights in the West. Describe its economic and political benefits for India. (2023)
- 'Indian diaspora has a decisive role to play in the politics and economy of America and European Countries'. Comment with examples. (2020)
- Indian Diaspora has an important role to play in South East Asian countries economy and society. Appraise the role of Indian Diaspora in South-East Asia in this context. (2017)



Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.


- '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. (2023)
- 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)
- Critically examine the aims and objectives of SCO. What importance does it hold for India? (2021)
- Critically examine the role of WHO in providing global health security during the COVID-19 pandemic. (2020)
- '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'. (2020)
- What are the key areas of reform if the WTO has to survive in the present context of 'Trade War', especially keeping in mind the interest of India? (2018)
- What are the main functions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)? Explain different functional commissions attached to it. (2017)
- What are the aims and objectives of the McBride Commission of the UNESCO? What is India's position on these? (2016)

- “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 seem doomed due to differences between the developed and the developing countries.” Discuss in the Indian perspective. (2016)
- Discuss the impediments India is facing in its pursuit of a permanent seat in UN Security Council. (2015)
- India has recently signed to become founding member of 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. (2014)
- WTO is an important international institution where decisions taken affect countries in a profound manner. What is the mandate of WTO and how binding are their decisions? Critically analyse India’s stand on the latest round of talks on Food security. (2014)
- 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. (2014)
- The World Bank and the IMF, collectively known as the Bretton Woods Institutions, are the two inter-governmental 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. (2013)

Miscellaneous

- “The long-sustained image of India as a leader of the oppressed and marginalised Nations has disappeared on account of its new found role in the emerging global order” Elaborate (2019)

 <p>Previous Year Questions</p>	<p>Scan the QR code to download the soft copy of syllabus-wise segregated PYQs from 2013-2023 (International Relations).</p>	
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