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*International
Relations
MIB 2025*



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Ayan Jain, AIR-16

I want to thank Kalam IAS for their support in CSE 2023. I was a part of the interview guidance course where I found the current affairs material to be extremely good, and I have also benefited previously from the value addition material provided by Kalam IAS for Mains

Thank you!

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CSE 2024 TOPPERS TESTIMONIAL

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Abhishek Vashishtha
AIR-14, CSE 2024

I am Abhishek Vashishtha, I have secured AIR 14 in CSE 2024. Kalam IAS played an important role in my UPSC journey. I practiced PYQs at Kalam IAS, which helped me understand the exam pattern and improved my answer writing skill.

The face to face evaluation of my answers was very helpful. Interview Video analysis by Ajendra Chaudhary Sir was very useful. The detailed feedback provided to me by him helped me a lot.

Thank you Kalam IAS for being a constant support during my journey.

Abhishek

Abhishek Vashishtha
UPSC CSE Rank 14.



TANMAY
AIR-346, 2024

Hello,
Kalam IAS Team
I am writing this testimony to express my sincere thanks to whole team. Especially mock analysis of interview video was helpful. Daily discussion with Ankit Sir was also helpful. Once again thank you for your efforts in my interview preparation.
Tanmay,
AIR-346,
UPSC CSE 2024



Kanisk Singh
AIR 380, 2024

I am Kanisk, I cleared UPSC CSE 2024 with AIR 380 (Roll No-300000000). My journey with Kalam IAS Academy began when I attempted UPSC CSE for the first time before UPSC 2024. I already knew that the test was about a general knowledge in my clearing UPSC CSE 2024. My journey of self-improvement is as follows:
① Excellent coverage of General Affairs - UPSC Prelims questions conceptual & with UPSC PYQs.
② Quality and depth of content - Static syllabus was covered by very carefully crafted questions.
③ Specialized Mock Interview - Not only was the content of the topic covered but also the format of the interview was highly valuable as future questions are more related to it.
④ Detailed Interview Preparation - My interview preparation was extremely high level & in-depth research. Now I am going to reveal some that in UPSC CSE 2024 my 12th attempt was well.
Thank you
Kanisk Singh



Video Testimonials <https://bit.ly/4jGiyRJ>

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Thank you!

Ayan Jain, **AIR-16**

.....



Hi, This is Prajnanandan Giri, AIR-24 in UPSC CSE 2023. Thanks to Kalam IAS and particularly Virek Sir for his insightful guidance between prelims and mains, that I could increase my marks from 105 in 2022 to 118 in 2023 by ensuring my content with better structured answers. The real time evaluation of answer sheets helped me to find my lacunas and it gradually increased my marks in main tests. I would surely recommend Kalam IAS Ethics Program for those aspirants who are looking forward to improve their GS-II marks.

Thank You
Prajnanandan Giri
AIR-24, UPSC CSE 2023

Prajnanandan Giri, **AIR-24**



I was a part of Essay MIP and test series from Kalam IAS. I owe a big thanks to Priyanka Ma'am for one-on-one sessions, during which I suffered an example of a 1300 essay. Keep up the good work!

Regards
HARNIT SINGH SUDAN
AIR-177 CSE-2023

Harnit Singh Sudan, **AIR-177**



I want to thank Priyanka Ma'am of Kalam IAS for her support and guidance in Essay paper. I am very thankful to Ma'am for their guidance & support.

Rajat Tripathi
AIR-515
CSE 2023

Rajat Tripathi, **AIR-515**



Kalam IAS has been very helpful in my preparation. I have used their Mocks & Improvement Booklet for Essay and other subjects plus Priyanka Sir have helped me a lot during interview preparation. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to whole team of Kalam IAS.

Priyanka
(Rank 584)
UPSC-CSE

Prakhya, **AIR-584**



Hi, I am Katyayani Singh AIR 592. Kalam IAS had been instrumental in my UPSC journey. I had followed Kalam IAS booklet of Essay and was able to score 143 marks in the UPSC Exam. It provides a handholding support required for aspirants at the official stage of mains by having regular discussions by mentors, which help to improve upon their mistakes in time. Thankyou Kalam IAS for being pro-active assistance provider, I feel so grateful to be a part of their Main Mock Answer writing program.

Katyayani Singh, **AIR-592**

Toppers' Testimonials



<https://bit.ly/3WnBe0m>

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Dear Students,

We are elated to present you the fourth edition of Kalam **Mains Marks Improvement Booklet (MIB) 2025**. It contains **examples, quotes, anecdotes, references from the movies & books, poems, case studies** among others to enrich your mains answer writing.

Moreover, given the **elaborate coverage of data/facts/ committee recommendations etc.** in each other GS MIBs, we have not included them everywhere to prevent the repetition. We **recommend you go through Separate MIBs** for the comprehensive coverage.

Best Wishes!

Team KALAM

Dear Aspirants

Less than **70 days** are left for CSE MAINS 2025. We strongly recommend each one of you to:

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2. **Marks Improvement Booklets MIB (8)** are first of its kind booklet for CSE MAINS that is highly endorsed by toppers and coveted by all the aspirants at any stage of the preparation. It enhances your Marks by at least **20+ Marks** and helps to get your name in the CSE Merit list.






3. **REPLAY IAS Mains 2025** – write exam on the day of Exam - Each CSE aspirant who **missed mains** MUST write REPLAY - which gives opportunity to gauge their preparation; intensity of competitiveness in Mains and psychological advantage of knowing the mental and physical tiredness of the mains exam.

APPEAL to all Selected/Senior/ Mains giver to encourage your Friend/candidate/ward to write this one program. YOU KNOW THE IMPORTANCE. Don't let them give excuses "abhi prepare nai hai"
Good Luck!

List of Marks Improvement Booklets

- **Ethics Marks Improvement Booklet**
- **Essay Marks Improvement Booklet**
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- **Economy Marks Improvement Booklet**
- **Environment & Disaster Management Marks Improvement Booklet**
- **Internal Security Marks Improvement Booklet**
- **International Relations Marks Improvement Booklet**

Face to Face Mentors (Mains 2025)

				
AIR 14	AIR 228	AIR 386	AIR 393	AIR 543
Abhishek Vashishtha	Devansh M. Dwivedi	Tanishi Kalra	SARTHAK SINGH	MANISH KUMAR
PSIR	PSIR	ECONOMY	PSIR	ANTHROPOLOGY

International Relations CA/MIB Index

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KEY ACRONYMS – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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- 2) 75 Years of India – China Diplomatic Relations
- 3) India rejected Chinese attempt to rename 27 places in Arunachal Pradesh
- 4) Why is China building the world's largest dam on Tsangpo? How India may be impacted?
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- 9) India launches Cities Coalition for Circularity (C-3) Initiative
- 10) International Solar Alliance (ISA)
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- 12) India's Semiconductor Diplomacy
- 13) India's Critical Minerals Diplomacy



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KEYWORDS – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Keywords	Definition	Recent examples
Viksit Bharat 2047	The national mission to transform India into a developed nation by 2047, which serves as the primary driver for its economic and technology-focused foreign policy ambitions.	
Defence Blueprint 2047	A long-term strategic vision for India to achieve self-reliance and global leadership in the defence sector by 2047.	
Neo-non-alignment	A modern foreign policy that emphasizes "strategic autonomy," allowing India to engage with multiple, often competing, powers to serve its interests.	India is an active member of both the Quad (with the U.S., Japan, Australia) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (with Russia, China).
Assertive Foreign Policy	A shift towards a more confident, proactive, and firm diplomatic posture on the global stage, reflecting India's growing ambitions	After the 2020 border clash with China, India deployed 40,000 additional troops and banned numerous Chinese mobile applications.
Digital Transformation Diplomacy	The use of India's success in creating Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) as a tool of soft power and a model for international cooperation.	During its G20 presidency, India promoted its DPI model, including the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), as a global template for financial inclusion.
Tech Decade	A term used by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to frame the 2020s as a period where technology is central to India's development and foreign policy.	This vision is underpinned by the rapid growth of India's startup ecosystem and the nationwide adoption of digital platforms like UPI and Aadhar.
Critical Minerals Diplomacy	Proactive foreign policy to secure access to rare earth elements and other minerals vital for high-tech and defence industries.	India established Khanij Bidesh India Ltd. (KABIL) and signed a \$24 million pact with Argentina in 2024 for lithium exploration.
Realpolitik	Politics based on power and practicality over ideology.	India's continued defence ties with Russia despite Western sanctions, and engagement with Iran for oil imports.
Moralpolitik	Politics based on moral principles rather than power.	India's commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement and humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.
Pacifism	Belief in resolving conflicts without violence.	Advocacy for dialogue in the Kashmir conflict and support for peace talks in Afghanistan.
Policy balancing of	Aligning with various powers to maintain balance.	India's relations with both the U.S. and Russia, exemplified by its participation in the Quad while cooperating with Russia on defence.
Middle Kingdom complex (China)	The Middle Kingdom complex refers to the belief among some Chinese political and strategic elites that China is destined to be the dominant power in Asia and the world due to its superior culture and civilization.	
Swing state	A country whose strategic choices significantly impact the global order due to its geopolitical influence, economic power, and diplomatic capabilities	India's engagement in 'Mini laterals' or issue-based coalitions
Doval Doctrine	An assertive foreign policy willing to use military and non-military means.	Proactive measures against cross-border terrorism, including surgical strikes in Pakistan.
Gujral doctrine	Key principles 1) India would refrain from raising bilateral issues with its neighbours that they consider internal matters. This was meant to build trust and goodwill with India's smaller neighbours. 2) India would adopt a "big brother" approach and act magnanimously towards its neighbours by offering them help and assistance without demanding anything in return. 3) India would adopt an asymmetric approach in its dealings with smaller countries, giving them more than what they give to India in order to build cooperative and friendly relations. 4) India would emphasize dialogue, confidence building measures and conflict resolution rather than taking adversarial positions with its neighbours. 5) India would try to resolve all bilateral issues through peaceful negotiations and would avoid using aggressive or threatening language.	



Manmohan doctrine	A pragmatic, economically driven foreign policy focused on the neighbourhood. Act East Policy enhancing trade with Southeast Asian nations.	
Panchsheel principles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty - Countries should respect each other's freedom and independence. 2) Mutual non-aggression - Countries should refrain from using threats or force against each other. 3) Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs - Countries should not interfere or meddle in each other's domestic politics and governance. 4) Equality and mutual benefit - Relations between countries should be based on equal footing and aimed at mutually beneficial outcomes. 5) Peaceful co-existence - Countries should strive to resolve disputes peacefully through dialogue and negotiations. 	
New Panchsheel principles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Mutual respect for core interests - Countries should respect each other's core interests and major concerns, not just territorial integrity. This goes beyond mere non-interference. 2) Mutual sensitivity - Countries should show sensitivity to each other's perspectives and strategic culture, based on a deeper understanding of each other. 3) Mutual trust - Relationships require a baseline level of mutual trust to prosper. This involves transparency and predictable behaviour. 4) Cooperative deterrence - Given the rise of both powers, they need to develop deterrent capabilities that reassure each other but also cooperate where interests converge. 5) Mutually beneficial cooperation - Countries should pursue win-win cooperation based on comparative advantage, not just rhetoric about equality and mutual benefit. 	
Policy of strategic autonomy	India's policy of strategic autonomy aims to preserve its foreign policy freedom and flexibility by avoiding heavy dependence on any country or power bloc. While engaging with others constructively, India insists on the right to make decisions independently based on its own interests and requirements.	
High octane diplomacy	An active and aggressive approach to foreign relations.	Prime Minister Modi's numerous foreign visits and hosting of global leaders to strengthen partnerships.
Nehruvianism	Nehruvianism refers to the idealistic yet pragmatic vision that Nehru and the Indian National Congress had for independent India. It combined socialist economic policies with secular and inclusive political principles, along with a pragmatic yet autonomous foreign policy.	
Net security provider in Indian ocean	India's role in providing security in the Indian Ocean region. India's naval exercises with countries like Australia and Japan to ensure maritime security.	
Reformed multilateralism	The need for reform in global multilateral institutions.	India's push for UN Security Council reform to include permanent member status.
Pole in a Multipolar World	India's strategic ambition to be an independent center of power and influence, rather than aligning with a single bloc.	India maintains a unique stance on the war in Ukraine, refusing to take sides while advocating for its own interests and those of the Global South.
Global order	The current global order refers to the post-World War 2 liberal international order dominated by Western countries like the US, Europe and Japan.	
New Regionalism approach	Formation of new regional organizations and alliances in globalization.	India's engagement with ASEAN and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).
Multi-alignment	Developing partnerships with multiple major powers.	India's strategic partnerships with both the U.S. and Russia while improving ties with China.
Strategic alignment	Close partnerships based on converging interests.	India and Australia's strategic partnership in the Indo-Pacific region.
New Cold War	A new cold war refers to the growing geopolitical tensions, strategic rivalry and competition between the United States and China that some analysts warn mirrors the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union.	
Hard power	Use of military and economic means to influence other countries.	India's military modernization efforts and defence procurement from various countries.
Soft power	Influence through culture, political values, and foreign policies.	India's cultural diplomacy through the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).
Smart power	Combining hard and soft power for effective foreign policy.	India's naval capabilities paired with humanitarian assistance in the Indian Ocean region.

Neighbourhood First	Neighbourhood First policy refers to India's foreign policy approach that prioritizes developing close relations with its immediate neighbouring countries. It envisions India's neighbours as partners in its development and economic growth.	
Debt-trap diplomacy	Using loans to gain influence over debtor countries.	Concerns over China's loans to Sri Lanka leading to a Chinese-controlled port lease.
Salami Slicing policy	Achieving strategic objectives through incremental actions.	China's gradual erosion of Hong Kong's autonomy through legislative changes.
Hydro hegemon	A country that dominates a transboundary water basin.	China's control over rivers like the Brahmaputra, impacting India's water security.
India's delivery deficit	The gap between India's foreign policy ambitions and actual progress.	Slow progress in enhancing ties with Southeast Asia compared to China's influence.
Insecurity dilemma in India-Pakistan relations	The security dilemma or insecurity dilemma in India-Pakistan relations refers to the situation where the defensive actions and security measures taken by one country are seen as threatening by the other, triggering an endless cycle of action-reaction that exacerbates mutual distrust and tensions.	
Deep state	A hidden network of power manipulating a country's politics.	Allegations in Turkey regarding military influence over government policies.
Cooperation-defection cycle	Alternating cooperation and non-cooperation undermining trust.	Periodic peace talks between India and Pakistan often disrupted by terrorist attacks.
Thousand cuts, zero-option war	Achieving victory through persistent small actions.	China's incremental influence in India's neighbourhood through investments and aid.
Buffer state	A country located between rival powers that reduces conflict likelihood.	Nepal's role as a buffer state between India and China.
'India first' approach	A pragmatic foreign policy prioritizing national interests.	India's continued engagement with Iran and Russia despite U.S. sanctions.
Sagar doctrine	Sagar doctrine refers to India's efforts to deepen its cooperative engagement with countries in the Indian Ocean region through the principles of security, growth, cooperation, connectivity and respect for sovereignty. The aim is to increase India's strategic footprint and influence, while promoting an open and inclusive regional architecture.	
Principles of non-refoulment	Not forcing refugees to return to countries where they face persecution.	Concerns over the return of Rohingya refugees to Myanmar.
Paradiplomacy	Subnational actors conducting foreign relations independently.	Indian states like Punjab and Gujarat signing trade agreements abroad.
Neo colonialism	Control over weaker countries through economic or cultural means.	Criticism of China's investments in Africa as a form of neocolonialism.
String of Pearls strategy	The String of Pearls strategy refers to China's alleged efforts to create a network of military and commercial facilities around the Indian Ocean region that will expand its strategic influence and contain India's regional role. These "pearls" allegedly include China's access to ports in: 1) Gwadar in Pakistan 2) Hambantota in Sri Lanka 3) Kyaukpyu in Myanmar 4) Chittagong in Bangladesh 5) Seychelles	
Necklace of diamonds strategy	The "necklace of diamonds" strategy refers to India's efforts to build a network of security partnerships and bilateral relationships with Indian Ocean island nations to counter China's expanding presence in the region.	
Wolf warrior diplomacy	Wolf warrior diplomacy refers to an assertive and aggressive style of diplomacy practiced by China where Chinese diplomats and officials adopt combative and nationalistic rhetoric against perceived criticism or threats.	
Psychological warfare	Using propaganda and disinformation during conflicts.	Russia's disinformation campaigns regarding Ukraine.
Antagonistic cooperation	Competitive yet cooperative relationships between countries.	U.S.-China economic interdependence alongside strategic rivalry.
Pivot to Asia strategy	Pivot to Asia strategy referred to the Obama administration's efforts to strengthen US engagement and presence in the Asia-Pacific region by diplomatic, economic and security measures as a response to China's	

	growing influence and assertiveness. While initially successful, doubts remain about the durability of the US pivot to the Indo-Pacific.	
Think West policy	Think West policy refers to India's efforts to strengthen economic and strategic ties with Europe and other transatlantic partners like the US and Canada.	
De-hyphenation	Engaging countries independently of their relationships with others.	India's relations with Israel and Palestine without linking them.
Golden Crescent	The Golden Crescent refers to a region in Southwest Asia comprising Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan that is a major source of illicit drug production and trafficking.	
Golden Triangle	The Golden Triangle refers to a region in Southeast Asia comprising parts of Myanmar, Laos and Thailand that has historically been a major source of opium and heroin production.	
Track 2 diplomacy	Unofficial dialogue between non-governmental entities.	Initiatives between Indian and Pakistani scholars to discuss bilateral issues.
Public diplomacy	Efforts to communicate directly with foreign audiences.	Cultural exchanges organized by the ICCR to promote India's soft power.
Proxy wars	Conflicts fought through indirect means.	Pakistan's support for militant groups in Kashmir against India.
Malacca dilemma	The Malacca Dilemma refers to China's strategic vulnerability due to its high dependence on seaborne energy imports transported through the Strait of Malacca - a chokepoint controlled by the US and its allies. Around 80% of China's oil imports and over 50% of its natural gas imports pass through the Strait of Malacca between Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.	
Web of alliances	A network of international partnerships to promote interests.	The QUAD alliance involving the U.S., Japan, Australia, and India.
Strategic encirclement	Being surrounded by hostile nations.	China's accusations against the U.S. for surrounding it with alliances in Asia.
Balkanisation	Division of a region into smaller states along ethnic lines.	The independence of South Sudan from Sudan.
Global South	"Global South" refers collectively to developing countries that share common socioeconomic challenges and often work together to promote their collective interests in global governance, trade, development financing and climate issues.	
South-South Cooperation	South-South cooperation refers to collaborative efforts and partnerships between developing countries to boost economic growth, poverty reduction and sustainable development through trade, investment, technology transfers, knowledge sharing and addressing common global challenges. Such collaboration helps balance the Global North's dominant role in global affairs.	
Rule based global order	An international system governed by agreed-upon rules rather than power politics.	India's advocacy for a rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region.
Arc of democracies	A global network of democratic nations cooperating to promote democracy and security.	The Quad (U.S., Japan, India, Australia) aims to uphold a "free and open Indo-Pacific" based on democratic principles.
Band wagoning	Alignment of weaker states with a stronger state to avoid opposition costs and gain benefits.	Many countries aligning their trade and diplomatic policies with China due to its growing power, viewing band wagoning as beneficial.
De facto ally	States that coordinate closely on military, political, or economic issues without formal alliances.	India and the U.S. have become de facto allies through growing strategic partnerships, especially in countering China's influence.
Friendshoring	Businesses shifting supply chains toward "friendly" nations that share political and strategic interests.	The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework launched by the U.S. aims to strengthen supply chain resilience among allies like Australia, Japan, South Korea, and India.
Digital Diplomacy	Utilizing digital tools and platforms to enhance diplomatic engagement.	India's initiatives in promoting digital public infrastructure and e-governance models in developing countries.
Cultural Diplomacy	Promoting national interests through cultural exchanges and soft power.	The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) organizing events to showcase Indian culture abroad.
Geoeconomics	The intersection of economic and geopolitical factors in international relations.	India's focus on securing supply chains and trade routes in response to China's Belt and Road Initiative.
Climate Diplomacy	Engaging with other nations on climate change and environmental issues.	India's leadership in the International Solar Alliance and commitments made at COP26 for climate action.

KEY ACRONYMS – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Acronym	Full Form	Context	Example
LIFE	Lifestyle for Environment	India-led global mass movement introduced at COP26 and championed during its G20 Presidency.	To nudge individual and community action to protect and preserve the environment, promoting sustainable living.
MAGA	Make in India, Grow in India, Amaze the World	A phrase coined by PM Modi to boost the manufacturing sector.	To encourage manufacturing growth and position India as a global manufacturing hub.
SAGAR	Security and Growth for All in the Region	India's strategic vision for the Indo-Pacific	Maritime security and cooperation with neighboring countries
SANKALP	Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion	Skill development cooperation with Africa	Enhancing skill training and employment opportunities in African nations
5S	Samman (Respect), Samvad (Dialogue), Sahyog (Cooperation), Shanti (Peace), Samriddhi (Prosperity)	Principles guiding India's international relations	Promoting mutual respect and cooperation in diplomatic engagements
3C	Commerce, Connectivity, Culture	Cooperation with Southeast Asian nations	Boosting trade, infrastructure, and cultural exchanges with ASEAN countries
4C	Collectiveness, Consistency, Continuity, Consensus	Approach towards BRICS cooperation	Strengthening ties and collaborative efforts within BRICS nations
3D	Democracy, Demography, Demand	Highlighting India's strengths relevant for global engagement	Promoting India's democratic values, large population, and market potential
3T	Tradition, Talent, Technology	Areas where India can take global leadership	Showcasing India's cultural heritage, skilled workforce, and technological advancements
2I	India's Import and India's Image	To increase exports and enhance global prestige	Initiatives aimed at boosting India's export profile and improving its international image
I4C	Inclusiveness, Indigenisation, Innovation, Integrated-ness	Vision for the Make in India program	Policies to promote domestic manufacturing and innovation
SAT	Solar Alliance, Agriculture cooperation, Trade	Pillars of Green Partnership with Denmark	Collaborative efforts in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and trade
4P	Potential, Possibility, Progress, Prosperity	Cooperation with Germany	Bilateral initiatives to explore mutual growth opportunities
I2I	India to India	Connecting with the Indian diaspora	Leveraging the skills and resources of the Indian diaspora for national development
NEAT	Natural, Economic, and Attractive	India's engagement with the Arctic region	Strategies to explore economic opportunities and environmental conservation in the Arctic
SAMRIDDHI	Self-reliance in critical sectors	Reducing dependence on imports and promoting self-reliance	Policies aimed at enhancing domestic capabilities in key sectors
AIM	Act, Invest, and Make in India	Economic development approach	Encouraging investment, innovation, and manufacturing in India
INCH-MILES	India-China towards a Millennium of Exceptional Synergy	Strengthening India-China relations	Enhancing bilateral cooperation across various sectors

B2B	Bharat to Bhutan	Strengthening economic ties with Bhutan	Collaborative projects and economic initiatives between India and Bhutan
HIT	Highways, Information ways, Transmission Ways	Boosting India-Nepal links	Infrastructure and connectivity projects aimed at strengthening bilateral ties with Nepal
HEALTH	Healthcare Cooperation, Economic Cooperation, Alternative Energy, Literature & Culture, Terrorism Free Society, Humanitarian Cooperation	Cooperation within the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)	Promoting health, economic growth, and cultural exchange among SCO member states
STRENGTH	Spirituality, Tradition, Trade, Technology, Relationship, Entertainment, Nature conservation, Games, Tourism, Health and Healing	People-to-people contact between India and China	Promoting cultural and economic exchanges to strengthen bilateral relations with China
FDI	First Develop India	Emphasizing domestic development through foreign investment	Ensuring foreign funds contribute to India's development
G-All	Global Grouping for All	Promoting inclusive global cooperation	Advocating for unified global efforts at international forums



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- ▶ 1h-FST Complete Mains Syllabus = 2+ 8 PYQs
- ▶ **40 h-FST** (GS I - IV & Essay)
- ▶ 1-Set of Full Length Tests (Essay & GS I-IV)

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Essay	GS-I	GS-II	GS-III	GS-IV

TEST SCHEDULE

Date	Test Code	Subject/Theme
2-Jun-25	ACE_2501	Essay
3-Jun-25	ACE_2502	General Studies I
4-Jun-25	ACE_2503	General Studies II
5-Jun-25	ACE_2504	General Studies III
6-Jun-25	ACE_2505	General Studies IV
9-Jun-25	ACE_2506	Essay
10-Jun-25	ACE_2507	General Studies I
11-Jun-25	ACE_2508	General Studies II
12-Jun-25	ACE_2509	General Studies III
13-Jun-25	ACE_2510	General Studies IV
16-Jun-25	ACE_2511	Essay
17-Jun-25	ACE_2512	General Studies I
18-Jun-25	ACE_2513	General Studies II
19-Jun-25	ACE_2514	General Studies III
20-Jun-25	ACE_2515	General Studies IV
23-Jun-25	ACE_2516	Essay
24-Jun-25	ACE_2517	General Studies I
25-Jun-25	ACE_2518	General Studies II
26-Jun-25	ACE_2519	General Studies III
27-Jun-25	ACE_2520	General Studies IV
30-Jun-25	ACE_2521	Essay
1-Jul-25	ACE_2522	General Studies I

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GS & Essay
F2 F Evaluations



Sarthak Singh
AIR-393

PYQ Test

10-Years PYQs
GS-I to IV & Essay



Manish Kumar
AIR-543

- ☑ **Face to Face** Evaluation/week
- ☑ **Answer Explanation** (soft)

Date	Test Code	Subject/Theme
2-Jul-25	ACE_2523	General Studies II
3-Jul-25	ACE_2524	General Studies III
4-Jul-25	ACE_2525	General Studies IV
7-Jul-25	ACE_2526	Essay
8-Jul-25	ACE_2527	General Studies I
9-Jul-25	ACE_2528	General Studies II
10-Jul-25	ACE_2529	General Studies III
11-Jul-25	ACE_2530	General Studies IV
14-Jul-25	ACE_2531	Essay
15-Jul-25	ACE_2532	General Studies I
16-Jul-25	ACE_2533	General Studies II
17-Jul-25	ACE_2534	General Studies III
18-Jul-25	ACE_2535	General Studies IV
21-Jul-25	ACE_2536	Essay
22-Jul-25	ACE_2537	General Studies I
23-Jul-25	ACE_2538	General Studies II
24-Jul-25	ACE_2539	General Studies III
25-Jul-25	ACE_2540	General Studies IV
1-Aug-25	POT_2501	Essay
2-Aug-25	POT_2502	General Studies I
2-Aug-25	POT_2503	General Studies II
3-Aug-25	POT_2504	General Studies III
3-Aug-25	POT_2505	General Studies IV

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SYLLABUS: India and its Neighbourhood – Relations

CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF INDIA'S "NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST" POLICY

Why in News? A critical examination of India's "neighbourhood first" policy and its effectiveness in the region.

Guiding Principles: 5 S: Samman (respect), Samvad (dialogue), Shanti (peace), Samridhi (prosperity), and Sanskriti (culture)

Current State of Relations – Strained Ties with Neighbours

- 1) **Nepal:** K P Oli, known for his India-critical stance, is back as Prime Minister and has announced his first official visit to China instead of India.
- 2) **Bangladesh:** New government under Mohammed Yunus is demanding the extradition of Sheikh Hasina, putting India in a difficult position.
- 3) **Maldives:** President Mohamed Muizzu campaigned on ousting Indian forces from the island.
- 4) **Sri Lanka:** President Anura Dissanayake's party has a history of disliking Indian intervention.
- 5) **Bhutan:** The King has shown a slight inclination towards China.

Root Causes and Challenges – Historical and Current Factors

- 1) Some policies leading to the present situation predate the Modi government.
- 2) Anti-India sentiment has become a rewarding political strategy for leaders in neighbouring countries.
- 3) Perception of India's "**big brother**" attitude, particularly in Nepal, has damaged relationships.
- 4) Allegations of Indian interference in internal affairs, especially during Nepal's constitutional process and the 2015 "blockade."

Rethinking the Approach – Towards "Neighbourliness First"

- 1) **Need for respecting sovereignty and non-interference** in internal affairs of neighbouring countries.

- 2) **Importance of not allowing Indian territory** to be used for activities hostile to neighbours.
- 3) **Advocating for peaceful settlement** of disputes.
- 4) **Consideration of the "Gujral Doctrine":** India should not ask for reciprocity but accommodate neighbours' needs in good faith.

Conclusion – Reassessing National Interest

- 1) Current policies have not significantly advanced India's national interests in the region.
- 2) Need for public scrutiny and debate on foreign policy decisions affecting the neighbourhood.
- 3) Importance of balancing diplomatic expertise with common sense in neighbourhood relations.

Neighbourhood First Policy – Scholar Views

C. Raja Mohan: Views the Neighbourhood First policy as a crucial element of India's foreign policy.

- 1) No nation can become a credible global power without first achieving enduring primacy in its own neighbourhood.
- 2) India's policy links the welfare of its neighbours to its own economic growth, expanding cooperation and creating interdependencies.
- 3) India's eastern neighbours are no longer willing to let South Asian regionalism be held hostage by strained India-Pakistan relations.
- 4) policy reflects India's strategic need for regional stability and integration, recognizing that a secure neighbourhood is essential for its own security and development.

Harsh V. Pant: offers a pragmatic view on the complexities India faces in implementing its neighbourhood policy.

- 1) India must maintain workable relationships with its neighbours regardless of their system of government, as seen with Myanmar. Unlike Western powers, India cannot afford to isolate its neighbours due to direct national security interests like insurgency and border management.
- 2) Continuous engagement with neighbours is a strategic imperative to counter China's growing presence and influence in the region. Disengagement by India creates a

vacuum that China readily fills, as was the case with the Hambantota port in Sri Lanka.

- 3) 'Big Brother' Perception: India, as a large country, must be "nimble and humble" in its diplomacy to overcome the paranoia among smaller neighbours that it will dominate or dictate terms to them.

Shyam Saran: The former Foreign Secretary argues that the **"logic of geography is unrelenting."** He believes a stable, friendly, and peaceful neighbourhood helps reduce India's political, economic, and military burdens.

Challenges: Persistent negative perceptions of India as an **"interventionist power,"** a security-oriented outlook that fosters suspicion, slow implementation of projects compared to China, and an inability to resolve long-standing irritants like water sharing and border disputes remain significant challenges.

meeting in five years in October 2024 on the sidelines of the BRICS summit.

- a) The year 2025 also marks the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two nations.
- 4) **Resumption of Travel and Data Sharing:** As part of confidence-building measures, direct flights between the two countries are set to resume in January 2025 after a five-year suspension.
 - a) Additionally, India and China agreed to restart the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra pilgrimage by summer 2025 and resume sharing hydrological data on rivers.
- 5) **Ongoing Strategic Competition:** Despite the recent diplomatic thaw, strategic rivalry persists.
 - a) India remains concerned about China's growing assertiveness in South Asia, its **"String of Pearls" strategy**, and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. In response, India continues to strengthen its strategic partnerships with other nations through alliances like the Quad (India, US, Japan, Australia).

INDIA – CHINA RELATIONS

Key Facts

- 1) **Record Trade Imbalance:** In the 2025 fiscal year, India's trade deficit with China surged to a record \$99.2 billion.
 - a) China is one of India's largest trading partners, with bilateral trade reaching \$118.4 billion in 2023-24.
 - b) However, the relationship is highly imbalanced, as India's imports from China, particularly in electronics and machinery, far exceed its exports.
- 2) **Border De-escalation Agreement:** After a four-year standoff following the 2020 Galwan Valley clash, India and China reached a breakthrough agreement in late 2024 to de-escalate tensions.
 - a) The accord includes troop withdrawals from Depsang and Demchok and a return to pre-2020 patrolling practices along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).
- 3) **Renewed High-Level Diplomacy:** In a significant diplomatic development, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping held their first formal

75 Years of India – China Diplomatic Relations

Li Peng, Premier of China, with Prime Minister



PV Narsimha Rao.

Why in News? India-China diplomatic relations complete 75 years on April 1, 2025, as India became the first non-socialist bloc

nation to establish ties with the People's Republic of China on April 1, 1950.

Historical Evolution of India-China Relations

- 1) **India recognized PRC during early Cold War**, six months after communist China's establishment under Mao Zedong
- 2) **Initial relationship based on shared history** as ancient civilizations emerging from colonial rule
- 3) **Nehru viewed China as "India's old-time friend,"** while hoping for goodwill in border negotiations
- 4) **China made One-China Policy non-negotiable**; India gained no concessions in return
- 5) **1954: Panchsheel Agreement signed**, outlining five principles: territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference, equality, and peaceful co-existence
- 6) **1959: Relations deteriorated** when Dalai Lama given sanctuary in India after Tibet riots
- 7) **1962: War resulted in India's only military defeat**, losing 3,000 soldiers and 38,000 sq km in Aksai Chin

Key Developments and Strategic Shifts

- 1) **Post-1962:** Relations viewed through "great power triangle" of China, USSR, and US
- 2) **China deepened ties with Pakistan** as India moved closer to USSR
- 3) **1988:** PM Rajiv Gandhi's visit led to thaw; Deng Xiaoping spoke of "Asian Century" requiring both nations' development
- 4) **1991:** USSR collapse prompted rethinking of foreign policy approaches
- 5) **1993:** Border Peace and Tranquility Agreement signed during PM Narasimha Rao's visit
- 6) **2003:** Special Representatives mechanism established; China recognized Sikkim as part of India
- 7) **Economic divergence:** 1987-2023, China grew from \$272B to \$17.7T vs. India from \$279B to \$3.56T

Current Status and Future Outlook

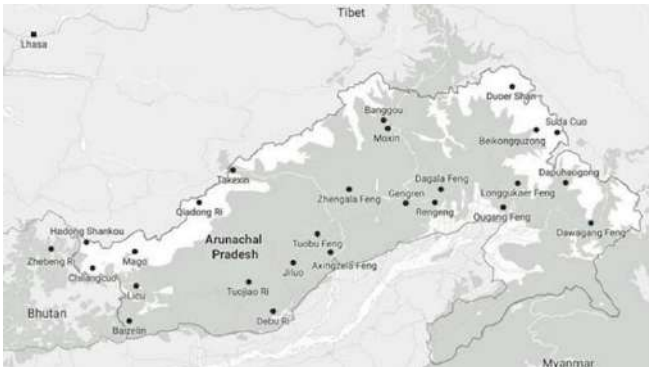
- 1) **China views India through lens of its competition** with US; India's Western ties remain an irritant
- 2) **2020 LAC standoff** dispelled notion that India would not escalate militarily
- 3) **China remains India's biggest trading partner** (FY 2023-24) despite tensions
- 4) **Recent normalization efforts:** Xi Jinping-Modi meeting at BRICS Summit in Russia (2024)¹
- 5) **India can learn from China's** educational investments and infrastructure development
- 6) **India needs to leverage its stable polity** and cultural diversity while improving military preparedness
- 7) **Relationship continues to balance** caution and conciliation at 75-year mark



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping before delegation level talks, in New Delhi in 2014.

India rejected Chinese attempt to rename 27 places in Arunachal Pradesh

This is the fifth such list from China since 2017, targeting over 80 locations in total.



China's Claims & Strategy

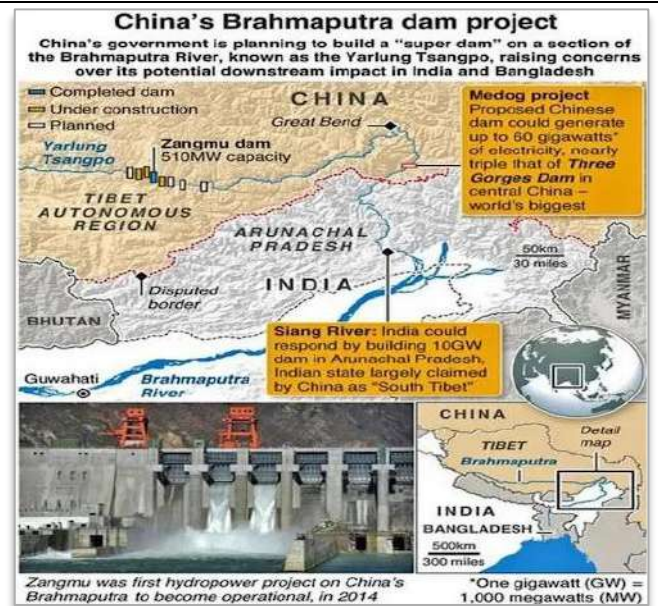
- 1) **Territorial Claim:** China claims Arunachal Pradesh as "Zangnan" (South Tibet) and rejects the 1914 McMahon Line.
- 2) **Strategic Goal:** The renaming is a "psychological warfare" tactic to reinforce its claims and create a basis for future disputes.
- 3) **Provocative Timing:** These lists are often released after significant diplomatic events, like G20 meetings or the Dalai Lama's visits.

India's Unwavering Response

- 1) **Consistent Rejection:** India has categorically rejected all renaming attempts.
- 2) **Firm Stance:** The Ministry of External Affairs stated that Arunachal Pradesh "was, is, and will always remain an integral part of India."
- 3) **Core Message:** Inventing names does not alter the reality of India's sovereignty.

Why is China building the world's largest dam on Tsangpo? How India may be impacted?

Why in News? China has approved the construction of the world's largest hydropower project (60,000 MW capacity) on the Yarlung Tsangpo river in Tibet.



Key Details

- 1) **Location:** At the "Great Bend" where the river makes a U-turn in Medog county before entering India's Arunachal Pradesh.
- 2) **Scale:** Three times the capacity of China's Three Gorges Dam, currently the world's largest hydro project
- 3) **Timeline:** Mentioned in China's 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025), with recent developments indicating advanced planning stage

China's Stated Objectives

- 1) Move away from conventional energy sources
- 2) Achieve net carbon neutrality by 2060
- 3) Utilize the river's steep descent and high flow rate for ideal hydroelectricity generation

Concerns for India

- 1) Potential impact on water flow to India, the lower riparian state
- 2) Interruption of silt flow crucial for agriculture
- 3) Changes in river flow affecting local biodiversity
- 4) Risks associated with large dam in earthquake-prone area
- 5) Strategic concerns as the dam can be used as a 'water bomb'

Way Forward

- 1) India needs to raise concerns more forcefully with China
- 2) Challenge Chinese claims about project's lack of negative impacts

- 3) Pursue honest dialogue to potentially dissuade China from undertaking the project
- 4) Make water issues a major part of India-China engagement

India's Response to China's Tsangpo Projects

Why in News? India is pushing for a large hydropower project in Arunachal Pradesh as a counter to China's plan to build the world's largest dam on the Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) river.

Project Details and Significance

- 1) **Scale:** Proposed 11,000-MW project with a 9 billion cubic meter reservoir capacity.
- 2) **Location:** Three potential sites in Siang and Upper Siang districts of Arunachal Pradesh.
- 3) **Strategic Importance:**
 - a) Counters China's dam-building activities upstream in Tibet
 - b) Aims to mitigate potential water diversion and sudden water release by China

Local Opposition and Concerns

- 1) **Impact on Agriculture:** Fears of submerging farmlands and homes, affecting livelihoods
- 2) **Displacement:** Estimated 13 villages at risk of complete submersion, 27 others partially affected
- 3) **Cultural Significance:** Siang river revered as 'Aane' (mother) by local Adi tribe
- 4) **Limited Alternatives:** Lack of other economic opportunities in the region

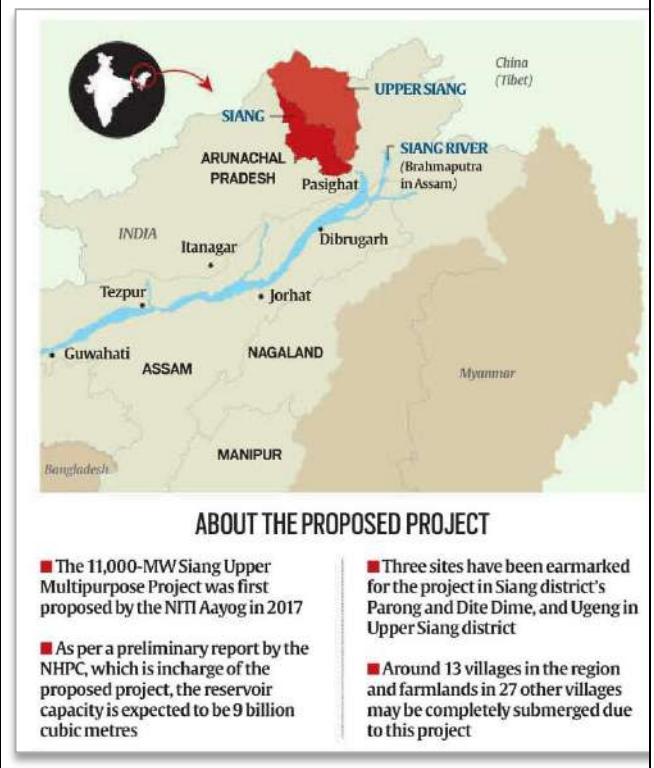
Government's Stance and Actions

- 1) **Security Measures:** Deployment of Central Armed Police Forces to manage potential resistance
- 2) **Outreach Efforts:** Chief Minister's appeal to locals, emphasizing project's necessity

- 3) **Compensation Promise:** Government claims to offer "India's best compensation" to affected people

Ongoing Developments

- 1) **Local Protests:** Demonstrations and rituals conducted by villagers against the project
- 2) **Dialogue Attempts:** Government's efforts to engage with locals, facing challenges from activists
- 3) **Next Steps:** Plans for surveys and environmental impact assessments before project approval



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China's Weaponisation of Critical Minerals

Why in News? China expanded its export control list on January 2, 2025, restricting access to critical minerals for 28 U.S. entities.

About China's Export Controls

- 1) **Targeted minerals:** China has banned or restricted exports of gallium, germanium, antimony, and rare earth elements to the U.S., citing national security concerns.
- 2) **Dual-use technologies:** The restrictions cover "dual-use" items with both civilian and military applications, including technologies for battery components and critical mineral processing.
- 3) **Regulatory framework:** China updated its Dual-Use Export Control List, effective December 1, 2024, introducing a unified control system and stricter oversight of high-tech sectors.
- 4) **Specific U.S. targeting:** Unlike previous restrictions, these controls explicitly target the United States, marking a significant escalation in the ongoing trade war.
- 5) **Potential expansion:** There are indications that China may extend restrictions to other strategic minerals like tungsten and magnesium, as well as technologies related to lithium-ion batteries.

Lessons for India's Critical Mineral Strategy

- 1) **Diversification of supply chains:** India should prioritize diversifying its sources of critical minerals to reduce dependence on any single country, especially China.
- 2) **Domestic exploration and production:** Accelerate efforts to explore and exploit domestic reserves of critical minerals. India has significant untapped potential, with only about 20% of its geological wealth explored to date.
- 3) **International partnerships:** Strengthen strategic partnerships with resource-rich countries and participate in global initiatives like the Mineral Security Partnership (MSP) to secure access to critical minerals.
- 4) **Recycling and circular economy:** Develop a robust circular economy for critical minerals, focusing on advanced e-waste recycling technologies and creating a national database

of end-of-life products containing these minerals.

- 5) **Policy framework:** Implement a comprehensive national policy framework for critical minerals, defining vision, objectives, and priorities across ministries and stakeholders.
- 6) **Investment in processing capabilities:** Develop domestic refining and processing capabilities to reduce reliance on imports of refined materials.
- 7) **Research and development:** Invest in R&D for alternative materials and technologies to reduce dependence on specific critical minerals.
- 8) **Skill development:** Address the skill gap in the critical minerals sector through specialized courses and vocational training programs.
- 9) **Sustainable mining practices:** Develop and implement environmentally friendly mining techniques tailored to India's unique ecological context.
- 10) **Strategic stockpiling:** Consider building strategic reserves of critical minerals to buffer against supply disruptions and price volatility.
- 11) **Regulatory reforms:** Streamline regulations and provide incentives to attract private sector investment in critical mineral exploration and production.
- 12) **International cooperation:** Engage in knowledge sharing and technology transfer with countries advanced in critical mineral exploration and processing.

What is a Critical Mineral?

A mineral is labeled as a **Critical Mineral** when the risk of shortage in its supply and associated impact on the economy is relatively higher than the other raw materials.

The lack of availability of Critical Minerals or concentration of existence, extraction, or processing of the minerals in limited locations may lead to supply chain vulnerability and disruption.

Critical Minerals and Economy



- Lithium, Graphite, Cobalt, Titanium, and rare earth elements are

essential for advancement in many sectors, including high-tech electronics, telecommunications, transport, and defence.

- They are vital to powering the transition to a low-carbon economy, and the renewable energy technologies required to meet the 'Net Zero' commitments of many countries, including India.

India's dependence on imports

- India fully depends on imports for the supply of **Lithium, Cobalt, Nickel**, and at least **7 other critical minerals**.

- China is a major source of India's imports of **Lithium, Cobalt, Nickel, Germanium, Rhenium, and Beryllium**.

International Cooperation



- Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL), set up in 2019, and **Australia's Critical Mineral Office** signed an MoU in 2022.
- KABIL signed an MoU with **CAMYEN** for strategic investment in **Argentina** in 2022.
- KABIL signed an MoU with **ENAMI** for the exploration of Lithium in **Chile** in 2023.
- India and the United States on October 4, 2024, signed an **MoU to expand and diversify Critical Minerals supply chains**.
- India joined the US-led **Mineral Security Partnership** and **Mineral Security Finance Network**.

SOURCE: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON IDENTIFICATION OF CRITICAL MINERALS, MINISTRY OF MINES
INFORMATION PROVIDED BY GOI TO LOK SABHA ON
31.07.2024

DH ILLUSTRATION: DEEPAK HARICHANDAN



Initiatives by the Government of India

- The Govt. has amended the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act**, of 1957.
- The **MMDR Amendment Act, 2023**, empowered the government to exclusively auction mining leases, and composite licenses for 24 critical minerals.
- The Govt auctioned 14 blocks having Lithium, Rare Earth Elements (REE), Graphite, Vanadium, Nickel, Chromium, Glauconite, Platinum Group of Elements (PGE), and Phosphorite in **Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh**.
- 21 more blocks having critical minerals like Graphite, Glauconite, Phosphorite, Nickel, PGE, REE, Potash, Tungsten, Vanadium, Glauconite, Cobalt, and Chromium have been notified for auction.
- The Union Budget 2024-25 proposes to set up a **Critical Mineral Mission** for domestic production, recycling of critical minerals, and overseas acquisition of critical mineral assets.

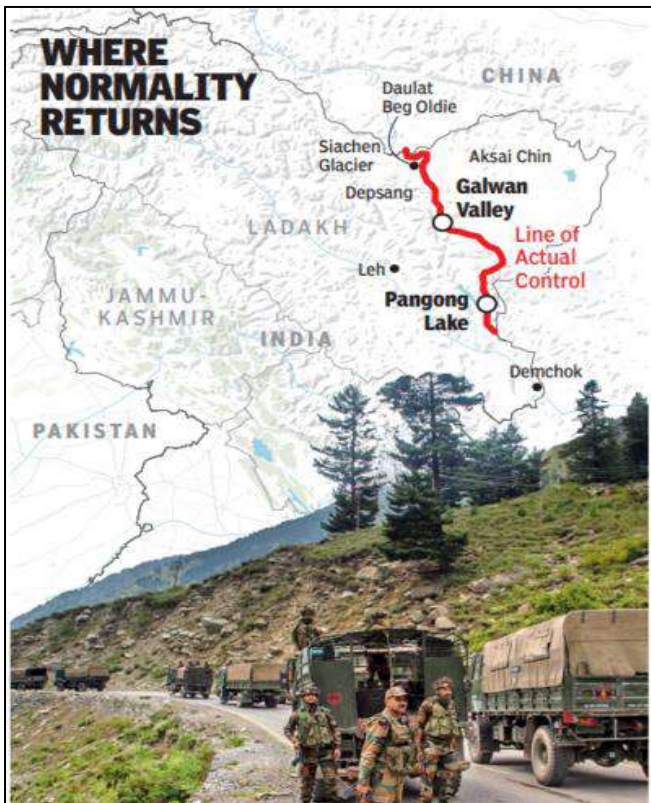


India - China LAC Agreement

Why in News? India and China announced a surprise détente, sealed by a summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping at the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan on October 23, 2024.

Key Developments

- 1) Disengagement completed at Depsang and Demchok
- 2) Troop de-escalation and de-induction along the LAC still pending
- 3) Exchange of sweets between Indian Army and PLA soldiers at the LAC
- 4) New "patrolling arrangements" agreed upon, but details not disclosed



Concerns and Questions

- 1) **Lack of Transparency**
 - a) No template or clear details of the agreement provided
 - b) Government's pattern of limited information sharing since 2020 clashes
 - c) Uncertainty about new patrolling arrangements and their implications
- 2) **Unresolved Issues**
 - a) Full return to pre-2020 status quo unlikely due to buffer zones
 - b) Potential risks similar to post-Doklam agreement scenario

- c) Unanswered question: Why did Chinese troops transgress in 2020?

3) Theories on Chinese Actions

- a) Part of China's broader territorial control policy
- b) Reminder of India's continental realities amid growing India-US partnership
- c) Pushback against India's increased border infrastructure
- d) Possible reaction to India's reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019

Future Outlook

- 1) Détentes with Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, and Pakistan
- 2) Need for government transparency and citizen engagement
- 3) Importance of thorough inquiry into LAC events and lessons learned
- 4) Potential for further diplomatic openings and regional stability

India – China Relations Scholar Views

S. Jaishankar (Indian Foreign Minister):

He has stated that the "state of the border will necessarily be reflected on the state of our ties," emphasizing the need for China to respect past agreements and the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Wang Yi (Chinese Foreign Minister):

He has urged both sides to "meet each other halfway" and manage differences to bring the relationship back to a stable track.

Brahma Chellaney: A geostrategist who describes China as a "hydro hegemon" due to its control over the sources of major rivers, viewing this as a national security threat to India.

Sam Pitroda: Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress, who cautions that India should not treat China as an "enemy," as this could become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

C. Raja Mohan: India has historically sought to balance Chinese power, and the current Sino-U.S. rivalry presents a strategic opportunity for New Delhi to become an indispensable part of a new regional balance of power.

INDIA – BANGLADESH RELATIONS

India's Trade Restrictions on Bangladesh

- 1) India imposed port restrictions on specified Bangladeshi exports to northeastern states through all land customs stations and integrated check posts
- 2) Restricted items include readymade garments, wooden furniture, plastic goods, carbonated drinks, baked goods, and cotton yarn
- 3) This is a reciprocal move responding to Bangladesh's own non-tariff barriers against Indian exports
- 4) The decision follows controversial remarks by Bangladesh's interim chief adviser Muhammad Yunus describing North-East India as "landlocked"
- 5) Exempted products include fish, LPG, edible oil, crushed stone, and goods transiting to Nepal/Bhutan

India aims to boost local manufacturing in the Northeast and enforce fair trade practices

Why India Bangladesh relations worsened?

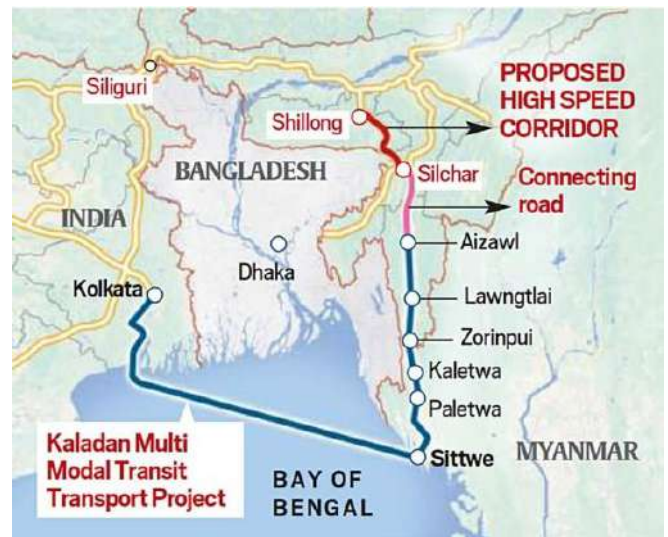
- 1) **Political Upheaval:** Sheikh Hasina's pro-India government was ousted in August 2024, and she subsequently sought refuge in India, disrupting the previous political alignment.
- 2) **Trade Friction:** Bilateral trade, which stood at \$11.06 billion in FY 2024, has been strained by India's move to restrict Bangladeshi exports through its land ports, impacting Bangladesh's garment industry.
- 3) **Extradition Demand:** Bangladesh's interim government has requested the extradition of Sheikh Hasina from India to face trial, a demand India has not met.
- 4) **Border Issues:** Long-standing issues persist across the shared 4,000-kilometer border, including border killings, smuggling, and illegal immigration, which create social and political strains.
- 5) **Water Dispute:** The failure to finalize a water-sharing agreement for the Teesta River remains a significant and unresolved point of contention, fueling public resentment in Bangladesh.
- 6) **Security Concerns:** The August 2024 political change has heightened India's

concerns about the rise of anti-India Islamist forces in Bangladesh, which could impact regional stability.

- 7) **Diplomatic Tensions:** Relations are strained by accusations of sedition, attacks on diplomatic properties, and India's public concerns over the safety of the Hindu minority in Bangladesh.

India's New Northeast-Kolkata Sea Link Project

- 1) Union Cabinet approved ₹22,864 crore four-lane highway (166.8 km) along NH-6 from Mawlyngkhung to Panchgram, creating a sea link between Northeast and Kolkata
- 2) First high-speed corridor in Northeast (144.8 km in Meghalaya, 22 km in Assam), to be completed by 2030
- 3) Reduces journey time from 8.5 to 5 hours
- 4) Infrastructure includes 19 major bridges, 153 minor bridges, multiple culverts, underpasses and viaducts
- 5) Being developed under Hybrid Annuity Mode by NHIDCL



Strategic & Technical Aspects

- 1) Connects to Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Project in Myanmar, bypassing Bangladesh following Muhammad Yunus's "landlocked" remarks in Beijing
- 2) Reduces dependence on Siliguri Corridor while connecting Silchar (entry point to Mizoram, Tripura, Manipur and Barak Valley)

- 3) Employs advanced engineering: slope stabilization, LiDAR scanning, rock anchors, protective walls, and monitoring instruments (piezometers, rain gauges, inclinometers, geophones)
- 4) Supports India's Act East Policy and regional economic development

INDIA – PAKISTAN RELATIONS

IMF Clears Loan Tranche to Pakistan; India Abstains

- 1) The IMF approved approximately \$2.3 billion in financing for Pakistan on May 9, 2025, including a \$1 billion tranche under the Extended Fund Facility and \$1.3 billion under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility
- 2) India abstained from voting and registered "strong dissent" during the IMF board meeting
- 3) India raised concerns about Pakistan's poor implementation record and the potential misuse of funds for "state-sponsored cross-border terrorism"
- 4) Government sources explained that India's abstention was not due to lack of opposition but because IMF rules do not permit a formal "no" vote-directors can only vote in favor or abstain
- 5) India highlighted that Pakistan has been a prolonged IMF borrower, receiving support in 28 of the past 35 years, including four programs in just the last five years
- 6) India also raised concerns about the Pakistani military's continued dominance in economic affairs, which undermines transparency and reform efforts.

SECURITY UPDATE: OPERATION SINDOOR

- 1) Indian armed forces conducted **Operation Sindoor** on May 7, 2025, at 1:44 AM, targeting 9 terror bases in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK).
- 2) **24 precision missile strikes** were executed, killing over 70 terrorists and wounding more than 60
- 3) This was the first tri-service military operation involving Army, Navy, and Air Force since the 1971 Indo-Pak war

Target Details:

- 1) **Nine terror targets were struck**, including Lashkar-e-Taiba stronghold in Muridke and Jaish-e-Mohammed headquarters in Bahawalpur
- 2) Camps in Sawai Nala (Muzaffarabad) and Syedna Bilal in POK were among those targeted
- 3) One of the targeted camps was reportedly where Ajmal Kasab and David Headley (of 26/11 Mumbai attacks) received training

Operation Specifics:

- 1) Precision weapons including Kamikaze drones (loitering ammunitions) were used in the operation
- 2) The operation specifically targeted terrorist infrastructure with no Pakistani military facilities hit
- 3) The strikes were described as **"focused, measured and non-escalatory"** with considerable restraint in target selection

Aftermath:

- 1) Following Indian strikes, Pakistan resorted to "arbitrary and indiscriminate firing" across the Line of Control, killing 10 civilians including 2 children



- 2) The Indian Army responded in what they described as a "proportionate manner"
- 3) US Secretary of State Marco Rubio is monitoring the situation and calling for peaceful resolution
- 4) United Nations has called for "maximum military restraint" from both countries

Civil Defence Mock Drill Today

The nationwide civil defence mock drill is being conducted today **across 244 districts** in India, starting at 4 PM.

Key activities include operationalizing air-raid warning sirens, implementing crash-blackout protocols (7:30-8:00 PM in Gujarat), testing communication links with the Indian Air Force, and rehearsing evacuation plans.

The exercise focuses on metropolitan cities and sensitive areas including **Delhi** (55 locations), **Mumbai, Chennai, border regions**, and locations with critical installations such as the **Tarapur Atomic Power Plant**.

Ministry of Defence



PRESS RELEASE:

OPERATION SINDOOR : INDIAN ARMED FORCES CARRIED OUT PRECISION STRIKE AT TERRORIST CAMPS

Posted On: 07 MAY 2025 1:44AM by PIB Delhi

A little while ago, the Indian Armed Forces launched 'OPERATION SINDOOR', hitting terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir from where terrorist attacks against India have been planned and directed.

Altogether, nine (9) sites have been targeted.

Our actions have been focused, measured and non-escalatory in nature. No Pakistani military facilities have been targeted. India has demonstrated considerable restraint in selection of targets and method of execution.

These steps come in the wake of the barbaric Pahalgam terrorist attack in which 25 Indians and one Nepali citizen were murdered. We are living up to the commitment that those responsible for this attack will be held accountable.

There will be detailed briefing on 'OPERATION SINDOOR', later today.

SECURITY UPDATE: Operation Sindoor: India's Response to Cross-Border Terrorism

- 1) Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri stated that India's precision strikes were a **"controlled, precise, measured and non-escalatory"** response to **Pakistan's "original escalation"**
- 2) The "original escalation" refers to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 civilians
- 3) Misri emphasized: **"Our intention is not to escalate matters. We are only responding to escalation"**
- 4) He warned that if Pakistan attempts further escalation, India will respond **"in an appropriate domain"**
- 5) Misri dismissed Pakistan's claims about downing Indian jets during the operation
- 6) He highlighted Pakistan's history with terrorism, referencing Osama Bin Laden's hideout and UN-proscribed terrorists operating from Pakistan



Keyword of the Day: Fog of War [Link](#)

- 1) "Fog of war" refers to the confusion and uncertainty in military conflicts, where accurate information is hard to obtain.
- 2) The concept comes from Carl von Clausewitz, who described war as being full of uncertainty and unpredictability.
- 3) It involves not knowing the true positions, strengths, or intentions of enemies and allies, making decision-making difficult.

- 4) The phrase now also covers the spread of misinformation and chaos during crises, especially amplified by social media.
- 5) During recent India-Pakistan tensions, misinformation and lack of clear updates created a "fog of war" for the public and officials.
- 6) The term is used in military, media, and even games to describe situations where information is incomplete or misleading.

SECURITY UPDATE: Operation Sindoor

What happened so far?

May 6-7, 2025 (Night):

- 1) Indian Armed Forces launch Operation Sindoor **against 9 terrorist targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK)**
- 2) The precision strike operation lasted approximately 25 minutes
- 3) **Around 100 terrorists** including top 5 commanders of LeT and JeM eliminated

Targets Struck:

- 1) **Muzaffarabad (PoK):** Sawai Nala camp (LeT training center) and Syedana Bilal camp (JeM staging area)
- 2) **Kotli (PoK):** Gulpur camp (LeT base) and Abbas camp (LeT Fidayeen training center)
- 3) **Bhimber (PoK):** Barnala camp (weapons and IED training center)
- 4) **Sialkot (Pakistan):** Sarjal camp and Mahmoona Jaya camp (HM control center)
- 5) **Muridke (Pakistan):** Markaz Tayyiba (LeT training center)
- 6) **Bahawalpur (Pakistan):** Markaz Subhanallah (JeM headquarters)

Weapons Deployed:

- 1) SCALP Cruise Missiles, HAMMER Precision-Guided Bombs, and Loitering Munitions
- 2) BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles (confirmed by UP CM Yogi Adityanath)

Pakistan's Response:

- 1) Attempted retaliation targeting civilian locations and military sites
- 2) India responded by destroying Pakistan's air defense system in Lahore
- 3) Pakistan launched drones and missiles targeting Indian defense sites
- 4) India countered with strikes on 8 Pakistani military sites including **air bases at Rafiqui, Murid, Nur Khan, Rahim Yar Khan, Sukkur, and Chunian**

May 10, 2025:

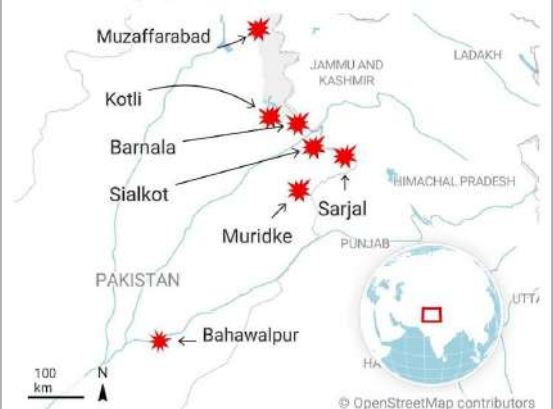
- 1) US attempts to broker a ceasefire between India and Pakistan
- 2) External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar announces understanding on stopping military action
- 3) Ceasefire holds briefly before Pakistan resumes shelling along Rajouri sector and Srinagar
- 4) Explosions reported in Srinagar and Baramulla, multiple Pakistani drones shot down

May 11, 2025:

- 1) Indian Air Force confirms Operation Sindoor still ongoing despite ceasefire announcement
- 2) IAF states its tasks were executed with **"precision and professionalism"**
- 3) IAF promises detailed briefing in due course, urges public to avoid speculation

India Hits Pakistan

The strikes followed April 22, 2025 attack that killed over two dozen in Pahalgam, Kashmir



Terrorist Camps

LeT - Markaz Ahle Hadith, Barnala	LeT - Shawai Nalla Camp, Muzaffarabad	LeT - Markaz Taiba, Muridke
JeM - Markaz Subhan Allah, Bahawalpur	JeM - Tehra Kalan, Sarjal	JeM - Syedna Bilal Camp, Muzaffarabad
JeM - Markaz Abbas, Kotli	HM - Maskar Raheel Shahid, Kotli	HM - Mehmoona Joya, Sialkot

Map: Dipu Rai • Source: Media Reports

DIU

Why US Brokered the India-Pakistan



Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump

After a long night of talks mediated by the United States, I am pleased to announce that India and Pakistan have agreed to a FULL AND IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE. Congratulations to both Countries on using Common Sense and Great Intelligence. Thank you for your attention to this matter!

Ceasefire?

- 1) US received "**alarming intelligence**" on May 9 indicating high risk of dramatic escalation between the nuclear powers
- 2) Fear of nuclear conflict between the two countries prompted urgent US diplomatic activation⁴
- 3) The US determined India and Pakistan were not communicating directly, necessitating intervention to bring the nuclear-armed neighbors back to negotiations
- 4) **VP JD Vance** directly contacted PM Modi while **Secretary of State Marco Rubio** called Pakistan's Army Chief General Asim Munir
- 5) US provided both nations with **diplomatic "cover"** to accept a ceasefire without appearing to capitulate first
- 6) The US has historically mediated in all major crises between India and Pakistan since 1999
- 7) **President Trump** warned that "millions of good and innocent people could have died" had the conflict continued to escalate
- 8) The situation presented an opportunity for Trump to demonstrate quick conflict resolution, similar to his approach to other global conflicts⁵
- 9) Pakistan acknowledged US played a "pivotal and paramount role" in facilitating the truce, along with Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Qatar, UK, UN and China

Why India Agreed to a Ceasefire?



- 1) India had **already achieved its strategic objective** of sending a message that terrorist attacks would not go unpunished through Operation Sindoor
- 2) Recognizing that further military conflict would inflict significant destruction on both sides with no clear path to victory
- 3) **Pakistan's DGMO initiated the ceasefire call**, allowing India to agree without appearing to back down first
- 4) India secured favourable terms with "**no preconditions, no postconditions, and no links to other issues**" from Pakistan
- 5) India **maintained all punitive measures** taken after the Pahalgam attack, including suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty
- 6) Significant international diplomatic pressure from approximately three dozen countries influenced the decision
- 7) Direct engagement from US leadership, including calls to PM Modi from VP Vance and Secretary of State Rubio
- 8) Growing global concern about potential escalation between the two nuclear-armed nations
- 9) India preserved its strong stance by ensuring the ceasefire was "**worked out directly between the two countries**" rather than through third-party mediation (despite US claims)

What's Next in the India-Pakistan Situation?

- 1) **DGMO-level talks** between India and Pakistan scheduled for Monday, May 12, 12:00 noon to discuss ceasefire modalities
- 2) First night of relative calm reported across Jammu and Kashmir since the tensions escalated, with no incidents reported overnight
- 3) 32 airports expected to reopen soon with a new NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) to be released, indicating potential easing of air restrictions
- 4) India has put Pakistan "on notice" and maintains that **any further terrorist action from Pakistan would be treated as an act of war**.

India – Pakistan Ceasefire Understanding

Why in News? Pakistani troops have violated the ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) for the ninth consecutive night, prompting calibrated and proportionate responses from the Indian Army.

India-Pakistan Border

India-Pakistan share 3,323 km border divided into:

- 1) **International Border (IB):** ~2,400 km from Gujarat to Akhnoor
- 2) **Line of Control (LoC):** 740 km from parts of Jammu to parts of Leh
- 3) **Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL):** 110 km dividing Siachen region



About Line of Control (LoC)

- 1) De facto military boundary between Indian and Pakistani-controlled parts of former Jammu and Kashmir.
- 2) Not an internationally recognized boundary but serves as the effective border.
- 3) Originally a ceasefire line after 1947-48 Indo-Pakistan war, renamed "Line of Control" following the **1972 Simla Agreement**.
- 4) Stretches approximately 740 km from Sangam in Kashmir to Point NJ-9842 near Siachen Glacier

Suspension of Indus Water Treaty and Aftermath

Following a terrorist attack in Pahalgam on April 22 that killed 26 civilians, India suspended the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) with Pakistan.

India's Stance and Actions

- 1) **Reason for Suspension:** India cited sustained cross-border terrorism from Pakistan as the reason for the suspension, stating that Pakistan undermined the spirit of mutual trust and cooperation that formed the basis of the treaty³⁵. Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated the government's position that "**water and blood cannot flow together**".
- 2) **Legal Status:** India has held the treaty "in abeyance" rather than formally terminating it, as the IWT does not have a provision for unilateral suspension or termination. The treaty can only be modified or terminated by mutual agreement. India's decision was endorsed by the Cabinet Committee on Security, marking the first time the agreement has been suspended.
- 3) **Operational Changes:** The suspension means India will cease sharing hydrological data, such as water flow and river discharge information, with Pakistan²⁸. India is also no longer bound by the treaty's operational restrictions on using water from the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab), potentially allowing for new storage and hydropower projects. India has started work to enhance storage capacity at two hydroelectric facilities in Kashmir.

Aftermath and Pakistan's Response

- 1) **Pakistan's Diplomatic Efforts:** Facing a potential water crisis, Pakistan has written four letters to India's Ministry of Jal Shakti, urging it to reconsider the suspension. Pakistan maintains that India cannot unilaterally suspend the treaty and that the action violates the pact's provisions.
- 2) **International Mediation:** Pakistan has reportedly approached the World Bank, a guarantor of the treaty, to mediate the dispute. However, the World Bank has so far

declined to intervene in what is considered India's internal decision.

- 3) **Impact on Pakistan:** Pakistan relies heavily on the western rivers for approximately 80% of its agricultural water and a significant portion of its hydropower²⁴. While India currently lacks the infrastructure to significantly reduce water flow, the suspension could severely affect Pakistan's agriculture and economy in the long term. Any attempt by India to block or divert water

has been warned by Pakistan to be considered an "act of war".

- 4) **India's Position:** India remains firm on its decision, stating the treaty will stay suspended until Pakistan "credibly and permanently" stops supporting cross-border terrorism.

India's Defence Exports

- 1) Defence exports reached record ₹23,622 crore (~\$2.76 billion) in FY 2024-25, marking 34-fold increase from ₹686 crore in 2013-14
- 2) 12.04% growth over previous fiscal year (₹21,083 crore in 2023-24)
- 3) Private sector contributed ₹15,233 crore, DPSUs ₹8,389 crore in FY 2024-25
- 4) Exports to around 80 countries including USA, France, and Armenia as top buyers
- 5) Portfolio includes BrahMos missiles, Akash SAM, Pinaka rockets, artillery guns, aircraft components

Renewed Interest

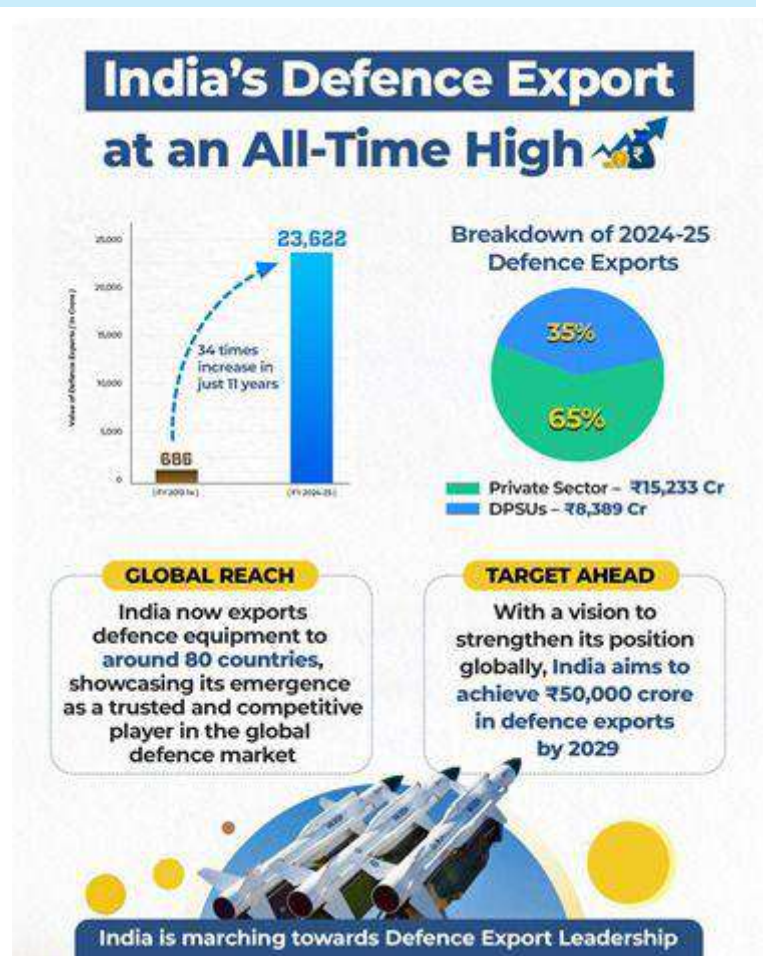
- 1) Operation Sindoor showcased Indian weapons as "war-tested," expected to boost global confidence
- 2) DPSU exports surged 42.85% in FY 2024-25, reflecting growing global acceptability
- 3) Export authorizations increased 16.92% (1,762 in FY 2024-25 vs 1,507 previously)
- 4) Number of exporters grew by 17.4% in same period
- 5) Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy (DPEPP) 2020 implemented to streamline processes

Significance

- 1) Contributes to forex reserves and creates high-skilled job opportunities
- 2) Enhances defence R&D base through private sector involvement
- 3) Strategic tool for diplomatic influence and geopolitical leverage
- 4) India transitioned from world's largest arms importer to top 25 exporter globally
- 5) Supports "Atmanirbhar Bharat" and reduces import dependency

Challenges

- 1) India remains 9.8% of global arms imports (2019-2023), still heavily import-dependent
- 2) Technology gaps in critical areas like engine development and advanced materials
- 3) Limited R&D spending (less than 1% of defence budget vs China 20%, US 12%)



- 4) Credibility issues compared to established exporters like US, France, Russia
- 5) Geopolitical resistance from global powers limiting market access
- 6) Complex export control regulations and logistical bottlenecks

Way Forward

- 1) Target ₹50,000 crore exports by 2029 under government roadmap
- 2) Establish Defence Export Promotion Council to streamline strategy
- 3) Focus on government-to-government sales and strategic partnerships
- 4) Leverage Defence Industrial Corridors in UP and Tamil Nadu
- 5) Simplify export procedures through digital authorization systems
- 6) Utilize India's non-aligned geopolitical stance as strategic advantage

INDIA – AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS

Why in News? Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri met with Taliban's acting foreign minister Amir Khan Muttaqi in Dubai on January 8, 2025, marking a significant elevation in the level of dialogue between India and the Taliban regime.

This marks the highest-level engagement between India and the Taliban since their takeover in 2021.

While not officially recognizing the Taliban government, India is adopting a cautious yet gradual approach to engagement.

Why India's shift in stance towards Taliban?

- 1) **Geopolitical considerations:**
 - a) **Pakistan-Taliban tensions:** Pakistan conducted airstrikes in Afghanistan's Paktika province on December 24, 2024, targeting Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants.
 - b) **Iran's diminished role:** Iran is preoccupied with internal and external conflicts, reducing its focus on Afghanistan.
 - c) **Russia's reorientation:** Russia is caught in its war with Ukraine, shifting its priorities away from Afghanistan.
 - d) **China's growing influence:** China has established diplomatic ties with the Taliban and is pursuing development projects in Afghanistan.
- 2) **Strategic interests:**
 - a) **Protecting past investments:** India aims to safeguard its infrastructure investments in Afghanistan.
 - b) **Counterterrorism:** Engaging with the Taliban allows India to address security

concerns regarding terrorist groups operating from Afghan soil.

- c) **Regional influence:** India seeks to maintain its strategic presence and counterbalance other powers in the region.
- 3) **Pragmatic considerations:**
 - a) **Humanitarian aid:** India wants to continue providing assistance to the Afghan people.
 - b) **Economic opportunities:** Discussions on trade via Chabahar port indicate potential economic benefits.
- 4) **International trends:** Over 30 countries have accepted envoys from the Taliban, influencing India's stance.

INDIA – MAURITIUS RELATIONS

Why in News? PM Narendra Modi visited Mauritius (March 11-12, 2025) as Chief Guest for its National Day, marking his second visit since 2015.

Historical & Cultural Ties

- 1) **Demographic Link:** 70% of Mauritius' 1.2 million population traces origins to Indian indentured workers (1834–1900s).
- 2) **Gandhi's Influence:** Mahatma Gandhi's 1901 visit emphasized education, political empowerment, and India-Mauritius connectivity; National Day coincides with Gandhi's Dandi March (March 12).
- 3) **Freedom Struggle Connections:** Mauritius' first PM, Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, collaborated with Indian leaders like Nehru, Bose, and Sarojini Naidu.

Strategic & Defence Cooperation

- 1) **Agaléga Infrastructure:** Jointly inaugurated airstrip and jetty (2024) to boost maritime security, counter piracy/drug trafficking, and

enhance disaster response (e.g., Cyclone Chido relief).

- 2) **China Factor:** India seeks to counterbalance China's Indian Ocean footprint through strengthened ties.
- 3) **White-Shipping Pact:** Technical agreement for real-time maritime data sharing between Indian Navy and Mauritius.

Economic & Development Partnership

- 1) **Trade & FDI:** Mauritius is India's 2nd largest FDI source (2023-24); bilateral trade pact signed in 2021.
- 2) **Projects:** India's \$1.1 billion assistance (2015–2025) includes Metro Express, 96 small projects, and 11 PSUs like Bank of Baroda.
- 3) **Disaster Response:** India aided Mauritius during COVID-19, 2020 oil-spill crisis, and cyclones.

Space & Capacity Building

- 1) **ISRO Collaboration:** Joint satellite development and TTC station established (1986).
- 2) **Skill Development:** ~4,940 Mauritian professionals trained under India's ITEC program.

Cultural Connectivity: Shared heritage includes Maha Shivratri celebrations, Ganga Talao pilgrimage site, and Ramgoolam's Bihari ancestry.

INDIA – INDONESIA TIES

Why in News? India and Indonesia signed pacts on maritime security, health, traditional medicine, culture, and digital cooperation as Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto in New Delhi on January 25, 2025.

Historical Context

- 1) Shared colonial experience and post-colonial goals fostered strong ties in the late 1940s and 1950s
- 2) India supported Indonesian independence during the National Revolution (1945-49)
- 3) Sukarno was chief guest at India's first Republic Day celebrations in 1950
- 4) Treaty of Friendship signed in 1951, aiming for "perpetual peace and unalterable friendship"

Periods of Fluctuation

- 1) 1960s: Relations deteriorated as Indonesia aligned with China and Pakistan
- 2) 1965 India-Pakistan War: Indonesia supported Pakistan, leading to strained ties
- 3) 1970s-80s: Gradual improvement under Suharto's leadership, but limited progress

Modern Era Developments

- 1) 1990s: Relations improved with India's "Look East" policy
- 2) 2014: Modi government introduced "Act East" policy, further strengthening ties
- 3) Bilateral trade increased from \$4.3 billion in 2005-06 to \$29.40 billion in 2023-24
- 4) Indonesia is India's second-largest trading partner in ASEAN

Current Status and Future Prospects

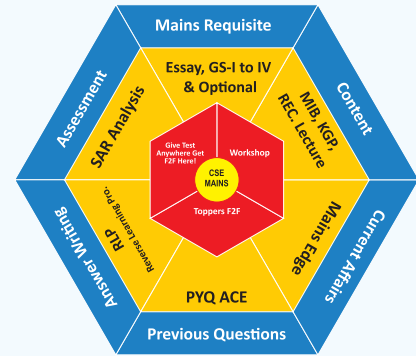
- 1) Regular high-level visits between leaders since 2000
- 2) Cooperation in political, security, defense, commercial, and cultural fields
- 3) Potential for further growth in trade, connectivity, maritime security, and defense cooperation
- 4) Recent agreements aim to enhance bilateral relations across various sectors

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Concession Details	Fee: ₹15000/-	Mode: Offline/Online
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Date	No of Day	Subject/Theme
10-June	RLP_2500	Essay, Geography*
11-Jun	RLP_2505	Biodiversity and Env.
13-Jun	RLP_2506	Biodiversity and Env. & DM
15-Jun	ST_2501	Geo, Biodiversity, Env. & DM
16-Jun	RLP_2507	Indian Culture & History
18-Jun	RLP_2508	Indian Culture & History
20-Jun	RLP_2509	Indian Culture & History
22-Jun	ST_2502	Indian Culture & History
23-Jun	RLP_2510	International Relation
25-Jun	RLP_2511	Security
27-Jun	RLP_2512	Technology
29-Jun	ST_2503	IR, Security & Technology
30-Jun	RLP_2513	Society
2-Jul	RLP_2514	Social Justice
4-Jul	RLP_2515	Governance
6-Jul	ST_2504	Society, SJ & Governance
7-Jul	RLP_2516	Constitution and Polity
9-Jul	RLP_2517	Constitution and Polity
11-Jul	RLP_2518	Constitution and Polity
13-Jul	ST_2505	Constitution and Polity
14-Jul	RLP_2519	Economic Development
16-Jul	RLP_2520	Economic Development
18-Jul	RLP_2521	Agriculture
20-Jul	ST_2506	Economic Development + Agri
21-Jul	RLP_2522	Ethics Part A
23-Jul	RLP_2523	Ethics Part A
25-Jul	RLP_2524	Ethics Part A
27-Jul	ST_2507	Current Affairs
28-Jul	RLP_2525	Ethics Part B
30-Jul	RLP_2526	Ethics Part B
1-Aug	RLP_2527	Ethics Part B
3-Aug	ST_2508	Ethics
4-Aug	RLP_2501	Geography
5-Aug	RLP_2502	Geography
6-Aug	RLP_2503	Geography
7-Aug	RLP_2504	Geography
10-Aug	FLT_2501	ESSAY
11-Aug	FLT_2502	GS-I
12-Aug	FLT_2503	GS-II
13-Aug	FLT_2504	GS-III
14-Aug	FLT_2505	GS-IV

CSE 2021

MEHAK JAIN
27-Selections in 2021

CSE 2022

Pooja Tirumani
34-Selections in 2022

CSE 2023

ADITYA SRIVASTAVA
49-Selections in 2023

CSE 2024

ABHISHEK VASHISHTHA
65-Selections in 2024

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Face to Face Evaluation

Internalization of Personal Feedback

- No Loss of Communication
- Two-way Communication
- Illustration for improvement of Answer
- Improvement in the approach of Answer writing



AAYUSHI CHAUDHARY
AIR-290, CSE 2024



Date	No. of Test	Subject/Theme
15-Jun	Sectional TEST 01	Geography
22-Jun	Sectional TEST 02	History + A&C
29-Jun	Sectional TEST 03	IR, Security & Tech.
6-Jul	Sectional TEST 04	Society, SJ & Govern.
13-Jul	Sectional TEST 05	Polity
20-Jul	Sectional TEST 06	Eco. & Agriculture
27-Jul	Sectional TEST 07	Current Affairs
3-Aug	Sectional TEST 08	Ethics
8-Aug	ESSAY	ESSAY
9-Aug	FLT 01	GS-I
9-Aug	FLT 02	GS-II
10-Aug	FLT 03	GS-III
10-Aug	FLT 04	GS-IV

Concession Details

Fee: ₹6000/-

Kalam IAS Students: 20%

UPSC Interview Student: 30%

CSE Selected Students: 50%

MODE

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Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Essay	GS-I	GS-II	GS-III	GS-IV

Concession Details

Fee: ₹5000 + GST

Kalam IAS Students: 20%

UPSC Interview Student: 30%

CSE Selected Students: 50%

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Sarthak Singh
AIR-393

PYQ Test

10-Years PYQs
GS-I to IV & Essay



Manish Kumar
AIR-543

- ✓ Face to Face Evaluation/week
- ✓ Answer Explanation (soft)

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Think Beyond Conventional Test Series!

AAYUSHI CHAUDHARY
AIR-290, CSE 2024



Face to Face Evaluation

Internalization of Personal Feedback

- No Loss of Communication
- Two-way Communication
- Illustration for improvement of Answer
- Improvement in the approach of Answer writing



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27-Jul	Sectional TEST 07	Current Affairs
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10-Aug	FLT 04	GS-IV

Concession Details

Fee: ₹6000/-

Kalam IAS Students: 20%

UPSC Interview Student: 30%

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MODE

Online/Offline

SYLLABUS: Bilateral, Regional and Global Groupings and Agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

India should be part of RCEP, CPTPP, says NITI Aayog CEO

Why in News? Niti Aayog CEO BVR Subrahmanyam stated that India should join the RCEP and CPTPP trade blocs to capitalize on global economic opportunities.

Reasons for India to join RCEP & CPTPP

- 1) **Economic Opportunities**
 - a) Capitalize on global economic shifts and opportunities
 - b) Better leverage the 'China plus one' strategy that other countries like Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Turkey, and Mexico have benefited from
- 2) **Trade Integration**
 - a) Further integrate India with global trade networks
 - b) Enhance India's participation in regional and trans-Pacific economic partnerships
- 3) **Economic Growth**
 - a) Support India's strong economic growth trajectory (8.2% growth rate last fiscal year)
 - b) Help maintain India's increasing contribution to incremental global growth (currently about 20%)
- 4) **Strategic Positioning**
 - a) Align with India's position as a "shining star" on the global economic horizon
 - b) Support India's path to becoming the third largest economy by 2027.

Factsheet: RCEP

- 1) Full name: Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
- 2) Signed: 15 November 2020
- 3) Entered into force: 1 January 2022
- 4) Members: 15 countries (10 ASEAN members + Australia, China, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand)
- 5) Trade impact:
 - a) Eliminates 90% of tariffs within 20 years
 - b) Aims to reduce non-tariff barriers
 - c) Establishes common rules for e-commerce, trade, and intellectual property



- 6) Economic projections:
 - a) Could add \$186-209 billion annually to world incomes by 2030
 - b) Potential to increase world trade by \$500 billion by 2030
- 7) Key features:
 - a) Single set of rules of origin
 - b) 48-hour target for customs clearance
 - c) Commitments on government procurement
 - d) Preserves members' right to regulate in public interest
- 8) India withdrew from negotiations in 2019

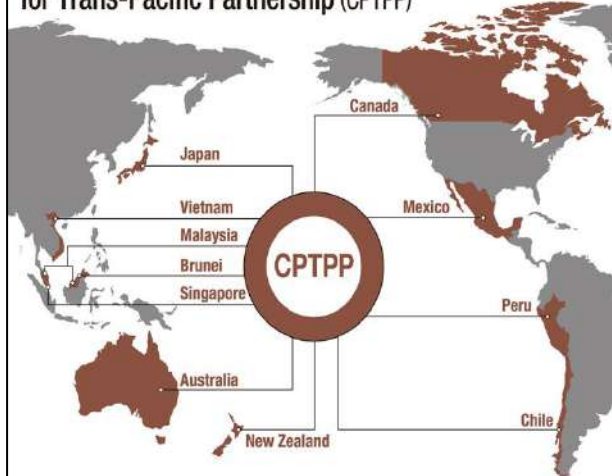
NO DEFENCE AGAINST SURGING CHINESE IMPORTS

<p>RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) attempts to establish world's largest free trade bloc, comprising 16 countries</p> <p>Apart from India, China, Japan, South Korea and Asean countries, Australia and New Zealand were engaged in talks that started in 2012</p> <p>Key negotiation item was reduction or elimination of import duty on nearly 90% goods. In case of China, India was looking to allow zero-duty imports of around 80% of goods</p> <p>Other points included opening up services trade, including easier visa rules for professionals, and more investments</p>	<p>WHY DID INDIA OPT OUT?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fear of surge in Chinese imports, including re-routing of goods via other RCEP countries 2. Reluctance of other countries to move base year from 2014 to a more recent year to reflect latest duty 3. No safeguard measures to check against import surge 4. No credible commitment on non-tariff barriers 5. Inadequate attention to services
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Factsheet: CPTPP

- 1) Full name: Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership
- 2) Signed: 8 March 2018 in Santiago, Chile
- 3) Entered into force: 30 December 2018
- 4) Members: 11 countries (Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam)

Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)



Members' share to global economy (2017)

GDP	13.9%	Trade	15.2%
Population	6.7%	Korea's exports	23.3%

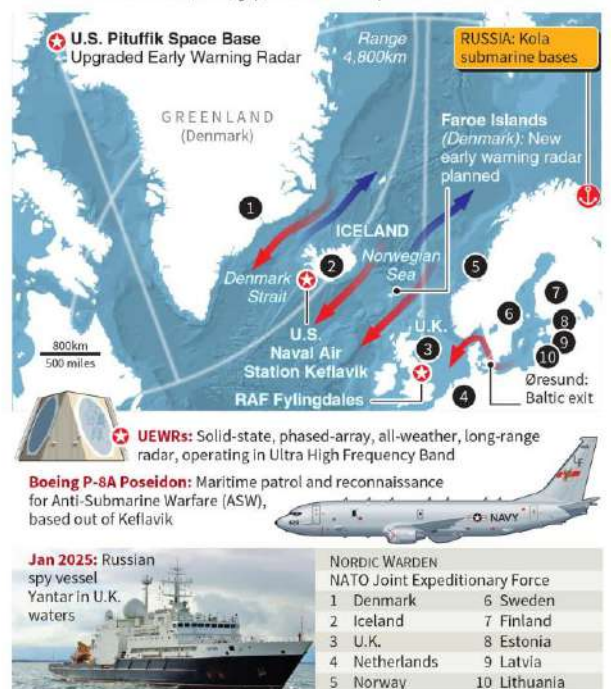
Graphic by Cho Sang-won

Source: Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency

- 5) Trade impact:
 - a) Eliminates 95-99% of tariffs between members
 - b) Aims to reduce non-tariff barriers
- 6) Key features:
 - a) Rules of origin
 - b) Customs cooperation
 - c) Sanitary measures
 - d) Technical barriers to trade
 - e) Investment
 - f) Services
 - g) Intellectual property
 - h) E-commerce
 - i) State-owned enterprises
 - j) Labor and environment standards
- 7) Evolved from TPP after U.S. withdrawal

Ice cold war

The melting of Arctic sea ice has prompted renewed interest in the region. The U.K. has repeatedly emphasised the strategic importance of the Greenland-Iceland-U.K. (GIUK) gap, a critical choke point for NATO's naval defences



Arctic Council Members

- 1) Canada, Denmark (through Greenland), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United States
- 2) These nations form an international body tasked with protecting the environment, conducting scientific research, and safeguarding interests of indigenous peoples
- 3) **All members except Russia belong to NATO**, creating geopolitical tensions following Russia's invasion of Ukraine

Reasons for Strategic Interest

- 1) **Climate change is melting ice caps**, revealing new opportunities for resource exploitation and shipping routes.
- 2) Region holds approximately **13% of world's undiscovered oil reserves** and **30% of untapped natural gas reserves** according to a 2009 U.S. Geological Survey report.
- 3) Rich deposits of **rare earth elements, phosphates, copper, and lucrative fishing grounds**.
- 4) **Potential for new trade routes:** Northeast Passage along Russia's coast could reduce shipping distance between East Asia and Europe by 8,000 kilometers compared to Suez Canal route.

Tensions in Arctic

Why in News? International observers have raised concerns about escalating tensions in the Arctic, warning that if left unchecked, they could eventually spark conflict in the region.

- 5) Unlike Antarctica, **Arctic lacks dedicated international treaty** for demilitarization and environmental protection.

Key Territorial Disputes

- 1) **Overlapping seabed claims** by Canada, Denmark, and Russia submitted to UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.
- 2) **U.S. President Trump's renewed interest** in acquiring Greenland from Denmark, citing "national security" concerns.
- 3) **Northwest Passage dispute** between U.S. and Canada—Ottawa claims it as internal waters while Washington insists it's international territory with freedom of navigation rights.
- 4) **Russian officials suggesting** Norway's Arctic Island of Svalbard should fall under Russian control.
- 5) **Strategic importance of the Greenland-Iceland-U.K. (GIUK) gap** as critical naval choke point for NATO defences.

Russia's Arctic Presence

- 1) Planted Russian flag on North Pole seabed in 2007 using MIR-1 submarine.
- 2) Maintains multiple military bases in the Arctic, mostly dating from Soviet era.
- 3) Only Arctic Council member with significant icebreaker fleet, including nuclear-powered vessels.
- 4) Conducted joint naval exercises with China in 2022, indicating strategic implications for Arctic security.

Recent Developments

- 1) **China declared itself a 'Near-Arctic State'** in 2018 and plans construction of its first nuclear-powered icebreaker.
- 2) **Sweden and Finland joining NATO** has intensified alliance military presence in the region.
- 3) NATO conducted large-scale exercises near Russian border in Finland in 2024.
- 4) Analysts note NATO's limited operational capabilities in the Arctic, raising concerns about strategic imbalances.

Sixth BIMSTEC SUMMIT

The 6th BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Summit was held in Bangkok, Thailand, on April 4, 2025. The summit's theme was "Prosperous, Resilient, and Open BIMSTEC," aiming to strengthen collaboration among the seven member states: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

Key Outcomes

- 1) **Bangkok Vision 2030:** The summit adopted the Bangkok Vision 2030, a strategic roadmap for regional prosperity, peace, and development, focusing on economic integration and resilience to global challenges.
- 2) **Maritime Transport Agreement:** A significant agreement was signed to enhance maritime transport cooperation, improving shipping routes and trade facilitation across the Bay of Bengal²³.
- 3) **Institutional Reforms:** The BIMSTEC Eminent Persons Group report was adopted to streamline the organization's functioning and ensure timely implementation of regional projects.
- 4) **New Partnerships:** Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed with the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to foster new developmental partnerships.

India's Major Initiatives

At the summit, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi introduced a 21-point action plan and announced several initiatives to bolster regional cooperation.

- 1) **BIMSTEC Centres of Excellence:** India will establish Centres of Excellence focusing on Disaster Management, Sustainable Maritime Transport, Traditional Medicine, and Agriculture¹²⁶.
- 2) **BODHI Programme:** A new initiative called BODHI (BIMSTEC for Organized Development of Human Resource Infrastructure) was launched to provide training, scholarships, and skill development for youth and professionals in the region¹²⁵.

- 3) **Digital and Economic Integration:** India proposed a pilot study on Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), linking India's UPI with BIMSTEC payment systems, establishing a BIMSTEC Chamber of Commerce, and hosting an annual BIMSTEC Business Summit¹²⁷.
- 4) **Healthcare and People-to-People Ties:** India announced a capacity-building program for cancer care and initiatives to strengthen cultural links, including a BIMSTEC Athletics Meet in 2025, the first BIMSTEC Games in 2027, and a Traditional Music Festival¹⁶.

BRICS - Analysis

About BIMSTEC

- 1) **Established in 1997**, BIMSTEC received its charter at the **2022 Colombo Summit**, which was ratified and came into effect last year.
- 2) Members include **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka** (from South Asia) and **Thailand** (from Southeast Asia).
- 3) **Permanent secretariat established in Dhaka**, Bangladesh in September 2014

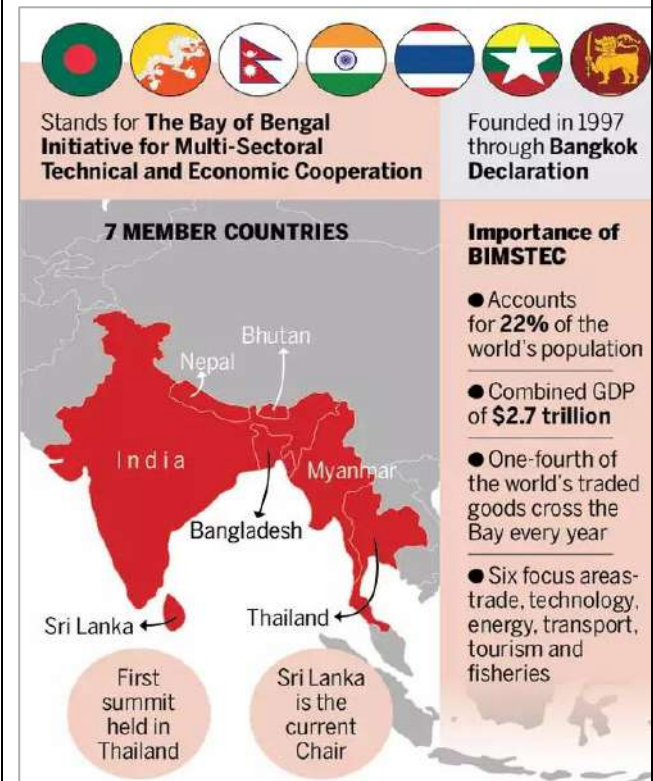
Strategic Significance of BIMSTEC

- 1) Provides a **forum for regional cooperation without Pakistan's veto capabilities** that stalled SAARC initiatives.
- 2) Represents an opportunity to **restore natural economic and historical bonds** across the Bay of Bengal region.
- 3) Growing importance as China's rise, its expanding maritime capabilities, and Washington-Beijing rivalry make the **Bay of Bengal a contested zone** again.
- 4) **Myanmar's potential as a land bridge** between South and Southeast Asia creates significant connectivity opportunities.

Challenges Before BIMSTEC

- 1) **Lacks the level of mutual trust** present in ASEAN, where members set aside bilateral disputes to pursue shared goals.
- 2) **Ongoing disputes** between Bangladesh and Myanmar complicate regional cooperation.
- 3) **Tensions between Delhi and Dhaka** following Sheikh Hasina's ouster affect India-Bangladesh relations.
- 4) **Myanmar's weakened territorial control** hampers its ability to serve as an effective land bridge between regions.

- 5) Unlike SAARC (which never truly advanced), **BIMSTEC moves slowly** but continues progressing toward greater engagement.



Recommended Strategy for India

- 1) **Regional level:** Persist in building BIMSTEC institutions and developing arrangements for deeper economic integration despite global economic disruptions.
- 2) **Bilateral approach:** Pursue enhanced trade and connectivity opportunities with individual members, including managing relations with Bangladesh's Yunus regime.
- 3) **Unilateral action:** Identify areas where India can act independently, similar to Thailand's visa-free entry policy for Indians that dramatically enhanced bilateral engagement.
- 4) **Maritime development:** Transform Andaman and Nicobar Islands into a major regional hub, develop eastern seaboard ports, modernize seafaring regulations, and improve maritime business environment.
- 5) **Economic leverage:** Use India's economic might (approaching \$4 trillion) and asymmetric relationship with smaller BIMSTEC neighbours (Thailand, the second-largest economy, has GDP of about \$500 billion) to drive regional initiatives.

BRICS Currency

Why in News? US President-elect Donald Trump has threatened BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) with 100% tariffs if they create a new currency or support any alternative to replace the US dollar as the world's reserve currency.

Background and Context

- 1) **US Dollar Dominance:** The US dollar accounts for 88% of global forex turnover, while the Indian rupee accounts for 1.6%
- 2) **Weaponization of Financial Systems:** The US has used its influence over global financial systems, such as SWIFT, to impose unilateral sanctions on countries like Iran and Russia
- 3) **Gradual Shift:** The IMF reports a gradual decline in the dollar's share of central bank and government foreign reserves
- 4) **Rise of Non-Traditional Currencies:** There's an increase in the use of non-traditional reserve currencies, including the Chinese renminbi
- 5) **BRICS Response:** Countries are seeking to reduce dependence on the US dollar and US-led global financial system

India's Position and Actions

- 1) **Rupee Internationalization:** In 2022, the Reserve Bank of India allowed invoicing and payments for international trade in Indian rupees
- 2) **Diplomatic Stance:** India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar stated that avoiding the use of the US dollar is not part of India's economic policy
- 3) **Trade with Russia:** India-Russia trade in domestic currency remains low due to fears of US sanctions and an unbalanced trade relationship

Implications and Expert Opinions

- 1) **Potential Backfire:** Experts suggest that a 100% tariff on BRICS countries could increase costs for American consumers without bringing manufacturing jobs back to the US
- 2) **China's Role:** There are concerns about China's potential dominance in any new financial framework among BRICS nations
- 3) **Balanced Approach:** India is advised to support financial reforms within BRICS while maintaining strong ties with the US.



Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump

The idea that the BRICS Countries are trying to move away from the Dollar while we stand by and watch is OVER. We require a commitment from these Countries that they will neither create a new BRICS Currency, nor back any other Currency to replace the mighty U.S. Dollar or, they will face 100% Tariffs, and should expect to say goodbye to selling into the wonderful U.S. Economy. They can go find another "sucker!" There is no chance that the BRICS will replace the U.S. Dollar in International Trade, and any Country that tries should wave goodbye to America.

3.5k ReTruths 12.1k Likes

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BRICS – Analysis About BRICS

- 1) **Formation:** BRICS is an intergovernmental organization of major emerging economies, originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, and China. The acronym "BRIC" was coined in 2001 by Goldman Sachs economist Jim O'Neill to highlight the growth potential of these nations.
- 2) **Expansion:** The group held its first summit in 2009. South Africa joined in 2011, creating the "BRICS" acronym. In 2024, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates became full members, followed by Indonesia in early 2025. Saudi Arabia is also a new member.
- 3) **Objectives:** The group acts as a political and diplomatic forum to promote peace, security, and cooperation among its members 278. It seeks to increase the influence of the Global South in international affairs and advocates for reforms in global institutions like the UN, IMF, and World Bank to create a more equitable world order.
- 4) **Structure:** BRICS operates as an informal bloc with a rotating annual presidency. Its

cooperation is built on three main pillars: politics and security, economy and finance, and cultural and people-to-people exchange.

Recent Developments with respect to BRICS

- 1) **16th Summit:** The 16th BRICS Summit was held in Kazan, Russia, in October 2024 under the theme "Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security". This was the first summit to include the new members who joined in 2024.
- 2) **Further Expansion:** At the Kazan summit, thirteen nations were designated as "partner countries," including Algeria, Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam. More than 40 countries have expressed interest in joining the bloc.
- 3) **BRICS Pay:** Members introduced BRICS Pay, a payment system designed to facilitate transactions and financial information exchange between their central banks, serving as an alternative to the Western-led SWIFT system.
- 4) **Kazan Declaration:** The summit concluded with a declaration endorsing the reform of the UN Security Council, supporting full UN membership for the State of Palestine, and agreeing to explore the creation of an independent cross-border settlement system.
- 5) **Brazil's 2025 Presidency:** Brazil is set to take over the presidency in 2025, with a focus on strengthening cooperation in the Global South, creating alternative payment methods, tackling climate change, and addressing poverty.

Significance of BRICS

- 1) **Economic Influence:** The expanded BRICS represents about 45% of the world's population and generates over 35% of global GDP in purchasing power parity terms, with its combined GDP now surpassing that of the G7 nations. The bloc accounts for about 25% of global exports and has significant influence in energy markets, with six of the

world's top ten oil producers among its members.

- 2) **Counterweight to the West:** BRICS aims to act as a counterweight to the dominance of Western-led forums like the G7. It has established its own institutions, such as the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA), as alternatives to the World Bank and IMF.
- 3) **Global Governance Reform:** The group actively advocates for a more inclusive and equitable global order by pushing for reforms in multilateral institutions to better reflect the rising weight of emerging economies.
- 4) **Platform for the Global South:** BRICS provides a key platform for countries of the Global South to coordinate on major international issues, including security, trade, and climate change.

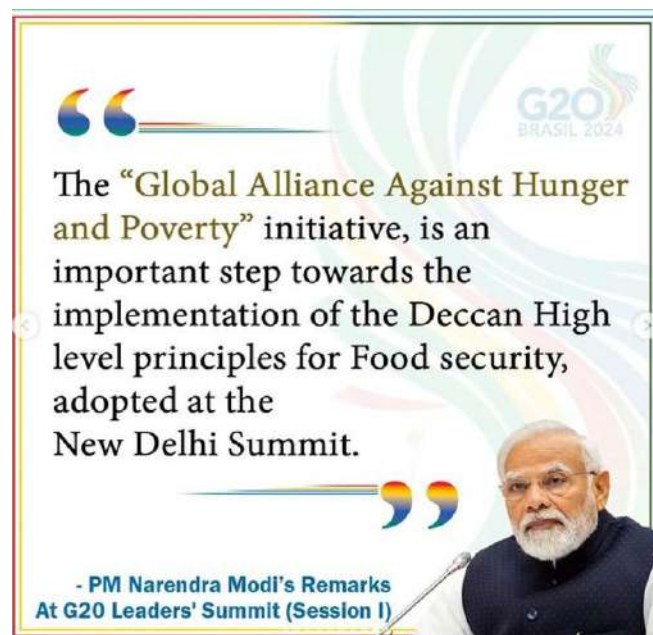
Challenges before BRICS

- 1) **Internal Divisions:** The bloc's members have diverse political systems, including democracies and authoritarian states, and varying relationships with the West, which can hinder cohesive action. Geopolitical rivalries, particularly the border tensions between India and China, also pose a challenge to unity.
- 2) **Economic Imbalance and Slowdown:** China's economy is significantly larger than those of the other members, creating a potential power imbalance. Additionally, after years of rapid growth, all member countries are facing an inevitable economic slowdown.
- 3) **Institutional Constraints:** The NDB has limited capital compared to established institutions like the World Bank, limiting its ability to compete. The expanded membership also makes consensus-based decision-making more difficult and highlights the need for a clearer expansion strategy and potentially a permanent secretariat.
- 4) **Geopolitical Tensions:** Members face external pressures, such as Western sanctions on Russia and the US-China trade conflict, which can strain the group's internal dynamics.

Way Forward

- 1) **Institutional Strengthening:** There is a recognized need to establish a permanent secretariat to manage the complexities of an expanded membership. The Kazan Declaration's introduction of "participation on a voluntary basis" for initiatives may allow for a more flexible, multi-speed approach to integration.
- 2) **Economic and Financial Cooperation:** The focus will be on implementing the BRICS Economic Partnership Strategy 2025, which prioritizes strengthening trade, increasing the use of national currencies, and enhancing cooperation in the digital economy and sustainable development.
- 3) **Building Trust:** Future success depends on members' ability to build trust, stand collectively against trade protectionism, and increase socioeconomic convergence. This includes promoting bottom-up approaches like a single BRICS visa and greater collaboration among researchers.
- 4) **Advancing Global Governance Reform:** BRICS is expected to continue its push for a comprehensive reform of the UN and its Security Council to ensure greater representation for developing countries.

- 3) The alliance is structured around three key pillars:
 - a) National: Coordination of specific public policies
 - b) Knowledge: Integration of data and technologies for evidence-based solutions
 - c) Financial: Large-scale resource mobilization



Why Launched?

- 1) The initiative was established to accelerate efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically targeting the elimination of hunger and poverty on a global scale.
- 2) It aims to eliminate all nations from the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) hunger map by 2030, responding to alarming levels of hunger reported in various countries.

Future Prospects

- 1) Strategic commitments announced include:
 - a) Reaching 500 million people through income distribution programs by 2030.
 - b) Expanding school meals to 150 million children in countries with high child hunger rates.
 - c) Mobilizing billions of dollars through multilateral banks for effective anti-poverty programs.
- 2) The alliance plans to hold regular Summits Against Hunger and Poverty and establish a High-Level Champions Council to oversee its activities.

What is Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, launched at Brazil G20?

Why in News? The Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty was officially launched at the G20 Leaders' Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

About the Alliance

- 1) The Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty was launched at the G20 Leaders' Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, with the aim of eradicating hunger and poverty by 2030.
- 2) It comprises 148 members, including:
 - a) 82 countries
 - b) The African Union
 - c) The European Union
 - d) 24 international organizations
 - e) 9 international financial institutions
 - f) 31 philanthropic and non-governmental organizations

- 3) With India's ranking at 105th in the Global Hunger Index, the alliance's efforts are crucial as it seeks to address the pressing challenges of hunger and poverty globally.

PM unveils 10-point plan to strengthen ASEAN

Why in News? Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a 10-point plan to strengthen India-ASEAN relations at the 21st ASEAN-India Summit in Vientiane, Laos.



10-Point Plan for India-ASEAN Cooperation

- 1) Celebrate 2025 as ASEAN-India Year of Tourism
- 2) Mark a decade of Act East Policy through various activities
- 3) Organize ASEAN-India Women Scientists Conclave
- 4) Double scholarships at Nalanda University for ASEAN students
- 5) Review ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement by 2025
- 6) Enhance disaster resilience
- 7) Initiate new Health Ministers' track
- 8) Establish ASEAN-India Cyber Policy Dialogue
- 9) Conduct workshop on Green Hydrogen
- 10) Invite ASEAN leaders to join 'Plant a Tree for Mother' campaign

Data Point

India's trade with ASEAN nearly doubled over last 10 years, surpassing \$130 billion.

India – Saudi Arabia Relations

Why in News? PM Modi is visiting Saudi Arabia this week, marking his third visit as Prime Minister after previous trips in 2016 and 2019.

#The meeting had been called off amidst Pahalgam attack.

India-Saudi Relations: Evolution and Significance

Historical Context

- 1) Only six Indian PM visits to Saudi Arabia since 1947
- 2) Early relations hampered by ideological posturing and Pakistan factor
- 3) Turning points: Jaswant Singh's visit (2000), King Abdullah's historic India visit (2006)
- 4) De-hyphenation from Pakistan began under King Abdullah
- 5) Manmohan Singh's 2010 visit laid groundwork for broader partnership

Modi Era Transformation

- 1) Engagement with Arab Gulf, especially Saudi Arabia, among most significant strategic advances in Indian foreign policy
- 2) Frequent high-level visits across multiple domains
- 3) Expected new initiatives in energy, technology, economic, security, and connectivity sectors

Saudi Arabia Under Mohammed bin Salman (MbS)

Leadership Consolidation

- 1) Rose from Defense Minister (2015) to Crown Prince (2017) to Prime Minister (2022)
- 2) Shifted from consensus-based to centralized decision-making
- 3) Streamlined governance while adopting new authoritarian style

Domestic Reforms

- 1) Vision 2030: Diversification from oil dependence
- 2) Economic initiatives: Partial privatization of Aramco, mega-projects like Neom
- 3) Social liberalization: Women's rights, entertainment industry revival
- 4) Religious moderation: Promoting "moderate Islam" globally

Foreign Policy Shifts

- 1) More assertive, proactive stance replacing reactive posturing
- 2) Demonstrated diplomatic flexibility with Qatar, Turkey, Iran
- 3) Multi-alignment strategy beyond US: China, Russia, emerging powers
- 4) BRICS membership and expanded global outreach
- 5) Interest-driven approach echoes India's own pragmatic Middle East policy

India – Qatar Relations

Why in News? India and Qatar signed a strategic partnership agreement on February 18, 2025, deepening ties in trade, energy, and security, amid discussions on the Gaza crisis.



Strategic Partnership Details

- 1) **Elevated cooperation:** Focus on trade, investment, energy, security, and collaboration in international forums.
- 2) **Key agreements:**
 - a) Double Taxation Avoidance Treaty signed.
 - b) Exploration of a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) alongside ongoing India-GCC FTA negotiations.
- 3) **Energy ties:** Qatar is a major LNG supplier to India, with plans to strengthen energy collaboration.

Regional Geopolitical Discussions

- 1) **Israel-Palestine conflict:**
 - a) India reiterated support for a two-state solution and welcomed the January 2025 ceasefire.
 - b) Qatar shared its stance, though specifics were not disclosed.
- 2) **U.S. proposal:** Qatar's Amir attended the Riyadh Arab summit (February 20, 2025) to discuss U.S. suggestions, including relocating Palestinians, which India has not publicly endorsed.

Economic and Trade Goals

- 1) **Trade target:** Aim to double bilateral trade to \$28 billion.

- 2) **Business engagement:** 38 Qatari firms (retail, energy, hospitality) participated in a Joint Business Forum.

Indian Diaspora and Legal Issues

- 1) **Indian workers:** Largest expatriate community in Qatar; ~600 Indians in Qatari prisons, with 85 pardoned in 2024.
- 2) **Commander Tiwary case:** Former Indian Navy officer remains detained; seven others repatriated in 2024.

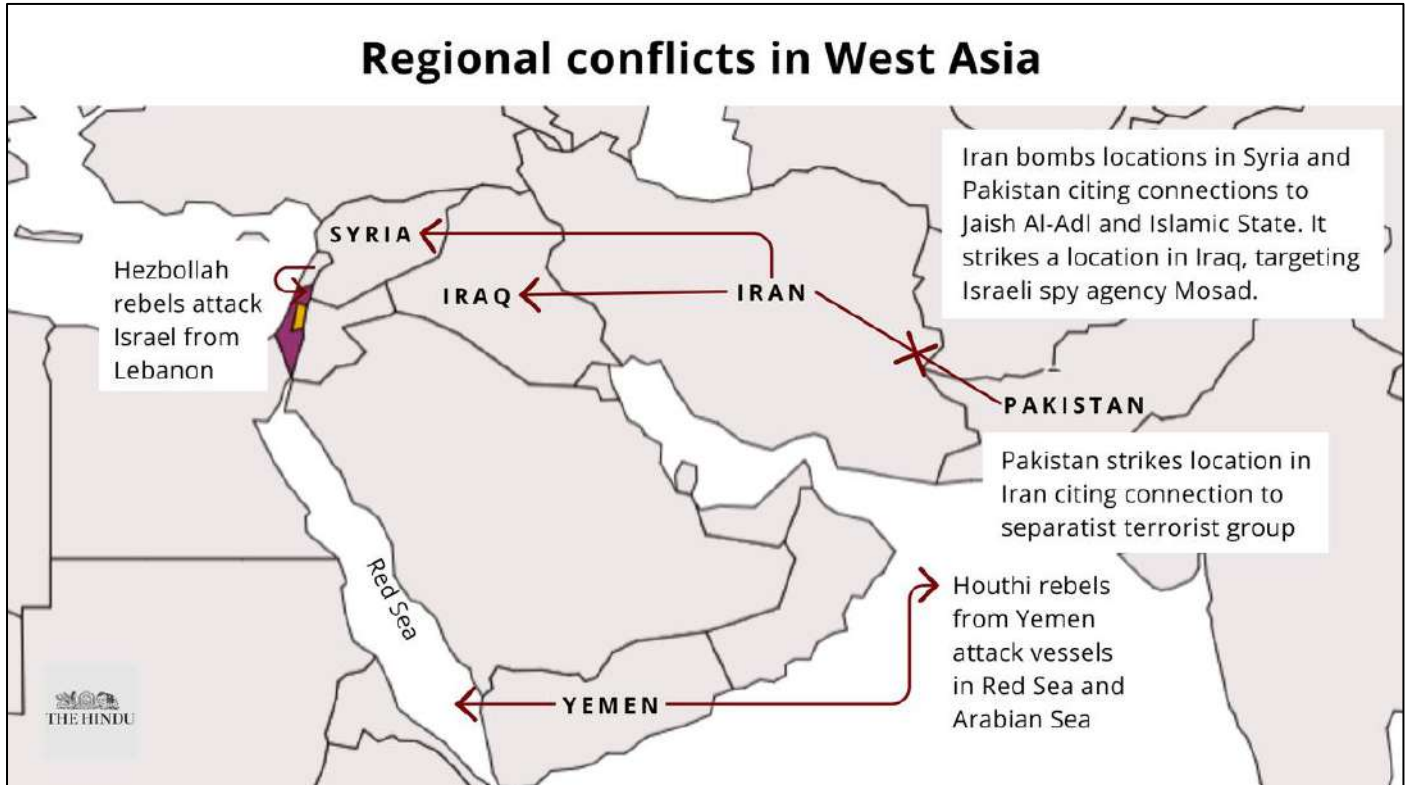
Other Strategic Partnerships in GCC: India has similar partnerships with Kuwait, Oman, UAE, and Saudi Arabia.

Significance of Qatar to India	Hurdles in India-Qatar Relations
1) Energy Security: Major LNG supplier (20-year \$78B deal)	1) Detention of Ex-Navy Personnel: Commander Purnendu Tiwary's unresolved case
2) Trade Growth: Aim to double bilateral trade to \$28B by 2030	2) Cultural Sensitivities: 2022 Prophet remarks controversy
3) Indian Diaspora: ~830,000 expatriates, largest workforce in Qatar	3) Labour Issues: Welfare concerns for migrant workers
4) Strategic partnership: Defence cooperation, counter-terrorism collaboration	4) Geopolitical Misalignment: Qatar's stance vs. India's ties with Saudi-led bloc
5) Investments: \$10B Qatari commitment in Indian infrastructure, tech	5) Zakir Naik Controversy: Fugitive's presence in Qatar
6) Regional Diplomacy: Qatar's role as mediator in Israel-Hamas talks	6) Delayed Agreements: Slow progress on FTA and investment treaty

Year of War in West Asia

Why in News? October 7, 2024, marks one year since Hamas' terrorist assault on Israel, leading to a prolonged conflict in West Asia.

- b) Increased emphasis on Palestinian sovereignty as precondition for peace
- c) Mediatory roles by Qatar and Egypt
- 3) **US and Western Allies**
 - a) Consistent support for Israel while calling



Current Situation

1) Death Toll and Destruction:

- a) Over 41,000 people killed in Gaza and Lebanon
- b) Gaza largely flattened
- c) 97 of 251 original hostages still held by Hamas

2) Expanded Conflict:

- a) Israel targeting Iran-backed groups like Hezbollah and Houthis
- b) Attacks on shipping in the Red Sea
- c) Israeli strikes in Syria, Yemen, and Lebanon

Key Perspectives

1) Israel

- a) Netanyahu's government more opposed to Palestinian statehood
- b) Israeli Knesset passed resolution rejecting Palestinian sovereignty
- c) Continued military operations despite international calls for restraint

2) Arab States

- a) Committed to regional reset and normalization with Israel

for de-escalation

- b) Limited influence on Israel's actions
- c) European outcry, but following US lead
- 4) **India's Stance**
 - a) Balanced approach: condemning terrorism while supporting two-state solution
 - b) Abstained from UNGA resolution imposing withdrawal deadline
 - c) Future of India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor dependent on regional stability

India – Kuwait Relations

Why in News? Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to visit Kuwait this weekend, marking the first visit by an Indian PM to the country in over four decades.

Significance of the Visit

- 1) **Closing Diplomatic Gaps:** The visit completes India's expanded diplomatic engagement with the Gulf region, crucial for the country's security and prosperity.

- 2) **Transforming Relations:** The past decade has seen a qualitative transformation in ties between India and Gulf monarchies, including:
- Strong personal rapport between PM Modi and Gulf rulers
 - Intensified commercial engagement
 - Enhanced security partnerships
 - Development of connectivity projects

Historical Context

1) Past Challenges

- India's relationship with Kuwait was previously strained due to Delhi's stance during Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990
- India's foreign policy traditionally favoured Ba'athist leaders and radical nationalist Arab Republics, complicating relations with Gulf monarchies

2) Shift in Priorities

- The Modi years have seen a definitive change, with frequent visits to Gulf countries
- The Arab Gulf has emerged as one of the highest strategic priorities for Delhi

Regional Implications

- Middle East Restructuring:** The visit coincides with the fall of the Assad dynasty in Syria, potentially leading to a radical restructuring of the regional order.
- Partnerships with Moderate Arab States:** India's partnership with moderate Arab states, including Gulf nations, Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco, gains new importance in the changing Middle East landscape.

Future Considerations

- Reassessing Regional Dynamics:** India needs to better appreciate the core concerns of moderate Arab states and reassess its premises about the region
- Balancing Regional Powers:** Delhi must consider the hierarchy of contradictions between moderate Arab states and non-Arab powers like Iran, Israel, and Turkey
- Promoting Stability:** India should encourage flexibility from Israel to facilitate cooperation between moderate Arab states and the Jewish state for regional stability.

IMEC Report Card

Why in News? The IMEC project, announced in September 2023 at the G20 Summit in New Delhi, has shown mixed progress over the past year.

Progress

Eastern Leg (India-UAE)

- Bilateral trade between India and UAE grew 93% from 2020-21 to 2023-24, reaching \$83.64 billion
- Non-oil trade increased from \$28.67 billion to \$57.81 billion in the same period
- Virtual Trade Corridor launched to streamline trade processes and reduce costs
- Focus on improving connectivity and trade facilitation

Overall Development

- Connectivity aspect gaining traction
- Potential to reduce transit time by 40% and costs by 30% compared to the Suez Canal route
- Viewed positively by participating countries as an opportunity for economic development and enhanced connectivity



Challenges

Western Leg (Middle East-Europe)

- Progress slowed due to Israel-Palestine conflict since October 2023
- Key stakeholders like Saudi Arabia and Jordan unable to make significant advancements
- Implementation likely to remain slow until regional tensions subside



Logistical and Infrastructure Issues

- 1) Complex logistical planning and coordination required across multiple countries
- 2) Significant portions of rail links missing, especially in the Middle East
- 3) Substantial construction efforts and investment needed to complete the rail network

Geopolitical and Economic Challenges

- 1) Coordination among multiple countries with diverse interests and legal systems
- 2) Potential opposition from existing transport routes, such as Egypt's Suez Canal
- 3) Competition from China's Belt and Road Initiative
- 4) Iran's geographical location and potential disruptive actions pose a threat

Technical and Environmental Concerns

- 1) Need for technical compatibility and standardization across different countries
- 2) Addressing environmental impact and ensuring sustainability in construction and operation

Future Outlook

- 1) Other elements (clean energy, undersea cables, etc.) on hold until regional situation normalizes
- 2) India can use this time to prepare ports, develop economic zones, and improve domestic logistics
- 3) Establishment of an IMEC secretariat recommended to organize structure and operations
- 4) Focus needed on improving integration in global value chains and enhancing manufacturing competitiveness

India – West Asia Relations – Analysis

- 1) India's engagement has evolved from peripheral involvement to strategic partnership through the pragmatic **"Link West" policy**.
- 2) Transformed from ideological approach to economic and strategic priorities under PM Modi's leadership.
- 3) India prefers bilateral relations rather than regional approach with West Asian countries.
- 4) Key pillars shifted from Egypt, Palestine, Iraq to Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Israel.

Recent Developments with respect to India - West Asia Relations

- 1) India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) signed in 2022

- 2) Bilateral trade reached \$84 billion with UAE and \$43 billion with Saudi Arabia in 2023-24
- 3) India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council established in 2019
- 4) 20-year LNG deal signed with Qatar in February 2024
- 5) India's maiden appearance at OIC Foreign Ministers' meeting as "guest of honour" in 2019
- 6) IMEC corridor and Chabahar Port development initiatives launched

Significance of India - West Asia Relations

- 1) Energy Security: Over 50% of India's crude oil imports come from the Gulf region.
- 2) Economic Partnership: UAE is India's third-largest trading partner.
- 3) Diaspora: Over 9 million Indians work in West Asia, largest source of remittances.
- 4) Strategic Location: Gateway to landlocked Central Asia.
- 5) Trade Volume: GCC region accounts for 15.8% of India's total trade.

Challenges before India - West Asia Relations

- 1) Balancing relations between rival nations like Israel-Palestine and Iran-Saudi Arabia
- 2) Political instability and sectarian tensions in countries like Syria, Iraq, Yemen
- 3) Competition with China's growing influence through Belt and Road Initiative
- 4) Energy dependency risks and supply disruption concerns
- 5) Terrorism threats and radicalization of Indian youth
- 6) Limited economic ties compared to other regions (only 7.5% of global trade)

Way Forward

- 1) Diversify energy sources and enhance renewable energy cooperation
- 2) Complete pending free trade agreements with Gulf Cooperation Council
- 3) Strengthen defense cooperation through intelligence sharing and joint exercises
- 4) Leverage diaspora networks for cultural diplomacy and economic initiatives
- 5) Maintain balanced diplomatic approach and strategic autonomy
- 6) Expand cooperation in healthcare, pharmaceuticals, higher education, and technology sectors

Israel-Hamas War

Why Israel-Hamas War Continuing?

- 1) **Netanyahu's Political Survival:** Refuses any deal without "complete defeat of Hamas"; war diverts attention from his corruption charges and October 7 security failures.
- 2) **Ceasefire Breakdown:** January 2025 ceasefire collapsed in March due to disputes over hostage exchanges and Israel's continued military presence in Gaza.
- 3) **Rejected Hamas Offers:** Israel rejected Hamas proposals to step back from governing Gaza and transition to technocratic government.
- 4) **Political Pressure:** Netanyahu's far-right coalition members oppose negotiations and demand aggressive stance against Hamas.
- 5) **Divergent Conditions:** Israel seeks new terms beyond original ceasefire agreement while Hamas wants adherence to January 2025 deal.

Implications of Continuing War on World

- 1) **Economic Disruption:** Oil prices could surge to \$150/barrel, triggering global economic "shock" similar to 1973 crisis.
- 2) **Financial Market Volatility:** Increased instability in global markets, higher energy prices, and supply chain disruptions.
- 3) **Regional Escalation:** Involvement of Iran, Hezbollah, and Houthis threatening broader Middle East conflict.
- 4) **International Isolation of Israel:** Described as becoming "pariah state" with multiple countries recalling ambassadors.
- 5) **Global Inflation:** Rising costs for businesses, tourism decline, and increased insurance costs worldwide.
- 6) **Diversion from Ukraine:** Reduced international focus and resources for Ukraine conflict.

Implications of Continuing War on India

- 1) **Maritime Security:** Houthi attacks affecting commercial shipping in Indian Ocean, directly impacting India's vicinity
- 2) **Energy Vulnerability:** High crude oil prices threaten currency stability and fiscal deficit
- 3) **Economic Sectors Impact:** Aviation, paints, tyres, and chemicals industries facing reduced profit margins
- 4) **Trade Relations:** \$8.4 billion exports to Israel at risk; imports of diamonds and equipment potentially affected
- 5) **Growth Concerns:** Potential negative impact on economic growth due to high inflation and reduced discretionary spending
- 6) **Strategic Balancing:** India forced to navigate between traditional Palestine support and growing Israel ties



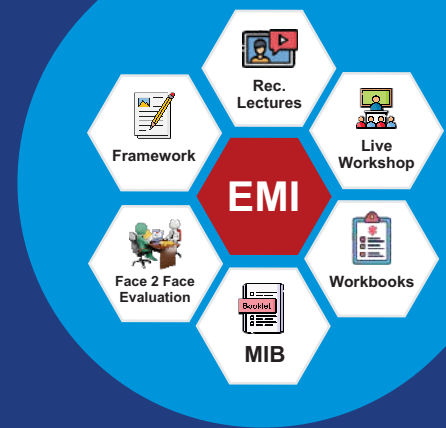
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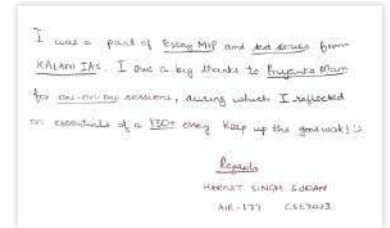
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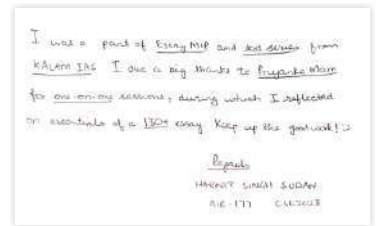
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India – US Relations

Trump Tariffs

During his second presidency, Donald Trump enacted a protectionist trade policy to boost U.S. manufacturing. He imposed a universal 10% tariff on all imports and higher duties on specific goods and countries. This included raising tariffs on Chinese goods to 145% and doubling them on steel and aluminium to 50%. On goods from India, 26% tariffs have been imposed.

THE TRADE WAR BETWEEN US & CHINA

FEB 1: Trump imposes 10% tariffs on China, 25% on Mexico and Canada, citing fentanyl crisis

FEB 4: As tariffs on China take effect, Beijing puts 15% tariffs on US coal, LNG; 10% on crude

MAR 4: Another 10% US tariffs; total now 20%. China responds with up to 15% on key US farm products

APR 2: On "Liberation Day" Trump announces 34% on all Chinese goods from April 9

APR 4: China announces its own 34% effective April 10, as well as controls on rare earths exports

APR 7: Trump threatens additional 50% tariffs if China doesn't back down

APR 9-10: The US levies 84% additional tariffs, bringing the total to 104%. China retaliates with 84% tariffs, effective April 10. Trump then raises it to 125%, totalling 145%.

APR 11: China raises tariffs to 125%, effective Apr 12, and declares no further hikes

APR 13: Trump exempts smartphones, computers and other electronics, subjecting them only to a 20% tariff

MAY 6: Talks in Geneva announced

Why is Donald Trump imposing protectionist tariffs?

- 1) **Protect U.S. Jobs:** Make domestic goods price-competitive to shield American manufacturing from foreign competition.
- 2) **Lower Trade Deficit:** Reduce the U.S. trade imbalance, which exceeded \$770 billion in 2023, particularly with China.
- 3) **Counter Unfair Practices:** Retaliate against intellectual property theft and state-sponsored subsidies, primarily from China.
- 4) **Gain Negotiating Power:** Use tariffs as leverage to force renegotiation of trade deals like NAFTA into the USMCA.
- 5) **Boost Federal Revenue:** Generate billions in direct tax revenue from tariffs on imported goods.
- 6) **Ensure National Security:** Use Section 232 tariffs to reduce U.S. reliance on foreign steel and aluminium for defence needs.

- 7) **Pressure on Border Issues:** Link tariff threats to force countries like Mexico to increase efforts against illegal immigration and drug flow.

How is China handling the U.S. tariff policy?

- 1) **Imposes Escalating Tariffs:** China matched U.S. duties, with its average tariff on American goods peaking at 147.6% by April 2025.
- 2) **Deploys Non-Tariff Barriers:** Beijing has restricted exports of critical materials like rare earths, placed dozens of U.S. defence and tech firms on an "Unreliable Entity List" to block trade, and launched antidumping investigations into U.S. products.
- 3) **Targets Key U.S. Industries:** Retaliatory duties were specifically aimed at impactful U.S. sectors, including 15-25% tariffs on steel, aluminium, and agricultural goods like soybeans, pork, and corn.
- 4) **Engages in Tactical Negotiation:** Amid the escalating conflict, China agreed to a temporary 90-day truce, reducing some retaliatory tariffs to 10% to allow for negotiations.
- 5) **Challenges at the WTO:** China filed formal complaints with the World Trade Organization, challenging the legality of the U.S. tariffs after each round of escalations.
- 6) **Absorbs Economic Impact:** The trade war has negatively affected China's economy, with J.P. Morgan Research revising the country's 2025 growth forecast down to 4.4% as a direct result of the tariffs.

Impacts of U.S. Tariffs on India

The U.S. imposed a country-specific 26% reciprocal tariff on India, on top of a baseline 10% duty on most imports, starting in April 2025.

Impacts

- 1) **Projected Economic Damage:** Estimates predict a reduction in Indian exports to the U.S. by \$5.76 billion to \$33 billion, potentially causing a 0.8-0.9% contraction in India's GDP.
- 2) **Sectoral Impact**
 - a) **Steel & Aluminium:** Face doubled tariffs of 50%, threatening a sector where the U.S. buys 6% of India's steel exports.

- b) **Automobiles:** 25% tariff targets auto components, where the U.S. is the top market, accounting for 27% of India's \$21 billion in exports.
 - c) **Electronics:** Tariffs threaten smartphone exports, which form a major part of the \$8.9 billion in electronics shipped to the U.S. in FY24.
 - d) **Gems & Jewellery:** The industry faces a potential 15.3% export decline, as the U.S. buys 30% of its total shipments.
- 3) **Potential for Trade Diversion:** India's 26% tariff is lower than rates for Asian peers like Vietnam (46%), positioning it to potentially gain manufacturing business as firms shift from China.

India's Retaliation: India proposed its own retaliatory duties on U.S. goods at the World Trade Organization and imposed a 12% safeguard duty on steel to prevent dumping from other nations.

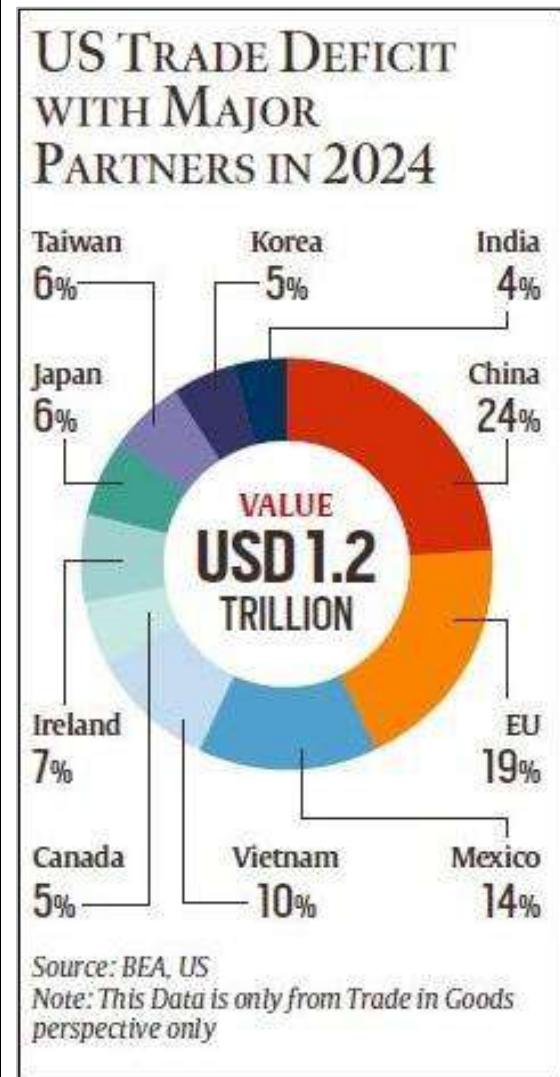
How should India handle U.S. tariff policy?

- 1) **Engage in Diplomatic Negotiation:** Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal's approach is to continue government-level engagement with the U.S. to negotiate a mutually beneficial **Bilateral Trade Agreement** and eliminate trade barriers.
- 2) **Proactively Liberalize Trade:** An Indian Express columnist argues India should not just react but strategically lower its own tariffs to a uniform 5-10% and remove non-tariff barriers to become a more competitive and stable investment destination.
- 3) **Rethink Domestic Policy:** An Economic Times editorial suggests India should move away from using tariffs for protection and instead bolster manufacturing with other supports, like the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, to better integrate into global supply chains.
- 4) **Make Strategic Concessions:** Another viewpoint is for India to offer targeted tariff reductions on specific U.S. goods in exchange for being treated like other key allies regarding access to critical technologies like AI and semiconductors.
- 5) **Heed Opposition Warnings:** In contrast, opposition leader Rahul Gandhi has warned that the U.S. tariff policy could "completely

devastate" India's economy, implying a need for a more protective stance.

Ashok Gulati on how should India play its cards on Trump Tariffs

Why in News? Trump's reciprocal tariff policy kicks in from April 2, 2025, requiring India to prepare a strategic response that balances cooperation with protecting domestic interests.



Current US-India Trade Dynamics

- 1) US and India aim to increase **bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030** (from about \$200 billion in 2023).
- 2) **US is India's largest trading partner** with India having a **\$45.7 billion trade surplus in 2024**.
- 3) India's trade deficit contribution to US grew by 88.1% between 2020-2024.



- 4) **India's tariffs are 5.2 times higher than US tariffs**; for agricultural products, 7.8 times higher.
- 5) Trump has criticized India as a "**Tariff King**" with duties up to 150% on some products.

Recommended Strategies for India

- 1) **Adopt cooperation rather than retaliation** for win-win outcomes.
- 2) **Increase energy purchases from US** (currently only 4% of India's crude oil imports).
- 3) **Consider high-tech defence purchases** like F-35 fighter jets to balance trade deficit.
- 4) **Identify and reduce tariffs** on goods where domestic impact would be minimal:
 - a) Lower duties on alcoholic beverages and tobacco products (currently up to 150%).
 - b) Reduce automobile and EV tariffs (currently up to 125%).
 - c) Set a maximum tariff ceiling of 50% for most products.
- 5) **For agricultural sector:**
 - a) Negotiate tariff rate quotas for US agricultural products (soybeans, maize, cotton).
 - b) Seek greater market access for Indian exports (pomegranates, grapes, mangoes, Indian snacks).
 - c) Address US concerns about sanitary and phytosanitary standards.
- 6) **Capitalize on opportunities from ongoing US-China trade tensions**, especially in labour-intensive sectors like toys, textiles, and leather items.

PM Narendra Modi's visit to the United States in February 2025 – Key Takeaways

- 1) **\$500 Billion Trade Target:** India and the U.S. set an ambitious goal to more than double their bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030.
- 2) **New Trade Agreement:** The leaders initiated the first phase of a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) to reduce trade barriers and streamline regulatory processes.
- 3) **Energy Deals:** India is set to purchase up to \$25 billion in U.S. energy, including oil and gas, to meet its growing needs.

- 4) **Tariff Discussions:** The visit addressed ongoing tariff issues, with an emphasis on boosting industrial goods exports from the U.S. to India and labour-intensive products from India to the U.S.

Defence and Security

- 1) **F-35 Jets for India:** The U.S. agreed to sell F-35 stealth fighter jets to India, placing the country in an elite group of operators of the advanced aircraft.
- 2) **Extradition of 26/11 Accused:** President Trump announced that his administration approved the extradition of Tahawwur Rana, a key plotter in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, to face justice in India.
- 3) **Expanded Defence Production:** The leaders announced plans for new procurements and co-production of Javelin Anti-Tank Guided Missiles and Stryker Infantry Combat Vehicles in India.
- 4) **Maritime Surveillance:** An agreement is expected for India to procure six additional P-8I Maritime Patrol aircraft to enhance surveillance in the Indian Ocean Region.

Strategic Partnership

- 1) **Launch of 'COMPACT':** A new initiative called the "U.S.-India COMPACT (Catalyzing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology) for the 21st Century" was launched to drive cooperation.
- 2) **New Defense Framework :** The two nations plan to sign a new ten-year framework for the U.S.-India Major Defense Partnership in 2025 to improve interoperability and technology exchange.
- 3) **MEGA Partnership:** PM Modi characterized the relationship as a "MEGA partnership," combining President Trump's "Make America Great Again" (MAGA) with his vision of "Make India Great Again" (MIGA).

Tahawwur Rana Extradition



- 1) Mumbai terror attack accused Tahawwur Rana (64) is being brought to India in a special flight expected to land at noon today (April 10, 2025)
- 2) Rana, a Canadian national of Pakistani origin, was lodged in the Metropolitan Detention Centre in Los Angeles and is likely to be placed in Tihar Jail's high-security ward
- 3) He is known to be associated with Pakistani-American terrorist David Coleman Headley, one of the main conspirators of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks that killed 166 people
- 4) Rana is being extradited on the basis of the India-US Extradition Treaty signed in 1997, which allows for extradition of individuals charged with offenses punishable by imprisonment for more than one year
- 5) His claim of 'double jeopardy' was rejected by the US Court of Appeals, which found that Indian charges had distinct elements from those in his US prosecution

The extradition was approved by US President Donald Trump following his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in February 2025

F-1 Visa Denials Surge in US

- 1) US student visa denials reached a 10-year high in fiscal year 2023-24, with 41% of F-1 visa applications rejected, almost double the rejection rate from 2014.
- 2) The US received 679,000 F-1 visa applications during this period, rejecting 279,000 applications, compared to 36% rejection rate in 2022-23.
- 3) The total number of F-1 visas issued in 2023-24 dropped to 401,000, down from 445,000 in the previous year

- 4) Indian students were particularly affected, with visa issuances to Indians dropping 38% in the first nine months of 2024 compared to the same period in 2023
- 5) Despite rising rejection rates, Indian students became the largest international student group in US universities in 2023-24, comprising 29.4% of all international students with 331,000 students enrolled
- 6) The US State Department noted that all visa applications are adjudicated case-by-case according to Immigration and Nationality Act provisions

USIAD Controversy

Why in News? The Trump administration and Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) are targeting USAID to reduce federal spending, impacting its global humanitarian role.

About USAID

- 1) **Historical Context:** Established in 1961 under JFK to counter communism via initiatives like the Alliance for Progress.
- 2) **Cold War roots:** Linked to the Marshall Plan (1947) and US strategy to expand global influence.
- 3) **Role:** Primary US agency for international humanitarian aid, funding NGOs, governments, and programs in ~130 countries (FY2023)
- 4) **Funding:** Managed \$43 billion in FY2023, with top recipients including Ukraine, Ethiopia, and Syria.
- 5) **Recent Developments:**
 - a) Trump ordered a 90-day pause on foreign aid; USAID security officials removed for denying DOGE access.
 - b) Musk labeled USAID a "criminal organisation" and seeks to eliminate it.

India-USAID Relations

- 1) **Past Contributions:** Supported IITs, agricultural universities, and health programs (e.g., polio eradication)
- 2) **Current Stance:** India rejects conditional foreign aid (since 2004); US aid dropped to \$141 million (FY2024)

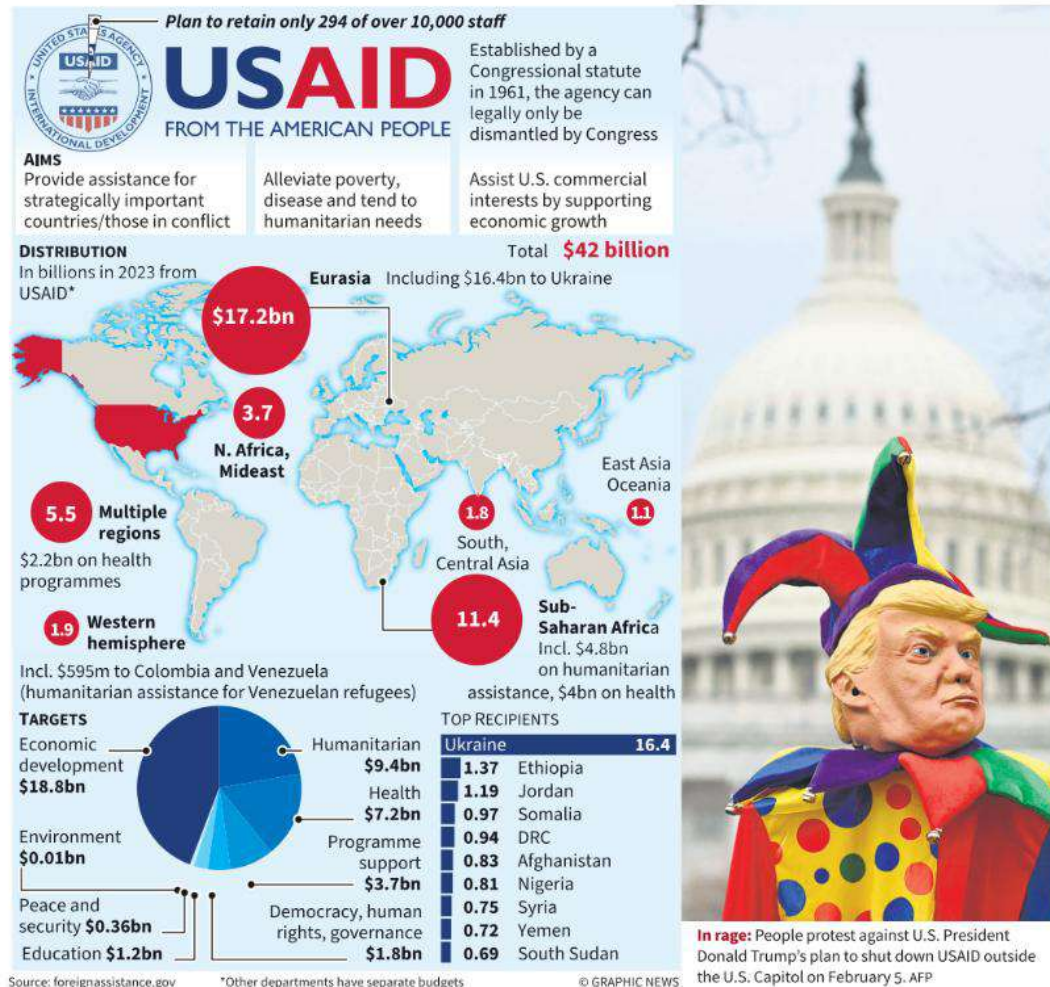
SPOTLIGHT: 2023 PYQ

'International aid' is an accepted form of helping 'resource-challenged' nations. Comment on 'ethics in contemporary international aid'. Support your answer with suitable examples. (150 Words, 10 marks)

- 2) Promised to reverse climate-friendly energy policies
- 3) Reiterated commitment to extracting more oil and gas for US energy needs

Dismantling aid from the U.S.

The withdrawal of USAID, arising out of a decision born of petulance, might severely impact the fortunes of many nations, as a number of projects will have to be dropped, in the light of aid being stopped through an executive decision by the Donald Trump administration



THE GIST

The U.S. Agency for International Aid was set up as an independent agency, through an Act of Congress in 1961. It was an attempt to align all U.S. efforts to administer civilian foreign aid and development assistance.

In India, the quantum of funding has reduced over the years, with the government of India objecting to certain aspects of the conditions for the agreement for grants.

While health remains the main sector where USAID has been involved in India, with a funding of \$79.3 million in 2024, it also has interests in economy, energy, water supply and sanitation, and environmental health.

In rage: People protest against U.S. President Donald Trump's plan to shut down USAID outside the U.S. Capitol on February 5. AFP

Trump's Paris Agreement Pullout

Why in News? Donald Trump signed an executive order withdrawing the US from the Paris Agreement again on his first day back in office as President.

Details of Trump's Paris Agreement withdrawal

- 1) Ordered immediate revocation of all US climate finance commitments



Reasons behind Trump's withdrawal from Paris Agreement

- 1) **Economic concerns:** Agreement costing US \$3 trillion in lost GDP and 6.5 million jobs.
- 2) **Perceived unfairness:** Put US at a "permanent disadvantage" as other countries like China can pollute without consequence.
- 3) **Energy independence:** Trump prioritise fossil fuel production. Promised to "drill, baby, drill," indicating the shift.
- 4) **Scepticism of climate change:** Trump has previously called climate change a "hoax"
- 5) **Opposition to international commitments:** Trump's "America First" policy stance is reflected in his desire to avoid what he sees as burdensome international agreements.
- 6) **Renegotiation attempt:** Trump expressed openness to renegotiating the agreement or creating a new one.

Potential Global Implications of US Withdrawal from Paris Agreement

- 1) **Undermining global climate efforts:** US is currently the world's second-largest greenhouse gas emitter.
 - a) Withdrawal weakens collective global effort to combat climate change.
- 2) **Diplomatic repercussions:** Likely to erode America's standing in the world and diminish its global influence.
 - a) Hand China and the European Union a competitive edge in shaping international climate policy.
- 3) **Disruption of climate finance:** Leave developing nations without vital support for mitigation and adaptation efforts.
- 4) **Potential domino effect:** Might encourage other nations to reconsider their commitments.
- 5) **Economic implications:** Potential to slow the growth of clean energy industries worldwide.
- 6) **Increased climate vulnerability:** Unfair burden on Global South countries.

Trump's WHO withdrawal

Why in News? President Donald Trump has signed an executive order to withdraw the United States from the World Health Organization (WHO) on his first day back in office.

Reasons for Withdrawal

- 1) Mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic

- 2) Failure to adopt urgently needed reforms
- 3) Inability to demonstrate independence from political influence of member states
- 4) Unfairly onerous financial contributions demanded from the United States

Trump specifically highlighted the disparity in funding, noting that the US paid \$500 million to the WHO, while China, with a much larger population, contributed only \$39 million.

Potential Implications

- 1) Weakening global defences against infectious diseases
- 2) Undermining decades of progress in fighting diseases like AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis
- 3) Diminishing US influence in global health policy
- 4) Potential loss of access to vital global health data for US agencies like the CDC.

The withdrawal process typically takes one year, and the US is obligated to pay its assessed contributions for the current fiscal year. However, Trump's order calls for immediate cessation of payments, which may face legal challenges.

Trump's Anti-Immigration Agenda

Why in News? Former US President Donald Trump, upon returning to the White House in 2025, signed executive orders implementing strict anti-immigration measures as a top priority.

What are the main components of Trump's immigration policy?

- 1) Ending birthright citizenship for children born in the US to non-citizens
- 2) Suspending the Refugee Admissions program
- 3) Reviving plans to build a wall on the US-Mexico border
- 4) Mobilizing US military to secure borders
- 5) Expanding immigration detention centres

Challenges before Trump

- 1) Logistical difficulties in securing borders and expanding detention facilities

- 2) Legal and constitutional questions, especially regarding birthright citizenship
- 3) Several states suing to stop the birthright citizenship order

What are the potential impacts of these policies?

On immigrants:

- 1) Millions face risk of deportation, including refugees and undocumented workers
- 2) 20,407 "undocumented" Indians at risk of removal or detention
- 3) H-1B visa holders, including many Indians, vulnerable to policy changes

On the US economy:

- 1) Foreign-born workers comprise 18% of US labour force
- 2) GDP growth could be reduced by \$30-110 billion in 2025
- 3) Innovation leadership in technology and biomedical research may be affected

How might this affect India-US relations?

- 1) Concerns for the 1.47% of US population comprising Indian Americans
- 2) Potential impact on H-1B visa holders, a significant group from India
- 3) Possible diplomatic tensions over treatment of Indian immigrants

India – EU Relations

Why in News? European Commission President **Ursula von der Leyen** chose India as her first international destination in her second term, signalling renewed EU-India collaboration amid global turbulence caused by Trump's policies.

Global Context driving India & EU close

- 1) **Geopolitical flux:** Trump's abrupt withdrawal of Ukraine aid, direct talks with Russia (excluding EU/Ukraine), and NATO burden-sharing demands force Europe to diversify partnerships.
- 2) **Economic recalibration:** EU seeks to de-risk from China (\$100B India-China trade deficit) via India's market; India aims to leverage EU's tech, capital, and green transition expertise.

- 3) **Tech-security convergence:** Shared focus on resilient supply chains (semiconductors, AI) and countering Chinese dominance in critical technologies.

India-EU Strategic Imperatives

- 1) **Trade agreements:** Accelerating FTA negotiations (stalled since 2013) to address EU's tariff demands (cars, wines) and India's push for textile parity with Bangladesh/Vietnam.
- 2) **Tech partnerships:** Operationalizing the EU-India Trade and Technology Council (TTC) for green hydrogen, EV infrastructure, and joint R&D in AI/quantum computing.
- 3) **Connectivity projects:** Reviving the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) to counter China's Belt and Road Initiative.
- 4) **Defence collaboration:** Exploring submarine co-production and C-295 aircraft deals to reduce India's Russia dependence.
- 5) **Science mobility:** Expanding Marie Skłodowska-Curie grants (600+ Indian researchers) and Horizon Europe projects (88 joint initiatives)

Challenges Ahead

- 1) **Trade barriers:** EU insists on stringent environmental standards (CBAM) and IPR norms; India resists tariff cuts on agriculture and wines.
- 2) **Strategic divergences:** EU's Ukraine stance vs. India's Russia ties; EU's China trade reliance (\$247B FDI) vs. India's border disputes.
- 3) **Domestic hurdles:** India's infrastructure gaps (port congestion, urban flooding) deter EU investors; EU's internal political fractures (AfD rise) complicate unified policymaking.
- 4) **Human rights friction:** EU's concerns over India's minority policies risk stalling deeper engagement.

Way Forward

- 1) **Finalize FTA by 2025-end** with phased tariff reductions and CBAM exemptions for Indian steel.
- 2) **Launch EU-India Critical Minerals Partnership** for lithium/rare earths to reduce China dependency.
- 3) **Institutionalize defence dialogues** and fast-track approvals for joint ventures in drone/space tech.

- 4) **Expand Global Gateway funding** for Indian infrastructure (ports, smart grids) to boost investor confidence.
- 5) **Balance strategic autonomy** with “multi-alignment” to navigate US-China-EU-Russia rivalries.

The visit lays groundwork for a 2025 EU-India Summit, aiming to adopt a post-2025 roadmap focused on tech sovereignty, defence interoperability, and climate-resilient growth.

India – UK FTA

About India - UK FTA

- 1) Concluded: May 2025 after nearly 3 years of negotiations
- 2) Scope: UK's most comprehensive bilateral trade deal post-Brexit; India's 16th and most comprehensive FTA ever
- 3) Structure: 27 chapters covering goods, services, digital trade, environment, labor, and government procurement
- 4) Current trade: \$60 billion bilateral trade, projected to double to \$120 billion by 2030
- 5) Partners: UK is India's 4th largest export destination; India is UK's 11th largest trading partner

Key Tariff Reductions:

- 1) India to UK: 99% of Indian exports get duty-free access to UK market
- 2) UK to India: 90% of UK tariff lines reduced, with 85% becoming fully tariff-free over 10 years
- 3) Whisky: Tariffs cut from 150% to 75% immediately, then to 40% in 10 years
- 4) Automobiles: UK car tariffs reduced from over 100% to 10% under quotas

Prospects

- 1) Economic Impact: UK GDP boost of £4.8 billion annually by 2040
- 2) Trade Growth: Expected 15% annual bilateral trade growth through 2030
- 3) Employment: Projected to create 1,200 jobs in UK whisky sector alone
- 4) Professional Mobility: 100 additional annual visas for Indian IT and healthcare professionals
- 5) Market Access: UK businesses gain access to India's £38 billion government procurement market

- 6) Consumer Benefits: Lower prices for UK consumers on Indian textiles, footwear, and food
- 7) Export Boost: Indian textile exports expected to increase by \$5 billion
- 8) Investment: Three-year social security exemption for Indian workers in UK enhances competitiveness

Why India showing renowned interest in FTAs in recent past?

- 1) **Strategic Shift to Western Markets:** India has changed its FTA strategy, shifting focus from Eastern countries like ASEAN to developed Western economies such as the US, UK, and the EU 24. These nations are considered more competitive, open, and complementary to India's economy.
- 2) **Boosting Exports and Economic Growth:** FTAs are central to India's goal of boosting export-oriented domestic manufacturing and expanding its economy 58. By reducing tariffs, these agreements provide Indian goods with greater access to new markets, such as the India-UAE pact which grants duty-free access to over 90% of India's exports.
- 3) **Integration into Global Value Chains:** FTAs are seen as crucial enablers for Indian industries to integrate into global value chains, which account for 70% of world trade.
- 4) **Geopolitical and Strategic Goals:** The push for FTAs is partly a strategic effort to reduce economic dependence on China 8. It also aims to deepen relationships with strategic partners like Australia and the UK, who are also members of security alliances like the QUAD and perceive China as a common threat.
- 5) **Attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):** By creating a stable and predictable trade environment, FTAs help attract FDI into key sectors like manufacturing, technology, and infrastructure 6. For example, FDI inflows from Australia increased by 25% following the implementation of the India-Australia ECTA.
- 6) **Improving Domestic Competitiveness:** Trade liberalization resulting from FTAs encourages competition, which in turn

pushes Indian companies to innovate and improve their efficiency to compete on a global scale.

- 7) **Response to Global Trade Dynamics:** The urgency for FTAs has been heightened by global events like the COVID-19 pandemic, which exposed supply chain vulnerabilities, and new trade policies like the "reciprocal tariffs" announced by the US.
- 8) **More Comprehensive Agreements:** Unlike earlier pacts focused mainly on goods, India's new FTAs with developed countries are broader. They include provisions for services, digital trade, intellectual property rights, sustainable development, and labor standards.



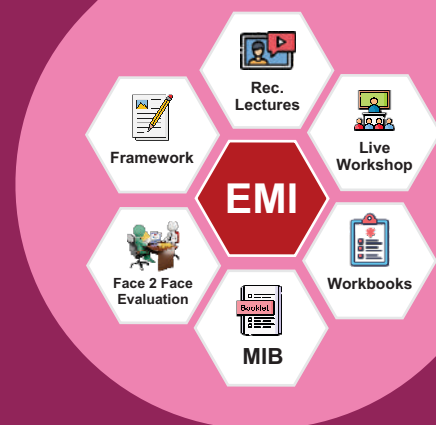
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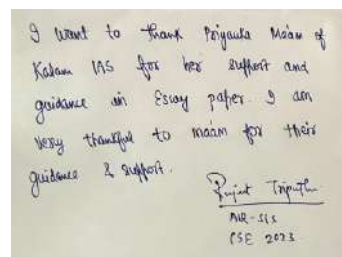


Chaitanya Giri
AIR-117, CSE 2023

I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to Kalam IAS Academy because their value addition materials and especially the PDFs which were there for current affairs of GS and value addition materials for Ethics & Essay helped me a lot in my mains preparation. In fact, one day before the main preparation, I was reading those PDFs and I even made certain short notes out of those PDFs which I tried to write in the actual exams and now as the marks are out I've gotten 134 marks in essay and 108 marks in ethics and I believe that Kalam IAS value addition material did play a major role in that and I would like to express my gratitude and thanks to the Kalam IAS team.



Rajat Tripathi
AIR-515, CSE 2023



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- 👉 5 Tests with real-time Face to Face evaluation
- 👉 Practical personalized strategies for exam management

Essay Answer Writing Workshop Schedule

WORKSHOP	DATE
Workshop-01	10 th June
Workshop-02	11 th June
Workshop-03	13 th June
Workshop-04	16 th June
Workshop-05	27 th June
Session Timing: 2 PM	

Fee: ₹7000/-

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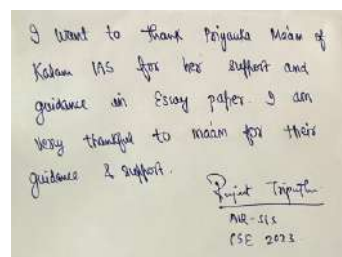


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AIR-515, CSE 2023



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Deepening India – France Relations

Why in News? PM Modi's visit to France (Feb 10-12, 2025) deepened Indo-French strategic ties through agreements on defence, nuclear energy, and AI amid global geopolitical shifts.



AI Action Summit Outcomes

- 1) Co-chaired by Modi and Macron, focusing on safe, ethical AI governance and public interest applications
- 2) Launched **India-France AI Roadmap** for joint research, innovation, and startups, including hosting 10 Indian firms at France's Station-F incubator
- 3) Announced **2026 as India-France Year of Innovation** to strengthen tech collaboration

Defence Cooperation

- 1) Progress on **Scorpene submarines** with DRDO's Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) integration
- 2) Discussions on **joint production of helicopter/jet engines** (with Safran Group) and missile systems
- 3) India invited to observe **Eurodrone MALE programme**; France urged to consider India's Pinaka rocket launcher

Civil Nuclear Energy

- 1) **Jaitapur nuclear plant discussions** revived, with focus on resolving liability law hurdles
- 2) Agreement to **co-develop Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)** and Advanced Modular Reactors (AMRs) for energy security
- 3) ₹20,000 crore **Nuclear Energy Mission** announced in India's 2025 budget for SMR research

Geopolitical Implications

- 1) **Trump's outreach to Russia** heightened EU's strategic concerns, pushing France-India closer on Indo-Pacific security
- 2) **Collaboration on India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)**, with Marseille proposed as a hub
- 3) Shared focus on **multipolar global order** and climate action, countering U.S. withdrawal from Paris Agreement

Bilateral Initiatives

- 1) Reviewed **Horizon 2047 Roadmap** for long-term partnerships in defence, space, and tech
- 2) **Triangular Development Cooperation** pact for Indo-Pacific SDG projects
- 3) Inaugurated **Indian Consulate in Marseille** to boost trade and cultural ties

Russia – Ukraine War

Why Russia-Ukraine War Continuing?

- 1) **Territorial Ambitions:** Russia aims to seize half of Ukraine by 2026, extending far beyond formally annexed regions
- 2) **Strategic Objectives:** Putin seeks to overthrow Ukraine's pro-Western government and establish Russian sphere of influence
- 3) **Negotiation Deadlock:** Russia may reject ceasefire if making territorial gains; Ukraine demands NATO guarantees
- 4) **Maximizing Position:** Both sides pushing for territorial advantages before potential Trump-mediated negotiations

Implications of Continuing War on World

- 1) **Refugee Crisis:** Over 8 million Ukrainian refugees - largest displacement in Europe since WWII
- 2) **Global Food Security:** Disrupted wheat, barley, corn exports from key producers Russia and Ukraine
- 3) **Energy Crisis:** 50% increase in energy prices, gas supply disruptions to Europe
- 4) **Economic Shock:** Largest commodity price shock in 50 years causing worldwide inflation
- 5) **Geopolitical Realignment:** End of 30 years of globalization, strengthened US-European alliance
- 6) **Supply Chain Disruption:** Semiconductor materials (70% of global neon from Ukraine) severely constrained

Implications of Continuing War on India

- 1) **Energy Costs:** Oil price increases causing inflation and weakening rupee by 1.5%
- 2) **Defense Dependency:** 70% of India's military inventory from Russia; spare parts and deliveries delayed
- 3) **Trade Opportunity:** India buying discounted Russian oil, imports doubled since war began
- 4) **Economic Impact:** Projected GDP growth slowdown from 7.2% to 6.6% due to oil price assumptions
- 5) **Evacuation Operations:** 22,500 Indian citizens safely returned through Operation Ganga
- 6) **Current Account Deficit:** \$5 oil price increase widens trade deficit by \$6.6 billion

India – Canada Relations

Why in News? Canada and India recently expelled their top diplomats due to fallout from Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegation of possible Indian intelligence links to the killing of a Canadian citizen, Hardeep Singh Nijjar, in Canada.



Narendra Modi
@narendramodi

I strongly condemn the deliberate attack on a Hindu temple in Canada. Equally appalling are the cowardly attempts to intimidate our diplomats. Such acts of violence will never weaken India's resolve. We expect the Canadian government to ensure justice and uphold the rule of law.

Historical Context and Key Issues

1) Safe Haven Allegations

- a) India has long complained that Canada acts as a safe haven for Khalistani separatists/ extremists.
- b) India's biggest grievance is Canada's failure to prevent the 1985 Air India bombing and lack of support in subsequent investigations.

2) Political Dynamics

- a) Sikhs constitute only 2% of Canada's population but wield disproportionate political influence due to geographic concentration.
- b) All Canadian political parties, not just the Liberal Party, have engaged in actions perceived as supportive of Khalistani sympathizers.

3) Legal Complexities

- a) India's extradition requests are often denied due to Canadian legal standards and human rights concerns.
- b) Western democracies are wary of extraditions to countries with poorer human rights records.

INDIA AND CANADA, IN NUMBERS

Canada accounts for just 0.56% of the total FDI in India.



DPIIT data show total FDI equity inflow between April 2000 to June 2023 was \$645,386.084 mn, of which only \$3,642.5243 mn came from Canada.

But Canada is home to 5.26% of overseas Indians



Of the 3,21,00,340 overseas Indians, 5.26% (16,89,055) are in Canada, including 1,78,410 NRIs and 15,10,645 PIOs, according to MEA data.

And every 7th Indian student abroad is in Canada



In 2022, of the estimated 13,24,954 Indian students abroad, 13.83% (1,83,310) were in Canada, according to Ministry of External Affairs data.

Canada is 4th largest source of tourists in India (2021)



Canada accounted for 5.3% (80,437) of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India in 2021; 72.6% of Canadian FTAs were members of the Indian diaspora. FTAs from Canada rose to 3,51,859 in the pre-pandemic year 2019 from 88,600 in 2001. Arrivals from Canada fell sharply post pandemic.

Bilateral trade is tiny; its balance is in India's favour



India's trade with Canada was \$8,161.02 mn during FY 2022-23, just 0.70% of India's total trade of \$1,165,000.88 mn. Canada was India's 35th biggest trading partner. The balance of trade is in India's favour; in 2022-23, India's exports to Canada stood at \$4,109.74 mn, and imports at \$4,051.29 mn.

HARIKISHAN SHARMA

Misunderstandings and Perceptions

1) Canadian Perspective

- a) Canadian scholars argue that systemic racism influenced the initial response to the Air India bombing.
- b) The Canadian public is largely unaffected by and ignorant of Khalistani activism.

2) Indian Perspective

- a) The Indian public often assumes Canadian institutions work similarly to those in India.
- b) There's a misconception about the political motivations behind failed investigations and denied extraditions.

Current Situation

- 1) The diplomatic row is escalating Canadian Hindu-Sikh tensions.
- 2) Canadian newspapers are now criticizing Trudeau for being soft on India's "overtly hostile" actions.
- 3) The situation remains fluid, with potential legal developments on the horizon.

India Needs a Crypto-Strategy

Why in News? Trump-linked firm World Liberty Financial Inc signed a cryptocurrency MoU with Pakistan's newly formed Crypto Council, raising concerns for India's crypto policy vacuum.

Pakistan's Crypto Ambitions

Key Developments:

- 1) WLF (run by Trump's children) signed MoU with Pakistan Crypto Council in March 2025
- 2) Meetings held with PM Shehbaz Sharif and Army Chief Asim Munir
- 3) Plans include blockchain for financial inclusion, rare earth monetization, stablecoins for remittances
- 4) Pakistan appointed British Pakistani entrepreneur Bilal bin Saqib as PM's special adviser on crypto
- 5) Estimated 25 million crypto users in Pakistan with \$2 billion market worth
- 6) First diaspora convention held to strengthen US-Pakistan tech ties

Trump's Crypto Revolution

Policy Changes:

- 1) Two executive orders reshaping US crypto strategy
- 2) Created Strategic Bitcoin Reserve and Digital Asset Stockpile
- 3) Banned central bank digital currency (CBDC) development
- 4) Appointed David Sacks as "AI and crypto czar"
- 5) SEC paused lawsuits against major exchanges; Justice Department dissolved crypto enforcement team
- 6) Bitcoin surged past \$100,000 following policy changes
- 7) Trump launched personal meme coin \$TRUMP

India's Challenges

Current Situation:

- 1) Over 100 million crypto users in India with \$7 billion market
- 2) Government taxes crypto without regulatory framework
- 3) Supreme Court warned of legal/policy vacuum creating economic and security challenges
- 4) Lacks public discourse on geopolitical implications of crypto

Historical Parallel:

- 1) India underestimated Pakistan's nuclear ambitions in 1970s
- 2) Pakistan developed nuclear weapons by late 1980s, creating security challenges

Urgent Need:

- 1) Develop comprehensive crypto strategy
- 2) Address potential misuse for terror funding and money laundering
- 3) Respond to changing global financial order under Trump's crypto policies

Why New Zealand lawmakers staged 'Haka' against divisive Bill?

Why in News? Māori lawmakers in New Zealand's parliament performed a haka to protest a controversial bill seeking to reinterpret the Treaty of Waitangi.



The Haka Protest

- 1) Led by 22-year-old Te Pāti Māori MP Hana-Rawhiti Maipi-Clarke
- 2) Performed during the first reading of the Treaty Principles Bill
- 3) Opposition MPs and public gallery spectators joined in
- 4) Maipi-Clarke tore up a copy of the bill during the protest

The Treaty Principles Bill

- 1) Introduced by the libertarian Act Party, a minor coalition partner
- 2) Aims to legally define and reinterpret principles of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi
- 3) Seeks to extend treaty principles equally to all New Zealanders
- 4) Passed its first reading despite the protest

Controversy and Opposition

- 1) Critics argue the bill threatens Māori rights and promotes anti-Māori rhetoric

- 2) Prime Minister Christopher Luxon called the bill "simplistic"
- 3) A 1,000-km protest march to Wellington is underway against the bill
- 4) The bill's chances of passing further readings appear slim

Significance of the Haka

- 1) Traditional Māori ceremonial dance
- 2) Symbolizes cultural pride, strength, and unity
- 3) Historically performed by warriors before battle
- 4) Now used in various cultural and sporting contexts

Indian Diaspora

USA

Data

- 1) 5.2 million people of Indian origin as of 2025, representing 21% of total Asian population
- 2) 174% increase since 2000 (from 1.8 million)
- 3) 66% are immigrants, with 60% living in US for over 10 years
- 4) 51% of Indian immigrants have obtained US citizenship

Importance

- 1) \$250-300 billion in income taxes (5-6% of all US income taxes)
- 2) 16 Fortune 500 companies led by Indian-origin CEOs, employing 2.7 million Americans
- 3) 72 US unicorns co-founded by Indian Americans, valued at \$195 billion
- 4) 10% of US patents held by Indian-origin innovators
- 5) 11% of National Institutes of Health grants secured by Indian scientists
- 6) 84% English proficiency rate, highest among Asian Americans

Challenges

- 1) Anti-immigration policies by Trump 2.0
- 2) Continued discrimination and hate crimes targeting the community
- 3) H1B visa uncertainties and green card backlogs
- 4) Cultural identity preservation challenges for second/third generations

Way Forward

- 1) Growing political influence with record number of candidates in elections

- 2) Increased representation in Fortune 500 leadership positions
- 3) Enhanced cultural programs and community engagement initiatives
- 4) Advocacy for stable immigration policies

CANADA

Data

- 1) 2 million people of Indian origin as of 2025, representing 5.2% of Canadian population
- 2) 22 Indian-origin candidates elected to House of Commons in 2025 elections (up from 17)
- 3) 319,000 Indian students enrolled as of 2023
- 4) 31% drop in study permits issued in early 2025 due to policy changes

Importance

- 1) 45.8% of Canada's 834,010 temporary resident applications in early 2025
- 2) Strong representation in healthcare, technology, and education sectors
- 3) Significant political influence with record parliamentary representation
- 4) Major contributors to Canada's multiculturalism and economic growth

Challenges

- 1) 20% reduction in immigration planned for 2025, affecting lower-skilled workers
- 2) NDP leader Jagmeet Singh lost his Burnaby Central seat in 2025 elections
- 3) Diplomatic tensions between India and Canada affecting community relations
- 4) Tighter immigration caps impacting future student enrollments

Way Forward

- 1) Focus on skilled worker immigration over lower-skilled categories
- 2) Streamlined credential recognition processes
- 3) Enhanced bilateral cooperation despite political tensions
- 4) Emphasis on permanent residency pathways for temporary residents

MIDDLE EAST (GULF COUNTRIES)

Data

- 1) 8.9-9 million Indians in Gulf region
- 2) UAE: 4.36 million Indians (38.45% of UAE population)
- 3) Saudi Arabia: 2.59 million Indians
- 4) 40% of India's total remittances come from Gulf despite being only 27% of diaspora



Importance

- 1) \$47.5 billion in remittances from Gulf countries in 2023-24
- 2) 28.6% of India's total foreign inward remittances
- 3) Critical role in construction, healthcare, and IT sectors
- 4) 80% live alone, maximizing remittance potential

Challenges

- 1) Fire in Kuwait labor camp killed over 40 Indian workers, highlighting poor living conditions
- 2) Kafala system continues to restrict worker mobility
- 3) Non-payment of wages and exploitative labor practices
- 4) Limited citizenship prospects affecting long-term settlement

Way Forward

- 1) Strengthened labor laws and housing standards enforcement
- 2) Legal aid centers for expatriate workers
- 3) Emergency preparedness mechanisms for crisis situations
- 4) Bilateral agreements for better worker protection

AFRICA (SOUTH AFRICA, KENYA, AND OTHERS)

Data

- 1) 2.7-3 million Indians across 46 African countries
- 2) South Africa: 1.3-1.5 million (largest community)
- 3) Kenya: ~100,000 people of Indian descent
- 4) Mauritius: 68% of population (855,000)

Importance

- 1) Significant economic contributions in retail, manufacturing, and finance
- 2) \$72 billion India-Africa trade in 2015, doubled from 2006-2007
- 3) Strong cultural influence through festivals and educational institutions
- 4) Growing political representation in various African countries

Challenges

- 1) Instances of xenophobic attacks, particularly in South Africa

- 2) Economic inequality tensions with local populations
- 3) Political marginalization concerns in some countries
- 4) Integration challenges while preserving cultural identity

Way Forward

- 1) 18 new Indian embassies planned in Africa by 2021 to strengthen diaspora ties
- 2) Enhanced cultural exchange programs and business partnerships
- 3) Addressing economic disparities through inclusive policies
- 4) Strengthening India-Africa diplomatic relationships

AUSTRALIA

Data

- 1) 916,000 Indian-born Australians as of 2024 (doubled from 411,000 in 2014)
- 2) 3.4% of total Australian population
- 3) Second-largest migrant community after UK
- 4) 122,391 Indian students as of September 2023

Importance

- 1) Third anniversary of India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) in 2025
- 2) \$24 billion bilateral trade under ECTA
- 3) 14% growth in Indian exports to Australia in FY 2023-24
- 4) Strong presence in IT, healthcare, education, and engineering sectors

Challenges

- 1) Racism and discrimination incidents, particularly targeting students
- 2) Employment barriers due to qualification recognition issues
- 3) Cultural adjustment difficulties for new immigrants
- 4) Visa processing delays and policy uncertainties

Way Forward

- 1) New Roadmap for Economic Engagement with India launched February 2025
- 2) Four superhighways of growth: clean energy, education, agribusiness, tourism
- 3) Australia-India Trade and Investment Accelerator Fund established
- 4) Maitri Grants programme for enhanced cultural links

SYLLABUS: Important International Institutions, agencies and fora - their Structure, Mandate.

OPINION: Walter J Lindner on Indian Diplomacy [Link](#)

ON 'IF INDIA IS BECOMING A SHAM DEMOCRACY'

I was often asked 'isn't India moving towards a dictatorship?' and 'doesn't the PM diminish room for minorities?' I tell everyone, hear both sides, see the difficulties and then make up your mind



WHY W

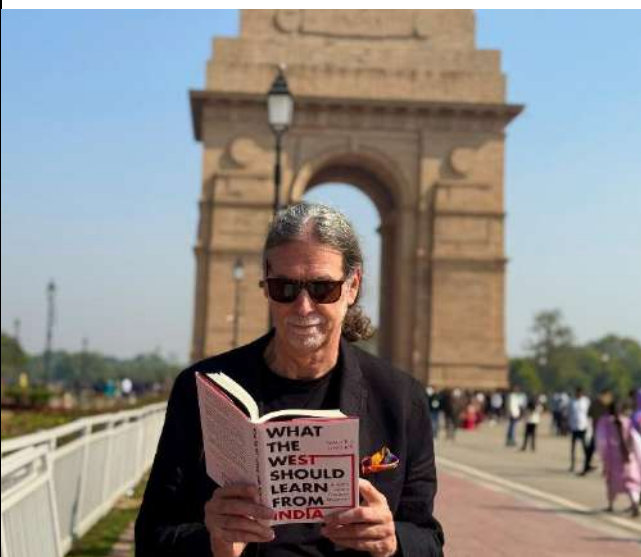
Walter J Lindner, who Germany's ambassador India from 2019 to 2021, out with a book, *What the West Should Learn From India: Insights from a German Diplomat*. Amid uncertainty in contemporary global politics, the book contextualises the rise

The Indian EXPRESS Mon, 10 March 2025
<https://epaper.indianexpress.com/c/76951280>

Why in News? Walter J Lindner, former German Ambassador to India, discusses India's evolving global role and democratic challenges in his book *What the West Should Learn From India*.

On India's Global Diplomacy

- 1) Maintains relations with conflicting leaders (Putin, Zelenskyy, Netanyahu, Abbas) while staying non-aligned.
- 2) Positioned as a neutral mediator due to historic ties (e.g., Russia's support in 1971) and energy dependencies.
- 3) Rising influence in multilateral forums (G20, Quad, BRICS) without military bloc membership.



On Democracy & Criticism

- 1) Rejects Western "megaphone diplomacy" on India's democracy, advocating objective analysis over preachiness.

- 2) Acknowledges concerns about minority rights but stresses India's complex socio-political landscape.

On India's Development Model

- 1) Digital leapfrogging (e.g., UPI) and economic growth poised to overtake Germany.
- 2) Cultural resilience and "jugaad" innovation as strengths, alongside a competitive spirit driven by caste dynamics.

On Global Right-Wing Rise

- 1) Attributes Germany's far-right growth to migration anxieties, economic uncertainty, and simplistic solutions.
- 2) Stresses differentiation between skilled migration (e.g., Indian professionals) and illegal flows.

Critique of Western Perspectives

- 1) Urges Europe to heed India's stance on Ukraine, noting divergent historical contexts.
- 2) Warns against normalizing border violations (e.g., Russia-Ukraine) as precedent for regional conflicts.

This analysis underscores India's strategic balancing act and Lindner's call for nuanced Western engagement.

WHO's Global Pandemic Treaty

Why in News? WHO member states adopted a legally binding pandemic treaty on May 20, 2025, following over three years of negotiations, marking only the second legally binding accord in WHO's 75-year history.

Background

- 1) Negotiations began in December 2021 during Omicron spread
- 2) Issues during COVID-19:
 - a) Vaccine hoarding by manufacturing countries
 - b) Inequitable global distribution
 - c) Studies suggest over 1 million lives could have been saved with better vaccine sharing
 - d) Lack of coordinated global response created a "toxic cocktail"

Key Elements of the Treaty

- 1) Pathogen access and benefit sharing system:
 - a) Gives companies access to scientific data in exchange for equitable sharing of medical tools
 - b) Manufacturers must allocate 10% of production to WHO
 - c) Additional 10% to be supplied at "affordable prices"
- 2) Technology transfer: Promotes exchange of know-how to help developing nations produce their own medications
- 3) Research funding policies: Countries must develop policies for taxpayer-funded research to ensure equitable access to resulting products

Limitations

- 1) Limited WHO authority:
 - a) No power over individual states
 - b) Cannot mandate travel bans, vaccinations, or lockdowns
 - c) No enforcement mechanism to ensure compliance
- 2) Implementation challenges:
 - a) Unclear pathogen sharing system mechanics
 - b) US absence

70th anniversary of the 1955 Bandung Conference

Why in News? The article discusses multipolarity gaining global prominence on the **70th anniversary of the 1955 Bandung Conference** (April 18-24), which established principles of equal power distribution.

Evolution of Global Power Structure

Historical Progression:

- 1) **Post-WWII world order (1945-2025)** moved from bipolarity (US vs Soviet Union) to unipolarity (post-Soviet collapse) to emerging multipolarity⁸
- 2) **NATO (1949) and Warsaw Pact (1955)** represented the bipolar order during Cold War era
- 3) **US became the unchallenged pole after 1991**, but this unipolarity was challenged within a decade by 9/11 and China's WTO accession

- 4) **China gradually positioned itself as a second pole** under the guise of "globalization"
- 5) **Multiple additional power poles emerged:** Russia, India, Brazil, South Africa, Mexico, Indonesia, alongside regional groupings (EU, ASEAN, AU)⁷

Current Dynamics:

- 1) US Secretary of State Marco Rubio acknowledged unipolarity as "an anomaly" and predicted a return to "multiple great powers"
- 2) European perspectives differ, with Munich Security Conference 2025 using "multipolarised" to describe a divided world
- 3) Trump presidency has disrupted traditional interstate relationships, especially within NATO
- 4) Negotiations between US and Russia over Ukraine conflict reflect changing alliance dynamics⁸
- 5) Traditional "rules-based order" increasingly undermined by unilateral actions

India's Stance and Strategy

Strategic Positioning:

- 1) External Affairs Minister Jaishankar emphasized multipolarity "suits India" and "requires greater collaboration"⁴⁶
- 2) India has evolved from Nehruvian non-alignment to a pragmatic multi-alignment approach under Modi-Jaishankar leadership⁸
- 3) Multi-alignment allows India to simultaneously engage with US, Russia, Israel, Iran, Europe and Global South

Policy Perspectives:

- 1) India envisions itself as a major pole in global politics, after the US, Russia, and China³
- 2) Seeks a multipolar world that keeps both US and China in check through global redistribution of power³
- 3) Pragmatic approach to de-dollarization, recognizing South Asia's continued need for dollar currency⁴
- 4) Actively pursuing multidirectional policy initiatives including Neighborhood First, Act East, Act West

Way Forward: Emerging Opportunities:

- 1) Growing multipolarity allows India to navigate global challenges while building strategic partnerships⁶

- 2) India positioned to translate multipolar intentions into reality by leading efforts to craft equitable new rules
- 3) Potential to leverage India's projected status as third-largest economy by decade's end¹
- 4) Opportunity to shape multilateral institutions through partnerships with middle powers and Global South nations³
- 5) Need to back diplomatic posture with enhanced military and technological capabilities

Is WTO still relevant?

Why in News? US President Donald Trump's '**reciprocal tariffs**' raise questions about WTO's relevance in preventing economic crises similar to the 1930s Smoot-Hawley tariffs.

Current Status of WTO

- 1) Described as "**irrelevant and sidelined**" though "**not dead yet**" according to experts
- 2) Cannot prevent economic crisis from potential tariff wars
- 3) **Decision-making by consensus** proving problematic
- 4) Decline began before first Trump administration, dating back to **Doha Round launch**
- 5) **Mismatched expectations** and naivete about China's integration into global trade system

Failure of WTO's Core Functions

- 1) **Negotiating function ineffective** since Doha Round (2001)
- 2) **Only one multilateral agreement** (fisheries) concluded, but not fully implemented
- 3) **Dispute settlement mechanism dysfunctional** due to US blocking Appellate body appointments
- 4) **Trade monitoring inefficient** due to opacity from member countries

Erosion of Most-Favoured-Nation (MFN) Principle

- 1) US has **unilaterally lowered tariffs** while other countries maintained higher levels
- 2) US **stepping away from MFN** during first Trump administration
- 3) Trump's new tariffs indicate "**final withdrawal from WTO system**"

- 4) Countries increasingly preferring **bilateral Free Trade Agreements** over multilateral negotiations
- 5) **Section 232 (steel/aluminum tariffs)** and **Section 301 (China tariffs)** maintained across administrations

Agricultural Negotiations Challenges

- 1) India's **political sensitivity around agriculture limits** negotiation flexibility
- 2) Perceived **callousness of WTO** toward India's agricultural concerns
- 3) **Disagreements** over subsidies and public stockholding of grains
- 4) India willing to discuss **labour and environmental standards bilaterally** but not at WTO

The China Challenge

- 1) WTO rules inadequate to address **China's economic dominance**
- 2) Issues like **excess capacity and market flooding** not foreseen in original rules
- 3) China's practices **distort trade despite technical compliance** with rules
- 4) No one anticipated "**how lacking the WTO rules would be**" in addressing China's dominance

IMO Adopts First Legally Binding Framework to Reduce Shipping Emissions

- 1) The International Maritime Organization (IMO) initiated a legally binding framework ("IMO Net-Zero Framework" or the "IMO Net-zero by 2050 Framework") to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions from ships by 2050
- 2) The agreement was reached during the 83rd session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (April 7-11, 2025).
- 3) This marks the first UN-administered carbon revenue system and first framework with mandatory emissions limits and GHG pricing in global shipping
- 4) Key provisions include a \$380 per ton levy on carbon dioxide for ships exceeding emissions intensity limits
- 5) Outperforming vessels can earn carbon credits for trading or future use
- 6) Ships under 5,000 gross tons will be exempt from regulations

- 7) The framework is expected to be formally approved by the IMO in October 2025
- 8) The United States withdrew from negotiations, claiming the agreement would "unduly burden" American interests
- 9) India voted in favour (Not signed or ratified yet)

About International Maritime Organization (IMO)

- 1) Specialised agency of UN estd. Following UN conference in Geneva in 1948 and came into existence in 1958
- 2) HQ: London, United Kingdom
- 3) 176 members including India

Major Conventions

- 1) **International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS):**
 - a) To specify minimum standards for the construction, equipment, and operation of ships to ensure their safety.
 - b) Adopted in 1914 in response to the Titanic disaster.
 - c) Subsequent versions were adopted in 1929, 1948, and 1960.
 - d) The current version, SOLAS 1974, was adopted on 1 November 1974 and entered into force on 25 May 1980
- 2) **International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL)**
 - a) Adopted in 1973, with a Protocol in 1978 (in response to tanker accidents), and further amended by a 1997 Protocol (adding Annex VI on air pollution)
 - b) Aimed at preventing pollution of the marine environment by ships from operational or accidental causes
- 3) **International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW)**
 - a) Sets minimum qualification standards for masters, officers, and watch personnel on seagoing merchant ships and large yachts, ensuring that seafarers are properly trained and certified
 - b) Adopted on 7 July 1978, entered into force on 28 April 1984.

Major amendments were made in 1995 and 2010 (the Manila Amendments)

Five – Eyes Alliance

Why in News? Intelligence officials from friendly nations, including US DNI Tulsi Gabbard, are gathering in Delhi amid growing concerns over the future of the Five Eyes alliance due to Trump's foreign policy shifts.

The Five Eyes Alliance: Origin and Evolution

- 1) **Formed during World War II** between **US and UK** (1946), later expanded to include **Canada** (1948), **Australia and New Zealand** (1956).
- 2) Comprises English-speaking nations from the former British Empire ("**Anglosphere**")
- 3) Initially focused on signals intelligence and Soviet communications during Cold War.
- 4) Expanded post-9/11 to cover counterterrorism and cybersecurity.
- 5) Recently pivoted toward monitoring China, including warnings against Huawei's 5G networks.
- 6) Considered "the most significant intelligence sharing agreement in world history".
- 7) Operates on foundation of trust where all signals intelligence is shared among partners.

Five Eyes security rift over Huawei

The U.S. has threatened to cut off intelligence sharing between the so-called Five Eyes unless its members ban 5G equipment from Huawei, fearing it could be a vehicle for Chinese spy operations



Trump Administration's Disruptions

- 1) Trump's trade war against Canada with 25% tariffs on imports.
- 2) Called Canada's border "arbitrary" and suggested it become the "51st state".
- 3) Reports of proposal to expel Canada from Five Eyes due to trade and border disputes.
- 4) VP J.D. Vance described Britain as "the first truly Islamist country to get a nuclear weapon".



- 5) Vance criticized Britain's "woke politics" at Munich Security Conference.
- 6) Elon Musk publicly attacked British PM Keir Starmer and Labour government.
- 7) Appointments of Tulsi Gabbard (DNI) and Kash Patel (FBI) causing concern among allies.
- 8) Radical policy shifts: rapprochement with Russia, pushing for Ukraine ceasefire, suspending intelligence sharing with Ukraine.

Broader Geopolitical Implications

- 1) Weakening of NATO and EU relationships
- 2) Dismantling the post-war US-Europe strategic consensus
- 3) Growing ideological divide between MAGA movement and traditional Anglosphere
- 4) American right increasingly views Britain as failing state dominated by "woke politics"
- 5) Some Five Eyes members considering limiting intelligence sharing with US due to Russia concerns
- 6) Intelligence experts warn fractures benefit adversaries: "met with cheers from Moscow, Beijing, Tehran, and Pyongyang"

Significance for India

- 1) Delhi hosting intelligence officials provides firsthand assessment opportunity
- 2) Chance to evaluate if Five Eyes crisis is temporary or permanent
- 3) Opportunity to strengthen India's intelligence diplomacy amid shifting geopolitics
- 4) Potential implications for India's security partnerships as traditional Western alliances realign
- 5) Canada's reduced intelligence access could impact its diplomatic approach toward India, particularly regarding Khalistani terrorism allegations

Quad Defence Leaders' Concerns Over China's Indo-Pacific Moves

- 1) Quad leaders (India, US, Japan, Australia) expressed serious concerns over China's military posturing in the Indo-Pacific, particularly condemning the "dangerous" use of coast guard and maritime militia vessels in the South China Sea.
- 2) The leaders stated they seek "a region where no country dominates, and no country is dominated — one where all countries are free from coercion".

- 3) Quad nations unveiled new security measures including the launch of a maritime legal dialogue to uphold rules-based order in the region.
- 4) The group announced a Quad Indo-Pacific Logistics Network pilot project to pursue shared airlift capacity for disaster response across the region.
- 5) India will host the inaugural MAITRI workshop in 2025, further strengthening cooperation among Quad nations.

QUAD – Analysis About QUAD

- 1) **Formation:** The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) is an informal strategic forum comprising four democracies: Australia, India, Japan, and the United States.
- 2) **Origin:** First initiated by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007, it originated from the 2004 Tsunami Core Group's disaster relief efforts. After a pause, it was revived in 2017.
- 3) **Objective:** To support a "free, open and prosperous" Indo-Pacific region, ensuring a rules-based global order and freedom of navigation.
- 4) **Nature:** It is a diplomatic partnership, not a formal military alliance like NATO. It operates through regular meetings at various levels, from leaders to subject matter experts.
- 5) **Expanded Mandate:** The QUAD has six working groups covering areas like global health, climate, infrastructure, critical technologies, space, and cybersecurity.

Significance of QUAD to India

- 1) **Strategic Counterbalance to China:** Provides a platform to counter China's regional assertiveness, particularly after events like the 2020-21 Galwan Valley clashes. Joint military exercises like Malabar enhance India's maritime capabilities.
- 2) **Technology and Economic Cooperation:** Offers India access to advanced technologies like AI and quantum computing, supporting national missions. The Quad Investors Network (QUIN) accelerates investment in critical technologies across the region.

- 3) **Infrastructure and Connectivity:** The Quad Infrastructure Coordination Group helps create alternatives to China's Belt and Road Initiative, complementing India's own connectivity strategies.
- 4) **Maritime Security:** The Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) initiative helps monitor the region in near-real-time to combat illegal fishing and piracy, crucial for India's trade, 95% of which moves by sea.
- 5) **Cybersecurity:** The Quad Cybersecurity Partnership aims to improve the cyber resilience of member nations. This is vital for India, which faced over 1.39 million cyber incidents in 2022.
- 6) **Global Standing and Public Goods:** Reinforces India's position as a key player in the Indo-Pacific and the "pharmacy of the world" through initiatives like the Quad Vaccine Partnership, which delivered over 400 million vaccine doses to the region.

Challenges before QUAD

- 1) **Lack of Formal Structure:** The QUAD operates as an informal forum without a secretariat or a formal structure like NATO, which can hinder decisive action during crises.
- 2) **Divergent National Interests:** Members have different priorities; for instance, India's vision of the Indo-Pacific is more focused on the Indian Ocean, while the US, Japan, and Australia are more concerned with the Pacific.
- 3) **Perception as an "Asian NATO":** China has criticized the group as reflecting a "Cold War mentality" and an attempt to form an "Asian NATO," which creates regional tension.
- 4) **Conflicting Partnerships:** India's continued engagement with Russia and its membership in groups like the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and BRICS can sometimes conflict with Quad's strategic goals.
- 5) **External Distractions:** The war in Ukraine demands significant attention and resources from the US, potentially diverting focus from the Indo-Pacific. India's neutral stance on the

conflict also differs from the other three members.

Way Forward

- 1) **Define a Clear Strategy:** The Quad needs to articulate a well-defined strategy for the Indo-Pacific that clearly aligns its economic and security goals to reassure regional partners.
- 2) **Focus on a Positive Agenda:** Emphasize tangible contributions to regional prosperity in areas like health, climate action, and infrastructure to act as a stabilizing force.
- 3) **Engage Regional Partners:** Proactively engage with ASEAN and other regional countries like Indonesia and Singapore to enhance the group's credibility and influence.
- 4) **Augment Existing Institutions:** The Quad should seek to supplement and support existing regional organizations rather than replacing them, promoting an inclusive vision for cooperation.
- 5) **Proactive Role for India:** India can leverage its leadership in initiatives like the International Solar Alliance to shape the Quad's agenda in areas that align with its own strategic interests.

India launches Cities Coalition for Circularity (C-3) Initiative

Why in News? India initiated the **Cities Coalition for Circularity (C-3)** to drive circular economy practices and waste management solutions across Asia-Pacific cities.



About Cities Coalition for Circularity (C-3)

- 1) **Objective:** Accelerate circular economy adoption through city-to-city collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and private sector

partnerships to reduce waste and enhance resource efficiency.

- 2) **Structure:** Proposed as a multi-national, multi-stakeholder digital platform for technical expertise exchange, coordinated by a voluntary working group of member nations.
- 3) **Key Features:**
 - a) Focuses on integrating traditional sustainability practices with modern technology (e.g., bio-CNG, e-waste recycling)
 - b) Aims to strengthen policymaker-industry-researcher collaboration for low-carbon economies
- 4) **Jaipur Declaration (2025–2034):** A non-binding commitment guiding resource efficiency and sustainable urban development in Asia-Pacific, adopted at the 12th Regional 3R Forum.
- 5) **Partnerships:** Includes CITIIS 2.0 agreements worth ₹1,800 crore for 18 cities across 14 Indian states, serving as lighthouse projects.
- 6) **India's Role:** Aligns with PM Modi's P-3 (Pro Planet People) approach and global sustainability initiatives like Mission LiFE and COP26 net-zero targets.

International Solar Alliance (ISA)

Why in News? India has retained the presidency of the 120-nation International Solar Alliance for another two-year term (2024-2026).

About ISA: Background and Purpose

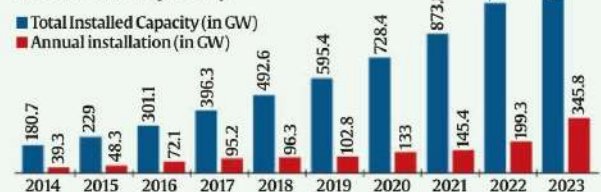
- 1) Launched in 2015 by India and France at the Paris climate conference
- 2) Aim: Accelerate solar energy deployment in developing countries
- 3) Evolved into an intergovernmental organization with over 110 member countries
- 4) Strategic importance for India's leadership in the Global South



Progress

- 1) **Global Solar Growth**
 - a) 30% increase in global solar capacity in 2023
 - b) Over 345 GW of solar capacity added globally in 2023
 - c) ISA's efforts in policy development and capacity building in member countries
- 2) **Upcoming Projects**
 - a) First ISA-facilitated project expected in Cuba (60 MW plant, part of 1,250 MW planned)
 - b) Several countries in Africa and Latin America preparing to launch solar tenders

TOTAL INSTALLED CAPACITY ANNUAL INSTALLATION (IN GW)



COUNTRIES WITH BIGGEST SOLAR FOOTPRINT

Total installed capacity in 2023 (in GW)

China	609.3	India*	72.7
European Union	254.7	Brazil	37.5
United States	137.7	Australia	33.8
Japan	87	Italy	29.7
Germany	81.7	Spain	28.7

* India's installed capacity reached 90.76 GW by end of September 2024

Source: World Solar Market Report, 2024, ISA



Challenges

1) Limited Impact

- Few ISA-facilitated solar projects operational
- 62% of new installations in 2023 occurred in China alone
- Less than 2% of new additions in Africa

2) Barriers in Developing Countries

- Lack of experience with large solar projects
- Absence of local developers
- Need for foreign investment
- Regulatory and policy challenges

3) Imbalanced Development

- 43% of global solar PV capacity installed in China
- Top 10 markets account for over 95% of installed capacity
- Over 80% of solar manufacturing concentrated in China

Future Outlook

- Potential for rapid escalation in project development
- Crucial for global energy transition and climate change mitigation

India's Path to Net-Zero Carbon Emissions

Why in News? India committed to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2070, with 45 years remaining to reach this goal.

The Global Context

Climate Change Urgency

- Global average temperature has risen by at least 1.1°C since 1880
- Scientific consensus: Limit temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels to avoid devastating consequences
- Remaining global carbon budget: 400-500 billion tonnes of CO₂ for a 50-67% chance of limiting temperature rise to 1.5°C

Equity in Climate Action

- Developed countries expected to reach net-zero before 2050 and finance climate action for developing nations
- Current efforts fall short of expectations, with developing countries bearing a disproportionate burden

Road to net zero

In 2015, over 190 countries committed to limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Countries such as the U.K. and France have already enacted laws to achieve net zero target by 2050. This has put pressure on India, the third-largest emitter, which has not been in favour of committing to a deadline

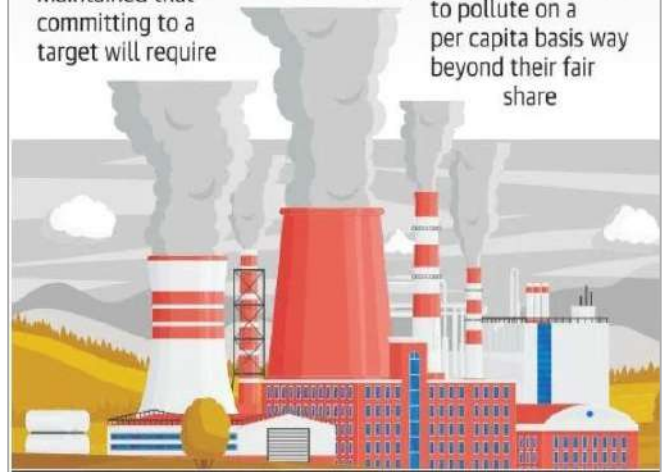
■ Net zero means committing to a year beyond which emissions will be balanced by taking an equivalent amount of greenhouse gases from the air

■ India has maintained that committing to a target will require

retiring coal plants and fossil fuel use overnight and even then, it will not guarantee that temperature rise stays below 1.5°C

■ India says that future net zero promises are hollow as countries responsible for the climate crisis have not delivered on previous promises

■ India argues that countries clamouring for net zero will continue to pollute on a per capita basis way beyond their fair share



India's Unique Challenges

Emissions and Development

- India's per-capita emissions among the lowest globally, but significant disparity between rich and poor
- Balancing act: Improving quality of life while working towards climate goals

Resource Constraints

- Limited carrying capacity to support developed world's lifestyle standards
- Potential food shortages, extreme heat stress, and biodiversity loss if unchecked consumption continues

Sustainable Pathway for India Energy Demand and Land Use

- Unchecked consumption could lead to a 9-10 fold increase in power demand by 2070
- Land-use trade-offs become significant beyond 3,500 GW solar and 900 GW wind capacity

Sustainable Consumption Corridor

- 1) Need for 'sufficiency consumption corridors' with a floor meeting developmental goals and a ceiling avoiding unsustainable growth
- 2) Focus on demand-side measures to maintain sustainable consumption levels

Key Strategies

Demand-Side Measures

- 1) Improved construction materials and passive design for thermal comfort
- 2) Energy-efficient appliances and sustainable transportation
- 3) Mindful dietary choices and alternative fuels in industries

Supply-Side Approaches

- 1) Decentralization of energy production (rooftop solar, solar pumps for agriculture)
- 2) Expansion of nuclear power generation for low-carbon baseload energy.

India's Semiconductor Diplomacy

- 1) India has placed semiconductor diplomacy at the heart of its foreign policy for strategic and economic reasons
- 2) PM Modi announced the shift from "Oil Diplomacy" to "Silicon Diplomacy" era at Semicon India 2024
- 3) India leverages QUAD Semiconductor Supply Chain Initiative and serves as Vice Chair of Indo-Pacific Economic Framework's Supply Chain Council
- 4) Strategic partnerships signed with Japan, Singapore, and US for semiconductor cooperation
- 5) Focus on merging semiconductor diplomacy with Act East Policy to connect with key Asian players

Recent Developments

- 1) Cabinet approved HCL-Foxconn facility in UP on May 14, 2025, with ₹3,700 crore investment for display driver chips
- 2) India-US agreement reached in September 2024 for semiconductor fab focused on defense technology
- 3) India-Singapore MoU signed during Modi's visit in September 2024 for semiconductor sector cooperation

- 4) First indigenous semiconductor chip expected by end of 2025 from Tata-PSMC collaboration at Dholera plant
- 5) Micron investing \$2.75 billion in ATMP plant in Gujarat, operational by early 2025
- 6) Tata Electronics investing \$3.3 billion in ATMP facility in Assam

Significance

- 1) Economic potential: Market projected to grow from \$34.3 billion (2023) to \$100.2 billion by 2032 with 20.1% CAGR10
- 2) Import reduction: Currently imports 65-70% of electronic components, mainly from China14
- 3) Employment creation: Expected to generate 300,000 jobs by 2026 across various domains10
- 4) National security: Ensures trusted sources for defense and telecom equipment6
- 5) Global market share: Aims to capture significant portion of \$1 trillion global semiconductor market by 203014
- 6) Foreign exchange savings: Reduces import bill as electronics are second-largest import after oil

Challenges

- 1) High capital requirements: Setting up fabs requires \$5-10 billion investment
- 2) Limited specialized talent: Despite 20% of world's chip designers, shortage of specialized manufacturing talent
- 3) Underdeveloped supply chain: Limited availability of silicon wafers, high-purity gases, specialty chemicals
- 4) Global competition: Competing with established hubs like Taiwan (60% global production), China, South Korea
- 5) Late market entry: Missed early opportunities, making it challenging to catch up with decades-old established ecosystems
- 6) Technology gap: India lags in advanced fabrication technologies and equipment

Way Forward

- 1) Focus on niche technologies: Develop MEMS and sensors for IoT, automotive, telecommunications applications
- 2) Strengthen East Asian integration: Deeper economic ties with Taiwan, Vietnam, Singapore, South Korea for technology access
- 3) Private sector participation: Encourage agility, risk-taking ability, and global network access

- 4) Talent development: Create specialized training programs in semiconductor design and manufacturing
- 5) Supply chain resilience: Build domestic capabilities for semiconductor-grade raw materials
- 6) Technology partnerships: Leverage "China Plus One" strategy and QUAD partnerships for advanced technology access

India's Critical Minerals Diplomacy

- 1) Strategic efforts to secure critical mineral supplies through international partnerships, trade agreements, and resource diplomacy to reduce supply disruption risks
- 2) Established Khanij Bidesh India Ltd. (KABIL) as key public sector undertaking to acquire critical mineral assets overseas
- 3) Focuses on securing lithium, cobalt, rare earth elements, copper, and other minerals essential for clean energy transition

Recent Developments

- 1) National Critical Minerals Mission (NCMM) approved with Rs 34,300 crore outlay for 7 years (2024-2031)
- 2) India and five Central Asian countries expressed interest in joint rare earth exploration at June 2025 India-Central Asia Dialogue
- 3) Formation of IREUK Titanium Limited joint venture with Kazakhstan for titanium slag production
- 4) India-Central Asia Rare Earth Forum established in September 2024

Significance

- 1) India imports 82% lithium, 85.6% bismuth, and 76% silicon from China, creating strategic vulnerability
- 2) Critical minerals demand projected to rise fourfold by 2030 for India's manufacturing and tech ambitions
- 3) China controls 60% of rare earth production, 60% of critical minerals production, and 80% of global processing
- 4) Import bill for critical minerals rose 34% between FY22-FY23, totaling Rs 91,000 crore

Challenges

- 1) Over 100 critical mineral blocks auctioned since 2023 but many remain unsold - 14 out of 18 auctions in June 2024 were cancelled
- 2) Lack of private sector participation due to absence of clear supply chain strategy
- 3) China's recent export controls on six heavy rare earth elements and magnets threatening EV supply chains
- 4) Negligible processing capabilities - India's IREL capacity of 600,000 tons/year insufficient for growing demand

Way Forward

- 1) Establish strategic stockpiles of critical minerals modeled on China's rare earth reserves strategy
- 2) Create centralized national authority and Center of Excellence for Critical Minerals (CECM) to coordinate efforts
- 3) Develop advanced e-waste recycling technologies with Rs 1,500 crore earmarked for recycling 24 critical minerals
- 4) Strengthen participation in Mineral Security Partnership (MSP) and bilateral agreements with resource-rich nations



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