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A message from OnlyIAS team

Dear aspirants,

OnlyIAS team is ecstatic to present this book to you. Many aspirants struggle with International Relations in PSIR because, this portion is specifically so dynamic that it needs articulation of so many things at a time on real time basis.

Currently the trend of questions asked in UPSC is more applied, where we requires a skill of integration, articulation, interconnection between theories and contemporary issues. We need to link theoretical aspects with dynamic matter of the subject. Political science now should not be treated just as a theoretical discipline rather it has to be treated as applied discipline and that approach needs to be used while studying and also in writing answers in exam to score high.

We always think from students perspective and try to understand what are the issues they are facing, or what other possible issues they may face during preparation of such a dynamic section. Every day there is something new under the heading of International Relations. Adding to its complexities, different scholars have to say something about various issues. Also there is continues change of stance in many cases by many experts, governments and countries.

And putting all these in limited words and to remember it so that it can be reflected in our PSIR answers becomes relatively very tough. These handouts will be your saviour in IR section. These handouts are designed in such a way that, topics of the syllabus are covered in a manner which keeps eye on trend and pattern of UPSC papers, previous year questions, current happenings, what scholars have to say about it, relevant data, important dimensions of that issue and relevant quotes wherever needed.

This is very humble attempt from our team to help you better understand IR and to make it easy for you to score good in such dynamic and marks fetching section. We hope you enjoy reading this and we wish that this gift from us helps you do better in exam. OnlyIAS team wishes you very ALL THE BEST for UPSC CSE Mains 2022.

Sumit Rewri and team

Special congratulatory note from OnlyIAS team

Very warm congratulations from the OnlyIAS team to our students who got selected in UPSC CSE 2021. Students of PSIR Daily Mains Answer Writing Program for 2021, who got selected.

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It is the moment of joy for our team and this joy is brought by our students who made us proud.

Be it content, be it test series, video or be it a copy evaluation. While delivering any of these entity our team is always inspired to do it passionately eyeing a constant dream and pursuit of the success of our students.






This book is outcome of our team's collective and passionate effort to bring the best for our students so that every year our student could make us proud by securing their ranks in the final list of UPSC.

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Wish you all the best.



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INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Syllabus:

- **Indian Foreign Policy:** Determinants of foreign policy; institutions of policy-making; continuity and change.

Previous year questions on the topic

1. Identify the elements of change in India's foreign policy. (2013)
2. "Federal units are critical in the making of India's foreign policy." Examine this statement with reference to the role of West Bengal vis-à-vis Bangladesh. (15 marks)
3. The Ministry of External Affairs is losing its importance in the making of India's foreign policy with the parallel rise of the P.M.O. Explain. (20 marks)
4. "Some of the major changes that occurred in India's foreign policy after the Sino – India war in 1962 were within the larger framework of continuity." Discuss. (15 marks)
5. The social structure of a country influences its foreign policy-making. How does the social structure of India impact the course and direction of its foreign policy?
6. How does the Parliament determine and influence the making of India's foreign policy?
7. 'Economic interest has emerged as the main component of India's foreign policy'. Discuss the statement in the light of India's initiatives to improve relations with China, Japan and the Central Asian republics.
8. Vision of a new world order has emerged as the major objective of India's foreign policy. Discuss the policy initiative taken by India in this regard and challenges faced by it.
9. Which determinant factors play an important role in making India's foreign policy? Illustrate with examples.
10. Examine the Indian National Movement and geographical location of India as determinants of India's foreign policy.
11. Do you agree with the view that Indian foreign policy is increasingly being shaped by the Neoliberal outlook? Elaborate. (150 words)
12. "India is often said to have a rich strategic culture." Discuss.
13. "India's current foreign policy marks significant qualitative shifts from that of the previous regimes." Discuss.
14. Discuss the role of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) in promoting India's soft power abroad.
15. Examine the role of 'parliamentary diplomacy' in India's foreign policy. 10 marks
16. Examine the increasing significance of maritime security in India's foreign policy. 20 marks
17. Describe the structure and function of the National Security Council of India. What role does it play in the formulation of Indian foreign policy?

Some important quotes:

- "America has no permanent friends or enemies, only interests"
— **Henry Kissinger**
- "A country that demands moral perfection in its foreign policy will achieve neither perfection nor security"
— **Henry Kissinger**

- **If the world is different, we need to think, talk and engage accordingly. Falling back to the past is unlikely to help with the future. – MEA S. Jaishankar**
- **“Now the times have changed; the first thing is that we no longer live in a bipolar world. The world is inter-connected and inter-dependent. You will have to connect with everybody at the same time. Even if there are two opposing countries, they will have to be friends.”- Narendra Modi**
- **The foreign policy is not about changing mindsets. Foreign policy is about finding the common meeting points. -Narendra Modi**
- **"The objectives of our foreign policy are the preservation of world peace and the enlargement of human freedom". Pt. Nehru**
- **“Foreign policy is an instrument available to a country to protect and promote its national interests. There is broad agreement on the concept of national interest, namely that it comprises the obligation to defend the country’s national security, to maximize economic benefits for its citizens from international trade and commerce, as also to enhance the effectiveness of its ‘soft power’ through propagation of its core cultural assets”- Chinmaya R. Gharekhan**

WHAT IS FOREIGN POLICY?

- A country’s foreign policy includes all of the policies it develops to pursue its national interests as it interacts with other countries.
- A foreign policy is a set of pre-established strategies designed and implemented systematically to secure goals of national interest by managing a country’s relationships with other nations.
- **“Foreign policy involves the formulation and implementation of a group of principles which shape the behaviour pattern of a state while negotiating with (contacting) other states to protect or further its vital interests” - C.C Rodee**
- Former National Security Adviser & Foreign Secretary **Shivshankar Menon** defines Foreign Policy as **‘Minimaxing’** i.e. minimizing risks and maximizing benefits.
- According to **Alexander Wendt**, constructivism explains how the past influences states’ foreign policy goals by arguing that it plays a role in socially constructing states’ identities. And as **Ted Hopf** noted, these identities mould states’ interests and whether they cooperate or perceive other states as threatening, and are thus the determinants of interaction

OBJECTIVE OF INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

- **The preservation of India’s territorial integrity and independence of foreign policy**
 - ✓ The territorial integrity and protection of national boundaries from foreign aggression is the core interest of a nation.
 - ✓ India had gained a hard earned independence from foreign rule after long time. Thus, it was natural for her to give due emphasis on the independence of foreign policy.
- **Promoting international peace and security**
 - ✓ India as a ‘newly independent and developing country rightly realized that international peace and development are correlated
 - ✓ Her emphasis on disarmament and the policy of keeping away from the military alliances is intended to promote global peace.
- **Economic development of India**
 - ✓ Fast development of the country was the fundamental requirement of India at the time of independence. It was also required to strengthen the democracy and freedom in the country

- ✓ In order to gain financial resources and technology from both blocks and to concentrate her energy on the development, India opted away from the power block politics, which was the defining feature of cold war international politics

DETERMINANTS OF INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

- Foreign policy of any country is not determined by any single factor but multiple factors. This interplay between different factors determine the policies and principles in foreign policy and bring continuity and change in policies.
- India's foreign policy is shaped by five broad factors viz. geography; history and strategic culture; India's requirements and goals; global and regional challenges; and domestic social and political structure.

HISTORY AND CULTURE-

- India's foreign policy is largely influenced by Kautailya's Realpolitik as well as Buddha's and Gandhi's idealism and pacifism. India's policy towards Pakistan reflects India's realpolitik whereas India's stand on various issues like Israeli-Palestine conflict, Nuclear Disarmament, **Neighbourhood First Policy** etc highlight idealism and pacifism.
- **India's freedom struggle**: Another important determinant is India's freedom struggle. Bitter experience of colonialism, imperialism, racial discrimination and economic drain pushed India towards Non-Alignment post-Independence.
 1. The value of **ahimsa** and morality led India to **call for nuclear disarmament**. India's historically constructed foreign policy goals of being a **moralpolitik** great power and maintaining **purna swaraj** can clearly be seen in its response to nuclear proliferation
 2. **Upinder Singh** argues that by connecting the independence movement with "the ancient Indian intellectual and philosophic tradition, Gandhi created the impression that non-violence was rooted in a unique way in the Indian psyche". This created the concept of ahimsa, or non-violence, that remains an influence on Indian foreign policy.
 3. **India's decision not to partner with foreign governments** and to develop nuclear capabilities reflect its foreign policy goal of maintaining **purna swaraj through non-alignment** and modernisation.
- **India's stance against Apartheid** in South Africa and support for decolonialization and anti-imperialism is derived from this experience and Gandhian idealism
- Further, the **defining characteristics of India's foreign policy** in the first few decades after Independence such as non-alignment, anti-colonialism, anti-racism, non-violence, disarmament, and peace-making were also influenced by culture of Pacifism and Gandhian nonviolence.
- The freedom struggle of India was not only largely non-violent but also contained a high degree of idealism. That explains why India, even after it became independent, did not nurse the bitterness against former colonial rulers like other countries which achieved independence. The fact that **India joined the Commonwealth of nations** is proof of the absence of that bitterness.
- Also, India's desire to protect its sovereignty and integrity prevented it from bandwagoning with any superpower and joining any bloc during cold war. This **realism and pragmatism** were also reflected in India's actions in Goa (1960) and Bangladesh (1971).
- The experiences of past also have bearings on present bilateral relations. For example, India's perception of China and Pakistan perception of India are deeply impacted by wars of 1962 and 1971 respectively.
 - However, the **historical animosity** between 2 countries can be overcome through diplomacy and negotiations.
 - For example, unification of East and West Germany and consolidation of EU despite experiences of 2 World Wars and Cold war.
 - Similarly, India and China have also agreed during Wuhan Summit to not let differences to turn into disputes.

GEOGRAPHY

- **Napoleon** once stated that any country's foreign policy is determined by its geography. Country's size, location, topography etc. are basic determinants of any country's foreign policy. In 1903 **Lord Curzon**, the then Governor General of India, predicted that the geographical position of India would more and more push it into the forefront of international affairs. In 1948 **Nehru** spoke of India as the pivotal centre of South, South-East, and Western Asia.
- Suitable geographical factors can help and encourage the nation to adopt and pursue higher goals. The **role played by English Channel in the development of Britain** as a major naval power and consequently as an imperial power is well known.
- Historically, protected by the seas to the south, Himalayas to the north, thick forests to the east and deserts to the west, India was a **self-contained, self-satisfied** and rich civilization. Thus, India was never an aggressive power since it had nothing to gain by making forays beyond its natural frontiers. Thus, Indians developed a **defensive mindset**. They did not craft a strategy to tackle foreign threats.
- The **Mackinder-Mahan debate** is often quoted to highlight importance of geography in foreign policy. **Alfred T. Mahan** argued about key role played by seas and **naval power** in emergence of Britishers as world power.
- On the other hand, **Mackinder** focused on land power. According to his '**Heartland**' theory, those who control Eurasia will control the world. In this context India is strategically located in the heart of Asia.
- India is very strategically located in the **heart of Asia** and **dominates the Indian Ocean**, which is named after India. The main **sea lines of communication** in the Indian Ocean pass very close to India. The **Persian Gulf**, which is the principal source of exportable global oil and gas, is India's neighbour. Further, India has also assumed central position in emerging construct of Indo-Pacific.
- In context of rise of China and its '**String of Pearls**' strategy of India's encirclement, India is developing **Chabahar port in Iran**, secured access to **Duqm port in Oman** for military and logistics purpose and signed agreement with Indonesia for access to **Sabang port**. India has also established **tri service command in Andaman and Nicobar Islands**.
- However, India's geography also poses **challenges** in India's foreign policy.
 - First, today's political borders of South Asia are artificial. **India has been divided in the past**, but never so irrationally as it has been since 1947. India's neighbours want to keep their distance from India in order to assert and preserve their sovereignty. Thus, they deliberately downplay their interdependence, complementarities and commonalities with India.
 - Secondly, **terrorism, fundamentalism, piracy and narcotics production** are rampant in areas that surround India.
- According to **Shivshankar Menon**, political division of south Asia is artificial. Hence the borders have not been scientifically demarcated and the border conflicts remains unresolved. Further, due to lack of consolidation of national identity, **nations are more sensitive about territorial disputes**. This lead to politicization of border issue as seen between India and Pakistan and recently between India and Nepal. Similarly, **many river water sharing agreements are pending due o politicization**. The **Teesta water issue** between India and Bangladesh is case in point.

INDIA'S REQUIREMENT AND GOALS

- The primary task of India's foreign policy is to ensure country's **security and territorial integrity, and a peaceful external environment** for India. Foreign policy is an integral and critical element of an overall strategy to serve national goals and priorities including social and economic development, and defence preparedness.
- India's policy of **non-alignment** was in consonance with **socialistic model** of development adopted by India. However, India also cooperated with other countries for its own economic growth. **For example**, India cooperated with the US for green revolution whereas India adopted 5-year plan from USSR.
- The demand for **New International Economic Order** was also based on desire of developing third world countries to prevent exploitation by MNCs and to promote equitable trade.
- Globalization has given rise to '**complex interdependence**' where economic force has gained prominence over military force as chief policy instrument. As per **Keohane and Nye**, it is a **love-hate relationship** where countries with political differences are forced to cooperate due to economic interdependence.

- **Economic liberalization** has raised the stakes and the influence of businessmen, industrialists and entrepreneurs in foreign affairs. Foreign policy has to promote trade, create jobs, bring in needed civilian and defence technologies and promote inward as well as outward investments. It also has to ensure India's energy security, since India depends hugely on imported oil, gas and coal, as well as many other raw materials and natural resources.
- Further, energy security and enhanced trade and commerce are chief determinant of India's '**Look West policy**' and '**Act East Policy**' respectively.
- Millions of Indians travel abroad for business, education or tourism. An equally large number of Indian citizens and people of Indian origin live and work abroad. Looking after the welfare of all these groups of Indians is a very important task of Indian foreign policy.
- The **level of economic development** also determines the scope of relations that a nation wishes to establish with other nations. The **military preparedness and military capability of a nation** is again directly related to the economic development and industrialization.

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL CHALLENGES

- Foreign policy is not static but dynamic concept. It involves continuity as well as change in order to adapt changing global and regional geopolitics as well as geo-economics. The only constant factor is protection and promotion of National Interests which itself is dynamic concept. According to **Morgenthau**, NI is static as well as dynamic.
- India's relationship with Pakistan and China and Cold war geopolitics pushed India towards non-alignment foreign policy. India's independence to avoid band-wagoning with superpowers and protect its independence is also a determining factor for Non-alignment. Further, avoiding conflict with China was determining factor in **Panchsheel**. However, **India signed Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation** with USSR in 1971 in context of Bangladesh war.
- Even in **Middle East politics** India's **policy of balancing** is to protect itself from sectarian conflict of Shia-Sunni and ensure energy security.
- According to **Henry Kissinger**, nations have no permanent friends or enemies, only permanent interests. Broadly this holds true for India too. India's relationships and priorities have changed over time. For example, **during the Cold War**, India's interests were best served through a close relationship with the Soviet Union, which gave India much needed political and diplomatic support on key issues in the UN, as well as valuable economic and defence assistance.
- **Post-cold war**, India's foreign policy goal was to promote its **economic development and multilateralism**. India's membership of RIC and BRICS grouping was aimed at hedging against negative consequences of the US hegemony.
- Today, however, India and the US have, as **PM Modi** put it, "**overcome the hesitations of history,**" and there is a much greater congruence of interests. Similarly, India-Japan relations that remained low-key and insubstantial for many decades are now very vibrant and dynamic.
- Other examples are the **Commonwealth, NAM and the G-77**, all of which were important for India in the early decades after Independence but no longer today, whereas the Persian Gulf region and ASEAN, which earlier occupied a minor place in India's foreign policy, are now extremely high priority regions.
- **The non-alignment** has given way to '**strategic autonomy**' in post-cold war. This means resisting pressures to join rival camps and alliances and examining foreign policy options on **merit**. Various factors, including our sense of pride and self-worth based on a rich heritage of civilization and culture, our past achievements, and our multi-faceted successes as an independent nation, impel Indians to cherish strategic autonomy. Even **MEA S. Jaishankar** has commented that '**Age of an alliances is over and India will go for issue-based partnerships.**'
- At present, **Global power equations** are changing. The relative weight of the US has diminished and it is less self-assured and more inward looking as seen. Europe is grappling with Brexit, the rise of right-wing nationalism, and a flood of immigrants. China is the new pretender that relentlessly pursues its '**China Dream**' or '**Middle Kingdom complex**', and eventually global, domination. Russia has regained much of its self-confidence and seeks to reclaim the Soviet Union's erstwhile global stature. The entire region from Pakistan to Morocco is in upheaval, with rampaging terrorism, fundamentalism, sharp regional rivalries, as well as many so-called '**failed**' and '**failing**' states.

- According to **Ambassador Rajiv Sikri**, in this changing landscape, a more self-confident and ambitious India is seeking to develop a new paradigm for India's foreign policy where India would not be a mere 'balancer' or 'swing state' but a 'leading state' that seeks a place at the global high table. He further suggests that as many other countries are working to keep India down, India must leverage its strengths have diversified foreign policy options, and remain alert and flexible.
- **At present**, India has assumed central position in emerging construct of Indo-Pacific due to expansionist China. India is also an important member of QUAD grouping to ensure that based order in the region. Further, India's attempts at FATF to blacklist Pakistan is to penalize it for terrorism financing. India's leadership at WTO is to protect interests of developing countries in trade in goods and services and agriculture.
- **At global level**, India is at forefront for adaptation of Comprehensive convention on terrorism to deal with challenge of terror. India has also established International solar alliance to protect itself from climate change.
- As pointed out by **Shivashankar Menon**, Foreign policy is about 'Maximizing'. Thus, India's foreign policy has also changed from time to time to protect itself from regional and global challenges.
- **COVID-19 diplomacy and Delta variant disruption**: India began the year on a diplomatic high- shipping vaccines around the world, eventually, more than 100 million doses to nearly 100 countries under a Vaccine Maitri programme, but as the COVID-19 virus mutated, India became the centre of the world's concern, and the government had to cancel all plans to export both medicines and vaccines.
- **Russia-NATO tensions**: Tensions between Russia and NATO countries have risen sharply at the end of the year over Russian troops along the border with Ukraine, and although US President Joseph Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin met once, and spoke a number of times in 2021, tensions are unresolved and likely to spill over into 2022.
 - ✓ India, which did not oppose the Russian takeover of Crimea in 2014, is now facing a tough tightrope over the US sanctions over Crimea- and the US's CAATSA law that threatened financial and visa sanctions against big defence deals with Russia.
- **Taliban takeover Afghanistan**: In February, a virtual summit between Prime Minister Modi and Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani saw India reaffirm its role as a development partner to Afghanistan and committed to ensuring a peaceful Afghanistan.
 - ✓ But events overtook all plans- Ghani fled Kabul as the Taliban took over the country, aided by Pakistan- and the U.S. and its allies all left.
 - ✓ In 2022, PM Modi invited Central Asian leaders to the Republic Day celebrations, and it remains to be seen if India can gain a foothold on Afghanistan's future along with the other countries in the western neighbourhood.

DOMESTIC SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

- According to **Nehru**, foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy. Foreign policy of any country is aimed at achieving domestic political, economic and social goals at international level.
- **Impact of social structure-**
 - Shared ethnicity, culture, religion and race can be source of cooperation as well as conflict. While in Europe, it has acted as binding agent in post-world war 2, in south Asia, it is source of conflict. As the partition of subcontinent was artificial and product of colonialism, nationalism is not consolidated in these countries and ethnic conflicts are common between as well as within states.
 - **For example**, the conflict between India and Pakistan is product of identity crisis. **Stephen P. Cohen** calls it 'paired minority conflict.' Similarly, the **Madhesi issue and Tamil issue** have led to deterioration of India-Nepal and India-Srilanka relations respectively.
 - Further, due to the **homogenization** brought by **globalization**, events happening in one part of the world has impact on other parts also. **For example**, human rights movement which originated in the West has also impacted non-western world.
- **Impact of political culture-**
 - As per **democratic peace theory** of **Michael Doyle**, 2 countries having democratic political structure never go to war. He also gives theory of '**zone of peace**'. It is a region where countries have democratic political system. The reason for this is shared values between democracies, separation of powers between institutions at domestic level and public pressure to settle dispute by negotiations.

- **For example**, during **3 wars between India and Pakistan** (1948, 1965, 1971), the Pakistani military was in charge of Pakistan's foreign policy.
- However, it must also be noted that though there is no empirical evidence of war between democracies, democracy can't always ensure cooperative and peaceful relationship. **For example**, India has strained relationship with Nepal despite Nepal adopting democracy.
- **Secondly**, any international agreement is **negotiated at 2 levels**. Firstly, it is negotiated between countries and secondly, it is negotiated at domestic level. Without ratification at domestic level, no international agreement can come into force. **For example**, India has not signed RCEP due to opposition at domestic level.
- **Thirdly**, political **ideology of ruling party and elites** also plays an important role. Ideological difference between capitalist USA and communist USSR was the basis of cold war.
- However, the role of ideology as a determinant of foreign policy should not be overemphasized. Often ideologies are used simply to obscure the real facts of a situation or ambitious rulers' real motives. Sometimes governments stand for certain ideas only to **command popular support**. The foreign policy of India and many other countries, despite ideological overtones, cannot be explained except in terms of **national interests**. **For example**, India's relations with Islamist countries in West Asia.

FEDERAL UNITS- PARADIPLMACY

- With **rise of regional parties and globalization**, states have come to play an increasingly influential international role. Some of the key areas of foreign policy engagement by Indian states include: foreign economic, resource management, environmental, and security concerns.
- Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal etc have regularly organized investor summits in order to gain foreign investment. The present government under '**competitive federalism**' has promoted greater role of states in foreign policy.
- New **State Division in MEA** was created to mainstream regional voices in foreign policy matters. However, involvement of states has remained **ad hoc and episodic**. This demands greater institutionalization and enhancing capacity of federal units to engage in diplomacy without compromising national interests.
- For paradiplomacy, the autonomous nature of sub-state units appears to be a precondition. Stefan Wolff enumerates **five elements of autonomy**: demographic distinctiveness of autonomous entity; devolution of power; legal entrenchment; limited external relation powers; and integrated mechanism. All of these elements are essential to make sub-state units autonomous, thereby allowing them to undertake paradiplomacy.
- Although paradiplomacy is not an essential attribute of **federalism**, the latter remains not only a key contributor but also a **determinant in the growth of paradiplomacy**.
 - ✓ The most important attribute of federalism—i.e., division of power between the Union and federating states/sub-units—provides an opportunity to the state governments to pursue paradiplomacy.
 - ✓ "**Sub-national actors**, such as states and provinces that have a formal legal personality, are more likely to engage in international activities designed to promote and protect local and international interests and prerogatives."
- On the other hand, states **pursue narrow regional and local agenda** which can be detrimental to overall National Interest. Competing political actors in these states often use these federal transboundary issues to influence New Delhi's policy preferences.
 - **For example**, West Bengal holds sway over issues of national strategic importance in India-Bangladesh relations, particularly issues of water-sharing, immigration, and border politics.
 - Similarly, political parties in Tamil Nadu have impacted India's relations with Sri-Lanka. **For example**, due to pressure from DMK and AIADMK, India voted against Sri-Lanka in UNHRC in 2013.

Apart from these 5, other factors such as environment protection, military power, quality of diplomacy etc also influence foreign policy of states.

Military Strength as Determinant of Foreign Policy

- The **core National Interest** of any country is sovereignty and territorial integrity. To protect these interest's military strength is essential.
- However, developing countries tend to use scarce resources on economic development rather than building defense capabilities. Countries in south Asia face '**Security Dilemma**' due to various factors like **artificial boundaries**, asymmetry in terms of economy, size etc. This was the main purpose behind Panchsheel and '**Hindi chini bhai bhai**'. However, diplomacy of appeasement couldn't prevent Indo-China war of 1962. Further, consistent threat posed by Pakistan also made it imperative for India to strengthen its defence capacity.
- **Military strength** is not only essential to win the war but also to prevent the war through deterrence. For example, **Mutual Assured Destruction doctrine** associated nuclear weapons has been credited by realist scholars for cold war remaining cold. Realist scholars like **Waltz** consider nuclear weapons as 'weapons of peace, and support gradual proliferation.
- Further, increasing military expenditure by one country can force other country to increase its own military expenditure or to form alliance with other countries. This gives **rise to trust deficit** and **security dilemma** as explained by **John Herz**. **For example**, military built-up by Germany gave rise to alliance between England and France.
- However, due to globalization and emergence of complex interdependence economic strength has gained prominence over military strength in foreign policies of many countries. **For examples**, despite geopolitical adversity, both China and Japan have signed RCEP.
- Liberal scholars like **Thomas Friedman** (**Golden Arches Theory**) and **Richard Rosecrance** (**Trading States**) also give importance to economy and interdependence over military strength.
- However, **complex interdependence theorists Keohane and Nye** have accepted the possibility of war between countries despite interdependence and highlighted importance of military power.
- Thus, both economic as well as military power are essential determinants of foreign policy of countries. At present, when geopolitics has gained prominence over geo-economics due to Chinese aggression, military capability has again become primary determinant of foreign policy of India.

Correlation does not imply causation.



Thomas Friedman:
No two countries with a
McDonald's have ever gone
to war since opening the
McDonald's.
(Golden Arches Theory of
Conflict Prevention)

INSTITUTIONS OF FOREIGN POLICY MAKING

- Foreign policy making is very complex phenomenon due to requirement of high level of sophistication, secrecy and long-term vision. Various institutions comprising of elected representatives, executive and bureaucrats are involved in Foreign policy making.
- With the rise of globalization and increasing interdependency of states and enlarging scope of foreign policy demand larger involvement of major organs of the government. Though, the **Ministry of External Affairs** is the pivotal player in managing India's external relations, other important agencies such as the Cabinet, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, National Security Council, Prime Minister's Office and Parliament also are contributing significantly for the planning and formulation of India's Foreign Policy.

PARLIAMENT

- "I believe that contacts among parliamentarians are the next best alternative to direct people-to-people contacts". --- **Barbara Prammer**
- India's Parliament has the power to legislate on foreign affairs. This authority includes legislation or amendment of any law for the successful implementation of international treaties, agreements and conventions.
- **Secondly**, as **government is accountable to Parliament**, it can seek information and clarification on policies and issues. By exercising budgetary control and passing necessary resolutions, Parliament can force the executive to act as per the will of the Government. Among its important oversight functions, Parliament has a Standing Committee on External Affairs and a Standing Committee on Defence, which grill the officials on issues

pertaining to foreign relations and external security. Parliament may also constitute ad hoc committees to look into specific issues.

- **Thirdly**, Parliament is also a chamber of deliberation where various policies and programmes of the government are deliberated upon. Thus, parliament also provides a platform to elected representatives to bring wider public attention towards foreign policy decisions of government and pressurize the government.
 - **For example**, India's nuclear cooperation agreement with the US was widely discussed in Parliament. Similarly, Nehru faced severe criticism in Parliament for his policy towards China.
- Parliament of some countries have created formal procedures aimed at avoiding confrontation and maintaining the tradition of national consensus in foreign policy matters.
 - **For example.** According to the Danish constitution, the Government must consult with the foreign affairs committee when matters are being prepared and before any decision of major importance is taken in foreign policy matters.
- Parliaments also play important role in **strengthening bilateral relations through inter-parliamentary relations**, delegation level visits etc. Indian **Parliamentary Delegations** are invited by the Parliaments of foreign countries to visit their countries as their guests on goodwill missions. Usually, it is on a reciprocal basis.
- On the other hand, as executive enjoys majority in parliament, it rarely holds the government accountable due to party politics. Further, various facts are withheld from parliamentarians due to national security implications. **For example**, the prices of Rafael Aircrafts were not disclosed due to security concerns.
- Secondly, as pointed out by former Vice President, **Hamid Ansari**, parliament has become 'Chambers of Anarchy' where debates are rare and informed debates are rarer. The ruling party and opposition are like warring parties. Due to this decline of parliament, its control over executive and foreign policy decisions has become weaker.
- However, being the highest democratic institution of the country and the voice of the people, the parliament influence the course of foreign policy decision-making by using various constitutional provisions. Though, the process of policy making has been dominated by the bureaucratic agencies, the Parliament still plays a major role in shaping India's external relations.

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

- As per the '**Allocation of Business Rules**' of GOI, MEA has been empowered with the task of planning, formulating and managing India's external relations with other nations to protect and promote national interests in the global stage.
- In India, MEA acts like the foreign policy secretariat in India, which receives numerous policy inputs from various sources, and analyzes and channelizes the different options to the political leadership, i.e., the Cabinet headed by the PM, and then implements decisions taken at this apex level.
- **Economic diplomacy**- Since the late 1980s, MEA has been strengthening its economic diplomacy capabilities with divisions dealing with investment and technology promotion, now subsumed into its **Economic Diplomacy Division** which looks after **Multilateral Economic Relations (MER)**.
- **Developmental assistance partnership**- A Development Partnership Administration (DPA) was created in MEA to bring together all elements involved in India's role as a preferred assistance partner to developing countries particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America.
- **Global politics**- The D&ISA Division under MEA deals with nuclear proliferation, disarmament and related issues, including India's bid for membership of the **Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)** and related bodies.
- **Functional divisions** like Administration, Establishment, Finance and Legal and Treaties, provide the tools and environment needed by **Indian diplomats** at home and abroad to discharge their functions effectively.
- **The External Publicity Division** of MEA is an effective recipient of foreign policy inputs particularly from the media and is also the chief source of dissemination of information on India's foreign policy objectives and measures.
- The MEA is also the primary department **responsible for all passport**, visa and consular issues. Passport and visa policies, in which the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has a major say, are piloted by the MEA which also discharges citizen-centric services like **issue of passports and provision of consular services** to all Indian nationals in India and those living abroad. It is the principal source of visas for foreign nationals desiring to visit India for various purposes like tourism, business, studies, medical services, etc.

- In effect all **Diaspora issues**, including the safety and security of Indian nationals residing abroad, are under the policy making purview of MEA.
- However, the Ministry of External Affairs is losing its importance in the making of India's foreign policy with the parallel rise of the P.M.O. During PM Nehru's time, since he was both PM and EAM, the Prime Minister's Secretariat (as PMO was known then), became the centre of foreign policy decision making. This trend has continued with each PMO assuming the central role in all foreign policy decision making.
- Since the late 1980s, MEA has been **strengthening its economic diplomacy capabilities** with divisions dealing with investment and technology promotion, now subsumed into its Economic Diplomacy Division, a division looking after Multilateral Economic Relations (MER) and specialized centres for our ties with ASEAN and BIMSTEC, which are primarily focused on strengthening economic ties.
- After the formation of the **National Security Council (NSC)** and with the appointment of the National Security Advisor, the role of the PMO has increased into manifolds. NSC performs similar functions like MEA. It assists the government to formulate other significant policies that directly or indirectly affects India's national Interest, such as policies on economic and energy security.
 - In recent times, NSA Ajit Doval has been chief architect of India's Pakistan and China policy. India's policy of Offensive-Defense with respect to Pakistan is also known as Doval Doctrine.
- However, MEA remains the focal point of India's foreign policy. MEA has institutional structure in the form of Policy Planning and Research Division to collect inputs from Indian Diplomatic Missions abroad, relevant ministries, departments and agencies in India, from think tanks and research centres like the IDSA and IWCA, from trade and industry associations like CII, FICCI and ASSOCHAM, from academic institutions, and from individual subject specialists.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

- The Government/PMO seeks the Ministry of Defence's views on matters related to defense policy and national security.
- The Raksha Mantri (Defence Minister) is a member of the Cabinet Committee on Security and of the National Security Council.
- The Secretary, Department of Defence, Secretary (Defence Production) and the three service chiefs (Army, Navy and Air Force) are members of the Strategic Planning Group.
- In recent years, a joint secretary level officer from MEA is seconded to the MoD to handle Planning and International Cooperation tasks of the Ministry.

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

- The Department of Commerce (DoC) together with the MEA and the Ministry of Finance is largely responsible for conducting India's economic diplomacy.
- On trade issues at the WTO, bilateral and multilateral FTAs, etc, policy is largely initiated and formalised at the DoC.
- Investment and taxation issues are coordinated by the MoF in consultation with MoC, MEA, CBDT, Customs, etc.,

CABINET AND CABINET COMMITTEES

- **Shiv Shankar Menon** in his book, 'CHOICES-Inside the making of foreign policy' has mentioned that the institutionalization of foreign and security policymaking in India has been weak, and is only now beginning with the creation of the **National Security Council** and the **Nuclear Command Authority** a little over a decade ago. The role and effectiveness of the Cabinet Committee on Security and its predecessor, the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs, have varied considerably from government to government and are less today than in Manmohan Singh's much more collegial government.
- In most of the Parliamentary systems of the governments like India, the important decisions on issues of national and international affairs are decided by the cabinet.

- The Cabinet being the top most decision making body of the government, determines the course of India's external relations by giving necessary directions. Cabinet Ministers are the most trusted colleagues of the Prime Minister and assist and advise him or her on major foreign policy issues, including during times of crisis.
- Cabinet decides on measures to strengthen India's external security in consultation with MHA, MoD and MEA. Regarding foreign trade and investment issues, the prime consultants are the Ministries of Commerce and Industry, Finance and External Affairs.
- However due to the increasing burden of the central cabinet, it unable to pay special attention to the significance national politics and several specialized cabinet committees have been setup to assist the cabinet in policy formulations. The committees are responsible to resolve the intradepartmental conflict and ensure greater cooperation among the ministries and departments.
- Though none of the current cabinet committees deal exclusively with foreign affairs, the issues dealt by such CCs, directly impact India's foreign policy and practices. Minister of external affairs is member of four cabinet committees on Economic Affairs, Parliamentary Affairs, Political Affairs and on Security.
- During the Chinese invasion of 1962, the '**Emergency Committee**' was setup to deal with the matter on national emergency. Chaired by the Prime Minister himself, the committee performed remarkable tasks on national and external issues. It also played prominent role during the time of **Rann of Kutch** dispute with Pakistan in 1965.
- Similarly, the committee on **World Trade Organization** Matters also worked to resolve issues related to India's concerns at WTO. The committee aimed to constantly keep eye on the recent development on the field of global trade and take action accordingly to promote India's foreign trade.
- Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs and committee on investment are responsible to improve India's economic conditions and to attract the foreign investment into the nation, hence indirectly related to the matter of foreign economic affairs.
- The **Administrative Reform Commission** has recommended to setup a cabinet Committee of foreign affairs.

PMO

- **Harish Kapur** in his work, *Foreign Policies of India's Prime Ministers*, has mentioned that Since independence, the role of the MEA largely remain secondary to PMO as India never had an independent and charismatic Foreign Minister who was politically powerful enough to leave his personal imprints in foreign policy
- **Shiv Shankar Menon** in his book, '**CHOICES**-Inside the making of foreign policy' has mentioned that, in foreign policy, policymaking has always been almost entirely within the individual domain of the prime minister, a practice begun by Nehru and carried on by all his successors. The result is that grand strategy, the conception of India's place and role in the world, has been bold, innovative, and shared across political parties in the spectrum.
- The PMO consisting of senior level bureaucrats provides secretarial assistance and advice to the PM and functions as the centre of policy making in India. It coordinates various central agencies like the Cabinet, Cabinet Committees, Council of Ministers and other stakeholders to sort out interdepartmental hurdles in domestic and foreign policy execution.
- During PM Nehru's time, since he was both PM and EAM, the Prime Minister's Secretariat (as PMO was known then), became the centre of foreign policy decision making. This trend has continued with each PMO assuming the central role in all policy, including foreign policy decision making, often bypassing the Cabinet, Cabinet Committees and Council of Ministers.
- Secondly, all important matters on foreign policy and security need PM's approval before implementation.
- Thirdly, the NSA is an important and influencing factor in the advice reaching the PM. Thus, successful foreign policy formulation and execution depends on the degree of coordination between the PMO and MEA.
- Fourthly, PM's approval is crucial in appointment of Indian Ambassadors and High Commissioners abroad, though the formal letter of appointment is issued by the President in his capacity as Head of State.
- The current PMO consists of the Principal Secretary to PM, the National Security Advisor (NSA), an Additional PS to PM, Secretary to PM, two Additional Secretaries, five Joint Secretaries and several other officers at the levels of Director, Deputy Secretary and Under Secretary.

- Even under present government, India's major foreign policy initiatives such as Act East policy, **Neighbourhood first policy** etc. were initiated by PM and PMO and coordinated by MEA. Also, India's Pakistan policy of Offensive Defence or **Doval Doctrine** is formed by NSA Ajit Doval.
- Thus, it can be said that PMO has been most significant institution of foreign policy making in India. However, coordination with MEA is essential to ensure evidence-based policy making and effective implementation of policies.

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

- Foreign Policy is about achieving geopolitical and geo-economics national interests through various means. As per **Shiv shankar Menon**, it is **MINIMAXING** i.e. minimizing risks and maximizing benefits. In this context the role of NSC is critical in protecting India's security and strategic interests.

Structure and functions of NSC-

- It is Chaired by the PM and consists of the Ministers of External Affairs, Defence, Home and Finance, the NSA and the Deputy Chairman of **NITI Aayog**. The NSA is the Secretary to the National Security Council.
- The NSC is a **three-tier organization** consisting of the Strategic Planning Group, the National Security Advisory Board and the Joint Intelligence Committee.
- **Strategic Planning Group (SPG)** is Headed by the Cabinet Secretary and Its members include secretaries of all-important ministries and departments like Home, Defence, External Affairs etc.
- The SPG is responsible for formulating and implementing India's **strategic policies**. This Group meets periodically and continuously observes national and international security environment and takes necessary steps to **neutralize possible threats**.
- **National Security Advisory Board (NSAB)** – Its membership includes eminent professionals, academics, scientists, administrative experts and retired bureaucrats.
- it advises govt on matters related to national security and development. It does long term **analysis and provides perspectives on issues** of national security.
- **Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC)** – It is Headed by a Chairman who is usually an Additional Secretary from the Cabinet Secretariat. It also has representatives from MEA, MoD, MHA, IB, R&AW etc.
- This Committee receives **intelligence inputs** from the IB, R&AW, and the Directorates of Military, Naval and Air Intelligence, respectively. It is the **highest intelligence assessment organization**, tasked with **inter-agency coordination**, collection and analysis of intelligence data. It sometimes directs the relevant intelligence agencies to conduct certain intelligence gathering tasks, based on the input or demand from the Government. The JIC is an important and effective advisory body to the PM and Cabinet in decision making on matters related to foreign affairs and defence.
- The National Security Council has important role to play in foreign policy as it was primarily constituted to act as a facilitator to **advise and assist the Prime Minister** in addressing issues of national security. Secondly, The NSC has also been designated with the function of **formulating National security strategies**, which in turn becomes a basis for formulating national military strategy. Thirdly, the National Security Council also **integrate, evaluate and coordinate** strategic information, suggestions, advice and expertise from government agencies, armed forces and think tanks.

Issues with NSC

- **Absence of National Security Doctrine-** According to some scholars, the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) had formulated draft national security strategy documents on four different occasions and presented them to successive governments, but the lingering worry in the minds of the politicians about a potential commitment trap has led to delay in its publication.
- **Secondly**, the National Security Council (NSC) almost never meets, primarily because it is an advisory body, with the Cabinet Committee on Security being the executive body.
- Former prime minister, **P. V. Narasimha Rao**, made it clear that he found it pointless to have a NSC in India, because the concept of a NSC was more appropriate for a presidential form of government as

opposed to the Indian parliamentary system, where the cabinet was the supreme decision-making body.

Way forward

- For NSC to be made more useful, the government's allocation of business rules should be amended to give more powers to the NSC and its subordinate organisations, such as the Strategic Policy Group.
- Second, the job of the National Security Adviser needs to be reimagined. Even though the NSA plays a vital role in national security, he has no legal powers as per the government's allocation of business rules. The **K.C. Pant Task Force** in the late 1990s had recommended the creation of an NSA with the rank of a Cabinet Minister.

NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR

- From 1998 onwards, the National Security Adviser (NSA), who has unrestricted access to the Prime Minister, supervises matters relating to foreign affairs in the Prime Minister's Office. He also controls and coordinates work relating to the Ministries of Defence, Home, Space, Atomic Energy, as well as the various intelligence agencies.
- Currently two Deputy NSAs, at least a couple of Foreign Service officers in the Prime Minister's Office, as well as a full-fledged dedicated National Security Council Secretariat assist him in this task.
- In this way, the NSA has emerged as a very powerful figure behind the scenes on foreign policy issues, even though **he need not necessarily have any background or expertise in foreign affairs**.
- on the one hand, **unencumbered by the demands of protocol**, of formal meetings with visiting dignitaries, of public appearances, of Parliament and political work, and armed, on the other hand, with information on nuclear, space and intelligence matters to which only the Prime Minister is often privy, the NSA has much more time for, and control over, foreign policy formulation and supervision than the Minister of External Affairs.
- He also has the advantage that **he is not accountable to either the Parliament or the public**— in fact to no one except his political bosses. Thus, there is an inbuilt conflict of interest between the NSA and the External Affairs Minister, which has frequently come out in the open since the setting up of the office of the NSA in 1998.

THINK TANKS

- According to **Dr Patrick Köllner** think tanks are “organizations whose main mission is to inform or influence public policies (and in some cases also corporate affairs) on the basis of research and analysis provided by in-house and affiliated staff.” The term “foreign policy think tanks” here denotes think tanks that focus either on international affairs or on defence and security issues.
- Academia and think tanks play prominent role in foreign policy decisions of western countries. Over the past few years, **India has seen a greater centralization of foreign policy decision-making** and the simultaneous rise of new foreign policy think tanks. Traditionally marginalized, India's foreign policy think tank sector has gained in visibility and vibrancy due to new demand in the wake of India's expanding international stakes.
- Various Academia in India are School of International Studies at JNU, the MEA supported Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and the Defence Ministry supported Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA). The various think tanks include the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS), the RIS (Research and Information System for Developing Countries), ICRIER (Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations), Centre for Policy Research (CPR), Observer Research Foundation (ORF), and Vivekananda Foundation etc.
- The number of think tanks in India has more than tripled from 121 in 2008 to 444 in 2017. According to the data collected by **McGann** and his collaborators, in 2017 India had the third-largest number of think tanks after the United States (1,872) and China (512). In terms of quality of research and other activities, in McGann's recent 2018 report the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) was ranked 28th among top non-US think tanks worldwide, while the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) was ranked 35th.
- Foreign policy think tanks created in India after 2009 are more active and visible in the public sphere than their predecessors. This is partly because they have more funding and increased access to information due to a more supportive government and a more open Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).



- These think tanks help country achieve its diplomatic objectives by developing networks and setting up new platforms to promote dialogue, including high-profile international conferences, bilateral and multilateral exchanges, and closed-door networking events.
- However, the growth of foreign policy think tanks in India has been mostly constrained to two distinct types: those which are close to Indian businesses and/or connected to foreign think tanks which tend to promote a liberal worldview and those which are close to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in ideological and personnel terms.
- Secondly, according to Queen Mary University of London's **Stella Ladi**, despite their often-professed public purpose orientation, think tanks are guided by interests of particular section and depend on particular sources of funding. According to **Diane Stone**, although often presented as **bridges between power and knowledge**, **think tanks are arguably a "manifestation of the knowledge/power nexus"** and may help to serve the interests of dominant elites.
- On the other hand, think tanks have faced various challenges in India. Some of the challenges are- a lack of funding (partly due to a lack of investment of the state and a lack of alternative sources); a lack of human resources and the dominance of retired civil servants in senior positions; and restricted access to information. This hinders the production of relevant research and the formulation of timely policy recommendations.
- **Conclusion-** considering the increasing complexity of global politics and Indian foreign policy, think tanks have emerged as important instrument for making well researched, sophisticated and comprehensive foreign policy. PM Modi has also highlighted need for substantial improvement in "the input of intellectual think tanks" for better policy frameworks.

Role of Think Tanks-

- Think tanks provide expertise and assistance for designing specific policies. ORF, for example, helped to devise India's BRICS policy.
- Think tanks act as brokers of policy knowledge, centres of research, and incubators of new ideas. As brokers, they channel knowledge between scholars, policymakers, and civil society. As applied researchers, they **convert multidisciplinary theory and empirics into insights and recommendations** packaged to inform and meet decision-makers' needs. As innovators, **they expand the policy world's perspectives and possibilities — for example**, showing the power of entrepreneurial solutions. At their best, think tanks provide information that is credible, relevant, and easily understood.
- Think tanks provide platforms for political dialogue among foreign policy actors from India and abroad, such as governments, policymakers, the strategic community. In this respect, the VIF and the IF have played an increasingly important role by organising small exclusive gatherings and meetings with high-profile guests.
- Some think tanks have utilised and further expanded their networks for engaging in informal diplomacy. ORF, in particular, is greatly involved in **Tracks 2 and 1.5 diplomacy**, with the latter also involving government officials.
- According to **Jyoti Malhotra**, in the matters of foreign policy, as the government carefully manages information, a few think tanks have become "platforms for the dissemination of information" by the government.

EVOLUTION OF THINK TANKS IN INDIA

- According to **Amitabh Mattoo** and **Rory Medcalf**, since Jawaharlal Nehru's reign foreign-policy making has largely remained the preserve of the prime minister, while the MEA has traditionally been in charge of policy implementation. Thus, with the exception of a very few high-profile think tank leaders and public intellectuals, think tanks and other external providers of policy advice have not been influential in shaping Indian foreign policy
- The landscape of foreign policy think tanks began to evolve in the first decade of the twenty-first century, when active and retired high-ranking military leaders started to establish specialist think tanks to produce knowledge on defence-related topics.
- **In 2001–2002**, Air **Commodore Jasjit Singh** created the Centre for Air Power Studies, staffed with retired top brass and ambassadors.

- In 2005 then defence minister **Pranab Mukherjee** launched the **National Maritime Foundation (NMF)**, which seeks to enhance dialogue on maritime issues, formulate policy advice, mould public opinion, and influence the national security elite on issues involving India's maritime security interests.
- Towards the end of the first decade of the new millennium, other new foreign policy think tanks with a broader focus emerged and became active and visible in the public sphere.
 - First, the **Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF)** and the **India Foundation (IF)** were founded in 2009.
 - Second, the **Brookings Institution India Center** was created in 2013, and the **Carnegie Center India** was opened in 2016. They are international centres of the prominent US think tanks the Brookings Institution and the **Carnegie Endowment for International Peace**, but they are legally independent and their founding members are mostly Indian.
 - Third, several think tanks developed through business initiatives have emerged or been recently set up. Although founded in 1990 as a Reliance Industries initiative, ORF has become particularly prominent in the past few years. Outside Delhi, the Mumbai-based **Gateway House: Indian Council on Global Relations** was founded in 2011.
- The size and means of these think tanks vary greatly. ORF is the largest organisation and one of the most well-funded, having received INR 322 million in domestic and foreign contributions in 2017, with 57 per cent of this funding coming from Reliance Industries.
- **Post 2014**, there is further spread of think tanks due to support by government, better and diversified funding and increasing interest of business community in foreign policy due to economic liberalization and globalization.

PRESSURE GROUPS AND NGO'S

- Besides the government bodies and authorities like the Prime minister and Ministry of External Affairs, the political parties, media, and pressure groups also play an important role in the formulation of foreign policy. Since India is a functioning democracy, the role of non-government stakeholders is gradually increasing.
- Voices of non-political groups, associations and organizations are important sources of influence in shaping government policies, including in foreign and security issues.
- **Joseph Nye** has described present world order as **3D chess board model.**
 - **At top level-** military level- unipolar world order
 - **Middle level-** Economic power- Multipolar
 - **At the third level** involving transnational actors with respect to issues such as Climate Change, drugs, terrorism etc, the power is distributed between state and non-state actors like NGOs, MNCs, pressure groups etc.
- While Realist doesn't give importance to NGOs and pressure groups in foreign policy making, liberals assign positive role to NGOs as agent of modernization and development. Feminist and critical school theorists also give positive role to civil society.
- Some of these groups, like friendship associations, are formally established and registered with the concerned authorities and have greater access to the policy makers, while others are informal but wield influence primarily through making their views known through various media, including through writings in influential journals and magazines, and lately through social media.
- NGOs are growing in stature not only for their work among the masses in India, but also in significantly influencing policy decisions, some of which have a bearing on India's external relations. NGOs dealing with environment, human rights and migration issues are very active in India. NGOs such as Greenpeace, Amnesty International and Red Cross have impacted India's foreign policy decisions in environment and human rights issues.
- **Post LPG reforms** role of pressure groups has also increased in the field of foreign affairs. The pressure groups formed by business groups, farmers associations, traders etc have affected the government's policy in international politics. **For example, India's insistence on Agreement on agriculture in WTO** is due to pressure from farmer organizations, similarly India's recent decision to pull out of RCEP is due to opposition from trader's lobby.

- Though PG and NGOs help in making foreign policy more representative and inclusive and provide essential inputs for policy making, they are guided by narrow self-interest which can be detrimental to broader foreign policy objectives. **For example**, India has been termed as ‘obstructionist’ in WTO by western countries. Similarly, as per IB report, negative activism by foreign funded NGOs has cost India 2% of GDP.
- To conclude it can be said that though NGOs and pressure groups provide critical input for foreign policy making and make policy inclusive yet there is need for better regulation and transparency in their functioning to prevent harm to national interest.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN FOREIGN POLICY MAKING

- From the **realist perspective**, the non-state actors do not hold much power over formulation of foreign policies and the development of bilateral relations. However, **liberalism and Postmodernist approaches** like **Constructivism** offer valuable insight into the importance of non-state actors like media and individual citizens and the role of the former plays in constructing perceptions of the latter.
- Media plays two-fold role in foreign policy making, **firstly** as an input source for decision-making and **secondly**, as an environment, which actors have to take into account during the policy formation.
- While the old ways of conducting international diplomacy lacked transparency and involvement of the masses and media was in the middle of a top-bottom communication hierarchy, today, due to the advent of new communication technologies, global politics has witnessed a growing role being played by media. This role has only gained further importance due to the spread of the internet and social media.
- In India, the role of media can be classified in 2 phases.
 - **The first phase** lasted from 1947 to 1990, during which almost all media outlets in the country were owned by the government and thus the dissemination of information was largely state controlled.
 - **The second phase** began from 1991, when ownership truly diversified. This also coincided with the government’s LPG policy. Over the years, media companies that were entirely private became more commonplace, and now there is greater freedom of publication, and the media can openly criticize the government’s policies.
- The role of media in foreign policy can be explained through the so called “**CNN effect**”.
 - 1) **Accelerant effect**- Under this scope, the existence of a 24-hour media environment leads to a constant flow of news and information, which acts as a pressing factor upon governmental decision-making. On that account, the accelerant effect impairs the quality of both the gathering of intelligence and of the actual response formation.
 - 2) **The constant flow of information** can also be seen as an impediment to operational/national security, since news coverage on certain topics may lead to disclosure of classified information. **For example, WikiLeaks** uses media in a way that compromises many countries’ security protocols and foreign relations by making classified information public.
- **Agenda setters**- examining media through an input perspective, media potentially can act as agenda setters. In words of **Bernard Cohen**, “in each major power, one newspaper stands out as an organ of elite opinion”
- Further, executives themselves tend to utilize media as loudspeakers. In this way, governments send public signals, targeting foreign governments or certain groups of people. Governments can thus put pressure on foreign actors while raising awareness of their motives and intentions on an international scale. **For example**, the role of Media was instrumental to achieve India’s objectives through Indo-US civil nuclear deal.
- **Media and International Prestige**- Due to the anarchic nature of the international system, no state can successfully attain and hold the position of a global hegemon. According to **Mearsheimer**, the world is too vast for any state’s limited reach. In this context, Media plays an important role in conveying objectives of Country’s foreign policy and justifying the means adopted to achieve it.
- However, according to critics like Professor **Noam Chomsky**, we live in webs of deceit, in an indoctrinated society, where elementary truths can be buried with ease. Thus, for them, the governmental elites use the media in order to steer public opinion through controlling access to information and by choosing the levels of salience that certain topics will receive.

- Further, other issues such as the lack of expertise in reporting, poor editorial supervision and strategic blunder of deliberately distorting news to attract an audience act as a hurdle for the media to be taken seriously by the government.
- The media has often been called the fourth estate, or the fourth branch of the government, for the role it plays in the societal and political life of a country. Thus, the extent of constructive role played by media in foreign policy of India depends on responsibility shown by media in reporting and coordination and communication between government and media.

Role of diaspora in Indian foreign policy-

- Once taunted as the 'Not Required Indians', in a major policy turnaround since the 1990s, the Non Resident Indians (NRIs) and the Persons of India Origin (PIOs), most of whom today hold the OCI card giving them access and facilities similar to NRIs, are an established factor in Indian politics.
- Growing in wealth and influence and India's quest to use its diaspora population across the globe for its national and international priorities, the NRI and PIO lobby is gaining influence in ensuring national and international policies are tilted in their favour.

INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES AND CHALLENGES

- The main and first and foremost objective of India's Foreign Policy is to secure its national interests. The scope of "national interests" is wide and includes-
 - To protect India from traditional and non-traditional threats;
 - To create an external environment which is conducive for an inclusive development of India so that the benefits of growth can reach the poorest of the poor in the country;
 - To ensure that **India's voice is heard on global forums** and that India is able to influence world opinion on issues of global dimensions such as **terrorism, climate change, disarmament, reforms of institutions of global governance**.
 - To engage and protect Indian Diaspora.
- MEA **S. Jaishankar**, speaking at the inaugural session of the **Raisina Dialogue 2020**, highlighted the three points that Indian Foreign Policy seeks to achieve are;
 1. A focus on key challenges by broad engagement with many parties
 2. Managing, if not leveraging, the global contradictions
 3. Advancing our interests in the multiple-hour world and contributing to the global good
 - In detail the major foreign policy objectives are, securing our borders to protect territorial integrity, countering cross-border terrorism, energy security, food security, cyber security, creation of world class infrastructure, non-discriminatory global trade practices, equitable global responsibility for the protection of environment, reform of institutions of global governance to reflect the contemporary realities, disarmament, regional stability, international peace

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND FEATURES OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

- According to Ambassador **Achal Malhotra**, in the present dynamic and complex world order, India's foreign policy has become proactive, flexible as well as pragmatic so as to make quick adjustments to respond to evolving situations. In the implementation of its foreign policy India, however, invariably adheres to a set of basic principles on which no compromise is made.
- **These fundamental principles include**

PANCHSHEEL

- Indian Policy makers understood the linkage between peace and development and survival of mankind. In view of the destruction caused by two world wars, they realized that for the progress of a nation a durable world peace was needed.
- Without global peace, social and economic development is likely to be pushed to the background. Thus, the founder of India's foreign policy, Nehru gave utmost importance to world peace in his policy planning

- For him, **India desired peaceful and friendly relations with all countries**, particularly the big powers and the neighbouring nations
- PANCHSHEEL, or **Five Virtues** which were first formally enunciated in the **Agreement on Trade between the Tibet region of China and India** signed on April 29, 1954 and later evolved to act as the basis of conduct of international relations globally.
- These Five Principles are:
 1. Mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty,
 2. Mutual non-aggression
 3. Peaceful co-existence
 4. Equality and mutual benefit
 5. Mutual non-interference
- **VasudhaivaKutumbakam** in her work '**The World is One Family**' has held that, the concept of **SabkaSaath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas** is similar to Panchsheel. In other words the entire world community is a part of one single large global family and the Members of the family must live together in peace and harmony, work and grow together and have trust in each other for mutual benefits.
- **Shiv shankar Menon** in "**India and Asian Geopolitics: The Past, Present**" has pointed out that, negotiation of the 1954 Panchsheel Agreement with China and normalization with China was also designed to limit the effects of the Cold War around India following the November 1953 military supply and defense agreement between Pakistan and the United States.
- However, according to **Rajiv Sikri**, China lulled India into complacency with its mendacious bhai-bhai and Panchsheel rhetoric, and got India to vacate its presence in Tibet as well as to recognize Tibet as a region of China in the 1954 India–China Trade Agreement. In launching a border war in 1962, China has also not followed the letter and spirit of the 1954 **Panchsheel Agreement**.

NON-ALIGNMENT-

- Non-alignment is the **most important feature of India's foreign policy**. Its core element is to **maintain independence** in foreign affairs by not joining any military alliance formed by the USA and Soviet Union, which emerged as an important aspect of cold war politics after the Second World War.
- Non alignment is India's contribution to the theory and practice of International relations. It was development in context of cold war to preserve India's independence and allow it to make merit-based decisions. India assumed the leadership of developing countries and rejected bloc politics of cold war.
- It was a **positive and dynamic concept**. It postulates taking an **independent stand** on international issues according to the merits of each case but at the same time not committing to coming under the influence of any military bloc.
- The **policy of strategic autonomy** adopted by India **post LPG reforms** can be considered as extension of Non-alignment as both policies allowed India to develop mutually beneficial partnerships with all major powers without joining any alliance or bloc.
- India's policy of nonalignment **got many supporters** in the developing countries of **Asia, Africa and Latin America** as it provided them opportunity for protecting their foreign policy independence amidst the cold war pressures and tensions.
- India, under the leadership of Nehru, convened the **Asian Relations Conference** in New Delhi in **1947** to forge the idea of Asian solidarity

CONTINUED RELEVANCE OF NAM-

- As the world faces greater threat from a unipolar world led by US after the disintegration of Soviet Union, the NAM can act as a check against undue dominance and hegemony of any country or block.
- The developed (North) and developing (South) world have divergent views over several global and economic issues. The NAM may provide a forum for third world countries to engage the developed nations in a productive dialogue.

- The NAM can prove to be a powerful mechanism to forge South-South cooperation, which is essential for their collective self reliance in the present market driven global order.
- NAM can provide an important forum for developing countries to discuss and deliberate upon various global problems, issues and reforms including the reform of UN and other international financial institutions like World Bank and IMF in order to make them more democratic and effective.

OPPOSITION TO EXPORT OF IDEOLOGIES AND CHANGE OF REGIMES

- India believes in and supports Democracy; however, India does not believe in the export of ideologies.
- By extension of the above principle, India does not endorse the idea of regime change or violation of territorial integrity in a particular country by use of force or other means by another country or a group of countries. (Ex. US interventions in Iraq, Libya, Syria or Russia's intervention in Georgia, Ukraine etc.)
- At the same time, India does not hesitate in promoting democracy wherever potential exists; this is done by proactively providing assistance in capacity building and strengthening the institutions of democracy, albeit with the explicit consent of the concerned Government. (Ex. Afghanistan)

OPPOSITION TO UNILATERAL SANCTIONS AND MILITARY ACTIONS

- **India does not endorse the idea of imposing sanctions/military action unless these sanctions/ military actions have been approved by the United Nations** as a result of international consensus. India therefore contributes only to such Peace-Keeping military operations which are part of the UN Peace-keeping Forces.
- Similarly, In context of the US sanctions on Iran, India clarified that it is abided by sanctions imposed by the United Nations but not those imposed by any other country, such as those announced by the United States against Iran.

INTERFERENCE: NO; INTERVENTION: YES

- India does not believe in interference in the internal affairs of other countries. However, if an act - innocent or deliberate - by any country has the potential of impinging upon India's national interests, India does not hesitate in quick and timely intervention.
- Here intervention is qualitatively different from interference, particularly when the intervention is made at the request of the country concerned. (**Examples:** Bangladesh 1971, IPKF in Sri Lanka (1987-90), **Maldives** (1988).

CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT OVER AGGRESSION

- India believes that violent retaliation and confrontation can only complicate the matters. War is no solution; after every war the conflicting Parties ultimately come to negotiating table by which time much damage has already been done. This applies in particular to Pakistan- the origin of State-sponsored terrorism targeted at India.
- The policy of engagement is, however, to be misunderstood as India's weakness. Strong and loud messages emanate from India each and every time our patience is tested. The **Surgical strike** to target terrorist – launch pads in Pakistan occupied Indian territory in September 2016 is one such example. **Air Strike at terrorist camps in Balakote** in February 2019 in retaliation to Pulwama terrorist attack is yet another example.

STRATEGIC AUTONOMY: PARTNERSHIPS-YES, ALLIANCES:NO

- Independence of decision making and strategic autonomy are yet another significant features of India's foreign policy. India thus believes in Partnerships and shuns Alliances, particularly military alliances.
- **Strategic autonomy** is similar to non-alliance as both policies reject bloc politics of cold war and allows India to maintain friendly relations with all major powers in the world.
- A new paper by a group of leading policymakers, analysts and thinkers, titled '**India's Path to Power: Strategy in a World Adrift**', has pointed out that, a period of geopolitical change and transformation carries risks but also creates spaces for emerging countries like India to expand its strategic autonomy, that is, to enhance its ability to take relatively autonomous decisions on matters of vital interest to it.

- According to **S. Jaishankar**, Strategic Autonomy as a framework and a way forward provides a chance for New Delhi to exploit the possible opportunities that are brought by the convergence of interests across the geopolitical chessboard. He further adds that, **Indian grand strategy** in an uncertain world requires advancing national interests by identifying and exploiting opportunities created by global contradictions, so as to extract as many gains from as many ties as possible along the way to expand its national capabilities.

GLOBAL CONSENSUS ON ISSUES OF GLOBAL DIMENSIONS

- India advocates a global debate and global consensus on issues of global dimensions such as world trade regime, climate change, terrorism, intellectual property rights, global governance.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN FOREIGN POLICY POST 2014

- Indian foreign policy underwent significant changes since NDA government came to power in 2014. However, these changes were in broader framework of continuity. Some of the significant changes are as follows

UNPRECEDENTED DIPLOMATIC OUTREACH-

- In an unprecedented diplomatic outreach, the country's top leadership engaged nearly all countries in the world cutting across time zones, the continents and hemispheres; this across-the-spectrum diplomatic outreach underlined the government's commitment to building relationships with countries, big and small, in the spirit of '**VasudhaivaKutumbakam**
- This accelerated diplomatic engagement had several positive impacts. It helped a qualitative upgrade in existing bilateral relationships and enhanced coordination on a range of regional and global issues. It revitalized and reinvigorated relations and at the same time opened new doors for mutually nourishing partnerships in a wide array of areas. **For example**, India's high-octane diplomacy in west Asia has led to strengthening of relations between India and Saudi Arabia, UAE, Iran as well as Israel.

SHIFT FROM IDEALISM TO PRAGMATISM

- **MEA S. Jaishankar** during **Ramnath Goenka Awards** in 2019 provided an assessment of the last 70 years of India's foreign policy and held that, "the real obstacle to the rise of India is not anymore the barriers of the world, but the dogmas of Delhi." The Dogma's include idealism, risk aversion approach and reluctance to use hard power etc.
- Highlighting the change in policy he stressed on the "need for greater realism in policy." He further adds that India is now at the "cusp of change and with more confidence, the pursuit of seemingly divergent goals and the straddling of contradictions are being attempted."
- India's changed approach can be seen in India's proactive approach in neighbourhood and beyond.
- However, the continuity can also be seen and explained by India's membership of QUAD as well as SCO. Similarly, while answering question on pursuit of "apparently contradictory approaches and objectives" in context of reconciliation between **Howdy Modi, a Mamallapuram informal meet and a Vladivostok meet Or the RIC** with JAI (Japan-America-India) Or the Quad with the SCO, the minister said that it represents India's willingness to look beyond dogma and enter the real world of convergences.
- Further, continuity can also be seen in India's reluctance to join alliance. According to S. Jaishankar, age of alliances is over and India will be involved in mutually beneficial partnerships based on convergences and national interests.
- 'The centre of gravity of Indian foreign policy had shifted from idealism to realism.' Pragmatism was seen, therefore, as liberated from prior beliefs and ideologies. India had become 'less ideological' and realized that 'grand ideological coalitions ill-serve[d] India's material interests'.
- It was not simply that Nehruvianism had failed; rather, scholars blamed the moralist and liberal internationalist ideas of Nehruvianism for India's 'strategic missteps', because it was ideological positions rather than the national interest that had hitherto dominated Indian foreign policy

INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY

- India has assumed central position in emerging construct of Indo-pacific. While highlighting importance of Indo-pacific PM Modi in his speech during Shangri la dialogue has held that, "For thousands of years, Indians have turned to the East. Not just to see the Sun rise, but also to pray for its light to spread over the entire world. The human-kind now looks to the Rising East, with the hope to see the promise that this 21st century beholds for the whole world, because the destiny of the world will be deeply influenced by the course of developments in the Indo-Pacific region."
- India has also joined QUAD grouping containing the US, Japan and Australia to check Chinese unilateralism. India has also strengthened its ties with ASEAN through Act East policy and bilateral mutual logistics agreements with countries such as Indonesia and Singapore.
- In words of **C. Raja Mohan**, "Beijing has emerged as the biggest challenge to New Delhi, and the US is increasingly becoming the part of the answer. India's membership of the Quad is a response to such geopolitics."
- The Indo-Pacific therefore is a new domain in India's foreign policy engagements, representing a shift in New Delhi's strategic environment—expanding its threats solely from its continental borders to its maritime space.
- A new shift in New Delhi's strategic thinking has been the **importance of island nations in India's Indo-Pacific vision**. These island nations, long ignored and pushed to the periphery of big power engagements, are beginning to reclaim their role in maritime security.
 - ✓ The Indo-Pacific provides an excellent initiative for increased collaborations with strategic islands located near critical choke points and geographies beyond the Indian Ocean.
 - ✓ Although the efforts are slow and at times ad hoc, New Delhi has attempted to build up its diplomatic and strategic presence across islands in the Indo-Pacific.

NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY

- The neighbourhood first policy is similar to **Gujarat Doctrine**. The 4 pillars of the policy are
 1. Diplomatic priority to neighbourhood in India's foreign policy.
 2. Capacity building of neighbour countries
 3. Enhancing connectivity and greater flow of people and capital
 4. India led regionalism where neighbours are comfortable.

FOCUS ON MARITIME DOMAIN

- Of late, the Indian Navy has been on a drive to improve domain awareness in the Indian Ocean. The Navy is seeking to expand India's surveillance footprint by setting up radar stations in the Maldives, Myanmar and Bangladesh; Mauritius, the Seychelles and Sri Lanka have already integrated into the wider coastal radar chain network. The Indian Navy's efforts seem focused primarily on monitoring Chinese activity in the Eastern Indian Ocean, particularly in the seas around the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- **Darshana Baruah**, an Indian maritime security analyst, has examined India's heightened focus on improving maritime domain awareness in the coastal domain, EEZ and far seas. According to her, the major concern for India is its ability to monitor the passage of PLA Navy submarine passages to Pakistan and elsewhere in the Indian Ocean. Despite improved maritime situational awareness in coastal waters, India still has difficulty in tracking surface and subsurface vessels transiting its EEZ or neighbouring waters.
- New Delhi is also upping its engagement in the Western Indian Ocean by positioning a Liaison Officer at the **Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre (RMIFC)** in Madagascar. Established under the auspices of the Indian Ocean Commission that India joined recently as an 'observer', the RMIFC is a key centre of maritime information in the Western Indian Ocean. India has also posted an officer at the European Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz (EMASOH) in Abu Dhabi to assist in the monitoring of maritime activity in the **Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz**.
- Along with exercises such as **Milan exercise, Malabar exercise**, India has also signed mutual logistics agreement with France. Similarly, India has assumed the **role of 'Net security Provider'** in Indian ocean and given vision of **SAGAR** (security and growth for all in the region). Maritime domain awareness is also an important pillar of **BIMSTEC and Indian Ocean Naval Symposium**.

MULTILATERALISM AND REFORMS OF INSTITUTIONS OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

- Multilateral world order has been one of the core objectives of Indian foreign policy. It is also an objective of BRICS grouping. Even during his speech at the UN, PM Modi has highlighted need for 'Reformed Multilateralism' with UN at its centre for peace and development. In his words, "For today's interconnected world, we need a reformed multilateralism that reflects today's realities, gives voice to all stakeholders, addresses contemporary challenges and focuses on human welfare."
- India has also assumed leadership of developing world in WTO. Though India has been criticized as obstructionist by developed countries, India has got support of developing countries. India is one of the chief proponents of implementation of Doha Development Agenda and oppose attempts by developed countries to bring 'New Issues'.
- India is also working with G-4(India, Japan, Brazil, Germany) for reform of UNSC.

BIGGEST FOREIGN POLICY CHALLENGES FOR INDIA

- China
- Pakistan
- Declining US hegemony
- Declining multilateralism and globalization
- Non traditional threats like terrorism, piracy etc
- Afghanistan
- West Asia

(these issues are discussed in respective chapters)

Conclusion: National interest has been the governing principle of India's foreign policy since the time of Nehru who was inspired by the ideal of world peace, toleration and mutual respect among nations. Even at present, India's policy of strategic autonomy, active and assertive diplomacy, centrality of diaspora and role in Indo-pacific are aimed at securing 3 core objectives of Indian foreign policy: preservation of India's territorial integrity and independence of foreign policy; Promoting international peace and security; and Economic development of India.



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NON-ALIGNMENT MOVEMENT

Syllabus

- India's Contribution to the Non-Alignment Movement: Different phases; current role.

UPSC PYQ

1. "India's policy of non-alignment has been guided by the genius of the Indian people and their interests." Explain. 15 marks
2. 'Non-alignment' has been the basic principle of India's foreign policy since independence. Discuss its relevance in the contemporary context.
3. Comment on India's contribution to Non-Alignment Movement and its contemporary relevance.
4. Compare and contrast Non-alignment 1.0 with Non-alignment 2.0. (10 marks)

- The term non-alignment was first coined by **George Liska** to describe the policies of the states, which decided not to join either of the two power blocs. They sought a level playing field in global geo-politics that emerged in post war period.
- According to **Indira Gandhi**, NAM is the biggest peace movement in the world.
- The Non-alignment movement is an international forum of 120 developing countries that believe in the idea of non-alignment with the major power blocs.
- The term non-alignment is used to describe the foreign policies of those states that refused to align with either of two blocks led by the two superpowers i.e., the USA and the USSR. Instead, they opted to pursue an independent course of action in international politics.
- The Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) emerged when individual non-aligned states come together and coordinated their efforts on common platform.
- NAM came into existence within the context of two simultaneous global developments- **Afro Asian resurgence and bipolar world politics**. NAM stands for an active role in world affairs and friendship and cooperation with all countries. It consists of taking an independent position based on the merits of each issue, and on the requirements of national interest. It is not directed against any ideology but seeks to promote peace and friendship in the world irrespective of ideological differences.
- **Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru** at the first NAM Conference in 1961 highlighted the principles and objectives of NAM. In his words, "The power of nations assembled here is not military power or economic power, nevertheless it is power. Call it moral force". He further added, "We shall take full part in international conferences as a free nation with our own policy and not merely as a satellite of another nation." Nehru proposed that India should avoid entering into "other people's quarrels", unless, and this is important and "our interest is involved."

FACTORS THAT HELPED IN FORMATION OF NAM –

- **Followed independent foreign policy:** Newly independent countries Asian and African countries want to establish as independent through NAM. Now these countries are not only the followers of the super power and they feel independent.

- **Economic development:** Economic reason is the base of NAM. All NAM countries were economically backward. The main aim of their foreign policy is increase the rapid economic growth. But they neither have money nor technical skills. So they decided not to merge with any bloc and followed the NAM.
- **Cold War:** After Second World War, Cold War had started. There were two superpowers in the world: United States and Soviet Union. NAM wants to take help from both the super-powers, but if it took the help of one then it faces the rude consequences from the second power. So these newly independent countries followed the NAM. That is why; these countries can develop with the help of these super-powers.
- **National Interest:** Newly exist countries want to break the sickles of colonization because those countries were victims so many years. Now they want to be developed, instead of merging with any power. So they followed NAM.

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF NAM

- **Bandung Asian-African Conference, 1955** is considered as the most immediate antecedent to the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement. The principles that would govern relations among large and small nations, known as the "**Ten Principles of Bandung**", were proclaimed at that Conference. The fulfilment of these principles became the essential criterion for Non-Aligned Movement membership; it is what was known as the "quintessence of the Movement" until the early 1990s.
- Six years after Bandung, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries was founded on a wider geographical basis at the **First Summit Conference of Belgrade**, which was held in 1961. The Founders of NAM have preferred to declare it as a movement but not an organization in order to avoid bureaucratic implications of the latter.
- The primary of objectives of the non-aligned countries focused on the support of self-determination, national independence and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States; opposition to apartheid; non-adherence to multilateral military pacts and the independence of non-aligned countries from great power or block influences and rivalries; the struggle against imperialism in all its forms and manifestations; the struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, foreign occupation and domination; disarmament; non-interference into the internal affairs of States and peaceful coexistence among all nations; rejection of the use or threat of use of force in international relations; the strengthening of the United Nations; the democratization of international relations; socioeconomic development and the restructuring of the international economic system; as well as international cooperation on an equal footing.
- Since its inception, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has waged a ceaseless battle to ensure that people being oppressed by foreign occupation and domination can exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.
- During the 1970s and 1980s, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries played a key role in the struggle for the establishment of a **new international economic order** that allowed all the peoples of the world to make use of their wealth and natural resources and provided a wide platform for a fundamental change in international economic relations and the economic emancipation of the countries of the South.
- However, By the end of the 1980s, the Movement was facing the great challenge brought about by the collapse of the socialist block. The end of the clash between the two antagonistic blocks that was the reason for its existence, name and essence was seen by some as the beginning of the end for the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.
- Nevertheless, and in spite of such setbacks, the principles and objectives of non-alignment retain their full validity and force at the present international juncture. The primary condition that led to the emergence of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, that is, non-alignment from antagonistic blocks, has not lost its validity with the end of the Cold War. **The demise of one of the blocks has not done away with the pressing problems of the world.** On the contrary, renewed strategic interests bent on domination grow stronger and, even, acquire new and more dangerous dimensions for underdeveloped countries.

- During the 14th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Havana, Cuba in September 2006, the Heads of States and Governments of the member countries reaffirmed their commitment to the ideals, principles and purposes upon which the movement was founded and with the principles and purposes enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION IN EVOLUTION OF NAM

- India was one of the Founding members of NAM. Also, the driving force behind it. In fact, 'non-Alignment' itself was a phrase coined by India's Ambassador to the United Nations, **V. K Menon**.
- Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru is seen as the architect of NAM as **his concept of Panchsheel** became the basis of the movement.
- India's role through NAM was not only limited to the attainment of its foreign policy goals, but also to achieve a long-term objective of global peace and security. Since independence in 1947, India has been in pursuit of strategic autonomy through non-alignment.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF NAM

- **Fight against Colonialism, imperialism, racialism:** In the first phase, NAM members Fought against the colonial rule being remained in the large part of Asia, Africa and Latin America. For it, the movement of NAM has to oppose all kinds of dominance and hegemony by foreign ruler. NAM member neither followed an expansionist policy, nor allows other states to follow expansionism. Similarly, it was against discrimination based on colours of the skin.
- **Efforts towards disarmament:** In the early 1960s, NAM was instrumental in approval of Moscow Test Ban Treaty through the conference on Disarmament in the UN. India always raised the problem of discriminatory nature of nuclear proliferation regime through the forum of NAM. As a result, NAM was able to get the decade of 1970 declared as '**Decade of Disarmament**' by the UN. However, NAM's declining influence in the post-cold war era did not allow it to follow such agenda more aggressively.
- **Efforts for the Establishment of NIEO:** It was realized that without economic independence, political freedom is false. Hence, since NAM's Algiers summit in 1973 economic agenda acquired the centre stage. It is envisaged that this new model needs to be **egalitarian and 'just'**. Collectively, these states raised this issue in the UN General Assembly and were successful in getting a declaration for the establishment of NIEO on 1st May 1974. In the post-cold war era this became all the more ardent to achieve because of process of globalization and weakening of NAM itself. However, India is still making efforts through the '**New Regionalism**' approach and joining new permutation and combinations through IOR-ARC, SAFTA, ASEAN, EAS and other such forms.

10 Principles of Bandung

The following are the main goals and objectives guiding members of Non-Alignment movement as espoused at the 1955 Bandung conference.

- **Respect for fundamental human rights** and for the purposes and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.
- Respect for **the sovereignty and territorial integrity** of all nations.
- Recognition of the **equality of all races** and of the equality of **all nations** large and small.
- **Abstention from intervention or interference** in the internal affairs of another country.
- Respect for **the right of each nation to defend itself** singly or collectively, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
- **Abstention from the use of arrangements of collective defence** to serve the particular interests of any of the big powers, abstention by any country from exerting pressures on other countries.

- **Refraining from acts or threats of aggression** or the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country.
- **Settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means**, such as negotiation, conciliation, arbitration or judicial settlement as well as other peaceful means of the parties' own choice, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.
- Promotion of **mutual interests and cooperation**.
- Respect for **justice and international obligation**.

PHASES OF NAM MOVEMENT

- **Till 1970**
 - It was **most successful** phase of NAM movement. NAM members fought against racialism, imperialism and colonialism, opposed military alliances.
 - NAM members neither followed an expansionist policy, nor allows other states to follow expansionism.
 - NAM worked for stability in newly liberated zones.
- **1971-1990**
 - With detente between super powers was becoming effective and threat of Neo-colonialism becoming real, NAM focussed on **New International Economic Order (NIEO)**, was put forwarded at 1973 Algiers's conference. NIEO focused on the "**Development of underdevelopment in the periphery.**"
 - NIEO demanded the regulation of work of MNCs, more responsible approach to environment, distributive justice based on historical responsibility.
 - However, NAM members were not successful in NIEO agenda. Nuclear disarmament was also failure.
- **Post-cold war**
 - With the disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the Warsaw Pact, world order changed from bi-polar to unipolar. USA emerged as single superpower. NAM relevance has been in question after the end of cold war.
 - In India, G. Parthasarathy and Brajesh Mishra called for its obituary.
 - But new orientation was given saying cold war ended but not the problems of the developing countries.
- **Havana Declaration of 2006**
 - Havana summit of 2006 reoriented the agenda of NAM. It stated that the Purposes of the Movement in the present international situation.
 - To promote and reinforce multilateralism and, in this regard, strengthen the central role that the United Nations must play.
 - To serve as **a forum of political coordination** of the developing countries to promote and defend their common interests in the system of international relations.
 - To **promote unity, solidarity and cooperation** between developing countries based on shared values and priorities agreed upon by consensus.
 - To **defend international peace and security** and settle all international disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the principles and the purposes of the UN Charter and International Law.
 - To **encourage the respect, enjoyment and protection** of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, on the basis of the principles of universality, objectivity, impartiality and non-selectivity.

RELEVANCE OF NAM

- As far as India is concerned it would be useful to distinguish between the philosophy and ideology of "Non-Alignment" which lays emphasis on strategic independence and autonomy, and the "Non Aligned Movement" which seeks to take a collective position on challenges faced by the developing world.

- **Integral part of foreign policy:** NAM as foreign policy is very much relevant today. Many developing countries like India still follow NAM policy. The policy to avoid colonization and imperialism continues to remain valid for all small and developing countries.
- **Check on big power ambitions:** NAM constitutes 120 developing countries and act as a check on big power ambitions. It stood as a unifying force against the traditional foreign policy of great power and strictly restricts imperialism, nationalism and universalism.
- **Base of 'South-South' co-operation:** NAM acts as catalyst to foster the co-operation between South-South nations. It raises issues that are of major concern for the south countries. It initiate economic, political and social development corner to achieve desired results of moving from developing to developed nations.
- **Shashi Tharoor** in his article "**Is the Non-Aligned Movement relevant today?**" has also questioned relevance of NAM post-cold War. In his words, "with the end of cold war, there are no longer two rival blocks to be non-aligned between and many have questioned the relevance of NAM whose very name signifies the negation of choice that is no longer on the world's geopolitical table."
- According to **S Jaishankar**, in contemporary global politics, blocks and alliances are less relevant today as we are moving towards largely loose arrangement. Alliances and blocks are as much a cold war concept as nonalignment. During the Cold War, the glue that held countries of an alliance together was composed of ideological convergence and an existential military threat. With the disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the Warsaw Pact, this glue dissolved and the international options of alliance partners widened, just like those of NAM countries.
- **Harsh Pant** added that NAM was oaky when India wasn't economic or military power, now India has to compete with China which is increasingly taking lead over India's leadership status. According to him, there is need to pursue new goals and policies and no point sticking to old shibboleths.
- **G Parthasarathy** holds that Non alignment gave India flexibility, but NAM never been forum of any consequence.
- **C Raja Mohan** has questioned the relevance of NAM even before end of cold War. According to him, NAM was irrelevant even before end of cold war. It didn't have any concrete achievement as it was extremely idealist to harmonize interest of so many countries which have collective interest. It never acted as platform for advancement of collective interest of 3rd world.
- **S Jaishankar:** Freed from the shackles of the Cold War, the NAM countries were able to diversify their network of relationships across the erstwhile east west divide. Non-alignment lost its relevance, and NAM its original raison d'être. Non-alignment movement was a concept of relevance in a specific era and a particular context, though the independence of action enshrined in it remains a factor of continuity in India's foreign policy.
- However, he also adds that Rejection of nonalignment does not mean a rush to alignment. India will not join an alliance system. India aspires to be leading power rather than just balancing power. India's new quest for strategic autonomy will be a complement to India's global economic engagement. India's earlier strategic autonomy was in context of unipolar moment. Today's strategic autonomy is in context of rise of China.
- **Vijay Gokhale** during **Raisina Dialogue** held that India has moved from its non-aligned past. While highlighting change in Indian foreign policy he held that India is aligned only with its interest.
- **Harsh V Pant** has also commented on relevance of NAM in context of PM Modi's recent speech in NAM summit. According to him, India has buried NAM for good. As international institutions rarely disappear, NAM will also continue with its mothballed existence. In his words, "to construe the recent speech in NAM summit as Modi's embrace of a now redundant philosophy of global engagement would be a big fallacy."
- However, on the other hand some scholars have pointed out **need for NAM to navigate the geopolitical flux.** **Shashi Tharoor** says that with the passing of binary superpower led world, NAM has redefined itself as a movement for countries that are not aligned with any major power. NAM has been shaping a persona that is increasingly vocal about resisting the hegemony of the sole superpower, the USA and in asserting the

independence of its members-overwhelmingly former colonies in the developing world from the dominance of “Western imperialism.”

- **TP Sreenivasan** says that the world “non-alignment” gave wrong notion that end of NAM was to remain nonaligned, but quintessence of non-alignment was freedom of judgement and action and NAM remains valid whether there is one block or two.
- **Shyam Saran** in his book “**How India see the world**” argued that while NAM has lost much relevance for India, non-alignment still governs Indian foreign policy. Foreign policy has substantive content separated from public posturing. While ethical posturing was public, our focus on relative autonomy was substantive.
- NAM countries form 2/3rd of the membership of the UN General Assembly, and hence, it can form an important voting bloc for India's claim to permanent seat in UNSC.
- NAM, along with the **G-77 gives superior numerical strength to developing countries** and has helped keep many third world issues ahead of the agenda at the UN. This can also help India's cause in garnering a seat at the Security Council.
- NAM can be a useful platform to raise awareness about issues like climate change, cross-border terrorism, human rights violations, etc
- NAM encourages an equitable world order and the organisation can act as a bridge between countries with varying political ideologies and systems.
- **C Raja Mohan** has expressed different view about non alignment and NAM. According to him, India's **Non-Alignment has always been “Tabula Rasa” with capacity to accommodate any idea**. He has used this argument to support India's economic pragmatism and muscular geo-politics. Similarly, India can use the NAM platform to achieve its long-standing goal of rightful place in comity of nations.

Conclusion

- According to **MK Narayan**, while non-alignment giving way to strategic alignment, organization such as NAM may seem anachronistic. But it still resonates with many third world countries. It also offers alternative platform for putting forward a different viewpoint. It would hence be premature to announce death of NAM.

Was NAM a marriage of convenience among desperate countries or a structured and rational response to the abrasive competition of cold war?

- Many of NAM members were quite closely aligned with one or another of superpowers. This has led to many scholars terming NAM as marriage of convenience.
- During India's 1965 war with Pakistan, none of NAM countries gave support to India. The mediatory role between two countries was played by USSR and not the NAM countries.
- South East Asian countries while being members of NAM were also under sphere of influence of either USA or USSR. Later on, with active involvement of USA, they formed ASEAN.
- Egypt, which was founding member of **NAM went closer to USA after Camp David accord. India's Treaty of Friendship of 1971 with USSR can be as termed India as de-facto ally of USSR**. At the **Havana summit**, Castro floated the theory of **socialist bloc as natural ally of NAM**.
- Despite mutual non-aggression being a founding principle, Iran and Iraq went for war and got support from USSR and USA. **NAM was unable to diffuse the crisis.**There has a dichotomy between what NAM leaders preached and practiced.
- After 1991 economic liberalization, India along with majority of NAM countries have gone closer to USA. Development of nuclear weapons by India further exposed of opportunism within NAM rather than ideological commitment.

- Because of all these inconsistencies experts like **John Foster Dulles** have alleged **the concept of NAM to be immoral and opportunistic**. The reason of their allegation is that it is based on selfishness. They have alleged that non-alignment was an alignment with both camps of cold war.
- However, in an era subsumed by cold war hostilities and military bloc politics, NAM in 1960s opposed military alliance: and called for disarmament. In 1970s, NAM expressed solidarity against neo-colonialism, and endorsed the New International Economic Order, thus giving voice to the poor counties of the South against north. In the 1980s it opposed apartheid and racism in the context of African anti imperial struggle leading to their independence.
- It has been credited for **reducing the hostility among super powers**. NAM changed the nature of inter-state relations by enabling the newly independent developing countries to play a significant role in world affairs. It advocated for right to self-determination for nations to chart its independent path without being compelled to collaborate and join restrictive factions.
- **Peu Ghosh** assesses the **contribution of NAM in terms of six Ds-decolonisation, detente, disarmament, development, democratisation and dissemination**. It demanded a revision of unequal global economic structure with a New international economic order based on equity and justice. Despite differences among member countries, NAM's role in disarmament, detente and decolonisation cannot be denied. **Indira Gandhi** during seventh summit said that "we have only established the base camp and have a long climb to attainment of our goals and ideals".
- The structure and apparatus of NAM is such that it allows for diverse ideologies to flourish within one umbrella movement thereby making it more enterprising and dynamic; it provides the widest flexibility to its members, which are at diverge levels in terms of geopolitical interest and economic development.
- Thus, termining NAM as a marriage of convenience will be a lopsided understanding of the movement. NAM definitely helped in easing the hostilities and gave the newly independent countries an independent path towards global affairs. To usher in a new world order, NAM has a definite role to play and the need of the hour is that NAM members should act in unison and revive the movement's assertive role and forge a stronger solidarity between South and South, ultimately leading to North-South cooperation.

RELEVANCE OF NAM IN POST COVID WORLD ORDER

- In 2020, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** addressed the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) virtual summit for the first time since assuming office in 2014. Calling COVID-19 the “most serious crisis” humanity has faced in decades and underlining the need for NAM to help promote global solidarity, Modi argued that **“NAM has often been the world’s moral voice” and in order “to retain this role, NAM must remain inclusive.”**
- The current environment has created new scope for revival of NAM. May summit brought focus on need of global solidarity to fight new challenges.
- NAM should develop new goals and revive **the principles of “peaceful co-existence.”** NAM taskforce will create a set of databases of basic humanitarian and medical needs of NAM members and potential donors. NAM can also provide platform for global south to come together to pool resources to tackle impending threats.

RATIONALE FOR INTENSIFYING ENGAGEMENT WITH NAM

- **C. Raja Mohan** in his article titled **“India rethinks the NAM”** has pointed out relevance of NAM in context of emerging New Cold War between the US and China. According to him, as India strengthens its own voice in world affairs, a more active engagement with the Non-Aligned Movement and, more broadly, the Global South, is coming into view. The new activism is expected to help India mobilise international support on issues of

national concern as well as generate greater political space amidst the unfolding rivalry between the United States and China.

- In Global Politics, basic realist premises can be used to assess NAM's viability. The realist standpoint favours the maximization of capacity by force or being allied with the passion and the pursuit of an interest-serving strategy flexible in changing enemies instead of varying interests. The 2 factors that highlight the importance of NAM are
 1. **International politics is a zero-sum game** among the power-seeking states to recognize one another as an independent state but never accept the principle of non-intervention unconditionally.
 2. The balance of order and security can be maintained by shifting alliances among states, preventing one from being overwhelmingly powerful.
- Further, those who say the **NAM is a relic of the Cold War** must also acknowledge that a **new Cold War** is beginning to unfold, this time between the United States (US) and China. As the conflict between the world's two most important powers envelops all dimensions of international society, India has every reason to try and preserve some political space in between the two giants.
- During the virtual NAM summit, PM Modi Called COVID-19 the "most serious crisis" humanity has faced in decades and underlined the need for NAM to help promote global solidarity. PM Modi further argued that **"NAM has often been the world's moral voice"** and in order "to retain this role, NAM must remain inclusive."
- Arguing that COVID-19 has shown limitations of the existing international system, he made a case for a new template of globalisation, based on fairness, equality, and humanity as well as international institutions more representative of today's world in the post post-COVID-19 era.
- **Second**, as pointed out by **C. Rajamohan**, Delhi paid lip service to the NAM but devoted a lot of diplomatic energy to forums like the BRICS and QUAD. Given the Russia and Chinese leadership of the BRICS, Delhi inevitably began to routinely echo the international positions of Moscow and Beijing rather than represent the voices of the 'Global South'. The Quad is less institutionalised than the BRICS but, here again, the focus is on great power politics rather than promoting the interests of the developing world. In this context, NAM provides an actual platform which provides natural leadership to India and provide opportunity for cementing south-south collaboration on issues of global concern.
- **Third**, to achieving its longstanding ambition of getting status of **'Major Power'**, India could do more with forums like the NAM that can help mobilise support around issues of interest to Delhi.
- **Fourth**, NAM can provide a platform for India to catch up China which has penetrated deep into Global South through its BRI project. China has observer status in NAM.
- **Lastly**, Indian diplomacy during the time of COVID-19 pandemic has been pro-active and has tried to shape the global discourse. Towards this, existing platforms like NAM and SAARC has been used by Modi in the same way in which he has used newer groupings like the G20.
 - According to **Harsh V. Pant**, this is an attempt to fill the leadership vacuum in the global order when both China and the US have exposed their vulnerabilities. India has shown that a nation with limited capabilities can also emerge as a leader by outlining the concerns of like-minded countries and working with them to build capacities in smaller states.
- Addressing the ministerial meeting of the 2019 Baku summit of the NAM, **S. Jaishankar** pointed out changes in geopolitical landscape since the first NAM summit of 1955. He further stressed the need to shift from Long-held assumption and alignments rooted in the legacies of colonialism and the ideology of the Cold War to new configurations and partnerships. In his words, "Multilateralism is undoubtedly under strain today. It is important that our Movement that represents two thirds of the world's population – continues to work together and take the lead in building multilateral governance structures" that are capable of meeting the 21th Century challenges.

- Similar views have been expressed by **Harsh V. Pant**. In his words, “there was a time for non-alignment. New Delhi has been there and done that. Today’s India and its aspirations demand much more from its leadership.” He further adds that, given India’s current security predicament, India cannot afford to be non-aligned in the traditional sense of the term as it will have to build partnerships with like-minded countries to build its capacities. India’s security rationale and its leadership ability means that India will always need its own voice to project itself on the global stage.

NON ALIGNMENT 2.0

- **Non-Alignment 2.0: A foreign and strategic policy for India in the 21st century**, is a report released by a group of foreign policy experts, which identifies the basic principles and drivers that would make the country a leading player on the world stage while preserving its strategic autonomy and value system. This report aims to identify the basic principles that should guide India’s foreign and strategic policy.
- It echoes Nehruvian/Liberal perspective on foreign policy, which is, by and large, the establishment perspective on foreign policy issues. According to **Chinmay Ghare Khan**, the report offers a comprehensive view of foreign policy and makes sensible suggestions to deal with geopolitical flux.
- The report deals with India's approach towards **the ‘Asian theatre,’ the international order, hard power, internal security, non-conventional security issues** like energy and nuclear options, the knowledge and information foundations of power as well as the state and democracy.
- The report emphasises that
 1. For its strategic and foreign policy to be successful, India must **sustain domestic economic growth, social inclusion and democracy.**
 2. Its approach must be to secure the **maximum space possible for its own economic growth** in order for the country to become reasonably prosperous and equitable.
 3. Although India's competitors will put roadblocks in its path, “the foundations of India's success will depend on its **developmental model.**”
 - The report has warned that underlying factors like, favourable growth prospects, demographic profile and international environment, that are propitious for our growth may not last long.
 - As per the report, India's big challenge will be to aim at not just being powerful but to set new standards for what the powerful must do, because in international relations, “idealism not backed by power can be self-defeating and power not backed by the power of ideas can be blind.”
 - Further, India's legitimacy in the world will come from its ability to stand for the highest human and universal values and at the global level, “India must remain true to its aspiration of creating a new and alternative universality.”

Critics

- **Former NSA Brajesh Mishra**, who spoke at the launch, questioned the approach of the report, especially its view that India not take sides in the rivalry between China and the U.S. In his words, China's approach was that of the Middle Kingdom, it wants to be number one, and India's priority should be to build a closer partnership with Washington.
- **Bharat Karnad** called it a **regressive foreign policy roadmap**. It Misunderstands power, ignores the centrality of balance of power politics in inter-state relations. This, in turn, leads to questionable analysis and doubtful policy prescriptions.
- Document says India’s influence is ideational and moral rather than material. The problem is that while ideas matter, it is less important than material power and usually its servant. Morality, “the power of example”, is even more problematic because it is inconsequential in international politics.

RE-INVENTING NAM

- With change in global political order, NAM needs to realign itself with current realities and a reinvent itself to make the organization relevant again.
- Global economic order is shifting from Atlantic Ocean to Indo-Pacific. Multipolar world order and rising powers like China and India's strengths need to be leveraged to make voices of 3rd world get heard.
- **Complex interdependence:** global threats like terrorism, pandemics, and climate change etc. These need to be formulated in NAM agenda. A world vision, comprising of a **global village and interdependence** among all nations including between North and South needs to be pursued.
- **Liberal institutional view:** Regional organizations do not ring a death knell for NAM, rather they need to be co-opted in NAM framework to coordinate and reconcile their often-conflicting aims.
- **Marxist view:** NAM needs to Safeguard member nations from ills of **neo-liberal globalization**.
- **Post-colonial view:** NAM needs to Safeguard autonomy of post-colonial societies.

Conclusion

- As **T.P Sreenivasan** says that **quintessence of NAM lies in 'strategic autonomy'**. In the complex reality of International Politics and geo-political flux, dialogues and cooperation will allow postcolonial societies to form alternate constructions to safeguard their interests.
- While India needs selective and multiple alignment to replace non-alignment as economic and political power is redistributed globally, it cannot allow deft balancing to degrade into opportunistic and sequential agreeing with whichever world leader is in town.
- Non- Alignment has **not lost any of its relevance** rather it has stood the test of time. NAM can play the most important role in protecting the economic interest of the third world countries as well as promoting south-south co- operation.
- NAM should develop a progressive agenda on the fundamental values of democracy, human right and multiculturalism. There are so many worldwide issues like greenhouse gas emissions, health concerns specially AIDS, drug trafficking, rising instances of poverty, food crisis and unemployment, NAM's spectrum could be enlarged with these increasing concern.

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INDIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY

Syllabus

India and South Asia:

- (a) Regional Co-operation: SAARC – past performance and future prospects.
- (b) South Asia as a Free Trade Area.
- (c) India's "Look East" policy.
- (d) Impediments to regional co-operation: river water disputes; illegal cross-border migration; ethnic conflicts and insurgencies; border disputes.

UPSC PYQ

1. Identify the constraints / challenges to the regional cooperation in South Asia.
2. Ethnic conflicts and insurgencies in North-East India can be better managed by improving relations with the neighbouring countries. Substantiate the statement with suitable examples.
3. River water disputes are emerging as a major source of conflicts and suggest the remedial measures.
4. "Sometimes we visualize that SAARC's efforts come to halt because of various impediments to regional cooperation." Elaborate with reasonable examples of impediments.
5. What are the hopes and aspirations of 'Look East Policy of India? Explain. 15 marks
6. Discuss the shift of India's foreign policy towards Pakistan in the light of Pathankot incident. 15 marks
7. What are the impediments in the development of South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA)?
8. "The Treaty of Perpetual Peace and Friendship between India and Bhutan needs to be revised with more pragmatic, realistic obligations and responsibilities." Comment.
9. "Despite the differences between India and Pakistan on various issues, Indus Water Treaty has stood the test of times." In the light of this statement, discuss the recent developments over this issue.
10. Do you subscribe to the idea that in the new evolving Asian dynamics, Japan and India have not only moved closer in economic cooperation, but also in strategic partnership?
11. Evaluate India's stand on the recent Rohingya refugee issue.
12. Analyse the significance of India's Look East Policy in the light of concerns of the indigenous people of North-East India.
13. What are the current issues in Brahmaputra River water sharing between India and China? 15 marks
14. Outline the reasons of low volume of trade in the SAARC region.
15. Analyze the impact of hydropolitics on Indo-Bangladesh relations.
16. Discuss the future prospects of Indo-Nepal relations in the context of the recent publication of new Nepalese map wrongly claiming Indian territory.
17. How does cross-border terrorism impede the achievements of peace and security in South Asia?

Introduction-

- The South Asian region, which is home to eight countries, and the Indian Ocean region (maritime Indian Ocean region; mostly western Indian Ocean) comes under the broad geographic expanse of India's neighbourhood.
- However, nation-states such as China and Myanmar, though not part of South Asia in formal institutional regionalisation plans yet share a border with South Asia, also form a part of India's neighbourhood. Moreover, there are ideas such as "**extended neighbourhood**" (linking India with other regions which do not necessarily share borders but share cultural, civilisational or economic linkages) that have come up in policy parlance in recent times.
- **C. Raja Mohan** argues that without enduring primacy in one's own neighbourhood, no nation can become a credible power on the global stage.

- According to **Prof. S. Shaji**, given its centrality and capabilities, since independence, traditionally India had preponderance in the region, especially in south Asia and to a large extent, in the western Indian ocean. In a way, India, while maintaining zig-zag relations with Pakistan and China, have had relatively long phases of cooperation with smaller countries, though there were rare occasions of strain or conflict.
- **C. Rajamohan and S. D. Muni** argue that for India 'achieving the objective of becoming one of the principal powers of Asia will depend entirely on India's ability to manage its own neighbourhood

DETERMINANTS OF NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST POLICY-

- Given its centrality and capabilities, since Independence, traditionally India had preponderance in the region, especially in South Asia and to a large extent, in the Western Indian Ocean.
- According to **Prof. S. Shaji**, 2 key factors determined India's neighbourhood policy- Policy of Balancing and Domestic Factors
 1. **Policy Of Balancing-** to a large extent, India's foreign policy approach towards its neighbours were shaped by the "principle of balancing". For instance, the policies that the major adversarial States (such as Pakistan and China) followed with super powers defined India's relations with the latter.
 2. **Domestic Politics-** some of the conflicts in the neighbourhood had domestic dimensions — for example, the India-Sri Lanka conflicts in the eighties and water sharing issues with Bangladesh.
- According to **prof. S. Shaji**, post-cold war, India's newly defined foreign policy premises began to provide an unprecedented attention to the neighbourhood. The factors that contributed to such changes broadly fell under two categories — **systemic and domestic**.
- The **systemic (international) level factors** included the collapse of the cold war binaries, spread of globalisation, increased degree of regionalism while the **domestic level factors** included introduction of economic reforms, emergence of coalition politics, nuclearization and so on.
- As a result, there were several initiatives to build better ties with its neighbours as evident from the increased trade, confidence building measures, border agreements/treaties and so on. India even undertook non-reciprocal initiatives to its south Asian neighbours to build ties and instil a high degree of confidence. One of those initiatives was the "**Gujral doctrine**" of 1996.
- The present policy discourse of '**neighbourhood first**' has emerged in context of transformation in India's status as 'rising global power' and rising Chinese footprint and emerging centrality of Indo-pacific in global politics.

Views on Indo pacific

1. **Muchkund Dubey**- Multiple factors shape neighbours perception of India- huge asymmetry in size, land, water and other disputes and India's involvement in their domestic politics. India couldn't establish itself as a benevolent neighbour.
2. **M.K. Narayanan**- If India is not seen to be actively involved in ensuring that the region is at peace and is functioning in conformity with its worldview then any claim of global leadership will be nothing more than treading water.
3. **Constiantino Xavier**- Disconnectivity remains the default state of affairs between India and its neighbours.
4. **Atal Behari Vajpayee**- we can change history but not geography, we can change our neighbours but not

our neighbours.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW -

1. **British Policy** - British policy towards neighbourhood was dictated by its need to secure its Indian Colony. British used Nepal, Afghanistan as buffer states against Chinese and Russian states respectively. Even in Indian ocean region and in west Asia, British control was aimed to ensure security of Indian borders.
2. **Nehru's policy of Panchsheel** -
 - **Nehruvian 'family approach'**- Nehru viewed India's neighbours through a broad spectrum and within a broader Asian framework.
 - The 'family approach' propagated the idea of '**part of one'theory**. Because of British legacy the focus during the Nehruvian era was primarily on security aspects and not much on economic dimensions such as building developmental projects etc.
3. **Gujarat Doctrine** -
 - In the post-Cold War period, which began in the 1990s, India set out to refashion its foreign policy premises on non-alignment, its relations with Western bloc countries, regionalism and so on, which in turn had a huge impact on India's neighbourhood/regional policies.
 - The Gujarat doctrine was based on the principle of **Panchsheel and Non-Reciprocity**. It called for greater investment in the region without expecting reciprocity as it was felt that India being a larger and more developed country in all the aspects should shoulder larger responsibilities.
 - The present policy of Neighbourhood First is based on similar premises.
4. **Manmohan Doctrine** - It was focused on creating **Economic Interdependence** through enhanced trade relations and regional integration. However due to coalition politics, India's relations with Bangladesh and Sri Lanka deteriorated.

MAJOR CHALLENGES IN INDIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD RELATIONS

- Over the years, India has struggled to forge strong neighbourhood relations despite its geographical proximity and historical, religious, economic, ethnic and cultural linkages with neighbouring states.
- Even though SAARC has provided India with a platform to interact with its immediate neighborhood and regular visits between head of states are also common, however, there is 'an impression of neglect' in the region.
- India has focused more on 'managing [its] relationships with [its] neighbours rather than shaping it and giving direction to it with a long term objective and vision in mind'
- S.D. Muni identifies five problem areas in India's approach towards the neighborhood:
 - (a) The lack of a balanced political perspective
 - (b) The power differentials
 - (c) India's economic clout
 - (d) Extra-regional powers
 - (e) Mindsets, diplomatic styles and personalities.

Border Dispute-

- Historically, India has been a civilizational state rather than a territorial state. Due to legacy of colonisation, Difficult terrain, Domestic politics India could not solve its **boundary disputes** with neighbours.
- India has disputes with Pakistan over Kashmir, with China on Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai chin, with Sri Lanka on Kachchatheevu island, with Nepal on Kalapani Area.
- Over the past 70 years, it has succeeded to resolve its boundary issues only with Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. India also went to war with Pakistan and China over boundary disputes.
- According to former Foreign Secretary **Muchkund Dubey**, India faces threats to its security from almost all its neighbours, be it the spillover of their domestic ethnic conflicts, large-scale illegal migration or providing base for terrorism directed against India.
- The single major irritant in preventing India from developing a coherent neighbourhood policy has been the strained Indo-Pak relations. Serious tensions have persisted between India and Pakistan since the partition of 1947. After the 26/11 terrorist attack on Mumbai in 2008, bilateral relations between India and Pakistan suffered a setback.

Trade Barriers

South Asia is one of the most poorly integrated regions due to multiple factors. The intra-regional trade among South Asian economies is lowest in the world at 5.6% (2017) of their total global trade.

Reasons for low trade -(Same points Can be used for poor regional integration subtopic)

1. **Historical reasons** - India adopted socialist model of economy and policy of import substitution and protectionism till 1990s and civil wars and domestic instability in other countries
2. **Poor Connectivity**- Due to difficult terrain on borders, poor development of inland waterways, poor border infrastructure like border huts etc.
3. **Ineffective regional organisations**- Failure of SAARC due to India Pakistan conflict. Both SAPTA and SAFTA have remained ineffective.
4. **Bilateral conflicts**- Border disputes, river water disputes , wars between India and Pakistan has affected regional integration and has a spill over effect on regional trade.
5. **Non complementary nature of economies**- Countries with different comparative advantages and product specialisation would have more opportunities to mutually benefit from trade than countries with a high degree of similar products and specialisation. In South Asia, most countries in the region are competitors in their export markets in a narrow range of products, namely textile and apparel exports.
6. **Lack of political will in countries** as the primary focus of countries was on nation building, security and defence of borders.

Way Forward-

1. Revisiting Free Trade Agreements-

- As SAFTA and SAPTA have been ineffective, FTA under BIMSTEC has been under negotiations for more than 15 years and India-Sri-Lanka FTA is more than 20 years old.
- This will require political leadership to sacrifice domestic protectionism in order to pursue long-term strategic interests of greater trade interdependence with its neighbours.

2. Eliminating NTBs-

- Countries in South Asia must take steps towards elimination of para-tariffs and NTBs such as import policy barriers, anti-dumping and countervailing measures, testing and certification requirements, export subsidies etc.
- Globally, the signing of the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of **TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975)** is a positive step towards the elimination of some NTBs and simplifying procedures

3. Enhancing Cross-border Infrastructure

- Improvements in cross-border infrastructure such as Integrated Check-Posts (ICPs), road, air and rail links are key to facilitating trade in the region.
- Improved infrastructure will enable greater connectivity thereby strengthening production networks and value chains in the region.

4. **Adopting Global Best Practices-** good practices from other regions must be tailored to the South Asian context to facilitate the resolution of reported barriers to trade. For instance, Sub-Saharan Africa has addressed NTBs by way of an online mechanism that consists of national monitoring committees in each country to facilitate the resolution of reported trade barriers.

5. **stronger political will** is required to combat barriers to trade in the region, especially after the COVID-19 crisis which may result in unleashing a new wave of protectionist measures.

Conclusion-

Enhancing trade in the South Asian region is not only economically beneficial, it is also strategically important in order to integrate India with the global economy.

River Disputes -

- In 2016, **UNEP** claimed that by 2030 almost 'half of the world's population will suffer from severe water stress'. In this context river disputes will determine India's riparian relations with its neighbours: Pakistan, China, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan.

1. Brahmaputra River and India-China-Bangladesh relations

- As an upstream riparian region, China maintains an advantageous position and is building dams on Brahmaputra River to intentionally prevent water from flowing downstream.

- Recently, A draft of China's new Five-Year Plan (2021-2025), has given green light for first downstream dams on Brahmaputra. Both New Delhi and Dhaka worry that these dams will give Beijing the ability to divert or store water in times of political crisis.
- On the other hand, India has built dams on the Teesta River, a tributary of the Brahmaputra, to utilise the flow of the Teesta during the dry season. This is cause of concern for Bangladesh as nearly 100 million Bangladeshis rely on the river during the dry season. Both countries could not sign an agreement on sharing of water from the Teesta River due to opposition from the West Bengal government.

2. Kosi River and frayed relations between Nepal and India

- Since 1954, when the Kosi Agreement was signed between India and Nepal, talks between the two governments have stalled and water rights issues have not been addressed. As a result, the first dam had remained neglected for decades and a proposed partnership for a second dam didn't take off.

3. Indus water treaty between India and Pakistan

- Despite having favourable provisions Pakistan has demanded revision of the treaty.
- There is also resentment in India as it conceded 80% of water to Pakistan and there is demand to revise the treaty.
- India has protested against the construction of Azad Pattan: PoK Hydel Project in PoK and Gilgit Baltistan, which are territories claimed by India as part of Jammu & Kashmir.

Need for water management

- Climate change
- Domestic Water politics and its spillover effect on bilateral relation
- Enhancing regional cooperation
- Hydroelectricity
- Livelihood security (As most of south asian countries are dependent on agriculture)
- Building India's soft power.

Way forward

- **Regional Mechanism-** To decide on mutually agreed principles on water sharing and enforcing of agreements. SAARC could be used to enhance cooperation among riparian states.
- **Harnessing Hydropower Potential-** in the north east part of India and in countries like Nepal and Bhutan.
- **Transparency in data sharing-** sharing of data on river water flow in a transparent manner based on mutually agreed scientific parameters.
- **Cooperating on transboundary river management and water conservation.**

Rising Chinese footprint

Over the past decade, China has strengthened its economic and military ties with India's neighbours in South Asia, which could pose a challenge for India

Implications for India

1. Strategic Encirclement - India is encircled by a growing ring of Chinese power and influence.

- To the north, garrisons, airfields and missile sites linked by modern road-rail networks underpin China's dominant posture on the Tibetan plateau. Also, the Xining-Lhasa rail link connects with Nepal, where China has made significant political inroads.
- To the east, China's Yunnan province will gain access to the Bay of Bengal via rail, highway and pipeline, linking it to the deep-water port being built by China at Kyaukpyu in Myanmar.
- A parallel endeavour on India's western flank, through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), will create access to the Arabian Sea from Xinjiang to the Pakistani port of Gwadar via Gilgit-Baltistan.
- Further west, China has set up its first overseas military base at Djibouti on the Bab el-Mandeb.
- To our south, China has built a new harbour in Hambantota and modernised Colombo port for Sri Lanka.
- There is already news that the PLAN intends to deploy its expanded marine corps to Djibouti and Gwadar. The recent Chinese sale of eight diesel submarines to Pakistan and two to Bangladesh provides conclusive evidence of India's "**strategic encirclement**".

1. China card for neighbour - Increased Chinese presence also provides neighbour countries to strike a hard bargain with India.

2. Security concerns - The recent clashes in Galwan Valley highlight **China's Salami Slicing Policy** in work.

3. Chinese interference in domestic politics - Of countries like Nepal and Sri Lanka has resulted in strained relationship with India.

4. Trade

- Over the past decade, China has replaced India as the major trading partner of several South Asian countries.
- Only Afghanistan, Bhutan, and Nepal have a higher trade share with India compared to China.
- China's exports to the region have increased from \$8 billion in 2005 to \$52 billion in 2018.
- China has committed around \$100 billion investment in the economies of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, the Maldives, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

5. China-Pakistan all weather friendship - As seen in CPEC project, China is stalling India's effort in UNSC to list Masood Azhar as terrorist and Raising Kashmir issue.

6. Debt trap diplomacy - As seen in Sri Lanka where China has acquired Hambantota port on lease for 99 years.

Way forward

- **Neighbourhood first-** Giving diplomatic and political priority to the neighbourhood. India can adopt principle of **Gujarat Doctrine** i.e., non-Reciprocity.
- **Leveraging quad and other multilaterals** - Joint implementation of projects with QUAD countries to improve connectivity in the region.
- **Fast completion of projects** - Like hydropower projects in Nepal, Bhutan, Kaladan Multimodal project etc.
- **Solving boundary and river water disputes** - to reduce the trust deficit among countries.
- **Reviving SAARC** -to provide platform for cooperation and discussion and fastening regional integration.
- **State Sponsored Terrorism By Pakistan**
- **ISIS** has presence in Maldives, Sri Lanka as well as in India. The easter bombings in Sri Lanka highlight the threat posed by it.
- **Poor border infrastructure** along borders. For ex- Borders along Nepal, Bangladesh are used by terrorists for infiltration.

Impact-

- **Poor Regional Integration**
- **Trust Deficit** between countries due to boundary disputes and other conflicts,
- **Low Level of Trade and Economic Interdependence**
- **Fear of Nuclear War** between India and Pakistan.
- **Impact on India's global image** and status as a rising power. (mention quote of M.K. Narayanan)

Way Forward-

- **SAARC - SAARC Force** with contribution from all countries to conduct coordinated action against terrorists.
- **Strategic Partnership and Intelligence Sharing** with armed forces of other countries. It can be based on the RATS mechanism of SCO.
- **Joint Military Exercises** to enhance interoperability between armed forces and protecting against traditional and non-traditional threats in Indian ocean region.

REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS**Importance**

- **Platform for Discussion** to solve disputes between countries.
- **Regional Cooperation** on critical issues such as blue economy, FTA in trade and investment etc
- **Regional Integration-** Through enhanced trade and reduced trust deficit
- **Common Policy on Global Platforms** such as WTO, UN. Support from neighbouring countries is critical for India's ambition of a permanent seat of UNSC.
- **Developing Regional Security Architecture** by building border infrastructure and joint patrolling in Indian Ocean Region. India can help other countries in capacity building through SAARC.

Reasons for Ineffectiveness- (covered above in trade barriers)

Way Forward-

- **Learning from ASEAN** -importance of continuing discussion and negotiations. For Ex- despite being under Military rule, ASEAN countries still engaged with Myanmar.
- **Alternative Arrangement- BIMSTEC** can be a new SAARC MINUS PAK.
- **Leadership by India** by putting more resources in Organisations like BIMSTEC and providing concessions to neighbours and helping them in capacity building in sectors such as Health, Education, disaster management etc.
- In his address at the SAARC summit, **Modi** declared “the future I dream for India is the future I wish for our entire region” assuring regional contemporaries that India will take the lead in development of the region
- According to **C. Raja Mohan**, the diplomatic engagements between SAARC members need to be sustained. In cases such as Indo-Pak bilateral relations, where stakes involved are very high, there is a need for uninterrupted dialogue with neighbours

INDIA'S ENERGY COOPERATION WITH NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES**Introduction**

- Energy security and connectivity are important pillars of our Neighbourhood First Policy. Govt's focus on renewable energy and the concept of '**One Sun, One World and One Grid**' have provided for increased energy cooperation in South Asia.

Examples of energy cooperation-

- **India-Nepal** petroleum products pipeline
- **India-Bhutan** joint venture hydroelectric project- Kholongchu project
- Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (**TAPI**) Pipeline,
- **Myanmar-Bangladesh-India** (MBI) Pipeline,
- Bhutan-Bangladesh-India-Nepal (**BBIN**) sub-regional grouping
- **India – Bangladesh Electricity trade** - MoU was signed in 2010 between two for bilateral Cooperation in the areas of Power and establishment of grid connectivity. India currently supplies about 1,200 MW power to Bangladesh.
- **India – Sri Lanka** - An interconnection from Madurai (India) to New Habarana (Sri Lanka) is under discussion between the two countries.

Benefits -

- **Regional Integration** by increasing interdependence and reducing trust deficit among countries.
- **Tapping into Hydropower Potential**- Hydro power potential in Bhutan and Nepal together is 1,13,000MW.
- **Economic and Social Gains**- Ensuring energy security will promote industrial and commercial activities which in turn will improve standard of life of people in the region
- **Environmental Benefits**- Investment in renewable energy like hydropower can help India to meet its INDC goals.

Government Steps-

- **At Bilateral Level-** Cooperation in hydroelectricity with Bhutan ,Nepal and Nuclear energy cooperation with Bangladesh (Rooppur power plant).
- **At Multilateral Level-** through International solar alliance.
- **Cross Border Electricity Trade** has started on the Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) to boost India's efforts to create a regional power grid. **SASEC-** Energy cooperation is a main focus of the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Operational Plan 2016-2025.
- **Through SAARC-** SAARC Framework Agreement for Energy Cooperation was signed by SAARC countries in 2014 to facilitate integrated regional grid across South Asia.

Issues-

- **India as a "Hydro-Hegemon"** - Due to the politicised nature of interactions on water sharing, the focus of existing bilateral agreements is on establishing sovereign rights over water, rather than the collective development of shared resources.
- **India's Delivery Deficit-** various projects in nepal and bhutan have been languishing for years.
- **Infrastructural Constraints:** Limited transmission network for cross border electricity trade and significant T&D losses limit scope of cooperation
- **Political Challenges:** Political instability in countries like Nepal and dysfunctional SAARC due to Pakistan's obstructionist attitude.

WayForward-

- **Improving Investment Environment** for the private sector for both electricity generation and transmission, particularly in Nepal and Bhutan
- **Harmonize Legal and Regulatory Frameworks** along with an **Energy Charter Treaty** for greater security for cross-border energy transfer related investments and transactions.
- Developing **regional energy cooperation framework** to ensure mutual beneficial cooperation.

NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST POLICY

- The policy of 'Neighbourhood First' focuses on creating mutually beneficial, people-oriented, regional frameworks for stability and prosperity. It aims to engage with neighbouring countries based on a consultative, non-reciprocal and outcome-oriented approach.
- **4 pillars** of policy
 - Diplomatic and political priority to neighbourhood
 - Active support for development of these countries
 - Greater connectivity and integration in the region.
 - Promote India led regionalism where neighbours are comfortable.

Positive Aspects of the Policy-

- **India's Munroe Doctrine-** NFP focuses on changing India's image of 'Big Brother' and strives for non-reciprocal , consultative and cooperative development assistance to neighbours.
- **Sub Regional Cooperation-** under BBIN and BIMSTEC. Recently, former PM of Sri Lanka **Ranil Wickremesinghe** has suggested an **Economic Integration Roadmap** for subregional cooperation.
- **Emergency Response-** SAARC assistance fund to deal with COVID pandemic, medical assistance under operation Sanjeevani and operation Neer to help Maldives during water crisis.
- **Connectivity-** Through projects such as sagarmala, greater male connectivity project in Maldives, BBIN, Kaladan project etc.
- **Maritime Security-** India has assumed the role of **Net Security Provider** in Indian ocean region and PM Modi has given the vision of SAGAR- security and growth for all.
- **Developmental Assistance-** Through High Impact Community Development Projects, Quick Impact projects etc.

Challenges-

- Rising Chinese Footprint (explained earlier)
- Border and river water disputes
- Domestic Politics- Tamil issue , Teesta water issue, Rohingya issue, CAA NRC ISSUE etc.
- Failure of SAARC
- Extreme Trust Deficit and Rise of territorial nationalism- for ex- recent border conflict between India-Nepal.

Way Forward-

- **Building on Soft Power** by leveraging historical civilizational and cultural linkages.
- **Re-Strategizing NFP-** by promotion of a multi-vector foreign policy by diversifying its foreign policy attention on multiple powers in the global arena while developing a stronger matrix of multilateralism and employing stronger diplomatic communications strategies at regional level.
- **Reviving SAARC-** by adopting Functionalist Approach- compartmentalising issues and cooperating in less contentious issues.
- **Connectivity-** faster completion of projects such as Kaladan project and working with like-minded countries like Japan, USA to improve connectivity in the region.

ANALYSIS OF INDIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY

1. On the occasion of completing 100 days of the Narendra Modi government's second term, External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** reiterated that **"the first circle of priority" remains the neighbourhood** and highlighted **two elements of the 'neighbourhood first' policy—frequent high-level political exchanges and "non-reciprocal policy"** towards its smaller neighbours. Beyond these stated elements, the neighbourhood approach is guided by pragmatism as Delhi rearranges the geopolitics of its neighbourhood.
2. **N. Sathya Moorthy** has analysed the rising Chinese economic footprint in south Asia and suggested measures to counter it in post covid era.
 - With the advent of economic reforms in the post-cold war era, India let the designation of India's sphere of influence slip by, and had also let **'extra-regional nations'** — both friends and foes — to dominate the scene.
 - All affected nations want investments to revive the local economy and restore, if not create, jobs. However, the Chinese model of development funding entails deployment of Chinese labour, and not deployment of local labour.
 - Most of China's past funding to aid-seeking nations comprise mega-projects like ports, airports and express way, or what is euphemistically called 'physical infrastructure'. In the changed scenario post covid, the need will be for these nations to generate usage for the existing physical infrastructure before creating more. Their own focus will be on strengthening the 'social infrastructure'.
 - In this context, new Delhi can begin by identifying Indian investors and facilitate their project-funding in neighbourhood nations. In doing so, the government will have to ensure that neither is the investors' interest sacrificed at the altar of domestic political play out there, nor are the host-nations' inherent interests compromised by what is perceived locally as a less-than-fair deal — as was the case with the forgettable GMR-Maldives deal in the previous decade.
3. **K. Yhome** has analysed the interplay between the rising Chinese footprint and India's neighbourhood policy.
 - Sino-India geostrategic competition has long been a dominant element in India's relations with its smaller neighbours.
 - Engaging China to counter-balance India remains a key foreign policy feature of India's smaller neighbours. The line dividing Delhi's desire for its smaller neighbours to be sensitive to its security

concerns and being accused of interfering in their foreign policy has further blurred as all its smaller neighbours, except Bhutan, joined China's belt and road initiative.

- The strategic underpinnings of India's current neighbourhood approach are driven by both external and internal imperatives. On **external front**, within the rapidly changing regional geopolitical dynamics, a strategic objective of Delhi has been to strengthen ties with its smaller neighbours by reviving old linkages and building new ones.
 - **The internal strategic imperative** is in addressing the issue of India's underdeveloped border regions. As Delhi's interests spread beyond its borders, the need to stabilise and develop the border regions have become critical, as these places are key to unlock the potential of India's engagements with its neighbours. A critical element in achieving this goal is through the involvement of the smaller neighbours for mutually beneficial projects. Delhi has engaged external partners such as Japan and Asian development bank in developing cross-border infrastructure projects to strengthen its linkages with the smaller neighbours.
 - He also suggests that, for expanding and scaling up its reintegration efforts with its neighbours, Delhi should involve more partners such as south Korea, Australia, ASEAN, EU, among others with the aim to provide alternative options to countries in India's neighbourhood.
 - Highlighting us-China competition he held that, as China's belt and road vision and America's Indo-pacific vision compete for influence in India's periphery, is it in Delhi's interests to keep the focus on reconnecting with its smaller neighbours. The strategic significance of **"the first circle"** in Delhi's own vision of the rearranging the geopolitics of the region will remain a key factor in India's ability to shape developments in the wider region.
 - **On using hard power-** Delhi's desire to shape political changes and foreign policy choices of its smaller neighbours using hard power—military intervention and economic blockade — have not always achieved the desired goals. In 2015, India's "unofficial" economic blockade of Nepal pushed Kathmandu to enter in trade and transit deals with China. Moreover, such actions have often fuelled 'anti-India' sentiments in the countries of its periphery.
4. **Prof s shaji** has analysed impact of rising border tensions between India and its neighbours
- In the "current pandemic phase", in the times of contracting economies, several fissures have emerged between India and its neighbours which subsequently expanded into the economic and business arena. The non-traditional security threats such as the covid-19 pandemic are increasingly leading to traditional security conflicts. He further adds that, the China factor, the changing global power architecture, and the existing conflicts with neighbours will play a significant role in India's foreign policy, of which its neighbourhood policy is a crucial one.
 - In this context, he suggests that a new neighbourhood policy needs to be imaginatively crafted in tune with the emerging realities in order to maintain its regional power status and to realise status transformation to the next level in the near future. It calls for promotion of a multi-vector foreign policy by diversifying its foreign policy attention on multiple powers (not only the us; but also, Russia, the European union, Africa and so on) in the global arena while developing a stronger matrix of multilateralism and employing stronger diplomatic communications strategies.
 - These initiatives are needed to be properly backed up by sufficient innovative hard power resources (defence and economy) and the use of soft power strategies. The latter can be operationalised only by way of creatively propelling India's democratic values and ideas, which can further improve its civilisational ties with regional states.
5. **C. Raja Mohan** has analysed India's intervention in India's neighbourhood

- **“Big nations always intervene in other nations but fend off potential threats to their own sovereignty.”** Intervention is part of international life; and the rhetoric on sovereignty in the international discourse tends to be, it’s an **“organised hypocrisy”**.
- According to him, the concept of national sovereignty was never absolute. Big nations tend to intervene more, and the smaller ones find ways to manage this through the politics of balancing against their large neighbours. Ironically, preventing intervention by one power invites intervention by another. For example, Nepal has long resented India’s interventions and saw Beijing as a benign neighbour. But as it gets closer to China to balance India, Nepal finds Beijing has its own imperatives for intervention.
- The subcontinent has historically been an integrated geopolitical space with a shared civilisational heritage. Equally true is the reality of multiple contemporary sovereignties within south Asia. In dealing with these twin realities, the principles guiding India’s engagement should be mutual respect and mutual sensitivity which could help India better manage the complex dynamic with its neighbours.

Conclusion : India’s neighbourhood first policy in recent years has seen some intense engagements with neighbours that are a high point of Indian foreign policy in recent decades. Yet, these relationships need constant nurturing.

India has a very long road ahead of it to try to bolster New Delhi’s regional leadership. Without taking urgent and proactive steps to build upon the current relationships and progress towards establishing new commitments in many South Asian countries, the neighbourhood will remain a challenge for India.

INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

PYQ's

1. How does cross-border terrorism impede the achievements of peace and security in South Asia[2020/10m/150w/5e]
2. Despite the differences between India and Pakistan on various issues, Indus water treaty has stood the test of times. In the light of this statement, discuss the recent developments over the issue. [2017/15m/200w/6b]
3. Discuss the shift of India's foreign policy towards Pakistan in light of Pathankot incident. [2016/15m/200w/8c]
4. River water disputes are emerging as a major source of irritation between India and its neighbours. Identify sources of conflicts and suggest remedial measures. [2015/15m/200w/7c]
5. What are the political and environmental contexts of the Siachen Glacier conflict? Comment on the possibility of environmental peace-keeping and collaborative arrangements being worked out with Pakistan on this aspect. [2012/20m/250w/8b]
6. Critically review the progress of the India-Pakistan peace process since the Kargil War. [2007/60m/6]
7. Explain the importance and limitations of recent Confidence Building Measures in Indo- Pak relations. [2005/60m/6]
8. Indo-Pak relationship veers around the peaceful settlement of the Kashmir issue. Critically evaluate various alternatives for its solution [2000/60m/8]
9. Discuss Islamic factors in Indo-Pak relations. [1996/20m/200w/5d]
10. It is said that India's bashing by its neighbouring countries is directly or indirectly linked to their internal social conflicts. Explain with the help of development of IndoPak and Indo- Sri Lankan relations. [1995/60m/7]

Background-

- By the terms agreed to by India and Pakistan for the partition of the Indian subcontinent, the rulers of princely states including Jammu and Kashmir were given the right to opt for either Pakistan or India.
- Hari Singh, the maharaja of Kashmir, caught up in a train of events that included a revolution among his Muslim subjects along the western borders of the state and the intervention of Pashtun tribesmen.
- He signed an Instrument of Accession to the Indian union in October 1947. This led to intervention both by Pakistan, which considered the state to be a natural extension of Pakistan, and by India, which intended to confirm the act of accession.

Views of Prominent thinkers regarding India-Pak relations-

1. **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**- Friends can change but not neighbors who have to live together
2. **Dilip Hiro** in **"The Longest August"**-Indo-Pak relation are tale of broken bloodline factual errors and mutual paranoia that has placed a bitter parting at the centre of destiny of subcontinent.
3. **Atif Shafique**- "On the face of it, South Asia, largely Indo-Pak, appears to vindicate the Hobbesian image of international relations".
4. **Shashi Tharoor**- He called Pakistan **"brother enemy"**, we have pursued everything but nothing seems to work.
5. **Shashi Tharoor** in his work **'Pax Indica'**- calls Pakistan as the biggest foreign policy challenge to India.
6. **Shyam Saran**- India's Pakistan policy must be based on the recognition that India-Pakistan relations are **deeply adversarial** and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future
7. **Rajesh Basroor**- The fundamental contradictions **are India's status quoist approach on Kashmir and Pakistan's determination to change it**. In context of this contradiction, he concludes that India has Pakistan challenge managed reasonably well
8. **M. K. Narayanan**- The long-term goal of India is to restore strategic autonomy of subcontinent, enlarge its strategic space and enhance its security options. Whereas Pakistan's identity is often defined by opposition and rejection of India. It has short term goals and sees talks and negotiations as mere stratagem (plan used to outwit the opponent).

9. **Prof. Vinay Kaura**- Pakistan has always been an important factor in India's domestic politics and foreign policy – a position that flows as much from historical disputes as from Pakistan's continued support for terror activities against India.

SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT ON UNDERSTANDING THE CONFLICT-

“SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST” SCHOOL OF THOUGHT- TOUQUIR HUSSAIN

- Relationship-oppressed by weight of past history, domestic politics and ideology
- Problem Relate to each other negatively-weakening each other
- In Pax indica, **Tharoor** writes Hatred is also being spread by the use of media

THEORY OF “INSECURITY DILEMMA”- HUSSAIN HAQQANI (PAK SCHOLAR)

- He asks in, “India vs. Pak” - Why can't we just be friend's Pathological obsession and Paranoia of elites
- Reductive nationalism – {95%-hatred towards India 5%-Love for Pak}
- Main problem is not Kashmir but most lavishly funded Pak Army
- **Ayesha Siddiqi** (“Military Inc”)- Disproportionately well-resourced deep state
- In words of Pakistani commentator **Cyril Almeida**, “the army is not strategically interested in peace”

THEORY OF “SECURITY DILEMMA”- SUMIT GANGULY

- In “The Deadly Impasse” he says that- Security dilemma and Deterrence don't work b/w India and Pak; Pakistan has revisionist motives and pak army is parochial

EVOLUTION OF INDIA'S PAKISTAN POLICY

- 1) **Under JL Nehru**- He **didn't consider Pakistan as foreign policy challenge** and believed that Pakistan will automatically merge with India as its history, geography as well as destiny is linked with India.
- 2) **Indira Gandhi**- She followed **realist policy** in Indo-Pak war of 1971. However, she also suffered diplomatic defeat in Shimla Agreement by failing to solve Kashmir problem.
- 3) **Gujral doctrine**- His policy based on **Panchsheel and non-reciprocity** brought new freshness to Indo-Pak relations.
- 4) **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**- He understood complexities and compulsion of relations well. To quote Vajpayee, **'we can change history but not geography. We can choose our friends but not neighbours.'**
 - ✓ However, India's Pokhran test justified Pakistan's nuclear weapons.
 - ✓ His efforts such as **Bus diplomacy** and **Lahore declaration** also backfired in the form of Kargil war.
 - ✓ Atal Bihari Vajpayee signed the ceasefire agreement of 2003 and the Islamabad Joint Statement of 2004, which together led to the resumption of the peace process and decline in violence in Jammu and Kashmir.
- 5) **Man Mohan Singh**- M. M Singh's Pakistan policy was based on **Interdependence and functionalism**. He focused on economic diplomacy to increase economic interdependence.
 - ✓ India-Pakistan peacemaking made rapid gains in 2003-2007, under Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Musharraf.
 - ✓ **Path-breaking CBMs**, such as trade and travel between divided Kashmir, were implemented, yielding a **draft framework agreement** that could have provided a lasting solution to the **Kashmir conflict**.
- 6) **Narendra Modi**- At the end of this period in 2014, the new government unveiled its **'Neighborhood First' Policy** which accorded priority to the South Asian countries in its foreign policy.
 - ✓ **Prime Minister level visits** between the two countries started and good will gestures were shown by both sides (fishermen released by Pakistan, Pakistan PM invited to PM Modi's swearing-in ceremony etc.).

- ✓ **Indian PM's visit to Pakistan in 2015 was first in a decade** and was therefore a significant change in India's approach to Pakistan.
- ✓ China and Pakistan signed the **China Pakistan Economic Corridor** (CPEC) infrastructural project in 2015 which was an affront to Indian sovereignty as the corridor passes through the PoK.
- ✓ Bilateral relations were dented by the series of attacks which started **with Gurdaspur terror attacks in 2015** and included other major incidents like the **Pathankot attack (2016), Nagrota attack (2016), Uri attack (2016), Amarnath yatra attack (2017)** and finally the Pulwama attack in 2019.
- ✓ India responded to the Uri attack by carrying out **a 'surgical strike' inside PoK** and to the Pulwama attack by carrying out the **Balakot airstrike** in Pakistan and **revoking the Most Favored Nation (MFN) status to Pakistan.**
- ✓ Following the **abrogation of Article 370** the diplomatic relations between the two countries have been downgraded. Pakistan launched a global diplomatic campaign to attract international support for Pakistan's position on Kashmir.

CHANGES UNDER NARENDRA MODI GOVT. SINCE 2014

- **Kanti Bajpai**- The policy under Modi is **'normal anger'** assertive diplomacy and more explicit coalition building as seen in increased security cooperation and diplomatic engagement with gulf countries.
- He defines this policy as **'cooperation-defection cycle.'** On the cooperation part, India has kept the doors open for engagement to maintain its image as responsible international player and due to imperative of nuclear stability in South Asia.
- **Whereas defection part** is highlighted in India's assertion to set the agenda and precondition of eliminating terrorism.
- India's present policy can also be explained by the so-called **Doval Doctrine of defensive offence strategy.** That India did not militarily counter Pakistan's aerial riposte to the **Balakot** strike through its air attack on military positions in **Naushera sector of the Line of Control** is indicative of India's defensive/deterrent intent, but through offensive means (**defensive offence**).
- India was able to set an image of "New India", where it would not tolerate the one sided terrorist attacks on its soil and give answer in the same language.

ANALYSIS OF POLICY

- The policy of defensive offense is based on **realist assumptions** of IR that **power is check to power.**
- Further India's stance of keeping the door open for dialogue is also in line with its image as **responsible global player.**
- According to 2021 Indus commission talks, India is allowed to have a minimum storage level on the western rivers – meaning it can store up to 3.75 MAF of water for conservation and flood storage purposes.
- According to **Shishir Gupta**, Under PM Modi, India has decided to call a spade a spade by building a pro-India lobby in the world and is prepared to defend its own interests by choosing its friends and degrading its enemies.
- India has also been largely successful in getting Pakistan isolated at the international arena through **FATF grey listing.**

CRITICISM OF THE GIVEN POLICY

- **Kanti Bajpai**- India's Pakistan policy has reached a **dead end** because,
 1. As Pakistan is **'sharp power'**, its ability to deal with coercion is quite high.
 2. International patience with India is wearing down. Due to its Pakistan policy, it has lent itself to be irresponsible power.

- **Rajesh Basrur**- He calls the current government policy as 'instant coffee' which lacks vision and goal clarity.
- **Ashley J. Tellis**- Recent Indian counter-terrorism activities have inflicted significant damage on terrorist cadres and their local leadership in the Valley. But these tactical gains have been undermined by the persistent alienation of its population—which then provides Pakistan with plentiful opportunities for meddling.

KEY ISSUES IN INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

After the independence India and Pakistan charted out separate courses for nation building with a hope that there was little left to fight among the two countries. However, the history of India-Pakistan relations since last 72 years has been a mix of aggression-reconciliation.

BORDER ISSUES

There are several border issues between India and Pakistan. The major ones are-

1. Kashmir issue
2. Siachin glacier issue
3. Sir Creek issue
4. Gilgit Baltistan issue

KASHMIR ISSUE

The Kashmir issue is the crux of the tortured relation and is one of the core issues for Pakistan. Musharraf believed Kashmir to be Pakistan's jugular vein, for India the core lies in the cross border terrorism.

- ✓ In words **Rajesh Basrur**, Kashmir is more of a symptom than the cause as the main contradiction is conflict of identity. Both countries have fought 3 wars on the Kashmir issue. It is not just a battle of territory but a battle of identities.



Pakistan view of Kashmir aspiration for self-determination mainly stems from military occupation of Kashmir and gross violation of human rights on Kashmiri people.

Need of Kashmir-

- **For India:** secular identity, location, China factor and fresh water availability
- **For pak:** Muslim brotherhood and water resources.

Views of Scholars-

1. **C. Raja Mohan**- "While Kashmir is on the bilateral agenda, Pakistan has a big problem. India's August 2019 move in Kashmir is stuck in Pakistan's political throat. It can neither swallow it nor spit it out. Pakistan's current Kashmir debate is about finding a way out."
2. **Ashley J Tellis**
 - ✓ FIRST, even if a solution to the vexed problem of Kashmir were found, **Pakistan is unlikely to give up on jihadi terrorism against India** as the Pakistani Army's grievances are too deeply rooted to forego its most effective instrument for bleeding India.
 - ✓ SECOND, the international community will sympathize with India's plight, but it **cannot neuter Pakistan's exploitation of terrorism** due to geopolitical significance of Pakistan.
 - ✓ THIRD, India must recognize that **Pakistani terrorism can at best be mitigated—not eliminated—in the absence of a fundamental transformation within Pakistan**. Mitigation may occasionally require punitive

military or covert action but, even when these are tactically successful, their larger effects are rarely enduring.

SIACHIN GLACIER ISSUE

History-

- ✓ The Siachen Glacier has been a bone of contention since the **Karachi Agreement in July 1949**, gave a **vague demarcation** of territories and unspecified authority over them.
- ✓ Indian interpretation was that Pakistan territory extended till **Saltoro Ridge based on the Simla agreement** where the territorial line's route after the **last demarcated Point NJ9842 was "thence north to the glaciers."**
- ✓ Pakistan's interpretation was that their territory continued northeast from **Point NJ9842 to the Karakoram Pass**. As a result, both nations claimed the barren heights and the Siachen Glacier.
- ✓ In the 1970s and 1980s both India and Pakistan permitted several **mountaineering expeditions** to climb the Siachen region on their respective sides. It was done to reinforce their claim on the area
- ✓ The most notable one was the one launched by **Colonel Narinder "Bull" Kumar** of the Indian Army, who led an expedition to **Teram Kangri**, along with medical officer **Captain A.V.S. Gupta**.
- ✓ When **Pakistan gave permission to a Japanese expedition** to scale an important peak (Rimo I) in 1984, it further fuelled the suspicion of the Indian Government of Pakistan's attempts to legitimize their claim.
- ✓ As many as **167 Army personnel lost their lives** in Siachen Glacier in the last 10 years due to weather-related incidents.
- ✓ While India's position is that there should be first demarcation of boundary followed by delineation and then demilitarization, Pakistan wants demilitarization first.

Views of Scholars-

- ✓ According to **Shyam Saran**, both countries came close to an agreement on Siachen Glacier thrice - in 1989, in 1992 and then in 2006. However, agreement could not be completed because of huge trust deficit between countries.
- ✓ Former PM **Manmohan Singh** was interested in making Siachen a 'Mountain of peace' and conduct joint explorations with Pakistan. However, it was opposed by Indian Army.
- ✓ According to **Stephen P. Cohen**, Siachen conflict is like 2 bald persons fighting over comb

Recent developments-

Recently, the Indian Army Chief, **General Naravane**, in his press conference reportedly made a reference to the possibility of "demilitarization of the glacial region" The army chief's remarks are significant because it is a departure from the uncompromising position that has been current in the recent past.

- ✓ **Shyam Saran** argues that the glacial region is a most inhospitable theatre and the extraordinary human and material costs it imposes on our troops would justify a review.
 - Further it would act as a tool to strengthen the table talks

What can be the solutions for Siachin problem?

- One, both countries can agree to a **glacier of peace with neither side occupying it**. Then there would be no strategic reason for soldiers to serve in such inhospitable terrain.
- The second option is **is mutual withdrawal of forces without delineation and authentication**. This is both undesirable and unlikely.
- The third option is **mutual withdrawal after jointly recording current military positions** and exchanging them as part of an annexure without prejudice to each other's stated positions, pending the final settlement of the Line of Control (LoC) and AGPL. This is perhaps the **best option** and takes on board

India's demand, and may not meet too much resistance from the Pakistani side given that they had agreed to it in 1992.

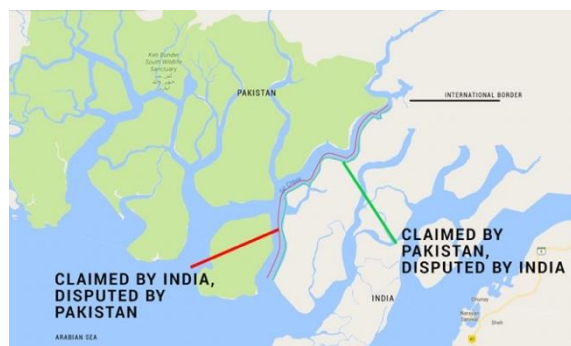
- It can also be converted into an **international destination for glacial research and other scientific experiments**. International scientific presence would act as a deterrent against any potential Pakistani attempts at occupying the territory and it could also check the Chinese activities in the greater Karakoram region. This perhaps is the best option under the circumstances.

SIR CREEK

- It is a 92 km stretch of marshy land **separating Gujarat from Sindh**.
- The dispute lies in **the interpretation of the maritime boundary** line between Kutch and Sindh.
- Before independence, the provincial region was part of the **Bombay** Presidency.
- While Kutch remained with India, Sindh went to Pakistan after partition in 1947.
- **Pakistan claims the whole of the creek as part of its territory** according to the Bombay Government Resolution of 1914 which was signed between the **Rao of Kutch and the Sindh provincial government**. As per this, the eastern flank of the creek was the boundary line
- According to India, this Green Line is an indicative line only.
- Another map drawn in **1925** is the basis for India's claim according to which the boundary line lies mid-channel. Also, mid-channel pillars were constructed in 1924. (The red line on the given map shows India's claimed position of the boundary line).
- India draws on the **Thalweg Principle** in international law according to which if the boundary between two political entities is a waterway, the boundary follows the thalweg of that watercourse.
- This means the **boundary would follow the centre of the principal navigable channel** of the waterway.
- Pakistan rejects this saying that the principle is applicable only to navigable channels which Sir Creek is not according to it.
- However, India says that Sir Creek is navigable during high tides and that fishing trawlers use the channel to go out into the sea.

Why is Sir Creek important?

- Sir Creek is a **strategically important** region and Indian and Pakistani troops had clashed in the **Rann of Kutch in the 1965 war**.
- It is an **important fishing ground** and is **one of the largest fishing sources in Asia**.
- Another reason for its significance is the **possible presence of oil and gas reserves** under the sea in that area.
- It is currently **unexplored** because of the ongoing border dispute.
- The area is also of great ecological importance with it being **home to flamingos** and other species of **migratory birds** in the winters.



Resolution attempts-

- After the 1965 war, the then **British PM Harold Wilson** intervened and both India and Pakistan set up a **tribunal** to resolve the dispute.
- The verdict was given in **1968** and according to this; **Pakistan was awarded 10%** of its claim.
- In **1997**, both countries **resumed composite dialogue** and one of the issues on the table was the Sir Creek dispute.

- In **1999**, there was a tense situation when an Indian fighter plane shot down a surveillance aircraft of the Pakistan Navy which was flying over the Sir Creek area. India says that **Pakistan violated its airspace** whereas Pakistan denies this.
- Between **2005 and 2007**, **joint surveys** of the area were carried out.

GILGIT BALTISTAN ISSUE

- Gilgit-Baltistan is a region that **India considers as part of undivided Jammu and Kashmir** but under current administration by Pakistan.
- The region has been a regular feature of India-Pakistan conflicts involving Kashmir.
- The Gilgit-Baltistan Issue came to the fore, when the government of **Pakistan decided to grant it "provisional provincial status" in May 2020**.
- Earlier, the region was a "**provisional autonomous region**".
- The government of India condemned this move as **illegal**, since the Gilgit-Baltistan area is considered as part of Jammu and Kashmir and by extension an integral part of India.

Background-

- When **Maharaja Hari Singh** signed the **instrument of accession** on 31st October 1947, the **two officers** of the Gilgit Scouts, the primary military presence in the region – **mutinied and launched a coup** that deposed the governor appointed by Maharaja Hari Singh.
- They **raised the flag of Pakistan** and invited its administration to occupy the region. Although the two British officers had claimed to have acted on their own accord, it has been speculated **that their government had directed them to hand over the territory as part of an understanding between Arab nations that supported Pakistan** along with curbing the Soviet Union's influence in the region through its ally, India.
- Regardless of the reasons, the **Gilgit-Baltistan region has been under the grip of Pakistan since then**. **India considers this an illegal occupation by Pakistan**, and any move to change its territorial borders of administrative status has been met with condemnation by the Indian government ever since.

India's stance-

- India has always considered the continued occupation of Gilgit Baltistan as **illegal**.
- In **1994** the Indian parliament had **passed resolutions claiming both Gilgit Baltistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir as part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir**, forming an integral part of Indian Territory.
- The other concern is about **the growing China-Pakistan relations**. Pakistan had **handed over some parts of Gilgit-Baltistan to China in 1963**. Since then, many development projects have taken place in the region, the most well known being the **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)**.
- These projects are considered an **attack on India's sovereignty** and territorial integrity. Therefore, the China Pakistan Economic Project constitutes a major part of the Gilgit Baltistan issue as this has escalated tensions between the two countries.

Latest developments-

- On **24 June 2020**, the government of Pakistan announced that **elections would be held in Gilgit Baltistan**. This came after a presidential proclamation on 16 May 2020. It was **opposed by India**, citing that no elections could be held in disputed territory.

- Another cause for concern is the **recent agreement by China and Pakistan to build five large dams in Pakistan. One of them would be built in Gilgit-Baltistan.** This project is in line with Beijing's One Belt One Road initiative, leading to speculation that China is aiming for an increased presence in the region.
- It can be safely said that **the removal of Article 370 in 2019** has led to many of these developments as of late. The Indian government must strengthen its resolve to raise the Gilgit-Baltistan Issue on the international level and try to resolve this dispute with peaceful means.
- Gilgit-Baltistan is **still a simmering dispute** between India and Pakistan and with the recent Indian-China border clash at the Galwan-Valley; it seems likely that China will bolster troop presence in the region in order to protect its projects there. It remains to be seen how this issue will play out in the coming years

TERRORISM ISSUE BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN-

- After military defeat in 1971, Pakistan changed its tactics and went for **Asymmetric balancing. General Zia-ul-huq started 'thousand cuts, zero-option war' policy** against India in 1990's. Pakistan uses terrorism as means to destabilise Kashmir. Many terrorist launch pads have been established in PoK along Kashmir border to infiltrate terrorists into India.
- Further, Pakistan has also provided funding and arms support to Khalistani terrorists. According to some strategic experts, **Kartarpur Corridor is Pakistan's attempt to revive Khalistan Movement in Punjab.**
- Pakistan may **also try to recruit Taliban fighters** for destabilising Kashmir after US forces withdraw from Afghanistan.

Recent developments-

- Despite the fact the after the Kargil conflict, there was a **Ceasefire Agreement signed in 2003**, there have been **regular cross border ceasefire violations** from the Pakistan side of the border with the trend being as such that since 2009 onwards, there has been a rise in the violations (with the exception of 2014). It has killed and injured security forces as well as civilians on both sides.
- With the regime change in India, there has been a different approach to the violations. With the **hardline policy of the new government**, there has been massive retaliation to the unprovoked firing.
- Thus, out of desperation, there has been a **rise in the number of infiltrations of terrorists** from across the Line of Control (LOC), which has been routine for quite a while now.
- With the void in between the Kashmiri people and the establishment increasing after the **devastating floods of 2014, there was raising discontent** again in the valley.
- The trigger to the events was the **killing of the militant commander** of the terrorist organization **Hizb-ul-Mujahideen Burhan Wani**, which led to widespread protests in the valley and the situation has been highly volatile ever since with almost daily scenes of protests and stone pelting in the valley.
- This is in sync with the stand Pakistan holds on Kashmir i.e., **to internationalize the issue of Kashmir and asking for holding a plebiscite in Kashmir** under Indian administration to decide the fate of Kashmiri people. The stand has been **rejected by India** as it says it is in direct **violation of the Shimla Agreement of 1972**, which clearly mentions that peaceful resolution to all issues will be through bilateral approach.
- After the **attack at the Pathankot base in 2016 January**, there was again a thaw in the relationship, especially when seen in the context that the Indian PM paid an unscheduled visit to Pakistan to meet his Pakistani counterpart.
- With Kashmir already on the boil and Pakistan adding fuel to fire to the situation, the **attack on Uri Army camp in September 2016** in which 19 Indian soldiers were killed made the Indian PM declare the statement that 'talks and terrorism' cannot go hand in hand.
- This was followed by **surgical strikes carried out by the Indian Army across the LOC** targeting the terror infrastructure in Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK). They were carried out at the end of September.

WHY PAKISTAN USES TERRORISM AGAINST INDIA

- **George Tanham**- India and Pakistan have structured their foreign policy against each other. If Pakistan's obsession with India is glaring, New Delhi's treatment is hardly any different. Their policies are mutually exclusive everywhere and are seen as zero-sum game.
- ✓ Pakistan uses terrorism to put dual burden on India. First, it denies **decisive victory** to India and second, it limits India's ability to achieve **regional hegemony**.
- **Ashley Tellis**- Even if it fails to achieve these goals, **jihadi terrorism** remains the perfect instrument for continuously coercing India.
- ✓ It provides the "deep state" in Pakistan with plausible deniability.
- ✓ It avoids the major conventional confrontations that Pakistan is certain to lose.
- ✓ It transforms Pakistan's nuclear deterrent into a license by which Rawalpindi can needle New Delhi without exposing itself to exorbitant Indian retaliation.

Future Prospects-

- ✓ Transforming this Pakistani behaviour fundamentally would require India to either accept its own failure or surrender to Pakistani extortion over Jammu and Kashmir.
- ✓ Because neither outcome is plausible—nor the prospect of a civilian government in Pakistan truly controlling the deep state is a pipedream—**India has to accept that Pakistan's efforts at strategic coercion through terrorism will persist well into the future**.
- ✓ Pakistan may occasionally change tactics: it may sporadically restrain its proxies to permit the realization of certain ends, such as encouraging bilateral negotiations or demonstrating Pakistan's credentials as a responsible state.
- ✓ However such tactics are chimera since the **very existence of pak is antithesis to India** and proxy war is best tool of defiance today

TRADE RELATION BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN-

- ✓ **Political tensions** have largely impacted trade relations between India and Pakistan.
- ✓ Intra-regional trade- accounts for a **little more than 5 percent of South Asia's total trade** while it accounts for **50 percent of total trade in East Asia** and the Pacific and **22 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa**. SAARC and SAFTA are also ineffective due to the conflictual relations between two.
- ✓ After the **Pulwama terror attack** in February 2019, **India withdrew the non-discriminatory market status** it had unilaterally granted Pakistan in 1996, popularly known as **Most Favoured Nation**, and imposed a customs duty of 200% on all goods originating from Pakistan.
- ✓ India also **suspended cross-LoC trade in April 2019** on receiving reports that these routes were being misused by Pakistan-based elements for funnelling illegal weapons, narcotics and fake currency.
- ✓ During **2020-21** (April-February), the recorded bilateral trade **was \$280 million**, of which **India's exports to Pakistan were \$278 million and imports were \$2 million**.
- ✓ Nearly 77% of India's exports comprised **vaccines, pharmaceutical products and products of chemical and allied industries**.

Suggestions to improve trade-

- As a trade facilitation initiative, India and Pakistan **should grant MFN status to one another**. India already granted MFN status to Pakistan in 1996 (revoked recently).
- The **volume of informal trade is larger than formal trade**; official trade can flourish due to regularizing the unofficial trade by improving trade infrastructure and bringing the items, which are being traded unofficially into the official tradable list.

India's trade potential with neighbours

While India is under-trading with Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, it is over-trading with Sri Lanka, Nepal and Maldives.



- The **promotion of trade and commerce**, as well as the movement of goods, services, and people, needs efficient and cost-effective transportation and communication.
- **Easing the complexities** of visa procedures, which should be considered by both countries.
- Increased bilateral trade allows producers in both countries to seek **price efficiencies** by providing lower-cost inputs to one another.
- **Enhanced trade cooperation** can also mean lower prices for millions of consumers. Given this advantage, both countries can jointly fight poverty deprivation, hunger, and inequality.

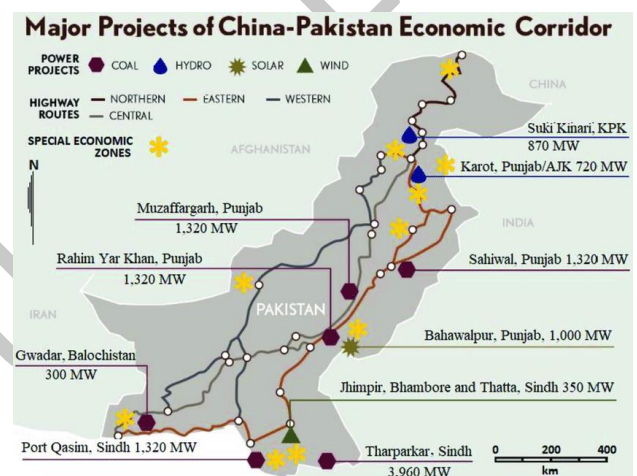
CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

The China – Pakistan Economic Corridor is a **collection of infrastructure projects** that are currently under construction throughout Pakistan. It is part of the greater **One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative** launched by the Chinese government initially valued at \$46 billion; it is now worth **\$70 billion as of 2021**.

The project intention of CPEC is to rapidly **upgrade Pakistan's important infrastructure** and strengthen its economy by the construction of energy projects, special economic zones, ports, and transportation networks.

Background-

- Since the **1950s**, plans were made for an economic corridor **stretching from the Chinese heartland to Pakistan's ports on the Arabian Sea**. Ever since the completion of the Gwadar port in 2006, Chinese interests in that particular region has been rekindled.
- The expansion of the port was **temporarily halted** due to political instability in Pakistan and the fall of General Parvez Musharraf and the outbreak of the Waziristan war in North-west Pakistan.
- In **2013**, **President Asif Ali Zardari and Premier Li Keqiang** decided to further enhance mutual connectivity by signing a series of MOU's on economic cooperation. These MOU's were part of a **long-term plan for the formation of the Chinese-Pakistan Economic Corridor**, which would initially be a part of the Silk Road Economic Belt as well. Further, plans were discussed by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met with Premier Li Keqiang in China to discuss further plans, which resulted in the full scope of the project being announced.
- The launch of CPEC was officially announced when China and Pakistan signed an agreement to commence work on **the \$46 billion agreement**, which is 20% of Pakistan's annual GDP.



CHINA PAKISTAN ALL WEATHER FRIENDSHIP-

- **Vivek Katzu-** Pak-China is not joint partnership, but patron-client relationship Patrons never give freebies in abundance, they keep them dangling a thread
- Recent India-China border standoff in Ladakh Region has increased possibility of 2 front wars on North-western and North-Eastern borders.
- China is also using Pakistan for strategic encirclement of India **through CPEC and Gwadar port**.
- The emerging **China-Pakistan-Iran-Russia** axis can endanger India's security on Northern borders as well as in Indian Ocean.
- China has raised J&K issue in UNSC three times since 2019.

Challenges for India

- CPEC is not just an infrastructure project but also has huge **geostrategic significance** for south Asia. It is an **expression of New Economic & Strategic Geography**

- Besides challenging India's sovereignty, it has many other consequences as well
- CPEC **passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Baluchistan**, both of which are home to a long-running insurgency where it faces terrorism and security risks.
- CPEC project's **lack of transparency and accountability** is a cause of concern, as it may be skewed in favour of China economically and strategically.

Geo-strategic Angle

- The project is part of **Containment strategy of China** to restrict India to South Asia.
- It also **ends China's Malacca Dilemma** but on the other hand, any military presence of China can create Gwadar Dilemma for India.
- China would also **disseminate its ideology and culture in Pakistan** through the terrestrial distribution of broadcast TV, which will cooperate with Chinese media in the "dissemination of Chinese culture". A similar signification is visible in the Mandalay town of Myanmar which has impacted local architecture and culture.
- The project may **undermine Pakistan's sovereignty** as its foreign policy, especially with India may be dictated by China, complicating the already estranged relations and create political instability in South Asia

Geo-economic angle

- It will **undermine the economic-interdependence between India and Pakistan** as instead of INSTC, Pakistan will be situated on East-West corridor through CPEC.
- Integration with south Asia for trade for Pak can be circumvented; secondly it will **make India's attempt of Pak isolation redundant**.
- Chinese approach of not partnering with local companies will **not help Pakistan create job opportunities**.
- The **political tension in Afghanistan** also may severely impede the benefits of transit corridors in South Asia.

Challenges to CPEC-

- The corridor runs **through an area fraught with tensions**.
 - ✓ First is the disputed territory of **Gilgit-Baltistan** where India has issues.
 - ✓ Second, **the Chinese are wary of extremism in the region**. There was an attack on Chinese consulate in Karachi.
 - ✓ Third, Pakistanis are offended because of Chinese high-handedness in **dealing with locals in business as well as in security measures**. (Chinese have been picking up Pakistani nationals from Xinjiang region and sending them to re-education camps)
- Pakistani is facing **debt crisis** and has very low reserves. CPEC has further put Pakistan deeper into debt.
- Lastly, Pakistan and China are discussing **extending CPEC to Afghanistan**. Though it can help increase China's influence and provide opportunity to explore the rare earth minerals like lithium, it has its own risk.
 - In September 2021, bus carrying Chinese engineers to the Dasu Dam project in Khyber Pakhtunwa was attacked and nine of them were killed in the incident.

Way Forward

- India's future strategy thrust on CPEC must be based on a **careful reassessment of the potential benefits as well as disadvantages** of the OBOR project.
- **The Asia-Africa Growth Corridor** is an India-Japan economic cooperation agreement, it can provide India great strategic benefits and counter China's OBOR project.
- India **should speed up work on the development of its own strategic projects** like Bangladesh, China, India, and Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM) and Chabahar Port.

Views

- **Manoj Joshi and P.S. Raghavan** have suggested policy of Economic interdependence and participation in BRI on condition that Islamabad and China open cross-South Asian trade routes.
- However, as per **Realist view** suggested by **Hardeep S. Puri** there should be no compromise with Indian sovereignty and New Delhi should continue resistance against CPEC.
- **Complex Interdependence policy** is suggested by **Daulat Singh Jorawar & C. Rajamohan**. They have suggested enhancing internal capabilities and blocking China in specific territories while taking benefit out of CPEC.
- However, the recent standoff between India and China in Ladakh and consolidation of China-Pakistan-Russia axis in Afghanistan has reduced the possibility of India joining BRI project.

INDUS WATER TREATY

- The IWT was signed by the then Indian Prime Minister **Jawaharlal Nehru** and the then Pakistani President **Ayub Khan**.
- Brokered by the **World Bank** (then known as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development), the negotiations for the agreement went on for nine years.
- Ever since the partition of India in 1947, the Indus River had been a bone of contention between the four countries through which it runs – **India, Pakistan, China, and Afghanistan**. The river originates from **Tibet**.
- India had blocked water to Pakistan for some time in 1948 but later restored it after the ceasefire. In 1951, Pakistan took the matter to the United Nations (UN) and accused India of cutting the supply of water to many Pakistani villages.
- On the recommendations of the UN, the World Bank came up with this agreement in 1954. It was eventually signed on September 19, 1960.

Provisions

- A **Permanent Indus Commission** was set up by the United Nations for resolving any disputes that may arise in water sharing, with a mechanism for arbitration to resolve conflicts amicably.
- According to the treaty, **India can use the water from the western rivers** for domestic, non-consumptive needs such as storage, irrigation, and also the generation of electricity.
- The **treaty gives India 20% of the water from the Indus River System** and the rest 80% to Pakistan.
- In executing **any scheme of flood protection or flood control** each country (India/Pakistan) will **avoid, as far as practicable, any material damage to the other country**.
- The **use of the natural channels of the Rivers** for the discharge of flood or other excess waters shall be **free** and not subject to limitation by either India or Pakistan, and neither of the countries shall have any claim against the other in respect of any damage caused by such use.
- As per the treaty **three 'western rivers' (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab) went to Pakistan** and the **three 'eastern rivers' (Sutlej, Ravi and Beas) were portioned to India**.
- **India conceded 80.52 per cent of the aggregate water flows** in the Indus system to Pakistan. India conceded its upper riparian position on the western rivers for the complete rights on the eastern rivers.

Why India signed treaty?

- India conceded its upper riparian position on the western rivers for the complete rights on the eastern rivers as it was vital to get the waters of the 'eastern rivers' for the proposed Rajasthan canal and the Bhakra Dam without which both Punjab and Rajasthan would be left dry, severely hampering India's food production.

Issues-

- Pakistan has objected to **Indian projects on Western Rivers** Jhelum and Chenab.
- There is also resentment in India as it conceded 80% of water to Pakistan and there is demand to revise the treaty.
- **Article XII of the IWT** says that it “**may from time to time be modified**” but it required ratification from both countries.
- **Pakistan’s Left Bank Outfall Drain (LBOD) project** passes through the Rann of Kutch in India’s Gujarat. The project was constructed without India’s consent. India has objected because this is in contravention to the IWT. The lower riparian state is in India and hence it needs to be given all details. There is also the danger of flooding in the state of Gujarat.
- **India does not use its entire share of water** it is entitled to as per the provisions of the IWT. About 2 million acre-feet (MAF) of water from the River Ravi flows into Pakistan unutilized by India.
- In the wake of the Pulwama attacks in 2019, the Indian government stated that **all water flowing into Pakistan at present, in the three eastern rivers, will be diverted** to Haryana, Punjab, and Rajasthan for different uses.

India’s projects on western rivers-

- **Tulbul** Navigation project – Jhelum
- **Rattle, Mangla, Bagliha** hydro projects - Chenab,
- **Bursar** hydroelectric project- on tributary of the Chenab
- **Tarbela** dam- Indus river

Way Forward-

- **Tapping on hydroelectricity**- out of the total estimated capacity of 11406 MW electricity that can be harnessed from the three western rivers in Kashmir, only 3034 MW has been tapped so far.
- Experts opine that **India should use the waters of the western rivers as permitted by the IWT**. This alone can send a strong signal to Pakistan. A lot should be thought over before any other drastic steps are taken, as they can have lasting effects on the relationship with Pakistan.

INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATION WRT AFGHANISTAN-

(Covered in more detail in Afghanistan chapter)

- **India directly touches Afghanistan through POK**. Had the present PoK been a part of India, it would have been in direct contact to India, thus directly threatening the Indian sovereignty.
- **M. K. Narayan** in his article in The Hindu titled ‘**Picking up threads from the Afghan rubble**’ calls **Pakistan as the ‘patron saint’ of the new regime in Afghanistan**. He further adds that, the Taliban are beholden to the ISI and thus, **Faiz Hameed was there to greet Mullah Baradar when he flew into Kandahar**.
- Due to fear of 2 front war and Pashtun Nationalism, Pakistan seeks **strategic depth** in Afghanistan. Thus, it is opposed to any Indian involvement in Afghanistan.
- **ISI has deep links with Haqqani faction of Taliban** which can be used to endanger India’s investments in Afghanistan. Even in recent interim government announced by Taliban, Pakistan holds certain key cards given the prominent role assigned to its protégés, Sirajuddin Haqqani and Mohammad Yaqoob, the son of Mullah Omar.
- There have been **various incidents of terror attacks** being planned on Indian soil by these networks.



- Pakistan can also **recruit Taliban fighters** for destabilising Kashmir once US forces withdraw from Afghanistan.

OPPOSITION TO INDIA'S UNSC SEAT CLAIM BY PAKISTAN-

- An informal "coffee club", **comprising 40-odd members' states**, has been instrumental in holding back reforms to the United Nations Security Council.
- Most members of the club are middle-sized states **who oppose bigger regional powers grabbing permanent seats** in the UN Security Council.
- The prime movers of the club include **Italy, Spain, Australia, Canada, South Korea, Argentina and Pakistan**.
- While Italy and Spain are opposed to Germany's bid for Security Council's permanent membership, **Pakistan is opposed to India's bid**.

CURRENT PHASE

PAKISTAN'S NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY: CAN PAKISTAN PUT OFF CHANGE AGAIN?

Pakistan has recently released its National Security Policy, which acknowledges the need for change in its state. But the policy did not talk about how the change will go.

PAKISTAN'S NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

- Prepared **after seven years of consultations**, it is being endorsed as the first policy document with guidelines for achieving **national security goals**.
- The Policy is divided into **eight sections** and places the **economic security of the country at the core**.
- The **other sections** include,
 - ✓ National security and cohesion,
 - ✓ Internal security, defence and territorial integrity,
 - ✓ Foreign policy
 - ✓ Human security
- The validity of the document is for **five years, starting from 2022**, and is supposed to be **updated by the National Security Division in case of requirements**.
- It can also be **updated whenever a new government is formed** in the country.
- The policy mentions that the country wants **to improve its relationship with India**, although it places **the Jammu and Kashmir issue as the core of the bilateral relationship**.

POLICY'S POSITION ON INDIA

- India is mentioned at least 16 times, **more than any other nation** in the policy.
- It mentions that **a just and peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute** remains at the core of the bilateral relationship.
- The document mentions that the **arms build-up by India is a cause of concern** for Pakistan.
- **Accusing India of "hegemonic designs"** and taking one-sided decisions.

WHAT ARE THE REASONS BEHIND NEW CHANGES IN PAKISTAN NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY?

- **Cross border terrorism:** With the end of the Cold War, Pakistan chose to opt for cross border terrorism to bring instability to Kashmir and turn Afghanistan into a protectorate. It has caused havoc in Pakistan itself in form of isolation at the international level.
- **Economic modernization:** Pakistan has done little to bring reforms to its economy. As a result, its economy in 2021 (GDP at \$280 bn) is well behind that of Bangladesh (\$350 bn). The Indian economy at \$3.1 trillion is also more than 10 times larger than that of Pakistan.

- **Foreign policy:** In the past, Pakistan played a large role in the Middle East and more broadly the Muslim world. But today, its equities in the West have steadily diminished. It does not get a call from Joe Biden since he has been elected as USA president.
- **Backfire of policies:** Pakistan's support for violent religious extremism has also started to backfire. Militant groups which were once seen as valuable instruments for Pakistan have now turned against the state. Also, severe financial penalties have been imposed on Pakistan by the international system for supporting terrorist activities. Similarly, the policy like **Blasphemy laws** has worked to create tensions among their own citizens.
- **Troubled relations: Barring the United Kingdom, Pakistan's equities in the West have steadily diminished.** After USA intervention in Afghanistan, Pakistan had a chance to change its course. Instead, it has chosen to bring them back to power. This may lead to the wrath of the USA. And Taliban on the other hand is signalling it is not a proxy of China.

CRITICISM OF THE POLICY-

- The document is criticized as a **work for amateurs**, which has no new vision, paradigm shift, or fresh thinking.
- It is regarded as an **old formulation with new packaging**.
- It is said that Pakistan has **been late in addressing issues** such as economic security, human security and comprehensive national security.
- It is criticized as a move by the Pakistani government **to show the rest of the world** that the country is progressive, modern and projects itself as a geopolitical hub.
- The policy is **deeply hostile to India** with the kind of words that are used.
- The document is also **contradictory**.
- The document is **only meant to influence countries in the West and China**.

THE SCO AND THE CONFLICT BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN

- In less than two decades, SCO has emerged as a key regional organisation in the Eurasian space. It accounts for **over 60% of Eurasia's territory, more than 40% of the world's population**, and almost a **quarter of the world's GDP**.
- Given the increasing role and significance of the SCO in the Eurasian region and beyond, India is likely to benefit more in the long-term by joining the organisation.
- Therefore, SCO provides the opportunity for India to fulfil its national interest while cautiously navigating through challenges.

The problem is that India and Pakistan joined the organisation with **very different goals**.

- **Pakistan wanted to raise its status** and not be left behind in the negotiation processes on the future of Eurasia, while **India wanted to find another platform where it could oppose and interact with China**. This divergence of goals calls into question the future of the SCO.

What can we expect from SCO-

- One assumes that India and China will **either restore their border issue, or put things back the way they were**, or find some other way to make sure that the border problem does not interfere with the development of their relations (for example, to turn the disputed territory into a neutral zone). Likewise, the **contradictions between India and Pakistan would be resolved or at least mitigated**.
- Second option implies that the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation will not consider what is happening as a challenge at all, but **will continue to work in areas where the contradictions between India on the one hand and China and Pakistan on the other are not critical**, and consultations on issues, for example, the **fight against terrorism**, will be carried over to the bilateral level. This will significantly narrow its capabilities in the near future, but it may be salutary in a strategic sense

- The third option — two organisations will actually appear within the SCO: one — relatively speaking, the “**broader SCO**” —here all the participants interact on those issues that do not cause any particular contradictions; and the “**restricted SCO**”, with alternative mechanisms of interaction, through which a dialogue is conducted on topics blocked by Pakistan and India.

SAARC- INDIA AND PAKISTAN

- India’s problems with Pakistan on terrorism, territorial claims, and its role in blocking SAARC initiatives on connectivity and trade are the main reasons that even after thirty-six years of its formation; SAARC appears to be a defunct body.
- However, if India aspires to become a global power, it must keep its neighbourhood peaceful, prosperous and supportive. In this context, reviving SAARC becomes very important.

Views

- **ShivShankar Menon**- “Cross-Border Terror Not Over-Archiving Threat, SAARC Policy Needs Review”
- Speaking about SAARC, Menon said **India must not continue “to spurn SAARC”**.
- He said, “There is a distinct danger that other countries may remain committed to it and move ahead without India”.
- More importantly, **“this could open the door for China being invited to join SAARC** without the presence of India”.
- Therefore, **a review of our SAARC policy** is urgently needed.

PAKISTAN’S NEW MAP

- Pakistan has once again unveiled a new map that shows Kashmir as part of Pakistan. It includes the UT of J&K and Sir Creek as part of Pakistan.
- **India’s objections**- India has objected to new map of Pakistan and held that it has **neither legal validity nor international credibility**.
- However, it also presents **opportunity to India as whole Kashmir has been shown as a single entity including Gilgit Baltistan**. Thus, strengthening India’s position. This gives opportunity to India to include the Gilgit Baltistan issue in Kashmir Talks.
- In another round of tit-for-tat manoeuvres, India in 2021, followed by Pakistan, has decided to halve the strength of diplomatic missions in each other’s capital. This signifies not so good relations between the two nations.

J&K ISSUE RAISED AT UNSC

- China has raised J&K issue in UNSC for third time since 2019.
- China called India’s move in J&K “**illegal and invalid**”, India responded by saying that Beijing has “**no locus standi**” on the matter.
- This highlight Pakistan’s attempt to internationalise the Kashmir issue. However, as per Shimla Agreement of 1971, Kashmir issue is bilateral issue.

UN’s Response

- The J&K issue has been raised at the UNSC three times in the last one year but there has been **no concrete solution** to it yet.
- UN human rights experts **have called on India to take urgent action** to address the alarming human rights situation in the region.
- **If India fails to take any genuine and immediate steps** to resolve the situation, meet the obligations to investigate historic and recent cases of human rights violations and prevent future violations, then the **international community should step up**.

Steps taken by India in response-

- **Amnesty International** in its report has urged the **National Human Rights Commission** (NHRC) and the **National Commission for Women** (NCW) to set up offices in J&K to facilitate easy access to the complaint filing process for the local people.
- NHRC has been asked to appoint a **special monitor** for the region and to take up cases pending with the erstwhile State Commission.
- NCW has been recommended to set up a **J&K cell** for addressing problems faced by women.
- The report held that people in J&K **do not have any way of redressal of the violations** of their rights after the closure of the State Commission in 2019.
- It also called on the government to **release all political leaders, journalists and activists from detention; restore 4G mobile Internet; decongest prisons** and start an independent investigation into attacks on journalists.
- The report acknowledged that there may be security concerns that merit restrictions on the right to freedom of expression.
- It suggested that **curbs should be for a limited timeframe** and as per the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which India is a state party.

ARTICLE 370 ISSUE

- On **5th August 2019**, President of India in the exercise of the powers conferred by Clause (1) of Article 370 of the Constitution had issued the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 2019.
- Through this, Government of India has **made modifications in Article 370 itself** (not revoked it).
- With this, the Government of India has dramatically **altered the relationship between the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the Indian Union**.
- The Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 2019 has replaced Presidential Order of 1954.
- Subsequently, the **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Bill, 2019**, passed by Parliament divides the state of Jammu and Kashmir into two new Union Territories (UTs): **Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh**.

Need for the changes-

- Article 370 was added in the Indian constitution to **provide autonomy to J&K**.
- However, it **failed** to address the well-being of Kashmiris who have now endured two generations of insurgency and violence.
- It contributed to the **gap between Kashmir and the rest of the nation**.
- The situation emerging in the western neighborhoods and the **possible re-ascendance of the Taliban in Afghanistan** call for greater attention and care.
- More so, the emerging geopolitical dynamics in Afghanistan and the resultant United States-Pakistan rapprochement could have potentially led to more heat on the Kashmir situation in the months ahead.

Possible consequences-

- Article 370 was seen by Kashmiris as a **marker of their separate identity and autonomy**.
- There is a **possibility of widespread protests and violence** as a reaction to the dilution of Article 370.
- **Terror elements in Pakistan** would find Kashmir to be the most **fertile ground** for breeding terrorism.
- The unrest can affect the democratic progress that has been made so far.
- Pakistan used 370 to wage a proxy war, internationalize Kashmir, supporting terrorism; all that **is gone now**.

ANALYSIS OF RECENT EVENTS

From Washington through European capitals to Moscow, Beijing and Tokyo, the world is taking a more **relaxed view** of Pakistan due to

1. **Nobody wants Pakistan to implode** under the burden of its non-performance due to geopolitical reasons in context of stability in Afghanistan.

2. **Western powers are competing with the Eurasian alliance** of China and Russia to retain influence in Afghanistan and Pakistan.
3. **India's case against Pakistan** is increasingly viewed as having become **weaker** as after the Mumbai terror attacks of November 2008, there has been no major cross-border terror attack on any civilian target in India and developments in Jammu and Kashmir terror attacks are increasingly being viewed by world opinion as **'locally staged'**.
4. Experts further argue that India's concerted attempt to get **Pakistan placed on the 'black list' of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** has reached the limits of success. While Pakistan has to work hard to get off the grey list, it is unlikely to be ever placed on the black list.

Sharat Sabharwal on recent thaws in relationship: According to him, "there's **no silver bullet** solution to Pak-sponsored terror and politicisation will further constrict choices."

- According to him, in spite of the renewed ceasefire, the two countries are nowhere close to the normalized relationship.
- He suggests that India should not expect any **strategic shift** on part of Pakistan. Try to preserve the ceasefire and keep the rhetoric in check with a view to managing this **complex relationship** better than has been possible because of the extreme volatility over the last few years.

RISK ASSESSMENT AND ESCALATION MANAGEMENT IN INDIA-PAKISTAN CONFLICTS

- India must be mindful of the fact that when it comes to escalation, **Pakistan can enlarge the conflict vertically and horizontally**, due to its policy of proxy wars.
- Pakistan can **calibrate terrorist actions** in consonance with its objectives and geopolitical situation and also has recourse to political escalation. The current situation **threatens India's long-term national objectives** of nation-building and economic growth.
- It will be in India's interest to set a **modest military objective**, for the short to medium term, of controlling Pakistan-sponsored terrorism.
- In the long term, it is imperative that **India develop the capability to escalate conflicts at will** and that decision-makers develop an understanding of the subject of escalation and escalation management to preclude conflicts from spiraling into all-out war.

CAN A CHINA-RUSSIA-PAKISTAN-TURKEY-IRAN ARRANGEMENT COUNTER THE QUAD?

In November **2017**, **India, the US, Australia and Japan** gave shape to the long-pending "Quad" Coalition to develop a new strategy to keep the critical sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any influence (especially China).

- Against the QUAD there have been discussions on a particularly interesting **five-way arrangement**.
- Since a proposal was made by an Iranian envoy to Pakistan last year, commentaries have been increasing about a potential **China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey** regional security arrangement.
- All five have varying degree of grievance and opposing strategic interests against at least one member of the Quad. **China and Russia have been against** the four-way arrangement due to their fears of being isolated.
- China lashed out by stating that, "enclosed small cliques with ideology as the yardstick is the **sure way to destroy the international order**".
- Russia, on the other hand, made similar comments by arguing that **Western countries are engaged in "Anti-China games"** by promoting "Indo Pacific strategies" and "the so-called Quad".
- **Iran's relationship with the US has been on the downward trend**, especially as it is facing the negative implications of the crippling sanctions imposed by the Trump administration.
- Along with China, **Russia has also cemented its position as Iran's important security partner**.

- **Pakistan**, on the other hand, will **inevitably support any arrangement that will go against or challenge India's influence**.

According to the former Indian Ambassador, **Mr. Vishnu Prakash**, "Islamabad is happy to jump onto any bandwagon that it is even remotely prejudicial to India's interest."

- **China has been a fundamental pillar in Pakistan's attempts to balance against India**. Moreover, Pakistan continues to support Turkey's ambition to take over the leadership role of the Islamic world due to the latter being the most vocal supporter of Pakistan on Kashmir.
- Furthermore, Pakistan has been trying to strengthen its strategic relations with both Russia and Iran while taking advantage of India warming up to the US.

According to **C. Raja Mohan**, the fall of Kabul may have widened the rift between New Delhi and Moscow. In his words, "The old ties between New Delhi and Moscow have become the geopolitical equivalent of a square peg trying to fit into a round hole."

- He gives example of the meeting of the **United Nations Security Council in September 2021** where India teamed up with the three Western powers—the United States, Britain, and France—to lay out some tough demands for the Taliban. However, Russia, in contrast, joined China in seeking to dilute the language of the resolution on Afghanistan and abstained in the vote on it.
- Similarly, the Axis could limit India's geographical space in Eurasia and South Asia specifically. India's interests and investments in Afghanistan, Iran and Central Asia may be jeopardized.

INDIA'S POLICY OPTIONS

DEFENSIVE POLICY-

- India's policy before 2014 was defensive one.
- Rather than being proactive, India will follow **reactive policy**.
- Favours continuations of talks and negotiations. **Liberal scholars favour it.**
- However, India may have to bear Pakistan sponsored terrorism. Also, this policy may prove difficult due to domestic political pressure to retaliate.

OFFENSIVE POLICY-

- **Realist scholars** and military experts advocate for more offensive policy against Pakistan. India should change its retaliation policy from "**counter value**" to '**counter force**' i.e. deployment of tactical weapons in battle field to increase deterrence. Surgical strike and air strikes are examples of this policy.
- However, as Pakistan uses terrorists for proxy war against India, declaring war on Pakistan will make India irresponsible player in global geopolitics and can also internationalise Kashmir issue.

DEFENSIVE OFFENSE AND KEEPING DOORS OPEN FOR TALKS-

- This policy is more pragmatic.
- However, it may prove ineffective for long term solution.

INTERDEPENDENCE AND FUNCTIONALISM THEORY

- Former **High Commissioner to Pakistan Sharat Sabharwal** **favours the interdependence and functionalism theory** and gives example of the composite dialogue held intermittently between 1997 and 2012 which was based on the premise that progress on issues such as trade and people-to-people contact should not be held hostage to movement on more intractable issues.

KEY IDEAS IN INDIA PAKISTAN RELATION

1. **Simple Interdependence- Manmohan formula:** Resume cross-border trade. Emulate our relations with China. Convert indirect trade to direct
2. **Functionalism- Vajpayee Formula-** Resume composite dialogue process (2+6 framework)
3. **Realist view- Rajiv Sikri-** Continue with aggressive diplomacy. Can't bow down to terrorism Cold Start Doctrine

CONCLUSION

- India needs series of **measured responses**, rather than high pitched rhetoric. Our work is largely at home, **building our capacity and competence.**
- **The international events and shifting of global power balance** also effects India-Pakistan relations. It is in the light of these events that India should plan its policy vis-s-vis Pakistan in future.
- Now that the political level engagement is near zero, a **start could be made through development of people-to-people level relations**, international mediation, using multilateral forums to initiate sideline talks and focusing on development of and bringing normalcy in Kashmir.
- **Manoj Joshi:** At the same time, we need not be pursuing resolving Pakistan issue, since even a stable Pakistan will be malign to India. We need to know how to manage Pakistan and have a policy on the same
- **Shyam saran** in "How India sees the world": Improved relations with Pakistan can only be cumulative outcome of a series of modest and incremental steps rather than the result of any big-bang affair which disturbs the deep state

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Key thinkers

1. **Shashi Tharoor-** social constructivism
2. **C Rajamohan-** Realism
3. **Happymon Jacob-** Complex Interdependence
4. **Suhasini Haider-** Complex Interdependence- India should not get into a copycat trap with Pak
5. **Sharat Sabharwal-** interdependence and functionalism



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INDIA – NEPAL

Introduction:

- **No two countries of the world are as closely interdependent as India and Nepal, be it socially, culturally, economically or even politically.**
- As close neighbors, India and Nepal share a **unique relationship of friendship and cooperation** characterized by open borders and deep-rooted people-to-people contacts of kinship and culture.
- This is so because the relations between the two countries are **fundamentally based on people-to-people relations** rather than government-to-government relations.



Background

- There has been a long tradition of **free movement of people** across the borders.
- Nepal has an area of 147,181 sq. Km. and a population of 29 million.
- It shares a border of over 1850 km to the south with **five Indian States – Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand** and in the north with the Tibet autonomous region of the People's Republic of China.
- **India-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950** is the bedrock of the special relations that exist between India and Nepal.
- Both nations are also members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (**SAARC**).

Views of Prominent Thinkers-

- In words of C Raja Mohan, "For India, Nepal is the "Punya Bhoomi", Nepal's sacred geography is a living repository of the Subcontinent's spiritual heritage. For Nepal, India is the vast economic hinterland and may well be called its "Karma Bhoomi". **If their destinies are inseparably intertwined, problems have often arisen whenever Delhi or Kathmandu has acted against the logic of extraordinary interdependence.**"

IMPORTANCE OF NEPAL FOR INDIA

Geo Strategic importance-

- **Strategic location of Nepal**: Apart from being an immediate neighbor, Nepal acts as a natural security buffer between India and China.
- **Internal security of India**: The harmonious relations between the two countries is necessary to prevent dreaded terrorists' groups such as Al-Qaida, Taliban, LeT etc. from establishing launch pads in Nepal and deal with the rising nexus between the Maoist groups operating in India and Nepal and using Nepal as a transit base for their clandestine operations against India.

Geo Economic importance-

- **Instability in Nepal affects pace of India** aided developmental projects in Nepal which if are completed on time will create much needed goodwill for India.
- **Flood water management and development of hydropower**: Rivers originating in Nepal such as Gandak and Kosi feed the perennial river systems of India in terms of ecology and hydropower potential. Thus, active cooperation of Nepal is important to control floods in Bihar and other parts of India.

- ✓ Kosi River is also called the "**Sorrow of Bihar**" because of it causing frequent floods in Bihar almost every year.
- Because of **the open border system**, the citizens of both countries cross over the Nepal- India border for livelihood opportunities apart from marriages and thus any unrest there will spill over into our country.
- Nearly 8 million **Nepalese citizens live and work in India**. There are regular exchanges of high-level visits and interactions between India and Nepal.

Geo Political importance-

- India's policy in South Asia is based on "**Neighborhood First**" but the Nepal-India relationship **goes further**, not just because of proximity, cultural, and people-to-people relationship but because the two countries have **marched together in search of identity, inclusiveness, and a value-based democratic system**.
- **China factor**: instability in Nepal **gives leverage to China to interfere** in the domestic politics of Nepal. For example, there are reports that China brokered deal between two fighting factions within ruling Nepal communist party (NCP).
- Due to the **China and US rivalry** and the unwarranted China and India skirmishes in the Himalayan borders, Nepal's geostrategic placement makes it liable to instability.

AREAS OF CO-OPERATION-

- **Defense cooperation**: India has been assisting the Nepal Army in its **modernization**, providing assistance during disasters etc.
 - ✓ The **Gorkha Regiments of the Indian Army** are raised partly by recruitment from hill districts of Nepal. Also, currently, about **32,000** Nepalese Gorkhas are serving in the Indian Army.
 - ✓ India from 2011, every year undertakes joint military exercise with Nepal known as **Surya Kiran**.
- **Water resource Cooperation**: There are about **250 small and large rivers** flow from Nepal to India and constitute an important part of the Ganges River basin.
 - ✓ A **three-tier bilateral mechanism** was established in 2008 to discuss issues relating to cooperation in water resources, flood management, inundation and hydropower between the two countries.
 - ✓ Rivers originating in Nepal **feed the perennial river systems of India** in terms of ecology and hydropower potential.
- **Energy Cooperation**: India and Nepal have a **Power Exchange Agreement since 1971** for meeting the power requirements in the border areas of the two countries, taking advantage of each other's transmission infrastructure.
- **Economic Cooperation**: India is the **largest trading partner of Nepal**. Total bilateral trade in 2018-19 reached **US\$ 8.27 bn**. Indian firms, account for about 40% of total approved foreign direct investments.
 - ✓ There are about **150 operating Indian ventures in Nepal**. They are engaged in manufacturing, services (banking, insurance, dry port, education and telecom), power sector and tourism industries.
 - ✓ India is Nepal's largest trade partner and **the largest source of foreign investments**, besides providing transit for almost the entire third country trade of Nepal.
 - ✓ Nepal lies in **a sensitive ecological fragile zone** which is prone to earthquakes, floods causing massive damage to both life and money, whereby it remains the biggest recipient of **India's humanitarian assistance**.
- **Connectivity**:
 - ✓ **Expanding Rail Linkages**: Connecting **Raxaul** in India to **Kathmandu** in Nepal.
 - ✓ Both countries have signed **MoU to provide rail connectivity** and are also working to develop **inland waterways in Nepal** to connect Nepal with Indian ocean.

- ✓ Establishment of **Integrated Check Ports** along the borders, recent ones being Birgunj and Biratnagar, have also eased trade and transit.
- ✓ Recently, the Union Cabinet has cleared a plan to build a **new bridge** connecting India and Nepal over the Mahakali river and link Dharchula in Uttarakhand with Nepal's Dharchula.
- ✓ Nepal being a landlocked country, it **is surrounded by India from three sides** and one side is open towards Tibet which has very limited vehicular access.
- ✓ MOUs have been signed between both the governments for **laying an electric rail track** linking Kathmandu with Raxaul in India.
- ✓ India is looking to develop the inland waterways for the movement of cargo, within the framework of trade and transit arrangements, providing additional access to sea for Nepal calling it **linking Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest) with Sagar (Indian Ocean)**.
- **Cultural-**
 - ✓ India and Nepal share **rich Hinduism and Buddhist cultural heritage**. Both the governments have also tried to build on this shared cultural heritage.
 - ✓ India and Nepal have also signed **sister-city agreements** for twinning of Janakpur-Ajodhya, Kathmandu-Varanasi, and Lumbini-Bodhgaya.
 - ✓ India is also supporting **2 heritage projects**, namely, **Pashupatinath riverfront development and Bhandarkhal Garden Restoration** in Patan Durbar.
 - ✓ The two countries not only share an open border and unhindered movement of people, but they also have **close bonds through marriages and familial ties**, popularly known as **Roti-Beti ka Rishta**.

Multi-lateral Partnership-

- India and Nepal share multiple multilateral forums such as **BBIN** (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal), **BIMSTEC** (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), **Non Aligned Movement**, and **SAARC** (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) etc.

Harnessing the Potential of India-Nepal Partnerships in Hydropower

The four crucial tributaries of the Ganges: **Mahakali, Karnali, Sapta Gandaki, and SaptaKosi** help irrigate the low-lying parts of Nepal, as well as the fertile Indo-Gangetic plains of India.

They contribute approximately 45 percent of the **annual flow of the Ganges and 70 percent of the dry-season flow**, thereby making them the "lifeblood of the Indian fertile low land.

The two countries have undertaken various collaborative projects, with the latest being the **Lower Arun Hydropower Project**, a USD 1.3-billion deal between the partners.

The Indian Sutej Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN) aided a 679-MW project between Sankhuwasabha and Bhojpur in eastern Nepal. This is the second mega project undertaken by India after the USD 1.04 billion 900 MW Arun III project.

Nepal's hydroelectric power generation is estimated at only 650 MW per annum, which is less than one percent of the proven potential, giving space for India to harness bonhomie

ISSUES IN RELATIONSHIP:

BOUNDARY DISPUTES:

- Despite India's objection, Nepal issued a new political map that included disputed areas including the Limpiyadhura, Lipulekh and Kalapani (Parts of Uttarakhand).

What is the issue?

- **History of Boundary formation: Treaty of Sugauli (1816)** - Under section 5 the treaty Nepal renounced its claims on the region west of river Kali. Thus, river Kali became boundary between India and Nepal.
- **Nepal's stand**- Nepal claims it conducted a census there in the early 1950s and refers to the 1815 Sugauli Treaty as legitimising its claims.
- **India's stance**- Though the areas of Kalapani, Limpiyadhura and Lipulekh lie west of river Kali, India has historically controlled the region. And claims that the border begins at Kalapani where the river begins.
- Though both countries established Joint Border Inspection Mechanism in 1981 and the Nepal-India Joint **Border Management Committee** in 1997 to manage borders. However, The Kalapani border has yet to be properly demarcated, especially the **so-called no-man's land** in the area.
- **Shyam Saran** in his book, '**How India Sees the World**' mentions that, with no other neighbour is India so well bonded on these fronts as it is with Nepal. And yet there is a widespread **perception in Nepal that India does not respect the country's sovereignty and independence that it often intervenes in Nepal's domestic affairs and generally behaves like an overbearing Big Brother.**



As noted by **Dinesh Bhattarai**, a former Nepali diplomat, the border dispute "looks minor, but allowing it to fester is likely to sow the seeds of immense competition and intense rivalry in the sensitive Himalayan frontier with far-reaching geopolitical implications

CHINESE INROADS INTO NEPAL:

- **Elevated Partnership:** During the visit of Xi Jinping, Nepal and China elevated their ties from "Comprehensive Partnership of Cooperation Featuring Ever-lasting Friendship" to "Strategic Partnership of Cooperation Featuring Ever-lasting Friendship for Development and Prosperity".
- **Treaty on Extradition:** China also signed a Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (MLACM) and expressed hope for an early conclusion of the Treaty on Extradition.
- **Himalayan 'Quadrilateral':** The recent Himalayan 'Quadrilateral' meeting between China, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nepal also highlight Chinese attempt to contain India in south Asia.
- **Defense Cooperation** - For the first time, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the Nepali Army held two joint-military exercises in 2017 and 2018. Since 2019, the PLA has also agreed to provide financial assistance to the Nepali Army on a regular basis

CONNECTIVITY:

- **Chinese are building a number of highways** from the Tibetan side into Nepal, all the way down to East-West highway that traverses Nepal, hacking through high mountains and difficult terrain. The Tibet railway has now been extended from **Lhasa to Shigaze** and could well be extended to Kathmandu across the border in the next few years.
 - India is building **Tribhuvan highway** in Nepal.
- **China opening port facilities** to Nepal and providing access to Trans Himalayan Railway reduces Nepal's dependency on India. Also, Nepal has joined China's Belt and Road Initiative.
 - Although India had advised Nepal not to join BRI, still Nepal has gone ahead with the project. It has led to some bitterness between India and Nepal.
- ❖ In contrast, India's plans to upgrade the existing highway and railway links between India and Nepal and create modern integrated checkpoints on the border have been on the agenda for years but are bedevilled by a very **slow process of implementation.**
- ❖ To improve its stand on the projects, India will have to **pace up** the pending projects and make sure that the projects undertaken in the future are completed on time.

INTERFERENCE IN DOMESTIC POLITICS-

- During recent political crisis in Nepal, A Communist Party of China delegation spent 4 days in Nepal, playing mediator between two factions of the ruling Nepal Communist Party. The Chinese envoy too held meetings with both factions
- This was a step to connect with Nepal and in the long run it might pull Nepal closer to China with respect to India.

IDENTITY ISSUES-

- **Shyam Saran** in his book, '**How India Sees the World**' argued that, "In Nepal, politics has traditionally been dominated by a high-caste elite who consciously tried to project Nepal as a country with a distinctive mountain culture and identity.
 - In his words, "In Nepal's attempt to uphold its separate identity – as thrust upon it by its elite – India has become 'the other' from which it must be distinguished."
- **Mindset of Nepali elites-** According to **Shyam Saran**, the root of its poverty and underdeveloped status lies in the mindset of its political elite, which **prefers to see India as a threat rather than an opportunity**. Any joint project of mutual benefit is immediately examined for what it brings to the Indian plate rather than for what it fetches Nepal itself.
 - In the long run, it will cause developmental issues in Nepal itself because of the attitude of the leaders. To encourage development, they will have to trust and work with India to let Indian companies work for the betterment of people of Nepal.

OTHER ISSUES

India-Nepal ties have frayed slowly as the economic bonds between the two countries have failed to keep pace with India's modernization and growth. **The opportunities offered by India's prospering economy have become increasingly inaccessible, and thereby irrelevant to ordinary Nepalis.**

Government to government is secondary.

- While the government of India and Nepal focused on doing business between them, a **new economic network** between the people of China and Nepal has taken shape.
- Once the single largest source for Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) in Nepal, **India has seen its position erode with growing Chinese investments.**
- In 2019, for instance, **China accounted for approximately 40% of new FDIs against India's 30%.**
- Chinese investors committed **23.37 billion Nepali rupees** (195.74 million U.S. dollars) in foreign direct investment in Nepal during the first six months of the 2021-22 fiscal year that started in mid-July last year, as against 22.5 billion rupees (188.45 million dollars) pledged for the whole 2020-21 fiscal year, showed data from the Department of Industry.

RECENT INSTABILITY:

- India's long-term interest in this sensitive neighbouring country is best served by a stable multi-party democracy and economic prosperity.
- However, since 2015, when **Nepal adopted the Constitution** after bringing an end to Monarchy, the country has been caught in political turmoil.
- Amidst a tussle for power within the ruling **Nepal Communist Party (NCP)**, with no party or coalition having a majority, the country's parliament has been dissolved twice since December 2020.
- The **present political crisis in Nepal has a long history of the power struggle** between the two prominent leaders, which to a great extent was camouflaged or contained through the intervention of the Chinese Communist leaders, from time to time. **Political turmoil will only exacerbate the economic crisis and may lead to renewed and widespread violence**

Ideological basis- The communist parties in Nepal have favoured China and consistently protested against India. This time around the Nepali Congress also favoured them.

- **Nepal's Discontent in Trade:** India is Nepal's largest trading partner (accounting for 65 percent of Nepal's total trade), with whom Nepal also runs the largest trade deficit.
- Because of its **geographical constraints**, Nepal has found itself heavily reliant on India, never acquiring the comparative advantage to increase exports. As a result, local enterprises fail to grow and compete against lower-priced Indian products. India's imposition of non-tariff barriers and lack of standard infrastructure have added to Nepal's discontent with India.
- **Prof. S D Muni** - The relations have been damaged seriously over the past two years. India resorted to an intrusive approach, muscular diplomacy and economic coercion. And Nepal reacted, under Oli's leadership, by whipping up a robust anti-Indian nationalism and an **aggressive display of the China card to reduce its dependence on India.**
- Both sides seem to be realizing that they had gone overboard in their emotive approaches towards each other.
- In words of **Shyam Saran**, **"The tendency in India is to regard Nepal's dependence on India for transit as leverage against it."**
- **Domestic politics:**

Shyam Saran: Every ruling dispensation in Kathmandu has used two political cards to compel Indian acquiescence to its narrow interests.

 - One, the crude message is that if India does not support the ruling dispensation, Nepal may turn to China and India must shoulder the blame.
 - Two, since Nepal is the only other Hindu majority country, India must not do anything to weaken the religious affinities that bind them together. India must never fall into this trap.
- **Shyam Saran** in his book, 'How India Sees the World' mentions that, 'Physical proximity often helps create positive bonds between countries but it may just as likely create misunderstanding and points of conflict that sometimes overwhelm strong and abiding political, economic and cultural connections.'

NEPAL-INDIA RELATIONS IN POST-COVID-19 PERIOD

The relations between Nepal and India touched their lowest ebb in 2015, when Nepal was making its new constitution, and further in 2020, on the boundary issue in Nepal's North-western region.

The spread of COVID-19 in the two countries further created a hardening of relations between the two countries as the open border was closed for over one-and-half years, beginning in March 2020.

the post-COVID-19 period, the situation on the ground is slowly returning to normal and, that too, after **Sher Bahadur Deuba became Prime Minister of Nepal in July 2021.**

- India also provided **1 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine** to Nepal
- The border is now re-opened and cross-border movement of people—apart from vehicles, that remained disrupted for so long—has resumed.
- Cross-border marriages have become a normal phenomenon.
- Recognition of COVID-19 test reports of one country by concerned authorities of the other country further facilitated the cross-border movement of people and vehicles.
- Another landmark achievement in relations between Nepal and India is that the Indian government has handed over the Janakpur-Jayanagar sector of the railway to the Government of Nepal- The entire cost of the railway project, that amounts to INR. 8.8 billion, is being borne by the Indian government.

TRADE BETWEEN INDIA AND NEPAL.

- India accounted for 64.6 percent share in Nepal's total exports in 2018–19, which shot up to **71.75 percent in 2019-20** and further **to 75.75 percent in 2020–21.** During the first four months of 2021–22, the volume of Nepal's exportable items to India further increased to 81.5 percent.
- Nepal for **the first time started to export surplus electricity to India.**

- Nepal performed well on the export trade front because **India allowed the imports of goods from Nepal even at a time when several countries had imposed restrictions** on the exports and imports of goods from this country due to COVID-19-related cases.

According to **Tribhuvan jha**, there is hardly any important sector in which India did not extend support to Nepal, be it education, health, culture, roads, hydropower, agricultural, forestry, transport, or communication.

- The visit of the Nepalese Prime Minister, Sher Bahadur Deuba, to New Delhi is likely to fortify the age-old relations between the two countries further

WAY FORWARD

A reset of India–Nepal relations

- **Gorkha regiments are patriotic Nepalis** but also have a **deep attachment to India** and to the Indian Army. They constitute an invaluable bank and **network of goodwill for India**. India must cultivate these elements to create and sustain goodwill about India.
- Since Nepal's dependence on India is more than India's dependence on Nepal, it is all the more necessary to balance such relations.
- To increase India's dependence on Nepal, it is necessary **to place the increase in trade and economic activities at the forefront**. Interdependence between Nepal and India is the secret to reset the relations between the Neighbors.
- Towards this end, the two countries could also **build an international corridor** along the 1,753 kilometer Nepal-India border region to facilitate greater movement of commercial vehicles between the two countries.
- The focus should be given to **more air, road, train, and waterways connectivity**, apart from playing an active role in several important multilateral forums such as BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal), **BIMSTEC, NAM, and SAARC** to serve their common interests.
- For this, **India can extend the benefits of UDAAN scheme** to Nepali people.

They could create **modern business hubs** that enable young tech-savvy Nepali entrepreneurs to connect with India's innovations.

- **Offer credit lines** that small and medium enterprises could directly access for cross border trade and investments.
- Harmonize and ease **cross border trading rules**.
- Most importantly, it must **encourage Indian and Nepali businesses** to speak with each other and provide them the confidence that their governments want them to succeed.

Shyam Saran India should seek to become the transit country of choice for Nepal by offering it open access to its transportation network and ports, extending that country's efficient and economical services. This will create **positive interdependency rather than negative leverage**

- Despite being aware of the benefits of cooperation, both countries are **lacking in effort and political will** to translate potential to reality.
- While Nepal lacks the **financial resources and technology** to set up dams for hydroelectric projects, India has not **provided adequate support**. Additionally, the deep-seated mistrust and grievances that Nepal has had due to several failed treaties act as roadblocks to any effective institutional mechanism.
- India argues, for its part, that Nepalese authorities have been more concerned with "narrow political gains."
- **For India, the fault does not lie with the treaties, but with Nepal's lack of trust** and will to implement those agreements.

Various views for way forward

- **Amb. Jayant Prasad**: The open border is a “safety-valve” for Nepal. Without compromising India’s security, the challenge is to turn it into a bridge, not a barrier.
- Instead of demanding an “India first policy”, affirm that India’s **strong support for a “Nepal first” policy**.
- Amendments to the **Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950**: Nepal wants amend certain clauses in the 1950 Treaty like the one which requires it to seek India’s permission to import arms from third countries. The Eminent Persons' Group set up jointly by the two countries to review their bilateral relations also recommended revision of the treaty.
- **Brahma Chellany**:(Realism) Nepal, nevertheless, still needs India, simply because of geography. China can replace India as Nepal’s main provider of essential supplies only by moving the Himalayas southward.

Conclusion:

- Centuries of social, cultural, political, strategic, and economic ties can only remain strong if they can remain relevant to changing times. The governments of India and Nepal must reset the narrative, modernize their policies, and get out of the way so that the ties between people thrives again
- India should stop looking at Nepal purely through a security prism and at bilateral relations only as transactional and part of a zero-sum game with China.
- India should focus on working towards multifaceted relationships to the advantage of both nations.
- India should negotiate diplomatically to resolve the boundary dispute with Nepal under the aegis of International law on Trans-boundary Water Disputes. In this case, boundary dispute resolution between India and Bangladesh should serve as a model for this.
- India should maintain a policy of keeping away from the internal affairs of Nepal, while at the same time, in the spirit of friendship, India should guide the nation towards a more inclusive democracy.

Key Thinkers and Ideas

- **C Raja Mohan**(**Institutionalism**): Beijing is trying to overcome its geographic disadvantage through mega projects like the Tibet Railway. But Nepal’s nearest ports will always be in India and the Gangetic plain will remain its largest market.
- **Prof. S D Muni**:(**Interdependence**)- In relation to China, if Nepal ignores India’s concerns, there were options open to New Delhi, like not purchasing power from the Chinese-added hydro-projects. The Madhes issue, though put on the back- burner, has not been abandoned.
- **S.D Muni** (**Pangs of proximity**)-focus on interdependence and tackle delivery deficit.
- **Hari Bansh Jha**(**Functionalism**).
- **Jayant Prasad**(**Democratic peace theorist**).
- **Suhasini Haider**-Tackle the security dilemma concern of Neighbors
- **C. Rajamohan**-utilize **Institutions for collective security**.

INDIA - BANGLADESH RELATIONS

PYQ

1. Analyze the impact of hydro politics on Indo-Bangladesh relations. [2020/10m/150w/5c]
2. Ethnic conflicts and insurgency in North East India can be better managed by improving relations with neighboring countries. Substantiate the statement with suitable examples. [2015/10m/150w/5d]
3. River water disputes are emerging as a major source of irritation between India and its neighbours. Identify sources of conflicts and suggest remedial measures. [2015/15m/200w/7c]
4. Identify the persistent points of frictions between India and Bangladesh at present. [2007/20m/200w/5c]
5. Give an account of the major contending issues in Indo Bangladesh relations. Assess the prospects for greater cooperation between the two countries. [2004/60m/7]
6. Discuss India's role in the independence of Bangladesh. [2003/20m/200w/5b]
7. Discuss contending issue between India and Bangladesh. [1998/20m/200w/5d]

Introduction:

- Bangladesh, given its strategic location, political stability and spectacular economic growth in the past few years, has emerged as the ideal partner for India. New Delhi's proactive engagement with Dhaka also reflects a broader shift in India's foreign policy, as it increasingly focuses its attention eastward, toward the Bay of Bengal and the Indo-Pacific region.
- In the last decade, India-Bangladesh relations have warmed up, entering a new era of cooperation, and moving beyond historical and cultural ties to become more assimilated in the areas of trade, connectivity, energy, and defence

Views of Prominent persons-

- **Subramanian Jaishankar**- Highlighting the importance of the relationship, he stated that India and Bangladesh have the potential to change "the whole geo-economics of the region."
- **Sheikh Hasina**- According to **Sheikh Hasina**, relations are like flowing river with full of generosity. S. Jaishankar describes current relations as fraternal friendship .This relationship, rooted as it is in history and conditioned by geography, finds its rightful place at the top of the foreign policy agenda in Bangladesh and a priority one in India.
- **Amb. Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty**: India-Bangladesh ties have entered an era of consolidation and expansion.
- **Vivek Katju**- Unlike the past, Bangladesh under Hasina has cooperated with India on security issues. It has also proceeded to incrementally expand connectivity. It is combating fundamentalist Islamic forces that are reflexively pro-Pakistan.
 - Thus, From India's perspective, a positive political future for Hasina is a positive for bilateral ties. India's political and diplomatic skills will be put to test, especially when China is enlarging its presence in India's neighborhood.

RELATIONS ROOTED IN HISTORY

- India's efforts to end the 1971 Bangladesh crisis are remembered as a great strategic and diplomatic triumph. India's intervention was altruistic only in small part. It was primarily based on realpolitik.
- Historically, India's has played a critical role in the creation of Bangladesh. India's political, diplomatic, military and humanitarian support during Bangladesh's Liberation War played an important role towards Bangladesh's independence.
- The two nations were **strong allies during the Bangladesh Liberation War** in 1971.
- **From the mid-1970s, however, relations worsened** because Bangladesh developed closer ties with Islamic nations, participated in the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and increased emphasis on Islamic identity over the country's ethno-linguistic roots. The two countries developed different Cold War alliances in the 1980s, which further chilled bilateral relations.
- With the **onset of economic liberalization in South Asia**, they forged greater bilateral engagement and trade.
- In **current phase relationship** is in the excellent phase with AWAMI league in power. AWAMI league has always tried to have good relationship with India unlike her counterpart - Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) which due to her pro-Islamic ideology and closeness with Pakistan has complicated relationship quite a few times.
- PM Modi has termed the present state of relationship as '**Sonali Adhyay**' (Golden era).

IMPORTANCE OF BANGLADESH FOR INDIA:

Geo strategic

- **Act East Policy**- Bangladesh, due to its strategic geopolitical location, acts as a gateway to Southeast Asia. It is a central component to various regional connectivity projects such as the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) initiative.
- **Maritime security**- as it is strategically located in Bay of Bengal, it is essential for securing important sea lines of communications.
 - ✓ The newly restored railway link between Haldibari (India) and Chilahati (Bangladesh) was jointly inaugurated by both nations. The train facilities to open with the improvement in COVID-19 situation.
 - ✓ The signing of the second addendum to the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT).
 - ✓ Trial run of trans-shipment of Indian goods from Kolkata to Agartala via Chattogram.
 - ✓ Operationalization of Sonamura-Daudkandi Protocol route under the PIWTT.
- **Importance in India's internal security**: India shares an extensive and porous boundary with Bangladesh. This has made cooperation between the two countries crucial for effective border management and tackling transnational crimes such as smuggling of arms, narcotics, fake Indian currencies and trafficking of women and children.
 - ✓ Smuggling of 5 rupee coin from India to Bangladesh and converting it to blades by melting the metal inside, has forced the Indian govt. to use cupronickel metal in the coins.
- **Counter-Terrorism**- Bangladesh is important to ensure anti India terrorist organization and terrorist do not flourish in India's neighbourhood, also North-East terrorists often seek asylum in Bangladesh hence Bangladesh is important to address counter terrorism and anti-India activities.

Geo Economic

- **Bangladesh overtook Pakistan in terms of per capita GDP in 2020 and could soon overtake India.**

Shivshankar Menon in his book, 'India and Asian Geopolitics: the past, present', pointed out that Bangladesh has an inclusive economy (where only 10.4 percent of bank accounts are dormant, while 48 percent are in India), and its garment industry took advantage of a globalized world to build large garment firms and generate employment for women.

- **Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia** and is an important destination for Indian exports. India's exports to Bangladesh in FY2018-19 stood at around US\$ 9.21 bn.
 - ✓ India has also granted the **Duty-Free and Quota Free access** to Bangladeshi exports to India under South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) since 2011.
- India is interested **in Oil and Gas resources of Bangladesh**. Cooperation among two can minimize their energy security needs. Further, India exports electricity to Bangladesh and India-Russia are jointly developing Rooppur Atomic Power Plant in Bangladesh.
- **Incentives of investment** as Bangladesh are one of the fastest growing nations among the world with sizeable middle-class population.
- **Tourism**: Bangladesh accounts for more than 35% of India's international medical patients and contributes more than 50% of India's revenue from medical tourism.
- **Peace and prosperity in North- Easter Region (NER)**: Transit and trans-shipment to NER through Bangladesh helps increase connectivity with the NER and ensure peace, stability and economic development of the region. Also, Indo-Bangladesh security cooperation has helped in the taming of insurgency in India's northeast.

Geo Political-

- Both function towards **democratic peace approach**
- Bangladesh **is supportive of India bid in the UN** and is institutionally aligned with India in SAARC, BIMSTEC IOR etc
- Is Pivot for India towards **act east** and helps counters chicken neck dilemma
- **Bangladesh Bhutan India Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicles Agreement** decided to be operationalised with the early MOUs between India, Nepal and Bangladesh. Bhutan to be given a later date to join.
- Bangladesh showed **interest in joining India Myanmar Thailand trilateral highway** project as an aid to enhance connectivity between South and South-East Asia regions.

CONNECTIVITY INITIATIVES-

Both the governments are undertaking various measures to restore the pre-1965 rail links and other connectivity links that existed between India and Bangladesh.

- The two Prime Ministers jointly inaugurated the **newly restored railway link** between Chilahati (Bangladesh) and Haldibari (India) on 17 December 2020.
- To enhance people to people contacts, the **frequency of two passenger trains**, i.e., **Maitree Express and Bandhan Express** was increased from 4 days a week to 5 days a week
- Both countries also started using **side-door container and parcel trains** to maintain uninterrupted supply chains during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Government of India handed over **10 broad gauge diesel locomotives** as part of grant assistance to Bangladesh Railways on 27 July 2020.
- Both the governments decided to **commence Dhaka-Siliguri-Gangtok-Dhaka and Dhaka-Siliguri-Darjeeling-Dhaka bus service** to enhance people to people contacts
- **Feni Bridge (MaitreeSetu)** connecting LCS Subroom (Tripura) and LCS Ramgarh (Bangladesh) has been jointly inaugurated on virtual platform by both the Prime Ministers on 09 March 2021.
- **Bangladesh Bhutan India Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicles Agreement** decided to be operationalised with the early MOUs between India, Nepal and Bangladesh. Bhutan to be given a later date to join.
- Bangladesh showed interest in joining **India Myanmar Thailand trilateral highway** project as an aid to enhance connectivity between South and South-East Asia regions.
- India also requested to allow **connectivity from West Bengal to Meghalaya through Bangladesh**.
- To meet the **travel needs amid the COVID-19 situation**, the two nations had earlier initiated a temporary Air Travel Bubble.

- **Second addendum to the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT)** was signed in May 2020 for including two new India-Bangladesh Protocol Routes (**Sonamura-Daudkandi on river Gomti and extension of Dhulia to Godagiri up to Aricha on river Padma**), five new ports of call and two extended ports of call.
 - ✓ Sonamura-Daudkandi Protocol Route was also operationalised in September 2020.

AREAS OF CO-OPERATION-

➤ **Counter terrorism/ Security cooperation -**

- Bangladesh has **handed over ULFA terrorists to India**.
- Indo-Bangladesh **security and intelligence cooperation** have resulted into curbing of anti-India terror camps and militancy in North eastern region.
- Cooperation has also been **effective** in curbing militancy in Bangladesh.

➤ **Military cooperation:**

- The armed forces from both sides regularly conduct joint drills like exercise **Sampriti and Milan**.
- India has extended **\$500 million line of credit** to Bangladesh for defense imports from India.
- Both the countries completed long standing issue of **exchange of 111 enclaves**- Land Boundary Agreement.
- The Bangladesh government led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has **uprooted anti-India insurgency elements** from its borders, making the India-Bangladesh border one of the region's most peaceful.
- This has allowed India to make a **massive redeployment of military resources** to its more contentious borders elsewhere.
- Further, Bangladesh handed **over many of India's "most wanted" criminals**.
- India has also **accepted an international tribunal verdict in favor of Bangladesh** that resolved a 40-year-old maritime dispute and built confidence as well.

➤ **Energy cooperation:**

- Nuclear Energy: India in partnership with Russia helping Bangladesh set up nuclear plant at **Rooppur**.
- FoU on '**Cooperation in the Hydrocarbon Sector**' was signed.
- MOU on Supply of Equipment and Improvement of **Garbage / Solid Waste Disposal** Ground at Lamchori Area for Barishal City Corporation.

➤ **Power sharing agreements:**

- India has been providing **500 megawatts of power to Bangladesh** (increased to 1100 MW after Modi's visit).
- A win-win situation for both countries as it **helps against power shortages in Bangladesh** and also helps India gain political leverage against the water sharing disputes.
- India has already **constructing an Indo-Bangla friendship pipeline** from Siliguri to Parbatipur for supply of high speed diesel as a grant-in-aid.

➤ **Rohingya issue**

- In 2018 India sent **relief materials for 300,000 Rohingyas in under 'Operation Insaniyat'** to support Bangladesh in its humanitarian efforts. In recently concluded virtual summit, India appreciated the efforts of Bangladesh in providing humanitarian assistance to the Rohingya refugee.

➤ Blue Economy

- India and Bangladesh are cooperating in the exploration of hydrocarbons, marine resources, deep-sea fishing, preservation of marine ecology and disaster management.
- During the virtual summit, both countries agreed to expeditiously conclude the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the area of disaster management cooperation.

➤ Developmental assistance-

- Bangladesh is one of the biggest beneficiaries of India's line of credit (US\$ 8 billion). In last 8 years in various sectors like road, railways, shipping and ports.
- Small Development Projects (SDPs) constitute an active pillar of India's development assistance.

ARE INDIA–BANGLADESH RELATIONS AT A CROSSROAD?

RIVER WATER DISPUTES:

- According to the **FAO of the UN**, the ratio of Bangladesh's external dependency for water is over 90%. A fair amount of that water comes through India.
- Overall, India and Bangladesh have **54 trans-boundary rivers** between them, part of the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) basin, and **Bangladesh lies downstream in majority of these river streams**. This has given rise to concerns in Bangladesh over **sharing of river waters, interlinking of the rivers and building of dams in India**.
- For example, delays in signing of the interim agreement for sharing of the **Teesta waters**.
- Despite the remarkable progress, the unresolved Teesta water sharing issue looms large.

ISSUES RELATED TO SECURITY AND CROSS-BORDER MIGRATION:

- **Illegal migration** from Bangladesh induced **demographic shift** in the bordering states in North East. This has given rise to the socio-ethnic tensions among the locals and migrants.
- **Radicalization in Bangladesh is on a rise** and the influence of the radicals is believed to have increased in the country's politics. The growing **presence of international militant organizations** like the Islamic State in the region is also a serious concern for India.
- The problem of Bangladeshi civilians being killed at the border has dented relations. The year 2020 saw the highest number of border shootings by the Border Security Force.
- These shootings occur as many Bangladeshi people try to illegally migrate into India.
- **Cross border crime:** Tough terrain and porous border leads to crimes in border areas, such as smuggling of arms, narcotics, fake Indian currencies, cattle and trafficking of women and children.



INCREASING NEGATIVE PERCEPTION ABOUT INDIA IN BANGLADESH :

- The **Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA)** caused major resentment in Bangladesh and the cancellation of Bangladesh Foreign Minister's visit to India. Foreign Minister of Bangladesh has gone on to say that the new law would weaken India's "**historic position**" as a "**tolerant and secular nation.**"
 - ✓ Bangladesh was even against the move because of India indirectly interfering in their internal matter of religious tolerance.
- Popular resentment is emerging in Bangladesh **about the treatment of minorities in India**. The basis for such **perception** has been various media reports that are exploited by the radical groups for propaganda.

GROWING INFLUENCE OF CHINA IN BANGLADESH:

- In recent years that the **Chinese investment** into Bangladesh has grown exponentially. The main concerns which are raised about these investments is that of Bangladesh falling into the same **debt trap** like Sri Lanka. Further, Bangladesh is overwhelmingly dependent on China for military hardware.

Shivshankar Menon in his books, '**India and Asian Geopolitics: the past, present**', mentions that, there is now a much stronger political dimension to China's interest in the region. He gives example of Rohingya issue where China has offered itself as an honest broker to Bangladesh and Myanmar and is brokering the Myanmar government's negotiations with its ethnic minorities and insurgencies.

- From developing a mega smart city near Dhaka to building an airport in Sylhet in eastern Bangladesh, besides a growing defence relationship, China has been making deep inroads in that country, much to New Delhi's discontent.
- China accounted for around **74 percent of Bangladesh's arms imports** between 2010– 2019.
- Despite its '**Neighborhood First Policy**', **India has been losing its influence** in the region to China.
- Sri Lanka, Nepal and the Maldives, once considered traditional Indian allies, are increasingly tilting towards China due to the Asian giant's massive trade, infrastructural and defence investments in these countries.
- China, in lieu of its cheque-book diplomacy, is well-entrenched in South Asia, including Bangladesh, with which it enjoys significant economic and defence relations.

POOR REGIONAL INTEGRATION-

Shivshankar Menon in his book, '**India and Asian Geopolitics: the past, present**', mentions that despite talk of "**neighbourhood first,**" the actual delivery of Indian development cooperation has diminished recently. This is a pity when the economic performance of south Asia, particularly of Bangladesh and of Sri Lanka after its civil war, is the basis to build a much more prosperous and integrated region.

- **BBIN initiative** can prove to be a long term solution which can solve the regional integration issue.
- **Open Borders** between the two countries have also led to growing regional integration between the two.

DOMESTIC POLITICS :

Shivshankar Menon in his book, '**India and Asian Geopolitics: the past, present**', pointed out that, domestic politics and communal polarization in India, with threats by Home Minister to expel Bangladeshi immigrants whom he described as "**termites,**" the National Register of Citizens in Assam, and India's ham-handed response to the Rohingya crisis have affected ties with Bangladesh, diminished India's credibility, and lowered its ability to integrate the subcontinent.

- As Bangladesh was a part of Pakistan some sections have sympathy towards Pakistan and in India some sections still view it as a part of Pakistan thus It is said that to have good relations **India must forget history and Bangladesh must forget Geography.**
- **Rohingya issue-** India's position on Rohingya migrants have not gone down well with Bangladesh. Further, India has also refused to exert any pressure on Myanmar for taking the Rohingyas back despite requests from Bangladesh.

- ✓ This is basically because of the lack of any refugee policy of India that has led to the prescribed steps against the Rohingyas issue.

ISSUES IN CONNECTIVITY

- **Inland Waterways**- the utilization of the inland waterway transit by Indian vessels remains below anticipated levels. Lack of navigability, lack of container facilities in Ashuganj port, and the long-distance of custom offices from the ports as some reasons for Indian carriers to not operate using Bangladesh's inland water routes.
- **Poor Infrastructure development** in both countries along the borders.
- **Financing**- India has provided four Lines of Credit (LoC) worth USD 7.8 billion to Bangladesh since 2010. However, the disbursement of capital through the LoCs has been slow. Of the total USD 7.8 billion credits, only around 9 percent or USD 686.08 million has been disbursed to Bangladesh till FY 2019-2020.
 - ✓ India has given access to Duty-Free and Quota Free Bangladeshi exports to India under the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) since 2011.
 - ✓ Both sides discussed India's export-import policy that hampers Bangladesh's domestic markets as export of essential commodities to Bangladesh hampers its domestic market.
 - ✓ A joint study on the prospects of entering into a bilateral Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) is yet to be completed.
 - ✓ In the wake of the first-ever meeting of the India-Bangladesh Textile Industry Forum that was held in 2020, an MOU between the Ministry of Textiles (India) and Ministry of Textiles and Jute (Bangladesh) is yet to be agreed upon.
- **Bureaucratic red Tapism**- Out of total approved \$7.4 billion, **only \$442 million was disbursed** till 2019 due to red Tapism and requirement of approval by Exim Bank.
- **Growing Radicalism in Bangladesh** is a concern not only for Bangladesh but also for regional security in Indian subcontinent.

HYDROPOWER CHALLENGES

- Water has been a critical explanatory factor in Bangladesh-India relations with 54 rivers crossing each other's boundaries.
- As such, the 50 years of hydro political relations between the two nations can best be described as a mixed bag of sweet spots and some bitter pills.
- While GWA and Maitri Bridge over Feni seem to be the sweet spots of success from a hydro-diplomacy perspective, the Teesta river still remains the bone of contention

TEESTA WATER ISSUE

- ✓ Teesta is subjected to "**conflictual federalism**" with divergent views of the Centre and the state of West Bengal over its use.
- ✓ Teesta's catchment area supports **8.5% of Bangladesh's population** — roughly 10 million people and 14% of crop production.
- ✓ Of the Teesta's catchment area, **83% lies in India**; the remaining 17% is in Bangladesh.
- ✓ The key issue is lean season flow in Teesta draining into Bangladesh. **Bangladesh wants 50% of the river's water supply**, especially in the months between December and May annually, while India claims a share of 55%.
- ✓ In 2011 when Delhi and Dhaka reached another agreement — an interim arrangement for 15 years — where **India would get 42.5% and Bangladesh, 37.5%** of the Teesta's waters during the dry season. However, **TMC government in West Bengal did not give approval** as 6 districts of North Bengal depend on Teesta's water.
- ✓ **Emotive issue in Bangladesh**: As the former Bangladesh High Commissioner in Delhi, Tariq Karim, put it, even if most of the agreements are delivered, many in Bangladesh will "only ask why Teesta has not been done."

- ✓ According to **Jaideep Majumdar**, India's case against China on Brahmaputra stands weak in face of Teesta issue.
- ✓ It may also **jeopardize 'Blue Water Partnerships'** in the Indian ocean.

Reasons for the crisis

- **Reduction in Water**- recent report of **thirdpole.net** shows that river has only one-sixteenth of the water needed.
- **Planning Failure**- Barrages are built to hold back water for dry seasons. However, water has been released by wrong time by authorities in both countries.
- **Sikkim Effect**- The water released from run of the river projects in Sikkim is not coordinated with peak time need of farmers.
- **Federalism Issue**- Different ruling parties at centre and the states makes the matter more complex. The CM of West Bengal has opposed the agreement on sharing of Teesta waters.

Recent News-

- During virtual summit in December 2020, **Bangladesh highlighted the need for early signing of an interim agreement for sharing of the Teesta waters, as agreed upon by both the governments in 2011.**
- **Role of China** - Bangladesh is discussing an almost \$1 billion loan from China for a comprehensive management and restoration project on the Teesta River.

Way Forward

- **Regional Mechanism**- To decide on mutually agreed principles on water sharing and enforcing of agreements. SAARC could be used to enhance cooperation among riparian states.
- **Water sharing deals from other rivers**- **India and Bangladesh shares 54 rivers.** Sharing waters from other rivers in equitable manner can help meeting water demands from both sides. Recently, WB CM has also proposed sharing of water from Torsa river.
 - ✓ Similarly, in 2019 both countries signed MoU on withdrawal of 1.82 cusecs water from Feni River by India a drinking water supply scheme in Tripura.
- **Transparency in data sharing**- sharing of data on river water flow in a transparent manner based on mutually agreed scientific parameters.
- Cooperating on transboundary river management and water conservation by **strengthening the institutional mechanism of Joint River commission.** Also, early conclusion of Framework of Interim Agreement on sharing of waters of six joint rivers is needed.
- **Need of a common platform**- There is a need to form a common platform where they can talk about the basic problems and solve the issue through bilateral talks.

Conclusion

- The hydrological linkages between India and Bangladesh are **a product of geography and a matter of shared history.** Thus, to make the recent gains in overall relationship irreversible, both countries need to continue working on the **three Cs** — cooperation, collaboration, and consolidation.
- As said by **PM's Modi** "rivers should nurture the India-Bangladesh relationship and not become a source of discord" actually comes to life.
- As Bangladesh celebrates its 50 years of independence, India continues to be one of its most important neighbours and strategic partners. To make the recent gains irreversible, both countries need to continue working on the three Cs — cooperation, collaboration, and consolidation.

AGREEMENTS SIGNED BETWEEN INDIA AND BANGLADESH-

- Framework of Understanding (FOU) on Cooperation in **Hydrocarbon** Sector

- Protocol on Trans-boundary **Elephant Conservation**.
- MOU regarding Indian Grant Assistance for Implementation of **High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs)** through Local Bodies and other Public Sector Institutions.
- MOU on Supply of Equipment and Improvement of **Garbage / Solid Waste Disposal Ground** at Lamchori Area for Barishal City Corporation.
- Terms of Reference of India-Bangladesh **CEOs Forum**.
- MoU between Father of the **Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Memorial Museum**, Dhaka, Bangladesh and the **National Museum, New Delhi**, India.
- MoU on Cooperation in the field of **Agriculture**.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bangladesh visit boost ties

- The visit has been a celebration of a common bond because the primary focus of the visit was the golden jubilee of Bangladesh's liberation to promote people-to-people connectivity between India and Bangladesh;
- Three new border haats were inaugurated during the visit.
- Also, the visit stressed improving connectivity and a new train called "Mitali Express" connecting Dhaka and New Jalpaiguri was inaugurated
- Primacy is given to enhancing cooperation in areas like space, the peaceful use of nuclear energy, etc. in the agenda of the bilateral discussion between the two countries.
- Some of the key initiatives to expand engagement with the youth declared during the visit include-
 - 1) India announcing special '**Swarna Jayanti Scholarships**' for the youth of Bangladesh for receiving education in various field of study in India.
 - 2) India unfolding its intention of inviting 50 young entrepreneurs from Bangladesh **to share their ideas with venture capitalists to seek funding** for their businesses.
 - 3) A Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) was signed between the Bangladesh National Cadet Corps (**BNCC**) and **National Cadet Corps of India (INCC)** to increase interaction among the youth of the two countries.

Way forward-

- **HIRA" connectivity**-Recently, while inaugurating the "MatriSetu" over the Feni river in Tripura, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated the vision and progress in ensuring "**HIRA" connectivity** — a mesh of highways, information ways, railways, and airways between the neighbours.
- **People to people exchanges**- Steps must be made to reinforce more interest of the younger generations in India and Bangladesh in each other.
 - ✓ **Regular exchanges between younger entrepreneurs and civil society** based on areas such as culture, music, sports, films, and sharing of best practices in sustainable development, human capital development, gender equitable growth, amongst others, needs to be pursued.
- **Respecting the martyrs**- Steps must be taken to keep the horrific memory of the war genocide alive and celebrate the martyrs who laid down their lives for the cause of freedom, lest the world and we forget.
- **Increasing inter-community participation**- Steps can be taken to facilitate more **exchanges of people at the shared borders, and between communities** who live at the borders as well as the border and the mainstream.
 - ✓ Increasing tourist footfall at select border locations such as at **Akhaura in Tripura and Dawki in Meghalaya** from both sides and facilitating a mechanism of exchange through the creation of a common entertainment zone at the border with a curated calendar of events can go a long way to spur interest in the "other" side.
- **Tourism potential**- The rich cultural and natural heritage of Bangladesh holds enormous tourism potential.

- ✓ The beaches of Cox bazaar, swamp of Ratergul, the tea gardens of Sylhet, the heritage of Rabindranath Tagore, the Shaktipeetah temples, and the Buddhist sites in Chittagong can be popular destinations for Indian and international tourists.
- **Joint working groups**- For all these to happen, there is a need to **jointly work towards a new paradigm of security at the shared borders**.
 - ✓ A paradigm that enables borders to be not merely thick lines which demarcate national boundaries but act as “connector zones” for inclusive growth and prosperity; all this while addressing ongoing concerns on both sides — issues such as illegal migration, trafficking, etc.

Conclusion

- **India's dream of 'Act East Policy'** can only be materialized with the helping hands of Dhaka. The first 50 years have consolidated the foundation of India-Bangladesh relations.
- The future will present itself with an abundance of opportunities to help the two countries to reach a new plane of bilateral relations higher than ever before, provided that the leadership of the two neighbours **play their diplomatic cards with more maturity and pragmatism**, keeping the regional aspirations and nuances of both the countries in mind.
- Bangladesh is the region's fastest growing economy, with social indicators that other countries, including India, can learn. This is the **vital link with which India can realise the full potential** of either the economic or strategic underpinnings of its Act East policy.
- While all countries desire to be recognised as equal, they also want bigger countries to take more responsibility for protecting this equality. This, **India must “play a pioneering role in India-Bangladesh relations**. Therefore, as the larger country, the onus is on India to be generous enough to let the water flow and resolve the dispute over Teesta water and six other rivers.

Key Thinkers and Ideas

- **Economic interdependence**- Walk the talk on its developmental promises and iron out Line
- **Regionalism**- Revive SAARC
- **Pinak Ranjan Chakraborty**- Create Indian Ocean region as a security community
- **C. Rajamohan**- **social constructivism**- Leveraging soft-power and enhance people-to-people ties and bridge trust deficit

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INDIA-BHUTAN

INDIA - NEPAL & INDIA - BHUTAN RELATIONS PYQ's

1. Discuss the future prospects of Indo-Nepal relations in the context of the recent publication of new Nepalese map wrongly claiming Indian territory. [2020/10m/150w/5d]
2. The treaty of perpetual peace and friendship between India and Bhutan needs to be revised with more pragmatic, realistic obligations and responsibilities. Comment. [2017/10m/150w/5c]
3. River water disputes are emerging as a major source of irritation between India and its neighbours. Identify sources of conflicts and suggest remedial measures. [2015/15m/200w/7c]
4. Examine India's role in strategic terms with regard to the land-locked countries in South Asia. With regard to Nepal, to what extent has the involvement of major powers such as China, the US and the EU impacted India's strategic interests? [2009/60m/6]
5. Comment on the distinguishing features of Indo-Nepal Relations. [2004/20m/200w/1b]
6. Discuss some of the major issues of conflict and cooperation between India, Nepal and Bhutan. [1999/60m/8]

BACKGROUND

- India and Bhutan have been sharing ties since 1910 when Bhutan became a protectorate of British India, allowing the British to "guide" its foreign affairs and defence.
- When India declared independence in 1947, Bhutan was among the first nations to recognize it. Since then, the relationship between the countries has become stronger, especially because Bhutan also has a historically tense relationship with China.
- Diplomatic relations between India and Bhutan were established in 1968 with the establishment of a special office of India in Thimphu.
- The basic framework of India Bhutan bilateral relations is the **Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation** signed in 1949 between the two countries and revised in February 2007.



➤ **Indo-Bhutan Treaty of Peace and Friendship, 1949**

- The Treaty provides for, among other things, perpetual peace and friendship, free trade and commerce and equal justice to each other's citizens.
 - In 2007 the treaty was re-negotiated, and provisions were included to encourage Bhutan's sovereignty, abolishing the need to take India's guidance on foreign policy.
 - The updated treaty, besides providing close cooperation on national issues, provides for stronger cooperation in cultural and economic fields.
- Among India's south-Asia neighbours, India's relations with Bhutan remain a **model worthy of emulation** as the type of trust deficit shown by India's other South-Asian neighbours is not visible in Bhutan- India relationship.
- During his state visit in 2019, **Narendra Modi** remarked "who will not want a friend and a neighbour like Bhutan?" highlighting the significance of Bhutan in India's '**Neighborhood first policy.**'
- The major determinants of Indo-Bhutan relationship are
1. Significance of Bhutan
 2. Hydroelectricity cooperation
 3. India's developmental cooperation

4. India's security imperative
5. Border disputes with China

SIGNIFICANCE OF BHUTAN

For Bhutan, access, **trade and technological integration are "undivorceable" deep with India**. This makes Bhutan more oriented towards South Asia and less towards China. Bhutanese and Indian foreign policies mutually support this orientation.

Geo-Strategic-

- **Buffer State-** Bhutan is important to India as a buffer state as it act as a defence against China by protecting the chicken neck. It is so important for India to protect the North Eastern states.
- **Internal security-**From internal security perspective, illicit establishment of camps by militant outfits in the dense jungles of south-east Bhutan is a cause of concern for both the nations.
- **Neighbourhood first policy-** Narendra Modi picked Bhutan for his first foreign visit after taking charge as PM in 2019, a sign that the neighbourhood and Bhutan are foreign policy priority for the new government.
- Bhutan **shares border** with four Indian States: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal and Sikkim.
- Nestled in the Himalayas, Bhutan serves as **a buffer between India and China**.
- **Security of Bhutan's present borders** especially its western border is very important for India.

Geo-economics-

- Bhutan provides a market for Indian commodities and is a destination for Indian investment.
- Also for India, Bhutan is a rich source of hydropower.
- The trade between the two countries is governed by the India Bhutan Trade and Transit Agreement 1972 which was last renewed in November 2016.
- The agreement establishes a free-trade regime between the two countries and also provides for duty-free transit of Bhutanese exports to third countries.
- India is Bhutan's largest trading partner. In the period from January- June, 2018, trade between two countries stood at Rs. 4318.59 crore.
- Major exports from India to Bhutan are mineral products, machinery and mechanical appliances, electrical equipments etc. whereas major items of import from Bhutan are electricity, ferrosilicon, Portland cement etc.

Constantino Xavier: "With one of the highest trade-to-GDP ratios in the region (82 percent) Bhutan's developmental goals will hinge on its ability to moderate its landlocked position by developing connectivity with the Bay of Bengal region."

Cultural significance-

- About 60,000 Indian nationals live in Bhutan, employed mostly in the hydro-electric power construction and road industry.
- In addition, around 8000-10,000 daily workers enter and exit Bhutan everyday in border towns.
- A large number of colleges going Bhutanese students study in India. Government of India provides number of scholarships to Bhutanese students.
- Regular cultural exchanges take place between the two countries. One of the basic objectives of India Bhutan Foundation established in 2003 is to enhance people to people exchange in cultural field.

Geo-Political Significance:

- A politically stable Bhutan is important to India. An unstable and restive Bhutan can provide a safe haven to anti-India activities and anti-India militant groups.

- Both India and Bhutan are founding members of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) that deals with economic, social and cultural development of South Asian Region.
- Both of them also share other multilateral forums such as BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal), BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) etc.

OVERVIEW OF INDIA-BHUTAN RELATIONS

- Before independence, Bhutan was a protectorate of British India and New Delhi inherited this relationship in 1947.
- The 1949 treaty of friendship modernised bilateral ties and has guided the contemporary Indo-Bhutan relationship, ensuring India's non-interference in Bhutan's internal affairs, while **Article 2** of the treaty gave India a role in guiding Bhutan's foreign policy.
- As per **Article 2**- "The Government of India undertakes to exercise no interference in the internal administration of Bhutan. On its part the Government of Bhutan agrees to be guided by the advice of the Government of India in regard to its external relations."

As per **P. Stobdan**, the treaty did embed values of trust and equality that may have kept the spirit and momentum of the relationship moving unhindered. Notwithstanding all geopolitical pulls and pressures, Bhutan steadfastly and unshakably stood behind India as its most reliable ally.

- On the insistence of Bhutan, the 1949 treaty was revised in 2007. As per **Article 2 of the revised treaty**, "Neither government shall allow the use of its territory for activities harmful to national security and interests of the other."

Why the Treaty was Revised?

- To address the **fears among Bhutanese elites** of India holding Bhutan hostage to its own geopolitical interests.
- **Independent foreign policy adopted by Bhutan** by establishing diplomatic relations with multiple countries. Series of diplomatic friendships and independent policy moves towards economic liberalization and private sector development, were pursued by Bhutan since the early 2000s. For example, in November, 2020 Bhutan established diplomatic relations with Germany.

Success of Treaty

- Bhutan stood by India in the face of its conflict with China in 1962. Post 1971 Bhutan and Mongolia were the first to back India's push for Bangladeshi independence.
- Bhutan never played the China card and never ruffled India's feathers in the region, and never refused India's exploitation of its hydro-power assets, unlike Nepal. It also rejected 'package deals' offered by China since 1990s.

According to **Medha Bisht**, given that the 2007 Treaty is balanced and takes note of multiple facets including security, there is no need to update the Treaty. The Treaty has an inbuilt exit-clause under **Article 9** for settling disputes without jeopardizing the existence of the Treaty, which is a signature of sustained goodwill and trust between both countries.

India's Developmental Assistance to Bhutan

- India has been extending economic assistance to Bhutan's socio-economic development since the early 1960s when Bhutan launched its Five-Year Plans. India continues to be the principal development partner of Bhutan.
- **For the 12th Five Year Plan, India's contribution of Rs. 4500 cr.will constitute 73% of Bhutan's total external grant component.**

- There have also been concerns about complications related to Bhutan's long-term stagnating economic growth, rising youth unemployment, and foreign debt owed to India.
- Reports have suggested that youth frustration has been fuelled by the increased number of business and academic opportunities being offered in China to young people from Bhutan.
- Likewise, as tourism from China begins to challenge Bhutan's economic revenue from hydropower exports to India

Hydroelectricity Cooperation

- India is playing an important role in development of hydro-power projects. This not only provides Bhutanese with electricity for domestic use but also revenue from surplus electricity exported to India.
- Hydro-power cooperation between the two countries is an example of **win-win cooperation**.
- The ongoing cooperation between India and Bhutan in the hydro-power sector is covered under the 2006 bilateral agreement for cooperation and its Protocol signed in 2009.
- Four hydro-electric projects (HEPs) totalling 2136 MW are already operational in Bhutan and are supplying electricity to India. **The Chukha HEP, Kurichchu HEP and Tala HEP** are the hydroelectric projects of Bilateral Cooperation between India and Bhutan.
- So far, Government of India has constructed three Hydroelectric Projects (HEPs) in Bhutan. Currently, India is helping Bhutan in the development of power plant on **Mangdechhu River**.

Hydropower projects-

The **720 MW Mangdechhu** was commissioned in August 2019.

Two HEPs namely, 1200 MW **Punatsangchhu-I**, 1020 MW **Punatsangchhu-II** in Inter-Governmental mode and **Kholongchhu** HEP (600 MWs) under the joint venture mode are under various stages of implementation.

In consultation with the Ministry of Power/DoE, the implementation formalities of the 2585 MW **Sankosh** HEP are currently being finalized.

- This hydropower cooperation comes under 2006 Agreement on Cooperation in Hydropower. Under a protocol to this agreement, India has agreed to assist Bhutan in the development of minimum of 10,000 MW of hydropower and import of surplus electricity from same by year 2020.
- Also, there is a Joint Group of Experts (JGE) on flood management between India and Bhutan.

However, according to **Suhasini Haider**, delay in hydropower project implementations and India's self-reliance in power and other renewable sources of energy is creating debt situation for Bhutan.

- There is resentment in Bhutan regarding the cost of electricity. Indian negotiators are offering up to Rs 3.90 a unit. Bhutan wants something closer to Rs 4.40 a unit — in line with the time-tested "**cost-plus model**" that was used for the landmark **1020 MW Tala project**.
- According to Bhutan, the demand for increase in cost is an effort to convert the relationship with India from the traditional "donor and aid recipient" to that of investment and trade.

China-Bhutan Boundary Dispute

According to **Suhasini Haider**, the position of Bhutan is like '**egg between two rocks.**'

- China's occupation of Tibet was a watershed in the relations between the two countries. Thus, Bhutan came to share a 470 km long un-demarcated border with northern neighbour China.
- However, there are some pastures, measuring approximately 269 sq.km, which are disputed. The dispute in the west of Bhutan in the Doklam plateau is limited to 269 sq.km. According to Bhutan, there is no boundary dispute in the east.

- China's annexation of Tibet brought the nation even closer, as India saw the relation with Nepal and Bhutan as the key to its 'Himalayan Frontier' security policy.
- In 1958 Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (born on November 14, 1889) visited Bhutan and reiterated support for Bhutan's independence and later declared that any aggression against Bhutan would be seen as an act of war by India
- However, at the **Global Environment Facility (GEF)** meeting in June 2020, China laid claim to the **Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary**, a protected site situated in Bhutan's eastern district of Trashigang under consideration for UNESCO inclusion.
- There is a Secretary-level mechanism on border management and security related matters between the two countries.
- There is also a Border District Coordination Meeting (BDCM) Mechanism between the bordering States and the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) to facilitate coordination on border management and other related matters.
- Also, the release of satellite images by U.S. satellite which depicted alleged Chinese construction activity on the Bhutanese side of the disputed border.
- Thirdly, the 73 Sino-Indian standoffs in Doklam plateau at trijunction area of India-Bhutan and China has delayed the border talks between Bhutan and China. Since the 1980s, when the first round of Bhutan-China border talks was held, the two sides have so far held 24 rounds of border talks.

According to **Mihir Bhonsle**, the Sino-Indian violent face-off at the disputed border in Ladakh has changed the strategic calculus in the South Asia.

Increasingly, countries in the Indian sub-continent are finding it difficult to balance India and China, a tactic adopted by weaker nations towards the strategic rivalry between the two giants. The Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan is also facing a test in balancing her southern and northern neighbours.

ANALYSIS OF CHINA FACTOR

- **Former Foreign Secretary Jagat S. Mehta** in his book, "**Negotiating for India: Resolving Problems through Diplomacy**" has mentioned that "Bhutan goal was to steer its external relations with China by giving neither provocation nor the impression of getting into a bear hug of dependence with India. Both could jeopardize [Bhutan's] autonomy." Bhutan's neutral stand during Doklam Standoff highlights the similar approach.
- According to **Zorawar Daulat Singh**, South Asia is an exception to **democratic peace theory**. Since democracy has been introduced in Bhutan and internal power struggle began, uncertainty has started coming. For example,
 - Parties in Bhutan are calling for '**self-reliant Bhutan**'
 - Indian interference in Nepal, Sri-Lanka, Maldives are carefully watched in Bhutan.
 - The party critical of India has won in 2018 elections.
- Bhutan has **not established diplomatic relations with China**. It is the only country in the immediate neighbourhood of India which has not joined OBOR project of China.
- It is a big diplomatic win for India as India has been successful in convincing Bhutan to not join OBOR despite China claiming to give huge benefits to Bhutan.
- Bhutan and China have held 24 rounds of talks for resolution of border disputes and also signed agreements in 1988 and 1998 and agreed to not alter status quo pending the final settlement of border question. However, Chinese road building activity in Doklam area led to 73-day standoff.

According to Mihir Bhonsle, China's new claim in eastern Bhutan is a result of China making the erstwhile Tibetan Kingdom's claims its own. The claim on the Sakteng sanctuary in the Trashigang district of Bhutan must be seen in this light

- Further, Scholars have identified these claims as part of **China's 'Western Development Strategy'** that aims to facilitate Tibet to regain a central position in the Himalayan system. This appears to be behind China's increasing aggression all along Tibet's disputed borders in Doklam, Ladakh and Bhutan.
- Some geostrategic experts like **Mihir Bhonsle** also consider China bringing issue of Sakteng Sanctuary as an attempt to punish Indian ally. Also, Bhutan's going of India's line in not joining the Belt and Road Initiative and the show of support for Japan's candidature for a permanent seat in the UNSC was seen to be against its strategic interests.
- Bhutan cannot be taken for granted since China is vying to make inroads

According to **Suhasini Haider** India must respect sovereignty of Bhutan at all costs. India needs to develop a stand-alone Bhutan policy which is independent of China.

CHALLENGES IN RELATIONS

TREATY CHALLENGES

- There is **resentment in certain sections of Bhutanese** about provisions of the treaty, especially among younger generations. The most prominent resentment is about Article 2 of the treaty. According to critics this provision is **against sovereignty of Bhutan** as it gives India veto over Bhutan's foreign policy.
- Even **during Doklam standoff**, Indian forces stood against Chinese in Bhutan's territory. India argued that security arrangement with Bhutan under 2007 treaty which justifies presence of Indian forces in Bhutan.
- Bhutanese younger generation resent its overdependence on India. India's action in 2013 to cut fuel supplies was also perceived to be against its democratically elected government
- According to strategic experts Bhutan has serious **misgivings about becoming another Sikkim** (which was annexed by India) or meeting the fate of Tibet. Thus it plays the game of strategic autonomy

Amb **Ashok Sajjanhar** suggest Developmental stance to be followed by India, Further Functionalist approach to explore cooperation beyond government initiatives by giving more space to private sector.

ERODING AUTONOMY

Ties came under strain in recent times over India's sudden change in its power purchasing policy, rigid rates and refusal to allow Bhutan to join the national power grid and trade with third countries like Bangladesh. A clause that required the exporting power generation company to be majority owned by an Indian entity created friction. However, these are being addressed now.

According to **P. Stobdan**, India's traditional 'sacred bond' with Bhutan has been disastrously eroded and the Himalayan state merely remained as an object of strategic play against China.

He also points towards rising Chinese footprint in the region-

- 1/3rd of Bhutan's imports come from China
- China has been trying to make a deal for land swap which according to some Bhutanese elites is in national interest of Bhutan.
- China has been trying to start diplomatic relations with Bhutan.
- China has been giving Buddhist scholarships

HYDROPOWER ISSUES

- While promising to be bedrock of continuation of strong relations between the two countries, **cooperation in hydropower is also fraught with challenges.**
- Since the pandemic descended upon the two countries in March, the ongoing constructions of joint hydropower projects taken by the two countries like **Punatsangchhu-I and II projects have been disrupted**

due to shortage of machinery and construction materials. The two projects have already overshoot their scheduled completion owing to geological challenges.

OTHER ISSUES-

- **Trade deficit** in favour of India and mounting debt.
 - In 2016, total bilateral trade between the two countries stood at Rs. 8,723 crores with total imports being Rs. 5528.5 crore (82% of Bhutan's total imports) and exports recorded as Rs. 3205.2 crore including electricity (90% of Bhutan's total exports).
- The Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal Initiative (**BBIN**) – Bhutan came out of BBIN as it considered that the project would increase pollution
- There are multiple problems that Bhutanese traders face in bilateral trade and third country exports due to the introduction of Goods and Services Tax and demonetisation of currency notes by India.
- There are concerns in Bhutan with regard to the environmental risk because of trade, transport and tourism.
- India's plans for a Motor Vehicle Agreement in the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal grouping are held up.
- Bhutanese proposal to levy entry charges on Indian tourists could cause differences with India.
- Earlier generations of Bhutanese students never looked beyond India, but in recent years young Bhutanese have shown a preference for education in places like Australia, Singapore and Thailand.
- There are high-level visits from countries like China and USA.

COVID-19 COOPERATION PUSH TO INDIA RELATIONS

Non-reciprocity principle, is an important feature of the 'Neighborhood First' policy.

- India made an exception allowing imports of potatoes and other agricultural products from Bhutan.
- India also exported huge quantity of medicines and vaccines to Bhutan during COVID crisis as a good gesture.
- India on the request of the Bhutanese Prime Minister is also considering reprioritizing the allocation of INR 4500 crore towards Bhutan's 12th Five Year Plan owing to the pandemic.
- The two nations signed an agreement on the construction of the first-ever joint venture project — the 600-MW Kholongchhu hydropower project.
- Bhutan's Power System Master Plan 2040 estimated the country's hydropower potential and availability at 37,000 MW from 155 identified sites, including the existing power plants. This is a marked increase from estimate of 30,000 MW.
- The increased availability holds potential for the two countries to jointly tap hydropower beyond the 10,000 MW agreed through an inter-governmental agreement in 2009.

Way Forward

- Bhutan and India, however, are hopeful of turning the tide of the pandemic and recuperating from its disastrous effects through the virtue of staying together and helping each other.
- Reinvigorated by PM Modi's 'Bharat to Bhutan' vision, wherein India and Bhutan are always on each other's side, a relationship that has endured since 1949 when the Indo-Bhutan Friendship Treaty was signed laying the foundation of close political, cultural and economic ties between the two countries.
- India needs to step up efforts to publicise the benefits that accrue to Bhutan from Indian projects.
- India continuously needs to explore new areas of cooperation with Bhutan. Decision of setting up of ISRO's ground station in Bhutan is a welcome step. The station will help Bhutan in providing weather related messages to its far flung areas.
- India should try as much as possible to remain out of Bhutan's internal matters, though it can act as a mentor.

- Safety of Border from China is a concern for both nations. Therefore, both sides need to work together on this issue. Also, it needs to be ensured that border areas remain militants free.
- Being neighbours, it is necessary that both nations continuously recognise value of each other. For this, regular high level visits from both the sides are necessary.

Conclusion

- There is enough reason for Bhutan and India to explore cooperation beyond government initiatives. When Bhutan is diversifying its economy, private sector can lead the way forward.
- PM came with four agendas i.e. a fair tariff for the 720 MW bilateral Mangdechhu project; seeking India's support for Bhutan's 12th Five Year Plan (FYP); starting the 2,560 MW Sunkosh Reservoir project and waiving off the Central GST for Bhutan.
- These are critical for Bhutan's economic future and commercial plans and India has to adopt an open, participative approach to achieve them.

In words of **C. Raja Mohan**, "Despite diversifying international bilateral ties, Bhutan will politically continue to consider India as its only major strategic ally but New Delhi should also recognise Thimphu's concerns by not taking it for granted."

INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONS

Background-

- The relationship between India and Sri Lanka is more than 2,500 years old.
- Both countries have a legacy of intellectual, cultural, religious and linguistic interaction.
- Sri Lanka occupies a central place in India's "Neighbourhood First policy." India and Sri Lanka strive to achieve close and cordial relations in all spheres of mutual interest.
- In recent years, the relationship has been marked by close contacts at all levels. Trade and investment have grown and there is cooperation in the fields of infrastructure development, education, culture and defence.
- In recent years, significant progress in implementation of developmental assistance projects has further cemented the bonds of friendship between the two countries.

Views of prominent scholars-

- In words of **Rajiv Bhatia**, "India encounters a range of reactions in Sri Lanka; appreciation, support, suspicion and opposition"
- Highlighting the geostrategic significance of Sri Lanka, **Harsh V. Pant** has held that the "great game" of this century will be played in the waters of the Indian Ocean. In his own words, "**Sri Lanka matters because the Indian Ocean matters.**"

IMPORTANCE OF SRILANKA-

GEO-STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

- Sri Lanka is located on the critical sea route in Indian Ocean and is considered as **stationed ship in Indian Ocean.**
- Sri Lanka controls the three continents of the Indian Ocean, Asia, Africa, and Australia.

In words of President **Gotabaya**, “The minerals of the world are largely in Africa and they have to come to this side by passing through the Indian Ocean, similarly, energy is in the Middle east, it needs to come this side.”

- Thus, Sri Lanka can prove to be a huge resource rich country for Indian investors.
- India and Sri Lanka are member nations of several regional and multilateral organizations such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, South Asian Economic Union and BIMSTEC.
- India and Sri Lanka are the islands of **vibrant democracy** in south Asia.

GEO-POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE-

- **Location**- Sri Lanka’s location in the Indian Ocean region as an island State has been of strategic geopolitical relevance to several major powers.
- **Examples**- Some examples that highlight Western interests in Sri Lanka’s strategic location are the British Defence and External Affairs Agreement of 1948, and the Maritime Agreement with USSR of 1962.
- **Voice of America**- Even during the J.R Jayewardene (1978-1989) and Ranasinghe Premadasa (1989-1993) tenures, Sri Lanka was chosen to build the Voice of America transmitting station (suspected of being used for intelligence gathering purposes and electronic surveillance of the Indian Ocean).
- **Chinese involvement**- It was the massive Chinese involvement during the Rajapaksa tenure that garnered the deepest controversy in recent years.
 - ✓ China is building state of the art gigantic modern ports all along the Indian Ocean to the south of it, in Gwadar (Pakistan), Chittagong (Bangladesh, KyaukPhru (Myanmar) and Hambantota (Sri Lanka).
 - ✓ China’s string of pearl’s strategy is aimed at encircling India to establish dominance in the Indian Ocean.
- **Relying on China**- Post 2015, Sri Lanka still relies heavily on China for Port city project and for continuation of Chinese funded infrastructure projects in Sri Lanka.
- **Hambantota harbour**- Although the Hambantota harbour is reportedly making losses, it too has potential for development due to its strategic location.
 - ✓ Sri Lanka has a list of highly strategic ports located among busiest sea lanes of communication.
- **Colombo Port**- Sri Lanka’s Colombo Port is the 25th busiest container port in the world and the natural deep water harbor at Trincomalee is the fifth largest natural harbour in the world.
- **Second World War**- Port city of Trincomalee was the main base for Eastern Fleet and British Royal Navy during the Second World War.
- **Multi-purpose ports**- Sri Lanka’s location can thus serve both commercial and industrial purposes and be used as a military base.

GEO-ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE

- **Export destination**- India is Sri Lanka’s third largest export destination, after the US and UK.
- **ISFTA**- India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISFTA): More than 60% of Sri Lanka’s exports enjoy the benefits of the agreement, which came into effect in March 2000.
- **Since ISFTA**- While Sri Lankan exports to India have increased substantially during the past several years since 2000 when ISFTA came into force.
- **SAARC**- Sri Lanka is one of India’s largest trading partners among the SAARC countries. India in turn is Sri Lanka’s largest trade partner globally.

- **Demand-driven development**- India's development partnership with Colombo has always been demand-driven, with projects covering social infrastructure like education, health, housing, access to clean water and sanitation, besides industrial development.
- **Concessional financing**-Concessional financing of about \$ 2 billion has been provided to Sri Lanka through various Indian government-supported Lines of Credit across sectors (for railway connectivity, infrastructure, supply of defence equipment, security, and counter-terrorism and solar projects, among others).
- **FDI**- Foreign direct investment (FDI) from India amounted to around \$ 1.7 billion over the years from 2005 to 2019 and went into retail petroleum, hotels and tourism, real estate and manufacturing, apart from telecom, banking and financial services.
- **Major imports**- The main products exported from Sri Lanka to India were Animal Food (\$80.2M), Refined Petroleum (\$61.8M), and Other Nuts (\$50.9M). During the last 25 years the exports of Sri Lanka to India have increased at an annualized rate of 13.7%, from \$30.1M in 1995 to \$740M in 2020.
- **Major exports**-India's exports to Sri Lanka amounted to \$5.3 billion in 2015-17 whereas its imports from the country were at \$743 million.
- **Widening Balance of trade**- However, there has been a high growth in India's exports to Sri Lanka, resulting in a widening of the balance of trade. This is largely because of the lack of export capacity from Sri Lanka to service Indian requirement and also due to increase in imports from India because of competitiveness of our exports.

INDIA-SRI LANKA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (ISFTA)

- The main framework for bilateral trade has been provided by the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISFTA) that was signed in 1998 and entered into force in March 2000.
- The basic premise in signing the ISFTA was asymmetries between the two economies, local socio-economic sensitivities, safeguard measures to protect domestic interests, and revenue implications so as not to impact high revenue generating tariff lines in the short term.
- In a nutshell, India sought to do more without insisting on strict reciprocity from Sri Lanka.
- This is reflected in the respective obligations of the two countries under the ISFTA where India agreed to open more tariff lines upfront and within a shorter time span of three years as against smaller and more staggered openings by Sri Lanka which was provided a longer time of eight years.

In order to receive ISFTA benefits, the merchandise exported between India and Sri Lanka should comply with the Rules of Origin criteria.

DEFENSE AND STRATEGIC COOPERATION

- Sri Lanka and New Delhi have long history of security cooperation. In recent years, the two sides have steadily increased their military-to-military relationship.
- India and Sri Lanka conduct one of the largest joint Military exercises called '**Mitra Shakti**'. Both conducts joint naval exercise called '**SLINEX**'.
- India is the largest provider of **defense training program** to Sri Lankan soldiers and Defence officials
- The **Mi-17s** that India 'quietly gifted' to Lanka were in addition to a Sukanya class offshore patrol vessel also gifted by the Indian Coast Guard to the Sri Lankan Navy in 2002.
- The choppers played a major role in several **daring missions launched by the Sri Lankan Air Force** to rescue the army's deep penetration units and injured soldiers from deep inside LTTE held territory.
- A **trilateral maritime security cooperation** agreement was signed by India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives to improve surveillance, anti-piracy operations and reducing maritime pollution in Indian Ocean Region.
- In April 2019, India and Sri Lanka also concluded agreement on **countering Drug and Human trafficking**.
- In the aftermath of the horrific **Easter bombings**, Sri Lankan Prime Minister thanked the Indian government for all the "help" given.

- The alerts issued by **Indian agencies before the attacks had warned specifically** about the use of radicalized suicide bombers attacking churches and the Indian High Commission in Colombo.

PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE TIES

- **Buddhism**- Buddhism is one of the strongest pillars connecting the two nations and civilizations. India in 2020, announced USD 15 million grant assistance for protection and promotion of Buddhist ties between India and Sri Lanka.
- **Internally Displaced Persons**- Both countries share a broad understanding on major issues of international interest. In recent years, significant progress in implementation of developmental assistance projects for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and disadvantaged sections of the population in Sri Lanka has helped further cement the bonds of friendship between the two countries.
- **People of Indian Origin**- The People of Indian Origin (PIOs) comprise Sindhis, Borahs, Gujaratis, Memons, Parsis, Malayalis and Telugu speaking persons who have settled down in Sri Lanka (most of them after partition) and are engaged in various business ventures.
 - ✓ Though their numbers are much lesser as compared to Indian Origin Tamils (IOTs), they are economically prosperous and are well placed.
- **Unique organizations**- Each of these communities has their organization which organizes festivals and cultural events.
- **Tea or rubber plantation**- The IOTs are mostly employed in either tea or rubber plantation in Central, Uva and Sabaragamuwa Provinces though during the last decade, the younger generation has been migrating to Colombo in search of employment.
- **Fair share**- A fair number of IOTs living in Colombo are engaged in business. According to Government census figures (2011), the population of IOTs is about 1.6 million.

INDIA'S DEVELOPMENTAL AID

- **What is the crisis?**-The Sri Lankan economy has been facing a crisis owing to a serious Balance of Payments (BoP) problem. Its foreign exchange reserves are depleting rapidly and it is becoming increasingly difficult for the country to import essential consumption goods.
- **Reason of the crisis**- The current Sri Lankan economic crisis is the product of the historical imbalances in the economic structure, the International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s loan-related conditionality's and the misguided policies of authoritarian rulers.
- Sri Lanka is an important pillar of Neighbourhood First Policy.
- **Rehabilitation and relief assistance**- India has provided rehabilitation and relief assistance for internally displaced Tamils. India has constructed 30000 houses and other medical facility infrastructure.
- **Currency swap**-The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) have concluded the USD 400 million **currency swap agreement under the SAARC currency swap framework**.
- **LOC**- Exim Bank has so far extended nine LoC to Sri Lanka including the latest one taking the total value to \$1.68 billion.
- **Defer pending payments**- PM Rajapaksa asked India to defer pending payments for three years, so as to enable Sri Lanka to seek a similar moratorium from other debtor-nations and international organisations.
- **ECONOMIC SUPPORT**- Beginning January 2022, India has been providing crucial economic support to the island nation in the grip of a severe dollar crisis that, many fear, might lead to a sovereign default, and a severe shortage of essentials in the import-reliant country.
- **Total support**- The relief extended by India from the beginning of 2022 totals over USD 1.4 billion - a USD 400 currency swap, a USD 500 loan deferment and a USD 500 Line of Credit for fuel imports.
- **Short-term concessional loan**- More recently, India extended a USD 1 billion short-term concessional loan to Sri Lanka to help the country as it faces an unprecedented economic crisis.

TAMIL QUESTION AND INDO-SRI-LANKA RELATIONS

Background-

- In the 1970's-1980's, Sri-Lanka was plunged into a civil war with Tigers of Tamil Eelam, a separatist insurgent force, on one side and the Sri-Lankan Government on the other.
- India faced growing resentment against its own Tamil populations in 1987. An influx of refugees from Sri Lanka further made matters worse. Hence, India took the decision to intervene directly in the Sri Lankan Civil War.
- The Tamils in the Jaffna region were supplied by economic blockade and military assaults, despite military assaults and economic blockade by the Sri Lankan government.
- After several rounds of negotiation, India and Sri Lanka entered into an agreement which would grant a degree of regional autonomy in the Tamil areas and called for Tamil militants in laying down their arms.
- Further India was to send a peacekeeping force, named the IPKF to oversee the disarmament and ensure stability in the region.
- The result was that the LTTE now found itself engaged in military conflict with the Indian Army. The conflict between the LTTE and the Indian Army left over 1,000 Indian soldiers dead.

Former **NSA Shivshankar Menon** in his book '**Choices: Inside the Making of India's Foreign Policy**' has highlighted 3 major reasons for Tamil Question-

1. **Religious and linguistic discrimination** by Sinhala speaking Buddhist majority. Tamil has not been given status of official language and primacy is given to Buddhism in employment and education.
2. **Denial of Citizenship**- The majority of the Tamils were denied citizenship. Thus, most of the Tamils continued to live in poverty in the tea estates of Sri Lanka.
3. **Civil war and Human Rights abuses**- The UN estimates that 40,000 civilians alone died in the five months before the civil war between LTTE and Sri Lankan government ended in May 2009.

CIVIL WAR IN SRI LANKA

SumitGanguly in his work '**Emerging The World: Indian Foreign Policy Since 1947**' has analyzed the history of Tamil question in Indo-Sri Lanka relation.

- **Beginning**- Communal tensions between the Sinhalese and Tamil communities had been brewing since the early 1940s and intensified with the wave of Sinhalese nationalism and massive anti-Tamil riots in the latter half of the 1950s.
- **Formation of LTTE**- The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was formed in 1976 as the self-styled "national freedom movement of the people of Tamil Eelam" and began a guerilla war on the government and administration. The war with LTTE officially started after the killing of 13 soldiers in 1983.
- **Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord**- In 1987, Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan President Jayewardene signed the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord and Indian soldiers were dispatched to Sri Lanka as part of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF).
- **Assassination of Rajiv Gandhi**- Though many of the insurgents did agree to intermittent truce under the IPK, matters deteriorated soon and fighting erupted once again once the IPKF left in 1990. The LTTE was also implicated in the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, allegedly in revenge of his aid to Sri Lanka.
- **1995 to 2001**- The island state remained in a state of unrest throughout the 1995 to 2001 with brief intermittent spells of peace. Severe bombing and attacks in the northern and eastern parts of the country continued.
- **Ceasefire**- The government and LTTE signed a ceasefire with the Norwegians as mediators in 2002. Though peace is achieved for a short period with both sides making concessions, peace talks disintegrated soon. The ceasefire held for a while longer but violence escalated again with an LTTE suicide bombing in Colombo in 2004.

- **All-out war against the LTTE**- In early 2008, the government went on an all-out war against the LTTE, aiming to secure their complete and unconditional surrender. The UN estimates that 40,000 civilians alone died in the five months before the war's end in May 2009, when the Tigers surrendered.
- **Defeat of LTTE**- In May 2009, the Sri Lankan government announced the LTTE officially defeated. Military said rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran was killed in the fighting. The UN estimates that 40,000 civilians alone died in the five months before the war's end.
- **UN Resolution**- In March 2012, the United Nations passed a resolution urging Sri Lanka to investigate alleged abuses during the final phase of war with Tamil rebels. India voted against Sri Lanka, under pressure from parties from south India.
- **Killing of Balachandran Prabhakaran**- However, the Sri Lankan government were considered "inconclusive and lack the independence and impartiality to inspire confidence". Things became worse following the killing of Balachandran Prabhakaran, the 12-year-old son of Velupillai Prabhakaran, leader of the Tamil Tigers. Another similar resolution is scheduled to be moved in the UN Human Rights Council on March 21.

1987 ACCORD BETWEEN INDIA AND SRI LANKA-

Provisions of accord:

- The northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka where Tamils were the majority would be merged into a single province.
- Substantial devolution of power to the Northern Province.
- The LTTE would be dissolved and arms surrendered in a very short time.
- The Indian army would come to the aid of the Sri Lankan government if requested by Sri Lanka.
- The 13th amendment aimed at creating provincial councils in Sri Lanka and enable Sinhalese and Tamil as national languages while preserving English as the link language.
- However, the accord **failed to take off** because the LTTE had given only reluctant consent, was not a signatory, did not trust the Sri Lankan government and refused to surrender.

INDO-SRI LANKA RELATIONS AFTER THE LTTE: 2009 TO 2015

- India's decision to vote against Sri Lanka in the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHCR) twice in succession, in March 2012 and March 2013 was due to mutually reinforcing factors, namely, pressures from Tamil Nadu parties and from the Congress' own Tamil Nadu unit, and the increasingly blatant renegeing on commitments made to India at the highest level by the Rajapaksa regime.
- However, Sirisena government tried to follow accommodative policy and enacting **19th Amendment** which provided for parliamentary democracy and devolution of powers.
- India, on its part, abstained from voting in the United Nation Human Rights Council on a resolution sought to fix responsibility for war crimes and human rights violations against Tamils by Sri Lankan authorities in the final days of the Eelam War IV.
- Also, in recent times, **salience of Tamil Question is declining** in India-Sri Lanka relations as well as in Tamil Nadu politics.
- The new government in Sri Lanka has brought the **20th Amendment** which provides for executive presidency and dilutes the 13th amendment.
- During visit of Sri Lankan premier to India, Prime Minister Modi called on the Sri Lankan government "to address the aspirations of the Tamil people for equality, justice, peace and respect within a united Sri Lanka", and urged it to take forward "the process of reconciliation with the implementation of the 13th Amendment".

CHALLENGES IN RELATIONS

FISHERMAN ISSUE

- **Kachchativu island**- India recognized Sri Lankan sovereignty over the barren **Kachchativu Island**, against objections by the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) government in Tamil Nadu, without adequate safeguards for traditional fishing rights of Tamil Nadu fishermen.
 - ✓ The island was ceded to Sri Lanka in 1974. The agreement allows Indian fishermen access to Katchatheevu for rest, for drying of nests but it did not ensure the traditional fishing rights.
- **Attack on fisherman**- After the end of civil war in 2009, arrests and attacks increased on Indian fishermen when they enter Lankan waters because of depletion of marine resources on the Indian side.
- **Use of big trawlers**- Sri Lanka also protests against use of big trawlers by Indian fishermen.
- **International Maritime Boundary Line**- Though both countries have demarcated the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) yet fishermen from both sides cross the line unknowingly. Recently, the recovery of bodies washed ashore in Sri Lanka has triggered protests in Tamil Nadu as they are believed to be of the four fishermen reported missing from the state.
- **Joint Working Group**- Both countries have established the Joint Working Group mechanism to find the permanent solution to the issue. Also, MoU was signed between India and Sri Lanka to provide nets and other necessary equipment to fisherman.
- **Protest by India**- Recently, in 2020, Indian High Commission in Colombo had lodged a “strong protest” with the Sri Lankan government over Sri Lankan Navy’s firing on Indian fisherman.
- **Humanitarian concern**- It had also highlighted that the issue of fishermen should be viewed “as a purely humanitarian and livelihood concern” and that the use of force was not resorted to under any circumstance.

ROLE OF CHINA

- **Increasing Chinese footprint**- Over the last few years, Chinese footprint has increased dramatically in the island nation. Sri Lanka’s embrace of China largely stems from two factors.
 - ✓ First, Sri Lankans continue to be **suspicious about India’s motives vis-a-vis the Tamil cause**.
 - ✓ Second, **India’s slow bureaucratic processes** that delay approvals incite suspicions of India’s commitment to Sri Lanka. Last year, the Indian government took five months to approve a loan moratorium sought by Colombo while Beijing approved an additional US \$500 million loan from its development bank in no time.
 - ✓ China’s quicker decision making and its far larger assistance makes them a more attractive partner.
 - **Sri Lanka China free trade agreement**- Due to Sri Lanka China free trade agreement, Sri Lanka's trade with India has been reduced as it finds it is beneficial to substitute goods of Indian origin with goods of Chinese origin.
 - **Role of Pakistan**- In geopolitical terms, China and, to a much lesser extent, Pakistan established a diplomatic presence in Sri Lanka in 2000’s.
 - ✓ Pakistan supplied pilots and arms during the final phase of the Eelam War(2006–9), and China supplied arms on a larger scale, while India exercised restraint due to its earlier bad experience of fighting the LTTE.
 - **China card against India**- Sri Lanka has since then played **the ‘China card’** against India to ward off pressures to accommodate the Tamils in a political solution based on the full implementation of the 13th Amendment involving the devolution of land, police, and fiscal powers to the north and east. China has also emerged as the largest aid donor to Sri Lanka.
- According to **Harsh V. Pant**, China views India’s role in Sri Lankan affairs not only as a means to “control” Sri Lanka and achieve “regional hegemony” in South Asia but also to “expel the influence of other countries.”
- **Strategic position of Sri Lanka**- For China, Sri Lanka is placed at very important sea line of communications. Hence, China didn’t want Indian influence in Sri Lanka. China's policy in South Asia is mainly focused on India.

- **Rise of India**- In the last few years, India has emerged as a regional military power with economic power, nuclear power, and missile capability. This is challenging the growth and interests of this region of China. According to Beijing's policy is to increase China's influence in Colombo and reduce India's influence.
- **War against LTTE**- Sri Lanka's war against the LTTE made India's role contentious both domestically and in Sri Lanka, and allowed China crucial manoeuvring space to enhance its profile in the country.
- **Trading and investment partner**- Today, China not only supplies military hardware and training, but has emerged as major trading and investment partner. As a result, the two nations now have a declared **"strategic co-operation partnership."**
- **Loans to the Sri Lanka**- In recent years, China has extended billions of dollars of loans to the Sri Lankan government for new infrastructure projects, which is not good for India's strategic depth in Indian Ocean Region.
 - ✓ China has also supplied arms as well as provides huge loans to Sri Lanka for its development.
 - ✓ China also invested sufficiently in the infrastructure of Sri Lanka, which included building of Colombo international container terminal by China Harbor Corporation.
- **Hambantota**- Sri Lanka also handed over the strategic port of Hambantota, which is expected to play a key role in China's Belt and Road Initiative, to China on a 99-year lease.
 - ✓ The opposition parties and trade unions in Sri Lanka have already dubbed the port deal as a sellout of their country's national assets to China.
- **Improving India-SL relations**- However, the relation between Sri Lanka and India are improving. In order to allay Indian concerns that the Hambantota port will not be used for military purposes, the Sri Lankan government has sought to limit China's role to running commercial operations at the port while it retains oversight of security operations.
- **Civil nuclear cooperation agreement**- The two countries have signed civil nuclear cooperation agreement which is Sri Lanka's first nuclear partnership with any country.
- **India's investment**- India is also investing into Sri Lanka's infrastructure development in the Northern and Eastern provinces.
 - ✓ India is also planning to build Trincomalee Port to counterweight the Chinese developments at Hambantota Port.

CHINESE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN SRI LANKA

- **Largest investor**- China is the largest investor in Sri Lanka today, with funding and investment of nearly \$15 billion.
 - ✓ China's increasing control over high-profile Sri Lankan infrastructure projects has renewed fears that the country may soon become a Chinese colony.
- **Elevated highway in Colombo**-The China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) has recently won a new development project for a 17-km elevated highway in Colombo.
 - ✓ The terms of the deal allow CHEC to own the highway, recover the principal, earn profits and hand it over to the Sri Lankan government after 18 years.
 - ✓ This makes the CHEC the **first foreign company** to own a highway in Sri Lanka.
- **Ports**- Other Chinese flagship projects are the Hambantota Port Development and the Colombo Port Project both supported by loans and are located at strategic points on the global sea trade route.
- **Energy projects**- Recently, a Chinese company has won a contract to set up energy **projects on three Sri Lankan islands** off the northern Jaffna peninsula- **45 km from Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu.**
- **Anti-India sentiment**- There are also reports of Chinese hand behind rising anti-India sentiment against Indian projects like East Coast Container Project.
- **India's investment**- India is also investing into Sri Lanka's infrastructure development in the Northern and Eastern provinces.
 - ✓ India is also planning to build Trincomalee Port to counterweight the Chinese developments at Hambantota Port.

IMPLICATIONS OF CHINESE INVESTMENT ON INDIA

- 1) **From realist perspective**, it is not in Sri Lanka's interest to have one dominant power in the neighbourhood, but to have a **balance of power**.
 - ✓ Thus, even Pro China Rajapaksha's have to maintain neutrality between India and China. In this context, India needs to play its cards well.
- 2) **Geostrategic and security concerns**- According to strategic experts, increasing Chinese presence in Indian Ocean is part of '**string of pearls strategy**' for India's containment.
 - **India first' approach**- Sri Lanka has also made it clear that its strategic security policy will have 'India first' approach though it will also cooperate with other partners for economic development.
 - ✓ Sri Lankan President has also mentioned 3 important pillars of "**Non alignment policy**" of Sri Lanka.
 1. Strategic security priority to India
 2. Posture of neutrality in dealing with global powers
 3. Equidistance from declining west, rising India and China.
 - **Chinese projects are closer to India**- However, many Chinese projects like Hambantota project, Colombo port city project etc are at proximity of Indian coastline.
 - ✓ The Hambantota port's location at the southern extremity of Sri Lanka, overlooking South Asia's vital sea lanes, makes it an important commercial asset for China.
 - ✓ It also has strategic dimension of containing India.
 - ✓ Though Colombo has assured that Hambantota port will be civilian and under the explicit control of Sri Lankan authorities, yet there are no takers for this argument in New Delhi.
 - **Economic concerns**- According to the American Enterprise Institute's China Global Investment Tracker, **China has committed around 100 billion USD in the economies of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, the Maldives, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka**.
 - **China has replaced India in projects**- Over the past decade; China has replaced India as the major trading partner of several South Asian countries.
 - ✓ Sri Lanka had offered India Trincomalee and Batticaloa port for development. But India due to its bureaucratic apathy couldn't develop this port. India's delivery deficit with Sri Lanka had pushed it towards China.
 - **Debt trap diplomacy**- The island nation's total debt is standing at \$64bn and almost 95% of all government revenues go towards debt repayment.
 - ✓ Debt to GDP ratio of Sri Lanka is 80% of which China and ADB own 14%.
 - ✓ Chinese projects have been accused of issues like non transparency, poor environmental sustainability etc.
 - ✓ Recently Sri Lanka had leased Hambantota port to China for 99 years. Similarly, the new Colombo port city is considered as **Chinese colony** in Sri Lanka.
 - **China slowing down projects**- While on the one hand, China giving high-profile attention to Sri Lanka, Colombo is slowing down some of its planned projects with India and Japan.
 - ✓ Reports have suggested that China believes that Colombo must maintain some distance from New Delhi and Tokyo.
 - ✓ Accordingly, Sri Lanka has decided to pause or slow down some of the development projects involving India and Japan, like Japanese-funded light rail project.
 - ✓ Sri Lanka has also "unilaterally" pulled out of the 2019 tripartite agreement for development of East coast container. However, it has also tried to compensate by signing a deal with India for West Container Terminal Project.
 - **Sri Lanka's assurance to India**- Though President Gotabaya during his Delhi visit stated that Sri Lanka would not encourage anything that would jeopardize the security of the Indian Ocean and Sri Lanka's Foreign Secretary **Jayanath Colombage** had reiterated the same sentiment, stating explicitly that, "We cannot be,

we should not be, we can't afford to be a strategic security threat for India", yet India is apprehensive of growing Chinese influence and past record of Rajapaksa's.

OTHER ISSUES

➤ **Political Instability in Sri-Lanka**

- ✓ In last decade, Sri Lankan politics has gone through a long running crisis characterized by the changing nature of its political system, from presidential and semi-presidential. The President and Prime Minister have been at odds with each other on many occasions.
- ✓ The Sri Lankan Constitution's 19th Amendment prohibits Mahinda eeks to establish the Executive Presidency and reduce powers of the PM and Parliament.
- ✓ These changes can strengthen Sinhalese nationalist sentiments and can further dilute the 13th Amendment. This is a cause of concern for India.

➤ **Role Of the USA in India- Sri Lanka**

- ✓ **Indo-Pacific strategy**- Under the Indo-Pacific strategy, the US has shifted its focus towards Indian ocean.
 - It is working with QUAD members to counter the Chinese aggression in Pacific and Indian ocean.
- ✓ In this context, the Sri Lankan regime, which is close to China, will have to navigate stronger geopolitical headwinds with the US. There is bipartisan support in US for Indo-Pacific strategy.
- ✓ Assistant Secretary **Alice Wells** after his south Asia visit spoke about Sri Lanka as 'that piece of real estate in the Indo-Pacific' which was important to the US. Recently, the US has signed a Defence Agreement with Maldives "to deepen engagement and cooperation in support of maintaining peace and security in the Indian Ocean."
- ✓ In this context, the dynamics between US and China strategic rivalry will make it hard for Sri Lanka to pursue Non-Alignment foreign policy and will also impact Indo-Sri Lanka relations.
- ✓ **Re-engaging in multilateral institutions**- Secondly, the Biden administration is re-engaging in multilateral institutions. In this context, Sri lanka can face increasing pressure to implement the 2015 UNHRC resolution co-sponsored by the US and the former Sri Lankan government, which was hardly implemented due to domestic pressure and subsequent withdrawal.
- ✓ In these dynamics, India can be the bridge between the Sri Lanka and the West and can help Sri Lanka maintain balanced relations with the West.
- ✓ According to **C. Raja Mohan**, non-aligned Sri Lanka is better than China-aligned Sri Lanka.

➤ **Sri Lanka's economic crisis poses challenges for India**

- ✓ **Backed out of project**- In February, Sri Lanka backed out from a tripartite partnership with India and Japan for its East Container Terminal Project at the Colombo Port, citing domestic issues.
- ✓ **Currency-swap agreement**- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had signed a currency-swap agreement with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) under the SAARC Currency Swap Framework 2019-22, for withdrawals of up to \$400 million.
- ✓ **CBSL renewal**- The CBSL settled the scheduled facility with RBI in February 2021. Even though the agreement was valid till 13 November 2022, India declined any further renewal of it in the absence of an International Monetary Fund programme to address Sri Lanka's current macroeconomic imbalances.
- ✓ **Fragile liquidity situation**- Sri Lanka's fragile liquidity situation has put it at high risk of debt distress. Its public debt-to-GDP ratio was at 109.7% in 2020, and its gross financing needs remain high at 18% of GDP

NOTE- Sri Lanka's economic crisis may further push it to align its policies with Beijing's interests.

- ✓ This comes at a time when India is already on a diplomatic tightrope with Afghanistan and Myanmar.
- ✓ Other South Asian nations like Bangladesh, Nepal and the Maldives have also been turning to China to finance large-scale infrastructure projects.
- ✓ Nurturing the Neighborhood First policy with Sri Lanka will therefore be important for India.

Way Forward

- ✓ Regional platforms like the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation and the Indian Ocean Rim Association could be leveraged to foster cooperation in common areas of interest like technology-driven agriculture and marine sector development, IT and communication infrastructure, renewable energy, and transport and connectivity.
- ✓ Both countries could also cooperate on enhancing private sector investments to create economic resilience.

SRI LANKA'S LOOMING ECONOMIC CRISIS

- The Sri Lankan economy has been facing a crisis owing to a serious Balance of Payments (BoP) problem.
- Its foreign exchange reserves are depleting rapidly and it is becoming increasingly difficult for the country to import essential consumption goods.
- The current Sri Lankan economic crisis is the product of the historical imbalances in the economic structure, the International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s loan-related conditionalities and the misguided policies of authoritarian rulers.

Reasons of the crisis-

- **Covid-19 pandemic-** The Covid-19 pandemic has led to a global slump with productivity dropping and supply chains getting disrupted across the world.
- **Rising global food prices-** As global food prices have risen, countries like Sri Lanka have borne the brunt given their reliance on imports to sustain them.
- **Tourism sector** has been hit due to the pandemic and this is a sector which generates maximum revenue for the island nation.
- **Depreciation in Sri Lankan rupee-** The result has been depreciation in Sri Lankan rupee, thereby putting more pressure on the country's foreign exchange reserves.
- **External reserves dropped-** Sri Lanka's external reserves dropped to \$1.6 billion in November 2021, triggering alarm in different quarters. Foreign reserves draining so rapidly could only mean that a sovereign default is imminent.
- **Credit agencies downgraded SL's value-** American credit rating agency Fitch downgraded the island nation to a 'CC' rating, which is the lowest rating prior to default.

NOTE- Despite its mounting foreign debt over the years, Sri Lanka has never defaulted until now.

What is the Recent Economic Support that India is Providing to Sri Lanka?

- **Supplying essentials-** Beginning January 2022, India has been providing crucial economic support to the island nation in the grip of a severe dollar crisis that, many fear, might lead to a sovereign default, and a severe shortage of essentials in the import-reliant country.
- **Monetary support-** The relief extended by India from the beginning of this year totals over USD 1.4 billion — a USD 400 currency swap, a USD 500 loan deferment and a USD 500 Line of Credit for fuel imports.
 - ✓ Sri Lanka is further negotiating a USD 1 billion assistance from India to help the country as it faces an unprecedented economic crisis

Why is India helping Sri Lanka?

- **To keep it away from China**- Crucially, any disillusionment in Sri Lanka with China eases India's effort to keep the Lankan archipelago out of China's 'string of pearls' game in the Indo-Pacific.
 - ✓ It is in India's interest to contain Chinese presence and influence in this region.

Humanitarian help- To the extent India can extend low-cost help to alleviate the hardships of Sri Lankans, it should, however it must be done with due care keeping in mind that the optics of its aid matters too.

What do experts say?

- **HARSH V. PANT**- Expecting India to bail Sri Lanka out every time there is a crisis may work for some time, but it's a recipe for disaster.
- **Harsh V. Pant**- suggests **complex interdependence and social constructivism**:
 - ✓ The challenge for Sri Lanka and India is to be realistic in their appraisal of this important bilateral partnership.
 - ✓ Notwithstanding issues India will have to cease looking every move of Sri Lanka through the China lens.
 - ✓ For Beijing Colombo may just be a strategic outpost to outmaneuver India but for New Delhi this is about a long term sustainable engagement with a neighbor.
 - ✓ For Colombo, it might be tempting to use the China card against India and get concessions.
 - ✓ But it needs a strategic perspective in its engagement with both New Delhi.

Way Forward

- **Future recommendations**: India cannot be complacent as present government is neutral to India-China
- **C. Rajamohan (Interdependence)**: deepen economic and military cooperation with Sri-Lanka; Walk the talk on its projects; India needs to correct perceptions about ETCA
- **C. Rajamohan (social constructivism)**: Past Indian governments committed "monumental errors" in their Sri Lanka policy. India can "rebuild" the special relationship with Sri Lanka by "reclaiming the shared spiritual heritage"
- **Partha sarthy (Liberal institutionalism)**: Utilize the platform of BIMSTEC to deepen relations. Evolve Bay of Bengal region to security community.
- **Suhasini Haider**: India-Sri-Lanka dialogue comprises of 5 different dialogues Between New Delhi and Colombo, Delhi-Jaffna, Delhi-Chennai, Colombo-Jaffna and Colombo-Chennai.
 - ✓ The only way forwards to knit them together in comprehensive relations.
- **Amb. Shashank**- Collaborate with like-minded countries and leave either-or approach adopting a dual approach of mutual development

Conclusion

- In line with the "Neighborhood First" approach and the "Sagar" doctrine, New Delhi attaches "a special priority" to its relations with Colombo.
- According to **Harsh Pant**, with geography as well as its age-old cultural and ethnic ties to Sri Lanka, India wants to be "first amongst equals" in terms of influence over its island neighbour. And that remains a work in progress for Indian foreign policy.
- According to **C. Raja Mohan**, India's policy should be guided by **enlightened national interest** which will require careful navigation between the principles of non-interventions and security of the region. He also suggests that India should shed its image of an interfering big brother and two countries should recognise the legitimacy of each other's concerns & operate in a way mutually beneficial.

INDIA – MYANMAR

Introduction

- In words of **C. Raja Mohan**, “India Myanmar relationship is described as **Brother countries**; Once part of same territory, Myanmar is the **land bridge** that connects India and South East Asia.”
- It is the only ASEAN country adjoining India and, therefore, is a gateway to South East Asia. India is seeking to enhance its cooperation with Myanmar in line with ‘**Act East**’ and ‘**Neighbourhood First**’ Policies.
- India and Myanmar are under a traditional, long-standing and close relationship. Both countries were colonies of the British Empire in early modern times and Myanmar was also annexed, being a part of British India in the years 1886 - 1937
- Myanmar has been in turmoil since February, 2021 when the military seized control of the country in a coup and detained Aung San Suu Kyi and other leaders of her National League for Democracy (NLD).
 - ✓ Being the world’s largest democracy, India shall feel concerned when democracy in such a proximity is threatened. However, India also has vital interests in Myanmar that it would like to protect and enhance.



HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

- India had good relations with Myanmar after independence however relations deteriorated after 1962 Military coup as India supported democracy movement which was against the interests of ruling junta (military).
- Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru attached great importance to the friendship between India and Myanmar. For him, Myanmar is a neighboring country with close relationships and intimacy.
 - ✓ However, the **coup** headed by General Ne Win ushered in the military coming to power in Myanmar (March 1962), which contributed to the cold and tense relationship between the two countries for many decades later.
 - ✓ It can be stated that “idealism” in India’s foreign policy towards Myanmar deeply dominated bilateral relations in the years 1948 - 1962 and 1962 - 1988.
- Relations are improving since 1993 with India opening her economy and with the launch of **Look East policy** and New Delhi proposing to Integrate economic development of India’s North East region and Myanmar.
- Since the late 1980s, peace, dialogue and cooperation have become a major global and regional trend and have had a major impact on India's foreign policy in general and India's Myanmar policy in general.
 - ✓ The decline in relations with Myanmar in the years 1962 - 1988 showed that India needed in order to adjust its foreign policy with this eastern neighbor.
 - ✓ India needs to become more realistic in its foreign policy and relations with other countries, including Myanmar. It is the transition from “idealism” to “realism” in Indian foreign policy in general and for Myanmar in particular, especially from the moment when India started to implement the Look East Policy
- According to **C. Raja Mohan**, in current phase there is greater sensitivity to each other’s red flags and India has also adopted not to interfere in Myanmar’s internal affairs with Myanmar military also reciprocating by

not allowing its soil for North east based insurgent groups and even allowed India to take military action against them.

- India-Myanmar relations are rooted in shared historical, ethnic, cultural, and religious ties. As the land of Lord Buddha, India is a country of pilgrimage for the people of Myanmar. India and Myanmar relations have stood the test of time.

WHY A STABLE MYANMAR IS IMPORTANT FOR INDIA?

GEOPOLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

- ✓ Myanmar is geopolitically significant to India as it stands at the centre of the India-Southeast Asia geography.
- ✓ Myanmar is the only Southeast Asian country that shares a land border with north-eastern India, stretching some 1,625 kilometres.
- ✓ An important member of BIMSTEC, ASEAN, Mekong Ganga cooperation.
- ✓ Myanmar is important for regional cooperation and for India to establish herself as regional power. For example, Myanmar is key partner in various regional groups like BIMSTEC, ASEAN Mekong Ganga Cooperation etc.
- ✓ On June 18, the United Nations General Assembly overwhelmingly passed a resolution on the “situation in Myanmar” with a vote of 119-1.
 - Among other things, the resolution calls on the Myanmar military to end the state of emergency, reopen the “democratically elected parliament”, release detained civilian leaders “immediately and unconditionally”, “swiftly implement” the five-point consensus reached at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations meeting.
 - In total, 36 countries – including India – abstained from voting.
- ✓ As part of India’s SAGAR Vision, India developed the Sittwe port in Myanmar’s Rakhine state. The port is meant to be India’s answer to the Chinese-fronted Kyaukpyu port, which is intended to cement China’s geostrategic footprint in Rakhine.
- ✓ India had been categorical from the very beginning that the gains made by Myanmar over the last decades on the path towards democracy should not be undermined.
 - On Suu Kyi’s imprisonment for 2 years (sentenced recently), India also expressed its deep concerns as such developments accentuate differences.
 - It suggested all the sides take efforts to advance dialogues for the sake of their nation’s future.

GEOSTRATEGIC LOCATION

- ✓ Bordering China, India and ASEAN and Bay of Bengal. Myanmar sits at the intersection of India’s ‘Neighbourhood First’ and ‘Act East Policy’, and therefore is an essential element in India’s practice of regional diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific, and serves as a land bridge to connect South Asia and Southeast Asia.
- **National security:** Myanmar-China border has become the epicentre of local armed separatist groups operating on Myanmar soil, and Indian groups, ranging from ULFA in Assam to the NSCN (IM) in Nagaland. The **free movement regime** further facilitates their movement and links with organised crime.
- **Proximity to the ‘Golden Triangle’** together with a porous and poorly guarded border provides the enabling environment for traffickers to smuggle heroin and psychotropic substances into India through the India-Myanmar border.
- It serves as a **buffer between India and China**. Myanmar has coastal access to the Bay of Bengal. It connects Bangladesh, China and the restive North-eastern states of India. It is also close to India’s Nicobar archipelago.

- **Countering China:** According to **C. Raja Mohan**, a failed Myanmar state at India's doorstep and a weakened Myanmar falling into the clutches of China as a satellite state will pressurize India to do Beijing's bidding in regional affairs.

GEO ECONOMIC:

- India has interests in **natural resources** of Myanmar and also developing certain projects like **India–Myanmar–Thailand trilateral highway** and **Kaladan multi-modal project** which is to link India's landlocked north-eastern States to the Myanmar Port of Sittwe, located in the Bay of Bengal. Instability in Myanmar will be a roadblock to these ambitions.
- India is interested in developing Myanmar's Energy resources to tackle **energy security** of both the nations as it has **adequate Oil and Natural reserves**. The Rohingya-populated areas of Myanmar have large oil and natural gas reserves, reaching 11 trillion and 23 trillion cubic feet respectively.
 - Recently, the Indian side proposed construction of a \$ 6 billion **petroleum refinery in Thanlyn area, near Yangon**.
 - Myanmar also has potential in hydroelectricity.
 - China is investing and pulling Myanmar into its orbit.
 - Countries like Japan, South Korea and most ASEAN members have all moved forward with engaging the military junta in Myanmar.
 - The Cambodian Prime Minister has also scheduled to visit Myanmar in January, 2022 and is likely to set new terms of engagement.



CULTURAL IMPORTANCE-

- ✓ The 5 B's: A bridge between South Asia and Southeast Asia, Myanmar has loomed large on India's diplomatic horizon.
- ✓ Blending business, culture, and diplomacy, there is a strong connection between the two countries.
- ✓ Buddhism, Business, Bollywood, Bharatnatyam, and Burma teak— these are the five Bs that frame India-Myanmar relations in the popular imagination. Moving beyond this rich configuration, the relations are now acquiring greater economic weight and strategic orientation.
- ✓ The talks in Nay Pyi Taw, the new capital of Myanmar, has set the stage for Prime Minister Modi's visit to the Southeast Asian country in November for the India-ASEAN summit and East Asia Summit.
- ✓ The importance of Myanmar for India is all-too-obvious: India and Myanmar share a long land border of over 1600 km and a maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal.

ROHINGYA CRISIS- INDIA & MYANMAR

ISSUE OF ROHINGYAS

- Rohingya are described as the **world's most persecuted people**. They live predominantly in Rakhine state.
- **Systematic discrimination:** The Rohingya are considered as illegal immigrants and they suffer from systematic discrimination in Myanmar.
- Stateless people: The Myanmar government has made them stateless people by denying them citizenship.
- The recent crackdown on Rohingya by Myanmar army is described by the United Nations as a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing" due to which around 800,000 Rohingyas fled Myanmar and took shelter in Bangladesh.

- Aung San Suu Kyi's silence on the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar has only led to the plight of the hapless Rohingya take a backseat. This is not in India's national security interest in the north-east.
- This issue put India in **tight position** as being aspirant for global leader as well as having followed principles-based policy India was expected by world community to put pressure on ruling military to accommodate Rohingyas however national interest demanded pragmatic and realist policy hence putting New Delhi in dilemma.
- In spite of not being a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, India has been one of the largest recipients of refugees in the world.
 - Therefore, if India had domestic legislation regarding refugees, it could have deterred any oppressive government in the neighborhood from persecuting their population and making them flee to India.

India's policy on Rohingya

- The Indian government believes that the Rohingyas **are illegal immigrants** and have no right to stay in India. The Indian government has asked the state governments to identify illegal immigrants and to start the deportation process of the refugees seeking shelter in India.
- According to the Indian government, there is a **viable threat to national security** if the Rohingyas are allowed to stay in India, as their vulnerability could be exploited by Islamic extremist groups. Indian government considers Rohingyas as threat to national security based on intelligence that they have links with Pakistan's ISI.
- **The Supreme Court of India** has also issued an order, allowing the deportation of Rohingyas from Indian territory.
- The approach of the Indian government has garnered international notoriety, which has led the **UNHCR**, the UN Refugee Agency, to condemn it as a violation of international law.
 - **Article 33 (1)** of the UN Convention on Refugees 1951 highlights the **principles of non-refoulement**
- According to the Indian government, India is not violating international law as it is not a party to the Convention and thereby not bound by the principles of non-refoulement.
- India has asked Myanmar to secure position for the displaced people within the country and to start the repatriation process soon in consultation with Bangladesh.
- **Development of the Rakhine province:** India has also laid emphasis on the socio-economic development of the Rakhine province to create enough economic incentive for the displaced people who will return from the camps at Bangladesh.
- **Resource crunch:** The Rohingya's will consume the resources meant for citizens of India, for whom the government is constitutionally bound to act.
 - Some 40,000 Rohingyas have also found their way to India. India is fearful of **terrorist organisations** like ISIS may exploit vulnerable Rohingyas and recruit them for attacks in Indian subcontinent.

What steps did India take on Rohingya issue?

- India signed a **MoU on Rakhine State Development Programme** with Myanmar aimed at "socio-economic development and livelihood initiatives in Rakhine State" that included "a project to build prefabricated housing in Rakhine State to meet the immediate needs of returning people."
- India **pledged US\$25 million** for a five-year development project in Rakhine State.
- At the invitation of the Myanmar government, India **joined the UNSC delegation** that visited Myanmar along with three other neighbours—China, Laos, and Thailand.
- On the side-lines of United Nations General Assembly, **U.K. hosted a meeting and India abstained on a resolution** calling for an end to military action and 135 countries voted in favour of the resolution with 26 abstentions.

Concerns for India on Rohingya issue

- **Destabilization in the neighbourhood**- due to radicalization and terrorist activities by Arakan army. It might even lead to increase in the Naxal activities, may lead to threat of Indian people's lives, rising arm revolts, etc.
- India's stand has raised **questions on its democratic credentials** and may undermine its regional and global leadership aspirations.
- **China factor**- While India is reluctant to pressurize the Myanmar, China is actively mediating between Bangladesh and Myanmar. This undermines India's leadership role in South Asia.
- **Historical record of India**- India holds a strong history of welcoming refugees from Sri Lanka, Tibet, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and still they enjoy the freedom and rights here. The Rohingyas are now the most genocide community in recent past in South Asia, they are stateless and no place got to go.
- **Deportation of illegal immigrants**- 16500 Rohingya refugees in India holds United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)'s identity card and India consider it as irrelevant, and as far as they are illegal immigrants to India, they will be subjected to deport.
- **Worse situation of Rohingyas in their own country**- The refugees have to face the same situations like in the past if India sends them back, which will question India's policies in the global front. It considered as will rather die in India than return to Myanmar for Rohingyas.

Way forward

- **Diplomatic Solution**- New Delhi should use creative diplomacy to persuade Myanmar to resolve the Rohingya crisis as a stable and democratic Myanmar will naturally gravitate towards New Delhi.
- **National security**: India has the right to prioritize its national security. However, security concerns need to be balanced by constitutional values and Human Rights of refugees.
- **Domestic Refugee Policy**- India needs to **enact a domestic refugee policy** legislation to bring clarity on India's stance as The Foreigners Act, 1946, fails to address the peculiar problems faced by refugees

ISSUE OF NATIONAL SECURITY: INDIA & MYANMAR

- **The recent coup**- The conflict in Myanmar triggered by the February 1, 2021, military coup that toppled the democratically elected government has not only become a disaster for Myanmar, but also for countries across the region.
 - China's response has received considerable international attention, as has the struggle within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to forge a resolution to the conflict.
 - The impact on Myanmar's western neighbors, however, has largely gone unexamined — with the exception of analysis of the consequences for Rohingya refugees, who are indefinitely stranded in Bangladesh with no chance of safely returning to Myanmar under this military regime.
- **Safe haven for insurgents**- Apart from that, Myanmar is also being used as **safe haven by insurgents** like NSCN khaplang which are secessionist movements in north east India.
- **Drug smuggling**- Also, huge **drug smuggling, human trafficking** etc has negatively impacted north-east Socio-economic stability.

As per **C. Rajamohan** lack of connectivity and slow implementation of projects by India paving way for greater Chinese involvement in Myanmar and thus leading to restricting India's leverage.

- **Weakening of ASEAN**- Authoritarian rule in Myanmar can intensify fissures in ASEAN and can weaken its unity and capability to deal with China.
- **Infiltration**- The 1643-km-long Indo-Myanmar border, which facilitates cross-border movement of militants, illegal arms and drugs, is extremely porous. The border runs along hilly and inhospitable terrain and provides cover to the activities of various Indian Insurgent Groups (IIGs).

CHINA-FACTOR

- **China's hand behind the coup**- Some strategic experts have pointed towards China's hand behind recent military coup. They suggested that ousting the NLD and assisting the authoritarian junta back to power would prevent any shift of Myanmar towards, and eventual democratic alignment with, the United States (US).
- **China-Myanmar Economic Corridor**- Ever since the coup, China's economic grip over Myanmar has become tighter with a special focus on projects critical for the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor.
 - Moreover, the recent deadly attack on an Assam Rifles convoy near the Myanmar border was a reminder about the proclivity of China for creating trouble in the Northeast.
 - The Gwadar port, part of the CPEC along with Kyaukphyu port gives China the benefit of **strategically containing India** and blocking its access both to the west and the east.
 - The deep seaport at Kyaukphyu is the most strategically vital to China. It gives China access to the Indian Ocean and is uncomfortably near the Andaman Islands.

According to **Harsh V. Pant**, Myanmar has turned towards China mostly because in earlier coups India siding with pro-democracy groups. Thus, increasing Chinese influence is consequence of India's obsession with democracy.

- **Direct border connection**- Chinese province of Yunnan and Myanmar share a border, and the provincial government has direct interactions with Myanmar's government. Oil and gas pipelines connect Myanmar's Rakhine state and Yunnan capital Kunming.
- **Oil reserves in Myanmar**- Myanmar is rich **in oil and natural gas reserves**. This combined with its geographical position has given it a vital role in China's plans.
 - ✓ China constructed a natural gas and oil pipeline from Kyaukphyu City in Myanmar's Rakhine State to China's Yunnan region.
 - ✓ China also constructed a 22 million tons annual capacity oil terminal at Kyaukphyu. The natural gas pipeline can account for 16.3% of China's total gas imports.
- **Connectivity**- Myanmar is India's gateway to ASEAN and India is involved in major connectivity projects like Kaladan transport corridor, IMT trilateral highway, Mekong Ganga cooperation etc. These projects can be jeopardized due to increased Chinese influence in Myanmar.
- **China-Myanmar economic corridor**- CMEC is a branch of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in the Indian Ocean.
 - The CMEC to the Bay of Bengal is the replica of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that connects Beijing's western province of Xinjiang to Karachi and Gwadar on the Arabian Sea.
 - **Three important pillars** of the China Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC) are the Kyaukpyu Special Economic Zone, the China-Myanmar Border Economic Cooperation Zone and the New Yangon City.
- **Bilateral trade**- In terms of bilateral trade, **China is the largest trading partner** of Myanmar. China occupies the largest share in both imports and exports of Myanmar.
 - ✓ According to data from 2020, the bilateral trade stands at about USD 12 billion that roughly amounts to 1/3rd of the total.
 - ✓ On the other hand, India is not even in top 5 trade partners of Myanmar.
- **Defence**- China has been one of the largest military suppliers of Myanmar since 1988. According to SIPRI database Myanmar spent USD 1.3 billion in arms from the Chinese between 2010- 2019.

Warmth in the relationship between China and Myanmar can be understood from the statement of **Ms. Suu Kyi's** visit to Beijing that Myanmar and China are "blood brothers".

- **Lack of trust by Myanmar**- However, there is a **lack of trust** on the Myanmar side due to China's historical role in supporting rebel groups in Myanmar by funding them or providing them with arms. These groups have also been accused of disrupting some Indian projects in Myanmar.

- **Excessive dependence on China**- Further, Myanmar has long been aware of its excessive dependence on China and has been trying to reduce it since 2011 by cancelling or stopping some Chinese projects like Myitsone Dam and the cancellation of the railway line to Kyaukphyu in 2015.
 - Myanmar also negotiated with the Chinese to reduce the cost of Kyaukphyu project by almost 80% and to increase Myanmar's share in the project from 15% to 30%.
 - Chinese projects are not popular among the people of Myanmar while the Indian projects are comparatively more popular.

MYANMAR COUP: GROWING DISPLACEMENT ISSUE IN INDIA

Introduction- The conflict in Myanmar triggered by the February 1, 2021, military coup that toppled the democratically elected government has not only become a disaster for Myanmar, but also for countries across the region.

What has happened in India? - Approximately, more than 16,000 Myanmar nationals have crossed into the four bordering states of India namely Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh in a desperate attempt to find a safe haven.

- According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), an estimated 22,000 refugees have entered India from Myanmar since February 2021, with an estimated 7,000 crossing into Manipur and Mizoram States in the second half of January 2022 alone.
- Tens of thousands more are looking to cross but have been delayed due to COVID-19 lockdowns.
- The majority of the influx has been in the state of Mizoram, which clocked 9,247 Myanmar nationals after the Chief Minister of Chin state took refuge there in mid-July.
- The intensity of the conflict is forcing tens of thousands of people to flee their homes in Myanmar and seek refuge in India's fragile northeastern states. Beginning in March 2021, refugees started to cross over from Myanmar into India's northeastern states.

Starting of the coup- Among the first wave were leaders of the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), including organizers of anti-coup protests, striking civil servants, military and police defectors, teachers and student activists.

- By April, as Myanmar's military stepped up its attacks on civilians in Chin State and Sagaing Region, the number of people fleeing to India increased. Among them, reportedly, were members of the PDFs.

Impact on India- The coup has significantly undermined India's economic and security interests in Southeast Asia. The multi-dimensional civil war in Myanmar has made progress on India's economic and logistics projects in the country, which are central to India's Act East policy, all but impossible.

- The sudden influx of refugees from Myanmar poses significant challenges to India.
- These challenges include: security risks and burdens to local populations as refugees make the long journey across India without proper access to food or medicine; the possible spread of infectious diseases, including COVID-19; and growing tensions between New Delhi and the state governments of Mizoram and Manipur over how to manage the influx of refugees.

India's political reaction- India's reaction to the developing displacement crisis in Myanmar has put the government in a tough spot, as it tries to appease both domestic and international stakeholders.

- Mizoram's state administration has gone against the national government, requesting protection for the displaced people as they consider them their brothers, with a shared ethnic identity in the Chin community.
- The Mizo Students' Union in Mizoram urged the state government to provide asylum to the hapless people on humanitarian grounds and give them legal status.
- if the situation in Myanmar continues to worsen, the displacement issue will spread to other states sharing open or porous borders. Moreover, New Delhi's appeasement of the Tatmadaw in recent months could trigger angry protests, and, perhaps, provide a fresh lease to anti-India insurgencies in the Northeast.

India's policy stand- India is not party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol and lacks a national framework for the protection of refugees. India has chosen not to sign the refugee conventions and protocol, and has historically cited national security interests and challenges to its sovereignty as key concerns.

- The government of India, along with the governments of other South Asian countries, asserts that migration is a matter of bilateral and not multilateral relations, which should not be governed by international agreements. India has held that cross-border movements affect political stability and internal security, including the country's already fraught demographic balance.
- Instead, India grants asylum to a large number of people from neighboring states and generally respects UNHCR's mandate, but on an ad hoc basis.

INDIA STANCE OVER ITS MYANMAR POLICY

The Myanmar coup has left India in a tight spot as it continues to factor in its strategic interests in Myanmar.

- **Sanctions imposed**- The UN General Assembly overwhelmingly voted to condemn the coup while the United States (US) and the European Union (EU) imposed sanctions. Even the ASEAN and India's more sober and measured stance called for an end to the violence.
- **Selling of military equipment's**- In the course of building this partnership, India has also sold military equipment to its Neighbors; the arms sold range from sonar equipment to diesel submarines. With these security interests at play, New Delhi is wary of backing the sanctions and tough rhetoric emanating from a number of western capitals.
- **Past experience**-Indian diplomacy is also guided by history. A similarly brutal crackdown on civilians by the Tatmadaw in 1988 brought harsh Indian criticism to the fore. However, New Delhi paid a heavy price for its outspoken policy as relations with Myanmar's security forces were put on ice by the latter.
- **India's economic presence in Myanmar**- Policymakers in South Block are also worried about India's growing economic presence in Myanmar and the omnipresent China challenge.
 - ✓ Bilateral trade, which stands at a modest US \$1.5 billion, has nonetheless expanded at a steady clip for the last decade.
- **Projects by India**- India has also underwritten several key connectivity projects like the India-Myanmar-Thailand highway and the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transport Project.
 - ✓ India has also been fighting an intense battle to make inroads into China's dominant sphere of influence in Asia.
 - ✓ India's economic commitments are dwarfed by the China-Myanmar economic corridor while questions linger about the Southeast Asian nation's dependence on Chinese trade and investments.
 - ✓ Myanmar became a member of **BIMSTEC** in December 1997. Myanmar is a signatory to the BIMSTEC Free Trade Agreement. Myanmar is the lead country for the energy sector. Myanmar trades mostly with Thailand and India in the BIMSTEC region.
 - ✓ Myanmar has been a member of the **Mekong Ganga Cooperation**(MGC) since its inception in November 2000, for cooperation in the fields of tourism, education, culture, transport, and communication.

Chinese Threat in Myanmar Junta -

- While the West continues to condemn and sanction, China is investing and pulling Myanmar into its orbit. The US has continued to use the overused threat of ever more sanctions, though to little avail.
- Myanmar's army seems to have ceased bothering about the rhetoric from the West. It is the neighboring countries that have to shape the behavior of the military junta in a constructive manner.
- It is not surprising that countries like Japan, South Korea and most ASEAN members have all moved forward with engaging the military junta in Myanmar. For India, a humanitarian crisis as a result of the pandemic-induced economic crisis in Myanmar would be a lose-lose situation and it should be prevented with the utmost urgency.

According to **Harsh V Pant**, in international relations, black and white binaries never really work. The complexity of India's regional security and neighborhood demands that India adopt a more nuanced position on Myanmar. New Delhi should not lose its essential pragmatism in engaging Myanmar

The need of a new approach by India in Myanmar-

- **Responding to humanitarian challenges-** India could respond to the growing humanitarian challenges on its northeastern borders by supporting the state governments and civil society groups that bear the cost of hosting refugees from Myanmar. It will be critical that international humanitarian aid agencies have access to these communities to provide direct support.
- **In the insecurities caused by the coup-** The insecurity caused by the coup and the advent of the rainy season will impact local communities' ability to mobilize and provide humanitarian aid and relief, only worsening the already dire conditions.
- **In summary-** India would benefit from the above approach, which will help its northeastern states consolidate cross-border ethnic ties, enhance India's reputation within the ethnic communities that are collaborating with many of the anti-junta forces, strengthen India's relations with the NUG and lay the foundation for deeper people-to-people relations, protect infrastructure projects linked with its Act East Policy and set the stage for strong democratic and economic initiatives within a more inclusive federal democratic Myanmar.

Thinkers and Way forward-

- **Harsh V. Pant-** considering its strategic position, entire world is now trying to woo Myanmar; India will have to face competition.
- **Harsh V. Pant-** has suggested Democratic peace theory and suggested that India should share democratic best-practices of inclusiveness to help Myanmar in institution building. He further adds that; New Delhi should utilize platforms like BIMSTEC to step up cooperation thus creating security community.
- **Amb. Ashok Sajjanhar-**has suggested social constructivism approach. According to him, India must leverage cultural and civilizational linkages and establish firm people to people contact.
- **Amb. Gautam Mukhopadhyay-**He has suggested interdependence approach. According to him, India and Myanmar need to diversify our trade from agricultural products and need to achieve the target of \$3 billion (interdependence), moreover both countries must expand energy trade with India-Myanmar pipeline.
- **Amb. Gautam Mukhopadhyay-** Myanmar also understand that Myanmar -China relationship is largely extractive which is not the case with India. This gives opportunity for both countries to strengthen partnership based on equality and mutual interests.
- **Shyam Saran-** our capacity and institutions lag behind our ambitions. Thus, India needs to speed up connectivity projects like air connectivity, IMT, Kaladan etc. Myanmar has lower focus on development of region west of Irrawaddy neighbouring India. This is where India can fill the gap.

Conclusion

- **Shaping own trajectory-** It is imperative that, like the other immediate neighbours of Myanmar, India too reaches out and shapes its own trajectory in Myanmar.
- **Vision with practicality-** The complexity of India's regional security and neighbourhood demands India to adopt a more nuanced position without losing its essential pragmatism in engaging with Myanmar.

Indrani Bagchi, a prominent Indian foreign policy correspondent, noted that India is adopting a "twin-track" approach, "walking a fine balance between engaging the immediate eastern Neighbor while pushing it towards restoration of democracy."

- **India on Myanmar in UNHRC**- For instance, in international platforms such as the U.N. Human Rights Council, India has made a case against sanctions even as it continues to express concern over the developments in Myanmar.
- **Should India ignore Myanmar?**- Given the geopolitical and security interests, India cannot afford to ignore or isolate Myanmar. Because of these pressures, India has carefully maintained some linkages with the military junta and is likely to continue to do so.

INDIA- AFRICA RELATIONS

Syllabus- India and the Global South: Relations with Africa and Latin America; leadership role in the demand for NIEO and WTO negotiations.

UPSC PYQ

- Sketch the leadership role of India in WTO negotiations. (2013)
- Discuss the factors for the decline of India's presence in Latin America.
- Suggest measures so that India's partnership with Africa becomes a true symbol of South-South Cooperation, delivering clear-cut economic and political dividends to both sides of the equation.
- Analyse the stalled progress of Doha Round of WTO negotiations over the differences between the developed and the developing countries.
- India's coalition diplomacy within the WTO has earned it wide appreciation. What accounts for the success of India's coalition diplomacy? (20)
- "India's capacity building programs under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) has earned much goodwill for it in Africa." Discuss.
- India's Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) is a major initiative in the area of South-South Cooperation. Discuss.
- How is India pursuing her foreign policy objectives through the IBSA Dialogue Forum (India, Brazil and South Africa)? 10 marks
- How do the guiding principles of India-Africa relations seek to enhance harmony and mutual cooperation between India and Africa?

Introduction

After the decolonisation of Africa, India and the African countries took a similar stand on various international issues. They expressed full faith in the policy of non-alignment and peaceful coexistence. On the wider economic issues like North-South Dialogue also they have worked in complete co-operation and have come to accept the need for closer horizontal co-operation between the undeveloped countries.



In words of Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar, **Africa** is considered a **foreign policy priority** by India." India's support to Africa has always been without any conditionalities or hidden agenda.

- **Decades old partnership**- India and Africa relations are based on "decades old partnership and historical and civilizational links specially in the struggle for independence, equality, human rights, freedom and democracy." India has an intrinsic interest in helping Africa achieve progress. The spirit of "developing together as equals" defines this bilateral partnership.

- **Continent of hope**- Europeans termed Africa as a “dark continent” but today world is viewing it as “Continent of hope”
- **Emotional link**- As mentioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India and Africa share an “emotional link” based on our shared history of struggle against colonialism and our aspiration to bring prosperity to our people.
- **During COVID-19 crisis**- India and Africa’s relations have come into the news in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. 25 African countries received medical assistance from India.
 - ✓ Also, India offered an e-ITEC course on “COVID-19 Pandemic: Prevention and Management Guidelines for Healthcare Professionals’ to healthcare workers in Africa.

According to **Former Vice-President Hamid Ansari**, Today India and Africa fit into each other’s worldview in at least four ways.

1. **Panchsheel**- First is the common historical experience of colonization and decolonization. Derived from that is the normative notion and principle of independent, sovereign states committed to liberal peace paradigm. The **Panchsheel principles** which were adopted at the Bandung conference in 1955 have remained one pillar of Indo African relationship.
2. **Development cooperation**- in terms of development cooperation, India has been an early development actor in Africa, though its contribution was limited in capacity.
3. **Vital for India’s rise**- Africa remains vital for India’s emergence as a global actor both beyond its own immediate neighbourhood but also in the international institutional arena. Reform of institutions of global governance remains shared objective of both India and Africa.
4. **Security threats**- there are security threats emerging from Africa that not only impacts the African nation but also have strong bearing on India. Terrorism and organized crime are of increasing concern to India and Africa. International terrorism has been on the rise in Africa in recent years extending from Nigeria in west Africa to Somalia in the Horn of Africa.

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF INDIA AFRICA TIES

- **Historical ties**- India’s relations with Africa date back several centuries. The presence of Indians in East Africa is documented in the ‘Periplus of the Erythraean Sea’ or Guidebook of the Red Sea by an ancient Greek author written in 60 AD.
 - ✓ The geographical proximity and easy navigability in Indian Ocean resulted in well-established trade network between India and the Swahili Coast predating European exploration.
 - ✓ More concrete relation between India and Africa begins to emerge during the Islamic age which is evident through the accounts of Venetian traveler Marco Polo.
- **Contribution of Gandhi Ji**- Political connection during the colonial era was linked through M.K Gandhi who began his political career in South Africa, became the leader of colonized and established Indian Natal Congress in 1894.
- **India worked for Africa after Independence**-After India got independent, it raised voice for African liberation taking their case to all the available international forums. End of racial struggle and decolonization became the rallying point of India–Africa relations.
- **Relevance of NAM**- India was a forerunner as a champion of the interests of the developing countries from Africa, particularly through the Bandung Declaration of 1955, the Group of 77, and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
 - ✓ India’s policy of NAM provided the world with the third front at the time of heightened cold war rivalry between US and USSR, where African nations acted as the strengthening factor.
- **Diaspora**- A large chunk of Indian diaspora continues to live in African countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Mauritius, and Nigeria.

- ✓ It is this sense of solidarity, mutual trust and confidence born in the difficult days of the Cold War which continues to drive India-Africa cooperation to this day.

Constantino Xavier has analysed India Africa's evolutionary ties in diff phases in the **Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign policy**.

- **First Phase**-- India used Gandhian Non-violence movement as an example to dislodge colonialism. Success of its Gandhian and nonviolent mass movement offered African countries an alternative method to the popular socialist teachings of armed struggle and revolution. India assumed highly influential role in Africa during 1950. Nehru took up African causes during NAM summit, Asia conferences and UNGA. Nehru's links with leaders of Africa shows considerable Indian Influence on Africa.
- **Second Phase**- Due to ethnic conflict, fight against French and Portuguese Colonialism, Cold war played out in Africa and militarization, New Delhi lost considerable influence in Africa.
- **Third Phase**-- India was more subsumed with Great powers and Scope for Africa decreased with Continent in political transition and turmoil. India also closed many Diplomatic missions
- **Present Phase**--Re-emergence of Africa in Indian **Strategic Radar**. Africa become **India's foreign policy priority**.

IMPORTANCE OF AFRICA

GEO-ECONOMIC

- **Resource rich**- Africa is very resource-rich and has moved from being an underdeveloped continent to having several fast-growing economies, and new democracies.
 - ✓ Africa has vital elements in India's quest for strategic minerals like oil, coal, gas, Uranium and other natural resources needed to feed its burgeoning economy.
- **Among the fastest growing economies**- The economic growth of the continent that is estimated to be 3.2 per cent in 2019. It also houses six of the world's fastest growing economies as per world bank estimates. Additionally, several African countries have been providing incentives to attract foreign investors and partners in growth thus providing an opportunity for India.
- **Reducing dependence on gulf for oil & gas**-Africa thus assumes an important role in India's attempt to diversify its traditional dependence on the Gulf region. **Crude oil and gas** have emerged as the leading export to India, accounting for nearly two-thirds of all exports. **Nigeria is the 5th largest crude oil supplier to India**. While gold and other precious metals accounts for 16 percent.
- **Trade**- India's total trade with Africa grew from US\$ 4 billion in 2000 to US\$ 80 billion in 2019, and India is now Africa's third-largest trade partner.
 - ✓ Africa has emerged as an important market for Indian goods and services. A number of Indian multinationals already has significant interests and investments in the region, with strategic sectors including agribusiness, pharmaceuticals, information and communications technology (ICT), and energy. Reliance, Tata, Jindal have made unprecedented forays in Nigeria, Angola, Sudan.
- **Agriculture**- India-Africa agricultural cooperation currently includes institutional and individual capacity-building initiatives such as the India-Africa Institute of Agriculture and Rural development in Malawi, extension of soft loans, supply of machinery, acquisition of farmlands and the presence of Indian entrepreneurs in the African agricultural ecosystem. Indian farmers have purchased over 6,00,000 hectares of land for commercial farming in Africa.
 - ✓ India has entered into agreements with **Malawi and Mozambique for the import of pulses**.
 - ✓ **Para diplomacy in agriculture**- Kerala government is trying to meet its steep requirement for raw cashew nuts amounting to 8 lakh tonnes a year with imports from countries in Africa to complement its production capacity currently limited to 0.83 lakh tonnes. There are also proposals to create a jointly-owned brand of Africa-Kollam cashews.

GEO-STRATEGIC

Intro- After decades of marginalization, Africa has gained in strategic relevance in recent years. The abundance of natural resources, the proliferation of Muslim extremist groups, and the increasing South-North migration have prompted external powers to re-engage in Africa. Warnings of an upcoming Sino-American geopolitical confrontation in Africa seem premature. Both the external powers and the African countries have a role to play in making sure that the growing inflows of aid and investment become a force for economic growth and political stability in Africa.

- **Maritime security:** New Delhi has been looking to enhance cooperation with countries in the Indian Ocean region including those on the east coast of Africa to build up their capabilities in the area of **combating piracy and poaching**.
- **Net security provider-** India has also assumed the role of '**Net security provider**' in Indian ocean and built up its credentials as the first responder as in times of crisis in the Indian Ocean region. India is also taking important initiatives to protect its interest in Indian ocean like Indian Ocean Naval symposium (IONS), SAGAR, Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).
- **UN peacekeeping:** India has had a long engagement with Africa in terms of peacekeeping. Indian peacekeepers have been especially appreciated for their efforts in prevention of mass genocide in South Sudan conflict.
- **Security and Defence cooperation-** At the first meeting of the India-Africa Defence Ministers' meet on the side-lines of the 11th Defence Expo, India signalled its readiness to become a security partner of choice for African countries by offering to provide offshore patrol vessels, interceptor boats and unmanned aerial vehicles besides Dornier maritime surveillance aircraft. This has come against the backdrop of China setting up military bases on the continent.
- **South-South cooperation-** India has been strong proponent of South-South cooperation as well as continued north-south cooperation. Both India and Africa are keen to shape the emerging global regimes particularly those related with food, energy, climate change, water.
- **Cooperation on global issues-** India and Africa have often held common positions in global platforms and worked together to guard the interests of other developing countries.
 - ✓ They have moved joint proposals, such as the **Agricultural Framework Proposal** and **Protection of Geographical Indications**, at WTO and World Intellectual Property Organisation, and have worked towards protecting the food and livelihood concerns of farmers at the **Doha Development Round** of WTO negotiations.
- **Framework for Strategic Cooperation-** The '**Framework for Strategic Cooperation**,' the outcome document of the Third India-Africa Forum Summit, also mentions that India and Africa will "enhance cooperation through training and collective negotiations on global trade issues, including at the WTO to protect and promote the legitimate interests of developing countries, especially the LDCs".
 - ✓ India and South Africa are also currently pressing for a waiver of certain provisions of the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights for COVID-19 treatment and vaccines
- **Reform of global governance institutions-** There's a convergence of interests for reforming the Security Council. It is imperative for both sides to speak in "one voice" for Security Council reforms.
- **Reforms in WTO-** India and Africa are aligned on the outstanding issues at the World Trade Organization (WTO) and are in favour of multilateral trading systems. For example, at the Bali Ministerial in 2013, Africa and India had united in seeking an interim mechanism for safeguarding minimum support prices to farmers against WTO caps till a permanent solution is found and adopted.

Steps taken by India to help African countries-

- **Faith in Non-Alignment-** Both India and African countries profess faith in the policy of non-alignment. They adopted this policy because they wanted to preserve their newly won freedom and independence.
- **Transfer of Technology-** India has fully sympathized with the aspirations of the Africans to attain self-reliance.

- ✓ Trade is one of the mechanisms for the transfer of technology embodied in goods and services.
- ✓ India has also contributed to the economic development of Africa through the transfer of technology.
- ✓ India's trade with the African countries has not been large and continued to be stagnant during the period 1960-70.
- **Drought Assistance**- India has provided funds and foodstuffs at the time of drought. It also made available expertise and technical assistance in the development of agriculture along modern lines and the development of irrigation facilities so that these problems can be tackled on a long-term basis.
 - ✓ India has also shown its solidarity with various African countries at the time of their distress and provided them with every possible assistance.
 - ✓ India has also extended assistance to various African countries in the development of non-conventional energy sources, rural electrification solar energy and wind power.
- **Operation Sahayata 2019**- It was an Indian operation to provide Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) to Mozambique in 2019. Cyclone IDAI had caused great loss to Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi.
 - ✓ INS Sujata, ICGS Sarathi and INS Shardul undertook HADR
 - ✓ India Navy was the first responder in the evolving humanitarian crises in the aftermath of Cyclone IDAI that hit Mozambique on 15 March 2019
- **Operation Vanilla 2020**- It was an Indian operation to provide HADR to Mozambique in the wake of Cyclone Diane.
 - ✓ INS Airavat (amphibious ship) was sent with relief materials.
- **Credit Facilities**- Despite her tight financial position, India has made available to several African countries enormous amounts as a credit on most reasonable terms.

It offered credit between 5 to 10 crores to countries like Tanzania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Zambia, Uganda, Sudan etc. for purchase of India manufactured goods such as textiles and engineering goods, tractors, motorcycles, buses, trucks, bicycles etc.

CHALLENGES IN INDIA AFRICA RELATIONSHIP

- **China's formidable presence in Africa**–
 - ✓ **Trade:** By comparison, China, having surpassed the United States, is Africa's **largest trading partner**; the value of Chinese-African trade in 2020 was around \$220 billion.
 - ✓ **Investment:** Chinese overseas investment in Africa, in all sectors, as of 2020, totalled **\$147.66 billion**.
 - ✓ **Strategic ties:** China even built up its first overseas military base in Djibouti.
 - ✓ In this context, it is difficult for India to **compete dollar-for-dollar** with Chinese spending power.
 - ✓ Since the end of the Cold War China's presence has grown in Africa, who has been providing soft loans to African states which has resulted in Chinese growing influence in the continent.
- **Issues with India's diplomatic outreach**- India's **misplaced perception** of Africa based on colonial narrative need to be rectified through informed and rational exchanges. Further, **Lack of Coordination** between Indian State and its businesses in Africa and the role of India Inc. is limited while drafting policies. This limit the strengths of both actors.
 - ✓ With government institutions and businesses working in separate silos, India has no coordinated Africa policy nor does there seem to be an avenue where the strengths of both actors can be leveraged.
- **Political instability:** Political instability in number of African Nation may impact India's long-term investment opportunities. e.g., South Sudan experiencing civil war since 2013, South African protests in 2021.

- **Attacks on Africans in India:** The spate of assaults on Africans based in India may generate a negative image of India in Africa and may impact on century-old ties with the continent. Recently Indians were targeted during South African protest.
 - ✓ Ethnic and religious conflicts and governance issues in some countries make foreign contributors averse to venture in the region.
- **India's outreach to the diaspora** has been concentrated mostly to European and American region. Within Africa, the outreach has been limited to the elite section only.
- **Declining Trade:** According to the Confederation of Indian Industry, in 2020-21, India's exports to and imports from Africa stood, respectively, at \$27.7 billion and \$28.2 billion, a reduction of 4.4% and 25% over the previous year. Thus, bilateral trade valued at \$55.9 billion in 2020-21, fell by \$10.8 billion compared to 2019-20, and \$15.5 billion compared to the peak year of 2014-15.
- **Decline in investment:** India's investments in Africa too saw a decrease from \$3.2 billion in 2019-20 to \$2.9 billion in 2020-21.
- **Geopolitical tensions in Asia:** Geopolitical tensions in Asia and the imperative to consolidate its position in the Indo-Pacific region have compelled New Delhi to concentrate on its ties with the United Kingdom, the EU, and the Quad powers, particularly the U.S. Consequently, the attention normally paid to Africa lost out.
- **Financial Limitations:** In terms of **cheque book diplomacy**, India cannot compete with China or the U.S. Some of the African countries, even the richer ones like Nigeria, expect India to bear gifts for them under India Africa Forum Summit. However, India asserts for joint endeavour for better development.
 - ✓ India's substantive presence in Africa has remained marginal as it focused on its own periphery through much of the Cold War period which limited its capabilities.
- **Security:** India has limited role in maritime co-operation with African countries in the form of anti-piracy operation, UN peacekeeping and joint patrolling in western Indian ocean.
 - ✓ India sees its peacekeeping efforts from the narrower lens to reinforce its claim of UNSC seat rather than strengthening its ties with Africa.
 - ✓ India is struggling to meet growing demands from Africa for greater security cooperation.
 - ✓ All African leaders during 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit demanded greater cooperation with India. However, there is **huge gap in India's promises and India's deliveries**.

ASIA AFRICA GROWTH CORRIDOR

- Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC), an initiative announced in 2017, that is going to be jointly undertaken by **India and Japan**.
- India has been involved in **developmental as well as infrastructural projects** in Asia and Africa but joining hands with Japan, a more capable power with a larger kitty and advanced technologies, can become effective and efficient.
- Japan has agreed to fund in the tune of **\$200 billion** for the growth corridor in Africa.
- The Vision Document has identified **four core areas** for this growth corridor —
 1. Development cooperation projects,
 2. quality infrastructure and institutional connectivity,
 3. enhancing skills and capacity building, and
 4. people-to-people partnership.
- **Alternative to BRI-** The AAGC offers a benevolent alternative to the BRI that holds significant potential for regional connectivity on a state-to-state level. Given Japan's experience with mass projects and expertise in developing cutting edge train networks, such as the Shinkansen.

- **Better alternative to BRI-** AAGC is better alternative to BRI as while China concentrates on infrastructure and cheque-book diplomacy, India promotes a broader spectrum of cooperation projects and programmes focussed on the development of Africa's human resources.
 - ✓ Secondly, while China goes solo, India is desirous of working with other willing nations to assist Africa as per the latter's priorities.

AAGC weakness

- **Rajiv Bhatia** in his article **"This time for Africa"** argued that India and Japan do not have the luxury of time in view of China's rapidly expanding footprint in Africa. An urgent need exists for them to increase the scope of their development projects, create synergy among themselves, engage proactively with other willing partners, and thus turn the concept of the AAGC into a viable reality.
- He further adds that, unless results become visible in the short term, questions may arise about the credibility of their joint approach. China's substantial success needs to be matched by sustained India-Japan cooperation in Africa.

THE TEN GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR INDIA-AFRICA ENGAGEMENT

- In July 2018, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Ugandan Parliament** during his state visit and outlined a vision for not just a bilateral partnership with Africa, but also a partnership in multilateral forums by espousing the '10 guiding principles for India-Africa engagement'.

INDIA'S DEVELOPMENTAL PARTNERSHIP WITH AFRICA-

According to **S. Jaishankar**, India's activities and initiatives are designed to respond to the needs of Africa and the priorities of its people. In his words, "It envisages co-capabilities and co-benefits, while promoting local ownership. As a result, we see a unique level of trust that is even more valuable as we contemplate the challenges ahead."

- **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation-** In 1964, India launched the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme to provide technical assistance through human resource development to other developing countries, with African countries the greatest beneficiaries of it and the Special Commonwealth African Assistance Programme (SCAAP).
- **Economic engagement-** India's economic engagement with Africa, on the other hand, only began intensifying in the early 2000s. India's total trade with Africa grew from US\$ 6.8 billion in 2003 to US\$ 76.9 billion in 2018, and India is now Africa's third-largest trade partner
- **India's development cooperation-** The scale of India's development cooperation with Africa has also grown rapidly.
 - ✓ From 2003 onwards, India began to use **concessional lines of credit** (LoC) as one of its key development partnership instruments to fund the construction of railway lines, electrification and irrigation projects, farm mechanization projects, among others.
 - ✓ The LoCs are **demand-driven** and extended on the **principle of mutual benefit** — recipient countries make development gains, while the LoCs help create **new markets** for Indian companies, **foster export growth, build good relations** with countries that are important sources of food, energy and resources, and contribute to the country's image abroad.
 - ✓ So far, India has sanctioned **182** LoC projects in Africa through the Export Import (EXIM) Bank of India, with a total credit commitment of about US\$ 10.5 billion
- **Irrigation project-** India's irrigation project in Senegal led to a six-fold increase in rice production and currently over 30 percent of that country's consumption is covered by domestic production, as compared to 12.1 percent prior to the implementation.
 - ✓ Similarly, India's LoC worth US\$ 640 million to Ethiopia helped the country become self-sufficient in sugar production

- **Technoeconomic capacity building**- India-Africa cooperation has also focused on technoeconomic capacity building. Skill development and capacity building featured prominently in all the India-Africa Forum Summits
- **India's scholarship programme**- India's scholarship programme also grew rapidly. At the third India-Africa Forum Summit in 2015, India pledged to provide 50,000 scholarships to African students over a five-year period and set up institutions of higher learning in Africa
- **'Study in India' initiative**- India's Ministry of Human Resource and Development launched the 'Study in India' initiative to attract students from neighboring and African countries.
 - ✓ Foreign students can choose from 1,500 courses being offered at the undergraduate, graduate and PhD level by public and private institutions in India, and meritorious students could receive up to 100 percent fee waivers.

Cooperation on global issues

India and Africa have often held common positions in global platforms and worked together to guard the interests of other developing countries.

- **Joint proposals**- They have moved joint proposals, such as the Agricultural Framework Proposal and Protection of Geographical Indications, at the World Trade Organization (WTO) and World Intellectual Property Organization, and have worked towards protecting the food and livelihood concerns of farmers at the Doha Development Round of WTO negotiations.
- **IPR Waiver for COVID**- India and South Africa are also currently pressing for a waiver of certain provisions of the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights for COVID-19 treatment and vaccines. Nearly half of all member countries in the International Solar Alliance, initiated by India, are from Africa.

LIMITATIONS TO INDIA'S APPROACH

- **Lack of clear strategy**- The values that steer India's development cooperation — demand driven, conditionality free and based on the principle of partnership among equals — are appreciated in Africa. But India's model of development cooperation in Africa lacks a clear strategy.

There are **two main flaws** in India's development strategy in Africa.

- **No specific development goals**- Firstly, India is not actively pursuing any specific development goals. An assessment of India's development cooperation instruments (LoCs, grants, and capacity building projects like ITEC) reflects the absence of a plan for Africa.
 - ✓ Indian LoCs have **not** been designed to achieve a **larger development goal** such as food security, health security, clean energy or education for all.
 - ✓ LoCs are typically used by recipient countries to **fund small development projects** such as roads, bridges, railway lines, power transmission and water supply systems.
 - ✓ Although the individual projects have development benefits for recipient countries, the **overall development impact** of Indian LoCs in Africa is **not significant**.
 - ✓ These individual projects **barely make a dent** on any of the larger development challenges (for instance, food insecurity, health insecurity, poverty) in African countries.
- **No synchronization between different development instruments**- Secondly, there is no synchronization between different development instruments.
 - ✓ LoCs, grants and capacity building initiatives operate as standalone instruments of development cooperation, with almost **no links with each other**.
 - ✓ As a result, the overall development **impact** of India's development cooperation is **small** and difficult to measure.

- ✓ “India-Africa partnership is yet to achieve its full [development cooperation] potential.
- ✓ What is needed is **an infusion of energy**, of something new and concrete, and with a specific focus and direction

INFLUENCE OF CHINA IN AFRICA

- **Grander strategy**- In the beginnings of 1990s, China pondered a “**grander strategy**” for Africa

According to **Veda Vidyanathan**, while access to Africa’s natural resources, its untapped markets and support for ‘One China Policy’ are primary drivers of Chinese engagement with the region, there are other factors at play. She gives example of Chinese-built industrial parks and economic zones in Africa that are attracting low-cost, labour-intensive manufacturing units relocating from China.

- **Trade**: With a total trade of USD 200 billion in 2020, China is Africa’s **biggest bilateral trade partner**. Chinese exports to Africa amounted to USD 113 billion in 2019, while imports from Africa reached USD 78 billion. China trades with almost all 53 countries in Africa. From Angola and Libya, China mainly imports oil; from Gabon come oil and manganese. The Republic of Congo mainly provides oil and minerals, and the DRC, cobalt and copper.
- **Political relationship**: The **Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)** held its first ministerial conference in Beijing in October 2000. The forum’s objectives include the promotion of political cooperation, and creating a favourable environment for China-Africa business and trade. China seems to have a clear will to influence political leaders in Africa and other developing countries, regardless of whether or not it involves copying its own development model.
- **Development**: China is involved in the development of 47 ports in sub-Saharan Africa. China has also undertaken various infrastructure development projects in Africa.
- **Defence ties**: Over the last few years, China has emerged as the largest major arms supplier to Sub-Saharan Africa. China has also strategic and military interest in Africa. **Djibouti** is China’s first naval military base outside country.
 - ✓ China is training on-site African armies, police forces and soldiers involved in multilateral peacekeeping operations.
 - ✓ China also provides financial support to the African Union’s military operations, conducts military exercises with African countries, and plays an active role in UN peacekeeping operations in the continent.
 - ✓ China’s maritime silk road is about connecting China’s eastern seaboard with the Indian Ocean littoral.
- **Investment**: In 2020, total Chinese Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to Africa amounted to USD 44 billion, which corresponded to 2 percent of global Chinese FDI. Chinese companies have entered almost all African markets. Today there are more than 1,000 of them operating in Africa; some one million people of Chinese descent reside in the continent.
- **Lending**: It is estimated that 62 percent of African bilateral debt is owed to Chinese creditors. China has accounted for 13 percent of bilateral lending to Africa; the next biggest creditor is the US at a much lower 4 percent. Beijing is deliberately pursuing “**debt trap diplomacy**,” imposing harsh terms on its government counterparties and writing contracts that allow it to seize strategic assets when debtor countries run into financial problems.
- **Neo-Colonialism**- China’s activities in the African region are termed as **neo-colonialism** as loans and aid from China have an underlying agenda. It aims to make African states dependent on China and make them more compliant in international contexts, where China is dependent on the voices of these states, such as within the UN, or in issues such as Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Expert’s views on Africa-China

- **Veda Vidyanathan**- Further, according to **Veda Vidyanathan**, increasingly critical to China's global aspirations, its engagement in African agriculture is taking on a strategic quality. However, larger commercial farms run by Mandarin-speaking managers and the presence of small-scale Chinese farmers in local markets aggravates socio-cultural stresses.
- **Veda Vidyanathan**- Africa-China relations are becoming **complex** with a growing, insular diaspora, lopsided trade, looming debt, competition with local businesses and a negative perception accompanied by greater political and socioeconomic interlinkages.
- **Dan Blumenthal** has written: "the Chinese Communist Party's long-term strategic objective is to displace the United States as the world's most powerful country and create a new world order favourable to China's authoritarian brand of politics, or its "socialist market economy."

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON AFRICA AND SCOPE FOR INDIA AFRICA COOPERATION

- The COVID-19 pandemic is also expected to **completely wipe out economic progress** made by Sub-Saharan Africa in the previous decade. According to International Monetary Fund (IMF), the real per capita GDP of the region will decline by 5.4 percent in 2021, bringing it back to the 2010 level.
- The pandemic is likely to **push about 26 million more people into extreme poverty** in Sub-Saharan Africa and income inequality is also expected to increase substantially.
- Most African countries **also do not have the fiscal room to fund large stimulus packages** to revive their economies. Rising debt levels were already a concern for many African countries, but the pandemic and the associated loss in economic growth has made things worse for the region.
- The pandemic has **widened Africa's financing gap to US\$ 345 billion** and it will be extremely difficult for countries in the region to find the resources to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

How can India make development more impactful?

In this context India can try to make its development cooperation with Africa more impactful in the following ways:

1. **Clear strategy for African development:** Targeting a few important areas like food and health security, climate change adaptation and gender equality will help improve development outcomes and make India's development cooperation program more effective.
2. **Continue the current focus on capacity building:** Investment in human capital is the key to development in Africa. The current focus on capacity building is in line with Africa's needs given the continent's huge youth population that need skills and jobs.
3. **Harness Indian civil society organizations, NGOs, and Indian diaspora:** Some Indian organizations like **Pratham and Barefoot College** are also playing an important role in Africa. The Indian government should explore greater collaboration with these organizations to implement development projects in Africa at low costs.
4. **Promote development-friendly private investments:** Given the emphasis on mutual benefit in its strategy, India's development cooperation should be aligned to its commercial interests in Africa. Therefore, India should try to support Indian companies making investment in development-friendly projects for mutual benefit.
5. **Timely completion of projects:** Efforts must be made to expedite the LoC projects. Lessons should be drawn from other countries that have a much better record in implementation.

RETHINKING INDIA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE AFRICA AND WAY AHEAD

- **Pan African engagement**- It is important for India to maintain the pan-African tier of engagement. Issues like terrorism, climate change, solar energy, globalization, multilateralism, the WTO, blue economy and the

like need to be discussed with the AU. It has avenues for discussion through arrangements with the ADB, NEPAD and the UNECA.


- **Infrastructure projects**- The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programmer (CAADP), the Program Infrastructure Development for Africa (PIDA) the African Medicina Agency (AMA) for medicines, and the high-five for specific infrastructure projects need regular partnerships.
- **Annual India-AU dialogue**- It would be useful to have an annual India-AU dialogue at the track 1.5 level, which will include government representatives, academia, business leaders and functional sectors of interest to both sides.
 - ✓ These arrangements would lead to sector specific developments and invitations to join various efforts currently underway.
- **India chairing African Union**- An annual invitation to the President of the country which is to Chair the AU should also be instituted along with reviving a dialogue with the Chairperson of the AUC. This can be decoupled from the AU summits and held separately for emphasis.
- **Rural electrification corporation**- The RECs could also be partnered with in a more robust fashion for the same purpose. Of the eight RECs, at least five are functioning well and a dialogue with them, which was attempted in 2006, needs to be revitalised.
 - ✓ Between 2008 and 2014, three meetings with the RECs were held by India and these may be revived.
- **Meeting of ambassadors**- The Indian Ambassadors located in countries where these have HQs should be formally asked to have periodic meetings; follow-ups to the decisions of these RECs should be instituted to see how their agenda and Indian interests can be better engaged.
- **Africa Continental Free Trade Area**- With the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) now emerging, India needs to engage with Africa at all levels — continental ,regional and bilateral—to ensure that its interests in issues like rules of origin and standards are not diminished.

Key Thinkers

- According to **Ambassador Anil Trignuyat**, although India in the past, due to lack of a concerted strategic approach, lost out on key economic opportunities while ceding space to other countries including China. But goodwill for India, its benevolent outlook and non-intrusive benign outreach to find a collaborative trilateral partnership for and in Africa would be the key for **the re-entry into to the African orbit**.
- **Mahesh Sachdev (institutionalism)**- as India is neither a rich country nor has its hands been tainted by a history of slavery, colonisation and the exploitation of Africa, India's aid to Africa should be reciprocated by acknowledgement and quid pro quo in terms of goodwill, and institutional preference. India cannot simply be a cash cow for Africa, particularly when its own economy is slowing down.
- **Mahesh Sachdev** suggestions in his article in The Hindu titled "**Fortifying the Africa outreach**" suggested that India needs to take direct control of its development programme instead of handing our funds to intermediaries such as the African Union, the African Development Bank Group and the Techno-Economic Approach for Africa-India Movement (TEAM 9), whose priorities are often different from India's.
- **Mahesh Sachdev(interdependence)**- in his article in The Hindu titled "**Fortifying the Africa outreach**" suggested that India's development assistance should prefer the countries with its substantial interests, both existing and potential. India's own needs for raw materials, commodities and markets should be factored in its aid calculus.
- **S Vard Ranjan (social constructivism)**- Engage with Diaspora at all levels and not just elites focusing on strengthening diplomatic ties.








Conclusion


- **Suhasini Haider** in her article **“India Africa: Beyond Summit”** suggested that for many African countries, **India doesn’t represent just a ‘white knight’ or trading partner**; it represents a country with similar problems, tropical climate, and challenges of poverty and disease, but has overcome many of these challenges through low-cost innovations.
- It is still important to unite against new attempts at exploitation, so they are not bullied into adopting unsustainable standards on issues like poverty alleviation or patents for generic drugs that India produces for Africa.
- It is this futuristic course that draws closer the ties between the African continent and the Indian subcontinent, described once by **Nelson Mandela as ‘the golden thread woven in the common struggles against injustice and oppression’**.
- As pointed out by **Rajiv Bhatia**, for mutual benefit, Africa and India should remain optimally engaged. In this context, India needs to restore Africa to its primary position in India’s diplomacy and economic engagement.





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Syllabus- India and the Global Centres of Power: USA, EU, Japan, China, and Russia

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- Examine the recent developments in India-Japan relationship. (2013)
- “EU – India relations have a long way to go before they can purposely be termed strategic.” Discuss.
- Do you agree with the view that the USA is of late willing to treat India as a partner rather than merely a camp-follower? Give reasons for your answer.
- Evaluate the recent changes in Indo – Japan relations. 20 marks
- Analyse the drivers of Indo – Russian relations in the post-Cold-War era. 20 marks
- Before the year 2000, the indo-US relationship has been marked more with estrangement than cordiality. Why?
- Illustrate the main causes of tension between India and China. Suggest the possibilities of improving relationship.
- Explain Britain's ouster from EU and bring out its consequences on world economy in general and India in particular. 20 marks
- Comment on India's growing relationship with USA in the background of constrained relations between India and China. 15 marks
- How is the 'Belt and Road Initiative' of China going to affect India-China relations?
- The recent differences between India and Russia are the result of misconceptions than facts. Elucidate.
- The natural behaviour of India and the United States is likely to serve each other's interests. Hence, a deliberate strategy of dovetailing their efforts will obviously benefit both. Elaborate.
- Discuss the role of the Indian Diaspora in promoting Indo-US relations.
- Critically assess the evolving convergence of India and China in the areas of trade and environment.
- How is India responding to the idea of Indo-Pacific? 10 marks
- Describe briefly China's 'One Belt One Road (OBOR)' Initiative and analyze India's major concerns. 20 marks
- Critically examine India's position on South China Sea Dispute. 15 marks
- What are the notable features of the recently concluded pact or the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) between India and Japan? How is it likely to address the security concerns of India?
- Discuss the significance of Indo-US strategic partnership and its implications for India's security and national defence.
- Explain the defence and foreign policy options of India to address the challenges emerging out of the current India-China standoff at the Line of Actual Control (LAC)

INDO-PACIFIC

INTRODUCTION-

S. Jaishankar in his book, **‘The India Way: strategies for an uncertain world’** mentions that, as the world changes, it will naturally throw up new concepts and terminology.

- ‘Indo-Pacific’ is among the more recent additions to the global strategic lexicon. The waters are changing and Indo-Pacific is not tomorrow’s forecast but actually yesterday’s reality.’
- Highlighting importance of Indo-Pacific for different powers he pointed out that The Indo-Pacific naturally means different things to different powers, but it undeniably is a priority for all of them.

IMPORTANCE OF INDO-PACIFIC FOR DIFFERENT POWERS-

- **For India-** it is the logical next step beyond **Act East** and a transcending of the confines of South Asia.

- **For Japan**- the movement into the Indian Ocean could be part of its strategic evolution.
- **For the US**- it is a unified theatre that addresses convergences that are central to its new posture.
- **For Russia**- for its part, could visualize this as part of its new emphasis on the Far East.
- **For Europe**- it is a case for a return to a region from which it withdrew.
- **For China**- And the stakes are particularly high for China, as its maritime capabilities are the prerequisite to its emergence as a global power.

INDIAN APPROACH TOWARDS INDO-PACIFIC- EXPERT OPINIONS

- **Shangri La Dialogue**- at Shangri La Dialogue in Singapore, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called Indo-Pacific as “natural region” that stretches from east coast of Africa to the west coast of USA.
- **Open to all**- The PM emphasised that India’s conception of Indo-Pacific is not directed against any other nation. He called the building of a **“stable, secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific Region” an “important pillar” of India’s partnership with the United States**. He also clarified that India does not view the vast Indo-Pacific region as a “club of limited members”.
 - ✓ He insisted that the Indo-Pacific “stands for a free, open, inclusive region, which embraces us all in a common pursuit of progress and prosperity. It includes all nations in this geography as **also others beyond who have a stake in it”**.
- According to Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar, the “Indo-Pacific construct signifies the confluence of the Indian and Pacific oceans that **can no longer be handled as distinct spheres**. It is a reiteration that the world cannot be frozen for the benefit of a few, the security, stability, peace, and prosperity of this vast region is vital for the world.

IMPORTANCE OF INDO-PACIFIC

Introduction- the Indo-Pacific as a strategic concept may be new but it has been an **economic and cultural fact for centuries** as Indians and Arabs have left their imprint all the way up to the eastern coast of China, just as the people of South-East Asia did on Africa.

From Strategic point-

- **From strategic point of view**, the importance of Indo-Pacific was highlighted by geostrategic expert **Alfred T Mahan** where he pointed out that, **‘those who control the sea , will control the world.’**
- This is evident because of the fact that every great power is directly or indirectly trying to control the Indo-Pacific.
- At present, the centre of world geopolitics has shifted from West Asia to Indo-Pacific. Further, unlike West Asia, Indo-Pacific is home to 2 superpowers, US and China and rising powers like India, ASEAN, Japan, Australia etc.

Communication-

- **Indo-Pacific is important sea line of communication**. The vast Indo-Pacific region comprises at least **38 countries**, shares **44 percent of the world surface area**, is home to **more than 64 percent of the world’s population**, and accounts for **62 percent of the global GDP** with more than **50 percent of global trade** traversing through its waters.
- Indo Pacific region consists of many worlds’ **vital choke points** such as strait of Malacca, Mozambique Channel, the Bab el Mandeb.

Trade-

- **Trade and economy**: According to a report of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), countries in the Indo-Pacific produce **over 60% of global GDP**, making the region the **largest single contributor to global growth**.
- The Indo-Pacific region also **stands at the intersection of international trade**, with around 32.2 million barrels of crude oil pass through annually and **40% of global exports come from the region**.

Natural resources-

- **Natural resources:** Maritime territories have also emerged as depositories of vital resources ranging from fish stocks to minerals and offshore oil and gas.
- The emergence of Poly metallic nodules in the Indian ocean and India getting the right to mine the mineral in Indian ocean has been one of the biggest achievement in the region.
- However, **Due to China's unilateralism, increasing militarization of Indo-pacific region is happening at greater pace.** China has shown disregard for international law and regulation. China didn't accept permanent court of arbitration's decision over south China sea. **Territorial disputes over South China sea** have become bone of contention between China and other neighbouring countries.

INDIA'S INTEREST

The conceptual justification for the Indo-Pacific centres around the expanding interests of India For India, it is all about the **pathway of its own steady rise**, while also responding to the compulsions arising from the posture of others.

- **Geopolitically**, the East Asia Summit already took India beyond the Indian Ocean to the Indo-Pacific. Its participation in bilateral, trilateral and multilateral naval exercises in the Pacific Ocean carried its own significance. It is buttressed by its self-perception as a **rule-abiding power that contributes to the global commons.**
- Further, since **maritime activity** has such a profound impact on overall equations, India's participation goes some way in **contributing to stability in Asia.**
- **Geo-economically**, the steady externalization of its economy and focus towards the East made it sensitive to maritime security and safety. Also, though India's core interests may be in the Indian Ocean, but a presence beyond also ensures a peaceful periphery.

IMPORTANCE OF INDIAN OCEAN-

However, the heart of India's economic ties in the Indo-Pacific is rooted in the Indian Ocean. **The Indian Ocean is almost 20 percent of the world's ocean area, touching the shores of 36 countries** and connecting three continents (Africa, Asia and Australia), with a total coastline area of 66,526 km, or **40 percent of the global coastline.**

- **Importance in terms of choke points-** The Indian Ocean is home to major sea-lanes and choke points that are crucial to global trade, connecting major centres of the international economy in the North Atlantic and Asia-Pacific — **90,000 commercial shipping vessels** form the backbone of international goods trade; and **about 40 percent of the world's oil supply** travels through strategic choke points into and out of the Indian Ocean, which is also a **valuable source of mineral and fishing resources.**
- **Geopolitical aspirations:** India is seen as an ideal swing state and **"Net Security provider"** in Indian Ocean region.
- **Containment of China:** Through its **String of Pearls strategy**, China is expanding its footprints to contain Indian hold in the Indian ocean. It is creating a ring around India through strategically placed nations such as at-
 - ✓ Chittagong (Bangladesh)
 - ✓ Gwadar port (Karachi, Pakistan)
 - ✓ Hambantota Port (Sri Lanka)
 - ✓ Colombo port [Sri Lanka]
- **'Necklace of Diamonds' strategy-** In a counter-action, India has started working on the 'Necklace



of Diamonds' strategy. This strategy aims at garlanding China or in simple words, the counter encirclement strategy. India's strategic bases include-

- ✓ Changi Naval Base (Singapore)
- ✓ Sabang Port (Indonesia)
- ✓ Duqm port (Oman)
- ✓ Assumption Island (Seychelles)

- **Developing Blue economy:** The blue economy has a **4.1-percent share in India's GDP**, with immense potential for growth. PM Modi has stressed the importance of the ocean economy by likening it to the blue CHAKRA (wheel) in India's national flag.
 - ✓ Asian countries contribute over 90% to aquaculture worldwide. China, itself, contributes more than 70%.
 - ✓ Some 880 million people are employed in fish farming from salmon cages in Norway to Prawn Ponds in Thailand.
 - ✓ Employment in the fisheries sector has grown faster than the world's population as well as employment in traditional agriculture.
 - ✓ During the 8th FYP, from 1992-97, the Intensive Marine Fisheries Program was launched in India also, which collaboration with MNCs was encouraged.
 - ✓ Over a period of time, fishing harbors in Tuticorin, Porbandar, Visakhapatnam, Kochi and Port Blair were established.

THREATS-

- **Non-traditional threats-** Indian Ocean region faces many traditional and non-traditional threats such as piracy, terrorism, human trafficking, drugs trafficking, weapons trafficking.
- **China's regressive behavior-** in the critical sea lanes in the South China Sea is the centre of the entire maritime security challenge. The sea lanes of communication are critical for peace, stability, prosperity and development of the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Terrorism** has been referred to as the gravest threat to global peace.

STEPS TAKEN BY INDIA IN INDIAN OCEAN-

- **Net security provider-** India now sees itself as **Net security provider to the Indian Ocean region**. This reflects India's aspirations to take a leading strategic role throughout the Indian Ocean.
- **Asia Africa growth corridor:** It is an Indian-Japanese collaborative vision regarding development, connectivity and cooperation between Asia and Africa. It is an **alternative to China's One Belt One Road initiative**. It is based on four major pillars-
 - ✓ Development and Cooperation Projects
 - ✓ Quality Infrastructure and Institutional Connectivity
 - ✓ Enhancing Capacities and Skills
 - ✓ People-to-People partnership.
- **Logistics sharing agreement-** India has naval **logistics sharing agreement** with Singapore, Oman, Japan, and Indonesia.
- **Trilateral agreements:** India-Japan-US, India-France-Australia and the India-Indonesia-Australia trilateral arrangements
- **New Indo-Pacific Division-** Ministry of External Affairs has established a new Indo-Pacific Division in April 2019.
- **Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative-** In 2019, at the East Asia Summit in Bangkok, India announced the **Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI)** to support the building of a rules-based regional architecture centred on **seven pillars** —
 - ✓ Maritime security
 - ✓ Maritime ecology

- ✓ Maritime resources
- ✓ Capacity building and resource sharing
- ✓ Disaster risk reduction and management
- ✓ Science, technology and academic cooperation
- ✓ Trade, connectivity and maritime transport.
- **Act East and Act West policy**- Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative is anchored on India's Act East and Act West policies.
- **SAGAR initiative**- India has articulated its Indo-Pacific concept in its vision of SAGAR - 'Security and Growth for All in the Region', an aspiration that depends on ensuring prosperity for all stakeholder nations, guided by norms and governed by rules, with freedom of navigation.
- **Indian ocean Rim Association**- It consists of 23 states bordering the Indian ocean. It is based on the principles of open regionalism for strengthening economic cooperation.

IS INDO PACIFIC A MAJOR TRANSITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ORDER?

- **International Liberal order** led by the USA had lasted for around 75 years. China is the largest beneficiary of the order in terms of growth in trade and investment.
- **Center of gravity shifted to Asia Pacific**- The centre of gravity of global politics and trade remained across the Atlantic Ocean until the beginning of the Cold War. Later on it was substituted by Asia Pacific, which was aimed at excluding Indian interests, particularly in the background of the Cold
 - ✓ At present, the liberal order is transforming itself as countries such as the US is looking differently at the international politics.
- **Asia has become center of International politics**- The transition from Asia Pacific into I.P is viewed as the shifting of centre of gravity of international politics towards Asia.
 - ✓ It also signifies a shift in the Balance of Power and the fulcrum of Geopolitics.
- **Reasons** behind the shift:
 - **Maintaining peace**- To securitize and to maintain peace and law abiding nature in the Indian and Pacific Oceans through which majority of world trade occurs. India also backs this cause but never does a 'drum beating' of the same.
 - ✓ According to India, the sea lanes of I.P are vital for communication and nobody's property.
 - **USA is showing withdrawal tendency**- Under the Presidency of Donald Trump, the US is showing a 'withdrawal' tendency with regards to international alliances, sending shivers down the spine of its traditional allies such as South Korea, Japan and the ASEAN countries.
 - **Emergence of China**- China is emerging as an aggressive player, particularly in the context of changing stand of ASEAN countries.

India's issues In the Indian Ocean-

- **Below par Naval power**- S. Jaishankar in his book, 'The India Way: strategies for an uncertain world' has pointed out that strategic edge due to India's central location was undermined by below par naval power and maritime exploitation. He further adds that the nature of the challenge is also novel since so much of it is played out in the global commons.
 - ✓ For this, India needs to cooperate with democratic allies and neighbors in the region and it should also increase investment in its navy.
 - ✓ In particular, completing construction of new aircraft carriers and attack submarines, modernizing India's naval assets, and improving its maritime domain awareness capabilities will ensure that India has a modern navy that can counter growing Chinese influence in the Indian Ocean region
- **Land based security focus**- India's security focus has been largely land-based. As a result, the Indian Navy is under resourced in comparison to the army and air force. This is largely because of import dependence on other nations, when it comes to naval ships and weapons.
 - ✓ India has a limited naval capacity.
 - ✓ India also lacks overseas naval bases.

- ✓ India spends only 15 percent of its total military expenditure on its navy, far lower than its peers in the Quad.
- ✓ The United States spends nearly 30 percent of its military expenditure on its navy, while Australia and Japan spend nearly 25 percent and 23 percent respectively.
- **Slow pace of development:** No visible progress in Asia Africa Growth Corridor. India and Japan can't match the resources of China and India's poor implementation record in project implementation has put question mark on credibility of the initiative.
 - ✓ Surveys were not carried out on what the African people wanted from India and Japan
 - ✓ The collective private sector of African countries was also ignored.
 - ✓ There was no clarity on how AAGC would help Africa tackle its development challenges or, for that matter, how favorable was it in comparison to China's BRI
- **Balancing maritime and continental strategies-** Focus on Indo-Pacific may antagonize China. It may lead to further worsening of India China relationship. Further while Australia, Japan, US are distant from China, India shares the border with China. The debate between maritime and continental strategy is big question for Indian foreign policy.
- **Opting out of RCEP-** India's decision to remain out of RCEP has dealt a huge blow to Act East policy and India's profile in ASEAN.
 - ✓ The move could potentially leave India with less scope to tap the large market that RCEP presents —the size of the deal is mammoth, as the countries involved account for over 2 billion of the world's population.
 - ✓ Given attempts by countries like Japan to get India back into the deal, there are also worries that India's decision could impact the Australia-India-Japan network in the Indo-Pacific.

SAGAR- SECURITY AND GROWTH FOR ALL IN THE REGION

What it is?

In 2015, India unveiled its strategic vision for the Indian Ocean i.e. **Security and Growth for All in the Region** (SAGAR). It is an increasing recognition of the increasing importance of maritime security, maritime commons and cooperation.

Aim of the initiative-

Through SAGAR, India seeks to deepen economic and security cooperation with its maritime neighbours and assist in building their maritime security capabilities. For this, India would cooperate on the exchange of information, coastal surveillance, building of infrastructure and strengthening their capabilities.

Need of SAGAR-

- **To make use of blue economy**- Blue economy presents India with an unprecedented opportunity to meet its national socio-economic objectives (livelihood generation, achieving energy security, building ecological resilience etc.) as well as strengthening connectivity with neighbours.
- **Sustainable development**- India seeks an integrated approach and cooperative future, which will result in sustainable development for all in the region.
- **IORA**- India must focus on the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). IORA's mandate is to promote sustainable growth and balanced development in the region.
- **IOC**- Recently, India has been granted the observer status in Indian Ocean Commission (IOC). India can learn from IOC Bottom-up regionalism.

Significance of SAGAR Vision

- **Expand partnerships**- SAGAR provides a mechanism for India to expand strategic partnerships with other IOR littorals in Asia and Africa.
- **Leadership role to India**- SAGAR indicates the leadership role and responsibilities India is ready to play in the region on a long-term basis in a transparent manner through its capacity building and capability enhancement programs.
- **Works in synergy with other missions**- The key relevance of SAGAR emerges when seen in conjunction with India's other policies impacting the maritime domain like Act East Policy, Project Sagarmala, Project Mausam, India as 'net security provider', focus on Blue Economy etc. This symbolises India's maritime resurgence, as maritime issues are now centre of India's foreign policy.
 - With effective implementation of all these policies, India can act as an enabler to create a positive environment in the IOR.

According to **S. Jaishankar**, SAGAR drives a more active and outcome-oriented Indian approach that enhances its influence by delivering on partnerships. It is translated into hinterland linkages and strengthened regionalism, maritime contributions and support, and the creation of an extended neighbourhood. It comes with a willingness to assume responsibilities as a net security provider

QUADRILATERAL SECURITY DIALOGUE

What is QUAD?

- Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) is the informal strategic dialogue between India, USA, Japan and Australia with a shared objective to ensure and support a "free, open and prosperous" Indo-Pacific region.
- The idea of Quad was first mooted by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007. However, the idea couldn't move ahead with Australia pulling out of it, apparently due to Chinese pressure.

Evolution of Quad

- **Genesis:** In 2004, India, Japan, Australia and USA formed the Tsunami Core Group for disaster relief.
- **April 2007:** Joint Naval Exercises near Tokyo by India, Japan and USA
- **May 2007:** In Manila, on the sidelines of Asian Regional Forum members met in the inaugural meeting of Quadrilateral
- **August 2007:** Shinzo Abe delivered “**Confluence of two seas**” speech in Indian parliament. He invoked book by **Dara Shikoh** to describe the dynamic coupling between Indo Pacific Ocean as confluence of two seas.
- **February 2008:** Australia unilaterally announced its departure from quadrilateral security dialogue due to China’s resistance.
- **Revival-** Quadrilateral security dialogues were revived again in 2017 due to growing Unilateralism of China and prevent Unipolar Asia.
- **March 2020-** *Quad officials met to discuss COVID 19. This meeting was joined by New Zealand, Vietnam, and South Korea’s officials unofficially known as Quad Plus.*
- **Oct 2020-** *The second meeting of the **Quadrilateral Strategic Dialogue of Foreign Ministers** took place in Tokyo in October 2020.*
- **Australia allowed-** *Australia was allowed to take part in Malabar exercise.*
- **Feb 2021-** QUAD ministerial meeting discussed issues across Indo-Pacific and the military takeover in Myanmar.
 - The focus was on pressing crises like Covid-19, climate change, and emerging technologies.
 - Quad Vaccine Partnership was launched.

Guiding principles of members-

- **Free and fair Indo-pacific-** The idea behind the QUAD Group is to keep the strategic and significant sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any influence (read Chinese influence).
- **Reduce Chinese influence-** It is seen as a strategic grouping to pre-empt and reduce Chinese influences.
 - It seeks to contain a ‘rising China’ and work against its predatory trade and economic policies
- **Rule based global order-** The core objective of the QUAD is to secure a rules-based global order, liberal trading system and freedom of navigation.
- **Development of Indo-pacific countries-** Another purpose of the QUAD is to offer alternative debt financing for nations in the Indo-Pacific region.

STAND OF RESPECTIVE MEMBERS-

India’s stand-

- QUAD is united by its democratic values and will remain an important pillar of stability in the Indo-Pacific region.
- Called the meet an extension of the ancient Indian philosophy ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’, which regards the world as one family.

Australia’s stand-

- QUAD grouping could be the start of a new, permanent and powerful regional grouping of like-minded democracies.

USA’s stand-

- QUAD is an opportunity to cooperate on economics, technology, climate and security. It is not a military alliance or North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) equivalent.
- Maritime security, humanitarian and disaster response are core to the QUAD agenda.

- QUAD is going to be a vital arena for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. Read in detail about the significance of the Indo-Pacific Region on the given link.

Japan's stand-

- Acknowledged the new dynamism that QUAD has received because of the meeting of the top leaders of the member countries.
- It will firmly advance its cooperation to realise a free and open Indo Pacific, and to make a tangible contribution to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the region, including overcoming Covid-19.

CHINA'S RESPONSE

- China defines quad as “Indo-Pacific NATO”, “Asian NATO”, a “headline-grabbing idea” that would “dissipate like sea foam”.
- **Criticism by China**- Beijing's Foreign Minister Wang Yi criticised Quad as an “exclusive clique”, “an anti-China frontline” and even a “mini-NATO” led by the U.S.'s “Cold War mentality”.
- **Claiming islands in S. China sea**- China claims nearly all of the disputed South China Sea, though Taiwan, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam all claim parts of it. Beijing has built artificial islands and military installations in the South China Sea. China also has territorial disputes with Japan in the East China Sea.
- **Asia-Pacific vs Indo-Pacific**- China believes that the Indo-Pacific concept is not only trying to erase the name “Asia-Pacific” and the effective regional cooperation architecture in the region, but also trying to wipe out the achievements and momentum of peaceful development created by the concerted efforts of countries in the region over the past decades.

STEPS TAKEN BY INDIA

In words of **S. Jaishankar**, ‘After years of being in denial of a changing reality, India had to come to terms with the fact that there were now more forces at work in the oceans below.’

- **SAGAR initiative was launched**- That acceptance drove the fashioning of the first integrated maritime outlook in 2015. It was appropriately articulated as **SAGAR** (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and premised on the belief that advancing cooperation and using our capabilities for larger good would benefit India.’
- **New Indo-Pacific Division launched**- Ministry of External Affairs has established a **New Indo-Pacific Division** in April 2019.
- **2+2 with all QUAD members**- India has **institutionalised 2+2 defence and foreign dialogue** mechanism with all quad members
- **ACSA between India and Japan**- India and Japan signed a **logistics agreement** which is known as **Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA)**.
 - ✓ The agreement establishes the enabling framework for closer cooperation between the Armed Forces of India and Japan in reciprocal provision of supplies and services while engaged in bilateral training activities, United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, Humanitarian International Relief and other mutually agreed activities.
- **Agreements with USA**- India has also signed **four foundational agreements** such as-
 - ✓ General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA)
 - ✓ Logistics Support Agreement (LSA)
 - ✓ Communications Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA)
 - ✓ Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (BECA)
- **Regular bilateral talks with members**- India are conducting bilateral and multilateral military exercises with other quad members.

C. Raja Mohan has traced India's activism in QUAD to its policy of strategic autonomy. According to him, while the BRICS was part of India's strategy in the unipolar moment that dawned at the end of the Cold War, Delhi's current enthusiasm for the Quad is about limiting the dangers of a Unipolar Asia dominated by China.

FOCUS ON MARITIME SECURITY

- Strengthening of tri-service command at Andaman and Nicobar
- **India and Seychelles** agreed on naval base at Assumption Island
- India is developing **naval base at Agalega** Island in Mauritius
- India signed a **military cooperation agreement with Oman** government to give **Indian Navy access to Duqm port**. Access to Duqm port will **help India to check China at Gwadar**
- India is developing its maiden **deep-sea port in Indonesia's Sabang** close to Andaman and Nicobar Islands
- India and Singapore signed a bilateral agreement that will allow Indian Navy ships logistical support, including refuelling, at Singapore's Changi naval base located near the disputed South China Sea.
- **India and France** operationalised their **logistics support agreement**

CHALLENGES TO THE CONCEPT OF QUAD

- China's Territorial Claims: China claims that it has historical ownership over nearly the entire region of South China Sea, which gives it the right to manufacture islands. However, the International Court of Arbitration rejected the claim in 2016.
- China's Closeness to ASEAN: The ASEAN countries also have a well-knit relationship with China. The Regional Cooperation Economic Partnership (RCEP) is a recent example of China's increasing influence over ASEAN nations.
- Economic Power of China: Considering the economic might of China and the dependence of Quad nations like Japan and Australia on China, the Quad nations cannot afford to have strained relations with it.
- Convergence among Quad Nations: The nations in the Quad grouping have different aspirations, aims at balancing their own interest. Therefore, coherence in the vision of Quad nation as a grouping is absent.

Rise of QUAD- some excerpts from article of Harsh V Pant

- The rise of the Quad signals the acceptance, both within and beyond the member countries, of the "Indo-Pacific" as a strategic concept. Today the Quad represents maturation in thinking by major powers in the region.
- **Japan**- For Japan and the US, their traditional understanding of "security" has expanded beyond the narrow confines of Northeast Asia
- **USA**- the US has declared that its sphere of interest now stretches "from Hollywood to Bollywood".
- **India**- for India, its membership in the Quad represents an evolution in strategic thinking that began with its Look East policy in the early 1990s.
- **Australia**- Australia, too, has realised that the Indian Ocean, and not just the Pacific Ocean, is critical to its national interest

Rising security related initiatives-

- ✓ In pursuit of their goals, the Quad has intensified its military activities in recent years.
- ✓ **Malabar**- The navies of all four nations participate in the high-profile Malabar exercises.
- ✓ At the same time, bilateral military ties, in the form of exercises and defence agreements, have heightened as well.
- ✓ **2+2 talks**- Equally important, high-level 2+2 dialogues between member nations have become a regular feature of the diplomatic calendar.

Vaccine related steps-

- ✓ **Quad Vaccine Partnership**- The Quad Vaccine Partnership, which had pledged to donate 1.3 billion Covid vaccine doses by end-2022, appears to have made significant headway.

- ✓ **Supplying vaccines**- While Quad partners had only supplied 79 million doses of its ambitious target by September 2021, that number now stands at more than 500 million.

What can be said about the future of QUAD?

Technology

- **Balance between digital advancement and security**- The Quad must also find the balance between its hard security-oriented goals and its larger role as an enabler of digital economies, and shaper of technology flows and regimes in the Indo-Pacific.
- **Critical and Emerging Technology Working Group**- Its resurgence was underscored by the first Quad Summit in March 2021, where the Quad Critical and Emerging Technology Working Group was established by the member states
- **5G technology**- Collaboration on secure 5G technologies appears to be the most active of these areas, as evidenced by the establishment of a **5G subgroup** under the Working Group, as well as the convening of the **Quad Open RAN Forum** in July 2021.

Climate Action

- **Geographical variations**- The Quad countries cover a critical regional arc encompassing the United States in the Pacific, India and Japan in South Asia and Southeast Asia, and Australia.
 - ✓ All four countries are home to many important regions that are suffering the manifold impacts of cascading climate crises.
- **Global warming**- For each of these countries, global warming poses multiple fronts for action and change.
- **Can act as torch bearers in climate change agendas**- As an important grouping of states that are home to a quarter of the world's population and roughly 35 percent of the world's GDP, the Quad can prove to be a torch-bearer for the global climate agenda.
- **Pledge to fight climate change**- In the first-ever in-person leaders' summit of the Quad (held in the US in 2021), the nations pledged to fight the climate crisis and partner on emerging technologies.
- **Disaster resilient infrastructure**- Focus on increasing the Indo-Pacific region's resilience to climate change by improving critical climate information-sharing and disaster-resilient infrastructure.
- **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure**- Building a new technical facility through the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure to provide technical assistance in small island developing states and setting up a Climate and Information Services Task Force.
- **Inclusive energy transition**- The Quad can drive inclusive energy transition in technology, manufacturing, and finance.
- **Technology expertise**- They can provide much-needed technology expertise required to achieve the energy transition goals set under frameworks such as the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and OSOWOG (One Sun One World One Grid).
- **Taking over China in green energy**- India is well-placed to provide manufacturing infrastructure to build these technologies. To take over from China as the "world's factory", it will have to mirror its advantages of large-scale production at low costs.
- **Funding**: Quad has a role and an opportunity to drive capital investments towards helping developing nations to move towards sustainable forms of energy.

Counter terrorism-

- **Fewer actions taken till now**- While counterterrorism has regularly featured in statements and communications released in and around talks held by Quad leaders, little has materialised.

- **Table top exercise-** In November 2019, India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) hosted the first counterterrorism table-top exercise (CT-TTX) for Quad members.
- **Direct counterterrorism cooperation-** Direct counterterrorism cooperation between the Quad members without a framework of an alliance, however, poses roadblocks on issues such as sharing of intelligence (which is different from information).
- **Intelligence-sharing network-** While there has been an increase in intelligence cooperation between India and the US on a bilateral level, a wider intelligence-sharing network amongst the Quad grouping is not in the near horizon

What can emerge as issues in QUAD-?

- **AUKUS—the Australia, UK, US partnership on technology and security.** The new arrangement is significant not because of the diplomatic fallout with a key ally—i.e., France—but because it is a stark reminder to India of the invisible fence around the US and its treaty partners.
- **India's 5Gi standards-** Another pressure point is India's 5Gi standards, which—while part of India's vision for connectivity for all—would isolate India's 5G ecosystem from the standards dictating 5G markets elsewhere.
- **Changing Indo-Pacific definition-** the Quad must keep up with the evolution of the Indo-Pacific construct. The "Indo-Pacific" has matured beyond its maritime security roots.
 - ✓ It captures the varied interpretations of countries within and outside its geographic bounds and now encapsulates issues including sustainable development, trade, infrastructure, and inclusive digital transformation.
 - ✓ Key to this shift is the transformation of the **Indo-Pacific as a term synonymous with the Quad**, to a larger ecosystem that the Quad is simply a part of.
 - ✓ This sentiment was made clear in the March 2021 Quad Leaders' Joint Statement on "**The Spirit of the Quad**"

The Quad, AUKUS, and India

POSITIVES FOR INDIA-

- **Some advantage to India-** The AUKUS partnership strengthens the QUAD and gives more weight to important partners like India, which provides the military balance in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Can accelerate QUAD-** AUKUS will also accelerate the capabilities of the QUAD in fields like cyber security, Artificial Intelligence, Quantum technology and advanced missiles. It also opens up opportunities for cooperation in these areas for India and Japan.
- **China's aggressive response-** Any alliance or partnership that benefits the multilateral structure opposed to China is a net strategic positive for India. China's aggressive response to AUKUS is a sign for its benefit to India.

NEGATIVES FOR INDIA-

- **Focus of USA on other nations-** A worry for India is that the U.S. is now promoting a security partnership with its English allies which India is not a part of.
- **Upsetting the balance in region-** It might possibly upset the balance of power in the region, and set off new tensions to India's east while substantial turbulence in India's west is caused by the recent change of government in Afghanistan.
- **Crowding of nuclear submarines-** The deal could eventually lead to a crowding of nuclear submarines in the eastern Indian Ocean, eroding India's regional pre-eminence.

- ✓ The Indian Navy presently dominates the space, but its conventional underwater capability has been shrinking.
- **Dilemmas for India**- It raise the question, “what the future might hold for India”.
 - ✓ France, a big NATO ally to the US and Australia, considers this partnership as an act of betrayal.
 - ✓ The chances are likely for the two countries to look up to their own advantage if a similar condition arrives in future that involves India.

What should be the way forward-?

- **Adding other like-minded nations**- The quartet must look to rope in other like-minded nations through issue-based cooperation. Taiwan’s experience in fighting Chinese disinformation and cyber warfare could prove useful.
- **Quad needs to respect the principle of ASEAN centrality**- This will serve dual purpose. On the one hand, it means rejection of Chinese centrality and on the other hand, it will enhance legitimacy and credibility of Quad.
- **Quad members also need to counter weaponize the supply chain by China**. Quad should also expand its coverage of issues like quality infrastructure, resilient supply chain, connectivity, cyber-security, 5G technology, rare earth materials.
 - ✓ It should also include other like-minded countries like Vietnam, Indonesia, France, Germany, UK to provide greater inclusivity and credibility.
- **Institutionalisation of quad** needs to be done through joint statement, military exercises, white paper on defence. This will help device a common and clear strategy.

Suggestions by S. Jaishankar for India’s approach-

S. Jaishankar in his book, ‘**The India Way: strategies for an uncertain world**’ has suggested that New Delhi should focus on Indian Ocean.

- In his words, “By maintaining a strong posture in Indian Ocean, India’s value rises and ensures a more enthusiastic welcome further east. For India, getting its Indo- Pacific approach right rests on ensuring that it works out its Indian Ocean strategy even more correctly.”

He has highlighted 4 key elements for securing India’s interests-

- The first is **to safeguard our mainland and islands**, defend our interests, ensure a safe, secure and stable Indian Ocean, and make available our capabilities to others.
- The second **focuses on deepening economic and security cooperation** with our maritime neighbours and strengthening their capacities.
- The third **envisages collective action and cooperation to advance peace and security** and respond to emergencies.
- The fourth seeks a **more integrated and cooperative future for the region** that enhances sustainable development.

Some other suggestions by S. Jaishankar-

- **Comprehensive maritime strategy**- He has also suggested a comprehensive maritime strategy with focus on maritime infrastructure for the homeland, development of island assets, connectivity to immediate neighbours, and the capabilities brought to bear on a daily basis.
 - ✓ **Connectivity**- Connectivity is going to be critical factor for success of India’s Indo-pacific strategy. With regard to its Neighbourhood First policy, what are of particular relevance are those initiatives which have an oceanic impact.
- **Maritime space beyond India’s waters**- The next circle includes the maritime space beyond India’s waters and its immediate island neighbours like Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius and Seychelles.

- ✓ On land, the restoration of connectivity to the extended neighbourhood is high in importance. They have direct implications for the ability of India to safeguard waters on a larger scale.
- **Revival of the Indian Ocean as a community**- The next step would be revival of the Indian Ocean as a community that builds on its historical and cultural foundations.
 - ✓ In words of S. Jaishankar, 'It is only by shaping cooperation across the Indian Ocean that India can hope to significantly influence events beyond it. How to make the ocean a more seamless and cooperative space is not only a larger regional objective, but one that would enhance the centrality of India.'

QUAD 2.0

- Recently, the Foreign Ministers of **India, the US, Israel and the UAE** concluded a virtual meeting. The meeting is a strong manifestation of the changes in West Asian geopolitics and formation of another Quad like grouping in the Middle East.
- India's involvement in this new grouping reflects a shift in its foreign policy.

Factors leading to its formation-

- **Abraham Accord**- The new grouping is possible after the resumption of formal diplomatic relations between Israel and the UAE, through the Abraham Accord.
- **Converging interests**- The new Quad can be termed as a result of converging interests between India, the UAE, and Israel amidst Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan's assertive claims for the leadership of the Islamic world.
- **Footprint in the Middle East**- the US is clearly seeking to lessen its footprint in the Middle East as part of its pivot to East Asia to tackle China's rise, which is redrawing West Asia's traditional equations.

What can be the benefit for India through QUAD 2.0?

- **Integrated regional policy**- The four-nation meeting suggests India is now ready to move from bilateral relations conducted in separate silos towards an integrated regional policy.
- **Rise of Greater Middle East**- Much in the manner that the "Indo-Pacific" has transformed the way India thinks about the east, the notion of a "Greater Middle East" can provide a huge fillip to India's engagement with the extended neighbourhood to the west.
- **Pakistan's alignment with Turkey**- Further, the new grouping is also driven by Pakistan's growing alignment with Turkey and its alienation from its traditionally strong supporters in the Arab Gulf - the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

What can be the way forward?

- **Too soon to analyse**- While it is too early to speak of the strategic significance of such a grouping, there are areas where it can deepen its engagement - trade, energy ties, fighting climate change and enhancing maritime security.
- **Need to be wary of the conflicts**- India should be careful not to get sucked into the many conflicts of West Asia that could intensify amid growing regional rivalries.
- **Insecurities in Asia**- India is facing deepening insecurities in continental Asia after the American withdrawal from Afghanistan. So the challenge before India is to retain a healthy relationship with Iran even as it seeks to build a stronger regional partnership with the US-Israel-UAE bloc.

Key thinkers and ideas:

- **Brahma Chellaney**: Success of quad depends on India as Australia and Japan are already in security alliance with USA and are under military and nuclear umbrella of USA.
 - ✓ None of these countries shares border with China. However, India directly shares boundary with China.

- ✓ India has been traditionally reluctant to join military alliances. Even Narendra Modi also clarified that India does not view the vast Indo-Pacific region as a “club of limited members”. However, according to him, China’s aggression on LAC changed strategic equation.
 - ✓ Now Quad will shift gears from consultation and cooperation to strategic alliance that plays central role in multilateral security arrangement in region.
 - ✓ Quad consolidation highlights that **China’s wolf warrior diplomacy** has backfired.
 - ✓ However, consolidation of QUAD is unlikely to result into military bloc and cold war system of ‘hub and spoke’ as India won’t agree to it and values its strategic autonomy.
- **S. Jaishankar**: India needs to let go of dogmatic non alignment paradigm and go for issue-based partnership.
 - **Amb. Kanwal Sibal**: he advises to raise the Quad dialogue to political level, intensify naval exercise with Australia bilaterally and make the Quad Malabar a reality
 - **C Raja Mohan**: If India discards its military isolationism, develops productive defense diplomacy, and embarks upon deeper security cooperation with its partners through bilateral, unilateral and multilateral mechanisms, the “quad talk” might generate a lot less heat than it does today.

Conclusion

- ✓ India has presented inclusive vision of Indo-Pacific.
- ✓ **Narendra Modi** has declared that India stands for free, open, inclusive region which embraces all in common pursuit of progress and prosperity.
- ✓ India’s vision is not against any country and it doesn’t see Indo-Pacific as club of limited members.
- ✓ India’s continental grand strategy is facing an existential crisis and it is high time that India should focus on maritime.

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PYQ's

1. Discuss the significance of Indo-US strategic partnership and its implications for India's security and national defence. [2020/15m/200w/6c]
2. How is the current stand-off between the USA and Iran affecting India's energy security? [2019/15m/200w/7c]
3. Discuss the role of Indian diaspora in promoting Indo-US relations. [2018/15m/200w/7b]
4. The natural behaviour of India and the United States is likely to serve each other's interests. Hence a deliberate strategy of dovetailing their efforts will obviously benefit both. Elaborate. [2017/20m/250w/8a]
5. Comment on India's growing relationship with the USA in the background of constrained relations between India and China. [2016/15m/200w/6b]
6. Before the year 2000, the Indo-US relationship had been marked more with estrangement than cordiality. Why? [2015/20m/250w/6a]
7. Do you agree with the view that the USA is off late willing to treat India as a partner rather than merely a camp-follower? Give reasons for your answer. [2014/10m/150w/5d]
8. Examine India's response to the Af-Pak policy of the US. [2010/20m/200w/5b]
9. Comprehensively examine the major development / trends in Indo-US relations since the early 1990s. Do you visualise the strengthening of ties between the two nations? Substantiate. [2007/60m/8]
10. Examine the areas of cooperation and conflict in the Indo-American relations. [2003/60m/7]

Introduction-

- **Global strategic partnership-** India-U.S. bilateral relations have developed into a "global strategic partnership", based on shared democratic values and increasing convergence of interests on bilateral, regional and global issues
- **High-level political visits-** Regular exchange of high-level political visits has provided sustained momentum to bilateral cooperation, while the wide-ranging and ever-expanding dialogue architecture has established a long-term framework for India-U.S. Engagement
- **Broad-based and multi-sectoral-** Today, the India-U.S. bilateral cooperation is broad-based and multi-sectoral, covering trade and investment, defence and security, education, science and technology, cyber security, high-technology, civil nuclear energy, space technology and applications, clean energy, environment, agriculture and health
- **People-to-people interaction-** Vibrant people-to-people interaction and support across the political spectrum in both countries nurture our bilateral relationship as well

**Expert's opinions on Indo-USA relations-**

- **Dennis Kux:** India and USA have come a long way from being estranged democracies to engaged democracies.
- **Ashley J. Tellis-** held that despite their shared affinities of constitutional democracy, liberal politics, and civic nationalism, the United States and India have not enjoyed consistently warm relations because of contrasts in worldview, differences in national priorities, and asymmetries in power capability, which lasted in their strongest form until the end of the Cold War.

- **S. Jaishankar**- India America ties have reached to the level where the only direction to go was “up”. He added that, the USA economy is largely complementary and there is no fundamental clash of interest between the two sides.
- **David Malone**- in his book “**Does an elephant dance**” described India USA relationship as proverbial blind man and elephant are trying to understand each other.
- **Narendra Modi**- termed USA as natural global partner of India.
 - ✓ Modi said - “Relations between India and US aren’t just between two governments, but are people-centric and people-driven” and “these relations are very important for the most important relationship of the 21st century.”
- **Kanwal Sibal** has pointed out ambiguity on part of India. According to him, there is clarity on the part of USA as to what it expects from the partnership. There are 2 dimensions.
 - **Strategic:** USA official establishment clearly sees India as ideal swing state against China. However, India values its strategic autonomy and is averse to alliances.
 - **Commercial:** USA is looking India as huge market. However, despite huge convergence in geopolitical sphere, both countries failed to reach agreement on FTA.

EVOLUTION OF INDIA USA RELATIONS

Before Independence

- Despite USA’s advocacy for the right of nation to self-determination for people around the world, USA has never pushed British for India’s independence.
- Pandit Nehru was socialist. He thought American imperialism worse than British imperialism. Historically, USA had made an ambivalent approach towards growth of India’s power.
- WWII started to shift USA’s focus towards India after the pearl harbour attack.

After Independence

- **Phase 1: Conflict and Cooperation**
 - ✓ USA didn’t support India on Kashmir issue.
 - ✓ India became the first non-communist country to recognise People republic of China.
 - ✓ India didn’t support USA resolution in UNGA which blamed China as aggressor.
 - ✓ India kept on insisting permanent membership for people republic of China instead of Taiwan.
 - ✓ USA took pro-India stance in 1962 war.
 - ✓ USA helped India in addressing food security.
 - ✓ India opposed American involvement in the Vietnam War. Nehru made his last state visit to the United States in November 1961.
- **Phase 2: phase of Strategic conflict, No cooperation**
 - ✓ USA, China and Pakistan formed an axis. Ultimately India had to go for treaty of peace and friendship with USSR.
 - ✓ USA and China pressurised India during 1971 war.
 - ✓ USA has constructed nuclear apartheid against India after Pokhran 1.
- **Phase 3: End of cold war**
 - ✓ After disintegration of USSR, India was forced to look west.
 - ✓ India’s adoption of Policy of LPG opened up India’s domestic market to world economy.
 - ✓ Malabar exercise began in 1992 between India and USA.
 - ✓ India is being considered as an ideal swing state against China

- ✓ Estranged democracies turned into engaged democracies.

Co-operation in times of George W Bush-

- According to **Ashley J. Tellis**, President George W. Bush, reversed course and over his two terms in office forged a unique nuclear cooperation agreement with India.
- Washington expended extraordinary political capital to secure both congressional consent for amending US domestic law and agreement within the international Nuclear Suppliers' Group to permit global nuclear trade with India. The epochal decision by President Bush to pursue such a partnership with India was driven by two interacting reasons:
 1. 'viewing India as part of the solution to nuclear proliferation rather than as part of the problem'
 2. 'Helping India become a major world power in the twenty-first century'. This also served American interests effectively in the face of rising Chinese power in Asia.

REASONS FOR CHANGES IN INDO-US RELATIONSHIP IN 21ST CENTURY

- According to **Harsh Pant**, unique constellations of factors like systemic, domestic, political and individual together played the role in changing India USA relationship.
 1. **Systemic factors** like End of cold war, Rise of Unipolarity and possible rise of China.
 2. **Domestic factors** like opening of Indian economy, structural adjustment program
 3. **Political factors** like change in government. BJP in India always had pro-west approach and little commitment towards non-alignment.
- Further scholars like **Ashley Tellis** have significantly influenced the policy of Bush administration to adopt policy of de-hyphenation of India-Pakistan.
- Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region in 2015 was signed to further increase the co-operation.

INDO-USA DEFENCE PARTNERSHIP

- **2 handshakes**- Former US defence secretary **Ashton Carter** mentioned that Indo US defence partnership was built on two important handshakes.
 - ✓ One is "**Technological handshake**" a reference to the rapid growth in arms sales, co-development and technology sharing.
 - ✓ Second handshake is "**strategic handshake**" representing a broad convergence of geopolitical interests as India's Act East and USAs rebalances to Asia.
- **Malabar exercise**- India also conducts **Malabar** exercise with USA Japan and Australia. India also participated in Rim of Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise for fifth time.
- **2+2 talks**- India also conducts 2+2 foreign and defence ministerial level dialogue with USA.
- **Defence**- Aggregate worth of defence acquisition from U.S. Defence has crossed over US\$ 16 billion. US's share in India's total arms imports is 12% and is 3rd after Russia and Israel.
- **Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI)** - India and the United States have launched a Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) aimed at simplifying technology transfer policies and exploring possibilities of co-development and co-production to invest the defence relationship with strategic value.
- **STA-1**- India in 2018 also became just the third Asian country to receive clearance on purchasing licence-free space and defence technology under the **Strategic Trade Authorisation-I**.
- **4 foundational agreements**- India has also signed four foundational agreements such as-
 - ✓ General Security of Military Information Agreement (**GSOMIA**) - It was signed in 2002, to facilitate sharing military intelligence between India and the USA.

- ✓ Logistics Support Agreement (**LSA**) - It was signed in 2016, as per this agreement. India and USA can use each other's military bases to carry out repairs and for resupplying.
- ✓ Communications Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (**CISMOA**) - This agreement is to share and secure communications exchange between 2 nations during training exercises and operations.
- ✓ Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (**BECA**) - The agreement is about the exchange of geospatial information between the two nations, enhancing the operational efficiency of US platforms currently operated by India.

Narendra Modi's views-

While signing of foundational agreements, Modi has argued that "it's not that India has abandoned non-alignment. It's that unlike before India is not standing in corner."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has effectively moved India from its historical fixation with 'strategic autonomy'—a ghost of its nonaligned past, to '**strategic alignment**'.

- ✓ The government has redefined autonomy "as an objective that is attainable through strengthened partnerships instead of avoiding partnerships."
- ✓ These new partnerships highlight shift in India's foreign policy towards pragmatism and Realism based on 'Enlightened Self Interest.'

CHINA'S CONTAINMENT

According to **Ashley J. Tellis**, the emergence of China as a global power fundamentally challenges both the United States and India in different, but complementary, ways.

1. **For USA-** Beijing's ascendancy would be dangerous to Washington if it precipitates a power transition at the core of the global system and undermines the US-backed security and trading systems in Asia.
 - ✓ **Challenges to American values-** It also poses other challenges to American values and interests in more peripheral regions of the world.
 - ✓ **Challenge USA's supremacy in unipolar world-** China has started to challenge USA's supremacy in unipolar world and led to the emergence of multipolar world.
 - ✓ **Challenged the USA's hub and spoke system-** China's rising economic, diplomatic and military profile in Asia, has challenged the USA's hub and spoke system of regional alliances.
 - ✓ **Challenged USA's hegemony in Asian region-** China's unilateral rise has challenged USA's hegemony in Asian region and has made way to China led regional formations.
 - ✓ **Forced to shift focus from middle east-** USA has also realised the need to shift focus away from Middle East to the increasingly important Indo Pacific region. USA has decided to shift its diplomatic resources from Eurasia to western shores of USA.
 - ✓ **China as the greatest strategic threat-** USA's National Defence Strategy 2018 and the National security Strategy 2017 identified revisionist China as the greatest strategic threat to the USA.
 - ✓ **Salami slicing strategy-** China's growing assertiveness and well-known salami slicing strategy in Indo Pacific region has alarmed the USA and its allies like South Korea, Japan and Australia.

2. **For India-** China's growing pre-eminence would be dangerous to India if it results in the entrenchment of a new superpower on India's doorstep—an outcome that could permanently eclipse New Delhi as an Asian centre of influence, precipitate irreversible transformations in the local military balance, and enable the successful assertion of all of Beijing's territorial claims.

- ✓ **Security and economy issues**- New Delhi's own China strategy involves strengthening India both security-wise and economically (internal balancing) and building a range of partnerships (external balancing)—and it envisions a key role for the U.S. in both.
- ✓ **Don't want a dominant China**- India and USA both share an interest in managing China's rise. Neither would like to see a situation with dominant China and minimal USA. This increasing US presence in Indo-Pacific is welcomed by these countries.
- ✓ **Open Chinese hostilities**- According to **Harsh V. Pant**, India's moves towards USA are driven by China's open hostilities against India and are India's balancing act.

What can be the way forward for India and USA with respect to China-

- **Undefined role in Indo-Pacific**- India and the U.S. also have concerns about the each other when it comes to China. Both sides remain uncertain about the other's willingness and capacity to play a role in the Asia-Pacific.
- **Need to have realistic expectations**- When it comes to China, however, India and the U.S. must have realistic expectations about the other. Every decision each country makes vis-à-vis China should not be seen as a zero-sum game.
 - ✓ They can help in boosting each other's trade to decrease reliance on China
 - ✓ They can provide debt free loans to other nations to get away from China's debt trap
- **USA must understand India's viewpoints**- For the U.S., it has to recognize that India is likely to maintain other partnerships in its attempt to balance China—including one with Russia—that Washington might not like.
- **Policies should not be based only on China**- It is important for policymakers and analysts in both countries to keep in mind that an India-U.S. strategic partnership solely based on China is neither desirable nor sustainable.

INDO PACIFIC

- It is in the Indo Pacific region where India's Act East policy and USAs rebalance to Asia and Indo-Pacific strategy find the greatest strategic and geographic overlap.
- USAs rebalance to Asia policy aimed at to assert itself as Pacific power and consolidate America's defence, diplomatic and economic ties in the region.
- **Indo-Pacific Strategy Report**'- US Department of Defence's recently released 'Indo-Pacific Strategy Report' at the Shangri-La Dialogue. It categorises India as vital partner of USA in Indian Ocean region and in South Asia due to China's growing assertiveness in IOR.
- Indo Pacific strategy report highlights cruciality of United States to build stronger bonds with nations that share values across the region from India to Samoa.

USA experts on Indo-Pacific-

Former US secretary of state **Mike Pompeo** said, "It's only natural that the world's most populous democracy should partner with the world's oldest democracy to maintain our shared vision throughout the Indo-Pacific."

U.S. Defence Secretary, **Mark Esper**, stating that "India will be the most consequential partner for the US in the Indo-Pacific this Century"

What is ASEAN's and USA's official position on Indo-Pacific?

- US's National security strategy noted: "a geopolitical competition between free and repressive visions of world order is taking place in the Indo-Pacific region.

- **ASEAN**- In 2019, released the 'ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific', in which it adopted the American nomenclature of the 'Indo-Pacific'; declared its centrality to the strategic construct; and pressed for cooperation in the maritime domain, all mostly in line with the US's vision for a rules-based order.
 - ✓ All QUAD members including India have accepted this proposition.
- **USA** renamed pacific command to **Indo Pacific Command (US INDOPACOM)**
- **Free and Open Indo-Pacific**- The two countries have a similar vision on the principles and values of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).
 - ✓ India and the US champion for a FOIP "in which all nations, large and small, are secure in their sovereignty and able to pursue economic growth consistent with accepted international rules, norms, and principles of fair competition; there is peaceful resolution of disputes; adherence to international law including the freedom of navigation and over flight."
 - ✓ There is a common concern about a rising China which is using its "military modernisation, influence operations, and predatory economics to coerce other nations" and hence impacting the security and stability in the region.
- **Blue Dot network**- Both countries are also part of Blue Dot network which aims to promote quality infrastructure investment that is open and inclusive, transparent, economically viable, Paris Agreement aligned, financially, environmentally and socially sustainable, and compliant with international standards, laws and regulations.

Difference in strategy of India and USA-

But there is a difference in the strategy of the two countries when it comes to dealing with the challenges being faced by the region, especially China

- **India's point**- India sees the Chinese rise as a challenge, but as PM Modi's 2018 Shangri-La Dialogue keynote speech reflected, India has taken a more subtle attitude towards China and a diplomatic stance in pointing out the "**China threat**" in global platforms.
 - ✓ In his words, "India has as many layers as our relations with China"
- **India's Indo-Pacific vision and policy**- It has been to mainly to engage with other players in the diplomatic, economic, connectivity and defence (naval exchanges and exercises, capacity building, maritime domain awareness) realms.
 - ✓ As declared by PM Modi, the Indo-Pacific region "is not seen as a strategy or a club of limited members."
 - ✓ India's Indo Pacific vision includes not only the nations that fall within this geographical ambit, but also countries which have a stake in it.
- **USA's recognition**- US does recognise that India may have a different strategy of dealing with China as it is different to deal with the likes of China from across the ocean than when it is on your border.

COUNTER TERRORISM AND INTERNAL SECURITY

- **Symbolic convergence**- The India-US counterterrorism cooperation has seen a symbolic convergence, anchored on the shared identities of being vibrant democracies and victims of terrorism.
- **Progress in co-operation with technological progress**- Cooperation in counter-terrorism has seen considerable progress with intelligence sharing, information exchange, operational cooperation, counter-terrorism technology and equipment.
- **India-U.S. Counter-Terrorism Cooperation Initiative**- It was signed in 2010 to expand collaboration on counter-terrorism, information sharing and capacity building.
 - ✓ Both the countries have faced the havoc of terrorism. India in 26/11, 2001 parliament attack and USA through 9/11, 2 decade war in Afghanistan, etc.

- ✓ So, both have decided to create intelligence networks and share information with each other to solve this crisis.
- **Homeland Security Dialogue**- A Homeland Security Dialogue was announced during President Obama's visit to India in November 2010 to further deepen operational cooperation, counter-terrorism technology transfers and capacity building.
- **Great power competition**- Strengthening counterterrorism cooperation in the Indo-Pacific will ensure the US' continued focus on counterterrorism and recognise its global interests of a "great power competition," predominantly playing out in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Repeated infiltrations by terrorist groups**- India's repeated articulation of concerns regarding LeT and JeM infiltration into Myanmar's Rakhine province has so far failed to receive US support, as the focus has largely been on either the humanitarian crisis of the Rohingya Muslims or China's rising influence and strategic investments in Myanmar.
- **Hijbul as FTO**- AFTER Modi's mid-2017 visit to the US, the US State Department designated Hizbul Mujahideen as a "foreign terrorist organisation" (FTO)
- **Masood Azhar in sanctions list**- Washington's support in overseeing the addition of JeM leader Masood Azhar to the United Nations' (UN) 1267 ISIL and al-Qaeda Sanctions List. The US expended considerable political capital on ensuring its designation as FTO, especially by coaxing China to lift its "hold" on the matter at the UN Security Council.
- **Pakistan grey listed**- In June 2018, India and the US seemingly came together to oversee Pakistan's grey listing at the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)
- **Counter Terrorism Tabletop Exercise**- India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) convened the first Counter Terrorism Tabletop Exercise (CT-TTX) for Quad member countries, ensuring a "free and open Indo-Pacific.
- **Areas of Concern**: The lack of policy congruence on Pakistan plays a central role in impeding India-US counter terrorism cooperation. For example, US had accepted Pakistan's classification of 'Good Taliban' and 'Bad Taliban'.
- **Suggestion**- the India-US counter terrorism agenda must seek greater institutionalisation, instead of relying on Pakistan's rising and falling relevance in American considerations regarding terror networks.

INDIA-USA-IRAN

- **Chabahar port**- In 2016, India and Iran signed an agreement to invest in Iran's strategic Chabahar Port and to construct the railway connecting the south eastern port city of Chabahar to the eastern city of Zahedan and to link India to landlocked Afghanistan and Central Asia.
 - ✓ Iran now accuses India of delaying its investments under U.S. pressure and has dismissed India from the project.
 - ✓ Replacing India with China in such a strategic project will **alter the balance of power** in South Asia to the detriment of New Delhi.
 - ✓ China now has the chance to connect Chabahar Port to Gwadar in Pakistan, which is a critical hub in the BRI program.
- **USA's sanctions on Iran have complicated the matter**- India's economic and geopolitical priorities with Iran are complicated by US sanctions.
 - ✓ India faces a critical challenge in balancing its own interests with those of other powers in the Middle East.
 - ✓ Washington has disagreed with India over its bilateral ties with Iran. This contentious issue in Washington-New Delhi relations has pushed India to reconsider its relations with Iran on many occasions.

- ✓ Moreover, it has revealed India's limitations in asserting strategic autonomy in its own economic decision-making. This was clearly evident when it cut down importing Iranian oil due to US pressure.
- **Revival of JCPOA can be an opportunity for India**- However, Biden administration's attempt to revive JCPOA and rise of Taliban provide an opportunity for New Delhi to assert its strategic autonomy and strengthen its relationship with Tehran.
 - ✓ This will require proactive diplomacy and improved implementation record but is essential to secure Indian interests in Indian Ocean.

INDIA-USA-AFGHANISTAN

- **Retreat of USA from Afghanistan**- The 'retreat' of the United States from Afghanistan in 2021 is far more humbling than the Russian withdrawal in the 1990s.
 - ✓ This time the Taliban having played fast and loose with the U.S. has left the 'superpower' with not even the fig leaf of an honourable withdrawal.
 - ✓ According to **M. K. Narayanan**, U.S. President Joe Biden's decision to set a date for the withdrawal of the American forces, and treat this decision as one carved in stone irrespective of the situation within Afghanistan clearly enabled the Taliban to take over.
- **Horses for courses mantra**- The "horses for courses" mantra of the US foreign policy is badly hurting India's strategic and security interests in Afghanistan.
 - ✓ The haphazard American withdrawal from Afghanistan has put question mark on credibility of the USA.
- **Return of Taliban to power**- The return of Taliban rule in Afghanistan is an unambiguous strategic setback for India and, at least in the near term, a triumph for the Taliban's chief backer—Pakistan.
 - ✓ India may be the outlier among Afghanistan's neighbours for a variety of reasons, including its warm relations with the Karzai and the Ghani regimes in the past two decades.
- **Pakistani terrorist can use Taliban**- Islamabad-aided terrorist groups will almost certainly use Afghanistan to organize attacks on Kashmir and other parts of the country.
- **India's land access to central Asian route jeopardised**- The longstanding Indian goal of gaining access to Central Asia by building a port and railway line through Iran and Afghanistan remains a pipe dream.
- **India's investment in Afghanistan**- New Delhi paid for the new Afghan parliament building as part of its commitment to a democratic Afghanistan, as well as for a dam, a highway and energy projects.
 - ✓ The Indian government donated helicopters to the Afghan air force and helped train a small number of Afghan army officers and police.
 - ✓ The Indian government funded scholarships for Afghan students.
 - ✓ The roughly \$3 billion in assistance it provided made India the second largest non-Western donor to Afghanistan after Japan, and the fifth largest donor overall. That all stands jeopardized.

Expert opinions on Afghanistan crisis-

- **According to Sushant Sareen-**
 - ✓ **Direct threat to India**- Unlike the US, India does not have the luxury of pretending that Afghanistan does not exist, given the clear and present danger that the nexus between China, Pakistan and a Talibanised Afghanistan will pose to India's security.
 - ✓ **India will have to divide its attention**- Instead of focusing on the east, India will now be forced to divide her attention, energies and resources between her eastern and western flanks. Additionally, given the nature of threat that Taliban-ruled Afghanistan represents, there is also going to be a third front—internal—that India will need to worry about.
- **According to Ashley Tellis-**

- ✓ **USA compromised India's security**- One of the inadvertent consequences of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan is that USA has compromised India's security.
- ✓ **Graveyard of terrorism**- "India wanted Afghanistan to be the graveyard of terrorism, not the graveyard of empires."
- ✓ **Dilemma for India**- India's eviction from Afghanistan at gunpoint will certainly affect the Quad. It will intensify an old Indian dilemma between continental commitment and maritime commitment.
- ✓ If the continental challenge is attenuated, it frees India to play in the maritime space. This, in effect the U.S. has unintentionally weakened India's ability to be of assistance to us in the maritime space.
- **According to Brahma Chellaney-**
 - ✓ "The U.S. exit told its allies that they count on America's support when they most need it at their own peril."
- **According to Samir Saran**
 - ✓ He dismissed the idea of quitting Afghanistan to focus on China as naive. According to him, U.S. has ceded South and South West Asia to Beijing. This may have disastrous consequences for India as India's primary security interests are in South Asia.
- **According to M. K. Narayanan,**

"For India, the virtual retreat of the U.S. from this part of Asia; the growing China-Russia-Pakistan nexus across the region; and an Iran under a hardliner like Ebrahim Raisi, all work to its disadvantage. A great deal of hard thinking is needed as to how to retrieve a situation that for the present seems heavily tilted against India."

INDIA USA MARITIME SECURITY

Introduction-

The term "Indo-Pacific" was first coined by then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2008. The Americans soon shied away from it and put out the more convoluted terminology of "Indo-Asia-Pacific". By using the old term again, it seems that the US recognizes India's legitimate role in waters stretching from the Suez Canal to the waters of the western Pacific.

Factors causing synergy between India and USA-

- **Increasing Chinese presence**- No area of United States-India defence cooperation holds more promise than maritime cooperation.
 - ✓ India is increasingly concerned about the Chinese naval presence in the Indian Ocean, particularly when viewed through the prism of China's steady escalation of tensions in the South China Sea.
- **Humanitarian disasters**- Both the United States and India are critical responders in the region in case of humanitarian disasters. Both nations are active in counter piracy initiatives in the Indian Ocean.
- **Maritime security dialogue**- India is holding **maritime security dialogue** with USA since 2016.
- **Tiger Triumph military exercise**- In November 2019, the United States and India conducted Tiger Triumph, the first-ever tri-service (ground, naval, and air forces) exercise between the two countries.
- **RIMPAC**- India also participates in the U.S.-led Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise and trilateral Malabar exercise with the United States and Japan.

INDIA USA TRADE RELATIONS

- **Largest export destination**- The US was India's largest export destination and the second largest trading partner in 2020-21.
- **Trade surplus**- The USA is one of the few countries with which India has a trade surplus.
 - ✓ The trade surplus has widened from USD 5.2 billion in 2001-02 to USD 17.3 billion in 2019-20. Trade surplus had peaked at USD 21.2 billion in 2017-18 and has moderated to some extent.

- ✓ In 2019-20, India exported goods worth USD 53 billion to the US – that's roughly 17% of all Indian exports that year and imported goods worth USD 35.7 billion in return – that's roughly 7.5% of all Indian imports.
- **India's exports**- to the US in 2020-21 were valued at \$51.62 billion and imports at \$28.88 billion, resulting in a trade deficit of about \$23 billion for the US.
- **Supplier of services**- For the USA, India was the sixth largest supplier of services imports.
 - ✓ India accounts for nearly 5% of the USA's services imports from the World

ISSUES IN TRADE RELATIONS

- **Tax and Tariffs-**
 - ✓ Since 2018 both countries were engaged in **tariffs war**.
 - ✓ E.g., In 2018, the US imposed additional tariffs of 25% on steel and 10% on aluminium imports from various countries, including India.
 - ✓ India's refusal to remove the 20% tariffs on ICT products caused the trade deal between India and USA to delay which remains still pending.
- **Withdrawal of Generalised system of preferences (GSP):**
 - ✓ The US has withdrawn its preferential treatment to Indian exports under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) that covered around 2,000 items valued at \$6.3 billion.
 - ✓ With higher duties, Indian exports will become more expensive and will lose their competitiveness vis-à-vis other developing countries' exports to the US
- **H1B Visas:** US has ramped up H-1B denials under the executive order "Buy American and Hire American". H-4 visas have also been issued at a much lower rate.
- **Divergence on data localisation:**
 - ✓ Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) circular mandated the storage of all payment data of Indians in the country and allowing the central bank "**unrestricted access**".
 - ✓ The circular particularly aimed at US-based companies such as MasterCard, Visa, American Express, PayPal, Face book and Google.
 - ✓ Data localisation will lead to increased cost of business for American companies.
 - ✓ USA seeks for an improvement in data localisation norms and better ecommerce rules that do not discriminate in favour of local Indian e-commerce giants.
 - ✓ India boycotted the Osaka Track on the digital economy as it felt that it would undermine multilateral consensus-based decisions on trade and deny policy space for digital industrialisation. The Osaka Track pushed hard for the creation of laws which would allow data flows between countries and the removal of data localisation.
- **Violation of Intellectual property rights (IPR):** India is also on U.S.'s "Priority Watch List" which identifies countries posing challenges to American intellectual property rights. Also, The US wants India to strengthen patent regulations, and to ease the limitations American companies investing in India face.
- **Agriculture:**
 - ✓ Although agricultural products are not the largest component of U.S.-India trade, tensions over them are long-standing and remain among the most difficult to resolve.
 - ✓ The United States exported around \$1.5 billion worth of agricultural products to India in 2018 and imported \$2.7 billion.
 - ✓ It is difficult for U.S. dairy farmers to sell their products in India, according to the International Dairy Foods Association because India requires that dairy products are "derived from a dairy cow that has been fed a vegetarian diet for its entire life."
 - ✓ Sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) barriers in India limit USA agricultural exports.
- **Investment barriers:**
 - ✓ In its annual 2021 National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers, the **US Trade Representative (USTR)** mentioned that while the Indian government pursued ongoing economic

reform efforts, it also continued to promote programmes like 'Make in India' that favour domestic production over importation.

- ✓ Indian government also announced the "Self-Reliant India" (Atmanirbhar Bharat) initiative to increase self-sufficiency by promoting domestic industry and reducing reliance on foreign suppliers.
- ✓ Restrictive FDI regime, Lack of clear cut and transparent sectoral policies for FDI, High tariff rates by international standards, Lack of decision-making authority with the state governments, No liberalization in exit barriers are major investment barriers in India.

C. Raja Mohan has suggested 3 options

- The secret to successful engagement with the US involves two simple propositions — never stop negotiating and keep making deals small or big.
- **Need to have compromises**- India often can't close a negotiation because its opening bid tends to remain the final position. Americans, on the other hand, are always open to splitting the difference, finding a compromise and moving on.
- **Own economic capability**- India need to develop its own economic capability to be on a better negotiating position and end protectionist measures.
- **Diversify its trade options**- India also needs to diversify its trade options. This can be achieved by finalizing BTIA with EU.

Steps taken to solve some of the trade related issues-

- **Joining OECD in 2022**- India's decision to join the OECD/G20 inclusive framework on adopting a common multilateral approach to taxation has helped address one of the hurdles:
 - ✓ **The need to shift the equalization levy imposed on e-commerce transactions over time.**
 - ✓ The decision of the government gives the American side room to roll back or substantially reduce some of the tariffs raised as a response.
- **Trade margin rationalization**- The ministerial talks took some decisions to ease access to select agricultural products from both sides.
 - ✓ Separately, India has adopted a trade margin rationalization approach to price regulation on certain medical device products as a means of protecting the interests of both consumer and supplier, and this has been acknowledged by Washington.

ISSUES IN INDIA-US STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP- EXPERTS OPINIONS

- **Shashank Joshi** has pointed out following strategic divergences between the two countries
 - 1) **Difference in approach**- U.S. has been focussing more on East Asia rather than South-East Asia. India, on the other hand is concerned **more about Indian Ocean.**
 - 2) **Different priorities**- While U.S. considers Indo-Pacific as a 'priority theatre' and 'subset of broader security strategy' of U.S. military, India has toned down its rhetoric against China by terming Indo-Pacific as a '**Natural Geographical Regions**'; and not the club of limited members.
 - 3) **Changing priorities**- After withdrawal from Afghanistan, US's South Asia policy may not in favour of India and US may give away this strategic space to China-Pakistan-Russia axis.
- According to **S. Jaishankar** keeping a distance from another country cannot be a primary yardstick of policy independence of a confident power. Highlighting the importance of strategic autonomy he held that, India will work with the US when required and differ with it when necessary.

- **M. K. Narayanan** has also suggested the policy of strategic autonomy to deal with uncertainty in global politics. In his words, “It is hardly the time to be seen to be the ally of One Power, that too one whose power seems to be waning.”

S-400 and CAATSA

Introduction-

- In October 2018, India signed a 5.43 billion USD deal with Russia for the S-400 Triumf missile system despite objections from the US and the threat of sanctions under CAATSA.
- India is likely to begin taking delivery of the S-400 missile defence system from Russia in November 2021.

What is CAATSA-?

- It is a US federal law enacted in 2017. The Act empowers the US President to impose at least five of the 12 listed sanctions on persons engaged in a “significant transaction” with Russian defence and intelligence sectors.
- Its “ultimate goal”, “is to prevent revenue from flowing to the Russian Government.
- Besides Russia, CAATSA is aimed at enforcing sanctions against Iran and North Korea.
- The CAATSA contains 12 types of sanctions. There are only two sanctions that may impact either India-Russia relations or India-US relations.

What does it means for India-

- **China also buying-** From India’s point of view, China is also buying the system. In 2015, China signed an agreement with Russia to purchase six battalions of the system. Its delivery began in January 2018.
 - ✓ China’s acquisition of the S-400 system has been viewed as a “game changer” in the region. However, its effectiveness against India is limited.
- **2-front war-** India’s acquisition is crucial to counter attacks in a two-front war, including even high-end F-35 US fighter aircraft.
- **India’s trust on Russia-** New Delhi does not want to give up on the Russia relationship – despite Moscow’s alliance with China – but it also does not want to push the U.S. too hard.
- **Changing scenarios-** Also, backing off from the S-400s will present domestic political difficulties, maintaining strategic autonomy in such a scenario remains a challenge.

India’s balancing act between Russia and the US amidst growing tensions

- **India’s abstention at UNSC-** India’s recent abstention at the UNSC on Ukraine issue indicates that it will continue to maintain favorable relations with both the countries whilst prioritizing its own interests
- **US accommodated India’s stance on Russia-** The US’ official response following India’s abstention, stating that America’s relationship with India has not been impacted by the ongoing tensions with Russia, seems to suggest that India is so far successfully navigating between both the great powers.
- **Growing multi-faceted co-operation-** India, which had been improving ties with America since the start of the century, is now fast-tracking manifold its multi-faceted cooperation with the US, mainly to balance a belligerent China.
- **India decided to go ahead with S-400 deal-** Notwithstanding the possibility of American sanctions through CAATSA, India not only decided to go ahead with the deal for S-400 missile defence systems that it signed in 2018.
 - ✓ But also finalized a fresh deal worth INR 5,000 crores for the manufacture of 7.5 lakh AK 203 Russian assault rifles.

- ✓ **2+2 with Russia**- India and Russia also held their first ever 2+2 Ministerial dialogue in December, indicating that Russia is as important to India as its QUAD partners with whom it already had this mechanism.

How has India's relation with USA spanned out lately?

- **Growing co-operation**- India-US bilateral partnership today encompasses a whole host of issues including the response to Covid-19, economic recovery post-pandemic, the climate crisis and sustainable development, critical and emerging technologies, supply chain resilience, education, the diaspora, and defense and security.
- **Growing relation**- The breadth and depth of Indo-US ties remain unmatched and the drivers of this partnership have been growing at an unprecedented rate.
- **Strategic + cultural relations**- The relationship remains unique insofar as this is driven at both levels: at the strategic elite as well as at the people-to-people level.
- **Ready to come together on differing issues**- Although India and the US have quite contradictory responses towards the Russia-Ukraine crisis, in the recent meeting, the PM of India and the US President expressed that the world's two major democracies are willing to work around their divergences to arrive at mutually acceptable outcomes.
- **Larger picture in mind**- India and the US have underscored their commitment to continue to build on the momentum of recent years and not lose sight of the larger strategic picture.

Theoretical Framework in handling relations

- **Institutional approach**- Further, following the **institutional approach**, India and the United States should take advantage of existing groups that promote maritime security cooperation.
 - ✓ India has observer status at the Western Pacific Naval Symposium and should consider extending a similar observer status to the United States at the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium.
- **Capacity building of littoral states**- Both governments should make strengthening the capacity and capability of littoral nations a key focus for their future collaboration. Such collaboration can be focused on developing effective mechanisms for inter-state cooperation on maritime law enforcement in domestic zones in the Indian Ocean.
- **High-end exercises**- India and the United States should conduct high-end exercises as a means of strategic signalling and optics.
 - ✓ Such exercises should enhance U.S.-India defence cooperation in the Indian Ocean in maritime security, counterterrorism, counterpiracy, and humanitarian assistance and should expand the geographic scope of Malabar to include joint military activities between relevant U.S. commands and the Indian military in the Western Indian Ocean.
- **Deepen ongoing efforts under DTTI**- To strengthen the defence relationship, the governments of the United States and India should deepen ongoing efforts under DTTI and could consider long-term projects in intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance (ISTAR), vertical lift enabling technology, and advanced technology for ground combat vehicles.
- **Complex interdependence with China**- Dealing with **complex interdependence** with China, both the US and India should adopt functionalist approach. Both countries need to leverage the QUAD and ASEAN to engage China in rules-based order in Indo pacific.

According to Ashley Tellis-

For the foreseeable future, the evolving challenges in the international system imply that both Washington and New Delhi will be bound by common concerns that include containing China, defeating jihadi terrorism, arresting the further spread of weapons of mass destruction, protecting the global commons, preserving the multilateral trading order, ensuring food and energy security, and managing climate change.

He further adds that, three ingredients are essential for forging successful cooperation:

1. Policy entrepreneurs with 'big ideas',
2. Determined leadership at the highest levels on both sides, and
3. Committed 'pile drivers' within the bureaucracy capable of implementing their leaders' intentions.

According to C. Raja Mohan

In words of **C. Raja Mohan**, "India needs to be more skilful - traditional props and talks of shared values alone will not do." He further adds that Strategic autonomy won't help when post-cold war global order is breaking down and suggests a policy of Multiple alignments with a room for manoeuvrability.

Conclusion

- According to **Ashley Tellis**, genuine strategic partnership is possible—if both sides can agree on some minimally acceptable notion of reciprocity.
 - ✓ **For USA**- Washington, for its part, needs to reconcile itself to the fact that India will never become a formal ally, and keep the geopolitical imperatives that drove the transformation of bilateral relations front and centre in their dealings with New Delhi.
 - ✓ **For India**, it will have to shed its traditional expectation that its importance warrants perpetual special treatment and support of the kind usually offered only to formal allies, even while New Delhi persists in maintaining its prerogative to oppose Washington.
 - ✓ **Working together**- Successfully working in concert in the future will, therefore, require both sides, to recognize the importance of 'the exchange of considerations'
- In words of **Rakesh Sood**, "we are living neither in the Age of Hegemony nor in the Multipolarity but in the age of uncertainty. In this context, Indian policy needs fewer red lines and Greater agility & pragmatism to navigate the geopolitical flux."

INDIA JAPAN

Introduction-

- According to **S. Jaishankar**, the peoples of India and Japan are guided by common cultural traditions including the heritage of Buddhism, and share commitment to the ideals of democracy, tolerance, pluralism and open society.
- India and Japan, two of the largest and oldest democracies in Asia having a high degree of congruence of political, economic and strategic interests, view each other as partners that have responsibility for and are capable of responding to global and regional challenges.
- Highlighting the growing convergence of interests between India and Japan, **Kanwal Sibal** held that it is **cherry blossom time in India Japan relations.**
- The longest serving Prime minister of Japan **Shinzo Abe** in his book **“Towards a beautiful nation”** termed **India as Japan’s natural ally.** Japan and India are natural allies because they have no conflict of strategic interest and share common goals to build institutionalized cooperation and stability in Asia.
- At present, if any relationship that can be compared to Indo Soviet relationship it is India Japan relationship.

INDIA-JAPAN RELATIONSHIP IN 21ST CENTURY

- **Shinzo Abe**, in his book **‘Toward a Beautiful Country’** expressed his hope that “it would not be a surprise if in another 10 years; **Japan-India relations overtake Japan-U.S. and Japan-China relations”.**
 - ✓ He further added that, “a strong India is in the best interest of Japan, and a strong Japan is in the best interest of India.”
- **S. Jaishankar** in his book, **‘The India Way: Strategies for an Uncertain World’**, mentions that, though neither India nor Japan had historically focused on each other when it came to addressing their respective security situations.
 - ✓ Yet, they both think similarly on the big issues of the day, especially in the last few years. This applies to power shifts as much as power deficits.
 - ✓ A shared interest in securing the global commons and to contributing to global goods has brought about a convergence between very different polities. This realization in two nations that they have little choice but to help shape their continent is now an impelling force of a new relationship.
- **Global Partnership-** The visit to India of the Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori in 2000 led to a significant and qualitative shift in India-Japan relations with the establishment of the ‘Global Partnership’ between the two sides.
- **Strategic and global partnership-** During Annual summits between Prime ministers in 2006, relationship between India and Japan elevated to **Strategic and global partnership.**
- **Special Strategic and Global Partnership-** PM Narendra Modi’s official visit to Japan in 2014 for the Annual Summit meeting upgraded bilateral relations to ‘Special Strategic and Global Partnership’.
 - ✓ India-Japan relationship has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years. This was reflected in Modi’s comments when he remarked that “a good friend is timeless and sees no borders.”
- India Japan is now seeking to transform their ties into a deep, broad-based and action-oriented partnership with a view to shape strategic and economic architecture of Asia.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned Japan as one of India’s most trusted friends in strategic, economic sphere.
- India and Japan came out with an **India-Japan Vision 2025** which called for deep, broad-based and action-oriented partnership.

IMPORTANCE OF JAPAN

GEOSTRATEGIC

- **Japan as security provider:** The US has declassified its Strategic Framework for the Indo-Pacific in which it has termed India as the net provider of security in the region but to India Japan can be the stability provider in the Indo-Pacific region to counter China.
- **Benefits of close ties with Japan-** According to S. Jaishankar, from India's viewpoint, close ties with Japan offer many benefits.
 - ✓ To begin with, it takes India out of the South Asia box to which it has been confined since independence. It also moves it beyond South-East Asia, which is as far as the Look East policy took it.
 - ✓ Only a partner in East Asia that encourages India to operate there and reciprocates by also maintaining a presence in the Indian Ocean makes Indo-Pacific a reality.
- **Asian balance of power-** In 21st century, a need to forge a new Asian balance have led Japan and India to discover each other strategically.
- **Who is shaping Asia?-** S. Jaishankar in his book, 'The India Way: Strategies for an Uncertain World', mentions that, Asia is being shaped largely by the outlook of the US, the power of China, the weight of Russia, the collectivism of ASEAN, the volatility of the Middle East and the rise of India.
 - ✓ There is one major imponderable which could create a very different scenario in Asia. it is the future posture of Japan, bringing back into the strategic calculus a major economy with enormous technological capabilities.
- **Concern for Japan and China in Indian ocean-** C. Raja Mohan in his book 'Samudra manthan' has mentioned that securing the seaborne trade through the Indian Ocean and its entry into the western Pacific through narrow choke points in Southeast Asia has also become a major strategic concern for both Japan and China.
- **Broader Asia term-** In recent years, this dependence has begun to make an impact on the strategic thinking in East Asia. Thus, a 'broader Asia' that broke away geographical boundaries is now beginning to take on a distinct form in the form of Indo-pacific.

INDO PACIFIC-

- **Common interests-** India and Japan share many common interests in the maintenance of peace and stability in the Indo-pacific region. There is strong synergy between India's Act East Policy and Japan's Open and Free Indo Pacific strategy.
- **Geopolitical convergence-** The increasing geopolitical convergence between India and Japan demonstrates traditional strength, deepening trust, matured partnership and strong democratic values in addressing strategic challenges.
- **Following rules based order-** India and Japan have also stressed that all disputes related to maritime territories should be settled peacefully in accordance with the provisions of the UNCLOS and that no country should seek to change the prevailing status-quo by force.
- **New Delhi's Indo Pacific oceans initiative-** which focuses on shared economic growth and prosperity in greater Indian Ocean region with special focus on maintaining peace, stability and security in the Indo-Pacific envisages Tokyo as pivotal partner.
- **Vision statement of 13th Annual summits-** between Prime minister of India and Japan reiterated "unwavering commitment" between India and Japan "to working together towards a free and open Indo-Pacific."

- **Maritime security cooperation**- India and Japan also recognized urgency to accelerate maritime security cooperation, high frequency of bilateral naval exercises and deepening level of the Malabar exercises coupled with expanding maritime domain awareness (MDA) in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **QUAD**- Japan is also part of strategic Quadrilateral security dialogue whose other members are India, Australia and USA.
 - ✓ The recent consolidation of QUAD is not just directed against rising Chinese unilateralism but also an attempt by Japan, India and Australia to ensure continued presence of USA in the region.
- **Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement**- India and Japan signed "Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement" (ACSA) which focuses on sharing of military logistics for greater interoperability. The agreement enhanced the already close military engagement between the two countries whereby Japan can get access to Indian facilities in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and India gets access to Japan's naval facility in Djibouti.

C. Raja Mohan has highlighted the importance of Indo-Japan relationship to shape the future of Indo-Pacific. In his words, "The international system is undergoing transition with a weakening U.S. led liberal order challenged by contesting regional visions. A stronger, comprehensive partnership between Japan and India creates an indigenous and inclusive axis, as well as a credible and stable centre of gravity in Indo-pacific and intra-Asian relations."

NORTH EAST INTEGRATION

- India's Act east policy has North east development at its core. Japan promises to undertake several projects in the region under north East Forum. It has **security (chicken neck corridor) and developmental implications** for India.
- India and Japan have also set up **Act East forum** which aims at development of North East region.
 - ✓ The Act East Forum aims to provide a platform for India-Japan collaboration under the rubric of India's "Act East Policy" and Japan's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy".
 - ✓ The Forum will identify specific projects for economic modernization of India's North-East region including those pertaining to connectivity, developmental infrastructure, industrial linkages as well as people-to-people contacts through tourism, culture and sports-related activities.
- In the words of Japanese Ambassador "North East is situated where India's Act East Policy and Japan's vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific converge."

CHINA CHALLENGE

- **Countering Chinese progression**- In the past several years, India and Japan have collaborated to build infrastructure in Iran and Africa, provide vital aid to Myanmar & Sri Lanka and hammer out a common Association of Southeast Asian Nations outreach policy in an attempt to counter China's growing influence in these corners of the globe.
 - ✓ India and Japan are building Bullet train in Iran.
 - ✓ The Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) is an Indian-Japanese collaborative vision regarding development, connectivity and cooperation between Asia and Africa that was announced in 2017.
 - ✓ India and Japan have entered into a trilateral agreement with Myanmar to pursue infrastructure projects in 15 schools in the Rakhine state.
 - ✓ India and Japan have agreed to work together on assisting crisis-hit Sri Lanka.
- **India is deepening ties with USA and Japan**- **C. Raja Mohan** in his book 'Samudra Manthan' has pointed out that, India is deepening its ties with the United States and Japan in order to balance the rising power of China. According to him, this imperative is likely to get stronger in the next two decades.
 - ✓ China is altering the status quo in South China Sea by constructing the island with military bases. China is obstructing freedom of navigation in East China sea.

- ✓ China and Japan have a dispute over **Senkaku islands** and China is changing status quo by force.
 - ✓ China's maritime geography is defined in terms of island chains running parallel to its coastline. It is termed as **9 Dash Line**.
 - The first island chain runs along the Kuril Islands, Japan, the Ryukyu Islands, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Indonesia.
 - The second island chain runs from a north-south line from the Kurils through Japan, the Bonins, the Marianas, the Carolines, and Indonesia.
 - ✓ The U.S. Navy has dominated the two island chains since the Second World War. Breaking free from this domination is one of the central objectives of China's blue-water ambitions.
 - ✓ India and Japan both have converging strategic interest in containing China's aggressive stance in Indo Pacific region.
- **Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement**- India and Japan signed an "Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement" that would allow the militaries of the two countries to exchange supplies and services on a reciprocal basis during exercises in which both participate, U.N. and humanitarian assistance operations etc.
- **JIMEX**- Trilateral naval exercise Malabar involving the United States, Japan and India will be carried on continuous basis. Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JIMEX) is also conducted on a regular basis.
- **Space cooperation**: India and Japan conducted their first Annual Bilateral Space Dialogue, for enhancing bilateral cooperation in outer-space.
- **Civil nuclear energy cooperation**- Bilaterally, they have initiated a range of dialogues and mechanisms that facilitate policy convergence. An ability to reach agreements in domains as sensitive as civil nuclear energy cooperation and defence equipment speaks for the growing comfort levels.

According to **C. Raja Mohan**, India or Japan, on its own, is in no position to become a counterweight to China in Asia. Acting in concert with the United States and Australia and through deeper engagement with the region, India and Japan can contribute to a more stable balance of power in Asia.

- ✓ **Japan is a trading state**- However, it must also be noted that, Japan is primarily a 'trading state' and it has huge interdependence with China. In 2020, both countries also entered into FTA through RCEP.
- ✓ **Economic interdependence**- Thus, the strategic balancing need to be balanced by economic interdependence. In this context, India needs to speed up its domestic reform agenda to emerge as a balancer to China. India's withdrawal from RCEP has come as a shock to Japan and ASEAN and has put question mark on India's role as balancer to China.

GEO-ECONOMIC

- **Expansion in business**- S. Jaishankar in his book, 'The India Way: Strategies for an Uncertain World', mentions that, on the business side, there has been a perceptible expansion in the presence of Japanese companies in India and a stronger commitment by those already there.
- ✓ The enabling environment for them has been significantly improved with specific initiatives to improve their living conditions and travel.
 - ✓ A noteworthy step was the **creation of an Act East Forum** to promote connectivity initiatives in India's North-East region and extend that to Bangladesh and Myanmar. This reflects the maturing of economic thinking into larger strategic policy.
- **ODA projects**- He also pointed out that, ODA projects [Official development assistance] have been among the most successfully executed in the country in the present times.

- ✓ Flagship initiatives include Metro projects that have transformed urban management and the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor that can multiply industrial production.
- ✓ Additional freight and industrial corridors are on the drawing board and their importance to addressing India's logistical bottlenecks is significant.
- **CEPA-** India and Japan signed **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** in 2011 which helped in boosting bilateral trade.
- **Source of investment-** Japan has been one of the biggest sources of investment flows into India, accounting for \$28.16 billion in FDI between April 2000 and June 2018.
 - ✓ Japan has been a leading financial donor in the form of ODA (Official Development Assistance) to India.
- **Japan-India Investment Promotion Partnership-** Japan is going to invest 3.5 trillion yen of public and private financing to India in five years under the "Japan-India Investment Promotion Partnership"
- **Japan-India IoT Investment Initiative-** Japan will develop a new mechanism, "Japan-India IoT Investment Initiative," to promote investment in Internet of Things (IoT) related area from India to Japan.
- **Support to skill India-** Japan's support to Skill India Initiative through training at Industrial Training Institutions (ITIs), skills development for managers, curriculum development and the Skills Evaluation System Promotion Program.
- **Infrastructure projects-** JAPAN is deeply involved in several crucial **infrastructure projects**.
 - ✓ Japan's official development assistance is being utilised to modernise key sectors in India including transport, communication, environment and health. Japan has remained a privileged partner in India's infrastructure development like Delhi metro or the quadrilateral highway or the Mumbai-Ahmedabad shinkansen rail corridor projects.
- **Development of Northeast India-** Japan to play a crucial role in the economic development of the Northeast India which has remained relatively backward.
 - ✓ India and Japan created India-Japan Coordination Forum for Development of North East.
 - ✓ The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) had concluded an agreement with the Indian government to fund phase I of the North East Road Network Connectivity Improvement Project to the tune of \$610 million.
- **Sister-State and Sister-City Cooperation:** There are growing links between Japan's Prefectures and States in India. As of now 7 Indian states and 3 cities/regions in India have partnered with the Prefectures and Cities of Japan through MoUs to cooperate under diverse sectors.
- **Boost to Act East policy-** These engagements see a major convergence between India's Act East Policy and Japan's Partnership for Quality Infrastructure (PQI) initiative.
- **Indian Community in Japan:** In recent years, there has been a change in the composition of the Indian community with the arrival of a large number of professionals, including IT professionals and engineers working for Indian and Japanese firms as well as professionals in management, finance, education, and S&T research. Approximately 38,000 Indians live in Japan.
- **Bilateral S&T cooperation-** was formalized through an Inter-Governmental Agreement signed in 1985. Recent initiatives include establishment of three India-Japan Joint Laboratories in the area of ICT (AI, IoT and Big Data); Initiation of DST-JSPS Fellowship Programme for the young researchers.
- **Healthcare:** In view of the similarities and synergies between the goals and objectives India's AYUSHMAN Bharat Programme and Japan's AHWIN, both sides had been consulting with each other to identify projects to build the narrative of AHWIN for AYUSHMAN Bharat.
- **Skill Development:** Under the MoC signed in 2016 to train 30,000 shop floor leaders, Japanese companies have established 12 Japan India Institute of Manufacturing (JIM) in India and 4 Japanese Endowed Courses (JEC) in Indian Engineering Colleges.
- **India-Japan Digital Partnership (IJD) and Start-up Hub:** In view of synergies and complementarities between the two nations, "**India-Japan Digital Partnership**" (I-JDP) was launched during the visit of PM

Modi to Japan in October 2018 furthering existing areas of cooperation as well as new initiatives within the scope of cooperation in S&T/ICT, focusing more on “Digital ICT Technologies”.

ISSUES IN INDIA JAPAN RELATIONSHIP

- **Highly rhetoric**- According to Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar, the two countries may have long enjoyed very cordial relations, but it also tended to be one that was low on ambition and high in rhetoric.
- **Overarching preference for strategic autonomy**- Shivshankar Menon in his article “India’s foreign affairs strategy” argued that India’s foreign policy is driven by an overarching preference for strategic autonomy and by three broad priorities: security, economic development, and states.
 - ✓ That put significant restraints on further improvement in relation with Japan because India wants to maintain the strategic autonomy.
- **Economic issues**: In spite of Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement, India Japan trade it has not produced the anticipated results.
 - ✓ In 2011-12, the total volume of the bilateral trade was \$18.43 billion, but it declined to \$17.63 billion during 2018-19.
 - ✓ Both had diverging interest with respect to economic issues like on E-commerce rules (Osaka track).
 - ✓ Japan will also be making a big push to convince India to join the RCEP, the mega regional trade agreement of which Japan is a part.
 - ✓ Tokyo wants India in RCEP to more effectively push back against China. But it remains unclear if India is willing to change its stance on the RCEP.
- **Geo-strategic issues**: The important difficulty in India Japan partnership is **Geography**: the two countries are just too far away from each other to be of much use to the other.
- **Relationship with China**: while India and Japan both have a common interest in standing up to China, the specific disputes they have with China are bilateral and territorial, and it is not clear that India and Japan can support each other on these.
 - ✓ Both countries do not have a specific China policy. Despite, converging interests of Japan, India’s trade with China represents more than 20% of Japan’s total trade. Thus, a coherent Anti-China policy with all the priorities clearly defined can do wonders for both the nations.
- **Thaw in China-Japan relations**: \$350 billion trade Protectionist U.S. has led to countries looking for diversifying partnership. Yet, according to Pallavi Aiyer, any China-Japan relation is tactical at best
- **Issues with Asia Africa growth corridor**: No concrete action on Asia Africa Growth Corridor, despite it being signed in 2017. AAGC has remained a vision without concrete achievement.

INDIA-JAPAN PARTNERSHIP IN THIRD COUNTRIES

- **Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC)**- an initiative that is going to be jointly undertaken by India and Japan.
 - ✓ India has been involved in developmental as well as infrastructural projects in Asia and Africa but joining hands with Japan, a more capable power with a larger kitty and advanced technologies, can become effective and efficient.
 - ✓ Japan has reportedly agreed to fund to the tune of \$200 billion for the growth corridor in Africa.
 - ✓ The Vision Document has identified four core areas for this growth corridor — development cooperation projects, quality infrastructure and institutional connectivity, enhancing skills, and people-to-people partnership.
 - ✓ But the corridor has not proved to be much success till now due to delay in the projects, increase in cost of the projects, etc.

➤ Investment in Bangladesh

- ✓ **Socio-economic development**- The socio-economic development that Bangladesh has been able to achieve in recent years can be attributed to specific, targeted strategies including women empowerment and economic inclusion at the grassroots.
- ✓ **Both India and Japan are individually working in Bangladesh**- In recent years, both India and Japan, separately, have included Bangladesh in their investment radar
- ✓ **FDI inflow**- According to the Statistics Department of the Bangladesh Bank, net inflow of FDI to Bangladesh from India and Japan in 2019 was \$115.9 million and \$72.3 million, respectively.
- ✓ **Financing infrastructure projects**- The two countries have shown interest in financing infrastructure projects in Bangladesh, such as the Chilahati-Haldibari rail link, the Dhaka-Siliguri rail link, and the Araihasar Economic Zone.
- ✓ **Lines of credit**- India has extended three lines of credit to the country, while Japan has provided China Exit Subsidies
- ✓ **New areas of co-operation**- Talks are underway between the two countries to explore fresh areas of cooperation such as artificial intelligence (AI), disaster management, and environmental conservation. To be sure, however, differences between India and Bangladesh remain on issues like the Teesta Agreement.

➤ Investment in Myanmar

- ✓ **China in Myanmar**- China was one of the first countries to push its investments into Myanmar.
 - ✚ China is Myanmar's second-largest source of foreign investment and its top trade partner.
 - ✚ From 1988 to June 2019, approved Chinese investment amounted to more than \$25 billion.
 - ✚ China pushed heavily for infrastructure projects under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), to form a China-Myanmar Economic Corridor.
- ✓ **Oil and gas sector**- Both India and Japan have shown interest in following in China's steps. For India, 80 percent of its investments in Myanmar are in the oil and gas sector
- ✓ **Connectivity projects**- India has multiple connectivity projects in the country such as the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project (KMMTTP), an industrial corridor linking India's northeast regions to Myanmar, the Mandalay bus service, and the Mekong-India Economic Corridor.
- ✓ **Japan's investments**- Japan's investments in the country, meanwhile, were estimated to exceed \$ 1.7 billion dollars from 2011 to 2020, with four loan agreements amounting to \$ 1 billion.
 - ✚ It has 39 corporations working in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone in industries such as transport, real estate, hotels and tourism.

INDIA-JAPAN VISION 2025

- **Transforming relations**- India and Japan are resolved to transform the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership, a key relationship with the largest potential for growth, into a deep, broad-based and action-oriented partnership, which reflects a broad convergence of their long-term political, economic and strategic goals.
- **Rule based order in Indo-Pacific**- India and Japan reiterated their unwavering commitment to realise a peaceful, open, equitable, stable and rule-based order in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.
 - ✓ India and Japan uphold the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity; peaceful settlement of disputes; democracy, human rights and the rule of law; open global trade regime; and freedom of navigation and over flight.

- ✓ They pledged to work for peace, security and development of the Indo-Pacific region toward 2025 underpinned by these principles.
- **Strengthening regional economic and security forums-** India and Japan will work to strengthen regional economic and security forums and coordinate their actions to tackle global challenges including the reform of the United Nations, climate change as well as terrorism.
 - ✓ India and Japan underlined the need for closer coordination and effective communication, bilaterally and with partners, to address existing and emerging challenges in spheres of security, stability and sustainable development.
- **Boosting opportunity for youth-** India and Japan resolved to boost opportunities for study, tourism, youth exchanges and educational collaboration to deepen broad-based and diversified engagement between the two peoples.
- **Synergy between policies-** Seeking the synergy between India's "Act East" policy and Japan's "Partnership for Quality Infrastructure", the two Prime Ministers decided to develop and strengthen reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructures that augment connectivity within India and between India and other countries in the region.
- **Dialogues reiterated-** They reaffirmed their desire to further develop dialogue and exchanges between the two countries in the security and defence fields, including through the full utilisation of '2+2 Dialogue', Defence Policy Dialogue, Military-to-Military Talks and Coast Guard to Coast Guard cooperation.

Sreeparna Banerjee in her article "India Japan partnership in third countries" concluded that "the nature and extent of India-Japan relations has undergone a phenomenal change in recent years. The current relationship is based on timely and considerate associations based on convergence in their geo-strategic and security deliberations."

INDIA JAPAN MARITIME SECURITY

- **Geopolitical convergence-** The increasing geopolitical convergence between India and Japan demonstrates traditional strength, deepening trust, matured partnership and strong democratic values in addressing strategic challenges.
- **Open and free Indo-Pacific-** Japan was one of the first countries to ideate the notion of an "open and free" Indo-Pacific region. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe unveiled Japan's 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) Vision'—one that would ensure that principles such as a **stable legal framework, freedom of navigation and free trade** are firmly upheld with a "coordinated whole-of government approach."
- **Multilateral hedging-** Tokyo has been pursuing a strategy of "multi-layered multilateral hedging" in the Indo-Pacific.
- **Japan's claims in South China sea-** Japan is trying to protect its interests in the East China Sea against repeated intrusions by China around its claimed Diaoyu Islands.
 - ✓ Sea of Japan which is spread across the Pacific Ocean and the Pacific Coast of the US and Canada has a significant volume of commercial and military traffic and is an important sea line of communication for Japan.
 - ✓ In order to keep these lanes free and open to sustain trade, Japan aims to build a network of the allies.
- **Areas of co-operation-** The two countries therefore are strengthening cooperation in areas such as maritime security, connectivity, and human assistance disaster relief.
- **SAGAR vision-** The SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) vision, launched in 2019 during the East Asia Summit in Bangkok is testimony to India's commitment to the building of a rules-based regional architecture.
 - ✓ India seeks to uphold freedom of navigation in the Indo-Pacific and to serve as net security provider in the region.

- **India-Japan bilateral Maritime Exercise- JIMEX**- is conducted biennially between the Indian Navy and the Japanese Maritime Self -Defence Force (JMSDF), which commenced in 2012. Japan is now a permanent member of the Malabar exercise with India and the US and has also conducted the **MINEX- mine-countermeasures exercise**- as a part of its naval wargaming drills.
- **MILAN multilateral naval exercise**- Japan is also a participant in the MILAN multilateral naval exercise hosted by the Naval Wing of the Andaman and Nicobar Command.
 - ✓ Japan has undertaken a project in Andaman and Nicobar to assemble undersea cable systems that connect the group of islands to Chennai on the East coast of India.
- **Joint investment in Sri Lanka**- India and Japan have joint investments in Sri Lanka to develop the East Container Terminal of the Colombo Port
- **Defence technology cooperation**- Agreement Concerning Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology Cooperation” and “Agreement Concerning Security Measures for the Protection of Classified Military Information” signed in December 2015 to enhance defence technology cooperation.

RISE OF MINILATERALS VIS A VIS JAPAN

- **Minilateralism**- provides a mechanism through which Indo-Pacific’s three major powers – India, Japan and Australia – could lay the foundations of this regional balance of power.
- A similar understanding of the power transition, their complementary interests, shared values and their substantial capabilities bode well for this minilateral security initiative.
 - ✓ Minilateralism also helps resolve the problems of free-riding and entrapment.
- **For India**- India is not new to Minilateralism. Six years ago, India endorsed and became party to trilateral security arrangements with the US and Japan.
- **Malabar exercises**- In October 2015, the Malabar naval exercises—a series of bilateral naval exercises between the US and India—saw the participation of Japan.
 - ✓ The Malabar series has been conducted since 1992, and other countries have on occasion joined them.
 - ✓ While the 2015 Malabar exercises were particularly highlighted, it came in the backdrop of a significant development with India, Japan, and the US elevating their trilateral dialogue to the level of foreign ministers.
 - ✓ Since then, Japan has become a permanent partner in the Malabar exercises, thus making it a US-India-Japan trilateral naval exercise.

INDIA JAPAN FRANCE TRILATERAL

- **Importance of Indo-Pacific**- The Indo-Pacific, often regarded as the ‘maritime underbelly’ of Asia, has emerged as the world’s economic “**centre of gravity**”.
 - ✓ The home of vast geo-economic opportunities and facing manifold security challenges at the same time, this maritime domain has attracted the keen attention of global powers in recent years.
 - ✓ A massive 90 percent of French EEZs are located in the Indo-Pacific.
- **France**- France envisions itself as a key player in the Indo-Pacific region. French President Emmanuel Macron declared the inclusion of the ‘Indo-Pacific’ in the country’s foreign policy.
 - ✓ France’s military deployment in the region is at around 7,000 personnel – 4,100 in the Indian Ocean and 2,900 in the Pacific Ocean.
 - ✓ France places itself as a “**stabilising power**” in the region, and works with like-minded countries that share similar values of democracy.
 - ✓ India joined French led **La Perouse exercise** in the Bay of Bengal which also included the United States, Japan and Australia

- ✓ The India-France-Japan trilateral partnership narrative is a collaborative framework that can help foster **greater 'Asian informality'** and thereby help strengthen cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.
- **Chokepoints-** the Suez Canal, the Bab-el-Mandeb, the Mozambique Channel and the Cape of Good Hope are vital chokepoints of French interest.
- **Bottleneck-** However, despite their shared concern about China's belligerence, the biggest bottleneck in the India-Japan-France partnership lies in certain bilateral contradictions.
 - ✓ For this trilateral to succeed, it has to be founded on a consultative character and promote capacity building, connectivity, and sustainable infrastructure development.

INDIA JAPAN AUSTRALIA TRILATERAL

- **Balance of power-** In the face of China's rise and the US' retrenchment, Asia's regional powers are hedging their bets on a regional security order that is based on a **balance of power**.
- **Two factors** have played an important role in bringing these three countries on a similar strategic plane.
 - ✓ First is the rise of China as a power centre in the Indo-Pacific. More recently, they have been equally informed by a perception of declining American power.
 - ✓ The second reason for the immense relevance of this trilateral is these countries' geography.
 - ✚ Collectively, they represent the **maritime arc** which is increasingly being called the 'Indo-Pacific'.
 - ✚ If any collective grouping of states connects the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, it is the India Japan-Australia trilateral; they are **the resident powers of the Indo-Pacific**.
- **Supply chain resilience program-** Australia, Japan and India agreed to develop a **supply chain resilience program for the Indo-Pacific region**.
 - ✓ This initiative came amid a growing recognition in all three nations of the dangers of excessive economic reliance on China.
 - ✓ This initiative that would strengthen alternate supply chains in an effort to counter China's control of the trade of essential supplies.

Rise of Naval presence in 2021

- **AUSINDEX-** the Indian and Japanese naval forces have been active outside of JIMEX as well. The Indian Navy conducted the fourth edition of AUSINDEX, between the Indian Navy and the Royal Australian Navy.
- **Naval exercise-** Major naval exercise in the waters off the southeast of Okinawa involving six participating navies – the U.S. Navy, the U.K. Royal Navy, the JMSDF, the Royal Netherlands Navy, the Royal Canadian Navy and the Royal New Zealand Navy training,
 - ✓ It brings together three CSG [carrier strike groups], embodies the strong will of the participating countries to realize a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, the JMSDF will work closely with allied and friendly navies, which share the same objectives, to respond to global challenges and defend maritime order based on the rule of law."
- **QUAD-** Meanwhile, the navies from the four Quad countries – Australia, India, Japan, and the United States – Concluded the second phase of the Malabar exercise.

Rajeshwari Rajagopalan writes- "The heightened pace of these military exercises and their growing complexity, as well as the growing number of countries participating, should send a clear message to Beijing about the coalition slowly gathering against it. There is still time for China to turn away from the dangerous path it has chosen, but Beijing does not appear willing to listen."

Fumio Kishida as new Japanese prime minister

- **Criticized China's aggression**- Kishida has not only criticized China's economic and political aggression during his time as a candidate but also proclaimed his willingness to work with "those that share the same values, such as the US, Europe, India and Australia".
- **Supporting Japan's acquiring missile**- Significantly, Kishida has also indicated his support for Japan's acquisition of an offensive missile strike capability.
 - ✓ By acquiring an avowedly offensive tool of war, Japan will make clear to both allies and competitors that its more muscular military posture is here to stay.
- **Prioritizing economic security**- Kishida has also stated that establishing economic security will be a key priority for his administration.
 - ✓ This drive to reduce dependence on China and diversify key supply chains, combined with Quad's plan to establish supply chain resilience in semiconductors, represents a key opportunity for India.
- **Helped companies to re-establish out of China during COVID**- As tensions with China mounted and the COVID-19 pandemic raged, Japan offered compensation for a range of Japanese companies to move out of China and into friendlier climes in Southeast Asia and India.
 - ✓ With some creative diplomacy and internal economic improvements, **New Delhi can convince Tokyo to take the bilateral economic relationship to the next level.**
- **Need of synergy between India and Japan**- On the international stage, New Delhi will have to count on Japan to hold the fort on key economic standards in trade compacts like RCEP and CPTPP given that India and the United States are not involved. Kishida is already feeling the heat in his new role given China's recent application to join the CPTPP.

Post pandemic alliance, suggestions by Amb. Satoshi Suzuki

- **Common interests**- We share political, economic and strategic interests based on the firm foundations of common values and traditions.
 - ✓ We are continuing our efforts to build a rules-based free and open international order. There are a plethora of fields that we can cooperate in security issues including cyber security, outer space and economic security.
- **One of the largest investor**- Secondly, Japan is also one of the largest investors in India.
 - ✓ Both countries have also promoted economic cooperation in other countries to enhance social infrastructure and connectivity.
 - ✓ Our economic partnership can further strengthen the economy of the Indo-Pacific, as well as the world economy.
 - ✓ Investment from Japan continued in India despite the ongoing pandemic.
- **Cultural exchanges**- Thirdly, cultural exchanges need to be augmented to strengthen the bilateral relations.

Key Ideas and suggestions

S. Jaishankar, in his book, 'The India Way: Strategies for an Uncertain World' has suggested following ways to strengthen Indo-Japan relations

- **Importance of Trade**- Since trade has been the primary driver of Japan's rejuvenation, it understandably dominates its strategic calculations. If a country like India is looking to hedge on its security needs, Japan's similar predicament arises more in the economic domain.

- **Need to provide opportunities to Japan to invest in India**- Japan have a longstanding presence in the Indian economy and society.
 - ✓ But, opportunities in India that opened up a quarter century ago did not evoke the expected response due to their over-caution as much as our own uncertainties.
 - ✓ Competing demands from other growing economies were also a factor. Thus, there has to be a **constant improvement of the enabling environment**, a specific focus on Japanese requirements and an aggressive utilization of instruments that have been put in place.
- **Interdependence**: On economic front, on both sides, there has to be more risk-taking and a stronger commitment to scale up. The longer the delay in its entry or expansion, the higher will be the cost.
- **In the political arena**- India and Japan may both hedge, but not necessarily on the same issues and to the same degree. Neither has an interest in closing any option in a multipolar world, especially those in the immediate neighbourhood.
 - ✓ Thus, a continuous dialogue is necessary, especially on issues of less convergence. The relationship will only grow if it is firmly anchored on an approach of mutual benefit

EXPERTS OPINIONS & THEIR THEORIES-

- **C. Raja Mohan-Functionalism**- Indo-Japan relations are a perfect case for an alliance. However, he has suggested that languishing defence partnership needs a push.
- **Rajiv Bhatia- Institutionalism**- given expanding Chinese footprint, India and Japan should urgently push AAGC and should show some concrete results on the ground for ensuring credibility of the project as an alternative to BRI.

Conclusion

- According to **C. Raja Mohan**, India and Japan along with Australia can together shape the regional order and not simply accept the results of US-China competition, collision or collusion. He has also suggested that, going beyond bilateral commitments, India and Japan are now eager to collaborate on areas of common interest at the regional level.
- **Vijay Gokhale**, former Indian Foreign secretary: "The increasing geopolitical convergence between India and Japan demonstrates traditional strength, deepening trust, matured partnership and strong democratic values in addressing strategic challenges."

INDIA CHINA RELATIONS

PYQ's

1. Explain the defence and foreign policy options of India to address the challenges emerging out of the current India-China standoff at the Line of Actual Control (LAC). [2020/20m/250w/7a]
2. Describe briefly China's 'One Belt One Road (OBOR)' Initiative and analyse India's major concerns. [2019/20m/250w/6a]
3. What are the current issues in Brahmaputra River water sharing between India and China? [2019/15m/200w/6b]
4. Critically examine India's position on South China Sea Dispute. [2019/15m/200w/8b]
5. Critically assess the evolving convergence of India and China in the areas of trade and environment. [2018/15m/200w/8b]
6. How is the belt and road initiative of China going to affect India China relations [2017/20m/250w/7a]
7. Illustrate the main causes of tension between India and China. Suggest the possibilities of improving relationships. [2016/10m/150w/5c]
8. Some of the major changes that occurred in India's foreign policy after the Sino India war in 1962 were within the larger framework of continuity. Discuss. [2014/15m/200w/8b]
9. Is there any linkage between a shift in China's relations with Japan to a perceived shift in her relations with India? Examine in the light of China's so-called 'anti-encirclement struggle'. [2012/12/150w/5c]
10. Do you think that India should sign a treaty with China on water-sharing of Brahmaputra River, similar to what she did with Nepal and other neighbouring states? [2011/20m/5]
11. 'The relationship between India and China is characterised by high levels of conflict and cooperation. Comment. [2008/20m/200w/5a]
12. Discuss the impact of Sino-Indian conflict of 1962 on International Politics. [2003/20m/200w/5a]
13. Examine the recent developments in Sino-Indian relations. [2002/60m/7]
14. Examine China's foreign policy towards Pakistan in the present context. [1999/20m/200w/5c]
15. Write a short essay on China and the Nuclear Weapons. [1997/20m/200w/5b]
16. It is not ideological differences but national interests and considerations of leadership in world affairs that are responsible for Sino-Russian schism. Discuss the statements and show its impact on India. [1997/60m/7]
17. Examine the changes in China's India policy in the 1990s. Do you attribute these changes to the altered global environment or to the domestic factors? [1996/60m/6]
18. Discuss the economic determinants of Chinese foreign policy. [1995/20m/200w/5d]

Introduction-

- India-China diplomatic relationship is dotted with competition, co-operation and discord. Relations have always been cold however recent confrontation have turned them icy chill
- **The year 2022 marks the 72nd years of diplomatic relationship between India and China.** However, both countries have been at loggerheads over boundary disputes.
- **Confrontation and hostility** have become the recurrent theme between India and China since starting of diplomatic relationship.
- According to **Manoj Joshi**, India's relations with China involve the four C's — conflict, competition, cooperation and containment.
 - ✓ **Political competitor**- Explaining this he pointed out that, China may not think India as much of a competitor when it comes to the economy, but politically New Delhi remains a potent presence in areas that border both India and China, especially in South Asia.
 - ✓ The **two sides cooperate on a range of areas**; India was among the early supporters of the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank and is, of course, a partner of China in BRICS and of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).
 - ✓ As for containment, this is actually the hidden theme in their relationship — China thinks that India is trying to contain its rise in collaboration with the US and Japan, while New Delhi believes that Beijing's policies in South Asia are aimed at preventing India from playing a larger extra-regional role.

- **Shyam Saran** in his book “**How India see the world: Kautilya to 21st century**” highlighted the difference between India and China’s world view.
 - ✓ He argued that China remains poorly understood by India and this lack of familiarity can be costly.
 - ✓ India considered the world as Bharatvarsha (lotus) with India as Jambidwipa (one of the petals).
 - ✓ Instead, China considered itself as middle kingdom, supposed to be the civilized centre of world, surrounded by barbarians and savages.
- **Zhao Gancheng** in his book, “**Asia: Rise of Chindia& its impact on world systems**” mentions that Rise of India & China will be marked Cooperation and conflict.
 - ✓ As both countries started their relationship with worst case scenario in 1962, both suffers from Prisoner's dilemma.
 - ✓ He further adds that **Old framework of Panchsheel** which **was based on idealism**, is not working and due to Lack a new framework India looks at stronger China with suspicion

IMPACT OF RISE OF INDIA AND CHINA ON GLOBAL BALANCE OF POWER

- **India as swing state**- In words of **C. Rajamohan**, “After more than a half century of false starts and unrealized potential, India is now emerging as the swing state in the global balance of power.
 - ✓ In the coming years, it will have an opportunity to shape outcomes on the most critical issues of the twenty-first century: the construction of Asian stability, the political modernization of the greater Middle East, and the management of globalization.”
- **China’s unprecedented rise**- On the other hand, China’s rise in last 2 decades has been unprecedented and currently, it is challenging the US economy.
 - ✓ Unlike the former USSR which was primarily military power, **China has become ‘Comprehensive Power.’**
 - ✓ The present president of China Xi Jinping is talking about ‘**new type of great power relationships**’ and during his speech in WEF in 2017 declared that China is ready to accept the role of defender of liberal world order.
- **Same goals**- However, as both India and China are rising, they are also competing for same geostrategic space, which has led to conflict and competition in Indo-pacific and south Asia. This dynamics between India and China will have huge implication for global balance of power.
- **QUAD**- Even in **global balance of power**, India is working through QUAD for containing Chinese unilateralism; China is also working with Russia, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey to challenge the liberal world order led by the US.
- **At bilateral level**, though leaders talked **about not letting differences to turn into disputes**, yet both are working on containment and counter containment strategies. India has responded to **China’s string of pearls**’ with its own ‘**necklace and diamond**’ strategy.’

Expert’s opinions-

- **Vijay Gokhale**- In words of former secretary Vijay Gokhale, “If not, a new phase of antagonistic rivalry may be starting, with the countries sliding into possible confrontation as the strategic periphery of China collides with the strategic backyard of India in the Indian Ocean region.”
 - ✓ He further adds that, discussions after LAC disengagement at present could be “the final chance” for cooperation between the two countries.

- **Shivshankar Menon**- in his book, **Choices: Inside the Making of India's Foreign Policy**, mentions that from India's point of view, it is China's silence or ambivalence about the rise of India that poses a puzzle and a challenge.
 - ✓ While the United States has moved from opposition to India's non-alignment in the 1950s to encouraging India's rise in the twenty-first century, China has moved in the opposite direction.
 - ✓ This has resulted in intensification of competition and containment in recent years.
 - ✓ Thus, the **dream of Asian Century** with the **simultaneous rise of India and China** doesn't seem to be working at present. The **recent border standoff** has taken the relationship to lowest level.
- **Samir Saran**- According to Samir Saran, China wants to utilize its political and economic clout to emerge as sole continental power.
 - ✓ For China, multipolarity is for the world, not for Asia. According to an old Chinese adage, "One mountain cannot contain two tigers"
- **Difference of approach**- Apart from border dispute and competition over geostrategic space in South Asia, both countries also has differences in their world view.
 - ✓ While India is working with likeminded countries for multipolar world order, China is aiming for bipolar world order with unipolar Asia.
- **Kanti Bajpai**- In this context, India needs to change its China policy and link it with global BoP. In words on **Kanti Bajpai**, 'Power is not everything in IP but Ignoring the massive power differential is Strategic Blindness'.
 - ✓ Thus, India needs hedging strategies and internal as well as external balancing to deal with China challenge.
- **S. Jaishankar**- However, India must be cautious that external balancing does not lead to joining military blocs or alliances. MEA **S. Jaishankar** has mentioned that 'age of alliance is over' and India will go for issue based partnerships.
- **On internal balancing**, as pointed out by **C. Rajamohan**, the longer India takes to act vigorously on its frontier region development (ex. A&N), military modernization and regional economic integration, the greater will be its difficulty in coping with China's rise.

NOTE- Thus as global politics is in flux **post pandemic**, India needs to form a grand strategy to secure its core national interest and achieve its long standing goal of rightful place in comity of nations.

- For China, as pointed out by **Shivshankar Menon**, '**a new modus vivendi at a political level**' is needed to '**manage the relationship**'

BOUNDARY DISPUTE

- **No mutually agreed LAC**- There is no mutually agreed Line of Actual Control (LAC). India considers the LAC to be 3488 km long whereas China considers it to be only around 2000 km.
- **Western sector**- The boundary dispute in the Western Sector (Ladakh) pertains to the Johnson Line proposed by the British in the 1860s put Aksai Chin in the then princely state of Jammu and Kashmir.
 - ✓ China, however, do not recognize it and instead accepts McDonald Line which puts Aksai Chin under its control.
- **Middle sector**- In the Middle Sector (Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand), the dispute is a minor one. Here LAC is the least controversial. India and China have exchanged maps on which they broadly agree.
- **Eastern sector**- (Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim) is **over the McMahon Line** (in Arunachal Pradesh) decided in 1914 in a meeting of Representatives of China, India, and Tibet in Shimla. Though the Chinese representatives at the meeting initiated the agreement, they subsequently refused to accept it. The **Tawang tract** claimed by China was taken over by India in 1951.

- **Palm and Digit policy-** China's claim is based on Palm and Digit policy of Mao. China considers Tibet as right-hand palm with five digits- Ladakh, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Arunachal Pradesh.

BORDER AGREEMENTS

- **Panchsheel-** Nehru and Zhou signed the **Panchsheel treaty** on 29 April 1954 to lay the **roadmap for stability in a region** (Hindi-Chini Bhai-Bhai).
 - ✓ India acknowledged Chinese rule in Tibet.
 - ✓ **Panchsheel-** It includes Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; Mutual non-aggression; Mutual non-interference; Equality and mutual benefit; and, Peaceful co-existence.
- **Agreement on Peace and Tranquillity** on Border was signed in 1993 to maintain peace along LAC.
- **Confidence Building Measures** (CBMs) in the military field along the LAC in India-China border areas was signed in 1996.
 - ✓ Modalities for the implementation of Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field Along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas signed on 11th April 2005.
- **Special Representative mechanism** had been set up in 2003 through Declaration on principles for Relations and comprehensive cooperation Agreement.
- **Agreement on the Political Parameters and Guiding principles** for the settlement of the India-China Boundary Question was signed between India and China on 11th April 2005.
 - ✓ In agreement, China accepted under its Article VII that "In reaching the boundary settlement, the two sides will safeguard the interests of their settled populations in border areas."
- **Border Defence Cooperation Agreement** was signed in 2013 for border security and stability, Information asymmetry, Socio-economic reconstruction along LAC.
- **Five Points' agreement** - The Foreign Ministers of India and China, **Subrahmanyam Jaishankar** and **Wang Yi**, signed 'Five Points' agreement to reduce the tension on the Ladakh border at Moscow in 2020. It includes-
 - ✓ Not allowing differences to become disputes
 - ✓ The border troops of both sides should continue their dialogue, quickly disengage, maintain proper distance and ease tensions
 - ✓ Both sides shall abide by all the existing agreements and protocol on China-India boundary affairs
 - ✓ Maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas and avoid any action that could escalate matters,
 - ✓ To continue to have dialogue and communication through the Special Representative Mechanism on the India-China boundary question.

REASONS BEHIND BORDER DISPUTE

- **China's Salami slicing strategy-** in Himalayas is the main reason behind India China discord. Salami slicing strategy refers to series of many small actions, often performed by clandestine means.
 - ✓ Along the India-China borders, Beijing stakes claim on the 90,000 sq. km of Arunachal Pradesh calling it the South Tibet.
 - ✓ China also claims small territories in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir as its own.
 - ✓ China has already acquired about 6,000 sq. km area north of Karakoram in Jammu and Kashmir from Pakistan.
 - ✓ China is eyeing **Doklam plateau** as it would give it an advantage in keeping an **eye over the Siliguri corridor** or '**Chicken's Neck**' that connects northeast India with rest of the country.
- **Five Fingers of Tibet** is Chinese foreign policy attributed to Mao. It considers Tibet to be China's right-hand palm with five fingers on its periphery: Ladakh, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Arunachal Pradesh and It is China's responsibility to liberate these regions.

- **Samir Saran** argued that China wants to utilize its political and economic clout to emerge as sole continental power.
 - ✓ According to China's view, Multipolarity is for the world, not for Asia. According to an old Chinese adage, "One mountain cannot contain two tigers"
- **Growing economic and military asymmetry between India and China:** According to **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute**, China's GDP is five times of India (\$12 trillion) and defence budget is three times of India (\$150 billion). China's expenditure on its military has increased from 2.5 times that of India's in 2010, to 3.7 times India's in 2019, and reaching over four times India's military expenditure in 2015. While Indian military expenditure has reduced from 2.7 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2010 to 2.4 percent in 2019.
- **China wants greater market access-** Another argument put forward by some experts is that that China wants to have greater market access in India for peace and tranquillity at border.
 - ✓ Heightening tensions with India will bring India to negotiating table and using economic bargains as price for peace and tranquillity.
- **Sending signals-** China is also using border dispute with India to send a message to its other neighbours in the East and South China Sea.
 - ✓ China is demonstrating to the world the **limitations of decaying American power** without having to actually confront it.
- According to **Samir Saran**, Beijing is using heightening tension along LAC to remind India of Asia's geopolitical hierarchy which is **neither multipolar, nor bipolar but unipolar**.
- **Wolf Warrior Diplomacy-** China has faced heavy backlash in domestic against covid management. To address the domestic unrest, China has resorted to **Wolf Warrior Diplomacy**. China is also playing nationalism card to pick fights with various nations to address the domestic unrest.
- **China on India's internal matters-** China is also reacting to the recent India's domestic Development.
 - ✓ India's decision to abrogate Article 370 and making Ladakh as Union Territory, India's aggressive claims on POK, Gilgit, Baltistan, Infrastructure development in border areas to provide all weather connectivity to Leh and Karakoram has made China to take offensive steps.
- **Differing perceptions-** Explaining Chinese intensions behind border incursions, **Shyam Saran** held that, the plan would have been to occupy territory falling within the category of "**differing perceptions**" of LAC and prevent any Indian presence and patrols in these areas.
 - ✓ Another aim would have been to neutralise any Indian advantage from improved border infrastructure such as the Darbuk-Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) road and revived Advance Landing Grounds (ALG) at DBO, Fukche, Chushul and Demchok.

VIEWS ON BORDER DISPUTE

According to Shiv Shankar Menon the fundamental problem is that both India and China are negotiating with the assumption that both will have a better negotiating position in the future. And it's true: both are rising and therefore neither side is really seeing the negotiations through. We have a successful mechanism for managing difference

Shyam Saran in his book "How India see the world: Kautilya to 21st century" has argued that Chinese view over boundary dispute hardened due to two reasons.

1. Growing power asymmetry.
2. Aksai Chin has lost relevance as a connecting region between Tibet and Xinjiang.
 - He suggested LAC plus solution from Indian side by making limited territorial concession to China and package proposal without Twang from China where Chinese pilgrims can freely visit Twang.
 - He also suggested more confidence building measures like Border Personnel Meeting, Hand in Hand, Border Defence Cooperation Agreement. The clarification of LAC can be starting point.
 - **Shiv Shankar Menon:** "Boundary is not the real issue; it is just a lever to regulate temperature in relations"

- **Wuhan and Chennai Summit:** India and China agreed to direct their armies to implement Confidence Building measures.

OTHER ISSUES

Trade Deficit

- **India's imports-** India's imports from China rose to \$97.5 billion in calendar year 2021, up 46.1 per cent from imports worth \$66.7 billion in 2020, which was impacted by Covid-19 related restrictions, as per data from the China General Administration of Customs.
- **Trade reached \$125 billion-** Imports were up 30.3 per cent over 2019, which was not impacted by the pandemic. India's total trade with China was \$125.7 billion in the 2021.
- **Import items-** Some of India's key imports from China include Smartphone's, components for smart phones and automobiles, telecom equipment, plastic and metallic goods, active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), and other chemicals.

Reasons behind Trade deficit with China

- Flooding of lower quality goods in Indian market
- Dumping of Steel material
- Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures are hurting Indian products.
- India's export to China mainly contains farm produce exports which are undervalued.
- Curbs on Indian pharmaceutical products even those having approval of USA, European Union and Japanese regulators.
- Difficulty for IT sector to get greater market access in China

NOTE- To decrease the trade deficit, India needs to increase its domestic production and reduce its import dependency on China and other countries.

China-Pakistan Axis

- **Andrew Small** in his book "The China-Pakistan Axis: Asia's new geopolitics" argued that Pakistan is acting like proxy for China against India.
 - ✓ For China, Pakistan is not just a client state, but a valued instrument to contain India.
 - ✓ Beijing is not only propping up the Pakistani state financially and militarily, but also has repeatedly blocked United Nations action against the chief of the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad terrorist group.
 - ✓ After abrogation of **Article 370**, China has helped Pakistan to internationalise Kashmir issue.
 - ✓ **China Pakistan Economic Corridor, Development of Gwadar Port by China**, China's One Belt One Road Initiative passing through POK are attempts by China to encircle India with the help of Pakistan as proxy.

Reform of UNSC and more democratic world order

- **S. Jaishankar:** Though we have commitment to more democratic world order yet our actions in terms of reforms of UNSC are in contrast to our approaches to usher in more equitable international world order through reform of existing multilateral institutions.
- China along with other P5 countries is blocking way to reform of UNSC and other multilateral institutions.

Access to Nuclear energy

- China is blocking India's way into Nuclear Supply Group as China has been insisting that only those countries which have signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) should be allowed to enter the organisation.
- Both India and China are nuclear states and both have signed the "No first use" policy independently.

Hydropolitics between India and China

- **Brahma Chellany:** "Asia's troubled water": China heavily damming Mekong has already created water crisis in Thailand and Vietnam.
- **Dams on the Brahmaputra-** China is also building five dams on the Brahmaputra river, and it is feared that "directional blasting techniques could be used to divert the Brahmaputra north to China at the u-bend in the aftermath of border clashes between India and China in the Galwan Valley from May, China blocked the flow of the Galwan River
- **Super dam on Brahmaputra-** China is planning to **build the super dam on Brahmaputra River** near to LAC which may have adverse effect over Indian region.
 - ✓ It may lead to flooding/water scarcity in North East states.
 - ✓ China may resort to weaponizing of water in future. Since Himalayan Region is seismic zone, construction of super dam may also lead to increased vulnerability of region to earthquake.
- **Pollution of transboundary rivers-** China could sabotage Transboundary Rivers by polluting them, rendering them unfit for use.
 - ✓ The Siang river, which joins the Lohit and the Dibang downstream to form the Brahmaputra, turned muddy and "blackened" in 2017 raising concerns about China's upstream activities.
- **Data to manage floods downstream-** Third, China has access to valuable data that can help manage floods and fluctuations downstream.
 - ✓ India and China have signed two pacts since 2008 on data sharing for the Sutlej and Brahmaputra in order to better manage the shared watercourses.
 - ✓ While these agreements have had a positive effect on water management, and helped pre-empt and control flooding, this dependence can also be exploited by withholding hydrological data accessible only to the upper riparian state.

Way forward

There are few diplomatic solutions available to India.

- **Effective management of domestic rivers** and rainwater remains the primary recourse.
- India could lead a **counter-coalition of countries that share Transboundary Rivers**, and forge a common institutional set-up for better transboundary management of shared rivers.
- While offering greater bargaining leverage vis-à-vis China, such an institution could also promote a "Southern Asian water information grid", and aggregate best practices for water management.

CHINA IN NEIGHBOURHOOD

- **Power asymmetry in Asia-** **John J. Mearsheimer** pointed out in **The Tragedy of Great Power Politics** that Asia will be an unbalanced multipolar system, because China will be much more powerful than all other Asian great powers, and thus qualify as a potential hegemon.
 - ✓ And when there are power asymmetries, the strong are hard to deter when they are bent on aggression.
- **Increasing Chinese footprint in South Asia** is marked by Debt trap diplomacy, involvement in domestic politics of small countries and attempts to contain India.

- **Chinese inroads in neighbourhood**- According to former foreign secretary **Shyam Saran**, India should be concerned about the “inroads” China is making in its neighbourhood and must work more closely with countries like the US, Japan and Vietnam to counter Beijing’s rise and “**unilateral assertion**”.
- **Relation with Pakistan**- is the only country with which China has an “all-weather strategic partnership”. The relationship is also the only one described as: “higher than the highest mountains, deeper than the deepest ocean and sweeter than honey!”.
 - ✓ Their strategic and territorial interests have been cemented by the **China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)**.
 - ✓ With the flow of Chinese military power into Pakistan, China veritably straddles India, with its armed forces present on India’s northern, eastern and western borders.
 - ✓ The growing China-Pakistan nexus raises the threat to India.
 - ✓ The growing number of China-Pakistan military exercises are a further sign of the deepening partnership between the two militaries.
 - ✓ Recently, the Pakistan Army inducted its first batch of Chinese-made VT-4 battle tanks. Pakistan’s use of Chinese-made combat drones or unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs) is cause of concern for India.
- **Relation with Bangladesh**- China has financed more than 25 projects.
 - ✓ China has also extended support for 2nd nuclear power plant in Bangladesh.
 - ✓ China has also extended Line of credit of \$24 Billion.
 - ✓ China is also the largest arm supplier of Bangladesh army.
 - ✓ China has special geostrategic interest in Bangladesh’s Chittagong port.
- **Relation with Sri Lanka**- China has acquired the strategic **Hambantota port** from Sri Lanka bolstering **Beijing’s String of Pearls**.
 - ✓ Over period of 15 years China has poured over **15 billion dollars into projects in Sri Lanka**.
 - ✓ This financial assistance has resulted into **debt trap for Sri Lanka**.
 - ✓ The **Colombo port city** being build by China is being termed as ‘**Chinese Colony**’ by strategic experts in India and Sri Lanka.
- **Relation with Maldives**- is near-exclusively focused on leveraging BRI to develop Maldives as well as to raise Chinese influence there to counter India.
 - ✓ Maldives has also signed Free Trade Agreement with China.
 - ✓ More than 70% debt of Maldives is owned by China.
- **Relation with Bhutan**- does not have diplomatic relations with China, and so there is much less interaction than with other South Asian countries.
 - ✓ However, in the last meeting held in February 2019 between visiting Chinese ambassador to India, **Luo Zhaohui**, and Bhutanese Prime Minister Lotay Tshering, Beijing emphasised the need to continue working together with Bhutan on resolving the border issue.
- **Relation with Nepal**- China signed 20 agreements with Nepal through BRI to better enable China to develop and connect with Nepal.
 - ✓ The two sides will accelerate the building of the **Trans-Himalayan Multi-Dimensional Connectivity Network** through connectivity projects including ports, highways, railways, aviation, and communications, and have announced the launch of a feasibility study of the China-Nepal cross-border railway.
- **Relation with Myanmar**- agreed to focus on **China Myanmar Economic Corridor**.
 - ✓ China Myanmar Economic Corridor is **branch of Belt and Road Initiative in Indian Ocean**.
 - ✓ Myanmar has also signed Comprehensive strategic co-operation partnership agreement with China.
- **Relation with Afghanistan**- China is eyeing on its mineral deposits estimated to be worth \$3 trillion.
 - ✓ **The Afghanistan is probably home to the world’s largest reserves of Lithium.**

- ✓ Afghanistan is also rich in several other resources such as gold, oil, rare earths, natural gas, Uranium.
- ✓ China's strategic Belt-and-Road Initiative (BRI) could get more reach if it able to extend the initiative from Pakistan to Afghanistan.
- ✓ After takeover by Taliban in Afghanistan, Taliban has termed China as Afghanistan's "most important partner" in national reconstruction efforts.
- ✓ China is keen to leverage the Afghanistan crisis is to "link up" with Iran across the Pamirs, Hindu Kush, Karakorum and Himalayas, and for the first time become a strategic player in the Gulf region.

NOTE- However, Conflict resolution and political problem-solving in other countries are not traits that Chinese diplomats excel at.

- ✓ It remains to be seen how China walks this tightrope in Afghanistan, which remains a fractured crucible of contradictory ethnic and political interests.
- ✓ China does want to reap economic benefits of a stable Afghanistan but it has to first ensure that there is no spill over of security threats from Afghanistan into its restive Xinjiang province.
- **Rajiv Sikri** in his book "India's Foreign Policy-Determinants, issues and challenges" stated that from China, India faces challenges at three level-globally, regionally and as a neighbour.
 - ✓ **At the global level**, China is using its economic clout, and its status as a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council and an NPT-recognized nuclear power to thwart India's rise in every possible way.
 - ✓ **At the regional level**, so far China has been using Pakistan as a pawn to keep India tied down in South Asia and to prevent India from becoming a serious challenger to China's ambitions to dominate Asia.
 - ✓ **Bilaterally**, both India and China are rising powers with history of conflict. Both suffers from huge security dilemma due to growing power asymmetry and involvement of external players.

INDIA'S RESPONSE TO CHINA'S BELLIGERENCE

- **Military response-** As a military response, India upped the ante by taking two steps, one military and one economic — occupying the heights in south Pangong and by permanently banning 59 Chinese apps.
- **Policy change-** India has changed policy towards China from Cooperation and Competition to counter and containment.
- **Necklace of Diamond Strategy:**
 - ✓ Through its String of Pearls strategy, China is expanding its footprints to contain Indian hold in the Indian ocean.
 - ✓ It is creating a ring around India through strategically placed nations such as at **Chittagong (Bangladesh), at Karachi, Gwadar port (Pakistan) and at Colombo, Hambantota (both in Sri Lanka)**
 - ✓ In a counter-action, India has started working on the '**Necklace of Diamonds' strategy**. This strategy aims at garlanding China or in simple words, the **counter encirclement strategy**. India is expanding its naval bases and is also improving relations with strategically placed countries to counter China's strategies.
 - ✓ India's strategic bases include **Changi Naval Base (Singapore), Sabang Port (Indonesia), Duqm port (Oman), Assumption Island (Seychelles).**
- **QUAD-** India along with USA, Japan and Australia has initiated Quadrilateral strategic dialogue commonly known as Quad to contain China.
 - ✓ Quad also held a first Quad Plus meeting that included representatives from New Zealand, South Korea and Vietnam.
 - ✓ QUAD will work together in Indo-Pacific region to contain the moves by China.

- **Economic Measures:**
 - ✓ After Galwan clash, **India has banned more than 100 Chinese apps.**
 - ✓ India has also changed FDI rules to counter hostile takeover of Indian companies by Chinese. It is necessary for prior approval for FDI coming from countries sharing borders with India.
 - ✓ India has also initiated **stringent quality norms to curb inferior Chinese products** in Indian markets.
 - ✓ Ministry of road transport and Highways has decided to **not allow Chinese companies in road projects.**
- **Agreements with USA to counter China**- India has also signed four foundational agreements such as General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), Logistics Support Agreement (LSA), Communications Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA) and Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (BECA) with USA that cover areas of military information, logistics exchange, compatibility.
 - ✓ Through these agreements, India and USA can act together and work to counter the Chinese strategies.
- **Supply Chain Resilience Initiative**- India along with Japan and Australia has launched Supply Chain Resilience Initiative to lessen dependence on China.

THEORETICAL UNDERSTANDING IN DEALING WITH CHINA

Complex Interdependence

- As per **Kanti Bajpai**, India's relationship with China is marked by Complex Interdependence. He further adds that China and Pak are the biggest challenges to India's strategic community and Border settlement is pre-condition for normalization.
 - ✓ Also, while Old rivalries like Border dispute are still persistent, new issues like Trade differential, hydropolitics over Brahmaputra Dams, CPEC and NSG issues etc are emerging.
- **Question on effectiveness of QUAD**- China also has similar complex interdependence relationship with USA, Japan, and Australia, which put question mark on effectiveness of QUAD.
 - ✓ In response to the recent **Galwan valley clash**, India has tightened scrutiny of Chinese investments in India, banned some Chinese apps, and cancelled some public contracts with Chinese firms.
 - ✓ However, there are limits to decoupling.
 - ✓ China accounted for about 12% of India's imports in 2019 when total two-way trade was \$92.68 billion, \$56.77 in China's favour.
 - ✓ China was India's largest trading partner until overtaken by the United States in 2019.
 - ✓ These dependencies are considerable in auto parts, pharmaceuticals, electronics, telecom, power, and fin-tech.
- **Mutual interest in global bodies**- India and China have mutual interest in World Trade Organisation, Climate change and working together towards common goal of multilateralism. However, in Asia India needs to work with USA to balance China.
- **Mismatched expectations**- In words of former Foreign Secretary **Vijay Gokhale**, "Mismatched expectations and "misperceptions", especially over India's concerns over the Belt and Road Initiative and China's view of India-U.S. ties, lie at the root of deteriorating relations between Delhi and Beijing, and could lead to an "antagonistic rivalry" and even future confrontation"

Functionalism

- **Harsh V Pant**: It is important for India to have strong relationship with USA but it is also more pertinent to have normal and mutually beneficial with China. While expanding relationship with Washington, Delhi must know how to manage Beijing. It is tight rope act for Delhi, but one that India will simply have to walk.

Institutionalism

- **Happymon Jacob:** India needs to resort to smart balancing since neither straight-forward balancing will work owing to large power gap and band wagoning won't serve Indian interests.
 - ✓ India also needs to do Co-binding China in a bilateral/regional security complex, i.e., coordinate on regional security issues.
 - ✓ At the same time, make a security community in Indo-pacific and contain China.
- On the other hand, **Bertil Lintner** in his book "China's India War" mentions that Asia's two giants are destined to be rivals because they are simply too different.
 - ✓ "It is hard to imagine two cultures that are more different than India and China in terms of history, social structure and political culture" and the relations between them represent a true "clash of civilisations."
- **M. K. Narayanan** has also mentioned that China and India are destined to be rivals due to geography and other factors such as large populations, old civilizations, rich and venerable cultures and artificial borders.

Is the India-China conflict intractable-India's move

- **China's negative geography-** As a wannabe world power, China must first be dominant in its neighbourhood.
 - ✓ The problem for Beijing is geography, where big powers such as Russia, Japan and India are its neighbours, and the US has a major oceanic presence.
 - ✓ China's own heavy-handed conduct has left it with few friends.
 - ✓ It has actually provoked the formation of a new military alliance, AUKUS, in the western Pacific, layered upon Quad which includes India and Japan as well.
- **Locational advantage for India-** In SA-IOR, India has a locational advantage, with its peninsula jutting 2,000 km into the Indian Ocean.
 - ✓ Just as small South Asian countries use China to balance India, there is a wider region — Southeast Asia and Central Asia — which sees New Delhi as a balancer to China.
 - ✓ Sadly, India has so far failed to live up to expectations, but things can change.
- **Rapidly changing Demography-** China is aging rapidly, India's demographic profile will be positive till the 2050s helping power its economic growth.
 - ✓ There may be a huge difference in the national power of China and India today, but New Delhi's role as a global actor is aided by the American need to balance China in the western Pacific.

NOTE- The bottom-line is that Beijing wants Washington to accept it as a peer, and at the same time, wants to push New Delhi to acknowledge its primacy in SA-IOR. Just as the US rejects the Chinese contention, so, too, does India, which has a strong sense of its own destiny as a leading nation of the world, if not a great power. All this makes for a situation of intractable conflict.

How can India handle China?

- **Practicality-** Pragmatism, not jingoism will help India deal with China, India must shed naive optimism and halt China's covert but steady haemorrhaging of Indian territory-Naval chief Arun Prakash
- **No counter strategy against China-** New Delhi, on its part, has failed to evolve a strategy to counter China's designs or even issue a White Paper to explain the dimensions of this challenge to Parliament and the public.
 - ✓ China, having amply demonstrated its penchant for "salami-slicing" territory, as well as its disdain for international law, leaves India with little room for complacency or for vainly hoping that so-called "legacy issues" will resolve themselves with time.
 - ✓ It is, therefore, vital to deconstruct China's elaborate charade and to halt the covert but steady haemorrhaging of Indian territory.

- **Revive Chinese PM Zhou's offer of 1960**- India could exhume and revive the offer reportedly made by PM Zhou in 1960.
 - ✓ Seeking strategic depth for Highway 219 that links Xinjiang with Tibet across Aksai Chin, Zhou had suggested negotiating a "quid pro quo" wherein China would recognise the McMahon Line in exchange for India making certain adjustments in the west.
 - ✓ This would call for considerable political boldness and diplomatic adroitness.
- **Sustained pressure to bear on China**- Another option would be for India to bring sustained pressure to bear on China on the diplomatic, trade and psychological fronts and await results.
 - ✓ At the same time, Indian forces must remain poised for swift direct action; seizing unoccupied territory and holding on to it as a bargaining chip.
 - ✓ The surprise capture of tactical heights on the Kailash Range by our Special Forces brought severe psychological pressure on Beijing and must serve as a template.
- **Opportunities in maritime domain**- another option lies in the maritime domain where opportunities exist, both for power-balancing via partnerships, as well as direct naval action.
 - ✓ China's economy and industry are overwhelmingly dependent on uninterrupted seaborne trade and energy.
 - ✓ The Andaman & Nicobar Islands, suitably fortified and militarised, could become maritime bastions, dominating the Malacca Straits.
- **To maintain status quo**- The last option would, obviously, be to maintain the status quo — with 50,000-60,000 troops deployed at high altitudes — and engage in sustained military/diplomatic parleys hoping for useful outcomes — with an unpredictable Chinese threat hanging over our heads like a sword of Damocles.

UKRAINE CRISIS AND CHINA

- **Attention of west is diverted from China to Russia**- As a consequence of the Russian invasion of Ukraine; the West will possibly direct its attention away from China.
 - ✓ Thus, China will not remain the principal villain in the eyes of the liberal world, which it has been
- **Reduction in China's 'wolf warrior diplomacy'**- One might also see a reduction in China's 'wolf warrior diplomacy' as it senses an opportunity to mediate and create a stake in the settlement process.
 - ✓ Russia is imposing costs on the West by stretching its military budgets is also a good thing for China.
 - ✓ This will divert Europe's attention to its neighbourhood and away from the Indo-Pacific and possibly delay its engagements with the Quad.
- **Pattern in Ukraine's engagement with Europe**- Beijing also sees a pattern in Ukraine's engagement with Europe and fears its repetition in Central Asia where Russian and Chinese interests converge in keeping democratic interventions away.
 - ✓ The principal shared concern for China and Russia is that of externally instigated regime changes, which force democratisation in Central Asia and destabilise the region.
- **Shock and awe and escalation matrix**- The shock and awe and escalation matrix used by Russia could well be a template if China were to consider a military solution in Taiwan or in circumstances where it sees its core interests being violated.
 - ✓ China would also be studying Russian posturing and signalling, such as putting the nuclear deterrent forces on high alert, and the response from the U.S., the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, individual European countries and the UNSC.

Key Ideas and Way Ahead

There are 3 broad Approaches to deal with China

- **Idealist** – It was visualised by **Tagore and followed by Nehru.**

- ✓ It was based on principle of Panchsheel, Asian solidarity and Asian century.
- ✓ However, it resulted into India-China war of 1962.
- **Realist** – It was based on views of **Sardar Patel**.
 - ✓ It was based on **realism and Kautailyan wisdom** which makes neighbour as natural enemy.
 - ✓ They considered China Irredentist land grabbing state and suggested policy of Balancing.
- **Pragmatic** – This policy is suggested by strategic experts like **C Raja Mohan, Shyam Saran** etc in context of **‘complex interdependence.’**
 - ✓ This policy of **Co-engagement is based on principle of functionalism** which involves compartmentalisation of issues.
 - ✓ It involves cooperating on issues of mutual interests and competing in others.
- **“Antagonistic Cooperation”- Shiv Shankar Menon** predicts that future of India China relationship will be **“Antagonistic Cooperation”**.
 - ✓ Thus, New Delhi needs a new modus-Vivendi to deal with China. Some of the measures can be hotlines between armies, CBMs like Border Personnel Meeting.
- **India needs proactive rather than reactive strategy to counter China’s warfare strategy.** According to **Samir Saran**, India needs to stand up to China when national interests are at stake.
 - ✓ **Low key diplomacy** should be pursued as first option.
 - ✓ **Compartmentalisation of issues** needs to be done and to work on those issues according to their level of priority.
 - ✓ India and China both should need to **create new “normative principles”** to manage regional affairs.
- **Happymon Jacob** has suggested to leverage **complex interdependence** and **adopting Smart balancing** as since neither **straight-forward balancing** will work owing to large power gap and **band-wagoning** won’t serve Indian interests.
 - ✓ He has suggested to **Co-bind China in a bilateral/regional security complex** and at the same time, making a **security community** in Indo-pacific to contain China.
 - ✓ This will need immense diplomatic skills and will be a tightrope walk but is one that India simply needs to walk.
- **Frederic Grare** in his book **“India Turns East: International Engagement and USA-China rivalry”** has suggested that India should ‘reinvent the concept of strategic autonomy’.
 - ✓ He argues that India must avoid past regional isolation in the name of non-alignment and leverage US capacities to its own benefit, without becoming entangled in the rivalry between Washington and Beijing.
- **Zorawar Daulet Singh** in his book **“Powershift: India-China Relations in Multi-Polar world”** takes apart multiple pieces of conventional wisdom.
 - ✓ According to him, a greater Indian naval presence to threaten China’s sea lines of communication assumes a zero-sum confrontation between Beijing’s naval ambitions and New Delhi’s.
 - ✓ Pointing out that all of the actors in the region, including the multiple mid-sized states, need free access to shipping lanes, he held that, India becoming a “net security provider” in the seas of the Asia-Pacific would not be “prudent”.
 - ✓ Instead, it should shore up its presence on the Asian continent.

Conclusion

- The future of Sino-Indian relationship remains uncertain due to flux in geopolitics.
- In words of MEA **S. Jaishankar**, “In the world of uncertainty and positioning, the two nations have at least an interest in building a stable relationship.
- The long-term challenge will be how two rising powers in close proximity accommodate each other”.

INDIA-RUSSIA

PYQs

1. The recent differences between India and Russia are the result of misconceptions rather than facts. Elucidate. [2017/15m/200w/7] b]
2. Analyse the drivers of Indo Russia relations in the post Cold War era. [2014/20m/250w/7a]
3. Comment on the recent trends in Russia's foreign policy. [2010/20m/200w/7a]
4. Discuss the present state of Indo-Russian relations. [2006/60m/7]
5. Discuss the areas of cooperation between India and Russia. [2003/20m/200w/5c]
6. Write a short note on Indo-Russian Summit 1997. [1999/20m/200w/5b]
7. Russian foreign policy is described as the tyranny of the weak. Explain how judiciously Russia has made use of her weakness vis-a-vis the West and USA. [1996/60m/7]
8. Russia and NATO. Comment. [1995/20m/200w/5c]

Introduction-

- **Declaration on the India-Russia Strategic Partnership-** the India and Russia ties have been a longstanding relation.
 - ✓ Since the signing of the "Declaration on the India-Russia Strategic Partnership" in October 2000, India-Russia ties have acquired a qualitatively new character with enhanced levels of cooperation in almost all areas of the bilateral relationship including political, security, defence, trade and economy, science and technology, and culture.
- **Downfall in relation-** However, the relations have taken a steep downfall over the past few years, especially in the post-COVID scenario.
 - ✓ One of the biggest causes for this is Russia's close relations with China and Pakistan, which have caused many geopolitical issues in the past few years for India.
- **Still interdependent-** The two countries, however, need to amend their policies as they are interdependent on each other in various ways and continuing cordial ties shall be beneficial for both, India and Russia

Expert's opinions-

- In words of PM **Narendra Modi**, "India gives top priority to its relations with Russia. In this rapidly changing world, our relation has become more relevant."
- In words of Russia's Ambassador in New Delhi, **Nikolay R. Kudashev**, "The Indo-Russian cooperation that is built in mutual trust and enriching each other is a living formula for the rest of the world."
- **Sochi summit-** The relationship was elevated to special and privileged strategic partnership at Sochi Informal Summit in 2018.
- **Long-term partnership-** India and Russia have long-term partnership in the military, security and nuclear energy fields with deep mutual trust & common foreign policy goal of multipolar world.
- **Little progress since cold war-** However, India's relations with Russia have made little progress since the end of the Cold War.

According to **Srinath Raghvan**, post-cold war, relations became transactional and centred on military technology & spares. Today their bilateral ties are heavily reliant on defence cooperation, while the economic partnership remains negligible even as the respective relations of the two with other states have grown rapidly.

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF INDIA-RUSSIA RELATIONS

- **Historical relations**- Relations between India and Russia are rooted in history, mutual trust and mutually beneficial cooperation.
 - ✓ However, Relations initially were quite tepid between India and Russia due to Stalin's attitude towards India.
 - ✓ The first impetus to the relationship came after Stalin's death when Khrushchev visited India in 1955 and that laid the foundation for the beginnings of an economic relationship.
- **Post-independence**- In the period immediately following independence the goal for India was attaining economic self-sufficiency through investment in heavy industry.
 - ✓ The Soviet Union invested in several new enterprises in the areas of heavy machine-building, mining, energy production and steel plants.
- **1960's**- After de-Stalinization phase of 1960's and intensification rift between China and Russia, political relationship begins to develop between India and Russia.
- **1962 war**- The relationship further consolidated after 1962 India-China war.
- **Treaty of Peace and Friendship in August 1971**- A watershed moment in relations between India and the Soviet Union was the signing of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship in August 1971.
 - ✓ The Treaty was the manifestation of shared goals of the two nations as well as a blueprint for the strengthening of regional and global peace and security.
- **1990s**- The nineties were a tumultuous period for both countries.
 - ✓ After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, India and Russia entered into a new Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in January 1993 and a bilateral Military-Technical Cooperation agreement in 1994.
- **2000**- In 2000, during the visit of President Putin to India, the partnership acquired a new qualitative character, that of a Strategic Partnership.
 - ✓ The strategic partnership institutionalized annual meetings between the Prime Minister of India and the President of Russia and meetings have been held regularly since then.
- **2010**- During the 2010 visit of President Dmitry Medvedev the relationship was elevated to the status of a **Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership**.

IMPORTANCE OF RUSSIA

- **Still one of the great powers**- In words of **Shyam Saran**, 'Russia retains its position as one of the great powers of the world. It has rich natural resources, a long history of mastery over science and technology and a sense of its own civilisation uniqueness.
 - ✓ It has also been nursing a grievous sense of loss and resentment over the loss of its Soviet empire in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.'
- **Champion of multipolarism**- Russia is today one of the vocal champions of a **multipolar order**.
 - ✓ Both India and Russia have high stakes in avoiding US-China bipolarity.
 - ✓ During the Sochi Summit, India and Russia agreed on building a multipolar world order and that the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia is an important factor for global peace and stability.
- **Defence partner of India**- Russia is major defence partner of India.
 - ✓ **For a long time, the USSR and then Russia has been a major source of weaponry and technology transfer for India.**

Energy Security-

- **ONGC active in Russia**- With energy deficits, India imports most of its hydrocarbons from the Middle East, but it is active in the Russian Far East, where the Indian giant ONGC has invested nearly \$3 billion in the fields of Sakhalin, while Rosneft has invested in India.
 - ✓ An Indian consortium is also present in the Siberian Arctic.

- **Nuclear power plant projects**- While France and the United States have not yet been able to implement their nuclear power plant projects in India, Russia has been developing the Kudankulam site in Indian Far South.
- **Space missions**- Space also deserves a special mention, with the support of Russia, among other things, India is in preparation for its first manned space mission scheduled for 2022, and is expected to eventually join the international space station.
- **Regional body's co-operation**- Beyond bilateral relations, India and Russia are stakeholders in various regional bodies, three of which include China: BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the RIC format, which brings together Russian, Indian and Chinese.
- **Support from Russia to India at multilateral bodies**- New Delhi also benefits from Russian support in multilateral affairs.
 - ✓ Moscow has long supported India's desire to expand the circle of permanent members of the Security Council, and to entry into the Nuclear Suppliers Group - which Beijing is blocking.
- **India and Russia also support each other on sensitive issues**. In 2014, New Delhi declared that it understood Russia's "legitimate interests" in Ukraine, and Indian diplomacy barely commented on Syrian affairs, while denouncing international terrorism.
 - ✓ As for Moscow, it reaffirmed at a very early stage that Kashmir was "a bilateral issue" when Pakistan launched in the summer of 2019 an international campaign against the abolition of Kashmir's autonomy under Indian administration.

TRADE AND CONNECTIVITY- \$11 BILLION

- **Main exports**- Russia's main exports to the world consist of energy-oil, gas, nuclear-and arms sales
- **Strategic Economic Dialogue**- India Russia Strategic Economic Dialogue was started in 2018.
- **Eastern Economic Forum**- India participated in Eastern Economic Forum (2020) which aims to support the economic development of Russia's resource rich Far East.
 - ✓ Also, India has extended a \$1 billion line of credit for the development of this region
- **Maritime route between India and Russia**- Also, proposal for maritime route between Chennai and Vladivostok has been made.
 - ✓ It would reduce the time for goods to be shipped to the Russian Far East by 16 days.
 - ✓ This route would potentially add the required balance to peace and prosperity in South China Sea and could open new vistas for India, like the India Russia-Vietnam trilateral cooperation.

ENERGY-

- **World Energy Outlook**- The **International Energy Agency's World Energy Outlook** projects that India will account for almost 30 percent of global energy demand growth, and for 11 percent of global energy use by 2040
- **Reserves of natural gas**- Russia have one of the world's largest reserves of natural gas. India has begun its shift toward natural gas while Russia has been keen to expand its gas markets away from Europe
- **ONGC Videsh** has been involved in Russia since 2001; by acquiring 20 percent stake in the **Sakhalin I oil and gas plant**.
- **St. Petersburg Declaration, 2017**- In the **St. Petersburg Declaration, 2017**, the two leaders reiterated their interest in "launching joint projects on exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons in the Arctic shelf of the Russian Federation.
- **Northern Sea Route** (NSR), which is just about to become an alternative way of delivering oil and gas to European and Asian markets, will definitely facilitate the process of resource development in the Arctic and open up new opportunities for Indian companies.
- **'Pivot to Asia' strategy**- As part of his **'Pivot to Asia' strategy**, President Vladimir Putin is inviting foreign countries to invest in this region.

- ✓ The country's outreach to Asian nations has especially gained momentum after the 2014 Crimea crisis.
- **Nuclear plants**- In nuclear energy field Russia remains the only foreign country involved in nuclear power production in India. Modi and Putin agreed to set up 6 new nuclear plants in India.
- **Projects in third-countries**- Further both are working together on projects in third-countries such as in Bangladesh with its Rooppur NPP project.

DEFENCE

- **Russia commands 58 percent of total arms imports by India**, followed by Israel and the US at 15 and 12 percent, respectively.
 - ✓ This figure is lower than 2010-14 when Russia had a share of 70 percent of the Indian defence market.
- **Willing to share strategic technology**- However, Russia is one of the few nations willing to share strategic technology with India. It leased Akula class submarine to India & is an important Partner in Brahmos missile system.
- **S-400 deal**- Further, S-400 deal despite US reservations and CAATSA highlight India's desire to maintain strategic Autonomy.

DIVERGENCE BETWEEN INDIA AND RUSSIA

- **Special and privileged partnership**- While their bilateral relationship is free of active conflict, the repercussions of external factors can no longer be ignored or underestimated.
 - ✓ Thus, it is pertinent to examine the effect of these developments on the long-standing “**special and privileged partnership**,” as New Delhi and Moscow seek to position themselves amid the ongoing flux in global politics.
- In his article titled, **Alexei Zakharov, ‘Can the Russia-India Friendship Survive in the New Bipolar World?’**, has argued that, Russia and India’s divergence toward the two global centres of power—China and the United States—is gradually burning the bridges of Russian Indian friendship.
 - ✓ In his words, “Their partnership resembles a marriage that is falling apart, in which the only thing stopping the couple from getting a divorce is their many years of interdependence.”
- According to him, there are **two fundamental problems** in Indo-Russian relations right now.
 - ✓ The first is that Moscow is incapable of expanding its relationship with New Delhi beyond the confines of cooperation in the military and energy sectors.
 - ✓ The second problem is that Russia’s confrontation with the United States is forcing its Asia policy to tilt toward China, which cannot fail to impact its relations with India.

KEY FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES OF RUSSIA:

- **Honourable accommodation** with the west
- Russia has **no desire to play second fiddle to China**. It considers China as potential adversary in the future.
- **Multipolar global order** with Russia as swing state' in global Balance of Power

WHY DEFENCE COOPERATION DECLINED?

1. India's desire to **diversify its defence import basket** increased competition for Russia with other suppliers
2. Dissatisfaction in India with **post-sales services and maintenance** being offered by Russia.
3. Growing closeness between India and the West and New Delhi’s efforts to get cutting-edge technologies from west to upgrade its mostly Soviet-era military equipment.

CAATSA, Russia’s S-400s, and the challenge for India’s defence indigenisation

- **Foreign dependence is the main issue**- Regardless of the state of India–US and India–Russia ties, there remains an inescapable challenge that India has struggled to achieve since its independence—New Delhi’s inability to indigenise the development of military products.
- The S-400 deal is only symptomatic of a larger, yet perpetual malaise.
 - ✓ **S-400 or THAAD- both are dependency**- Even if India substituted the S-400s for the Patriot or THAAD systems, New Delhi would have replaced one external supplier with another creating another dependency.
 - ✓ On the other hand, India may have to compensate the US for its refusal to buy the Lockheed or Raytheon built SAMs by purchasing some weapons system or platform from the US entrapping India in a vicious cycle of interminable addiction to foreign military supplies.
 - ✓ Conversely, sourcing capabilities from the US are not without their negative consequences for India–Russia defence relations either.
 - ✓ Unless India is able to limit this foreign dependence on crucial weapons systems more generally, frequency of tensions with one or two weapons suppliers, which also happen to be major powers, will persist.
 - ✓ Indigenisation of defence hardware significantly limits extraneous pressures and in all likelihood in some cases even renders them irrelevant.

ISSUES IN INDIA-RUSSIA TRADE PARTNERSHIP

- **Lack of involvement of the private sector**, poor connectivity, the stalling of the International North-South Economic Corridor has resulted in higher costs for transactions.
- **Weak banking links, cumbersome regulations** on both sides and Russia’s restrictive visa regime have restricted growth of India-Russia trade partnerships.
- **Russian firms import goods from China or Europe** as **transport** takes one or two weeks compared to 40-50 days from India.
- **Heavily dependent on collaboration**- The Russia-India economic relationship is heavily dependent on collaboration between state-controlled companies and Government-to-government interaction often leads to **bureaucratic delays**.
 - ✓ Further, there are difficulties in interaction between Russian public sector companies and Indian private companies.

Way forward

- **Free trade zone**- The early conclusion of a free trade zone under the FTA between India and the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) could facilitate trade between Russia and India.
- **Attract private sector companies**- Both sides need to attract private sector companies, including start-ups to the business dialogue, and facilitate conditions for doing business.
- **Need to embrace new areas**- Finally, there is need to embrace new areas of economic relationship and to digitalise the partnership to neutralise the geographical distance between the two countries.

RUSSIA-CHINA-PAK

- In words of **Gaurie Dwivedi**, “Russia and China have more than just communism and a dislike for the present **rule-based global order in common**.”
 - ✓ He further adds that “as global realignment began to take shape, both in Asia and in the Middle East, causing the world to become increasingly bipolar, it was perfect timing for fellow comrades Jinping and Putin to come together.”
- The two communist countries have come a long way since their border conflict in 1969 which led to frosty ties till 1985.

- Since then, ties between Moscow and Beijing have been on the rise and were further upgraded post the signing of the 2001 Treaty of Friendship. Russia and China have economic complementarities and political convergences final settlement of their long-standing border disputes in 2005 paved the way for a broader relationship.
- Russian Foreign Minister **Sergey Lavrov** described Sino-Russian cooperation as “close and fruitful in virtually all spheres” and “a vital factor in international affairs.”
 - ✓ For his part, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi described the relationship as being better than an alliance, saying the two would “always be each other’s strong backers.”
- **Russia overtook Saudi Arabia as the leading oil supplier to China.** Signing of the largest ever \$400 billion gas deal, proposal to connect Eurasian Economic Union to the Belt and Road Initiative and inauguration of the first cross-border pipeline between their countries, called the "Power of Siberia" highlight this growing convergence.
- It must also be noted that, **Chinese support in Russia's confrontation with the West does not mean a strategic convergence of the two states interests.** Even if Russia and China continue to have similar approaches globally, they will definitely find it difficult to align their policies in their neighbourhood.
- In words of **Gabriel Gavin**, “Despite the warm rhetoric, the reality of Sino-Russian diplomacy is that it runs a mile wide and an inch deep.”
- Russia continues to view China as a potential strategic adversary of the future. Thus, Russia was very supportive of India's entry into SCO, India became a full member in 2017. A major reason for this was Russia's and Central Asian state's desire to prevent the organisation from being dominated by China.

RUSSIA PAKISTAN RELATIONS-

- According to **C. Raja Mohan**, Moscow play china card to enhance its leverage w.r.t USA similarly closeness with Pakistan is intended to warn India.
- **Removed the arms embargo-** In 2014, Moscow removed the arms embargo imposed on Pakistan and sale of Mi-35 helicopters. Russia has also funded new gas pipeline between Lahore and Karachi via a \$2-billion loan.
- **Joint military exercises-** Russia and Pakistan have also conducted Joint military exercises.
 - ✓ According to strategic experts, this was a message to India for its growing closeness to the US, at the same time; Moscow is looking at Pakistan with reference to its policy on Afghanistan and wider stability in Central Asia and Caucasus.
- In words of Russia's special envoy for Afghanistan, **Zamir Kabulov**, “we understand India's concerns, but we can't win the war on terror without Pakistani support”
- **Relief for India-** Despite concerns in India about growing closeness between Russia and Pakistan, Moscow stood by India on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, arguing that "India's decision [on Jammu and Kashmir] is a sovereign decision which is as per its Constitution and that "Moscow follows a policy of non-interference in domestic affairs of countries."

RUSSIAN INTEREST IN AFGHANISTAN

- **Stable Afghanistan-** Russia is interested in a stable Afghanistan to safeguard its security and strategic interests.
 - ✓ It has alliance responsibilities under the **Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO)**, and a rising level of violence makes Russia concerned about its spill over into Central Asia and within its own borders.
- **Areas of concern-** The issues related to the **flow of refugees, drug trafficking, and spread of radicalism** is other leading areas of concern for Russia.
- **The threat of ISIS-** is also one of the top concerns.

- ✓ Already, the Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu has warned about the movement of ISIS fighters from Syria, Libya, and other places to Afghanistan, leading to the strengthening of Russian capabilities at the military base in Tajikistan.
- **Assurance from Taliban**- In this context, the chief goal of Russia is to get assurances from the Taliban that it 'would not violate the borders of the Central Asian countries.'
 - ✓ In addition, it will 'ward off the threat of ISIS in Afghanistan and eradicate drug production in the country after the end of the civil war.'

INDIA-RUSSIA COOPERATION IN AFGHANISTAN

- **Link between India and Afghanistan**- Moscow could be helpful for New Delhi in reaching out to various Afghan players.
 - ✓ The Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar has noted the need for the two sides to **work together** to ensure that the 'economic, social, and democratic' progress made in the past years is preserved.
- **The threat of ISIS** is also a shared one. Both the parties would benefit from a stable Afghanistan established through political dialogue.
 - ✓ Additionally, such a development will have a positive impact on connectivity plans of the two sides.
- **SCO**- Apart from bilateral discussion on these issues, another avenue for India-Russia cooperation on Afghanistan would be through multilateral engagement in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).
 - ✓ The SCO–Afghanistan Contact Group provides a platform to coordinate with regional countries as well as the Afghan government directly on security issues which is an important part of Indian strategy.
- **Spread of radicalism and terrorism**- The threat of spread of radicalism and terrorism is a common concern, where issues of mutual concern can be pursued through Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS).

According to **Nivedita Menon**, though India's outlook on Afghanistan will not always coincide with that of other players, Moscow can step in in its endeavour to build a limited security agenda to safeguard its interests. If the two sides can find common ground on Afghanistan, it would help New Delhi to preserve its interests in the war-torn country and for Moscow, it would provide an opportunity to strengthen its position as a key Eurasian power as well as its relationship with India.

The Ukraine crisis and India: Balancing triumph and tribulation

Background of the conflict-

- Ukraine was a member of the Soviet Union until 1991 when it disintegrated, and Russia has tried to maintain the country in its orbit since then.
- In 2014, a separatist insurgency started in Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland, Donetsk Basin, also known as,
- Russia further gained a maritime advantage in the region due to its invasion and annexation of Crimea.
- As a result, both the US and the EU have pledged to safeguard the integrity of Ukraine's borders.

What is Ukraine's importance to Russia?

- Ukraine and Russia have shared cultural and linguistic ties for hundreds of years.
- Ukraine was the most powerful country in the Soviet Union after Russia.
- Ukraine has been a hub for commercial industries, factories and defence manufacturing.
- Ukraine also provides Russia with access to the Black Sea and crucial connectivity to the Mediterranean Sea.

Why Russia did attacked Ukraine?

Economic Factors

- **Eurasian Economic Community**- Russia, considering the economic significance of Ukraine, sought Ukraine's membership in the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC), which is a free trade agreement that came into being in 2015.
- **Ukraine refused**- With its huge market and advanced agriculture and industrial output, Ukraine was supposed to play an important role. But Ukraine refused to join the agreement.

Geo-Political and Strategic Factors

- **NATO's eastward extension**- Russia claims that the eastward expansion by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) which they call "enlargement", has threatened Russia's interests and has asked for written security guarantees from NATO.
- **NATO missile defence system**- NATO, led by the U.S., has planned to install missile defence systems in Eastern Europe in countries like Poland and the Czech Republic to counter Russia's intercontinental-range missiles.

What is India's position and dilemma?-

- **3 main reasons**- Expectations of a close strategic partner in the US; the need to maintain strong ties with Moscow and; to avoid any perception of proximity to the emerging Sino-Russian axis.
 - ✓ In unison, these three compulsions also narrate the story of India's challenges today and the implicit need for a more accommodative evolution of its traditional strategic autonomy to a positioning that straddles balancing and hedging with occasional pushing.
- **With India's own growing role and aspirations**, the tension in its decision-making could be felt more sharply in the future, especially as when the choice is between "comprehensive global strategic partnership" with the US on one hand, and its "special and privileged partnership" with Russia on the other. China's direct conflict with India and its ever-increasing bellicosity marks it as a relative outlier in India's great power calculations, where despite trade dependence on China, India's choices vis-à-vis Beijing are clearer in comparison to the other two great powers.
- **India-Russia vs. Russia-China**- If India's strong relationship with the US keeps Russia on the edge; Russia has pared down its apprehensions by forging a strong relationship with China and by its intermittent signals through its relationship with Pakistan.

NOTE- Even though European Union and United States sanctions have hurt the Russian economy, moreover, it shows **no signs of collapse**. Indeed, Russia has grown its foreign exchange to record levels, in preparation for a long crisis.

- There's no telling how the distant power-struggle in Ukraine will end, but one way or the other, it will shape India's world for decades to come.

India's diplomatic dilemma post Russian military movement

- **De-escalation**- At an emergency meeting called by the UNSC on the Russia-Ukraine crisis, India said the immediate priority was de-escalation.
 - ✓ The meeting came after Russia's President Vladimir Putin recognized the independence of two Russian-backed separatist regions in eastern Ukraine.
- **Abstained from voting in UN**- Immediately after the annexation, India abstained from voting in the UN General Assembly on a resolution that sought to condemn Russia.



- **Voted against Ukraine in 2020**- In 2020, India voted against a Ukraine-sponsored resolution in the UN General Assembly that sought to condemn alleged human rights violations in Crimea.
- **Neutral position**- India's position is largely rooted in neutrality and has adapted itself to the post-2014 status quo on Ukraine.

Key takeaways from India's position

- **Not considered as neutral**- While India may like to portray the statement as neutral, but the western bloc, led by the United States, will not view it in that fashion.
 - ✓ **Russia is breaching international treaties**- Internationally, Russia's actions are widely seen as violation of a sovereign nation's territorial integrity, and a breach of international law and agreements — including the Minsk Agreements of 2014 and 2015 between Kyiv and the Russian-backed separatists, and the 1994 Bucharest Memorandum
- **Indian Diaspora**- Major concern for India remains the 20,000-odd Indian nationals, mostly students, in Ukraine
- **Intensify diplomatic efforts**- India has asked "all sides" to intensify diplomatic efforts to reach an amicable solution at the earliest.
 - ✓ This is again a time-tested Indian line — in which it refrains from blaming any one side for not being cooperative.
 - ✓ The West has squarely blamed Putin for the current situation, while the Russian President has said the threat to Russia from NATO's eastward expansion is responsible for tensions.
- **Being viewed as double standards**- Indian statement did not use the words "territorial integrity and sovereignty", which it always refers to in the context of China's aggressive behaviour. Some in the West are likely to view this as condoning the Russian action, and applying double standards.

India is walking tightrope amid calls for Russia's isolation

- **Sanctions from the west**- Russia's all-out invasion of Ukraine has prompted a wave of sanctions from all over the world with global leaders seeking to ramp up pressure on the Kremlin.
- **India's own interest**- India's decision to abstain from voting at UNSC does not mean support for Moscow but India's reliance on cold war ally on terrorism, border issues and arms trade.
- **Plans to use the leverage for China in future**- Both Pakistan and China are seen to be on the Russian side and India believes Moscow has leverage to change Beijing's hard stance on border issue.
 - ✓ This is not just an abstract question.
 - ✓ But the fact is that India is in the middle of a war with China. India is locked in an eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation with China over disputed areas.
- **CAATSA sanctions**- There is a possibility of CAATSA sanctions on India by the U.S. as a result of the S-400
- **Chance for India**- A pact between the US and Russia might affect Russia's relations with China. This might allow India to expand on its efforts to re-establish ties with Russia.
- **Interconnected world**- The issue with Ukraine is that the world is becoming increasingly economically and geopolitically interconnected. Any improvement in Russia-China ties has ramifications for India

Impact of the ongoing crisis

- **Exports and imports** will be hit and the existing supply bottlenecks due to the pandemic will aggravate.
 - ✓ For instance, west will ask other nations to stop their import of energy from Russia and threaten sanctions against those nations and companies that continue to trade with Russia.
 - ✓ This would include China; otherwise the sanctions on Russia will not bite.
 - ✓ Since China is the biggest trading partner for many of the rich countries, this will disrupt trade massively and lead to further supply bottlenecks.

- ✓ The US may act to increase supply of petro products and ask friendly OPEC countries to also do so, to prevent prices from shooting up and disrupting the world economy.
- **Supply chain will be affected-** Ukraine is a major exporter of agricultural produce and their supplies will get disrupted, leading to increase in food prices.
- **Global capital flows will decline** since many countries would want their capital to invest at home rather than abroad. This along with the sanctions on financial flows will impact the financial markets
- **Growth will be hit** as a result of these adverse changes in consumption and investment. Budgets of nations will be impacted as military expenditures rise.
 - ✓ The already high fiscal deficits in the budgets will rise further and most likely setback social sector expenditures which will impact the poor the most.
- **Authoritarianism will rise** in most countries on the grounds of need for national unity and need for a strong leader to steer the nation through a crisis.
 - ✓ Dissent will be frowned upon and might have public support.
 - ✓ A fall out of all this could be **reduced attention towards the pandemic**, which most nations are assuming is now in an endemic phase.
 - ✓ The WHO has cautioned against this. Global vaccine inequity could rise in the name of national requirements.

Possible impacts of the war in the Long Run

- **China and Russia will get pushed closer to each other** and given the strength of the Chinese economy and the technology available with Russia, the cold war will not be between very unequal blocs as was the case in the 1950s
- **Cutting Russia from global economic cycle-** The current moves to freeze the assets of Russians in Western banks and to cut off credit to their companies, would force them to devise alternative international payments system independent of the dollar.
 - ✓ Those companies like, the Chinese, which defy Western sanctions will also need such a payment system.
 - ✓ So, two trading and financial blocs will emerge
- **Deglobalisation-** With deglobalisation and a greater need for investment in the home countries, global capital flows are likely to decline with less going to the developing world.
- **Militarization-** The military industrial complex everywhere will be strengthened as militarization increases.
 - ✓ As more and more armament is used up in the conflicts and more arms are offered to countries, profits of these companies will rise.
 - ✓ Producing more armament is like producing machines to destroy them to produce more.

Impact on India and Way Ahead

- **India depends on imports for critical defence equipment.** It will face difficulty in procuring defence equipment already contracted since both the rich countries and the Russians will delay deliveries, given their own requirements.
 - ✓ This will mean India's preparation to face China and Pakistan will weaken.
 - ✓ China could take advantage of this development and push India harder.
 - ✓ Further, relations with both the US and Russia are likely to become tricky since we are forced to stay neutral between them while both expect support.
 - ✓ While neither may antagonize India but the support that was available till now may weaken.
- **Need to restructure relations-** In the longer run; India will have to restructure its international relations in the new Cold War scenario and especially given the relations with China.
 - ✓ That is India's most important concern and not Ukraine. In fact in the last two years while facing the Chinese obduracy we only got lip service from the Western powers and silence from Russia.

- **Need to strengthen own economy**- With deglobalisation impacting growth in the world, trade, capital and technology flows, India will have to strengthen its economy on its own.
 - ✓ The public sector will have to play an important role since the private sector will not be able to boost itself on its own when demand is short.
 - ✓ The country will have to strengthen its R&D which will require putting its education sector in order and the disastrous NEP based on substituting teachers by technology will have to be given up.
- **Growing role of social sectors**- Social sectors will have to receive a much higher priority so that the productivity of workers rises and their degrading living conditions improve.
 - ✓ It will not only provide the market for growth of Indian economy but strengthen the country.
 - ✓ We would have to resist the temptation of the rulers to turn more authoritarian because that would only dissipate the nation's energies.

Possible solution of the conflict

- Restrictions on military operations along the NATO/Russia border.
 - A moratorium on NATO expansion eastward.
 - Resolution of ongoing and frozen conflicts in the former Soviet space and the Balkans.
 - Modernization of the 1975 Helsinki Accords, which created a pan-European forum and articulated, agreed principles of interstate relations to undergird East-West detente.
- Consideration on the **Minsk agreement** has also been suggested by various scholars. However post Russian movement in Donetsk and Luhansk region the hope of status quo ante remains a pipe dream.

Minsk Agreement

- Minsk Agreements were signed in 2014 and 2015 in the Belarusian capital Minsk.

MINSK I

- Ukraine and the Russian-backed separatists agreed a 12-point ceasefire deal in the Belarusian capital in September 2014
- Its provisions included prisoner exchanges, deliveries of humanitarian aid and the withdrawal of heavy weapons, five months into a conflict that had by then killed more than 2,600 people – a toll that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy says has since risen to around 15,000.
- The agreement quickly broke down, with violations by both sides.

MINSK II

- Representatives of Russia, Ukraine, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the leaders of two pro-Russian separatist regions signed a 13-point agreement in February 2015.
- It set out military and political steps that remain unimplemented. A major blockage has been Russia's insistence that it is not a party to the conflict and therefore is not bound by its terms.
- **Point 10**, for example, calls for the withdrawal of all foreign armed formations and military equipment from the two disputed regions, Donetsk and Luhansk: Ukraine says this refers to forces from Russia, but Moscow denies it has any forces there.

Russia and NATO

- **Ukraine joining NATO-** At the heart of Russia's fears is the prospect of Ukraine joining NATO and NATO troops potentially stationed at the border with Russia.
 - ✓ NATO's historical record, of its penchant for expansionism, has likely fuelled such insecurities.
- **Founding Act of 1997-** After the dissolution of the former Soviet Union, the Eastern European military alliance, NATO, and Russia in 1997 signed the "Founding Act" on mutual relations, cooperation, and security.
 - ✓ Disregarding the spirit of this agreement, NATO quietly underwent five rounds of enlargement during the 1990s, pulling former Soviet Union countries into its orbit.
- **Agreements have fallen-** Cooperative exchanges, communications hotlines, and Cold War fail-safes such as arms control verification have fallen by the wayside, even more since Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014.
- **Alternative explanation-** It may be the case that owing to Putin's failure to develop Russia into an economic powerhouse that naturally attracted neighbouring countries and international capital to it, partly explains Moscow's deflection of attention to strategic questions relating to NATO and Russia's territorial integrity.
 - ✓ But unless western nations give assurances to Putin that NATO will not seek to relentlessly expand its footprint eastwards, Moscow will have little incentive to return to the negotiating table. But Russia and Mr. Putin must realise that war is not the means to peace and security.



Expert's Opinions

- **Suhasini Haider-** New Delhi's greatest concerns are:
 - ✓ **World War scenario:** Any conflict- where the U.S. and its European allies are ranged against Russia will impact the whole world- economically and in terms of security, and India, as a partner to both Moscow and Washington will either have to take sides, or be prepared to deal with unhappiness from both sides.
 - ✓ **S-400 delivery and US waiver:** The crisis comes precisely as India's purchase of the Russian S-400 missile system is under way- and New Delhi hopes for a waiver of U.S. sanctions on this.
 - ✚ Conflict will complicate both the delivery of the system, and the possibility of a presidential waiver.
 - ✓ **Moves focus from China:** Just as U.S. and Europe had grown more focussed on their Indo-Pacific strategy that puts India centre-stage, and India grapples with Chinese aggression and land-grab at the Line of Actual Control, and 100,000 troops along the boundary on both sides, the world's attention is diverted from China to Russia.
 - ✓ **Brings Russia China closer-** the Crisis will make Moscow more dependent on friends like China, and build a regional bloc of sorts that India is not a part of.
 - ✚ In Beijing this week, the future seems evident- as India has announced a **diplomatic and political boycott of the Olympic games-** while Putin, Central Asian Presidents, and Pakistan PM Imran Khan are all in Beijing to stand in solidarity with Xi Jinping.
 - ✓ **Energy crisis:** In any conflict- Europe worries Russia will turn down gas and oil supplies- driving energy prices up.
 - ✚ Already tensions **have pushed oil prices** up 14% in a month past \$90 and analyst say they could hit \$125 a barrel if the situation is not resolved.
 - ✚ **Investor sentiment has taken a beating** over the last few days in line with rising crude prices. Foreign portfolio investors have turned net sellers and have pulled out a net of Rs

51,703 crore from Indian equities between January and February, leading to decline and volatility in equity markets.

- ✓ **Indians in Ukraine:** As India's UN envoy pointed out in his speech- India has more than 20,000 nationals in Ukraine, mostly medical students, as well as business professionals in the field of pharma, IT and engineering- and the government is concerned about their safety in the event of a crisis, although MEA says it is not at present evacuating citizens.
- **Sanjaya Baru- GoI** neutrality on Ukraine part of India's correct goal of seeking strategic autonomy
- **P.S. Raghvan:** Pursuit of strategic interests in global geo-politics requires alignments along multiple axes (C. Rajamohan: Pursue Europe option)
 - ✓ India should draw red lines: Russia can develop relations with China and Pak-but not at cost of India's security
- **Shyam Saran** in his book '**How India Sees the world**' has pointed out that for India, the Ukraine crisis has introduced a new element of discomfort as it seeks to maintain its traditional relationship with Russia without spoiling its growing partnership with the US. It is also uncomfortable over the tightening embrace between Russia and China, which can only work to India's disadvantage.

Way forward

- In words of **Shyam Saran**, "Nostalgia may be useful, but it can't make up for lack of substantive drivers in India-Russia ties."
- **Need to change with time-** The challenge in front of India and Russia is that they need to transform a 20th century partnership and make it relevant for the 21st century
- **China factor-** Indo-Russia relationship faces increasing stress from the evolving international scenario characterized by the rise of China and deterioration of US-Russia relations.
- **Energy and defence** form the core of the bilateral relationship but are no longer enough on their own.
 - ✓ There is a need **to search for new areas** to serve as catalysts for expanded cooperation. Both countries can explore the potential for collaboration with Japan and South Korea in Russian Far East region.
- **Need of forward-looking economic agenda-** A forward-looking economic agenda should include cooperation in the hi-tech sector, biotechnology, nanotechnology, AI, space, start-up and innovation, pharmaceuticals, healthcare etc. to harness the strengths of the two countries.
- **Encouraging SMEs** to engage in bilateral economic cooperation will also be an important step in this direction. Besides, furthering cooperation in the Russian Far East and the Arctic, both in bilateral and multilateral formats, would be beneficial.
- **Nivedita Menon-** According to Nivedita Menon, current period of geopolitical flux is exactly the time for the two sides to bank on their '**special and privileged strategic partnership**' to pursue a multi-vector foreign policy. The most important, critical take away from the relationship for both countries is the strategic space they provide each other to deal with the US, China and other great powers.
- **Nivedita Menon** has suggested revitalizing the bilateral India-Russia agenda.
 - ✓ According to her, an action like the quiet diplomatic effort by Russia in 2020 to get India and China to the table during their border clashes is critical for building confidence and much more effective than public airing of differences.
- **Chabahar-** since Russia has close relations with Iran, India should explore the possibility of Russian involvement in Chabahar port which will provide Afghanistan and Central Asia access to sea.
- **Multi-vector foreign policy-** Russia has made it clear that it is not in an alliance relationship with China and wants to have a multi-vector foreign policy.
 - ✓ In this context, India needs to take steps to shore up its relations with Russia to prevent it from becoming more dependent than it already is on China.

- ✓ It will also benefit Russia as it can prevent Chinese hegemony in Eurasia.
- **Need of “free and frank” discussions-** Lastly, as Neither India-China ties nor US-Russia ties are expected to improve in the short term; it might thus be prudent to intensify “free and frank” discussions on all issues as well as resolve to maintain neutrality on issues of core concern for each other while taking steps to strengthen the bilateral relationship.
 - ✓ This would ensure that at a time of uncertainty in a changing world, India’s and Russia’s engagement with other powers does not come at the expense of their bilateral partnership; while giving the two sides space to strengthen their political, economic, defence and cultural ties in the coming years.

Conclusion

- According to **Shyam Saran**, Russia retains its position as one of the **great powers** of the world. It has rich natural resources, a long history of mastery over science and technology and a sense of its own civilisation uniqueness.
- Thus, strengthening relations with India’s **time tested friend** and transforming the relationship for 21st century would serve dual purpose for New Delhi; **preserving strategic autonomy and containing Chinese threat**.
- Given that Moscow as well as New Delhi remains antithetical to the idea of being subordinate to any power, there remains scope for bilateral cooperation in Indo-Pacific and in Eurasia – including in Central Asia, West Asia and Afghanistan.

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ADMISSION OPEN

UNITED NATIONS

Syllabus- India and the UN System: Role in UN Peace-keeping; demand for Permanent Seat in the Security Council.

UPSC PYQ

- Bring out the objectives of India seeking permanent seat in Security Council. (2013)
- Is India's quest for a permanent seat in the Security Council a possibility or just a pipedream? Elaborate with reasons.
- Evaluate India's participation in United Nations peace-keeping operations over the years. 15 marks
- The United Nations completes 70 years of its establishment in 2015. What reforms is India asking for to strengthen the global institutions of governance and why?
- Critically analyze China's role in international politics against India's demand for permanent seat in UN Security Council. 15 marks
- "India has been the largest and consistent country contributing to the UN peacekeepers worldwide." Examine India's role in this perspective.
- 'Uniting for Consensus' also known as 'Coffee Club' has opposed the claims of India and other countries over permanent membership of the UN Security Council. Point out their major objections.
- Discuss the various impediments in India's way to a permanent seat in the Security Council.
- Analyze the recent trends in India's role in the UN peacekeeping operations. 15 marks
- Explain the importance of India's claim for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

Introduction

- UN is made of group of international institutions, which include central system located in New York, specialised agencies like WHO, ILO and programmes and funds such as UNICEF, UNDP
- **Dag Hammarskjöld:** "United Nations was not created to create heaven on this Earth but to prevent it from becoming hell."
- **When formed-** It was formed as an international organization in 1945. It is currently made up of 193 Member States.
- **Mission-** Its mission and work guided by the purposes and principles contained in its founding Charter and implemented by its various organs and specialised agencies.
- **Main activities-** Its activities include maintaining international peace and security, protecting human rights, delivering humanitarian aid, promoting sustainable development and upholding international law.
- **Role-** As mentioned in preamble, the envisaged role of United Nations to save succeeding generations from "scourge of War".
- **Aims to-** As per United Nations charter, it also aims
 - To **practice tolerance and live together** in peace with one another as good neighbours.
 - To unite our strength to **maintain international peace and security**.
 - To ensure, by the acceptance of **principles and the institution of methods**, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest.
 - To employ international machinery for the promotion of the **economic and social advancement of all peoples**.
- **Principles** -The United Nations act in accordance with the following principles.
 - ✓ **Article 2(1):** All member states are sovereign and equal.
 - ✓ **Article 2(2):** All are pledged to fulfil their obligations under the Charter in good faith.

- ✓ **Article 2(3):** All are pledged to settle their international disputes by peaceful means and without endangering international peace, security and justice.
- ✓ **Article 2(4):** They are to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against any other state.
- ✓ **Article 2(5):** They are to give the UN assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the Charter.
- ✓ **Article 2(6):** Organization shall ensure that states not members of UN shall act as far according to principles to maintain international peace.
- ✓ **Article 2(7):** The United Nations shall not intervene in matters which are essentially domestic ones of any state except when it is acting to enforce international peace.
- **Main pillars-** Functioning of United Nations is based on three pillars:
 - ✓ Protection of world peace
 - ✓ Promotion of Development
 - ✓ Protection of Human rights.

NOTE- United Nations reflects the **hope for “just and peaceful global community.”** It is the only global organization with legitimacy derived from universal membership and mandate which includes security, economic and social development, protection of human rights, environment.

EXPERT’S OPINIONS ON UN-

- **Gareth Evans**, former foreign minister of Australia in his article “**Valuing the UN**” argued that no other body embodies as many dreams yet so many frustrations.
 - ✓ Security Council is the prisoner of great power manoeuvring, general assembly is theatre of empty rhetoric, and ECOSOC is largely dysfunctional, secretariat as inefficient. Still, UN is important.
- **Hardeep Puri** in his book “**Perilous Intervention: the Security Council and Politics of Chaos**” argued that grounds for pessimism are undeniable, yet UN should not be written off.
- **Ban Ki Moon**, former secretary general of United Nation pointed that we need UN now more than ever.
 - ✓ This is because of the rise of global threats that have gone beyond the capacity of single nation including the superpower to deal on its own.
- **Shashi Tharoor:** “UN is the mirror of our society. It cannot be more successful than we want. It is not UN’s failure. It is our failure.”

IMPORTANCE OF UN

- **Only legitimate universal group-** It is only global organisation with legitimacy derived from universal membership and mandate which includes security, economy, social development and protection of human rights and environment.
- **Legitimizing state autonomy-** Membership and success of UN has come to be regarded as legitimizing state autonomy. It gives them place in international system.
- **Importance despite failure-** Despite flaws in UNSC, major powers prefer to take authorization of UNSC for any action they propose.
- **Expansion of social work-** UN’s economic and social work, management of peacekeeping and post conflict rebuilding has expanded since 1990’s.
 - ✓ The number of institutions in UN that address socio-economic issues has significantly increased since founding of UN. Despite shortage of funds, UN has acquired skills and resources with regard to key economic and social problems.
- **Outcome document of 2005-** The outcome document of 2005 world summit titled ‘**Responsibility to protect**’ asserted that UN charter does not merely assert rights of states but also of people. Statehood

could be interpreted as a conditional on respect of such rights. This justifies Humanitarian interventions by UN.

Achievements of UN in last 75 year

- **UN peace keeping missions:** since 1945, UN has conducted over 60 filed missions and negotiated over 170 peaceful settlements.
 - ✓ UN has helped more than 80 countries in Asia and Africa in **decolonisation process**.
- **Human rights-** United Nations' 1948 Universal Declaration of **Human Rights** is the custodian for the protection of human rights.
- **Nuclear proliferation:** UN passed a resolution to commit to the elimination of nuclear weapons in 1946. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is conducting regular inspections to check the nuclear proliferation.
- **Refugee Rehabilitation** - In 1950, the UN created the High Commissioner for Refugees to take care of the millions who had been displaced due to World War II.
- **MDG-** UN has launched 8 **Millennium Development Goals** and 17 **Sustainable Development Goals** to achieve sustainable development.
- **Environment:** In 1972, the UN environment programme was created. UN has created the United Nations framework convention on climate change to deal with the climate change related issues.
- **Impacts all aspects of life-** UN specialized agencies have made significant difference in almost all aspects of human life, including education, health, and poverty reduction, the rights of women and children, and climate change.
- **Nutritional security-** UN's World Food Programme, Food and Agriculture Organisation has helped improving nutritional security.
 - ✓ UN's World Food Programme won the Noble prize in 2020.
- **UNESCO** has been instrumental in protecting the world's most important natural and historic places.

Failures of United Nation

- It has to be measured with respect to United Nations' achievement in realising the core objectives. The record of UN in maintenance of peace and security has been mixed.
- On the one hand there is growing assertion of responsibility of international community, represented by UN to protect human rights of citizens.
- On the other hand, the centrality and monopoly of UN on peace operations has been questioned after wars in Iraq and Syria.
 - ✓ The military operations are also conducted by some regional organisations, ad hoc coalitions and hybrid arrangements involving UN and non-UN actors.

In Maintaining Peace

- Unfortunately, due to **east west conflict**, United Nation couldn't play any effective role in its prime objective.
- Collective security has remained paralysed.
- **Commitment towards peace-** At present commitment of countries towards peace is weakening.
- **Major tussles around the world-** United Nations could not play any effective role towards the resolution of crisis in Korean Peninsula, Palestinian issue, between India and Pakistan.
- **NPT-** Despite the signing of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, UN couldn't achieve nuclear proliferation.
- **Iraq-** UN Resolution 1483 attempted to legitimise the **Iraq invasion** that was carried out under the false assertion by the US and the UK that the Saddam regime was in possession of **Weapons of mass destruction**.

- **Syria**- the UN Security Council tried to pass several resolutions to address the **Syrian conflict**, but Russia utilised its veto power at least a dozen times to protect its ally, Assad.

In protecting Human rights

- **Humanitarian crisis**- United Nations couldn't play any effective role in protecting human rights during Rohingya crisis, Syrian crisis, crisis in many African countries.
- **Humanitarian aid**- The UN has failed to send humanitarian aid, food and drugs to civilians amid a blockade imposed on the war-torn countries like Syria, Yemen etc..
 - ✓ It shows failure of international community in protecting human rights. Even Human rights regime fell prey to geo-political ambitions of great powers.
- **Example**- For example, UN failed to uphold human rights values in Middle East wars, African wars or in US's war in Afghanistan.

In promoting development

- **Failure**- United Nation could not achieve sustainable, equitable distribution of development. Other developmental institutions of united nation could not create development friendly atmosphere in all countries.
- **WHO**- The most successful agency of United Nation has been World Health Organisation. Even that couldn't perform well during covid crisis. It has felt prey to geopolitical rivalry between USA and China.
- **Rise of other institutions**- United Nation's role as a major platform for development partnership has been taken by other institutions. Even WTO, IMF have side-lined united nation with respect to development agenda.
- **Need reforms**- Currently, United Nation is facing multiple crises and is in need of urgent reforms.
- **USA undermining UN**- United Nation has been a platform to establish USA's hegemony. However once USA realised that other countries are using United Nations platform to counter USA hegemony, USA has started undermining UN. It has threatened to come out of UN.
 - ✓ USA has been the biggest defaulter in paying membership dues.
- **ICC criticism**- The International Criminal Court has been criticized for prosecuting only African leaders while not acting against Western powers.
- **Crisis of credibility and relevance**- Like Non-alignment movement, united nation is also facing crisis of credibility and relevance.

Failures of the United Nations in the past one year

Fight against Covid

- UNSC failed to hold China accountable for its actions, WHO team has not been able to conclude on origins of the virus, or gain access to Chinese labs
- UN systems failed to ensure equitable distribution of vaccines, or hold US and Western countries for failing to share them, or even committing to the WTO appeal
- 4 million dead, fear of more variants of the virus, and no one is responsible
- WHO failed to see the problem coming, failed to stop the spread of the virus

Myanmar

- UNSC took no action against the Myanmar junta for the coup in February
- No new sanctions have been announced, nor any punitive actions
- No UN push for the release of democratically elected leaders

- This comes on the backs of an already unresolved situation with the Rohingya- about a million in refugee camps in Bangladesh, countless missions by the UN including the Kofi Annan report speaking of genocide, and no action.

Afghanistan

- In August: 3 discussions and 1 resolution on the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, not one contained any binding or punitive language. Each statement has been a watered down version of the previous one, and went from dropping the opposition to an Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan, to
- UN has failed to instil the idea of a transitional council – as it did in East Timor, and has no role of government formation
- UNSC has failed to extract assurances on democracy, human rights: women, girls, minorities, and commitment against terrorism: Remember it was the terror attacks in the US on 9/11 that led to a unified UN resolution, and the US strikes on Afghanistan. 20 years after the UN's' special session- Taliban back in power, Al Qaeda, other groups still in existence and the very real possibility of a gender crisis, a humanitarian crisis, a refugee crisis growing there.

Russia-Ukraine war

- UN failed to check the Russian troops advancement in Donbas region of Ukraine.
- UNSC and UNGA, although tried but were unsuccessful in checking the authoritarianism of Russia.
- UNSC even failed to collectively add up to stand up against Russia to stop the war in Ukraine.

Main issues with the UN

- Power in the hands of a few: P-5 has the veto
- Deep polarisation between US, UK, France and Russia, China
- Lack of UNSC reform, as demanded by India
- Failure of Sanctions: Iran, North Korea
- Global conflict fatigue: on contributing to operations, humanitarian assistance
- R2P failure in Libya

What is the need of the hour?

The real need is for two attributes:

- **Unity and Leadership**, both of which seem in short supply at the moment.
- In a world that is seeing the retrenchment of the US, the aggressive rise of China, and the success of populism, xenophobia and anti-globalisation leaders and forces in various countries of the world, it is hard to see the United Nations in its current form rise to its considerable potential, that was envisaged 76 years ago, and to the Charter adopted in 1945 beginning with the words:

United Nations Reforms

- Former External affairs Minister **Shushma Swaraj**: "The League of nation went into meltdown because it was unwilling to accept the need for reform. We must not make that mistake."
- Former UN Secretary-General **Kofi Annan**: "If we don't change the council, we risk a situation where the primacy of the council may be challenged by some of the new emerging countries."

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**: “Only reformed multilateralism with a reformed United Nations at its centre can meet the aspirations of humanity.”
- Reform is natural in any institution so that it remains relevant. Timely reforms within the institution can help it overcome element of obsolescence.
- **Institutional Reforms**
 - ✓ Article 2(7) of the UN charter doesn't permit UN intervention in the domestic affairs of sovereign states. UN intervenes on the basis of UNGA resolution based on **'responsibility to protect'**.
 - ✓ UN charter still mentions some states as **enemy states** of World War 2. **Article 107** of UN charter justifies action taken by the Allied powers against the former WWII enemy states. **Article 77** contains reference to enemy states in relation to the U.N. trusteeship.
 - ✓ U.N. Charter's anachronistic enemy state clauses has become an embarrassment for the countries defined as former enemy states.
- **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Reform**
 - ✓ Though decisions reached by UNGA are recommendations, it represents world's **moral opinion**.
 - ✓ No reform is needed in UNGA as such but better co-ordination is needed between UNGA and UNSC.
- **ECOSOC Reforms**
 - ✓ Number of developmental institutions have increased too much with huge overlapping functions. Hence, streamlining of these functions is needed.
 - ✓ These developmental institutions should be given management power.
- **Trusteeship Reforms**
 - ✓ Currently no trust territories are present under UN. This body completed its work long ago. Now it has become obsolete. Either it should be abolished or be given new mandate.
- **UN Secretariat Reform**
 - ✓ UN Secretariat should have greater representation from developing countries. It should address issues of red tapism.
 - ✓ It should work on training and capacity building of UN officials to meet the needs of 21st century.
- **UN peace keeping reform**
 - ✓ **Peacekeeping operations** have faced challenges in delivering on protection mandates and in contributing to long-term, sustainable peace.
 - ✓ Member states should show renewed political commitment for peacekeeping missions.
 - ✓ Peacekeeping missions should undergo significant institutional change. More focus should be on peace building.
 - ✓ **Financial support** to the peacekeeping missions should be increased.
- **Financial reforms**
 - ✓ Finances have been one of the major weaknesses of United nation. The United Nations' budget is not growing but the challenges it faces are. General Assembly approves \$3.2 billion UN budget for 2021 which is 2.8% reduction from 2020.
 - ✓ This **budget is highly inadequate** considering global challenges we are living in an age when multilateralism as such is coming to an end.
 - ✓ All countries must pay their due on time.
 - ✓ UN should have **independent source of income.**

Reform of UNSC

- ✓ Chapter VI of UN charter gives mandate to UNSC **to settle disputes peacefully through mediation and secure ceasefire through peacekeeping force.**
- ✓ Chapter VII of UN charter give power to UNSC **to impose military and economic sanctions.**
- ✓ UNSC is considered as nucleus of UN system. It is the only body of UN which **has teeth to bite.** UNSC has a major say in all critical appointment in UN.

- ✓ **The P-5 countries possess veto power.** It provides them ultimate weapon to stop functioning of UN against their national interest.
- ✓ There is huge **disappointment with the functioning of UNSC** primarily because P5 didn't allow UN to function by using veto power.
- ✓ There is **lack of transparency**, accountability in the functioning of UNSC.
- ✓ **Poor coordination** between UNSC and UNGA
- ✓ UNSC in its present form **can't be called representative**. There is need to reform manner in which veto power is exercised.
- ✓ Like during cold war, UNSC at present is **divided in P-3 and P-2**. None of the decisions of UNSC go without criticisms and allegations because of their partial nature.
- ✓ Further, UNSC is non representative, while Europe is over represented, **south America, Africa have no representation**, Asia is also under represented.

What has been the response of UN?

Five sets of issues have been identified by the General Assembly 62/557 decision on "question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters" -

- ✓ Categories of membership
- ✓ Question of veto
- ✓ Regional representation
- ✓ Size of an enlarged council and working methods of the Council
- ✓ The relationship between the Council and the General Assembly.

Categories of membership

- India has called for expansion in both permanent and non-permanent memberships and not only in Non permanent category.
- Increase in non-permanent category only would not address the issue of accountability and lack of checks and balances in the council.
- Supporting groups include the two largest groups- Africa with 54 members and L-69 with 42 members - and CARICOM (The Caribbean Community and Common Market), and G4 (India, Brazil, Japan, Germany).
- India has highlighted the need of Africa to be represented in both categories.
 - ✓ This directly challenges the proposed "so called" intermediate models wherein a longer term and immediate re-election are seen as compensations for a permanent membership.

Question of veto:

- India has called for the **abolition of veto** and till it exists, it needs to be provided to all members of the permanent category of the Security Council.
- India is **not** in favour of quantitative reform (of extending it immediately to new permanent members) but of quality - of introducing restrictions.

Regional representation:

- India has argued for an equitable geographical representation and urgent need for mitigating the non-representation and under-representation of some regions in both permanent and non-permanent categories.

Size of an enlarged council and working methods of the Council:

- Even though global population has trebled, and UN membership has grown by about 4 times since 1945
- India, realising the need to be realistic, has not called for a three-fold expansion in the membership of the Council.
- Instead G4 suggests a total of 25 or 26 members.

- On the working methods, G4 would like 14/25 or 15/26 affirmative votes for a decision.
- G4 & L69 groups would like the non-permanent members to hold the presidency of the Council at least once in their tenure.

Relationship between the Security Council & the General Assembly:

- India opines that it should not be competitive or adversarial, but “one of synergy and complementarity” that benefits the UN objectives of the promotion of international peace and security.
- A relationship with the General Assembly based on transparency, mutual trust and frequent interaction with all Member States will increase the credibility of the Council, which includes increase in dialogue between the Council and the Assembly.
- India thus has called for a greater transparency and consistency to improve the relationship between the two.

India and UNSC reform

- **Foreign policy agenda**- Getting its rightful place in the ‘comity of nations’ is an important objective of India’s foreign policy. In this context permanent seat at UNSC is very important.
- **PM Modi**- While speaking at the high-level dialogue of the U.N.’s Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) PM Modi pointed out that “Only reformed multilateralism with a reformed United Nations at its centre can meet the aspirations of humanity.”
- **India’s claims are based on**- India’s claim for permanent seat in UNSC is based on population, territorial size, GDP, economic potential, civilizational legacy, cultural diversity, political system and past and ongoing contributions to UN activities — especially to UN peacekeeping operations.
- **UNSC non-permanent member**- Recently, India won its eighth UNSC term last June when it secured 184 of the 192 votes cast, signaling a broad acceptance of India’s global role.
- **G-4**- India is also working with the G-4 (India, Japan, South Africa and Germany) to achieve its objective.
 - ✓ Recently (October 2021), the G4 nations of India, Brazil, Germany and Japan have reaffirmed that it is “indispensable” to reform the Security Council through an expansion in permanent and non-permanent seats to enable the U.N. organ to better deal with the “ever-complex and evolving challenges” to the maintenance of international peace and security.
- **Opposing G-4**- On the other hand, their regional rivals opposed the idea of G4 countries becoming permanent members. Italy, Pakistan, Argentina and South Korea formed an interest group, known as the ‘Uniting for Consensus’ (also nicknamed the ‘Coffee Club’) is opposed to increasing the number of the Security Council’s permanent members while wanting an increase in the non-permanent members category.
- **Process of reforms**- Also, considering the rigid process of UNSC reforms which requires support of 2/3rd members including all P-5 members, expansion of UNSC seem like a pipedream.
- **Who supports India?**- Though, US, UK, France and Russia are consistent in their support for India’s claim, US has yet not given written support, even Russia’s support is not guaranteed considering growing strategic convergence between Moscow and Beijing in Eurasia, Indo-Pacific and beyond.
- **China factor**- The biggest challenge to India’s inclusion is China which is continuously vetoing India’s inclusion.
 - ✓ China has called for Package Solution Acceptable to all members.
 - ✓ According to China, reform should be done through the widest possible democratic consultation and seek a package solution that takes into account the interests and concerns of all parties
- **Need to change with time**- The UNSC needs to reform and revitalize itself to bring in all the relevant stake holders for effective action in the 21st century.

Expert’s opinions-

- **Shyam Saran**- According to Shyam Saran, there is no point in running after 'Illusionary Goals', instead focus on building military and economic strength.
 - ✓ According to, Richard Roth, the biggest obstacle is that everybody wants power and a seat at the table but other countries don't want to let them have it.
- **Shashi Tharoor**- According to Shashi Tharoor, any one country including India will not get it alone, either there will be a reform, a reform that opens the door to a number of contenders or there would be no reform.
- **C. Raja Mohan**- However, as suggested by C. Raja Mohan, in global politics, it is not power of argument but argument of power that works.
 - ✓ Thus, India needs to focus on internal development along with working with other countries to reform the UN.
- **Prof Ramesh Thakur**- According to Prof Ramesh Thakur, India needs to go for 'non-cooperation movement' with UN (in context of peacekeeping forces) so that they will realize the importance of India themselves.
- **Abdulla Shahid**- President of the 76th session of the U.N. General Assembly Abdulla Shahid has said that the long-pending reform of the Security Council is a membership-driven issue and he will soon appoint facilitators for the negotiating process.

History of reforms in UN

- The United Nations has undergone phases of reform since its foundation in 1945.
- **Middle east & Kashmir**- During the first years, the first decisive change was the development of peacekeeping measures to oversee the implementation of ceasefire agreements in 1949 in the Middle East and one year later in the Kashmir conflict between India and Pakistan.
- **Formation of troika**- The Soviet Union launched reform initiatives during the East-West antagonism in the 1950s to curtail the independence of the Secretariat by replacing the post of Secretary-General with a troika, including a representative from the socialist states.
 - ✓ Decolonization created rapid growth in UN membership, and by 1965 it stood at 118, twice as much as at the Organization's founding.
- **Rise in development works**- With states from Africa and Asia joining the United Nations, development issues became increasingly important, resulting in the expansion of the United Nations in the development area, including the establishment of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1965 and negotiations on an International Economic Order (NIEO) as part of the North-South conflict in the 1970s.
- **1980s**- The 1980s were characterized by financial crisis and the retreat of the United States, which triggered a reform of the budgetary process and the downsizing of the Organization.
- **End of cold war**- With the end of the Cold War, the rediscovery of and renaissance of the United Nations were hailed; the first half of the 1990s saw a major expansion of the Organization and the reform associated with the Agenda for Peace launched by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.
- **1990s**- In the late 1990s, Secretary-General Kofi Annan improved the coherence of the United Nations, with a better coordinated development system and more effective humanitarian structures.
- **Fight against AIDS**- The fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic was energized, and a new concept of partnership between the United Nations and international business developed under the Global Compact.
- **Brahimi report**- Other reforms included the revamping of peacekeeping operations following the Brahimi Report.
- **Human rights**- The World Summit in 2005 recognized, albeit mainly symbolically, an international 'responsibility to protect' populations from genocide and the Human Rights Council replaced the discredited Commission on Human Rights.
- **Oil for food programme**- As of 2007, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon continued the reform agenda covering oversight, integrity, and ethics which had previously been launched in response to investigation of the UN Oil-for-Food Programme.

- ✓ The Programme responded to the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi civilians and was the largest, most complex and most ambitious relief effort in the history of the United Nations.
- **2005 summit**- With reference to the 2005 World Summit, the General Assembly approved in April 2007 a number of loosely related reform initiatives, covering international environmental governance, a unified gender organization, and 'Delivering as One' at the country level to enhance the consolidation of UN programme activities.
- **Guterres report on UN**- On 21 December 2017, Guterres submitted his report 'repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: our promise for dignity, prosperity and peace on a healthy planet'.

Seven key proposals for development system reform

- **UNCT**- A new generation of UN country teams (UNCT), to be demand-driven, skilled, and tailored to meet country-specific priorities
- **Reinvigorated resident coordinator**- A reinvigorated resident coordinator (RC) system, emphasizing sustainable development.
 - ✓ The RC system coordinates all organizations of the UN dealing with operational activities for development, regardless of the nature of their presence in the country.
 - ✓ The RC system aims to bring together the various UN development system (UNDS) entities to improve the impact, efficiency and effectiveness of the UN's operational activities for development at country level.
- **Restructured regional approach**- A coordinated and restructured regional approach to support work in the field more effectively
- **Accountability**- A renewed space for UN member states to ensure coherent, transparent and accountable results underpinned by system-wide evaluations
- **Stronger institutional response**- A stronger UN institutional response and system-wide approach to partnerships for the 2030 Agenda
- **Funding**- A funding compact to bring better quality, quantity and predictability of resources coupled with increased transparency to deliver on the 2030 Agenda
- **Alignment with 2030 agenda**- Necessary concrete steps to accelerate the alignment of the development system with the 2030 Agenda

INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE

- **Peacekeeping missions by UN**- United Nations Peacekeeping **began in 1948** when the Security Council authorized the deployment of UN military observers to the Middle East. Since then, more than 70 peacekeeping operations have been deployed by the UN.
- **India's contributions to UN peacekeeping** operations (UNPKOs) have been underscored by the experience and professionalism of India's armed forces.
 - ✓ India today is the largest contributor of troops to UNPKOs.
 - ✓ More than 200,000 Indian troops have served in 49 of the 71 UNPKOs deployed so far.
- **Since the end of cold war**- The end of the Cold War resulted in a mushrooming of crises. Since then three broad areas have emerged where India's contributions have made a difference.
 - ✓ The first area is in **making use of UN peacekeeping across the world** to ensure a political transition to peace. For ex in Yugoslavia, Cambodia etc.
 - ✓ The second area is in **augmenting peace building activities** by encouraging and mentoring the strengthening of national governance institutions. For ex- UNTAG saw Indian peacekeepers assist in the creation of the institutions of an independent Namibia.

- ✓ Thirdly, the **protection of civilians caught in intra-state conflicts** is one issue where India's UN peacekeepers have made a positive difference, especially in complex UNPKOs like MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of Congo and UNMISS in South Sudan.
 - ✓ Fourthly, **Indian doctors have provided medical care to the local population** in missions around the world. Their contribution was appreciated in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- Apart from strengthening claim on permanent seat at UNSC, India's contributions at UN peacekeeping have been multifaceted with respect for the region operation-
- ✓ **Propagator of peace**- India has been a consistent propagator of peace everywhere in the world. Participating in such actions demonstrates Indian commitment to peace.
 - ✓ **Quick Impact Projects**- Indian "Quick Impact Projects" to win the hearts and minds of people have further improved relations with affected countries, furthering military diplomacy.
 - ✓ **International exposure**- It also gives international exposure to Indian officers and troops thereby improving professional experience.
- **Challenge**- However, the bigger challenge for India is the denial by the permanent members of the Security Council to participate in "decisions of the Security Council" concerning the deployment of her troops, as provided for in Article 44 of the UN Charter.
- ✓ Further permanent members of Security Council have not made noticeable contribution as troop contingents, although they do occupy sizeable important appointments in UN staff.
 - ✓ Commenting on this, **Kishore Mahbubani** has held that, India's position is like Sisyphus, a historic Greek character carrying a huge burden to the top of the hill just to see it rolling down.
- **Peacekeeping troops**- Further, the troops deployed for UN peacekeeping role may not be available at a very short notice to deal with any misadventure by any of India's adversary.
- ✓ This can lead to corresponding reduction in India's deterrence value. In many situations, the approved mandate under Chapter VI has been found to be grossly inadequate to effectively deal with some critical situations.
 - ✓ It has resulted in poor results, and a criticism of professionalism of Indian Armed Forces, who had to deal with the situation, with one hand tied behind their backs.
- **India is proud of her contribution to the UN** for world peace in peacekeeping, as well as peace building efforts, and should continue her support towards that, but a realistic cost benefit analysis should be carried out to analyze the implications, before contributing troops for future peacekeeping missions. India should participate and deploy troops where she has some strategic interest and wants to leave some strategic footprints, besides earning goodwill.

UN Turns Seventy-Five. Here's How to make it Relevant Again.

➤ **Reform the Security Council-**

- UN reform has been on the agenda since the organization was created in 1945.

- The Security Council as currently constituted in terms of membership, functions, and powers cannot effectively respond to the myriad crises engulfing the world.
- Although it has become apparent over the years that its permanent members have little interest in internal reform, it behooves the other UN member states as well as civil society to continue to push for it.
- As powerful countries move toward unilateralism, populism, and nationalism at the expense of multilateralism and collective action, a united and forward-looking Security Council capable of effectively driving the wider United Nations to achieve its goals is sine qua non.

➤ **Establish an International Antivirus Consortium-**

- Priority should be to reform the World Health Organization (WHO) to create an international antivirus consortium to guarantee access to a COVID-19 vaccine for all countries, as well as access to future vaccines for new viruses.
- The consortium could be funded as the UN and peacekeeping budgets are, using a scale of quotas under which every member country, without exception, financially contributes according to its payment capacities.

➤ **Safeguard the Indo-Pacific-**

- The stakes could not be higher for India, which aims to shape rules in the international system and not merely be a follower.
- For India, as with many other states, the status quo is no longer a viable option.
- If UN reforms fail, New Delhi's approach to the United Nations could significantly alter in the coming years as India would feel it necessary to look elsewhere for solutions. And India wouldn't be the only country doing so.

➤ A **permanent coordinating platform** should be set up to integrate the UN response across agencies, funds, and related organizations, and to act quickly, comprehensively, and efficiently in various fields, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Health Organization.

- ✓ Establishing such communication channels will bolster cohesiveness, which is fundamental when dealing with ongoing, multidimensional threats in a fragmented UN system.

➤ The severity of the **climate threat** demands a fresh approach.

- The South African Institute of International Affairs suggests a full audit of the United Nations' work on climate change across the UNFCCC, UNEP, and other UN agencies.
- This mapping should be followed by the implementation of a reform agenda aimed at targeting climate change as a crosscutting factor that will shape the entire world in the twenty-first century and beyond.

➤ **Create Standards for Digital Cooperation-**

- ✓ The Centre for International Governance Innovation proposes the **creation of a Data Standards Task Force (DSTF) under the auspices of the United Nations.**
- ✓ It would create the required framework for a single data zone through codes, standards, guidelines, and model technical regulations.
- ✓ The framework would facilitate the collection, sharing and use of data across jurisdictions and sectors.

- ✓ The structuring of the DSTF should reflect the new realities of the digital age.

➤ Reinvigorate the UN's Collective Power-

- All of this will take energy, time, money, and leadership.
- It will also require a new compact between the United Nations and the public because the organization's legitimacy and influence will increasingly rest on a sense of ownership.
- In today's complex world, identifying problems, designing policies, and delivering change is no longer within the power of states standing alone.
- It requires participation of diverse actors, including nonprofits, grassroots movements, corporations, and local authorities.
- Getting inclusivity right and shifting to a more equitable governance model will be critical to weathering power politics and delivering for all.

Address Three Challenges to Multilateralism-

- Rising geopolitical tensions- First, rising geopolitical tensions are disrupting the UN agenda. The world is experiencing unprecedented global power shifts.
 - ✓ Yet the COVID-19 pandemic has fully exposed the harmful aspects of great power competition, leaving confrontation as the main theme,
- Increasing political polarization- Second, the Western world is awash in increasing political polarization and social cleavages.
 - ✓ Political tribalism has become a significant factor in influencing the future direction of political institutions in developed countries.
- Progress on global development and poverty is declining- Third, progress on global development and poverty is declining.
 - ✓ One of the long-lasting effects of the current global pandemic is the reversal of the work of national governments and international institutions, in particular the UN system, on global development and the reduction of poverty.

PM MODI ON UN REFORMS

- Speaking at high level dialogue of ECOSOC on subject 'multilateralism after covid-19; what kind of UN do we need at its 75th anniversary' PM Modi made following points.
- Only **reformed multilateralism** with reformed UN at its Centre can meet aspirations of humanity.
- UN was originally born from furies of the WW-II, today the **fury of pandemic provides context for its rebirth and reform**. Let us not lose this chance'
- 'We can't face today's challenges with **outdated structures**. Without comprehensive reforms, UN faces **crisis of confidence**'

Conclusion:

- Need to adapt with changing times- The efficacy, relevance and durability of any institution lie in its dynamic character and its willingness to adapt itself to the changing times so that it does not only uphold the time-tested values but also addresses the emerging challenges of the day.
- UNGA needs to be revitalised- India has always been of the view that the General Assembly can be revitalised only when its position as the primary deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations is respected in letter and in spirit.
- Deepak Mishra- In words of Minister in India's Permanent Mission to the UN **Deepak Misra**, "It is our firm belief that the urgent and comprehensive UN reform, including of the Security Council, is imperative to make it reflective of current geopolitical realities and enhance its capability to meet increasingly complex challenges of our time".

WEST ASIA

Syllabus- Recent developments in Indian Foreign policy: India's position on the recent crisis in Afghanistan, Iraq, and West Asia, growing relations with US and Israel; a vision of new world order.

UPSC PYQ

- "Afghanistan is a litmus test for India's ascendance as a regional and global power." Discuss.
- Examine the implications of turmoil in Iraq and West Asia for India's security and foreign policy concerns. 15 mark
- In the history of foreign policy, seldom have relations between any two nations blossomed as fast as they have in the case of India and Israel. Discuss. 15 marks
- Discuss the realistic foreign policy initiatives taken by India to balance its relations between Israel and the Arab world.
- Discuss the humanitarian role played by India in the crisis-stricken Gulf countries like Yemen and Iraq.
- Has the recent Indo-Israeli relationships given a new dynamics to India's stand on Palestinian statehood?
- Do you think India's capacity-building role in Afghanistan has shrunk the strategic space for Pakistan there? Discuss
- "The growing closeness between India and Israel will strengthen the cause of Palestine." Comment. 10 marks
- Write a brief note on India's interests in West Asia. 15 marks
- How is the current standoff between the USA and Iran affecting India's energy security? 15 marks
- Evaluate India's vision of a new world order. 20 marks
- "The war in Afghanistan is crucial from the point of view of India's national security. If the Americans withdraw and Jihadis emerge with a sense of triumphalism, India will face increasing onslaught of terrorism." Comment.
- Identify the key sectors of cooperation between India and Israel since 2014. Examine their significance in strengthening the bilateral ties between the two countries.
- Critically examine the role of India in shaping the emerging world order.

Introduction-

- West Asia is **Land of Great power politics**.
- India has been historically linked to West Asia through culture, commerce & colonialism.
- According to **Hamid Ansari**, the control of gulf was strategic imperative for the defence of colonial possessions. It remains Strategic imperative at present as well as in forceable future.
- Entire region is in India's Security parameter and critical for India's power projection.

Strategic importance of west Asia-

The strategic importance of West Asia has been recognized by scholars from the beginning.

- **Alfred T Mahan**, the American geopolitical Scholar highlighted **west Asia as a bridge of 3 Continents** (Africa, Asia, Europe), & Advised British Navy to control West Asia to maintain its hegemony.
- **Hamid Ansari**, In his work, '**Travelling through conflict**' has held that strategic imp of West Asia flows through its geography as a land bridge of 3 continents & natural resources. However, it suffers from '**curse of centrality**'.

SIGNIFICANCE OF WEST ASIA FOR INDIA-

GEO-ECONOMIC

- **Energy Security**- The Gulf- West Asia- North Africa region meets a major share of India's energy needs – contributing over 60 per cent of India's total imports of crude oil and over 85 per cent of India's LNG requirements.
- **Diaspora remittances**- There are around 8 to 9 million Indians in West Asia. This community has a significant impact upon the Indian economy, through inward remittances. According to a UN report on international migration, in 2019, inward remittances from the Gulf into India were 38 billion U.S. dollars.
 - ✓ **Reverse migration**- However, the reverse migration due to Covid-19 pandemic has affected remittances also.
 - ✓ **For example**, an estimated 1.2 million migrant workers out of 4 million from Kerala returned from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries in 2020 after the global pandemic left them jobless, the World Bank's Migration and Development Brief reveals.
 - ✓ These workers contribute 30 per cent of Kerala's income.
- **Trade and Investment**- in FY21, India imported goods worth **\$80.5 billion** from GCC countries, while exports amounted to \$40.5 billion. About half this trade is with the UAE.
- **India is reconsidering a free trade agreement (FTA) with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** after the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the country's biggest trading member in the bloc, approached it to revive talks that got stalled in 2008.
- **No regional talks**- Earlier, two rounds of negotiations were held between India and the GCC on the feasibility of a free trade agreement, but talks stopped after the latter began a review of its negotiations with all countries and economic groups.
- **Trade routes**- Important trade routes passing through the Persian Gulf and the Suez canal provides central position to West Asia in trans-Atlantic trade network.

GEOSTRATEGIC

- **Importance of the region**- The region is strategically significant due to its enormous energy resources, trade route links to different parts of the world and the fact that it is a place of origin for the Abrahamic religions.
- **Counter-terrorism**- cooperation with West Asian countries is necessary for countering ISIS threat and support of GCC for Pakistan and fundamentalism.
- **India is seen as a 'Balancer'**- Like in other regions, India is seen as a 'Balancer' to counter China's rise in Middle East. Further, due to rising US-China tensions, even West Asian countries are eager to strengthen economic as well as defence partnerships with India.
- **Proximity of West Asian countries to Indian Ocean** and its choke points. This necessitates India to build defence partnership with these countries for strengthening India's role as net security provider in Indo-Pacific
- **Regional peace**- The famous Great Game left a devastatingly lasting impact on the states, its' politics, peoples, environment, resources, and economies.
 - ✓ Till date internal as well as external transformations such as political instability, civil wars, sectarian rivalry, religious extremism, and secessionist movements are making it volatile and precarious region.

HISTORY OF INDIA'S WEST ASIA POLICY

- **Successful balancing act**- In the past, India has managed a successful balancing act in a tripolar West Asia. Now, the restructuring of West Asia's geopolitical landscape has allowed India to engage with West Asian states with even less political manoeuvring.

- **Changing policy with needs**- Over the years, New Delhi has adapted its foreign policy to suit the evolving needs and conditions of global politics — from the ideologically-driven Non-Aligned Movement to a policy based on greater pragmatism.
- **During the Cold War years of global bipolarity**, India's foreign policy followed the principles of the 1955 Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
 - ✓ The non-aligned values of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in domestic politics were a crucial component of Indian's foreign policy fabric.
 - ✓ In the West Asian context, this was reflected in the **Nehru-Nasser alliance**, through which India supported the Arabs against Western interference, particularly in the case of Palestine and the 1956 Suez Crisis.
- **Changing ideology**- Post-Cold War Ideology, a protectionist economy, and advocacy of Third World concerns were junked; national interest-oriented pragmatism became the overriding guiding principle.
- **India ceased viewing West Asia through the prism of its issues with Pakistan**- discontinued the use of strong rhetoric denouncing other countries' policies, and abandoned defensive, reactive policy approaches.
 - ✓ Also India began to reach out to all West Asian countries without picking and choosing between them, and on the basis of mutual benefit.
- **No bilateral political issues**- Since last 3 decades, except for continuing O.I.C. activism relating to Kashmir in particular, there are no bilaterally contentious political issues between India and the G.C.C. countries.
- **Hands-off policy**- Since the turmoil in West Asia gathered force in 2011, India has hewed to a "hands-off" policy based on the principle that regime change through foreign intervention constitutes a violation of international norms and law.
 - ✓ India has assiduously avoided taking sides in any of the region's rivalries or conflicts.
- **Current policy**- India's current foreign policy towards West Asia is based on 'strategic autonomy'.
 - ✓ **MEA S. Jaishankar** has already clarified that as a nation that imports 85% of its oil primarily through the Gulf, India will push for a diplomatic resolution of the matter to secure its interests.
- **Economic opportunities**- India's policy is motivated by its active pursuit of economic opportunities in West Asia, whether it is vis-a-vis energy security or greater connectivity and trade through the development of Chabahar Port in the Iranian case.
- **Defence and security**- India is also deepening defence and security cooperation with West Asian countries in the domain of Maritime security as well as in counter terrorism domain.

Scholarly opinions

- **Mehar Wadhavan**- According to Mehar Wadhavan, after the end of Cold War, while the fear of a **Washington-centric system** gripped Indian leaders, the crisis also called into question the ideological burdens and relevance of non-alignment.
- **Former Amb. Ranjit Gupta**: Policy should be based on mature recognition of own limitations of capability & influence. India's policy of passivity is prudent in volatile & unpredictable West Asia.
 - ✓ If speech is silver then in some cases silence is gold.
- **Prof. Girijesh Pant**: West Asia is not place for display of India's power. It is place for augmentation of India's power.
- **Ishrat Aziz**: India's policy was based on secular considerations of geopolitical & geo economic interests & not on ideology & religion.

Alternative view

- **S. Jaishankar** –India's foot print in west Asia has been autonomous of strategic calculus. It was mainly driven by markets & focus was on oil diaspora, however, the strategic aspect was missing.

- **C. Rajamohan** -India's mental map of Middle East was too simplistic. It was based on 2 axis, Arab- Israeli conflict & Anti imperialistic solidarity. It was driven by domestic political expediency rather than geostrategic vision.

PRESENT POLICY: THINK WEST POLICY

- **Focus on national interest**- It is based on realist assumption of International Relations that National Interest is ultimate goal of any states foreign policy.
 - ✓ Present policy has to be understood in context of overall change in India's Foreign Policy.
 - ✓ As explained **by S. Jaishankar** during Raisina dialogue in 2017, India's Foreign Policy has to be understood in accordance with India's changed status. India aspires to be leading power & is willing to share greater global responsibilities.
 - ✓ In a shift in thinking he further noted, "If the eastern front is building upon longstanding policy, the western one is relatively more recent conceptually. He further went on to say, "I can confidently predict that 'Act East' would be matched with 'Think West'."

CHANGES IN POLICY ARE 3 DIMENSIONAL:

STRATEGIC DIMENSION-

- **Strategic partnership**- India entered into strategic partnership with UAE, Qatar, Israel, Strengthened strategic partnership with Saudi Arabia through creation of Strategic-Partnership council.
- **Army chief visit to Saudi & UAE** - 1st by Indian Army chief. This can open new avenues for defence Co-operation.
- **Counter-terrorism and counter-extremism** has become an important pillar in relations.
 - ✓ In Pulwama crisis, Saudi and UAE played important part in keeping Pakistan in line.
 - ✓ India has also signed Agreement on information sharing & intelligence co-operation with UAE.
- **Major security partner**- India is also emerging as major security partner for these countries in context of India's role as net security provider in Indian Ocean.
 - ✓ For the first time, joint naval exercises with UAE (Gulf Star-1) were held in 2018.
- **UAE supports India on J&K**- the UAE has supported Jammu and Kashmir's re- organization.
 - ✓ Its ambassador to India, Ahmed Al Banna, said: "We expect that the changes would improve social justice and security and confidence of the people in the local governance and will encourage further stability and peace."

GEO-ECONOMIC-

- **Developmental partnership**- India continued its developmental partnership with Iran through Chabahar Port despite deteriorating US-Iran relations.
- **Diversification of economy & investment**- West Asian Countries are also looking for diversification of economy & investment. India with robust service sector and need for infrastructure development Provide ideal destination for Investment.

FROM IDEALISM TO PRAGMATISM

- **De-hyphenation of Israel - Palestine policy**- PM Modi visited Israel in 2017 but didn't visit Palestine. There was also no mention of 2 state solution or status of Jerusalem in Joint Statement.
 - ✓ PM Modi visited Palestine in 2018. **Voted against US in the UN for recognizing Jerusalem as Israeli capital.**

Expert's opinions on India-West Asia relations-

- **Talmiz Ahmed**- According to **Talmiz Ahmed**, due to economic rise and image of India as a neutral, there is growing expectation in West Asia from India.

- **Ranjit Gupta**- According to Ranjit Gupta_Shift in policy post 2014 is a 2 way street. There is change in perception of countries of the Middle East because of
 - ✓ Rise of India's economic strength
 - ✓ Recognition of Pakistan's role in preventing terrorism.
 - ✓ Decline of the USA
 - ✓ Shift of global energy market from Trans-Atlantic to Indo-Pacific.
- **M.K. Narayan**- However, According to M.K. Narayan, in West Asia, Indian diplomacy still lacks the nimbleness required to deal with fast-changing situations.
 - ✓ Despite its long time presence in the region, a 9-million strong diaspora, and the region being its principal source of oil, India is not a major player today and both Russia and China have overtaken India in the affairs of the region.
 - ✓ Even in strategically important Iran, the Russia-China-Iran relationship has greatly blossomed, almost marginalizing India's influence.

CHANGING SCENARIOS IN PRESENT TIMES-

- **Changing scenarios**- The strategic scenario has further changed after Trump Administration's policy towards the region. The fault-lines are deepening, and the new Axis - USA -Israel - GCC vs. Russia -Iran - china- Pakistan-turkey (Security Diamond) are emerging.
- According to **M. K. Narayanan**, the conflict can intensify **post Abraham Accords**.
 - ✓ There can be rise of traditional & non- traditional security threats.
 - ✓ After USA's withdrawal from JCPOA, Iran has restarted its nuclear program. The tensions are high after killing of General Solemani.
 - ✓ Iran is growing closer to China through 25-year comprehensive partnership.
 - ✓ Lastly, India's exit from Chabahar-zahedan rail project highlights diplomatic challenges for New Delhi to balance its ties with Washington and Tehran.

WHAT CAN BE THE CONSTRAINTS IN INDIA'S LOOK WEST POLICY-?

Guy Burtan has pointed out 4 major Possible Constraints Associated with the "Look West" Policy

- **Israel's improving status with the Arab world may not endure**. Another intifada or revival of support for the Palestinians by the wider Arab public could put pressure on Gulf regimes to reverse their current rapprochement with Israel.
 - ✓ If that should happen, India could find its position exposed as well, given its own growing closeness with Israel.
- **India's engagement with Iran over Chabahar is unlikely to eliminate the Pakistan/China option**.
 - ✓ One reason is the more modest scale of India's efforts in Central Asia and the Middle East, especially when compared to **China's Belt and Road**.
 - ✓ Another is that **Indian ambitions may become redundant**, especially if Iran and Pakistan are able to overcome differences between themselves to cooperate and link their ports as they have claimed.
 - ✓ Finally, other powers, such as the **United States, could derail Indian efforts**. Indeed, the Indo-Iranian agreement over Chabahar has been repeatedly delayed, partly because of US sanctions against Iran.
- The third challenge for India in the Middle East is the **vulnerability of its citizens and economic interests**.
- **India is susceptible to regional conflicts**- Fourth, as the US-Iran dispute shows, India is susceptible to regional conflicts over which it has little control. This may also jeopardize India's traditional passive policy.
 - ✓ For **example**, During the Qatar crisis in mid-2017, India was under pressure to take sides. Similarly, India's policy of 'Balancing' of Riyadh and Tehran may not work if the rivalry between Iran and GCC intensifies.

Some additional points that can be added-

- Further, according to **Gary Burtan**, though India's Look West policy of Balancing seems to be working but its sustainability is not certain.
 - ✓ India's present approach has been helped by the wider structural context in which the region finds itself in.
 - ✓ Further, presently the Middle East has become more multipolar, with power diffused among a variety of regional and extra-regional actors.
 - ✓ Within this mix India has pursued an approach that balances against different parties and their rivalries.
 - ✓ But once power ceases to be disparate and starts to become more concentrated, the scope for such action may start to narrow and the present window of opportunity could well close.

CURRENT TRENDS IN WEST ASIA

IRAN-SAUDI CONFLICT AND GROWING CLOSENESS BETWEEN CHINA AND IRAN

- **Part of American alliance**- After WW-II both countries were part of American alliance against USSR.
- **1979 revolution**- However, after the 1979 revolution, the Islamic nationalists overtook the Iran and spread Shia-centric theology against the narrative of Saudi-dominated Muslim world.
 - ✓ This created a **geo-political divide** in the region with Saudi in American camp and Iran working against American and Saudi influence in the region.
- **Iraq war 2003**- The differences sharpened after Iraq war, 2003, when anti-Iran regime was brought down paving the way for Iran to increase its influence in the region.
- **Arab Spring** increased the rivalry further by proxy wars in countries like Syria and Yemen.
- **Obama's attempts**- The attempt by former US president Obama to normalize relations with Iran through JCPOA were opposed by Saudi led GCC and Israel and Trump administration pulled out of the agreement under its 'Maximum Pressure strategy'
- **Sanctions on Iran**- The crippling of economy due to sanctions has pushed Iran closer to China and both countries have signed '25 year strategic cooperation agreement' which has both economic and military components.
 - ✓ Under it, China will invest **around \$400 billion in Iran**.
- The intensification of sectarian conflict has also impacted India
- **Geostrategic implications-**
 - ✓ Due to **deterioration of relations between the GCC and Iran**, it has become difficult for New Delhi to pursue its traditional policy of Balancing the 3 axis- Iran, Saudi Arabia and Israel.
 - ✓ Besides Syria and Yemen, **Iran and Saudi Arabia have also made Afghanistan an arena for their regional competitions**. Both countries have significant links with Taliban and had provided them with funding, arms as well as refugee whenever needed to safeguard its own interest. This has direct security implications for India.
 - ✓ **Iran criticised India on Art 370 issue**- Former Iranian president Hassan Rouhani has criticized India's decision to nullify Article 370. It is seen as Iranian attempt to emerge as the leader of the Muslim world.
 - ✓ **China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey** have emerged as counter force against QUAD grouping. It has as well as security implications for India in context of rise of Taliban, connectivity and security of Indian ocean.
- **Geo-economic Significance-**
 - ✓ **Due to US sanctions India has to cut its oil and gas imports from Iran**. Iran possesses world's 2nd largest natural gas reserves which is critical for India's ambitions of clean fuel.

- ✓ **Accusing India of delay in implementation**, Iran has dropped India from Chabahar-Zahedan railway project which was strategically important for India to link it with Afghanistan bypassing Pakistan.
- ✓ Due to **Proxy wars in Yemen and Syria** India had to evacuate Indian civilians through 'Operation Raahat'

TERRORISM

According to **Talmiz Ahmad** three sets of regional players are active in Afghanistan today:

1. **The Pakistan-Saudi coalition**, which has been the principal source of support for the Taliban-at-war.
 - ✓ They would like to remain influential in the new order, but neither would like to see the Taliban revert to their practices of the 1990s that had justifiably appalled the global community.
2. **Turkey and Qatar represent the region's Islamist coalition** and, thus, share an ideological kinship with the Taliban.
 - ✓ Both would like to see a moderate and inclusive administration, but Turkey is seen as a political and doctrinal antagonist by Saudi Arabia, while Qatar remains a rival for the kingdom as it backs political Islam and improved ties with Iran. The inter-play of these rivalries will resonate in Afghanistan.
3. **Iran**- while many of its hardliners are overjoyed at the U.S. "defeat", more reflective observers recall the earlier Taliban emirate which was viscerally hostile to Shias and Iran.
 - ✓ Iran also sees itself as the guardian of the Tajik, Uzbek, and Hazara minorities in the country.
 - ✓ This consideration led its spokesman to "**strongly condemn**" **Pakistani participation** in the Taliban attacks on the resistance fighters, largely Tajik and Uzbek, in the Panjshir valley.

Secondly, Though the ISIS has been defeated yet there is strong support for its ideology and resurgence of Taliban can further give momentum to spread of extremist ideology and west Asia and beyond.

- ✓ The recent attack on Kabul Airport is an example of revival of ISIS.
- ✓ According to **Talmiz Ahmad**, Afghanistan already has several thousand foreign fighters, whose ranks could swell with extremists coming in from Iraq and Syria, and threaten the security of all neighbouring states.

ABRAHAM ACCORDS

- As per the accords, **the UAE and Bahrain** would establish their respective embassies in Israel and work together with Israel across a range of sectors, including tourism, trade and security.
- On the other hand, it would **allow for Muslims to one of the holiest sites in Islam, the Al-Aqsa Mosque** in Jerusalem.
- Following the signing of the accords, **Sudan and Morocco** also normalised relations with Israel in the same year.
- According to **Talmiz Ahmad**, the rise of Taliban can strengthen an Israel-centric security order in which the Arab Gulf states would link themselves with Israel to confront Iran.
- **Weakness**- However, the weakness of this arrangement is that while the regimes of some Gulf States could be attracted to it, their populations are likely to be opposed. The proposal will also ensure that West Asia remains confrontational and unstable.

How Abraham Accords opened West Asia for India

- **United States, India, Israel and UAE** are in for greater cooperation and coordination in the region.
 - ✓ Some have already christened this meet as a similar 'design' to that of the Quad of the Middle East.
 - ✓ Working with all three main centres of power in the region, the Sunni Arab camp led by UAE and Saudi Arabia, the Jewish power centre in Israel and the seat of power for Shia Islam in Iran, India has leveraged its autonomous stance post Abraham accords.

- **Mid-air refuelling**- From the UAE providing mid-air refuelling to India's new Dassault Rafale fighter aircraft on their delivery flight from France to a gambit of military exercises over the past two years despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic shows a sense of urgency from both regions to expand political and economic ties.
- **'Look west' policy**- 'Look West' policy, which today stands out as an excellent Indian example of long-term diplomacy, stretching across party and government lines over the years.
- **Importance of India for the Gulf**- For the Gulf, India continues to provide a significant market, including for hydrocarbons, despite the narratives of 'energy transitions' around the climate change debate.
 - ✓ While the likes of Saudi Arabia try to end their economy's almost exclusive dependency on oil, the **Indian market and its growth projections** are critical to Saudi's economic transformation plans that also have a strong component of political transformation, moving towards a comparatively more inclusive and moderate form of Islam.
 - ✓ India has also cemented itself as a **growing political and security player** in the region.
 - ✓ From **Operation Sankalp** where Indian warships proactively escorted 16 Indian-flagged ships a day in and around the Persian Gulf as tensions between the US and Iran flared up to lesser-known tussles, such as those by intelligence agencies of India and Pakistan for greater clout in the UAE and the Gulf, and as per some accounts in recent times, India managing an upper hand, often forcing Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to relocate capacity from the traditional stronghold of Dubai to Turkey.

DECLINE OF USA

Recent events highlight the decline of "Pax Americana" in West Asia.

- In **January, 2021** the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states led by **Saudi Arabia lifted the over three year blockade of Qatar**;
- Since April, there have been three rounds of discussions between Iran and Saudi Arabia and plans are in place for the next meetings;
- Turkey has initiated **diplomatic overtures towards Egypt and Saudi Arabia**.
- None of these initiatives involves the Americans.
- On the other hand, in **August 24, 2021, Saudi Arabia signed a military cooperation agreement with Russia**. This can be considered as **policy of "strategic hedging"** as the U.S. has placed restrictions on defence supplies to the kingdom.
- Besides this, there were the two conferences in Baghdad — one set up a coalition of Iraq, Jordan and Egypt for economic cooperation, while the other, brought together the principal regional states to confront shared challenges — all these interactions have taken place without U.S. presence.
- In words of **Talmiz Ahmed**, 'The germ of a new regional security order, without the US, in West Asia is already sown in fertile ground.'

RISE OF CHINA

- **Was on sidelines in the past**- For decades China remained on the sidelines of West Asia's stormy waters.
 - ✓ Even when the country was rising as an economic powerhouse and stepped up cooperation with the major powers in West Asia, the cornerstone of this engagement was non-interference.
 - ✓ So it built ties with West Asian nations based on three principles — secure energy supplies, expand markets for finished goods and find investment opportunities — while leaving the U.S.'s primacy in the region unchallenged.
- **Changing policy under current leadership**- However, under **Xi Jinping**, China is trying to occupy the void left by the US in Europe, South Asia as well as in West Asia.
 - ✓ In recent years, **Beijing has been more active in global diplomacy concerning the region** (Iran nuclear deal)

- ✓ It has also started taking **strong positions at the UN (Syria vetoes)**; and has even begun flexing its military muscles (naval exercise with Russia in the Mediterranean).
- **Pro-active approach needed**- There's a growing consensus in Beijing that the passive foreign policy of the rising years has to be upgraded to a pro-active approach that suits the country's big power ambitions.
- **China has become increasingly close to Iran** while maintaining close commercial contacts with Saudi Arabia.
 - ✓ Xi was the first world leader to visit Iran after sanctions were lifted following the nuclear deal.
 - ✓ **25-year strategic cooperation plan**- In Tehran, he talked about a "new season" of Sino-Iranian ties and a 25-year strategic cooperation plan, committing to increase two-way trade to \$600 billion over the next decade.
 - ✓ Both countries have agreed to enhance security cooperation through intelligence sharing, counter-terror measures, military exchanges and coordination.
- **Alternate regional architecture**- China is also attempting to build alternate regional architecture with Russia, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey.
 - ✓ All the countries are also part of China's ambitious Belt and Road project.
- **Recent visit of China to West Asia**- During his recent visit of Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi to West Asia, he outlined five broad parameters of future engagement, while emphasizing that China supports building a "new security framework" for the region that eschews major power competition. The five parameters include
 - ✓ Seeking deeper development and digital economy cooperation;
 - ✓ Ensuring oil infrastructure, energy and trade security;
 - ✓ Cooperation on fighting terrorism and de-radicalization;
 - ✓ Building alignment on values such as non-interference in internal affairs and human rights;
 - ✓ Pursuing nuclear non-proliferation.
- **Manoj Kewalramani**- However, according to Manoj Kewalramani, Beijing wants to do more but is not keen on replicating Washington's political and military engagement in the region.
 - ✓ He further adds that there are areas where **American and Chinese interests coincide**.
 - ✓ The American presence in the region allows a certain degree of free-riding for China, at the same time; **Washington is unlikely to be opposed to Beijing committing more resources in this context**.
 - ✓ There's also a chance for alignment on Iran and nuclear non-proliferation. US secretary of state **Antony Blinken** acknowledged this by identifying Iran and Afghanistan among two areas where the interests of both sides "intersect".
 - ✓ On values and emerging technologies, however, **frictions are likely to persist and even deepen**.
- **Rising US-China competition**- In this context, rising US-China competition can further complicate matters for India.
 - ✓ China maintaining balanced position in West Asia is more suited for India as it allows New Delhi to pursue the same.
 - ✓ However, if the intersection of Interests between the US and China doesn't last then fault-lines in West Asia geopolitics may deepen impacting Indian security as well as geo-economic interests.

WAY FORWARD FOR INDIA

- **Don't step over any fault lines**- There is broad consensus among scholars that India should not step over any fault lines in West Asia.
- **Need to secure interests**- However, India needs to secure its vital interests in West Asia-
 - ✓ **Top priority**- New Delhi's top-most priority should be energy security and welfare of diaspora.
 - ✓ **Need to consolidate partnership**- India needs to consolidate partnership with key counties (Saudi Arabia, Iran, Israel, UAE) in line with its status as 'Emerging Global Power'
 - ✓ **Greater political warmth**- India needs to display greater political warmth by active engagements with key regional players.

- ✓ **Net security provider**- India needs to strengthen its role of net security provider in Indian Ocean by active naval cooperation with gulf countries.
- **Need to adopt proactive policy**- India also needs to adopt proactive policy to enhance its profile in the region. In this context, India can-
 - ✓ **Create a Regional Centre of Excellence** for countering extremism and terrorism based in any city in India.
 - ✓ **Organise an annual West Asia Summit** bringing experts, policy makers, officials and academic community from the region. This could be a platform for dialogue on strategic and economic issues.
 - ✓ **Initiate an annual regional energy dialogue** which will bring all energy producing West Asian countries and India together.

Expert's opinions-

- **Harsh Pant** has also suggested proactive policy. According to him, New Delhi should not shy away from greater display of hard power and should not be averse for military partnerships. 'Self Interest' rather than ideology should be basis for India's West Asia Policy.
- **Rajendra Abhyankar**- strategic imperatives are such that it will push India to search for middle ground, neutrality & balancing.
- **Rajendra Abhyankar**- India's future depends on self-recognition as rising great power. India needs to expand its geostrategic outreach by developing robust "modus Vivendi" to work with all parties, converting strategic convergence into institutionalized constructive engagements and leveraging diaspora, and cultural connect.
- **Ishrat Aziz** has suggested leveraging goodwill that India enjoys in West Asia and playing role of negotiator & interlocutor.
 - ✓ This will take immense political will & diplomatic skill but can prove beneficial to free WA from curse of centrality.
- **Suhasini Haider** in her article, "**India must find its Voice in West Asia**", suggests that India should play greater role since it has unique advantage of good relations with different sections. She suggests constructive approach to promote dialogue amongst different sections in West Asian geopolitics.

CONCLUSION

- **Nicolas Blarel**, in his Article, 'Recalibrating India's Middle East Policy', pointed out that India needs to adopt proactive policy & step up its diplomatic efforts to manage deft walk on right rope.
- Thus Multiple- Alignment remains the best framework to deal with choppy waters of complex West Asian geopolitics

AFGHANISTAN

Introduction-

- **Land of great games**- Afghanistan has been the land of great games, be it the Persian and Ottoman Empire or Russia and Britain rivalry or USA-USSR rivalry. It is also known as graveyard of empires as it was responsible for demise of great empires from Alexander the Great to USSR and Now the mighty US.
- **US vs China in Afghanistan**- Even at present the new great game is emerging between the US and China in Afghanistan.
- **Kautilya's Mandal Siddhant**- Rajiv Sikri in his book, "Rethinking India's foreign policy" mentions Kautilya's Mandal Siddhant. According to it, neighbor's neighbor is our friend.
- **Importance of stable Afghanistan**- Thus, for India, friendly, stable regime in Afghanistan is an insurance against Pakistan's deep-state.
 - ✓ Peace and stability in Afghanistan is important for India for security in Kashmir, securing Indian investment in Afghanistan as well as India's power projection as a major global power.
- **M.K. Narayanan** in his article in The Hindu titled 'Picking up threads from Afghan rubble' mentions that "Due to its geographical positioning and influence on regional stability, the political future of Afghanistan will be of considerable significance to several nations with competing sets of interests as well as to pan-Asian relations as a whole."

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF INDIA-AFGHANISTAN

- **Beginning of Great game**: British designs on preventing any expansion of Russian influence beyond the north- western border of Afghanistan started the 'Great Game' of the nineteenth century and established the idea of Afghanistan as a buffer state between British India and Russian Central Asia, leading to the signing of a MoU between British India and the Afghan Amir on the 'Durand Line' as delineating their respective spheres of influence.
- **During cold war**: In the Cold War decades, particularly until 1979, Indian and Afghan foreign policy interests had much in common, though India shied away from close engagement with Afghanistan. Both countries were among the original members of the Non-Aligned Movement
- **Soviet occupation**: With the 1979 occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet troops, India's non-aligned stance, despite initial protestations to the Soviets, gave way to a grudging recognition of Soviet-backed rule in Afghanistan —a low point in the relationship between the two countries.
- **Soviet withdrawal**: After withdrawal of soviet forces, India, along with Iran and Russia, started supporting the 'Northern Alliance' against the Pakistan-backed radical Islamist group, the Taliban.
- **USA defeated Taliban**: When the Taliban was defeated by American troops in the aftermath of 11 September 2001, India was one of the first countries to reopen its embassy in Kabul. India continued to remain engaged in Afghanistan through political, economic, cultural, and investment means.
- **Growing closeness between India and Afghanistan**: The growing closeness between India and Afghanistan was evident with the 2011 signing of the Strategic Partnership Agreement, the first such agreement for India and the first with a country in the region for Afghanistan, underscoring the crucial role India will play in shaping Afghanistan's future.
- **Limited role of India**- However, India's role was limited to developmental partner due to pressure from the US. US had made the Pakistan as frontline state in it 'global war on terrorism'. This Indian policy was criticized by realist as risk aversion policy or Panipat syndrome.

Experts opinions-

- **India implementing Pakistan's policy-** According to **Harsh V. Pant**, India was following Pakistan's policy channelled through USA. Steve Coll in his book "Directorate S: The CIA and America's Secret War in Afghanistan and Pakistan, 2001-2016" has also mentioned that India kept on implementing Pakistan's policy in Afghanistan and gave away strategic space to Pakistan by limiting itself to Soft Power diplomacy.
- According to **Happymon Jacob**, India does not have a contingency plan and soft power alone cannot secure Indian interests in the region.
- In words of **Rajeshwari Pillai Rajagopalan**, "A clear effect of India's stand of Afghan led and Afghan owned process" has been to isolate India in the multiple negotiations with Taliban for ending the war."

SIGNIFICANCE OF AFGHANISTAN FOR INDIA

GEOSTRATEGIC

- **Location-** Connecting East, West, central and north east Asia.
 - ✓ Proximity to major powers like Russia, China, India, Iran.
 - ✓ Centre of Great game between the USA and Russia since the cold war.
 - ✓ **Regional balance power-** Peace and stability in Afghanistan is linked to regional stability and India's vision of regional leader and global power.
- **Internal security-** Afghanistan is centre of radical ideology, drug trafficking and smuggling.
 - ✓ Thus peaceful Afghanistan is necessary for regional security.

GEOECONOMIC-

- **Connectivity-** Important transit hub for trade and commerce and access to landlocked Central Asia.
- **Mineral Wealth-** According to US geological Survey, Afghanistan is home to resource deposits like iron, copper etc **worth \$1 trillion.**
- **Energy Security-** Afghanistan has huge untapped sources of hydrocarbons including oil and gas. Further it is also an important component of **TAPI pipeline.**

TALIBAN TAKEOVER OF AFGHANISTAN

- With the withdrawal of the U.S. forces, the Taliban took control of Afghanistan's capital Kabul, declaring end of war.
- The Taliban has taken control of Afghanistan, as of 16th August 2021. The quick collapse of the government in Afghanistan, and the Taliban taking over the presidential palace, seem to have triggered panic and fear among the people in Afghanistan, many of whom are taking flights to escape the country.
- President Ashraf Ghani fled the country on 15th August, reportedly to Tajikistan, although this is not confirmed.

- According to **M. k. Narayanan**, after two decades of active involvement in the affairs of Afghanistan, and spending over a trillion dollars in the process to defeat terrorism and the al Qaeda, the U.S. has left Afghanistan in a worse situation than when it entered. This was followed by **collapse of Afghan government and swift power capture by Taliban** without any bloodshed.

WHY USA FAILED?

- **Overconfidence and hubris-** Dominic Tierney in his book, 'The Right Way to Lose a War: America in an Age of Unwinnable Conflicts' has analyzed how the U.S. in conflicts tends to aim high, achieve a narrow goal and then go home with as much dignity as possible.

- ✓ He attributes it to overconfidence and hubris of US policymakers.
- **Over-ambitious, unachievable goal**- According to **Henry Kissinger**, Washington's attempt to turn the country into a modern democracy was an **over-ambitious, unachievable goal**.
 - ✓ It failed to establish robust independent institutions in Afghanistan after 2001 Bonn Conference. Instead US focused on top-down liberal society establishment.
- **Doomed to fail**- According to official assessments published in 2009 by the Center for Complex Operations at the US military's National Defence University, this external approach, based on military occupation, was "doomed to fail" as political reform is more successful when it originates from the local societies and political cultures.
- **Afghanistan military was dependent on foreign military aid**- Further, when local leaders are dependent on foreign military forces to maintain power, it is hard to build popular legitimacy, govern effectively and build a shared national identity.
- **Ideological issue**- In Afghanistan, decades of Western military superiority failed to uproot the Taliban's ideological narrative regarding the corrupted nature of Afghan leaders and their allies and their betrayal of Islamic traditions and practices.
- **After 2003**, it focused on Iraq which allowed Taliban to recuperate.
- **US relied on Pakistan**- Despite objections from India; **US relied on Pakistan**, which continued playing a double game. Due to US's **sanctions against Russia and Iran**, US were completely dependent on Pakistan for access to Afghanistan. The US could have and should have coordinated with and involve all stakeholders like Russia, China and India.
- Ethnic conflicts and Multiple tribes and factions within Afghanistan did not allow stability

Hussain Haqqani in his article "**To win Afghanistan, get tough on Pakistan**" has mentioned that USA accepted Pakistan's argument that it was supporting Taliban to counter against existential threat from India. However, the argument was wrong since **India never has offensive presence in Afghanistan to wage a two-front war against Pakistan**. He further points out that, the US took restricted help of India which had good knowledge of Afghan region.

GEOPOLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

- **Pakistan looks at Afghanistan through prism of India**- According to **Rakesh Sood**, Pakistan looks at Afghanistan through prism of India.
 - ✓ Pakistan always wanted strategic depth in Afghanistan and boundary issues with Afghanistan, separatist elements, India's role in Bangladesh and India's good relations with Karzai and Ghani government created security dilemma for Pakistan.
- **Some countries are ready to accept Taliban**- According to **Sushant Sareen**, even if some countries led by the US shunned the Taliban, there were others that would eagerly and gladly accept the new reality and establish relations with the Taliban regime.
 - ✓ This will be seen in Pakistan as another grand diplomatic and strategic achievement – the PRICs alliance comprising Pakistan, Russia, Iran, China and Central Asian states built around Afghanistan, an alliance that would obviate the need to seek Western recognition.

SECURITY PERSPECTIVE

- **Foreign fighters will turn to Pakistan to spread terrorism**- Stability in Afghanistan means that foreign fighters will turn to Pakistan to spread terrorism.
 - ✓ Thus, Pakistan is trying to shift the battlefield to Kashmir as seen in Mumbai attack of Jihadi nature and Pulwama attack.
- **Pashtun nationalism**- Pakistan also fears of Pashtun nationalism as no government in Afghanistan has ever accepted Durand line. That's why Pakistan wants to control afghan military and its foreign policy.

GEOECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE

- **Extend CPEC to Central Asia**- Another aim of Pakistan is to extend CPEC to Central Asia and bringing to fruition the connectivity and geo-economic dreams. Pakistan aims to establish itself at the centre of China's BRI project through CPEC.
- **Pakistan's all-weather friendship with China** and inclusion of Afghanistan in BRI can further marginalise India in Afghanistan in new unfolding 'Great Game' in Afghanistan.

COUNTRY WISE PERSPECTIVES

RUSSIA

- **Still a big power**- Russia, though no longer the power it once was, is currently seeking to enlarge its influence in Eurasia, and the Afghan imbroglio gives it an opportunity. The withdrawal of the US from its backyard is considered geopolitical victory for Moscow.
- **Expansion motive**- According to **Brahma Chellany**, Putin wants to expand its geopolitical chessboard. It thus Supports China-Pak axis with the aim of U.S. retrenchment from area.
- **Cautious steps**- Today though most global media predict that Russia and China would fill the U.S.-left void. However, Russia is cautious, since it has not completely recovered from the "Afghan syndrome," referring to traumatic memories of the conflict nationwide.
- **Threat from Taliban militants**- President Vladimir Putin stressed that Russia is aware of "how counter-productive it is to try to force unnatural forms of governance." The Taliban remain banned in Russia, which limits prospects for a swift recognition of the Taliban government by Moscow. The primary threat for Russia is that Afghan militants could infiltrate nearby countries, spreading terrorism.

CHINA

- **China is attempting to fill the void left by the US**- At present; China is attempting to fill the void left by the US. The US withdrawal has provided it an opportunity to assert itself in Eurasia and fulfil its dream of middle kingdom.
 - ✓ China, which envisages domination of Asia as the first step in its bid to become the world's number one power, sees Afghanistan as a prize both from a geo-economic and geo-political standpoint.
- **What does Taliban gets from China**- According to **Brahma Chellaney**, China has dangled the prospect of providing the two things the Taliban needs to govern Afghanistan: diplomatic recognition and much-needed infrastructure and economic assistance.
 - ✓ He further adds that, An opportunistic China is certain to exploit the new opening to make strategic inroads into mineral-rich Afghanistan and deepen its penetration of Pakistan, Iran, and Central Asia
- **China in talks with Taliban**- According to **C. Rajamohan**, If Pakistan retains its influence over the Taliban, then Kabul could emerge as a peg in a Chinese game for a change.
 - ✓ The Taliban have been in direct talks with China, which already has Pakistan enrolled in its Belt and Road Initiative.
 - ✓ In the twilight of the Industrial Age, control of Kabul may no longer be the prize it once was to the West, but similar sort of leverage could satisfy a Chinese plot to encircle adversaries—with India as its main target.
- **China recognised Taliban**- China was one of the first global powers to recognize the Taliban "an important military and political force" while holding the bilateral summit in July 2021.
 - ✓ That followed the Taliban's reassurance to Beijing that they will not "interfere in China's internal affairs."

- **Mineral wealth of Afghanistan**- For China, the mineral wealth of Afghanistan is only one aspect; a key objective is to make its Belt and Road Initiative a truly viable entity, and further extend its reach to the Indian Ocean, without being totally dependent on Pakistan.
- **From realist perspective, P. Stobdan** has held that, for China Afghanistan is another region where India can be preoccupied.
- **Peace in Afghanistan**- However, Peace in Afghanistan is also critical for Peace in Xinjiang region and to increase its economic and strategic presence in Afghanistan and beyond.
 - ✓ The recent spike in regional terrorist attacks targeting Chinese interests – most notably, the July-August suicide bomb attacks on Chinese nationals in Pakistan – has China concerned that the Taliban could turn a blind eye to the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, which has used Afghanistan as a training ground.
- **Use of CSTO by China**- China may use the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), combined with regular China-Tajik anti-terrorism collaborations, to form a regional buttress for stability.
 - ✓ The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) may also play a more invigorated role as regional security guarantor, since all member-states are interested in regional stability and curbing terrorism.

USA

- **Failed enterprise**- Commenting on the U.S. withdrawal after a 20-year war, former Soviet leader **Mikhail Gorbachev** held that, the U.S. campaign in Afghanistan “was a failed enterprise from the start even though Russia supported it during the first stages,”.
 - ✓ Even American leading political scientists described the U.S. mission as “fatally flawed from the outset” because of impossibility of transforming Afghanistan into a unitary state.
- **Biden justified the withdrawal**- US president Biden has justified the withdrawal from Afghanistan to deal with China. However, through withdrawal, the US is ceding strategic space in Afghanistan to Russia and China.
- 2 strategic scenarios from US’s withdrawal
 - **If China and Russia**, together with some other countries—notably Pakistan—manage to **bring stability to Afghanistan**, it will mean loss of strategic space for the US and its allies from a very large geography in Asia.
 - On the other hand, **if America’s adversaries fail to pacify and normalise Afghanistan**, the terrorism challenge will metastasize into an uncontrollable strategic threat. Both these scenarios will seriously impact the US’ Indo-Pacific strategy.
- According to **Sushant Sareen**, the Strategic Disconnect between India and US has Been Revealed by Afghanistan.
 - ✓ He further pointed out that, for many years now, top US officials and policy wonks maintained that while the US and India had 95 per cent convergence east of India (read China), they had just 5 per cent convergence west of India.
 - ✓ To appease the Pakistanis, the Americans made the security domain, a virtual no-go area for India. This, strategic discontent has led to loss of critical geostrategic space to China-Pakistan-Russia axis.

INDIA

- **Bitter memories**- India has bitter memories of the previous Taliban stint in power from 1996 to 2001 and the group's links to Pakistan.
- **India put all its eggs in the basket of the Ghani government**- There has been criticism that India put all its eggs in the basket of the Ghani government when the United States itself had begun talks with the Taliban, and that New Delhi left it too late.

- ✓ However, according to various reports, over the past year as the Taliban emerged as a dominant force and U.S.-brokered negotiations began in Doha, Indian diplomats had opened a line with the group
- **India's long term stakes-** According former Indian ambassador to **Kabul Jayant Prasad**, "Our position today is one of adjusting to reality. We have to play the long game in Afghanistan. We don't have a contiguous border but we have stakes there."
- According to **Myra MacDonald**, author of three books on South Asia and a former Reuters journalist, while the Taliban takeover was a setback for India, it was not game over for New Delhi.
- **Development projects-** India as a major economic player can be attractive to the Taliban, looking to avoid an over-dependence on China. Further, India has development projects in every one of Afghanistan's 34 provinces.
- **India can also leverage Pashtun nationalism-** Fault line between Afghanistan and Pakistan over Durand line and goodwill among Afghan warlords to regain the lost ground in Kabul.

GCC and AFGHANISTAN

- **Fears of instability-** The Gulf monarchies find themselves facing a new and difficult dilemma vis-à-vis the Taliban regime. They are nervous about the "Islamic Emirate" returning to power for fears of instability in Afghanistan spilling into the Gulf and the West Asian country once again becoming a breeding ground for terrorist groups
- **Saudi will have to accept Taliban-** According to **Khalid al Jabar**, Director of MENA Center in Washington, DC, Saudi Arabia will have "no other option" but to "accept the Taliban" a second time, especially considering the "historical relationship" between the two nations.
 - He further adds that, **Saudi Arabia's approach** will likely be a moderating one as the new Saudi leadership has championed "**moderate Islam**," Riyadh may try to use its influence over the Taliban to push the group in a direction further away from the extremism.
 - At the same time, Riyadh is conducting outreach to Washington, and **backing the American line on Afghanistan**.
- **Qatar-** Among GCC countries, **Qatar** has been hosting an overseas office for the Taliban since 2013, and Doha has been the venue for the intra-Afghan Peace Talks between the erstwhile Afghan Government and the Taliban. Qatar's ties with the Taliban have also caused strains in ties with other Arab Countries.
- **Points to notice-** Afghan President Ashraf Ghani who fled Afghanistan was not allowed to land in Tajikistan and has been given exile in the UAE. Also, the United Arab Emirates has agreed to host 5000 Afghan nationals evacuated from Afghanistan on their way to third countries.
- **Importance of GCC-** The role of GCC countries and organizations like OIC will be crucial in Afghanistan apart from Beijing, Moscow and Tehran.
 - ✓ Thus, New Delhi needs to find synergies with Middle Eastern countries, especially Iran and Qatar, which have strong links with the Taliban.

IRAN

- **Confirmation of US' failure-** For Iran, Washington's Afghanistan fiasco is about more than just the victory of the Taliban; it has been touted as confirmation that U.S. policy in the Islamic world is doomed to fail.
- **Iran tried to be a hegemon-** In its messaging; Tehran has tried to reinforce the idea for its partners and allies that it is the only reliable actor in the Middle East, in opposition to a supposedly unreliable Washington that lacks strategic resolve.
- **Doesn't want Afghan refugees-** At the same time, Iran, which is already home to some 2.5 million Afghans, and whose dire domestic economic situation means it cannot afford a new wave of Afghan refugees, may use the Afghan exodus to blackmail Europe, where most of those refugees would want to end up.

- **Security challenges-** These immediate geopolitical and ideological gains, however, could be overshadowed by the potential challenges that a Taliban-ruled Afghanistan may pose for Iran's security and regional interests in the long run.
- **Challenges-** The consolidation of Taliban rule could also involve serious challenges for Iran.
 - ✓ First of all, the Taliban's approach to local Shiites will have a significant impact on Tehran-Kabul relations.
 - ✓ During their reign in the 1990s, Taliban were known for their strong anti-Shi'a ideology, reflected in systematic harassment, torture, and killing of the Shi'a Hazara minority.
 - ✓ Also, Iran will once again face a serious threat on its eastern frontier if the Taliban fail to establish stability and security in Afghanistan and deter extremist and terrorist groups such as ISIS and al-Qaeda.

POSITION OF DIFFERENT COUNTRIES ON RECOGNISING TALIBAN

- **Most Western governments-** have already made it clear that they do not intend to recognize the "Islamic Emirate."
- **China, Iran, Pakistan, and Russia-** are keeping the option of formally recognizing the Taliban on the table, but none of those countries have yet taken that step.
- **The United States-** has charted a path between these two positions; although it has kept the Taliban at arm's length, U.S. officials have indicated that Washington might recognize the group's authority if it protects human rights and severs its ties with Al Qaeda.
- **India's position-** can best be described as ambiguous, with no commitments or rejections from New Delhi.
- **During the 1996-2001 rule** of the first Taliban incarnation, three countries recognized its sovereignty.
 - ✓ The first was **Pakistan and the other two were Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates**, both in the GCC.
 - ✓ Presently, these two Arab states are closely monitoring the situation in Afghanistan and embracing a pragmatic approach to dealing with the new government.

CHALLENGES-

- **For India,** the virtual retreat of the U.S. from this part of Asia; the growing China-Russia-Pakistan nexus across the region; and an Iran under a hardliner like Ebrahim Raisi, all work to its disadvantage.
- **Srinath Raghvan** in his recent book 'The most dangerous place: A history of United States in South Asia' has written that US policy to disentangle the choke points of the region resulted in its own entanglement in the area with loss of 3 trillion dollars and 2400 USA soldiers.
- The vacuum can be filled by China and Pakistan which can be detrimental to India's security.
 - ✓ There is also **risk of terrorism**. While the U.S.-Taliban agreement states that the Taliban will prevent terrorist outfits from operating on Afghan soil, there is little clarity on how the agreement will be verified and enforced.
 - ✓ It is not possible to discern any reduction in terrorism or the demise of any of the better-known terror groups, such as the al Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS), or of lesser known terror outfits.
 - ✓ The other risk has to do with the growing influence of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate, which shares an undeniable link with the Taliban, especially the Haqqani group.
- **SECURITY-** Afghanistan is hub for transnational terrorism and radicalisation. It can have a spill-over effect on Kashmir. It is also a hub for opium trade and organised crime. Taliban's recent comments on J&K raises serious concerns over terrorism in J&k
- **TRADE-** trade through Afghanistan under a Taliban regime would be routed through Karachi and Gwadar, and the **Indian investment in the Chabahar port**, meant to circumvent Pakistan, may become unviable. Due to security concerns the Air corridor may also be of little use.

- **Connectivity**-India lacks direct connectivity with Afghanistan.
 - ✓ **Suhasini Haider** has pointed out that, the end of any formal dialogue between India and Pakistan since 2016 and trade since 2019 have resulted in **Pakistan blocking India's over-land access to Afghanistan.**
 - ✓ India's alternative route through Chabahar, though operational, cannot be viable or cost-effective also long as U.S. sanctions on Iran are in place.
- **India's boycott of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)** in 2017, and now tensions at the Line of Actual Control after the Chinese aggression in 2020, make another route to Afghanistan off-limits.
- **Russia and CHINA**- **Rising Chinese footprint in Afghanistan** through its proxy i.e. Pakistan and emergence of **China-Pakistan-Iran-Russia axis** may also affect India's presence in Afghanistan negatively. In a show of growing partnership and political bromance, Russia and China have agreed to foster collaboration over Afghanistan and pledged to strengthen strategic communication and mutually "safeguard the rightful interests."
- **Institutional weakness** in Foreign Policy making due to risk aversion approach and lack of capacity to meet rising expectations of Afghanistan. According to **Harsh V Pant**, **this has frustrated our allies and emboldened our enemies.**
- **New Great game**- Between US-INDIA-Afghanistan on one hand and Pakistan-China-Russia on the other. This may further deepen already existing fault lines in Asian Geopolitics.
- **Ethnic tensions in Afghanistan**- a 33-member interim government overwhelmingly Pashtun in character.
- According to **M. K, Narayanan**, Pakistan holds certain key cards given the prominent role assigned to its protégés, Sirajuddin Haqqani and Mohammad Yaqoob, the son of Mullah Omar. This may further intensify power struggle within different tribes, putting Indian investments in danger.
- **India's relations with Taliban government**- India's relations with the new Taliban leadership may remain strained due to its association, earlier with the Northern Alliance, and subsequently with the Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani administrations.
- **HUMAN RIGHTS**- there is the worry for India of the impact on Afghanistan itself, given the Taliban's past record in power, of an erosion in women's and minority rights, the overturning of a democratic system and the imposition of the Taliban's brutal form of justice.

INDIA'S POSITION-SHIFT ON TALIBAN

- Presently, India is taking '**wait and watch**' approach as events are still unfolding in Afghanistan. However, India's recent engagements with Taliban and Taliban's request to New Delhi to resume flights to Kabul highlight position shift towards Taliban. India is unlikely to pursue past policy of not recognising Taliban and supporting Northern Alliance.

WHY CHANGE IN POSITION?

- **US Withdrawal** and **Taliban coming back to power.**
- **Pragmatic shift**-**India's previous stance had become untenable** as it led to India missing out from various peace processes related to Afghanistan.
- **Pakistan Factor**- Taliban is also willing to have relations with India as an insurance against Pakistan. No afghan government including previous Taliban regime has accepted **Durand Line between Afghanistan and Pakistan.**
- **Indian Investment**- India also has invested more than \$3 billion in Afghanistan. This includes projects such as Salma dam, Afghan Parliament, Zaranj Delaram highway etc.
- **Connectivity imperative**- Afghanistan is also critical for India for connectivity to Eurasia and for energy security (Tapi Pipeline). Thus, having cardinal relations with ruling party in Afghanistan is an imperative for India.

- **Course correction-** India needs to avoid previous mistake of not recognising Taliban Government which led to hijacking of IC-814.

WAY FORWARD-

- India has 3 policy options in Afghanistan
- 1. **Realist policy-** According to **Harsh V Pant**, New Delhi need to shift theatre from Kashmir to Afghanistan and should work towards building Delhi-Washington-Moscow consensus to ensure peace and stability in Afghanistan.
 - ✓ On similar lines, Shyam Saran has suggested that India should kick-start new great game by leveraging USA's local network, good relations with various tribes and goodwill that New Delhi enjoys due to its developmental work.
- 2. **Continuation of Soft power policy-** This policy is supported by scholars like **Rakesh Sood, Shiv Shankar Menon and M.K. Bhadra Kumar**.
 - ✓ According to them, India should continue with No boots on ground policy to stay out of the Afghan quagmire. In words of **M.K. Bhadra Kumar**, "India should not try to fish in troubled waters."
 - ✓ However, this policy carries a risk of giving away strategic space to China and Pakistan. It can also endanger India's investments in Afghanistan under Taliban.
- 3. **Smart power strategy-** According to this strategy, India should come out of its Panipat Syndrome and pursue proactive policy to safeguard India's national interest.
 - ✓ According to Shanthie Mariet D'Souza New Delhi needs to engage with new government in Afghanistan without damaging its carefully nurtured image of a trustworthy neighbour.
 - ✓ According to **Vivek Katju**, India should maintain quiet engagements with Taliban to remain in loop. It will neither confer legitimacy on Taliban, now will it erode legitimacy of India.

NOTE- India should remain present in region either through direct talks or backdoor channels and remain prepared to engage even when a new government is in power.

INDIA-AFGHANISTAN DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

- India's assistance activities and development partnership with Afghanistan covers four broad areas:

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

- **Daily supply** of 100 grams of fortified, high-protein biscuits to nearly 2 million children under a School Feeding Programme administered through the World Food Programme.
- **Free medical consultation** and medicines through 5 Indian Medical Missions to over 30,000 Afghans monthly.
- **Reconstruction** of Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health in Kabul.
- **285 military vehicles** for the Afghan National Army, and 10 ambulances for public hospitals in five cities).

MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

- **Zaranj to Delaram:** Construction of 218 km road from **Zaranj to Delaram** to facilitate movement of goods and services from Afghanistan to the Iranian border and, onward, to the Chahbahar Port (completed).
- **Transmission line:** Construction of 220kV DC transmission line from Pul-e-Khumri to Kabul
- **Salma Dam power:** Construction and commissioning of Salma Dam power project (42 MW) in Herat province

- **Afghan Parliament:** Construction of the Afghan Parliament

SMALL AND COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

- These are in vulnerable border areas, with focus on local ownership and management and extend to agriculture, rural development, education, health, vocational training, and solar energy.
- 84 small projects are under different stages of implementation in 19 provinces of Afghanistan.

EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

- **Studies for Afghan student:** 500 annual long-term university sponsored by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations for under-graduate and postgraduate studies for Afghan students in India.
- **Training program:** 500 annual short-term ITEC training programmes for Afghan public servants
- **Women's Vocational Training Centre** in BagheZanana for training of Afghan women by the well-known Indian NGO SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association).
- **Capacity building programmes** are also underway in the fields of diplomacy, media and information, civil aviation, agricultural research and education, health care and medicinal science, tourism, education, rural development, public administration, electoral management and administration

India's Recent Engagement with Afghanistan

Delhi hosted the Regional Security Dialogue with 7 other regional players, including Russia, Iran and five central Asian countries.

- India wishes to remain an important and engaged player in the future of Afghanistan, and should not be cut out of the discussion.
- With the exit of U.S. and NATO troops, the solution to the situation there is best found through consensus in Afghanistan's extended neighbourhood including Russia.
- That the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan should be the region's immediate priority and political differences can be set aside in order to help, and show that Pakistan's attitude is a problem.

Pakistan's summit on Afghanistan- At the same time Islamabad hosted the Troika Plus meeting with Security Council members U.S., Russia and China, and had them meet the Taliban acting Foreign Minister.

- Demonstrate that Pakistan is the most important player vis a vis Afghanistan today, and the invitation to the Taliban FM to meet US Russia China is an indicator of that.
- Pakistan wants the international community to help with monetary assistance for Afghanistan to prevent bankruptcy and civil war that could spill over into Pakistan.
- By bringing the P-3 to Islamabad, Pakistan wants to show that far from blaming Pakistan for the problem in Afghanistan, it is part of the solution.

Difference in India's approach than rest of the world-

- **Engagement with Pakistan:** Every country except India has a working relationship with Pakistan, and dialogues about Afghanistan.
- **Engagement with Taliban:** Although no country has recognised the Taliban interim government, all the countries in both meetings are engaging the Taliban leadership in some form.
 - ✓ India wants to underline the fact that no country wishes to "legitimise" the Interim Taliban government. This will be difficult given that.

- **Russia and Iran** have engaged Taliban for some time and maintain embassies there, and in a departure from the Delhi declaration, Russia issued a separate statement alongside the MEA statement.
- **Turkmenistan** sent a ministerial level delegation to discuss connectivity with Taliban, and in particular the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline.
- **Uzbekistan** accepted a visit by Taliban Deputy PM Hanafi, and has discussed trade, transit, connectivity, even going ahead with Railway project.
- **Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan** have both sent high-ranking delegations to Kabul to talk to the Taliban FM.
- **Tajikistan** has engaged the Taliban less than the rest, and is even believed to have hosted the National Resistance Front, and has made it clear it will not recognise a Taliban-only government.
- **India** has had only two official meetings with the Taliban, one between the Indian ambassador in Doha and Taliban representatives, and the other.

NOTE- India's desire to lead conversations on Afghanistan's future, as demonstrated by the NSA dialogue, is a worthy goal for a regional leader, but can only be fulfilled once the government more clearly defines what it wants its role to be in Afghanistan.

Assistance and Aid

- **Vaccines-** India has already supplied three consignments of medical assistance, comprising lakhs of doses of Covid-19 vaccines and essential medicines.
- India has already supplied 5 lakh doses of **Covaxin vaccines** and 13 tonnes of essential lifesaving medicines to Afghanistan.
- **Wheat-** the Indian government has also committed to send to the war-torn country 50,000 tonne of wheat.
- **Humanitarian aid-** India has been pitching for providing unimpeded humanitarian aid to the country to address the unfolding humanitarian crisis there

Engaging Afghanistan via central Asian route

Security dilemma emanating from the Taliban-led Afghanistan has raised Geo security and security concerns for both India and Central Asia Republics (CAR).

- **Long borders with Afghanistan-** CARs will also face the heat of the Taliban as Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan share a 2,387-kilometre-long spongy border with Afghanistan.
 - ✓ Thousands of civilians and even Afghan military personnel have crossed over this fragile border into these three CARs.
- **Terrorist groups-** Furthermore, the presence of terror groups like the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Islamic Jihad (IJU), Jamaat Ansarullah, and the existence of some of the radical Central Asian ISIS fighters, who have joined the ranks of different terror groups in Afghanistan, have increased the region's security concerns.
- **Growing scepticism of Pakistan** owing to its support to terrorism and curtailment of strategic, economic, and cultural interests have made the CARs rethink their regional strategy and take a fresh look at its growing convergence with India on geostrategic, geo-economics, and security issues.
 - ✓ Tajik President Emomali Rahmon, while criticising the Taliban, asked Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan to pressurise the group for more guarantees for an inclusive government in Afghanistan.
 - ✓ The cautionary approach to Pakistan was once again revealed when the CA foreign ministers preferred to attend the third India-Central Asia Dialogue with India over the OIC summit hosted by Pakistan.
- **Control China's colonial ambitions-** The CARs also want to control China's colonial ambitions by diversifying their energy exports.
 - ✓ The growing need of diversification has already forced some of the CARs like Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to hold bilateral talks with the Taliban and restoration of their missions in Kabul.

- ✓ Both these countries are dependent on a stable Afghanistan for the continuity of their trade and energy links.
- **Coherent approach**- A coherent approach is needed from both regions. The CARs should keep in mind the call for immediate aid to the Afghan people and formation of an inclusive government before shaping their bilateral linkages with the Taliban.

KEY THINKERS AND IDEAS

- **Happymon Jacob** (Realism): Integrate reconstruction with reconciliation, otherwise all efforts are futile
- **Vivek Katju** writes: 'Strategic patience' cannot be an alibi for inaction; India must rethink 'wait and watch' Afghan policy.
 - ✓ Establishment of open contacts with the Taliban will not be contradictory to actively welcoming those Afghans, irrespective of their faith, who are closely connected with India.
 - ✓ It would damage India's reputation greatly and into the future, if perceptions grow, as they are growing, that India has abandoned its friends in Afghanistan at the time of their need.
- According to **M. K. Narayanan**, India should take on a **mediating role** among the different nations anxious to involve themselves in Afghanistan, and produce a formula that would help maintain Afghanistan's neutrality and ensure that it becomes a buffer zone to prevent further Chinese expansionism towards South Asia.
- According to **Sushant Sareen**, without interfering in Afghanistan's internal affairs, India can still build partnerships between various stakeholders and raise the capacity and capability of Afghan people.
 - ✓ Further, pointing out that USA was in Afghanistan for its own interests, he suggests that, India should increase its presence in Afghanistan security matrix and its capabilities to ensure that it can preserve its national interests on its own.
- **Rakesh Sood and Shiv Shankar Menon** (Soft Power): No boots on ground policy to stay out of the Afghan quagmire

CONCLUSION-

- As suggested by **C. Rajamohan**, strategic rewards in Afghanistan are as large as risks.
 - ✓ India is realistic enough to know that it doesn't have power to unilaterally define Afghanistan's future.
 - ✓ But India needs to develop some leverage and influence outcomes in Afghanistan through proactive diplomacy and some purposeful action on the ground.
- According to **Shashank Joshi**, India is a small fish in the water, but its clout is growing.
 - ✓ New Delhi has so far shown an unusual tenacity in its dealings with Afghanistan.
 - ✓ It now needs to move beyond the binary of economic cooperation and military engagement and evolve a comprehensive policy which involves all dimensions of power.
 - ✓ Afghanistan is a tough country. Only those who are willing to fight on multiple fronts will be able to preserve their leverage.

NOTE

- The U.S. has announced a new formation of a "**Quad**" on regional connectivity — **U.S.-Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan** that does not include India, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is conducting trial runs of truck convoys from Tashkent to Karachi and back.

INDIA IRAN RELATIONS

- In words of **Jawaharlal Nehru**, "Few people have been more closely related in origin and throughout history than the people of India and the people of Iran"
 - Similar sentiments were echoed by **PM Narendra Modi** during his visit to Iran in 2016 where he said that "**India and Iran are not new friends. Our dosti is as old as history.**" He also quoted a couplet from **Ghalib**: "Once we make up our mind, the distance between Kashi and Kashan is only half a step."
 - The peoples of India and Iran, two ancient neighbouring civilisations, have enjoyed close historical links through the ages. They had a common homeland and share a common linguistic and racial past. Over the several millennia, they interacted and enriched each other in the fields of language, religion, arts, culture, food and other traditions.
 - **People-to-people connect**- The 70,000 Parsi communities in India are the staggering example of historical people to people links. India has 25 million Shia populations which is the 2nd largest after Iran.
 - **Chinmaya Gharekhan**: India has big stake in the region. 70 p.c. of India's imported energy needs come from west Asia. India wishes the Indian community to live in West Asia in conditions of dignity and self-respect.
- C. Raja Mohan** divided India's **grand strategy of the world** into three concentric circles. 2nd concentric circle encompasses the extended neighbourhood stretching across Asia and Indian ocean littoral.
- However, India-Iran relations are overshadowed by their relations with other global powers like the US and China.



IMPORTANCE OF IRAN

GEO-STRATEGIC

- Iran has **unique geopolitical location** with access to Central Asia, Caucasus, West Asia and Persian Gulf. The strategic location of Iran acts as a Eurasian bridge connecting Asia and Europe.
- In present Middle East geopolitics, Iran has emerged as a leading player and it is critical for India to maintain good relations with Iran for continued success of its traditional balancing policy in West Asia.
- **Importance for India**- Iran is key player for India to balance China's growing strategic presence in the area through Chabahar Port (vs. Gwadar) and International North South Transport Corridor (vs. OBOR) as well as keep an eye out on its activity in the region

Expert's opinions-

- Amb. **Dinkar Srivastav**: Iran is also a gateway to Afghanistan for India, bypassing the Pakistan. Hence, it is of great strategic advantage for India. He further adds that Iran's proximity to Taliban makes it a potential stabilizer in the region
- In words of **Talmiz Ahmed**, 'In India Iran relationship energy is only secondary, primary importance is strategic.'
- Similar views have been expressed by former **VP Hamid Ansari**. According to him, for India, Iran is not just another energy supplier.
 - ✓ **Iran ensures overland connectivity between Eurasia and India.** Iran is a land power on the other side of Pakistan that provides us with an alternative route to Afghanistan.

GEO-ECONOMIC

- Iran is India's **third largest oil supplier (making 15% of total oil imports)**, its rich surplus energy resources make it potential for resource deficit India.
- Iran has the **second largest natural gas reserves in world.**

- Exports from Iran are very cheap to India due to geographical proximity and Iran's extended credit period.
- **Iran is big market for India's agricultural-products**, software services, automobiles.

EVOLUTION OF INDIA IRAN RELATION

- **After independence to till 1970**, Iran was in western camp (Baghdad Pact). It was part of military alliance of cold war.
- **From 1979-1989**: Islamic revolution in Iran created hopes in India.
 - ✓ However, relation between India and Iran couldn't move to its potential because Iran wanted to be recognized as leader of Islamic world.
 - ✓ It continued to support Pakistan on Kashmir issues.
 - ✓ Thus, India's relations with Iran whole cold war were limited to commerce. Relations were more of transactional rather than strategic.
- **From end of cold war**: In context of growing India USA relationship and growing tension between USA and Iran, India Iran relationship couldn't progress much to strategic level. India Iran worked closely against Taliban regime in Afghanistan.
 - ✓ **In 2003 visit of Iranian President resulted into Delhi Declaration** and MOU on strategic cooperation roadmap.
 - ✓ However, **Rand corporation of USA warned USA against Teheran-Delhi axis**.
 - ✓ Bush administration started pressurizing India and offered India civil nuclear deal. Bush administration also stigmatized Iran as axis of evil and rogue state.
 - ✓ It became increasingly difficult for India to walk tight rope. India found partnership with USA more attractive considering India's global aspirations.
 - ✓ Hence on one hand India's close relations with USA, Israel, GCC members and on other side Iran's closeness with Pakistan couldn't create favourable situation for India Iran strategic partnership.
- **Withdrawal of JCPOA**- Further the **withdrawal of the US from JCPOA** and growing closeness between Israel and GCC has pushed Iran closer to China and Pakistan.
 - ✓ This has jeopardized India's strategic as well as geo-economic interests in Iran. However, the **capture of Afghanistan and restarting of talks on JCPOA by Biden administration** provide opportunity for New Delhi and Tehran to strengthen the relationship based on mutual interests.

CHANGES IN INDIA'S WEST ASIA POLICY SINCE 2014

- **Stanly Johnny**: Historically, India's West Asia policy has been multi-directional. During cold war years India maintained close economic cooperation with Saudi Arabia and Iran the rival poles in geopolitics.
 - ✓ Even when New Delhi warmed up to Israel in the 1990s as part of the country's efforts to diversify its diplomatic engagement in the post-soviet world, it was careful not to jeopardize the traditional relations with Muslim countries.
 - ✓ The **bi-directional approach** has expanded to tri-directional foreign policy framework to accommodate the three key pillars of **West Asia- Saudi Arabia, Iran and Israel**.
- **C Raja Mohan**: India's new approach to the region, under Modi, is fashioned around three axes.
 - ✓ The first is to leverage the gulf riches to accelerate India's economic growth.
 - ✓ The second is to tap into the huge potential for strengthening counter terror.
 - ✓ The third is to explore the prospects for deepening defence cooperation with Gulf States.

Outcome of Modi's Visit to Iran in 2016

- **Chabahar port**: India signed contract for development and operation for 10 years of two terminals and five multi-cargo berths.
- **Trilateral Transit agreement**: signing of a trilateral agreement on transport and transit corridor between India, Afghanistan and Iran.

- ONGC securing rights to develop the offshore **Farzad-B gas field**.

CHALLENGES

- **Energy security equation:** India has brought down the oil imports from Iran to zero due to the threat of US sanctions under the **Donald Trump administration**.
- **India's shift in West Asia policy:**
 - ✓ Earlier India's West Asia policy has traditionally tried to **balance the three poles in the region:** the Arab Gulf states, Israel and Iran.
 - ✓ But at present India is being seen as more friendly with the Saudis, Israelis and Americans which is a cause of concern for Iran.
 - ✓ **India has also grown increasingly close to Israel**, a country that is the source of vital military equipment for India, but which is also engaged in severe competition with Iran.
- **India-US relations-** In words of **Harsh v. Pant**, 'Ever since India and the United States began to transform their ties by changing the global nuclear order to accommodate India with the 2005 framework for the Indo-US civilian nuclear agreement, Iran has become a litmus test that India has occasionally had been asked to pass to satisfy US policy-makers.
 - ✓ India's inability at times to assert its strategic autonomy in the wake of US pressure has damaged India-Iran relations.
- **Iran is dissatisfied with India's delivery deficit.** Iran removed India from Chabahar Zahedan railway project citing delay in implementation and non-facilitation of required equipment for railway line.
- **Iran's quest to emerge as a leader of the Islamic world** restrains Tehran from supporting India against Pakistan on issues such as Kashmir in international forums like the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) where Iran has raised concerns and apprehensions over Indian military action in Jammu and Kashmir.
- **After abrogation of Article 370**, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said "Kashmir's Muslims must be able to use their own interests and legal rights and be able to live in peace.
- Recently, Iran decided to give **Farzad-B gas oil filed to domestic producer**. This is a setback for India's energy ties with Iran as ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) had discovered the gas field in 2008 and has been part of the ongoing cooperation on that front.

Expert's opinions-

- **C. Rajamohan** in his article "**India's Chabahar Test**" stated that it has taken more than a decade for India to begin work on the Chabahar port project reveals the deep-rooted internal constraints on India's regional economic strategy.
 - ✓ The real challenge in India's engagement with Iran was not about holding up the high principles of "strategic autonomy", but of effectively navigating the international complexities surrounding economic and energy ties. Inability of India to find practical ways to deal with choppy waters of international politics has damaged India Iran relationship.
- **Srinath Raghavan:** India holds energy-centric view of Iran which has led to lack of strategic leverage in relationship.
- According to **Kabir Taneja**, among divergences on critical issues like Kashmir, Pakistan and Taliban, strategic partnership between India and Iran is hyped.

CHINA-IRAN-USA TRIANGLE

- **Comprehensive strategic partnership-** Recently Iran and China signed 25-year cooperation program/ Comprehensive strategic partnership. Under this agreement, China will invest \$400 billion in Iran in exchange of oil and gas from Iran.

- **China is challenging USA's hegemony** in middle east through Iran. With the help of this agreement with Iran, China can expand its strategic footprint in Persian Gulf.
- **Economic lifeline for Iran**- This agreement with China can be an economic lifeline for Iran, saving its sanctions-hit, cash-strapped economy by ensuring the sale of its oil and gas to China.
 - ✓ In addition, Iran will be able to use its strategic ties with China as a bargaining chip in future negotiations with the West.
- **Impact of USA's pressure**- China-Iran strategic partnership proves that the Trump administration's maximum pressure strategy has been a failure. It pushed Tehran into arms of Beijing.
- **Through strategic proximity to China**, Tehran is adapting the so-called "Look East" policy in order to boost its regional and military power.
 - ✓ Iran's new policy of a "Pivot to the East" involves cultivating strong economic, political, military, and security ties with the giants of the Asian continent, namely, China and Russia
- **Apolitical development-oriented approach**- China has adopted an apolitical development-oriented approach to the region, utilizing Iran's regional power to expand economic relations with nearby countries and establish security in the region through what it calls developmental peace—rather than the Western notion of democratic peace.
- **Common strategic and long-term interests**- Further, China, Iran and Russia have common strategic and long-term interests to contain the U.S. unilateralism, and this is one of the important factors in closeness between 3 powers.
- **Trump administration's unilateralist policy** and its withdrawal from international treaties (including but not limited to the JCPOA) have all seriously called into question the legitimacy and the credibility of the United States as a world power.
 - ✓ In words of **Harsh V Pant** 'As the Trump administration has tightened the screws on Iran, and Europe has failed to keep its promises, Tehran gravitating towards China may just be a natural response.'
 - ✓ However, During Biden's address to United Nations General Assembly, Biden indicated that the USA is prepared to join the Iran nuclear deal if Iran does full compliance.

IMPLICATIONS ON INDIA

- **Chabahar port**- In 2016, India and Iran signed an agreement to invest in Iran's strategic Chabahar Port and to construct the railway connecting the south eastern port city of Chabahar to the eastern city of Zahedan and to link India to **landlocked Afghanistan and Central Asia**.
 - ✓ Iran now accuses India of delaying its investments under U.S. pressure and has dismissed India from the project.
- **Connect Chabahar Port to Gwadar in Pakistan**- China now has the chance to connect Chabahar Port to Gwadar in Pakistan, which is a critical hub in the BRI program. Chinese involvement in such a strategic project could be detrimental for New Delhi.
- **Proposed to link CPEC to Gwadar**- Iran has proposed to link existing China Pakistan Economic corridor to Chabahar port through Gwadar port and to Europe and to Central Asia.
- **Golden ring** consisting of China, Pakistan, Iran, Russia and Turkey will turn into centrepiece of BRI, linking China to Iran and to Central Asia.
- **Military footprint**- In western Indian Ocean region, China Iran agreement has greater significance. China has a base in Djibouti and has been already expanding military footprint in Persian Gulf.
 - ✓ Comprehensive strategic partnership pact with Iran could allow China to establish military presence along Iran Pakistan coastline to monitor USA and Indian naval activity in region.
- **Issue of particular concern for India** is a reported reference in the 25-year strategic plan of China constructing a new port at Jask at the mouth of the Hormuz strait. This may be linked to oil and gas fields inland through pipelines and allowing shipments even if the narrow Hormuz Strait was closed.

- If the port were operated by China just as Gwadar on the Pakistani coast nearby is, then Chinese naval presence in the western reaches of the Indian Ocean would become significant. India's maritime security would be at further risk.
- **New China Iran relationship** will ultimately undermine India's interest in West Asia. Further, as US sanctions have forced India to reduce its oil imports from Iran, Tehran has lost faith in New Delhi as a reliable partner.

According to **M. K. Narayanan**, for India, the virtual retreat of the U.S. from this part of Asia; the growing China-Russia-Pakistan nexus across the region; and an Iran under a hardliner like Ebrahim Raisi, all work to its disadvantage.

Reset in India-Iran ties?

While Iran and India have many differences on their outlook in geopolitics they however share many common concerns.

- **Terrorist attacks**- India and Iran have faced attacks from the Taliban, Al Qaeda, Jundullah, Lashkar e Toiba and other sunni groups, and have a common concern about the Taliban gaining power in Kabul.
- **Security threats**- Mr. Zarif has said that an Islamic Emirate in Afghanistan is a security threat for India and Iran and an existential threat for Pakistan, and as neighbours, India and Iran have cause to worry
- **Power sharing arrangements**- While Russia, US, China have advocated power sharing arrangements involving the Taliban in Kabul, India and Iran have upheld the legitimacy of the democratically elected government in Afghanistan, and could cooperate in bolstering the Ghani government at this time.
- **Afghanistan related talks**- India and Iran have been left out of the US Russia China- Troika and Troika plus talks with Pakistan, thus far, despite being regional powers,
- **Connectivity projects**- Iran and India have cooperated on connectivity projects for Afghanistan and Central Asia, including at Chabahar and the INSTC that goes through Bandar Abbas.

Why a restart with Iran is needed at this point?

- **Rouhani government**- While the previous President Hassan Rouhani from 2013 to 2021 began with strong relations between the two countries, PM Modi then visited Iran for the signing of the Chabahar trilateral agreement in 2017.
 - ✓ President Rouhani had a successful visit to Delhi in 2018 there have been tensions over several issues, mainly India's decision to cancel or zero out its imports from Iran in 2019, after the Trump administration passed new sanctions and issued a threat.
- **Import of oil from Iran**- Prior to that India used to import about 2.5 billion tonnes of Iranian oil a month that accounted for more than 10% of its energy needs.
 - ✓ For Iran, India was a major buyer, and the Modi government's decision had a deep economic and diplomatic impact.
 - ✓ In 2012 when the US had issued a similar demand, India had stood firm and not cut its oil imports.
- **Trade**- Trade between the two that topped \$17 billion in 2018 has dwindled to a third, as they used a barter banking system that depended on oil revenues- this has had an impact on Indian traders who imported rice, fruits and other produce from Iran in return
- **Waiver for India from Iran sanctions**- The US sanctions have a carve out or waiver for India's investment in the Chabahar port, as long as it is used for humanitarian relief and trade with Afghanistan... on paper.
 - ✓ On the ground, the sanctions have severely curtailed India's ability to develop the Chabahar project, it took years to bring in cranes for example, or fill tenders for other equipment, and banks, insurance companies and freight companies don't want to engage with the project either.
 - ✓ As a result, in 2020, Iran decided to go ahead with its rail project, dropping India from the deal, as it was unable to participate.

- **No interference in internal matters of each other**- As a traditional partner, Iran has rarely spoken about India's internal affairs, including sensitive areas like Kashmir, yet in the aftermath of government's decision on 370 in Jammu Kashmir on August 5, 2019, Iran's leadership, and clerics issued sharp statements, criticising both the move and the arrests of thousands that followed.
- **Less focus on western partners**- Strategically, India's focus on the Quad and Indo-Pacific and the tensions with China to its eastern frontier have meant less focus on its partners to the west, particularly given the break in ties with Pakistan.
- **Iran-China relation increasing**- Meanwhile Iran has increased ties with China, something that worries India, as Iran and China signed a 25 years 400 bn dollar infrastructure partnership, which could affect Indian interests in Iran, the ports as well as oil and gas resources.

NOTE-

- It is important to remember however, that Iran is India's traditional, historical and cultural partner.
- Until 1947 it was India's immediate neighbour, and is still a maritime neighbour.
- It is of immense importance to India as it provides an alternate route of connectivity to Afghanistan, Central Asia and Europe, given the problems with Pakistan and China's Belt and Road Initiative, which India boycotted.
- Finally, if India is able to negotiate a way around US sanctions, Iran could once again be a vital source of energy for India at a time when oil prices in India have skyrocketed

WAY FORWARD

- In words of **Shyam Saran**, "The pursuit of a closer security partnership with the US does not mean that India should follow the US lead on its other important relationships."
- **Shyam Saran** has also suggested that, India should monitor ties between China and Iran, but must guard against hasty conclusions.
 - ✓ Due to US sanctions on Iran not only India but other countries, including China, which have found it difficult to undertake projects in Iran.
 - ✓ He also points out that Chinese purchases of Iranian oil have decreased substantially in the past two years and the overall **bilateral trade fell to \$23 billion in 2019 compared to a peak of \$35 billion.**
- **China-Iran**- Further, during **Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Iran in January 2016**, an ambitious target of \$600-billion trade in 10 years was announced.
 - ✓ It has turned out to be mostly hype. In his words," The 25-year strategic partnership plan of \$400 billion should also be taken with a generous pinch of salt."
- **Changing regional geopolitics**- While acknowledging this changed regional geopolitical landscape, India should pursue its largely successful policy of maintaining positive relations with Iran, the Arab states and Israel, just as China has done and not use a Chinese prism to shape its policy.
- **Iran nuclear deal might get revived**- India should keep in mind the possibility of a Democratic US President **reviving the Iran nuclear deal.**
 - ✓ The revival of the deal will open the door for US and European companies to resume business with Iran.
 - ✓ In the 2015-2018 period when sanctions had been partially lifted on Iran, it preferred to turn to the West rather than China for its economic revival.
 - ✓ Thus the revival of JCPOA can also provide opportunity for India to strengthen its relationship with Iran.
- **Historical relations should find precedence**- Lastly, India, quite rightly remained engaged with Russia even though Russia-China relations are the closest they have been historically and Russia's confrontation with the US has sharpened further in recent years. The same logic should apply to India's relations with Iran

Conclusion

- Cross currents of regional and global geopolitics always intersect India Iran relations.
- **Harish Khare:** India always mentions importance of Iran but Iran hardly mentions importance of India. Appeasement doesn't serve national interest. There is no need for India to appease Iran. International relations are conducted on the basis of reciprocity and mutuality of interest.
- **P.R. Kumaraswamy:** Iran is more than an energy supplier; however, it also has its own strategic liabilities. India should analyse its relations with Iran beyond US prism and weigh the pitfalls in the relations.
- **Kabir Taneja** in article "The reality of India Iran ties" argued that Iran is difficult to deal with because of having complex system of governance and competing power centres. Just promoting historical cultural and political ties with Iran will not cut it. India needs to make huge economic investment in sanction hit Iran economy.
- **C. Rajmohan:** India will have to ramp up dialogue with Iran and remove misunderstandings. While realism tells us that India cannot influence Iran-Saudi antagonism, it can certainly encourage emerging socio-political moderation in the region.

INDIA-ISRAEL

Introduction-

- Though India officially recognized Israel in 1950, the two countries established full diplomatic ties only on January 29, 1992.
- Diplomatic ties between India and Israel completed 29 years in 2021.
- In recent years, relations have seen rapid growth across a broad spectrum of areas and the future vision of the cooperation is of a strong hi-tech partnership as befits two knowledge economies.

DURING COLONIAL PERIOD AND INITIAL YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

- It was inspired by India's own freedom struggle.
- In words of **Gandhi** 'Palestine belongs to Arablike England to English & France to French'.
- **Led by Gandhi**, the Indian nationalists came to view Jewish aspirations for a national home in Palestine, through an anti-imperialist and anti-colonial prism.
 - ✓ The Zionists were seen in the Indian perspective as European people. The Zionist were relying on imperialist power to set up an exclusivist, theocratic state in West Asia at the expense of Palestinian Arabs.
- **Nehru** depicted the Palestine issue as analogous to the communal troubles of the Indian subcontinent.
 - ✓ Just as the British were employing the divide and rule tactics between Hindus and Muslims to perpetuate their domination, he perceived the English in Palestine pitting "Jewish religious nationalism against Arab nationalism.
 - ✓ In words of Nehru, 'Struggle for Palestine is India's own Struggle.'
- **Early phase**- Early phase of India-Israel relations was impacted by Indian national leader's opposition to exclusivist, theocratic, religion-based idea of nation. India had witnessed the horror of partition which was brainchild of religion-based idea of nation.
- **UNGA resolution 181**- India voted against UN General Assembly Resolution 181 which adopted plans to divide British mandate into Palestine and Israel and supported the cause of Palestine.
- **Recognised Israel in 1950**- However, India recognized Israel in 1950 itself. Following India's recognition of Israel, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru stated, "we would have recognized Israel long ago, because Israel is a fact. We refrained because of our desire not to offend the sentiments of our friends in the Arab countries."

DURING COLD-WAR

- **Nehruvian Consensus**- During Cold War, there was Nehruvian Consensus on Israel policy. India opposed creation of Israel and expressed solidarity with Palestine cause.
 - ✓ Due to India's support for Palestine, India was called as 'more Arab than Arabs'
- **India's foreign policy goals and alliances** also proved problematic to formal relations with Israel.
 - ✓ In 1974, India became the first non-Arab state to recognize the pro-Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.
 - ✓ In 1988, India became one of the first countries to recognize the Palestinian State.
- **Major non-NATO ally**- Israel was designated by USAs as a major non-NATO ally and India's leadership in Non-Aligned Movement created a rift between India-Israel relationship.
 - ✓ India also wanted to counter Pakistan's influence with the Arab world by showing solidarity with Palestine.
- Due to above mentioned reasons, India kept relationship with Israel 'behind the curtains' during cold war.

AFTER COLD WAR-

- **Diplomatic relations in 1992-** India established diplomatic relations in 1992 due to change in geopolitics post-cold war and LPG reforms.
- **Dependent on USSR-** Secondly, India depended heavily on the Soviet Union for arms support and its disintegration posed serious questions to the Indian administration. Consequently, it turned towards Israel, which had developed a competitive advantage in the armaments industry.
- **Peace agreements of Israel-** Thirdly, Israel signed peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan and participated in various bilateral peace negotiations with Palestine.
 - ✓ Coupled with this were the deep differences between Arab countries and India's failure in acquiring resolute Arab support in the Kashmir cause.
 - ✓ The prospect of a deeper Indian-Israeli partnership no longer looked like a high-risk endeavour.

AFTER 2014

- **Modi has de-hyphenated the Israel-Palestine policy.**
- **Upgraded to a strategic level-** In 2017, Prime Minister Modi undertook an historic first ever visit by an Indian PM to Israel during which the relationship was upgraded to a strategic level and seven Agreements/MoUs were signed in the fields of R&D innovation, water, agriculture and space.
- **Israel PM visit to India-** In 2018, Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu, made a visit to India during which four G2G agreements on cyber security, oil & gas cooperation, film co-production and air transport were signed, along with five other semi-government agreements.

CHANGES IN PALESTINE POLICY UNDER PRESENT GOVERNMENT

- **Stabilising role in West Asia-** On the sidelines of the COP26 summit in Glasgow, the Prime Minister of Palestine called for India's support to play a stabilising role in West Asia by maintaining cooperation with all related parties.
 - ✓ This statement is significant in the context of India's External Affairs Minister visit to Israel, whereby he excluded a trip to the Palestinian territory.
 - ✓ India in the recent year has been following a dehyphenation policy between Israel and Palestine.
- **Shift to balancing act-** India's policy on the longest running conflict in the world has gone from being unequivocally pro-Palestine for the first four decades, to a tense balancing act with its three-decade-old friendly ties with Israel.
- **Pro-Israel policy-** In recent years, India's position has also been perceived as pro-Israel.
- **Diplomatic visit in 2017-** In 2017, in an unprecedented move, India's PM visited only Israel and not Palestine.
 - ✓ Then, the recent visit of the Prime Minister to Palestine, Oman and the UAE is again a continuation of similar policy.
- **De-hyphenation-** This departure from earlier policy and endorsing an independent policy towards these two rivals is called the de-hyphenation in India's foreign policy.
 - ✓ It means India's relationship with Israel would stand on its own merits, independent and separate from India's relationship with the Palestinians.
 - ✓ The de-hyphenation is actually a careful balancing act, with India shifting from one side to another as the situation demands.
- **Why change was needed?-** As India moves towards becoming a larger player in global politics and economics, these pre-existing policies are increasingly in need of review, and de-hyphenating Israel and Palestine was a process long past its due date.
- **Breaking past trends-** In recent years, India has broken the tradition of supporting Palestine at the UN.

- ✓ In 2019, India voted in favour of Israel at the ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) to deny observer status to a Palestinian organisation named Shahed.
- ✓ Further, India abstained during the voting on a resolution calling for investigation into Israeli actions in the Gaza Strip at the Human Rights Council.

Balancing act of India

- **2017 UNESCO**- For instance, even as it abstained at UNESCO in December 2017, India voted in favour of a resolution in the General Assembly opposing the Trump administration's recognition of Jerusalem as the Israeli capital.
- **UNHRC's 46th session in Geneva**- At the UNHRC's 46th session in Geneva earlier this year, India voted against Israel in three resolutions – one on the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people, a second on Israeli settlement policy, and a third on the human rights situation in the Golan Heights.
 - ✓ It abstained on a fourth, which asked for an UNHRC report on the human right situation in Palestine, including East Jerusalem.
- **Human rights abuses in Palestinian territory**- The International Criminal Court claimed jurisdiction to investigate human rights abuses in Palestinian territory including West Bank and Gaza and named both Israeli security forces and Hamas as perpetrators.
 - ✓ Prime Minister Netanyahu wanted India, which does not recognise the ICC, to take a stand against it on the issue, and was surprised when it was not forthcoming.

AREAS OF COOPERATION-

- **Main pillars**- Since the up gradation of relations in 1992, defence and agriculture formed the two main pillars of our bilateral engagement
- **Strong bilateral ties**- India and Israel have enjoyed strong bilateral ties since 1950 with Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru reiterating India's position on the recognition of Israel as a state.
- **Defence co-operation**- Today, India is the largest buyer of Israeli military equipment and Israel is second largest defence supplier to India after Russia.
 - ✓ India is Israel's third largest Asian Trade partner, and tenth largest partner overall.
- **Expanding diplomatic ties**- India and Israel have been engaging in expanding diplomatic ties through bilateral talks and coalition initiatives towards agricultural cooperation, water accessibility and oil and natural gas cooperation.

DEFENSE COOPERATION-

- India is the **largest buyer of Israeli military equipment**
- The two countries have elevated their ties to a **strategic partnership**; an important pillar of this relationship is defense.
- The ambit of India-Israel defense cooperation has widened to include other domains like space, counter-terrorism, and cyber security; however, the cornerstone remains Israeli arms sales to India.
- The major defense sales from Israel to India include Heron UAV, Barak Missiles, SPYDER-MR air defense system etc.
- Government has increased the limit for **FDI in defense** through the automatic route from **49% to 74%**.

What makes Israel a good arms supplier to India?

- Israel supplies **ready-to-use critical technologies**, even on short notices. Israel has created its niche in the market with its innovation-backed technologies such as UAVs, missile defence systems and surveillance radars.
- Useful for **patrolling and surveillance purposes** in peacetime and eases the operational ability of armed forces in wartime.

- **Make in India-** The **export-oriented** Israeli defence industry and its openness to establishing joint ventures complement both 'Make in India' and 'Make with India' in defence.
- **Flexibility-** Israeli arms can be flexibly deployed to various wings of the military, which simplifies the operation during mission time.
- **Customisation-** Israel has developed the expertise to customise its arms according to the requirements of its customers.
- Israel has always been a '**no-questions-asked supplier**', i.e., it transfers even its most advanced technology without placing limits to its use.
- These factors make Israel a potential '**all-weather**' defence partner for India.

AGRICULTURE

- **Indo-Israeli Agricultural Cooperation Project** started in 2008 following the signing of a three-year Action Plan based on Government-to-Government Agreement.
 - ✓ Both started an agricultural fund worth \$50 million that focused on dairy, farming technology and micro-irrigation.
- **Work program agreement-** In 2021, India and Israel have signed "a three-year work program agreement" for development in agriculture cooperation.
 - ✓ The programme aims to grow existing Centres of Excellence, establish new centres, increase Centre of excellence's value chain, bring the Centres of Excellence into the self-sufficient mode, and encourage private sector companies and collaboration.
- **Centres of Excellence-** India and Israel are implementing "INDO-ISRAEL Agricultural Project Centers of Excellence" and "INDO-ISRAEL Villages of Excellence".
- **INDO-ISRAEL Villages of Excellence** is a new concept aimed at creating a model ecosystem in agriculture across eight states, alongside 13 Centers of Excellence within 75 villages.
 - ✓ The program will promote the increase of net income and better the livelihood of the individual farmer, transforming traditional farms into modern-intensive farms based on Indo-Israel Agriculture Action Plan (IIAP) standards.
- **Israeli expertise and technologies-** India has benefited from Israeli expertise and technologies in horticulture mechanization, protected cultivation, orchard and canopy management, nursery management, micro-irrigation and post-harvest management particularly in Haryana and Maharashtra.
 - ✓ Some Israeli companies and experts are providing expertise to manage and improve dairy farming in India through their expertise in high milk yield.
- **Israeli drip irrigation technologies** and products are now widely used in India.

TRADE-

- The bilateral trade between India and Israel grew from \$200 million in 1992 to \$5.84 billion in 2018. India's major exports to Israel and vice versa include precious stones and metals, organic chemicals, electronic equipment etc.
- The two countries have also signed a 'Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement'.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATIONS-

- India-Israel cooperation in S&T is overseen by the Joint Committee on S&T, established under the S&T Cooperation Agreement signed in 1993.
- During the visit of PM Modi in July 2017, an MoU for establishing India-Israel Industrial R&D and Innovation Fund (I4F) was signed.

- In 2012, the two countries signed a five-year \$50 million academic research agreement for promoting collaborative research across a wide range of disciplines, including medical and information technology, social and life sciences, humanities, and the arts.

New Quad signals India's strategic shift in Middle East

- **Mini QUAD**- The new and mini-Quad (comprising India, Israel, the UAE and the US) is innovative, non-confrontationist and hence will be enduring.
- **QUAD**- The other one comprising Australia, India, Japan and the US, the seeds of which were sown in 2007, is hampered by a host of security challenges. With China as their largest trading partner, none have the luxury of being openly anti-Beijing.
- **What is common between the two?-** Opposition to China being the common (if not the only) unifier presented a negative view of the Quad.
 - ✓ Moreover, when the US needed a stronger framework, it settled for AUKUS without any prior notification or consultation with other members of Quad.
- **How is new QUAD different?-** The new Middle Eastern Quad is different and will be more challenging for India than the Indo-Pacific one.
 - ✓ It will not be a talk shop like others where India is a member.
 - ✓ The new Quad is framed as an economic forum, akin to the ASEAN in its earliest stages. cooperation in infrastructure, trade, technology, health and big data aimed at economic growth.
 - ✓ Maritime security would involve freedom of navigation for all littoral and non-littoral states, and ensuring safe passage for oil and non-oil cargo, especially in the Persian Gulf region.
- **Does not aims against anyone-** Unlike the Indo-Pacific Quad, the Middle Eastern one does not appear to be aimed at any particular country, ideology or group. There is no one to gang up against.
 - ✓ Though Iran could be a concern for some, others do not see Tehran as an existential threat.
 - ✓ Since the mini-Quad enhances New Delhi's regional importance, Iran would have to accommodate India in its Afghan policy.
- **Economic cooperation-** Since economic cooperation is the prime focus, the Quad will not progress only on the shoulders of the Ministry of External Affairs.
 - ✓ The economic wing within embassies (introduced in the mid-1990s following economic reforms) will have to be scaled up, and the South Bloc will have to bring in other government and non-government players to fructify the forum
- **Will push India to transform itself-** This Quad will push India to transform itself.
 - ✓ While the US might be more lenient towards Indian stretchable time, Israel and the UAE are impatient countries.
 - ✓ Their economic transformation was achieved with greater attention to efficiency, lessening cost and reducing lead-time in deliveries.
 - ✓ Hence, the success of the new Middle Eastern Quad rests on India moving away from rhetoric, focusing on the deliverables and hopefully, improving its work culture and efficiency.

IS ISRAEL INDIA'S NATURAL ALLY?

(Need balanced approach in answer)

YES

- Though India established diplomatic ties with Israel in 1992, India recognized Israel in 1950 itself. And India kept relationship with Israel 'behind the curtains' due to above mentioned reasons. Israel's support proved critical for India during its wars with Pakistan and China.
- Israel has consistently supported India on Kashmir issue
- Support of Israel has been critical for India in Kargil War.

- India Israel relationship has evolved into multifaceted one with defense being the core. Other areas of cooperation being Agriculture, wastewater treatment and science and technology. (Briefly mention stats from above)

NO

- In International relations discourse, natural ally implies alliance with defense and security pact like US-Israel, US-Japan etc.
 - ✓ However, India values its strategic autonomy and is averse to military alliance. In words of **Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar**, 'age of alliances is over and India will go for issue-based alliances.'
- Secondly, according to **Rajendra Abhyankar**, strategic imperatives in West Asia are such that India will have to go for middle ground rather than alliances.
 - ✓ Thus, maintaining good relations with all 3 pillars of Middle-East geopolitics i.e., Israel, Saudi Arabia and Iran is critical for India.
- Thirdly, strategic experts have doubt over depth of India-Israel relationships. Israel-China trade is way more than India.
 - ✓ According to critics like **G. K. Gandhi**, **the relationship is too much hyped, high on optics, less in substance.**
 - ✓ He pointed out that beyond the Palestinian issue, there are several important differences between Indian and Israeli perceptions on matters of national security.
- Fourthly, **Nicholas Blarel** in his article **'Recalibrating India's Middle East Policy'** has pointed out limitations in relationships due to difference in strategic situation, different world views and lack of common enemy.
- **India doesn't share Israel's animosity for Iran** and also doesn't support Israel's aggressive anti-Iran posture. Israel has welcomed the Belt and Road Initiative sponsored by China and does not share India's deep concerns relating to the expansion of China's influence in India's neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean region.
 - ✓ India is anxious to see a settlement of the various contentions in the region, many of which are aggravated by Israel's actions.
 - ✓ These developments affirm that there are serious limitations to India-Israel relations. India Israel relations will remain transactional in character and never attain the level of a strategic partnership.
- Israeli newspaper Haaretz mentioned that **"India wants an affair when it comes to Israel, not serious relationship."** It argued that India's voting record at the UN "shows an **embrace of the Palestinian narrative**".

Conclusion

- Though both countries face unfriendly neighbourhoods, radicalism and terrorism, yet Israel's engagement with India is **mainly commercial.**
- Also, we cannot deny that both India and Israel have overlapping strategic interests. Relations are intimate but statements like **"sky is the limit"** remain a hyperbole.
- India's present policy marks the end of era when ideological posturing and vacuous morality rode roughshod over pragmatism and realism. Thus, in the present geopolitical flux, India-Israel relations is manifestation of relationship based on **'enlightened self**

CENTRAL ASIA

Introduction-

- **Halford John Mackinder** in his article “**The Geographical Pivot of History**” propounded “**Heartland theory.**”
 - ✓ For Mackinder the Heartland lay at the centre of the world island, stretching from the Volga to the Yangtze and from the Himalayas to the Arctic.
 - ✓ According to Heartland Theory one who rules Eurasia commands the Heartland; one who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island.
- **Location-** Central Asia located at centre of Eurasia has always been a **place of great game**. It has been termed as pivot of world politics. It has been traditionally under the influence of Russia since Cold War era.
 - ✓ Central Asia, located in the heart of Eurasia, forms a part of India’s extended neighbourhood.
 - ✓ Its geographical proximity, strategic location, and historical linkages make it an important partner for New Delhi.
 - ✓ However, India–Central Asia relations stagnated in the 20th century, due to the Anglo-Russian rivalry in the “Great Game” and in 21st century, the lack of direct access has limited India-central Asia relations.
- **Global chessboard-** Central Asia has also been called “the global chessboard.” In recent times, the “New Great Game” in Central Asia is characterised by fierce competition between various states all aiming to increase their influence, hegemony and power over the region.
 - ✓ In this ‘game’, the important players are Russia, the US, European Union (EU), China, Turkey, Iran and India.

IMPORTANCE OF CENTRAL ASIA

GEO-ECONOMIC

- **Mineral resources:** Central Asian countries have abundant mineral resources such as petroleum, natural gas, antimony, aluminium, gold, silver, coal and uranium which can help ensure energy security for India.
- For example-
 - ✓ Kazakhstan has the largest uranium reserves in the world.
 - ✓ Uzbekistan, along with Kyrgyzstan, is a significant regional producer of gold.
 - ✓ Apart from oil deposits, Tajikistan has huge hydropower capacity, and
 - ✓ Turkmenistan has the world's fourth largest gas reserves.
 - ✓ Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan are both on the Caspian coastline, promising to open the door to other Caspian states that are rich in oil.
- **Connectivity:** Central Asia lies in the middle of the Eurasian Continent and can help India achieve connectivity to Europe.
 - ✓ The region is important for India to develop its transit and transport potential through regional and international transport corridors such as the **International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)**.
 - ✓ Keeping the connectivity objective in mind, India has joined the **Ashgabat Agreement** in February 2018 and **the TIR Convention** in 2017.
 - ✓ With this, India is now a part of the single transport transit corridor system that would enhance the prospect of enlarging both the operational and practical scope of Chabahar and fast-tracking implementation of the INSTC.
- **Trade and investment potential:** Central Asia's economic growth, especially in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, has sparked a construction boom and sectors such as IT, pharmaceuticals and tourism have been expanding.

- ✓ India has expertise in these fields, and deeper collaboration would give trade ties with these countries a new impetus. The area also has a strong demand for Indian pharmaceutical products.
- **Energy Security-** The significant achievement in the energy sector has been **civil nuclear cooperation**.
 - ✓ In 2008, **Kazakhstan** supported India in obtaining India-specific exemption to allow civil nuclear cooperation with the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) countries.
 - ✓ In 2015, with their earlier deal having expired, India and Kazakhstan signed a new agreement for the purchase of 5000 tonnes of Kazakh Uranium until the end of 2019.
 - ✓ Currently, both sides are negotiating a third agreement, as part of which Kazakhstan is planning to increase its supplies to India to 7500-10000 tonnes.
 - ✓ India also signed a uranium supply agreement with **Uzbekistan**.

GEO-STRATEGIC:

- **P. S. Raghvan** in his article in The Hindu titled, '**India's pivot to Eurasia**' has highlighted importance of Central Asia for India in context of India's troubled relations with neighbours.
 - ✓ He has invoked **Kautilyan wisdom in Mandal siddhanta**. In his words, "When you have complicated ties with neighbours, it makes sense to strengthen ties with your neighbours' neighbours."
- **Strategic position:** geographically, Central Asia acts as a bridge between the various regions of Asia and between Europe and Asia.
 - ✓ New trade routes between India and Central Asia have been opened, bypassing Pakistan, with the Chabahar Agreement with Iran in effect.
 - ✓ It has been reported that, the only foreign military airbase in India, controlled by the IAF and the Tajik Air Force, is in Farkhor (Tajikistan).
- **Security:** Central Asian Republics face significant challenges
 - ✓ '**Golden Crescent**' illicit drug trade in opium cultivation (Iran-Pak-Afghan) and are also victims of the illicit weapons trade.
 - ✓ Central Asian instability can spill over to Kashmir.
 - ✓ Furthermore, religious extremism, fundamentalism and terrorism continue to pose threats to regional stability.

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

- **History of engagement:** India and Central Asia share a long history of engagement since 3rd century B.C.
 - ✓ **The Kushan Empire** was expanded across the modern Central Asia region.
- **Ancient silk-road:** Since Ancient times India and Central Asia are connected through Silk route which have facilitated exchange of ideas, thoughts and philosophy. Spices, cotton, silk etc were the main traded commodities which enhanced economic integration between these regions.
- **Islam and Sufism:** Origin of Mughals can be traced back to Central Asia (Babur came from valley of Fergana) and many prominent personalities like Al Biruni, Amir Khusro and Sufi saints played vital role in spreading Islamic culture in India.
- **Following India's independence,** the country's foreign policy largely focused on its immediate neighbourhood, the major powers in the international system and solidarity with other Afro-Asian colonies.
 - ✓ This, however, did not extend to Soviet Central Asia, due to India's robust diplomatic, defence and economic partnership with the Soviet Union, which was routed via Moscow.
 - ✓ Prior to the dissolution of the Soviet Union, India established its only Central Asian consulate in Tashkent in 1987
- **After the breakup of the Soviet Union** and the formation of the independent republics in Central Asia, India reset its ties with the strategically critical region.

- ✓ India provided financial aid to the region and established diplomatic relations. New Delhi signed the **Strategic Partnership Agreements (SPA)** in 2012 with Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to stimulate defence cooperation and deepen trade relations.
- ✓ The shared interests were also articulated through a **'Look North Policy'** that emphasized shared concerns along with a desire to 'promote stability and cooperation without causing harm to any third country.'
- **In 2012, New Delhi's 'Connect Central Asia' policy** aimed at furthering India's political, economic, historical and cultural connections with the region.
 - ✓ However, India's efforts were stonewalled by Pakistan's lack of willingness to allow India passage through its territory.
 - ✓ China took advantage of the situation and unveiled the much-hyped BRI in Kazakhstan.
 - ✓ However, in the later decades India's relation with the region have developed slowly despite enjoying several advantages.
 - ✓ India could not maintain the momentum in relations mainly due to
 - Lack of direct access,
 - Rising Chinese focus,
 - Shifting of focus towards indo-Pacific
- **In recent times**, the growing geostrategic and security concerns regarding the BRI's China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and its violation of India's sovereignty forced New Delhi to fix its strategy.
 - ✓ Soon after assuming office, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited all the Central Asian countries in July 2015. Eventually, Central Asia became the link that placed Eurasia in New Delhi's **zone of interest**.
 - ✓ **C. Raja Mohan** has described present state of relations between India and Central Asia as **"high octane diplomacy."**

Strengthening the connectivity:

- **MoUs with Iran**- India signed MoUs with Iran in 2015 to develop the Chabahar port in the Sistan-Baluchistan province that was in the doldrums from 2003.
 - ✓ Most of the Central Asian leaders view India's Chabahar port as an opportunity to diversify their export markets and control China's ambitions. China's assertive approach led to rising social discontent on the ill-treatment of their ethnic brethren in neighbouring Xinjiang.
- **INSTC & TAPI**- India has taken an active role in strengthening the connectivity with Central Asia through the International North South Transport Corridor Project (INSTC) and in the TAPI energy corridor project.
- **SCO**: India gained permanent membership in SCO in 2017. Through SCO, Central Asian countries expect India to counteract increasing influence of China and Russia in the region.

CHALLENGES

- **Land locked region**: Central Asia is land locked, which has hindered the relationship between India and Central Asia.
- **Weak connectivity** has also led to India and Central Asia's below-par trade. One choice was the old Silk Road, but Xinjiang's security situation, unresolved border disputes with China, and protracted negotiations forced India to pursue alternate routes to reach the CARs.
 - ✓ The unpredictable situation in Afghanistan and the geo-strategic importance of Pakistan in the region have robbed India of the benefits of Central Asian ties.
- **Chinese presence**: **The Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB)** initiative involves Central Asia. In addition, the danger posed by the spill-over of Islamic radicalization to the Uighurs in Xinjiang province has led China to become well entrenched in Central Asian security affairs, thus indirectly affecting India's interests.

- ✓ China has been expanding its regional presence **through SCO** and the '**5+1 format**' launched in 2020 to further its clout. However, its advances are already causing concerns of '**debt-trap diplomacy**' given the economic situation of Central Asian countries.
- ✓ Turkmenistan owes at least US\$ 8 billion in loans to China and the latter holds roughly 50 percent of Tajikistan's US\$ 2.8 billion foreign debt.
- ✓ Kyrgyzstan has turned to China for debt relief to deal with the economic impact of the pandemic.
- **Radicalism and extremism:** The increasing Islamic radicalization have become a major security concern for the governments of the region.
 - ✓ Central Asian republics are prone to factors such as Al Qaeda, the Islamic State, the Taliban, the IUM, Hizb-ut-Tahrir, and so on.
 - ✓ Following the start of Syria's civil war and the rise of the Islamic State (IS), estimates suggest that several thousands of Central Asians, ranging from 2000 to upwards of 4000, migrated to join the terrorist group.
- **Domestic problems**, such as:
 - ✓ "Youth Bulge " combined with restricted economic opportunities;
 - ✓ **Extreme and worsening corruption;**
 - ✓ **Drug trafficking;**
 - ✓ **Autocratic succession** without strong government or party institutions, etc.
- **Close partners**- India sees the Central Asian Republic (CARs) as its "close political partners" in its "extended neighbourhood" and cultivating closer economic, strategic, cultural and defence ties with them are a key element of its foreign policy.
- **India is a marginal player currently**- But, at present, India is only a marginal player in Central Asia. Countries like Russia, China and the US have much greater presence and consequently leverage in the region.
- **Poor economic relations**- India's current trade figure of about USD 100 billion with the SCO members is also grotesquely asymmetric – about 90 billion is with China, 8 billion with Russia and 1.5 billion with the Central Asia states of which 1 billion is with Kazakhstan.
- **Delays in projects:**
 - ✓ **Energy Security**- the lack of connectivity with any planned routes facing serious financial, political, and security constraints between India and the region has frustrated oil and gas diplomacy.
 - ✓ For instance, the long-delayed Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (**TAPI**) pipeline was first proposed in the mid-1990s and all four actors officially signed an intergovernmental agreement in 2010. Since then, progress has been stalled due to the instability in Afghanistan and the lack of trust between India and Pakistan.
- **Act east policy**- Lastly, India's "**Act East**" policy has resulted in concentrating its economic and diplomatic resources in Southeast and East Asia.
- **Dilemma**- Further the **dilemma between maritime and continental policy** in Indian foreign policy paradigm has led to loss of momentum in India -Central Asia relations.

EFFORTS BY INDIA TO ENHANCE ENGAGEMENT IN THE CENTRAL ASIA

- **LOOK NORTH POLICY**
 - ✓ In the domain of Indian foreign policy, Central Asia was focused upon under the narrative framework of the 'Look North' policy. However, due to the economic slowdown in India and global power competition in Central Asia, India couldn't maintain momentum. It has discouraged India from playing a major role in the region for a larger part of the last 3 decades.
- **CONNECT CENTRAL ASIA POLICY**

- ✓ India's '**Connect Central Asia Policy**' was reinforced in 2015, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first Indian head of state to visit all five nations between July 6 and 13.
- **Changing geopolitics**- This renewed focus on the region can be attributed to the changing geopolitics of the region, particularly the formation of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the external security threats to the region.
 - ✓ The convergence of China's BRI projects in the region with India's unrealized economic interests there has prompted the India to adopt a more proactive approach and look at new avenues for economic cooperation.
- **'Connect Central Asia' policy**- India's '**Connect Central Asia' Policy** is a broad-based approach, including political, security, economic and cultural connections. It covers an entire gamut of a **multi-model approach** to strengthen politico-economic, security, and cultural ties between the two.
 - ✓ The key elements of this policy cover many important issue areas, including political cooperation, economic cooperation, strategic cooperation, regional connectivity, cooperation in regional groupings
 - ✓ The Connect Central Asia Policy is based on - **4Cs: Commerce, Connectivity, Consular and Community**.
 - ✓ The policy included a focus on strategic and security cooperation, including close consultations on Afghanistan, energy and other natural resources, as well as connectivity.
- **India-Central Asia Dialogue**- During the second **India-Central Asia Dialogue**, India provided US\$ 1 billion Line of Credit for priority developmental projects in fields such as connectivity, energy, IT, healthcare, education, agriculture etc. in Central Asia.
- **Connectivity**- To facilitate transport of goods between India and Central Asia via Iran, India acceded to the **Customs Convention on International Transport of Goods under cover of TIR Carnets** in 2017 and joined the Ashgabat Agreement – which includes Iran, Oman, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan – in 2018.
 - ✓ Uzbekistan has also joined INSTC. Since its inception in 2000, the project has witnessed slow growth due to a combination of factors including low trade volumes, incomplete infrastructure, and sanctions.
 - ✓ **Trilateral Working Group Meeting**- India, Iran, and Uzbekistan conducted the Trilateral Working Group Meeting on the joint use of Chabahar Port on 14 December 2020.
 - ✓ Recently, stressing on the need for enhanced connectivity, External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** during his visit to Central Asia proposed the inclusion of strategic Chabahar Port in Iran in the North-South Transport Corridor
- **Developmental Partnership under High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP)**: Under these projects India provides Grant assistance for furthering socio-economic development.
- **India-Central Asia Business Council (ICABC)**: It was launched in February 2020 and comprises the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and chambers of commerce from the 5 central Asian countries. Its aim is to collaborate and provide an industry view to the governments of the six countries.

MULTILATERAL ENGAGEMENT-

- **Regional connectivity**- Apart from the bilateral cooperation, India has also focused on multilateral engagement with the region at two levels. The first is through **regional connectivity**.
- **Customs Convention**- To facilitate transport of goods between India and Central Asia via Iran, India acceded to the Customs Convention on International Transport of Goods under cover of TIR Carnets in 2017 and joined the Ashgabat Agreement.
- **Need to match diplomacy with action**- However, New Delhi needs to combine skilful diplomacy with action on the ground to ensure the continued viability of these projects in the face of US-Iran tensions.

- **Platforms for multilateral cooperation-** The next is through platforms for multilateral cooperation with both the Central Asian states and other external powers.
 - ✓ On the economic front, India and the Eurasian Economic Union, which includes the Central Asian nations of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, set up a Joint Study Group to explore the possibility of a Free Trade Agreement in 2015.
 - ✓ While the group submitted its feasibility report in 2017, formal negotiations have not yet begun.
- Bala Venkatesh Varma**, the Indian Ambassador to Russia, said that “the creation of a free trade zone between India and EAEU would boost trade turnover to US\$15 billion – about a 25 percent immediate increase. India and Russia have previously discussed ways of doubling trade to US\$30 billion by 2025”
- **SCO-** Twelve years after it became an observer, India joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as a full member in 2017. The change of status from observer to a full member marks an important shift in India’s approach to the region as a whole.
 - **Chance to work with other leaders-** This platform is not only beneficial for India to remain connected with Central Asia, but also has the potential for India to work collectively with other leading powers in the region to address economic and security issues that have potentially detrimental consequences for the world.

INDIA-CENTRAL ASIA SECURITY PARTNERSHIP

- **Tajikistan-** Out of the 5 central Asian countries, **Tajikistan** functions as India’s bridgehead in the region.
 - ✓ India provided material and logistics assistance to the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance in Afghanistan, routed through Tajikistan.
 - ✓ Subsequently, Tajikistan also became the recipient of long-term Indian military training as well as the location of what could have been India’s first overseas military base.
 - ✓ In 2002, India and Tajikistan signed a bilateral defence agreement, as part of which India refurbished Ayni airbase.
- **Military cooperation-** India’s military cooperation with other nations in the region has been significant, but far more limited. Tashkent has been an arms supplier, with India acquiring six Ilyushin-78 in-flight refuelling aircraft from Uzbekistan.
 - ✓ In all, India’s military cooperation with the region has been mostly limited to military education and training, with officers from the region having attended courses at India’s military institutions, infrastructure assistance to military training institutions in the region, as well as the establishment of field hospitals.
- **Modi’s visit in 2015-** After PM Modi’s visit in 2015, India has enhanced the institutional basis for its defence cooperation with the region.
 - ✓ Notably, during Prime Minister Modi’s visits in 2015, India signed memoranda of understanding (MOUs) and agreements related to defence and military technical cooperation with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan.
- **Kyrgyzstan-** Reflecting the growing engagement, India and Kyrgyzstan agreed to hold their bilateral military exercise, Khanjar, annually.
 - ✓ India also held its first joint army exercise with **Kazakhstan, Prabal Dostyk**, in 2016. Held annually thereafter, this was renamed as the **KAZIND** in 2018.
- **Opportunity-** However, India’s membership of the SCO provides opportunity for India to strengthen its security and defence relationship with the Central Asian countries. Further, the crisis in Afghanistan necessitates both India and Central Asian Republics to ramp up their defence capabilities and cooperation.

AFGHANISTAN FACTOR IN INDIA CENTRAL ASIA RELATIONSHIP

- **Importance of Afghanistan-** New Delhi’s approach to the Central Asia region has been shaped, in part, by its interests in Afghanistan.

- ✓ Given the geographical location of the CARs especially Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan—and the convergence of objectives vis-à-vis Afghanistan, greater engagement with these countries is crucial to India's Afghan policy.
- ✓ Afghanistan can be seen both as an enabler for India's objectives vis-a-vis Central Asia as well as an avenue for cooperation between India and the CARs. Thus, despite the limitations, it is critical for New Delhi to continue to persist with its policy of engaging with both Afghanistan and the CARs.
- According to **Harsh V. Pant**, the dramatic developments in Afghanistan have catalysed new geostrategic and geo-economic concerns for the region.
 - ✓ The evolving situation has also thrown up renewed challenges for India's regional and bilateral ties with Central Asia and the Caucasus, prompting India to recalibrate its rules of engagement with the region.
- **Similar concerns-** Besides their location, India and the CARs also share a number of similar concerns vis-à-vis Afghanistan. In fact, one of the principle goals of the '**Connect Central Asia**' policy has been strengthening strategic and security cooperation with the CARs, which includes close consultations on Afghanistan.
- **Consequences of a unstable Afghanistan-** An unstable Afghanistan that could become a haven for radical extremists and terror groups is an overriding concern.
 - ✓ India fears that terrorist groups like Lashkar-e-Tayyeba, Jaish-e-Mohammed and Harkat-ul Mujahideen could use Afghanistan as a base to train and operate against India.
 - ✓ India is also concerned about the prospects of the Afghan conflict spilling over into Central Asia, which can have an impact on its security environment.
- **Opium cultivation and drug smuggling-** The Central Asian Republics see opium cultivation and drug smuggling from Afghanistan as equally serious threats. High levels of drug addiction, human trafficking and powerful criminal networks are some of the other serious associated challenges to the region.
- **Working groups on counterterrorism-** India has joint working groups on counterterrorism with Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, which have been meeting regularly.
 - ✓ Although, such defence cooperation may not improve the security situation in Afghanistan, it can help in developing the capacity of the Central Asian states to withstand any spill over from Afghanistan.

WAY FORWARD

- **Developmental and humanitarian aid-** Beyond strategic and economic cooperation, India must increase its **developmental and humanitarian aid** to the region and promote closer people-to-people ties through education, knowledge transfer, medicine and health, culture, cuisine, and tourism.
- **Multilateral organizations** like SCO, EAEU, and CICA can serve as platforms for sustained engagement and regular exchange of ideas.
 - ✓ The **SCO is a crucial grouping that provides India a strategic convergence with Central Asian countries** on addressing new security challenges, enhancing infrastructural development projects, and creating a network of regional oil and gas pipelines for the larger benefit of the Central and South Asian region.
 - ✓ It bears high potential to give India a stake in the Eurasian integration process.
- **Need of co-ordination despite challenges-** Although several challenges such as China's aggressive posture in the region and the unholy nexus of Pakistan and China looms large over its success, a **calibrated coordination** with the stakeholders will enable New Delhi to accentuate its own role not only in the Eurasian region but also in South Asia.
- **Long way to go for India-** In a region where Russia and China remain the key players, India has a long way to go before it can be recognized as a consequential actor in Central Asia.

- ✓ The proposals and ideas discussed in the 2020 virtual summits possess the potential to form the bedrock of a sustained, balanced, long-term strategy — which New Delhi will have to capitalize on to achieve its policy goals in the region.

CONCLUSION

- According to **Rhea Menon and Sharanya Rajiv**, Geography has placed **Central Asia at the nexus of crucial political and economic transformations for centuries**.
- With the actualization of the BRI, India's Connect Central Asia policy, and the EU's new Central Asia strategy, the 21st century could possibly be the most decisive period for the region.
- Stemming from its historic cultural and economic bonds, India is now well placed to take a more active role in the development of the region.
- India's growing global visibility and key contributions to multilateral forums – like the SCO – have catapulted India from an observer into a critical stakeholder in the region.

HIGH LEVEL VISITS SINCE 2014(CAN USE AS EXAMPLES)

2014	Foreign Minister of Kyrgyzstan	India	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bilateral treaty on mutual legal assistance and an agreement on visa-free travel for diplomatic, official, and service passport holders 2. Progress of the 6th India-Kyrgyz Republic Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological, and Cultural Cooperation held in Bishkek in July, 2013
	External Affairs Minister of India	Tajikistan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cooperation in mining, pharmaceuticals, textiles and garment industries, transport and communication, education, health, and tourism, as priority sectors for promoting bilateral investment 2. India–Kyrgyz Republic Joint Business Council 3. IT Centre of Excellence in Bishkek and the progress in planned pan Central Asia e-network
2015	Prime Minister of India	Kazakhstan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Defence and military technology 2. Railways 3. Uranium supply to India 4. Sports 5. Transfer of sentenced prisoners
	Prime Minister of India	Uzbekistan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joint working group on counter-terrorism 2. Uranium supply to India
	Prime Minister of India	Kyrgyzstan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreement on defence cooperation 2. A <i>Memorandum of understanding (MoU)</i> on cooperation in field of elections 3. Culture
	Prime Minister of India	Turkmenistan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MoU on supply of chemical products 2. Programme of cooperation in science and technology 3. MoU on cooperation in the field of tourism 4. Defence agreement
	Prime Minister of India	Tajikistan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exchange of Note Verbale on setting up computer labs in 37 schools of Tajikistan

2016	President of Tajikistan	India	1. Agreement to prevent terror financing and money laundering
	President of Kyrgyzstan	India	1. MoU for youth exchange programmes 2. MoU on agriculture and food security
2018	President of India	Tajikistan	1. MoU on cooperation on peaceful use of space technology for development 2. MoU for renewable energy cooperation
	President of Uzbekistan	India	1. MoU on tourism, agriculture and allied sectors, health and medical sciences, pharmaceutical industry, science, technology and innovation, military education
2019	External Affairs Minister of India	Uzbekistan	1. Inauguration of India-Central Asia Dialogue
	President of Uzbekistan	India	1. Agreement on importing uranium from Uzbekistan 2. MoU of cooperation between Gujarat and Andijan
	Defence Minister of India	Uzbekistan	1. Military medicine 2. Military education
	Internal Affairs Minister of Uzbekistan	India	1. Security cooperation 2. Counter-terrorism 3. Human trafficking
2020	External Affairs Minister of Uzbekistan	India	1. US\$ 200 million of Line of Credit extended by India to Uzbekistan 2. Efforts to liberalize its economy, create business friendly conditions, and attract foreign investment including that from Indian companies 3. Cooperation in the fields of defence, counter-terrorism and security, information and communication technology, development partnership, and promote cultural exchanges 4. Cooperation in the multilateral fora including the United Nations and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)
	Second India-Central Asia Dialogue	Virtual meet	1. Combat terrorism 2. Modernising infrastructure of Chabahar port in Iran 3. An additional USD 1 billion Line of Credit by India for the Central Asian countries 4. Grant financing for high impact community development projects in the countries 5. India-Central Asia Business Council
	Bilateral dialogue between India and Uzbekistan	Virtual meet	1. MoU between National Institute of Solar Energy, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India and International Solar Energy Institute, Uzbekistan 2. Memorandum of Cooperation in the area of digital technologies 3. Dollar Credit Line Agreement between Export-Import Bank of India and Government of Uzbekistan 4. High Impact Community Development Projects

SCO AND INDIA

Introduction

- The SCO grew out of the **Shanghai Five grouping** — of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan — which was set up in 1996 to resolve boundary disputes between China and each of the four other members.
- It admitted Uzbekistan in 2001, re-christened itself the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and broadened its agenda to include **political, economic and security cooperation**. It admitted India and Pakistan as full members in 2017.
- The admission of India and Pakistan has expanded the geographical, demographic and economic profile of the SCO, which now has about half the world's population and a quarter of its GDP. Its boundary extends southwards to the Indian Ocean.

Structure of SCO

- The SCO has two main executive organs: **the SCO secretariat and SCO Regional Anti-terrorist structure (RATS)**
- **The head of the SCO secretariat** is nominated by the council of Head of States. The SCO Secretariat coordinates the activity of the SCO and provides informational, analytical, legal, organisational and technical support.
- SCO Regional Anti-terrorist structure (RATS) is responsible for the implementation of SCO counter terrorism strategies.

Objective of SCO

- Strengthen relations among member states
- Promote cooperation in political affairs, economics and trade, scientific-technical, cultural, and educational spheres as well as in energy, transportation, tourism, and environmental protection
- safeguard regional peace, security, and stability
- Create a democratic, equitable international political and economic order.

India's rationale behind joining SCO

- **SCO's relevance for India**- the SCO's relevance for India lies in geography, economics and geopolitics.
 - ✓ Its members occupy a huge landmass adjacent to India's extended neighbourhood, where India has important economic and security interests.
 - ✓ Its Central Asian countries border Afghanistan, Pakistan and China.
 - ✓ A narrow sliver of land separates southern Tajikistan from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.
 - ✓ According to **P. S. Raghvan**, with Pakistan joining the Organisation, the logic of India's membership and playing more assertive role in the region, became stronger.
- **After break-up of the Soviet Union**- Since the break-up of the Soviet Union, the optimal development of India's relations with Central Asian countries has been constrained by lack of overland access through Pakistan and Afghanistan/Iran, because of political and/or security reasons.
 - ✓ With new multimodal transport corridors now envisaged through SCO's Multilateral Connectivity Initiative, there are again prospects of invigorating trade and investment links with this region.
- **India was termed as mute spectator**- For long India was seen as a "mute spectator" and "fence sitter" in terms of its foreign policy towards Western and Central Asia.
- **Balancer to China**- SCO can increase India's profile in Eurasia and enhance its credibility as balancer to China.
 - ✓ In the formative years of the SCO, Russia pushed strongly for India to join it, to somewhat balance China's economic dominance in Central Asia.

- ✓ However, the Chinese were not responsive. It has secured the simultaneous admission of Pakistan into the SCO.
- ✓ In this context, India has to carve out a political and economic space for itself in Central Asia, alongside Russia's role as net security provider and China's dominating economic presence.
- ✓ Further, the Central Asian countries would welcome India breaking into this Russia-China duopoly.
- **Integral part of the Eurasian security group-** It enables India, as an integral part of the Eurasian security grouping, to neutralise centrifugal forces arising from religious extremism and terrorism in the region.
 - ✓ It helps India in managing much more effectively the negative impact of a Talibanised Afghanistan, especially in the post-USA exit scenario.
- **India-Pakistan relations-** SCO can provide a useful platform for negotiations between New Delhi and Islamabad/Rawalpindi. However, there are also apprehensions that SCO deliberations could get bogged down by India-Pakistan squabbles.
 - ✓ Russia and China have suggested that harmonious cooperation in the SCO may pave the way for an India-Pakistan rapprochement, recalling that SCO membership had facilitated resolution of China's boundary disputes with Russia and Central Asian countries.

However, according to **P.S. Raghvan**, the circumstances are not comparable. China made substantial concessions to settle its boundary disputes with Russia and Central Asia, in pursuit of larger strategic and economic objectives in the region. India-Pakistan differences extend well beyond a boundary dispute, flow from different historical circumstances and are located in a different geopolitical environment.

Challenges

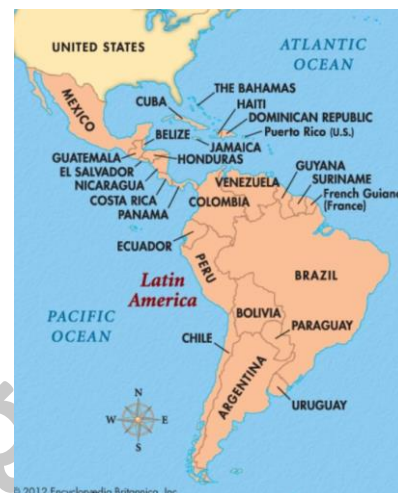
- **Increasing Chinese dominance-** For India — besides that of security and defence cooperation with Pakistan — may come from **increasing Chinese dominance of the SCO**. This could happen if Russia-U.S. relations worsen further, leading Russia to an even greater dependence on Chinese political and economic support.
- **Retreat of the US-** Further, **the retreat of the US and more assertive role played by China and Russia** in the region could dramatically change the balance of forces in the Asia-Pacific in favour of China. This would transform Eurasian dynamics, with an inevitable impact on SCO.
- **Rise of CSTO-** Further, Russia is also not very keen to let China enhance its profile in its periphery. While military confidence building measures have grown under the SCO banner, Russia had its own security organisation for the region, called the Central Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO).
- Moscow also appears reluctant to back Chinese proposals to promote trade integration under the SCO banner; it prefers the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) under its own leadership. China is not a member of either CSTO or EAEU. This is one reason for the weakness of SCO regionalism.

According to **C. Raja Mohan**, Russia also sees itself as the sole protector of the former Soviet Republics and may not be ready to share that role with China — “yes” to coordination, but “no” to a Sino-Russian security diarchy.

LATIN AMERICA

Introduction-

- India has always maintained a good relationship with various parts of the world, such as East and South Asia, Australasia, North America etc.
- India's socio-economic affinities, strategic geographical location, and more Indian people settling in other countries have contributed to such interrelationships.
- But, India Latin America relations have **not been developed much** as not much migration from India has been to these areas; there have been cultural and spiritual differences between the two countries that made Latin America consider India distant.
- But there is a lot of potential in this relationship. In 2018, the combined GDP of both countries reached almost US\$ 8.4 trillion.
- Latin America and India have a 'sense' about each other but their minds are still to be made up.
- According to **AN ray** Latin America is last frontier of Indian foreign policy. Analyst argues that roadblock is not geography but Psychology.
- However according to **Amb R. Vishwanathan** Latin America is closer to India than you think.



Political and diplomatic relations

- Early political exchanges identified some common ground but had little political impact.
- India today hosts twenty Latin American and Caribbean embassies and maintains 14 in that region.
- It participates with Brazil, Mexico and Argentina in the G20. Forums for bilateral dialogue, contact with the Community of Latin American States (CELAC) and sub-regional forums provide the matrix for engagement.
- Reform of UN and UNSC expansion, LAC dialogue on lines of India, Africa Forum Summit Latin America countries helped in getting NSG waiver are some of the ways in which Latin and India relations merge.

Economic Relations

- Economic complementarity has been evident, with Indian companies importing large quantities of hydrocarbons from Venezuela, Mexico, Colombia and Brazil; edible oils and sugar from Brazil and Argentina; copper and precious metals from Chile and Peru; wood from Ecuador, etc.
- In turn India exports diesel, textiles and manufactured products.
- Trade accelerated this century at thirty percent annually to hit \$46 billion in, It then slowed with the fall in prices of commodities, especially crude oil, India's principal import.
- The main drivers of the relationship have been official patronage and private enterprise. The former has promoted a strategic partnership with Brazil; a privileged partnership with Mexico; trade negotiations with Mercosur, Chile, Peru; observer status in the Pacific Alliance; investments in energy, mainly hydrocarbons; and a variety of agreements for collaboration in agriculture, science and technology, commerce, etc.
- Private companies have exploited the economic complementarity to invest and trade in energy, commodities, manufactures and technology to mutual benefit in most cases.
- Indian companies recognise Latin America as an important market for automobiles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and engineering goods. Over two dozen Indian IT companies have service and development centres there.
- Latin America has surplus of what India needs. On the other hand, Latin Americans look at India as a large and growing new market for their exports.

India's imports:

Food Security: Latin America could become a large and regular supplier of oilseeds and pulses in the long-term contributing to India's food security.

- **Vegetable oil** - India imports soya oil worth over USD 2 billion from Argentina.
 - ✓ Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay have become the largest soya producer in the world.
 - ✓ Thus Latin America could help India to lessen the excessive dependence on Malaysia and Indonesia who has been dictating prices.
- **Fruits and Vegetables** - Chile, Peru and Argentina.
 - ✓ These are not considered as competition to domestic production but seen as complementary since they come during India's off-season from South America which is in the southern hemisphere.
- **Agriculture** - South America has vast tracts of fertile land, abundant water, advanced technologies and best practices.
 - ✓ The region has the potential to bring in another 40 million hectares of land into agriculture and feed an extra 500 million people.

Strategic Energy Security:

- India imports around 15% of crude oil from Latin America as part of its strategic energy security policy to reduce over dependence on Middle East.
- Latin America is blessed with huge reserves (20% of global reserves), large production capacity and surplus for exports.
- Venezuela has more oil reserves (292 billion barrels) than Saudi Arabia which has 266 billion barrels.
- Argentina has the world's second largest reserves of shale gas and the fourth largest shale oil and production from these have just started. Brazil has started commercial production of its new found pre-salt reserves.
- Mexico is discovering new reserves after the historic opening of the energy sector to private and foreign investment in the last two years.
- With all these, Latin America has the capacity to double its crude exports from the current export of about four million barrels per day.
- Latin America's principal market for oil is USA. But US has drastically reduced crude imports after the shale revolution. Latin America is, therefore, more keen on the large market of India, which has emerged as the second largest importer of crude from the region.

Minerals:

- Copper and precious metals from Chile and Peru; wood from Ecuador, etc.
- Raw Gold imports in 2017-18 were 2 billion dollars.
- Lithium for electric cars to be built in the future - Argentina, Bolivia and Chile together have the most deposits of Lithium in the world.
- Official patronage has promoted a strategic partnership with Brazil; a privileged partnership with Mexico; trade negotiations with MERCOSUR, Chile, Peru; observer status in the Pacific Alliance; investments in energy, mainly hydrocarbons; and a variety of agreements for collaboration in agriculture, science and technology, commerce, etc.
- Private companies have exploited the economic complementarity to invest and trade in energy, commodities, manufactures and technology to mutual benefit in most cases.

MERCOSUR:

- A sub-regional bloc. Its full members are Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Venezuela suspended in December 2016.
- Its purpose is to promote free trade and the fluid movement of goods, people, and currency. It is now a full customs union and a trading bloc.
- MERCOSUR and the Andean Community of Nations are customs unions that are components of a continuing process of South American integration connected to the Union of South American Nations.
- India at present has over 450 tariff lines with MERCOSUR.
- While India was struggling with SAARC and SAFTA, and NAFTA was being called into question by the Trump administration in the US, regional integration efforts were thriving in Latin America. The Organisation of American States (OAS), Mercosur & Caricom were all functioning extremely well.

Issues and Impediments

- **India's complex political economy**- Though the task would seem more complicated for India, which has to deal with over twenty countries, India's complex political economy also perplexes many Latin Americans.
- **Lack of cohesion**- Given the lack of cohesion and relatively shallow levels of Latin American integration – compared to ASEAN or the European Union - India transacts business bilaterally and occasionally engages in dialogue at regional level.
- **Fluctuating ideological currents**- Political vicissitudes and fluctuating ideological currents have impacted attempts to build durable friendships.
 - ✓ A lack of application, insufficient diplomatic attention, linguistic unfamiliarity, absence of a diaspora, and generally lower stakes than with other international partners, have conspired to keep both sides somewhat in the dark about aspects of their political environment important to the relationship.
 - ✓ The rapprochement with Brazil during the Lula presidency has given way to more routine, less ambitious exchanges in recent years.
 - ✓ This led to the neglect, and near demise, of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) forum created in 2003. Consolidation of democracy and centrist politics helps focus both sides on the essential aspects of their relations.
- **Lack of Physical connectivity**- Physical connectivity, a vital element for future growth of trade, was the other obstacle identified, specifically the high cost of transport.
 - ✓ India, unlike China, has no direct shipping services to this region.
 - ✓ The dispersed nature of Latin American populations and markets makes transport costs from India more relevant for Indian exports vis-à-vis Latin American exports to India, which consist largely of bulk commodity shipments.
 - ✓ Indian companies shipping to Brazil cannot automatically access all other countries and markets in the region, given problems of infrastructure and connectivity

NOTE- Scattered Indian lines of credit have fructified into a few projects, dwarfed by more ambitious ventures financed and executed by other players. Bilateral banking connections are non-existent.

- ✓ A solitary, non-retail branch of the State Bank of India exists in Sao Paulo.
- ✓ The Exim Bank of India, responsible for administering fledgling lines of credit, based in Washington DC is even more distant functionally.

Several misconceptions still existed in India about Latin America and the Caribbean Islands

- **Lack of deep knowledge**- India's knowledge of these countries was very superficial, restricted to news coverage about the odd volcanic eruption in Mexico or the Rio de Janeiro carnival held every year before Lent.
- **Misconceptions**- Other misconceptions about this region included that it was 'too far to travel to', 'too expensive to go there', 'ruled by dictators' and 'rife with corruption'.
- **Too much efforts**- India's academics, as a first step, but eventually its business community, bureaucrats, and its politicians, all needed to make a bigger effort to understand this region as the prospects for improving relations with India were tremendous.
- **Amb. Deepak Bhojwani** - India and Latin America: The Way Forward – "Latin America remains distant geographically and conceptually. Political relations are cordial but seldom ascend levels of strategic empathy. Physical connectivity is one of the main obstacle identified, specifically the high cost of transport"
- **Shyam Saran** on Latin America relations: If there is one region of the world where the previous government was perceived to be more engaged it is Latin America.
- **Deepak Bhojwani**: Political ties have reached an inflexion point from their limited levels during cold-war era. Democratizing LAC and liberalizing India interconnected through communication revolution and globalization. India should seize the opportunity with both hands

The Way Forward

- **Political will**- The prime mover is political will. Almost all the recent Indian prime ministerial visits to that region have been in connection with multilateral events.
 - ✓ Both sides need to pay more attention to each other. The need for a higher profile for Latin America in Indian diplomacy is paramount.
- **Political initiatives need to be supported by economic and social interaction**. Consolidation of the juridical matrix through agreements for investment protection, avoidance of double taxation, extradition, immigration, lines of credit, elimination of regulatory hurdles, etc. are as important as the forums that institutionalise dialogue between governments and other stakeholders.
- **Need to encourage people to people connect**- There is a need to encourage student exchange, more high-level visits and sustain the momentum of institutionalized dialogue Promote Latin American Studies Capitalizing on the popularity Bollywood build soft power Support pvt. Companies looking towards LAC Enter into PTA and FTA with Mexico Colombia Need for pro-active trade promotion FTAs and line-of-credits.

INDIA-EU RELATIONS

Introduction-

- The rise of India's economic and strategic prowess and need for global recognition has led India to think beyond simple mental map of concentric circles beyond Neighbours.
- India-EU relations are known as loveless arranged marriage Though they have a strategic partnership, yet there is nothing strategic in the relations
- 14th India-European Union summit, the European Commission's president, Jean-Claude Juncker, called the EU and India natural partners.

India-EU Convergence

- India-EU Agenda for Action 2020 endorsed by the 13th India-EU Summit in March 2016 serves as a framework for exchanges and cooperation between India and EU in various sectors.
- The bilateral Strategic Partnership encompasses thirty one dialogue mechanisms covering a wide range of issues including trade, energy security, science & research, non-proliferation and disarmament, counter terrorism, cyber security, counter-piracy, migration and mobility, etc.

Trade and Investment

- **Largest trading partner**- The EU as a whole was India's largest trading partner while India was EU's 9th largest trading partner in 2018.
- India's **bilateral trade** with the EU in 2018-19 stood at \$ 115.6 billion with India's exports valued at \$ 57.17 billion and India's imports from the EU totalled \$ 58.42 billion.
- **Service exporter**- India is also the fourth largest service exporter to the EU and the sixth largest destination for service exports from the EU.
- **Largest source of FDI**- EU is the largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India.
 - ✓ Over the period April 2000 to June 2018, FDI equity flows from the EU countries into India totalled \$ 90.7 billion, which is about 24% of the total FDI inflows to India.
- An **Investment Facilitation Mechanism** promotes and facilitates FDI inflows from the EU.
- The **European Investment Bank** opened its office in New Delhi in March 2017 and has extended credits for various projects in India.
- **Indian investments** into the EU are estimated at Euro 50 billion

Defence

- **Enhanced bilateral exchanges**- India and EU have gradually enhanced bilateral exchanges and cooperation in the field of defence & security. This includes mutual ship visits, collaboration in escorting humanitarian aid ships and exchanges among military officials, including the EU Military Committee.
- **Information Fusion Centre**- The new Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region in New Delhi (IFC-IOR) has recently been linked-up with the Maritime Security Centre – Horn of Africa (MSC-HOA) established by the EU Naval Force (NAVFOR).

Mobility/ Migration

- A Joint Declaration on Common Agenda on Migration & Mobility (CAMM) was adopted at the 13th India-EU Summit.
- India-EU High Level Dialogue on Migration and Mobility (HLDMM) discusses issues of mutual interest in the context of migration and mobility.

- The fifth meeting of this Dialogue was held on 10 July 2019 in New Delhi.

Science, Research and Innovation

- **India-EU Science & Technology Steering Committee** meets annually to review scientific cooperation. It held its 12th meeting on 1 March 2019 in New Delhi which identified a number of areas for collaboration such as smart grids, bio-economy, health research, polar science and cyber systems.
- **Joint Working Group** on Information & Communication Technologies discusses sectoral issues which last met in September 2019 in Brussels. A Joint Working Group on Environment also meets periodically to discuss cooperation in this sector.
- **Co-funding mechanism**- Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and the European Commission (EC) have established a co-funding mechanism (CFM) to support joint research projects selected under European Research & Innovation Framework Program 'Horizon 2020' related to climate change and polar research.
 - ✓ In June 2018, India and the EU signed a Joint Declaration of Intent on resource efficiency.
- **Cooperation agreement in the field of fusion energy research**- India and European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) signed a cooperation agreement in the field of fusion energy research in 2009.
 - ✓ India is a participant in ITER, an experimental fusion reactor facility in Cadarache (France) to prove the feasibility of nuclear fusion as a future source of energy.

Culture & Education

- **India-EU Joint Declarations of 2010** cover cooperation in the fields of education & training, and multilingualism. Senior official meetings review periodically initiatives and cooperation in the field of education and languages. Indian students avail Erasmus+ scholarship for studies in EU countries.
- **Dialogue on culture**- India and the EU have a dialogue on culture to discuss cooperation in the field of cultural exchanges. In this context, festivals of culture (e.g. Europalia-India festival), exchanges on heritage such as yoga & ayurveda, and other activities are taken up between the two sides.

Concerns in India EU relations

Impact of Brexit:

- **Political risk** - Apart from regional uncertainty, the changing dynamics can potentially reverberate to reach Asia and thus India.
- **Global growth impact** - The potential of a significant weigh down on global growth once the new trade terms take shape is real.
 - ✓ While India currently enjoys improved macroeconomic stability, the country cannot be isolated from the impact from global and regional subdued growth.
- **FTA challenges**: India's FTA negotiation with EU, which saw an impasse on the issue of bilateral investments, might now need a renegotiation of FTA with the union.
 - ✓ Additionally, a separate trade agreement with the UK might also need to be worked on.
- **Immigration norms** - Companies with operations throughout EU will now have to reassess their workforce mobility, along with expansion plans and operations.
- **Currency weakness and unhedged exposure** - According to reports, deepening recession risks and unhedged exposure the British Pound on account of Brexit might impact IT demand, affecting revenues of Indian IT companies in the UK by almost 10 per cent.

- **Contingency planning** - Reports suggest that, currently, over 800 Indian companies in the UK employ over 1.1 lakh people.
 - ✓ The top-growing Indian companies are said to have generated over GBP 26 billion in turnover in 2015. The above considerations demand a thorough assessment of evolving developments and the prioritisation of contingency planning.

Shift in Indo pacific Construct

- **Launch of AUKUS**- The announcement, without prior consultation with France, of the AUKUS partnership between the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom on 15 September, the day before the launch of the new European strategy for the Indo-Pacific, came as a shock for France and for Europe.
- **Loss of the existing contract**- This agreement meant not only the loss of the existing contract between Paris and Canberra for the order of twelve conventional submarines and its replacement by the sale of US-technology nuclear submarines, but also that an ally and a friend had not been informed.
- **Return to the Anglosphere**- AUKUS seems to signal a return to the Anglosphere where the UK would like to play a pivotal role, albeit a very minor one as all technologies are US-based

India-EU Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA)

- **India and the EU** are in the process of negotiating a bilateral Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) since 2007.
- Even after a decade of negotiations, India and EU have **failed to resolve certain issues** which have led to a deadlock. As of late, both sides are discussing the modalities of resumption of BTIA talks on a fast track.
- **Joint Workings Groups**- There are Joint Workings Groups on Textiles and Clothing, Agriculture and Marine Products, Technical Barriers to Trade and Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Issues, Pharmaceuticals and Biotechnology (SPS/TBT) as well as Food Processing Industries to enhance sector-specific cooperation.
- **Macroeconomic Dialogue at Secretary Level**- A Macroeconomic Dialogue at Secretary Level along with a Dialogue on Financial Services Regulations have also been instituted and take place annually.

Major sticking points were

- **Higher levels of tariff concessions**- The EU's demand for market access and higher levels of tariff concessions in automobiles, wines and spirits, as well as government procurement.
- **Divergence on some issues**- Apart from these, policies of India and the EU did not converge on issues like intellectual property rights, data security, services, agricultural exports, chemicals, dairy and fishery, registration of electronic products, and certification of telecom network elements.
- **Services sector**- India could have potentially gained in the services sector. But giving work permits and visas were primarily the competence of individual EU member states, so the EU could not commit much.
- **Different professional standards**- Moreover, the EU had different qualifications and professional standards. Both these factors made the trade deal less attractive for India. The differences that arose during the trade and investment talks were too wide to be overcome without a political push from the higher level.

What can be done?

- Though there have been efforts to resume BTIA negotiations, progress has been sluggish.
- After eight years, during the 15th India-EU Summit held in a virtual format on 15 July 2020, two sides agreed to set up a high-level ministerial dialogue on trade and investment.
- While pushing for the resumption of trade and investment negotiations, India needs to pitch for a quick "early-harvest deal" with the EU, which could be followed by a time-bound and balanced BTIA.

- Renewed thrust on trade talks amid Covid-19 disruptions indicates India's commitment towards a rules-based world trading regime and integration with the global value chain

Future of India –EU relations

- **EU-India Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025**- The recent endorsement of "EU-India Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025" talks about a common roadmap to guide joint action and further strengthen the EU-India Strategic Partnership over the next five years.
- **Agenda of the roadmap**- The agenda discussed in the roadmap talks about non-proliferation and disarmament, maritime security, counter-terrorism (including counter-radicalization, anti-money-laundering and countering terrorism financing) and cyber security.
- **EU-India Human Rights Dialogue** is also a key tool to promote shared values of human rights and fundamental freedoms and convene regular meetings to forge mutual understanding and discuss human rights issues – including women's rights and empowerment and child rights.)

Way Forward.

- **Same set of problems**- Many of the problems that the world currently faces remain the same: From counterterrorism to maritime security; from state fragility to migration; from environmental degradation to public health.
- **Need to explore new avenues**- India and the EU must explore new avenues for greater political and security cooperation to protect the world's public goods.
- **Need for global burden-sharing**- In an era dominated by heightening Sino-US rivalry, there is a greater need for global burden-sharing between like-minded middle powers.
- **Joint vision into common action**- India's seat in the UN Security Council in 2021–22 and its Presidency of the G20 in 2022-2023 provide opportunities to move a joint vision into common action.

Key Thinkers and Ideas

- **Harsh V. Pant** :The conclusion of this agreement will be important not only for India's further Integration into the global economy but also to a give a boost to India-EU ties, which have failed to achieve their full potential
- **Harsh V. Pant**, "With Indo-Pacific becoming new center of gravity, maritime cooperation"
- **Harsh V. Pant**: "With USA upending the liberal order and China's aggression, EU-India partnership is natural corollary".
- **Jose Manuel Barroso** (Former President of European Commission) Principled EU-India cooperation, on trade and on building international security and human rights, can represent an essential contribution to mankind's future
- **Kanwal Sibal** (Natural Partners): Strategic relations are more real than rhetorical. EU's new Global Strategy underlines direct connection between European prosperity and Asian security Joint Communication by the European Commission on India-EU partnership.
 - ✓ A Partnership for Sustainable Modernization and Rules-based Global Order' 'Preserving multilateralism; free trade; global governance Jointly working on Eurasian arc of instability Afghanistan will be a good starting point.
 - ✓ Indian Ocean Region EU is realizing its increasing dependence on China.
- **European Union (EU)** recently came out with a document outlining the bloc's vision for a new and comprehensive strategy to better connect Europe and Asia as an alternative to BRI.