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INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY



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BLOCK: I
**INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY: ORIGIN,
DETERMINANTS AND MAJOR THEMES**

Unit 1: Origin and Evolution of foreign policy in India

Unit 2: Major determinants of foreign policy in India

Unit 3: Institutions of foreign policy making in India

Unit 4: Non-alignment: challenges and relevance

Unit 5: Multialignment and Indian Foreign Policy

Unit - 1

Origin and Evolution of Foreign Policy in India

Unit Structure:

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Objectives
- 1.3 The Guiding principles of India's foreign policy
- 1.4 Origin of foreign policy in India
- 1.5 Evolution of Indian Foreign Policy
- 1.6 Role of Foreign Policy in India
- 1.7 Summing Up
- 1.8 Reference and Suggested Readings

1.1 Introduction

Foreign policy refers to a country's policy to deal with other nations. The major aim of foreign policy is to achieve the national objectives. It encompasses the set of principles, decisions, and actions by which a country interacts with other states, international organizations, and non-state actors on a global scale. Foreign policy is shaped by a variety of factors — internal and external, including geography, historical relations, economic power, domestic politics, and global events.

India's foreign policy plays very important role in determining its relations with other countries of the world. Like the foreign policies of other countries, India's foreign policy is also shaped by its historical legacy, geographical location, national interests, economic development, security and other global events. In this unit we shall try to discuss origin of India's foreign policy.

1.2 Objectives

Foreign policy of a country constitutes of a set of goals, strategies and actions that the country pursues in its relation with other actors in the international relations. India's foreign policy is shaped by different historical, socio-political, cultural and economic factors. After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Explain the meaning and definition of foreign policy of India
- Trace the history of foreign policy of India
- Analyse the different stages of evolution of foreign policy in India

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1.3 The Guiding principles of India's Foreign Policy:

Foreign policy of a country is guided by some principles and it has some objectives to be achieved. Mentioned below are the guiding principles of India which we can term as the objectives of Indian foreign policy.

- 1. Securing India's National Interest:** The first and foremost objective of India's foreign policy is to secure India's national interest. India focuses on combating cross-border terrorism, particularly from Pakistan. Its foreign policy emphasizes the need for global cooperation on counterterrorism and regional security. India is also strengthening its military capabilities and partnerships, especially in the Indo-Pacific region, to counter emerging security threats.
- 2. Maintaining Territorial Integrity:** India seeks to maintain its independence in decision-making, avoiding over-reliance on any single country or alliance.
- 3. Non Alignment:** India was a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) during the Cold War. Non alignment policy refers to choosing not to align with any major power blocs (the US or the Soviet Union) while maintaining strategic autonomy
- 4. Achieving Economic Growth:** India actively seeks to enhance its trade and investment ties globally, especially with key regions such as Southeast Asia (Look East/Act East policy), Africa, and the Gulf countries. It is also an active participant in global trade organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and seeks to promote its interests in multilateral economic negotiations.
- 5. Friendly relations with neighbors:** India prioritizes relations with its immediate neighbors in South Asia, including countries like Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives. Through this, it seeks to build stable and cooperative relationships in the region.

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- 6. Panchsheel and Peaceful Coexistence:** India promotes peaceful relations based on mutual respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in internal affairs, as enshrined in the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, known as Panchsheel, signed with China in 1954.
- 7. Global Leadership and Multilateralism:** India seeks to play a more significant role in global governance, advocating for reforms in international institutions like the United Nations Security Council (where it seeks permanent membership), the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund.
- 8. Soft Power Diplomacy:** India uses its cultural, religious, and historical ties to strengthen relations globally through diplomacy based on shared heritage, people-to-people ties, and its contributions to global development in the recent times; it has been observed that programmes like the International Day of Yoga and its diaspora engagement are key aspects of its soft power.
- 9. Climate and Sustainable Development:** India is a key player in global efforts to address climate change, advocating for sustainable development and energy security. It co-founded the International Solar Alliance (ISA) to promote solar energy globally.
- 10. Active opposition of colonialism, imperialism, racism, apartheid,** etc is another goal of foreign policy of India. In the early 20th century, there was a rising sentiment among Indian leaders to forge solidarity with other Asian and African nations that were also under colonial rule. This was a precursor to India's later support for decolonization and anti-imperialist movements.

Now you have got an idea that the guiding principles of India's Foreign Policy have been founded on various principles which promoted national interest. Besides the above mentioned principles, Indian foreign policy is also guided by principles like promoting international peace, co-operating with the United Nations, idea of disarmament, Peaceful solutions of international disputes and creating a world order based on equality.

Stop to Consider:

Key Elements of Foreign Policy:

- 1. National Interest:** The core of foreign policy is protecting and promoting a country's national interest, which includes security, economic prosperity, and diplomatic influence.
- 2. Diplomacy:** The practice of negotiating and managing relationships with foreign nations through peaceful means.
- 3. Economic Relations:** Foreign policy includes trade agreements, economic aid, and sanctions, aimed at advancing the economic goals of the country.
- 4. Military Strategy:** A nation's foreign policy also includes military alliances, defense commitments, and sometimes the use of force.
- 5. Global Governance:** Engagement with international institutions like the United Nations, World Trade Organization (WTO), and others to address global issues such as climate change, terrorism, and human rights.

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1.4 Origin of Foreign Policy in India

Foreign policy is an important instrument to maintain relationship with other countries. The Prime minister of India in collaboration with the External Affairs Ministry decides the foreign policy for the country. In this section, we shall discuss the changing trends of Indian foreign policy in different periods after independence.

The origin of India's foreign policy can be traced back to the period of national movement. Later, these principles are shaped by our first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. Before independence, India's foreign relations were controlled by the British government. The Indian National Congress, which took active part in the freedom movement and limited influence on foreign affairs. However, some of the ideas of the national movement which the leaders of the movement like Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru preached had great influence in shaping the foreign policy of independent India. It must be mentioned here that the ideas like non-violence and anti-colonialism advocated by these leaders had shaped the vision of India's international

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role even before independence. It must be remembered here that the major guiding principle of Indian foreign policy has been Panchasheel. We know that in a rapidly changing world, foreign policy must be capable of responding effectively to the new challenges and opportunities. Therefore, it has been observed that following these principles Indian foreign policies are made keeping in mind the changing world scenario and internal condition of the country. It also aims at strengthening the social fabric and well-being of the people and protecting India's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The first Prime Minister of India Nehru had a vision of a strong India. As an architect of the foreign policy of a nascent country, Nehru had mainly emphasized on the non-alignment principle during the Cold War. Moreover, he strongly supported panchsheel principles which talks about peaceful coexistence and therefore, believed in maintaining peaceful relations with the neighbouring countries. Here, you must remember that his ideas were mainly by india's experience of colonialism panchsheel principles.

Under the present Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India's foreign policy has seen significant changes, reflecting a more assertive and dynamic approach to global engagement. Modi's foreign policy aims to position India as a key player on the global stage while strengthening its strategic, economic, and security interests. His approach has been marked by increased diplomatic outreach, regional cooperation, and a focus on India's global role.

1.5 Evolution of Indian Foreign Policy

As mentioned earlier, the foreign policy of a country keeps changing with changing environment. Let us now discuss the Indian foreign policy under different leaders and governments in the post independence period. Let us discuss the Indian Foreign policy under different leaders and government.

Foreign Policy during the Nehru Period:

Immediately after independence our nation builders had very little experience the making or conducting of foreign policy. It must be mentioned here that the country's oldest political party, the Indian National Congress,

had established a small foreign department in 1925 to make overseas contacts and to publicize its freedom struggle. From the late 1920s on, Jawaharlal Nehru, who had a long-standing interest in world affairs among independence leaders, formulated the Congress stance on international issues. As a member of the interim government in 1946, Nehru articulated India's approach to the world. During his tenure as Prime Minister (1947-64), he achieved a domestic consensus on the definition of Indian national interests and foreign policy goals—building a unified and integrated nation-state based on secular, democratic principles; defending Indian territory and protecting its security interests; guaranteeing India's independence internationally through nonalignment; and promoting national economic development unencumbered by over reliance on any country or group of countries. He was mainly guided by democratic principles and focused on the following foreign policy goals —

- a) building a unified and integrated nation-state based on secular
- b) defending Indian territory and protecting its security interests
- c) guaranteeing India's independence internationally through nonalignment
- d) promoting national economic development unencumbered by over-reliance on any country or group of countries.
- e) supporting movements for decolonization and anti-apartheid struggles, advocating for newly independent countries in Asia and Africa.

These objectives were closely related to the determinants of India's foreign relations: the historical legacy of South Asia; India's geopolitical position and security requirements; and India's economic needs as a large developing nation.

In his period by October, 1962, India was at war with China. In fact, on October 26, 1962, the centre announced that "India is being put on a war footing to face the Chinese menace." Indian president Dr. Radhakrishnan even proclaimed a state of emergency. Following this announcement, India went into hyperactivity in order to put an end to the two-pronged Chinese aggression in the then North Eastern Frontier Agency (now, Arunachal Pradesh) and Ladakh. The Chinese did not advance further

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and on November 21 declared a unilateral cease-fire and ultimately the fighting stopped.

Foreign Policy during the Period of Lal Bahadur Shastri:

India's second prime minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri (1964-66), expanded the Office of Prime Minister (sometimes called the Prime Minister's Secretariat) and enlarged its powers. Later, the Office of the Prime Minister had become the de facto coordinator and supra ministry of the Indian government. The enhanced role of the office strengthened the prime minister's control over foreign policy making at the expense of the Ministry of External Affairs. Advisers in the office provided channels of information and policy recommendations in addition to those offered by the Ministry of External Affairs. A subordinate part of the office—the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) functioned in ways that significantly expanded the information available to the Prime Minister and his advisers. The RAW gathered intelligence, provided intelligence analysis to the Office of the Prime Minister, and conducted covert operations abroad.

Shastri's foreign policy may be summarized in the following points —

- a) Continued Nehru's Policy of non-alignment
- b) Tried to strengthen ties with China after Sino-Indian war of 1962
- c) Tried to establish closer relations with USSR
- d). To strengthen India's position he emphasized on defense

SAQ

Do you think, the first Prime Minister of India J. Nehru provides us a suitable base of Indian foreign policy. (80 words)

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Foreign Policy during the period of Indira Gandhi:

Lal Bahadur Shastri was succeeded by Indira Gandhi. Like her predecessor she took keen interest in the conduct of foreign policy. Office of the Prime Minister was particularly strong under the tenures of Indira Gandhi (1966-77 and 1980-84) and her son, Rajiv (1984-89), who succeeded her, and weaker during the periods of coalition governments. The Prime Minister is however free to appoint advisers and special committees to examine various foreign policy options and areas of interest.

Here, it must be mentioned that period was also witnessing the Cold war was between the two power blocks. Initially India has closer ties with Russia. However, during Mrs. Gandhi's Prime ministership period of developing close relationship with USA, USSR continued. As a result she got huge financial and military aid from the USA which helped India to emerge as a growing power in Asia. However, India has often known as representing the interests of developing countries at various international platforms.

The following are the key points of the foreign policy of during Indira Gandhi's Prime-ministership—

- a) Emphasis on non-alignment
- b) Strengthening relationship with USSR during the cold war phase for military and economic interests
- c) Receiving significant military and economic assistance.

After Indira Gandhi, her son Rajiv Gandhi became the prime Minister of India. He emphasized on fostering stronger ties with neighbouring countries. To implement that policy he signed Indo–Sri Lankan Accord in 1987 to curb the problem of LTTE. During this period emphasis was also made on strengthening India's position at global platform.

From 1947 until the late 1980s, India's foreign policy goals enabled it to achieve some successes in carving out an independent international role. Regionally, India was the predominant power because of its size, its population (the world's second-largest after China), and its growing military strength. In the late 1980s, India improved relations with the United States, other developed countries, and China while continuing close ties with the

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Soviet Union. Relations with its South Asian neighbors, especially Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal, occupied much of the energies of the Ministry of External Affairs. However, relations with its neighbours, Pakistan in particular, were often tensed.

Indian Foreign Policy in the post Cold War era

In the 1990s, economic problems and the demise of the bipolar world political system forced India to reassess its foreign policy and adjust its foreign relations. Previous policies proved inadequate to face the new challenges emerging out of the changing domestic and international scenario. The end of the Cold War has posed a question to the idea of nonalignment and left Indian foreign policy without significant direction. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, India improved its relations with the United States, Canada, France, Japan and Germany. In 1992, India established formal diplomatic relations with Israel.

Foreign Policy during Vajpayee and Manmohon Singh Government:

After the end of cold war many significant events took place at the international scenario. Though India is a supporter of disarmament, India refused to sign CTBT (comprehensive Test Ban Treaty). Again, India marked its history in the late 1998 by the Pokhran Blast when Atal Bihari Vajpayee led NDA government conducted the 'Shakti' Test in Pokhran. It subsequently led to several U.S., Japanese and European sanctions on India. India's defense minister, George Fernandes, said that India's nuclear program was necessary as it provided deterrence to potential Chinese nuclear threat. Most of the sanctions imposed on India were removed by 2001.

Again, the 9/11 incident has attracted the attention of world community on the issue of global terrorism. Indian intelligence agencies have worked with different countries to tackle the Al-Qaeda and related groups' activities in Pakistan and Afghanistan. India's extensive contribution to fight against terrorism, coupled with a surge in its economy, has helped India's diplomatic relations with several countries. Over the past three years, India has held numerous joint military exercises with U.S. and European nations that have resulted in a strengthened U.S.-India and E.U.-India

bilateral relationship. India's bilateral trade with Europe and U.S. has more than doubled in the last five years.

After A. B Vajpayee, Dr. Manmohan Singh assumed the office of the Prime-Minister. Under his leadership, India emerged as one of the single largest aid donor to Afghanistan.

India has been pushing for reforms in the UN and WTO with mixed results. India's candidature for a permanent seat at the UN Security Council though backed by several countries has not yet been successfully maintained. As we earlier stated, in the time of Manmohan Singh led UPA government in 2004, the United States signed a nuclear co-operation agreement with India even though the latter is not a part of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The US argued that India's strong nuclear non-proliferation record made it an exception; however this has not persuaded other Nuclear Suppliers Group members to sign similar deals with India.

Moreover, the tension between India and Pakistan continues. At the time of legislative assembly election of Jammu and Kashmir there was a war of words between India and Pakistan. The Indian ministry of external affairs has strongly objected to comments made by the Pakistan foreign ministry, questioning the credibility of the ongoing democratic process in Jammu and Kashmir. Indian External Affairs spokesperson commented on Pakistan's reaction to the election that it was "most unfortunate that Pakistan has commented on an internal matter of India. We strongly object to these remarks." The Ministry added that Pakistan ought to behave in a responsible manner as "It is in Pakistan's own interest to play a responsible role in the region. Comments such as these hardly suggest that it is prepared to do so." This came at the time when Pakistan's Indus Water Commissioner Jamaat Ali Shah said India could make Pakistan a barren land by 2014 by blocking water through construction of dams in violation of the Indus Water Treaty. He said that India had, and continued to, construct dams at various rivers in violation of the Treaty. He said that the Treaty allowed India to generate electricity on the flow of the river but it also said that water to Pakistan cannot be stopped. Thus the hostility between India and Pakistan that started immediately after independence continued till this period.

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Thus, we find that India's growing economy, strategic location, friendly foreign policy and large and vibrant diasporas have won it more allies than enemies during this phase. India has friendly relations with several countries in the developing world. Though India is not a part of any major military alliance, it has forged close strategic and military relationship with most of the major powers in pursuit of its national interest.

India's Foreign Policy under Narendra Modi:

In 2014 Narendra Modi has become the Prime Minister of India and been assuming the office till date. He tried to strengthen India's position through the foreign policies. Key features of his foreign policy are as follows:

- a) **Act East Policy:** Modi emphasizes on India's engagement with South Asia and the Indo-Pacific region. Thus he tries to bring a change in the previous "Look East Policy" to form the "Act East Policy." It focuses on deepening trade, connectivity and strategic partnership and enhanced defense cooperation with ASEAN nations.
- b) **Neighbourhood First Policy:** 'Neighbourhood First' is the guiding principle of Indian foreign policy. Modi also focused on this principle of improving relations with India's immediate neighbours in South Asia. He has initiatives like cross-border energy sharing, infrastructure projects, and trade cooperation has been promoted. After assuming his office Modi's first foreign trip was to Bhutan speaks volume about his intention.
- c) **Closer relationship with USA:** Under Modi's leadership India's relationship with US has flourished. Both the countries agreed to cooperate on the issues of defense, energy, technology and intelligence sharing. India has also taken participation in the QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) along with the US, Japan and Australia.
- d) **Balancing Relations with Russia:** Though India's foreign policy emphasized on strengthening relationship with US, it also maintained strong relationship with Russia in defense and energy sectors. India also works with Russia in Forums like BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).

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- e) Relation with China: Modi, has taken a firm stand on border security and at the same time wants to establish good relationship through BRICS and such other platforms.
- f) Relation with Africa: Modi's foreign policy also tries to establish good relations with Africa through economic co-operation, capacity building etc. Through Indo- Africa Forum Summit efforts have been made to expand trade and investment in energy, infrastructure and agriculture.
- g) Soft Power and Diaspora diplomacy: in order to establish good relationship with other countries Modi has used the soft power particularly through the diaspora. Through occasions like International Yoga Day, India's rich cultural heritage has been projected at the global level. Vaccine Maitri, initiative taken for distribution of Vaccines in the COVID period also enhanced its soft power.
- h) Indian foreign policy now also emphasizes on energy security and climate diplomacy. Modi has prioritized energy security by diversifying India's energy sources especially on renewable energy.
- i) Focus on Security and Counter terrorism: the foreign policy under Modi has emphasized on counterterrorism including cross border terrorism. Operations like surgical strike of 2016 Balakot air strike of 2019 give that clear message to the world.
- j) Global Leadership. Foreign policy always strive to strengthen a country's [position in the international field. The policies under Modi seek to strengthen India's role in global governance. India's G20 presidency in 2023 highlighted its commitment to global economic leadership, with Modi using the platform to focus on climate change, digital economy, and global health.

Thus, from the above discussion it is clear to us that foreign policy under Modi has emphasized on strengthening India's position at the global level. Therefore emphasis was put on greater engagement with major powers. At the same times by following the principles of the Neighborhood First and Act East policies, Modi has sought to strengthen regional ties. Moreover, it also seeks to curb terrorism in any form.

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1.6 Role of Foreign Policy in India

By now we have learnt that foreign policy is an important instrument to safeguard and promote national interest of a country. In India too, foreign policy plays a crucial role in shaping country's international relations, national security, economic development, and global influence. Let us now discuss the role of Indian foreign policy in this section.

From the time of independence till date Indian foreign policy has undergone some changes. However, we must admit that the basic and guiding principles of Indian foreign policy has been the same. Under the leadership of different leaders Indian foreign policies have been shaped and they have been successful in safeguarding its territorial integrity and sovereignty. India has been able to maintain strong diplomatic relations with countries like China and Pakistan. It has been successful in advocating the idea of countering terrorism and combating cross border terrorism at the global level. Through the foreign policies, India has strengthened its defense partnerships with countries like the United States, Russia, Israel, and France.

In the economic front, Indian foreign policies have been successful in opening new markets and attracting foreign investments. Many multilateral and bilateral agreements with ASEAN, EU and US have been made to strengthen economic position of the country. Moreover India has also actively participated in the global economic forums like WTO, BRICS etc.

Regional stability has also been maintained with the help of Indian foreign policies. SAARC had also played important role in this regard. Moreover, India has been actively participating in different activities of united Nations marking its strong presence in the international field. In recent years through soft power and diaspora diplomacy efforts have been made to present the rich cultural heritage at the global level.

Non-alignment has been one of guiding principle through which India shows its neutrality during the cold war period. However, Indian foreign policies have also helped in navigating the relationship of India with the superpowers from time to time. These policies have always supported peace at the international level and India follows a no-first-use nuclear policy and has been an advocate for nuclear disarmament at international forums..

In the recent time, Indian foreign policy has also addressed many issues which poses global challenge. Here we can cite the example of issues like climate change, vaccine diplomacy etc.

One of the important roles of Indian foreign policy has been to promote regional development. It has promoted infrastructural and transport connectivity with many countries of South Asia like Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar which in turn has led to the economic development of the region.

Hence, from the above discussion we can say that Indian foreign policy has been playing a significant role in safeguarding country, s national interests. It has emphasized on economic development and strengthening the country's position at the global level.

Check Your Progress:

- Q1. Explain the guiding principles of Indian foreign policy.
- Q2. What is soft power diplomacy?
- Q3. Trace the origin of India's foreign Policy
- Q4. Write a note on Nehru's foreign Policy
- Q5. Discuss the evolution of India's foreign Policy.
- Q6. Critically analyse the role of india's foreign policy.
- Q7. What do you mean by foreign policy? Discuss the basic objectives of Indian Foreign policy. Do you think that these principles help India to protect its national interest?

1.7 Summing Up

After reading this unit you are now in a position to discuss the main ideas of Indian foreign policy. India's foreign policy is guided by the principles of non-alignment and Panchsheel. The origin of India's foreign policy can be traced back to the period of national movement. Later, these principles are shaped by our first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru who is known as the architect of Indian foreign policy.

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On independence in 1947, few Indians had experienced the making or conducting of foreign policy. These objectives were closely related to the determinants of India's foreign relations: the historical legacy of South Asia; India's geopolitical position and security requirements; and India's economic needs as a large developing nation. From 1947 until the late 1980s, New Delhi's foreign policy goals enabled it to achieve some successes in carving out an independent international role. Regionally, India was the predominant power because of its size, its population and its growing military strength. However, relations with its neighbors, Pakistan and China, were often tense and fraught with conflict. In the post cold war era also India continues to balance their relationship with the other countries with the help of the foreign policy. From this unit you have also learnt that the present Prime minister Narendra Modi has emphasized on strengthening India's position at the global level. Therefore emphasis was put on greater engagement with major powers. At the same times by following the principles of the Neighborhood First and Act East policies, Modi has sought to strengthen regional ties. Moreover, it also seeks to curb terrorism in any form.

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Unit - 2

Major Determinants of Foreign Policy in India

Unit Structure:

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Objectives
- 2.3 Key features of Indian foreign Policy
- 2.4 Major Determinants of foreign policy of India
- 2.5 Determinants of foreign policy of India in different Phases
 - 2.5.1 Indian Foreign Policy from 1947 to 1990
 - 2.5.2 Indian Foreign Policy 1990 to 2014
 - 2.5.3 Indian Foreign Policy 1990 to 2014 (Under Narendra Modi)
- 2.6 Summing Up
- 2.7 Reference and Suggested Readings

2.1 Introduction

In the previous unit we have discussed the origin of Indian foreign policy. We have learnt that every foreign policy is shaped by some internal and external factors. India's foreign policy is influenced by a complex array of factors, ranging from geopolitical and security concerns to economic interests, global power dynamics, cultural diplomacy, and emerging challenges like climate change and technological advancement. These determinants guide India's engagement with the world and its pursuit of national interests in an increasingly interconnected and competitive global environment. From the previous unit we have learnt that Indian foreign policy is continuously evolving and incorporating issues of domestic and global importance. Our first Prime minister Nehru has been regarded as the architect of Indian foreign policy who immediately after independence took the responsibility of shaping India's future through its foreign policies.

In this unit we shall discuss the major features of Indian foreign policy as well as major determinants of foreign policy in India.

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2.2 Objectives

The foreign policy of India is shaped by a wide range of internal and external factors, often referred to as the determinants of foreign policy. These determinants influence the direction and focus of India's international engagements and strategies. After reading this unit we shall be able to:

- Discuss the major features of Indian foreign policy
- Examine the main determinants of Indian foreign policy

2.3 Key features of Indian Foreign Policy

Like every country's foreign policy, India's foreign policy strives to enhance the national interest. In the previous unit we have learnt about the guiding principles of Indian foreign policy. It also aims at promoting global peace, cooperation, and development. Over time, Indian foreign policy has evolved itself to meet new challenges as well as the new circumstances that arise at the global level. The major features of Indian foreign policy may be listed as under:

1. **Non-Alignment:** We all know that one of the foundational principle of Indian foreign policy is Non-Alignment. This policy was introduced by the architect of Indian foreign policy Jawaharlal Nehru during the Cold War
2. **Panchsheel (Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence):** Another key principle of Indian foreign Policy has been adhering to the Panchsheel principles. The five principles are Panchsheel Agreement, first articulated in 1954 are:
 1. Mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty
 2. Non-aggression
 3. Non-interference in each other's internal affairs
 4. Equality and mutual benefit
 5. Peaceful coexistence

These principles have been taken into consideration while framing Indian foreign policy and making any diplomatic move by India in international filed.

3. **Advocating Decolonization and Anti-Apartheid:** India has historically supported the decolonization of countries in Asia and Africa and has been a stand against apartheid and racial discrimination, notably in South Africa.
5. **Establishing Peace and supporting disarmament:** India promotes **peaceful** negotiations to resolve international conflicts. It also adheres to a **no-first-use policy** in nuclear warfare and promotes nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.
6. **Multilateralism:** India is committed to multilateralism, working through international organizations like the United Nations, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and International Monetary Fund (IMF) to pursue its interests.
7. **Economic development:** Indian foreign policy strives for economic development and therefore engaged in economic diplomacy. It focuses on trade, investment, and technology partnerships. Moreover, it has worked for strengthening regional economic cooperation through organizations like the SAARC and BRICS
8. **Counter-Terrorism and National Security:** India's foreign policy aims at countering-terrorism and urges the other nations and international organization for cooperation to combat terrorism including cross-border terrorism and thus tries to secure national security.
9. **Addressing the Diaspora:** one important feature of Indian foreign policy in the recent times has been to address the issues relating to Indian Diaspora. Through the diaspora bilateral relations and cultural exchanges have been made in the global level.
10. **Regional Cooperation and Leadership:** Through the panchsheel principles, Indian foreign policy promotes regional cooperation in South Asia. It plays a very vital role in organizations like SAARC, the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), focusing on regional economic development and security cooperation.

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11. Act East Policy: India has adopted the Act East Policy, aiming to enhance strategic, economic, and cultural ties with Southeast Asian and East Asian countries.

Besides, the above features, Indian foreign policy now also deals with the issues of climate change and energy security etc. Therefore, we can say that the features of Indian foreign policy reflect the country's balance between its historical values of peace and diplomacy on the one hand and the changing global scenario on the other.

SAQ

Do you consider India's neighbourhood first policy to be successful in view of its tensions with the neighbouring countries? (80 words)

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2.3 Major Determinants of Indian Foreign Policy

From the previous unit we have learnt that foreign policy is the attempt by a state to maximize its national interest. From the discussions in this unit so far, we have got an idea regarding the basic features of Indian foreign Policy. Foreign policy involves the formulations and implementations of a group of principles which shape the behaviour pattern of a state while negotiating with other states to protect or further its own interest. It is important to mention here that environmental and organizational settings greatly influence in framing of a country's foreign policy. The basic determinants of foreign policy of all the countries are: geography, historical traditions and national ethos, national capacity, public opinion, Ideology.

The factors that determine a foreign policy are divided into two groups—

- (1) Internal factors and
- (2) External factors.

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Internal factors determining the foreign policy of a country are the geographical location of a country, cultural and historical heritage of the country, national interest, economic condition and political ideologies. On the other hand, relationship with the neighbouring countries, international situation etc is the external factors that shape a country's foreign policy. We have already learnt that India's international relations are closely linked to its security and development issues. It is also known to us that the Republic of India is the world's most-populous electoral democracy and has one of the fastest economic growth rates in the world. With the world's fourth largest armed forces and fourth largest economy by purchasing power parity, it is considered to be a regional power and a potential superpower. India's growing influence gives it a more prominent voice in global affairs. At present India is having diplomatic relations with 201 states

After independence the first and foremost task for us is to maintain a healthy relationship with the neighboring countries and other countries of the world. As you know, in the formulation of foreign policy the environmental and organizational settings greatly influence. India's foreign Policy reflects a traditional policy of nonalignment, the exigencies of domestic economic reform and development, and the changing post-Cold War international environment. India's relations with the world have evolved considerably since the British colonial period (1757-1947), when a foreign power monopolized external relations and defense relations.

We all are also aware of the freedom struggle of India which finally gave independence to the country. After independence it was a challenge for the nation builders to formulate a foreign policy of India. The leaders of the national movement, however, had a vision to establish India as a strong nation in the world. It needs mention here that the country's oldest political party, the Indian National Congress, had established a small foreign department in 1925 to make overseas contacts and to publicize its freedom struggle. From the late 1920s on, Jawaharlal Nehru, who had the most long-standing interest in world affairs among independence leaders, formulated the Congress stance on international issues. As a member of the interim government in 1946, Nehru articulated India's approach to the world. After becoming the first Prime Minister of India after independence, Nehru

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took keen interest in formulating the foreign policy of the country. He is also known as the architect of Indian foreign policy. Let us now discuss the basic determinants of Indian foreign policy.

The major determinants of India's foreign policy are:

1. Geopolitical Location:

- a) **Strategic Geography:** India's location in South Asia, surrounded by countries like Pakistan, China, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, shapes its foreign policy. Its position in the Indian Ocean gives it strategic importance in maritime trade routes and global power politics.
- b) **Border Conflicts:** India's ongoing territorial disputes with Pakistan (Kashmir issue) and China (Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh) heavily influence its foreign policy. Border conflicts in terms of military alliances, defense strategies, and diplomatic negotiations.
- c) **Neighborhood Relations:** The complex relationship with neighboring countries, particularly Pakistan and China, and India's desire to maintain stability in South Asia play a central role in shaping its diplomatic strategies.

2. Historical Factors:

- a) **Colonial Experience:** we all know that India was dominated by colonial powers for a long time. The experience of colonialism under British rule has shaped India's ideas towards different issues. In the post independence period its opposition to imperialism and its support for decolonization movements in Asia and Africa are highly influenced by this colonial experience.
- b) **Non-Alignment:** In the previous unit, we have studied non-alignment as a guiding principle of Indian foreign policy. We have also learnt that the Non-Alignment policy was advocated by Jawaharlal Nehru during the Cold War to keep distance from the power blocks. This principle, remains as one of the determining factor of India's foreign policy till date.

3. National Security: National security has been the most important factor of the foreign policy of any country. India, after attaining independence

from the British rule was keen to protect its territory as well as sovereignty. Therefore, foreign policy of India has always takes in to consideration the following factors:

- a) **Border Conflicts:** India's foreign policy is heavily influenced by security concerns, especially that arises out of territorial disputes with Pakistan (over Kashmir) and China (over the Line of Actual Control). Military preparedness and diplomacy to manage these conflicts are essential components of its foreign policy.
- b) **Counterterrorism:** Terrorism, particularly cross-border terrorism from Pakistan, is a major determinant of India's foreign relations. This guiding principle has shaped India's foreign policy as it determines India's relationship with the Super powers too.

4. Economic Interests: A country's power is often measured by economic power. Enhancement of economic growth and development is one of the factors that shape a country's foreign policy. The following economic factors determine India's foreign policy.

- a) **Trade and Investment:** For economic growth and development India seeks to expand trade relations, attract foreign investment, and ensure access to global markets. Agreements with regional groups like ASEAN, BRICS, and bilateral trade deals reflect this focus.
- b) **Energy Security:** India's need for energy resources (oil, gas, and renewable energy) influences India's foreign relations with the Middle East (Gulf nations), Russia, Central Asia, and renewable energy cooperation through initiatives like the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**.
- c) **Technology and Innovation:** India's foreign policy also focuses on fostering international collaboration in fields like technology, innovation, and research, which are essential for its economic progress.

5. Political Leadership, Ideology and governance:

- a) **Political Leadership:** The political leader, their ideas and visions play a significant role in determining the foreign policy of India. Leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahdur Shastri Indira Gandhi,

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and Narendra Modi have shaped foreign policy based on their vision of India's role in global affairs. For instance, Jawaharlal Nehru's focus on non-alignment and Indira Gandhi's emphasis on self-reliance shaped different phases of India's diplomacy. Current Prime minister Narendra Modi emphasizes multialignment, strategic partnerships, and economic diplomacy which would shape the future course of Indian foreign policy.

- b) Public Opinion:** Domestic public opinion and political pressures influence foreign policy decisions, particularly in relation to issues like national security and terrorism. For example, domestic political pressure often shapes India's response to cross-border terrorism or relations with Pakistan.
- c) Democratic Values:** The democratic values that become a guiding force since the freedom struggle in India is a hallmark of India. As the world's largest democracy, India often emphasizes democratic values, human rights, and rule of law in its foreign policy. It seeks to project itself as a model for developing nations in terms of governance and economic progress as well as a flag bearer of democracy.

6. Military and Defense Capabilities: this is vital for ensuring security of a country. Every country through its foreign policy tries to enhance military and defense capabilities. India's military strength and defense capabilities impact its foreign policy, especially in forming strategic partnerships with countries like the U.S., Russia, France, and Israel. Moreover, India's nuclear doctrine, which includes a **no-first-use policy**, is a key aspect of its security strategy and impacts its diplomatic stance on global nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and relations with nuclear powers like China, Pakistan, and the U.S.

8. Global and Regional Power Structures: A nation's engagement with the issues of regional and global importance also decides the foreign policy of that country. In case of India, it has been found that the rise of China as a global superpower and its increasing influence in South Asia, the Indian Ocean, and globally has become a major determinant of India's foreign policy. Because of these, India has focused on countering Chinese influence

through alliances like the **Quad** (India, the U.S., Japan, and Australia) and its **Act East Policy**. India's foreign policy is shaped in a way to balance China's growing power and therefore closer ties with U.S have been made particularly in areas of defense, technology, and economic cooperation. Thus, regional power structure and global positioning also act as a determining factor of India's foreign policy.

9. Multilateralism and Global Governance: India's engagement in multilateral organizations like the United Nations, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) determines its foreign policy.

10. Climate Change and Sustainable Development: of late India has been strongly advocating , sustainable development and environmental protection. Thus, climate and sustainable development has become a determining force of India's foreign policy.

11. Diaspora and Soft Power: The large and influential Indian diaspora, particularly in the U.S., Canada, the UK, and the Middle East, plays an important role in shaping India's foreign policy. The diaspora is a source of economic strength (through remittances and investments) and serves as a bridge for enhancing bilateral relations. Moreover, the concept of Cultural Diplomacy has become a determinant of foreign policy of India. We have already mentioned that through policy like international yoga day India's rich cultural heritage has been showcased. This type of soft power diplomacy has promoted Indian culture globally and enhanced its image and influence in the international arena.

12. Global economic situation: We all are aware of the fact that economic growth is a major goal of India's foreign policy. India's foreign policy is influenced by international economic trends, global trade flows, and the evolving nature of globalization. Trade agreements, investment partnerships, and participation in organizations like the G20 and BRICS help India position itself in the global economy. Moreover, technological advancements in areas like information technology, digitalization, and artificial intelligence, also shape India's foreign policy, as the country seeks to secure leadership in the global tech space.

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13. Humanitarian Assistance and Global Responsibilities: India is always guided by humanitarian values. Therefore, India's foreign policy always incorporates humanitarian values, often playing a role in disaster relief and development assistance. India has provided aid to countries like Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh and played a proactive role during the COVID-19 pandemic through vaccine diplomacy.

14. Non-Traditional Security Issues: We all know that a foreign Policy is shaped by various factors — internal and external. According to the United Nations in the contemporary world, a nation's security is not restricted to restricted to traditional security issues like war, armament or defense. There are some other non –security threats which may cause more harms to mankind. This security issues are identified as – climate change, food security, health security, migration, natural disasters, smuggling and drug trafficking etc. In view of this Indian foreign policy has also incorporated such issues. It has been observed that India's foreign policy reflects growing concerns about climate change, water security, and environmental degradation. Its participation in international climate agreements and leadership in renewable energy development are driven by these concerns. In the global pandemics like COVID-19, Indian foreign policy included the policy of vaccine diplomacy, through initiatives like Vaccine Maitri. This has boosted India's international standing by providing vaccines to developing countries and showed the country's intention to curb these non security threats.

Thus, from the discussions above we can say that India's foreign policy is shaped by a complex interplay of geographical, historical, economic, security, and global factors. These determinants guide its engagement with the world, enabling it to pursue its national interests while adapting to a rapidly changing global environment.

Stop to Consider:

Challenges of Indian Foreign Policy : India's foreign policy is guided by the idea of strengthening India's position at global level. It has been continuously managing regional complexities and global challenges. These challenges are —

- **Border Disputes:** India’s ongoing border issues with Pakistan and China continue to challenge its foreign policy objectives.
- **Balancing US and Russia:** India must navigate its relationships with both the US and Russia, especially as tensions rise between the two global powers.
- **China’s Rise:** India is part of the Indo-Pacific strategy to ensure a free and open region, responding to China’s growing influence.
- **Regional Leadership:** Managing complex relationships in South Asia, especially with Pakistan, remains a priority under its “Neighborhood First” approach.

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2.5 Determinants of foreign policy of India in different Phases

In the above section we have discussed the major determinants of foreign policy of India. You all know that foreign policy of a country keeps on changing depending upon the domestic and global socio-political environment. In India too, it has been found that the foreign policies are adapting to the changing circumstances. At the domestic front, changes in the ruling party and leadership also bring changes in the foreign policies. Therefore, in this section let us have a discussion on the foreign policy of India in different phases.

2.5.1 Indian Foreign Policy from 1947 to 1990

After gaining independence, India soon joined the Commonwealth of Nations and strongly supported independence movements of other colonies, like the Indonesian National Revolution. The partition and various territorial disputes, has strained its relations with Pakistan since independence. During the Cold War, India adopted a foreign policy of not aligning itself with any major power block which is known as non-alignment. However, India developed close ties with the Soviet Union and received extensive military support from it. The founding father of foreign policy for India Pt Jawaharlal Nehru said that “Our general policy is to avoid entanglement in power politics and not to join any group of powers as against any other group. The two leading groups today are the Russian bloc and the Anglo-American bloc. We must be friends to both and yet not join either. Both

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America and Russia are extraordinarily suspicious of each other as well as of other countries. This makes our path difficult and we may well be suspected by each of leaning towards the other. This cannot be helped.”

The end of the Cold War significantly changes the global scenario. It has affected India’s foreign policy too. The country now seeks to strengthen its diplomatic and economic ties with the United States, the People’s Republic of China, the European Union, Japan, Israel, Mexico, and Brazil. India has also forged close ties with the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the African Union, the Arab League, and Iran.

2.5.2 Indian Foreign Policy 1990 to 2014

Though India continues to have a military relationship with Russia, Israel has emerged as India’s second largest military partner while India has built a strong strategic partnership with the United States. The Indo-US civilian nuclear agreement, signed and implemented in 2008, highlighted the growing sophistication of the Indo-US relations.

From the earlier discussion we come to know that India has a long history of collaboration with several countries and is seen as a leader of the developing world. India played an important role in international politics. India was one of the founding members of several international organizations, most notably the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Asian Development Bank and the G20 industrial nations. India has also played an important and influential role in other international organizations like East Asia Summit, World Trade Organization, IMF, G8+5 and IBSA Dialogue Forum. Regional organizations India is a part of include SAARC and BIMSTEC. India has taken part in several UN peacekeeping missions and in 2007, it was the second-largest troop contributor to the United Nations. India is currently seeking a permanent seat in the UNSC, along with the G4 nations.

Issue of economic development and trade, global and national security as well as problem of national interest has been the hallmark of Indian foreign policy in this phase.

2.5.3 Indian Foreign Policy 1990 to 2014 (Under Narendra Modi)

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As discussed in the previous unit, Modi's foreign policy mainly emphasizes on improving India's relation with the neighbouring countries, particularly in South Asia. Moreover, it also tries to extend this neighbourhood policy to Southeast Asia. He has taken initiatives like cross-border energy sharing, infrastructure projects, and trade cooperation has been promoted. He tries to bring a change in the previous "Look East Policy" to form the "Act East Policy." and focuses on deepening trade, connectivity and strategic partnership and enhanced defense cooperation with ASEAN nations. It needs mention here that Modi, has taken a firm stand on border security and at the same time wants to establish good relationship through BRICS and such other platforms

Closer relationship with USA and Russia is another significance of Modi's foreign policy. Under his leadership India and US has agreed to cooperate on the issues of defense, energy, technology and intelligence sharing. India's foreign policy also tries to maintain strong relationship with Russia in defense and energy sectors. India also works with Russia in Forums like BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).

As mentioned earlier India now emphasizes on soft Power and Diaspora diplomacy.: Through initiatives like International Yoga Day, attempts have been made to showcase India's rich cultural heritage at the global level. Vaccine Maitri, initiative taken for distribution of Vaccines in the COVID period also enhanced its soft power. Moreover, emphasis is also put on on energy security and climate diplomacy.

The foreign policy under Modi has strongly emphasized on counterterrorism including cross border terrorism. Operations like surgical strike of 2016 Balakot air strike of 2019 were undertaken to give that clear message to the world.

Thus, Modi's foreign Policy strives to strengthen a India's position in the international field. India's G20 presidency in 2023 highlighted its commitment to global economic leadership, with Modi using the platform to focus on climate change, digital economy, and global health.

Thus, from the above discussion it is clear to us that foreign policy under Modi has emphasized on strengthening India's position at the global

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level. The important points of Modi's foreign policy can be cited as — neighbourhood first, greater engagement with major powers, diaspora and soft diplomacy, advocating for counter terrorism.

Check Your Progress:

- Q1. India is a member of SAARC. (Write true or false)
- Q2. Discuss briefly the major determinants of India's Foreign Policy.
- Q3. Explain the major features of Indian foreign policy.
- Q4. What are the internal factors that determine Indian foreign policy.
- Q5. Write two external factors of Indian foreign policy
- Q6. Discuss Indian foreign policy under Modi's leadership.

2.6 Summing Up:

After reading this unit you are now in a position to know that Indian foreign policy is determined by various internal and external factors. These determinants influence the direction and focus of India's international engagements and strategies. You have also learnt that there are some key features of Indian foreign policy which reflect the country's balance between its historical values of peace and diplomacy on the one hand and the changing global scenario on the other. Hence we can say that India's foreign policy is shaped by a complex interplay of geographical, historical, economic, security, and global factors. These determinants guide its engagement with the world, enabling it to pursue its national interests while adapting to a rapidly changing global environment.

2.7 Reference and Suggested Readings

- Arndt Michael, India's Foreign Policy and Regional Multilateralism , London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012
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Unit - 3

Institutions of Foreign Policy Making in India

Unit Structure:

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Objectives
- 3.3 Institutions of Foreign Policy Making in India
 - 3.3.1 Ministry of External Affairs
 - 3.3.2 Prime Minister's Office (PMO)
 - 3.3.3 National Security Council (NSC):
 - 3.3.4 Ministry of Defense (MoD).
 - 3.3.5 Parliament
 - 3.3.6 Parliamentary Committees
 - 3.3.7 Ministry of Commerce and Industry:
- 3.4 Summing Up
- 3.5 Reference and Suggested Readings

3.1 Introduction

In the previous units of this block we have discussed the features, guiding principles and determinants of foreign policy. From these units you have learnt that there are various internal and external factors that shape a foreign policy. In India also foreign policies are framed keeping in mind the domestic conditions, public opinion and the global scenario. Again, foreign policy of India has been evolving under the leadership of different leaders in the post independence period. We have discussed these changes from the period of Nehru to Modi. The formulation and implementation of India's foreign policy involve various institutions and actors that contribute to shaping the country's global engagements. These institutions work in coordination to ensure that India's international relations align with its national interests, security, and development goals. It is important to know the institutions which are involved in making the foreign policy of India. In this unit we shall discuss the institutions of foreign policy making in India.

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3.2 Objectives

Foreign policy plays very important role in handling a country's diplomatic relationship with other countries. It strengthens the power and position of a country in the institutional domain. After reading this unit you will be able to :

- Name the institutions of foreign policy making in India
- Discuss the role of different institutions of foreign policy making in India

3.3 Institutions of Foreign Policy Making in India

By now we all know that foreign policy plays a vital role in determining a country's relationship with other countries. Therefore, formulation of foreign policy is a very important task for a country. Moreover, we all know that there are many determinants of foreign policy. The institutions entrusted with the job of making foreign policy have to take in to account these factors while shaping the policy. In India there are some institutions which are given the responsibility of formulating foreign policy. In this section let us discuss the main institutions of foreign policy making in India.

3.3.1 Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is the primary institution responsible for formulating, coordinating, and implementing India's foreign policy. Therefore it is stated that making foreign policy of India begins and ends with the MEA. It is led by the Minister of External Affairs, supported by a team of diplomats, bureaucrats, and policy experts. Minister of External affairs is also a member of the Prime Minister's cabinet. The foreign Secretary, an Indian foreign service officer, is the head of the Secretariat. Foreign Secretary is flanked by Secretary (East), Secretary (West), Secretary (Economic Affairs) and Secretary (CPV and Overseas Indian Affairs). Here you must remember that Foreign Secretaries and each of the Secretaries head and coordinate a number of divisions and agencies. This Ministry enjoys lot of flexibilities in the organizational structure as well as

functioning. Thus, we can say that the MEA is organized into various geographical and functional divisions that handle specific regions (e.g., South Asia, Europe, Africa) or issues (e.g., economic diplomacy, climate change, disarmament).

The Major Functions of MEA:

The major functions of MEA include the task of planning, formulating and managing India's external relations. It is always guided by the principle of strengthening national interest. The MEA receives numerous policy inputs from various sources. All those inputs are processed in the MEA. It has its own research and development wing for framing the foreign policy. The officials of this Ministry are well trained in this field and having analytical proficiency. However, the MEA also receives inputs from a number of governmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals. Among these institutions, external intelligence of India "Research and Analysis Wing" (RAW) gives significant inputs while framing the foreign policies.

Here you must remember that the MEA operates India's embassies, consulates, and high commissions around the world. These diplomatic missions represent India's interests abroad, engage in bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, and ensure the welfare of Indian citizens living overseas. The MEA facilitates India's diplomatic relations with countries around the world. It manages embassies, consulates, and missions abroad, ensuring regular interactions with foreign governments. Moreover, the bilateral relations are maintained and deepened through high-level visits, agreements, and strategic partnerships.

Another important duty of the MEA is to represent India in multilateral institutions such as the United Nations (UN), World Trade Organization (WTO), G20, and other international organizations. By participating in such platforms, India seeks to promote global governance reforms, climate change initiatives, and to assert its stance on international peace and security.

Moreover, India has been focusing on strengthening ties with key neighbors and regions like South Asia (SAARC), ASEAN, Africa, and the Indo-Pacific region. You all know that India follows the principle of "Neighborhood First" and "Act East" to strengthen relationship with the

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neighbours. MEA is responsible for coordinating these initiatives to enhance regional cooperation and economic integration.

Economic development is one of the vital goals of Indian foreign policy. The MEA is entrusted with the responsibility to promote trade, investment, and technology partnerships. As India's economy grows, economic diplomacy has become crucial in advancing foreign trade, development cooperation, and infrastructure projects.

In regard to global security and defense partnerships also the MEA plays important role. The MEA is responsible to coordinate India's defense cooperation agreements, joint military exercises, and counter-terrorism initiatives. You should know that the strategic partnerships with countries like the US, Russia, and France include defense procurement and joint defense research.

Diaspora Engagement has become an important agenda of India's foreign policy in the recent time. The MEA's Overseas Indian Affairs division works to engage with Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) through consular services, community programs, and cultural diplomacy.

Another important duty of MEA is to manage diplomatic crises that arise in the international field. It includes evacuating citizens from conflict zones or disaster-affected regions. It also provides consular services such as visas, passports, and assistance to Indians abroad.

Again, in the recent years soft power and cultural diplomacy plays very important role in formulating foreign policies. The MEA promotes India's rich cultural heritage, educational exchanges, and development partnerships as part of its "soft power" strategy through institutions like the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

The MEA, as the face of India's foreign policy, is crucial in positioning India as a rising global power and shaping its role in international politics. It takes in to account the major priorities of Indian foreign policy while preparing those policies. MEA has the responsibility to see that the Indian foreign policy adheres to the non-alignment principles continue to promote multipolarity in global affairs. It should also take in to consideration India's autonomy in decision making in the issues of global importance. It should

also notice that India's advocacy for the rights and development of emerging economies continues and India can strengthen its position in the international arena.

Thus, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is the Indian government department responsible for managing the country's foreign relations and diplomacy. As a key institution shaping India's foreign policy, the MEA plays a pivotal role in ensuring India's strategic interests on the global stage.

3.3.2 Prime Minister's Office (PMO):

We all know that India follows the Parliamentary democratic model. In this form of government, the Prime Minister is the real head. As the leader of the Parliament he should be well versed with the policy initiatives. Foreign policy plays a vital role in enhancing the power of the country. Therefore, the Prime Minister plays a crucial role in shaping India's foreign policy. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) works closely with the MEA and other ministries to make critical foreign policy decisions, especially on strategic, security, and international economic issues.

The main functions of Prime Minister's Office (PMO) relating to foreign policy are as follows:

We all know that the Prime Minister as the leader of the country plays a crucial role in shaping India's foreign policy. Therefore, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) works closely with the MEA and other ministries to make critical foreign policy decisions, especially on strategic, security, and international economic issues.

The Prime Minister often engages in personal diplomacy that involves direct relationships with world leaders. This has been a hallmark of India's foreign policy under various prime ministers, including Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, and recently Narendra Modi. You must remember here that the National Security Adviser, appointed by the Prime Minister, is a key figure in foreign policy-making, especially in matters of national security, defense, and strategic partnerships. The NSA heads the National Security Council and coordinates security-related foreign policy decisions.

The Prime Minister holds the ultimate authority in determining India's foreign policy priorities. The PMO provides the leadership and oversight

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for implementing India's foreign policy strategy, often taking a hands-on approach to major diplomatic initiatives. Major foreign policy decisions, such as alliances, trade agreements, and defense deals, often receive direct approval from the PMO, ensuring alignment with the government's overall strategic goals.

The PMO is engaged in bilateral and multilateral diplomacy. The PMO is closely connected to India's diplomatic engagements. The Prime Minister often leads high-level summits and negotiations with foreign leaders, playing a personal role in strengthening bilateral ties. In multilateral platforms like the G20, BRICS, and the UN, the PM's personal diplomacy is instrumental in advancing India's positions on global issues like climate change, counter-terrorism, and economic cooperation. Therefore, it is often said that India's stand in the international relations depends much on the personality and vision of the Prime Minister. The PMO plays a central role in shaping India's "Neighborhood First" policy, which prioritizes relations with South Asian countries such as Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. The Prime Minister's direct involvement is often required to resolve sensitive regional issues, such as border disputes, security cooperation, and regional economic initiatives like connectivity projects under the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) or BIMSTEC.

You should also remember that the PMO works closely with the Ministry of Defense and the National Security Council (NSC) and discusses security and foreign policy issues. The Prime Minister plays a key role in formulating India's strategic responses to regional and global security challenges and keeping relationship with neighboring countries like Pakistan and China. Moreover, PMO also plays very important role in shaping India's defense partnerships with super powers. We have often seen the PM of India interacting with Indian diaspora. The PMO actively engages with the Indian diaspora, which is a vital component of India's foreign policy strategy.

Economic growth is one of the vital principles of Indian foreign policy. The PMO has taken a more active role in promoting India's economic diplomacy, ensuring that trade and investment agreements align with India's developmental goals in recent years. The PMO often takes

initiatives to attract foreign direct investment (FDI), and the Prime Minister's foreign visits frequently focus on deepening economic cooperation, technological collaboration, and market access.

Again, though there is a separate ministry to deal with the external affairs, the PMO works in coordination with the MEA and other ministries to prepare an effective foreign policy. National security advisors (NSAs), working closely with the PMO, provide intelligence, strategic assessments, and policy recommendations on foreign affairs, helping shape India's defense and diplomatic strategies.

In times of international crises, such as wars, conflicts, or natural disasters affecting Indian citizens abroad, the PMO often becomes proactive to solve the crisis. Here we can cite the example of large-scale evacuations like Operation Ganga during the Ukraine crisis. In such situations the PMO coordinates with the MEA.

The Prime Minister represents India at major international forums. Many important initiatives such as India's role in the Paris Climate Accord, the International Solar Alliance (ISA), and India's efforts to combat terrorism are often personally taken by the PM. Again, through "public diplomacy," the PM communicates India's vision to a global audience. The PMO helps shape global perceptions of India that includes the use of social media, speeches at international forums, and global outreach during foreign visits.

The PMO takes the lead in managing India's most important relationships, including with the US, China, Russia, and key neighbors like Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The Prime Minister often engages directly in summit-level diplomacy to resolve issues or strengthen ties. India's strategic partnerships, especially with countries in the Indo-Pacific, are guided by the PMO's vision of India as a key player in global geopolitics.

So the PMO has been instrumental in initiatives aimed at fostering peace, stability, and cooperation with neighboring countries like Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh, as well as responding to crises in Sri Lanka and Afghanistan under the Neighborhood First Policy.

The PMO spearheaded India's efforts to strengthen economic and security ties with ASEAN countries and East Asia, especially with Japan, South Korea, and Australia following the Act East Policy.

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3.3.3 National Security Council (NSC):

The National Security Council is an apex body that advises the Prime Minister on matters related to national security, defense, and foreign policy. The NSA is the executive head of the NSC which is created under the leadership Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1998. Before the creation of NSC, the Prime ministers usually had one of his close confident used to advice the Prime Minister on the critical issues. As of now, the NSC is headed by the Prime minister. It has an adequate and efficient staff to formulate suggestion for the policies. The NSA is responsible to keep the Prime minister informed about the functioning of NSC. Thus, NSC and its secretariat is responsible for policy coordination among various ministries and departments. The NSC plays a crucial role in aligning India's defense and foreign policies. It ensures that diplomatic and security strategies complement each other, especially in areas like counterterrorism, border security, and military alliances. It must be mentioned here that there is a provision for Strategic Policy Group (SPG), which is a subgroup within the NSC. The SPG includes senior officials from the MEA, Ministry of Defense, and intelligence agencies, providing inputs on strategic policy matters. At present, Mr. Ajit Doval functions as the National Security Advisor, currently serving as his third consecutive term since his appointment in 2014.

The major functions of NSC are —

The major function of NSC is Strategic coordination and policy formulation. The NSC is responsible for the overall strategic assessment of India's security environment, both domestically and internationally. It provides a broad framework within which India's foreign policy is formulated, ensuring that diplomatic efforts are aligned with security and defense priorities. It advises the Prime Minister on matters of national security and foreign policy, helping craft strategies for dealing with regional and global security challenges, such as terrorism, border disputes, and international conflicts.

You must remember here that the National Security Advisor (NSA), a key figure in the NSC, is one of the most influential voices in shaping India's foreign policy. The NSA provides critical advice to the Prime Minister on security and diplomatic matters and plays a direct role in negotiations with foreign powers. The NSA, along with the MEA, coordinates India's

responses to regional conflicts, cyber security threats, and strategic partnerships. For instance, the NSA has played a central role in managing India's relations with countries like China (especially during border standoffs), the US (in strategic defense dialogues), and Pakistan (regarding counter-terrorism efforts).

Regarding Defense and Security Diplomacy also NSC plays major role. The NSC integrates India's defense diplomacy with its foreign policy objectives. It is instrumental in shaping military alliances, defense procurement, and strategic partnerships that have foreign policy implications. The NSC oversees India's defense relationships with countries such as the United States, Russia, Israel, and France. It coordinates joint military exercises, defense agreements, and counter-terrorism operations, ensuring that they contribute to India's broader security and diplomatic goals.

Again, in times of international crises, such as military confrontations, terrorist attacks, or regional conflicts, the NSC plays a key role in managing India's strategic responses. The NSC is often entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating between various branches of the government, including the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Ministry of Defense, and intelligence agencies, to respond to threats or conflicts that have both security and foreign policy dimensions. For example, during the 2019 Pulwama attack and subsequent Balakot airstrike, the

You should remember here that the NSC is central to India's approach to border management and security, particularly with China and Pakistan, where territorial disputes play a critical role in foreign policy. The NSC coordinates India's strategic posture along its borders, working closely with the armed forces and the MEA to address border tensions diplomatically. This has been particularly important in India's ongoing disputes with China in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh, and with Pakistan over Jammu and Kashmir.

Counter-terrorism is a major area where the NSC directly impacts India's foreign policy. The NSC helps coordinate international counter-terrorism partnerships, especially with countries like the United States, Israel, and European Union members. India's efforts to combat terrorism globally, including pushing for the designation of terrorist groups in international forums

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like the UN, are often informed by the NSC's security assessments and intelligence inputs.

The NSC coordinates India's intelligence agencies, such as the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and the Intelligence Bureau (IB), in providing strategic intelligence that informs foreign policy decisions. Intelligence sharing and collaboration with foreign countries is a crucial part of India's foreign policy, particularly in the areas of counter-terrorism, cyber-security, and border security. The NSC helps facilitate these partnerships, ensuring that intelligence inputs are integrated into foreign policy.

The NSC is a key player in managing India's nuclear policy, especially its doctrine of "No First Use" and the maintenance of credible minimum deterrence. This policy has significant foreign policy implications, particularly in India's relations with nuclear-armed neighbors like China and Pakistan. The NSC also plays a role in India's participation in global arms control and non-proliferation regimes, ensuring that India's security needs are balanced with its commitments to international nuclear norms.

The NSC is deeply involved in India's strategic vision for the Indo-Pacific region, an area of growing geopolitical importance. India's foreign policy in the Indo-Pacific involves building partnerships with countries like Japan, Australia, and the US (through the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or "Quad") to ensure freedom of navigation, secure trade routes, and counterbalance China's influence. Maritime security, particularly in the Indian Ocean, is a key area where the NSC integrates India's naval capabilities with its foreign policy goals.

Internal security challenges, such as insurgencies in the northeastern states or Maoist violence, also have foreign policy implications, especially regarding India's relations with neighboring countries like Nepal, Bhutan, and Myanmar. The NSC helps ensure that foreign policy decisions take into account internal security dynamics, coordinating cross-border efforts to curb insurgent activity and illegal arms trafficking.

With the rise of cyber threats, the NSC has taken on a leading role in shaping India's cyber-security policy. This involves diplomatic engagements with countries and international organizations to establish norms and frameworks for cyber-security. The NSC promotes international cooperation

on cyber defense, ensuring that India's foreign policy includes provisions for addressing cyber espionage, cybercrime, and threats to critical infrastructure.

The NSC contributes to India's positions in multilateral organizations like the United Nations (UN), G20, and BRICS. In particular, its assessments guide India's stance on global security issues, such as peacekeeping missions, terrorism, and disarmament. India's bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, for example, is supported by the NSC's strategic outlook, which emphasizes India's growing role as a global security provider.

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STOP TO CONSIDER:

Some other institutions/ Agencies that help in formulating Foreign Policy

Research and Analysis Wing (RAW): RAW is India's external intelligence agency, playing a critical role in gathering intelligence on foreign nations, cross-border terrorism, and security threats. RAW's inputs are crucial in shaping India's diplomatic and strategic responses.

Intelligence Bureau (IB): The IB focuses on internal security and also assists in foreign policy formulation when it comes to matters of cross-border terrorism, insurgencies, and threats from neighboring countries.

Think Tanks and Policy Research Institutes: Various think tanks and research institutions provide intellectual input and policy recommendations that influence foreign policy decision-making. These include organizations like the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), Observer Research Foundation (ORF), and the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA). These institutions conduct research on global issues, analyze geopolitical trends, and offer expert opinions, which help guide policymakers in formulating strategies on foreign relations.

Indian Diaspora: It also provides input in foreign policy formulations. The Indian diaspora, particularly in countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Gulf region, plays a significant role in shaping foreign policy. The diaspora's economic contributions

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(through remittances), as well as its political and cultural influence help to build stronger diplomatic ties. The MEA has a specific division for the Indian diaspora, engaging in diplomacy to protect the rights of Indian citizens abroad and utilizing the diaspora for cultural diplomacy.

Civil Society and Media: Civil society organizations, the media, and academic institutions play an indirect role in shaping foreign policy by influencing public opinion and generating debate on international issues. Media coverage of international relations often shapes public perception and puts pressure on the government to adopt certain foreign policy positions. Non-governmental actors, including think tanks, academics, and business leaders, often engage in Track-II diplomacy—informal dialogues with foreign counterparts that complement official diplomatic efforts.

International Organizations and Multilateral Forums: India's participation in international organizations like the United Nations, World Trade Organization (WTO), G20, and BRICS significantly influences its foreign policy. India uses these platforms to advocate for global reforms, economic development, climate action, and international peacekeeping. India's engagement with international organizations on issues like climate change, energy security, and sustainable development also shapes its foreign policy approach in global negotiations.

3.3.4 Ministry of Defense (MoD).

The foreign policy is directly related to the territorial and national security of a country. Therefore, the Ministry of Defense (MoD) is instrumental in shaping India's defense-related foreign policy, especially in areas such as military cooperation, joint exercises, defense agreements, and arms deals with foreign nations. The Indian Armed Forces (Army, Navy, and Air Force) often engage in defense diplomacy, participating in international peacekeeping missions, military exercises, and humanitarian assistance. The MoD coordinates these efforts with the MEA and the NSC. It also tries to improve the Border Security and Strategic Alliances of India. The MoD, in coordination with the MEA and the NSC, is responsible for

shaping India’s foreign policy toward neighboring countries that pose security challenges, particularly Pakistan and China.

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SAQ

To what extent the Ministry of External Affairs have been successful in providing welfare assistance to the expatriates returning from GCC countries? (80 words)

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3.3.5 Parliament

The Parliament of India represents the aspirations of Indian people. Its make the government accountable for all its policies and actions. Again, we all know that all government decisions must be approved by the Parliament. Therefore, the decisions relating to the foreign policy of India are also discussed in the Parliament. India’s Parliament plays crucial role in foreign policy-making through debates, discussions, and approvals of key international agreements, treaties, and declarations. Parliamentary debates tend to articulate the wider range of public opinion in a policy of the government. After debates and discussions suggestions are also made in the Parliament on a particular policy. Moreover, it is also ensured in the Parliament that foreign policy decisions align with democratic principles and national interests.

3.3.6 Parliamentary Committees

The Parliamentary Committees play very crucial role in framing India’s foreign policy. We have already learnt that debates and discussions in the Parliament help in framing an effective foreign policy. However, the Parliament is a very large body where sometimes it becomes difficult to discuss issues in a detailed manner. Moreover, sometimes in some technical issues there may be absence of such knowledgeable persons. Hence

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provisions have been made for parliamentary committees to deal with such issues in a detailed manner with experienced and knowledgeable persons on those issues. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs reviews foreign policy issues and provides recommendations. The Parliamentary Committee on Defense is another body that examines the intersection of defense and foreign relations, especially in the context of security and strategic partnerships.

3.3.7 Ministry of Commerce and Industry:

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry plays a significant role in foreign policy, especially in areas related to trade agreements, economic partnerships, and investment promotion. The ministry works with the MEA to negotiate bilateral and multilateral trade agreements and engage in economic diplomacy. The Ministry of Finance contributes to foreign policy, particularly in matters related to international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and Asian Development Bank (ADB). The ministry also oversees foreign direct investment (FDI) policies and international monetary cooperation.

Moreover, India's participation in international trade organizations like the World Trade Organization (WTO), BRICS, and G20 is coordinated by the Ministry of Commerce, influencing the economic dimensions of India's foreign policy. Again, the Ministry of Finance is involved in formulating and implementing sanctions or economic measures against foreign nations, often in collaboration with the MEA.

From the above discussion we have learnt that the formulation of India's foreign policy is a multifaceted process involving several key institutions. These bodies work together to ensure that India's national interests—ranging from security and economic development to global diplomacy—are effectively advanced on the world stage.

Check Your Progress:

- Q1. Discuss the role of Ministry of External Affairs in formulating the Indian foreign policy.

- Q2. Explain the role of Prime Minister's Office in formulating the Indian foreign policy.
- Q3. What are the Institutions of foreign policy making in India? Analyse the role of different institutions in formulating the Indian foreign policy.
- Q4. What is National Security Council? Discuss its functions in formulating the Indian foreign policy.

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3.4 Summing Up

After reading this unit you have learnt that foreign policy making is a very important task of a government. The responsibility of foreign policy making has been entrusted in different institutions in India. The Ministry of External Affairs is the governmental body entrusted with the responsibility for some aspects of foreign policy making, actual implementation of policy, and daily conduct of international relations. The ministry's duties include providing timely information and analysis to the Prime Minister and minister of external affairs, recommending specific measures when necessary, planning policy for the future, and maintaining communications with foreign missions in New Delhi. In 1994 the ministry administered 149 diplomatic missions abroad, which were staffed largely by members of the Indian Foreign Service. The ministry is headed by the minister of external affairs, who holds cabinet rank and is assisted by a deputy minister and a foreign secretary, and secretaries of state from the Indian Foreign Service. Thus you find that The Ministry of External Affairs led the nation into the front in the matter of foreign relations. The National Security Council (NSC) is central to integrating India's national security needs with its foreign policy objectives. By coordinating defense, intelligence, and security policies, the NSC ensures that India's foreign policy is not only reactive to global events but also proactive in securing the country's strategic interests. The NSC's role in areas like counter-terrorism, defense diplomacy, and crisis management reflects its importance in shaping India's global standing. Besides, the discussions of the Parliament, parliamentary committees, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Finance etc also play very important role in shaping the foreign policy of India.

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Unit - 4

Nonalignment: Challenges and Relevance

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Unit Structure:

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Objectives
- 4.3 Concept of non-alignment
- 4.4 Issues of Non-alignment Movement
- 4.5 Challenges to Nonalignment
- 4.6 India and Non-alignment
- 4.7 Role and Relevance of NAM
- 4.8 Summing Up
- 4.9 Reference and Suggested Readings

4.1 Introduction

In the previous units we have discussed at length about the foreign policy of India. We have learnt that Indian foreign policy is guided by certain principles. One of those principles has been non-alignment. After going through the previous units you must have got some idea about non-alignment. In simple words, non alignment means not allied with other nations. The term non-alignment was first coined by V. K Menon in his speech at the United Nations in the year 1953. This principle plays very important role during the cold war period when some of the countries of the following this principle maintained distance from the two power blocks.

The term non-alignment denotes different meanings to different schools of thought. In the study of political science, non-alignment refers to a policy of keeping out of alliances in general and military in particular. Hence, it is clear to you now that Non-alignment is based on the desire for the national independence and non-involvement in conflicts. During the Cold War many countries of the world have accepted non-alignment as the basis of their foreign policy. Many nonaligned countries, particularly from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, sought to remain neutral between the US and the USSR. The movement became an important voice for countries marginalized in global affairs, pushing for decolonization, economic justice, and peaceful

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coexistence. In this unit we shall discuss the challenges the non-alignment is facing in the contemporary world.

4.2 Objectives

The non alignment policy aimed at avoiding military alliances with major powers and to have flexibility. It was mainly to safeguard the interests of newly decolonized and developing countries in global forums, including the United Nations Besides, this policy emphasizes on strengthening cooperation among developing nations to counterbalance the dominance of superpowers. After reading this unit you will be able to :

- Explain the concept of non-alignment
- Analyse the growth of non-alignment
- Examine the relevance of non-alignmnet

4.3 Concept of non-alignment:

Nonalignment is a policy adopted by countries that sought to remain independent or neutral. We have already learnt that the term ‘non-alignment’ has been interpreted in different ways.. Many have preferred the term ‘neutralism’ to non-alignment. However, non-alignment has broader meanings. A non-align country is not required to be neutral all the time. It can participate actively in world affairs under exceptional circumstances. We must remember that non-alignment is linked with the Cold War and therefore non-alignment aims at keeping away not only from a particular conflict but from the Cold War which divided the world into two blocks.

This policy became very popular during the cold war period when many countries took a neutral stand by abstaining from joining any power group in the face of geopolitical rivalries. Rather than aligning with one of the two dominant superpowers at the time—the United States and its allies (Western bloc) or the Soviet Union and its allies (Eastern bloc)—nonaligned countries aimed to avoid alliances and remained independent in international relations.

The term non-alignment was first coined by V.K Menon in 1953 when he delivered a speech in United Nations. The term was later used by

J. Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India in 1954 in Colombo. This principle had become a policy guideline for the as an approach for newly independent countries to avoid aligning with either the US-led Western bloc or the Soviet Union-led Eastern bloc. The principle of Nonalignment has been associated with the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) that emerged during the Cold War era. This movement aimed at preserving sovereignty, avoiding involvement in power blocs, and promoting global peace and cooperation.

Thus, when we trace the origin of Non-alignment it is found that this concept originated in the context of decolonization after World War II when many newly independent countries, particularly in Asia and Africa, wanted to assert their sovereignty and avoid being drawn into Cold War tensions. The formalization of nonalignment as a global strategy came in 1961 with the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) by leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru (India), Josip Broz Tito (Yugoslavia), Gamal Abdel Nasser (Egypt), and Sukarno (Indonesia). NAM sought to represent countries that refused to align with super power and promoted cooperation, peace, and independence. There are various factors responsible for the growth of the principle of non-alignment. Now let us discuss these factors below:

- *Nationalism*: Nationalism was the guiding force of the freedom movements of most of the Asian and African countries. Most of the countries of Africa and Asia obtain freedom after a long struggle. Therefore, they try their best to preserve their independence and adopt the policy of non-alignment to maintain distance from the superpowers.
- *Opposing colonialism*: The newly independent nations in the post World War II period persisted the feeling of anti-colonialism which resulted in the growth of non-alignment. They anticipated that being with any power block may again reduce their status to a colony of a powerful nation.
- *Economic backwardness and Aids*: the newly emerged countries of the post World War II are mostly economically poor. The economies of these countries were devastated by the colonial

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powers. After getting independence these countries emphasized restructuring their economies with the help of the economically developed countries. Hence they did not join any power block for their own interest.

- *Racial and Cultural aspects:* the colonial powers have ruled most of the Asian and African countries and propagated the idea of their racial superiority. They have also treated the colonies as culturally backward. This racial arrogance and cultural dominance have created a feeling of agony among the people. This has created a sense of affinity among the newly emerged countries and they decided to co-operate each other and curb racial and cultural domination.
- *Establishing a Peaceful Environment:* The countries of Asia and Africa wanted the establishment of a peaceful international environment for the proper economic and political development. Hence they decided to keep away from the military alliances.

You have already studied the principle of non-alignment as an objective of foreign policy of India in the previous unit of this block. You must remember here that not only India, but many countries of the world have opted for the non-alignment as an objective of their foreign policies. Again, we have also learnt that the basic aim of foreign policy is to promote national interest. Thus, through the principle of non-alignment, the newly independent nations of the world have tried to promote their national interest.

The non-alignment as a principle of foreign policy aims at the following:

- *Independence in formulating policies:* the newly independent nations were keen to preserve their independence. Since at the nascent stage the countries were economically, politically and militarily weak to compete with economically advanced nations of the world, they adopted non-alignment as a principle of their foreign policy.

- *Avoiding war and preserving peace:* these countries of the world have learnt a lesson after two devastating World Wars that war cannot bring peace. The new nations of the world has concentrated more on economic development and therefore tried to avoid war by the policy of non-alignment. Moreover, they also believe that throughout the history alliances and arms race have led to war. So by keeping distance from both the power blocks, these nations try to act as a mediator and save the world from the scourge of another world War.
- *Economic Development:* the foreign policy of every nation also aims at the economic development of the nation. After the World War II, the new nations also thrive to be economically independent besides being politically independent. For that they wanted to divert their resources from armaments to other development schemes makes the lives of the people better.

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Stop to Consider

Key Features of Nonalignment: Nonalignment, that emerged during the Cold War era is characterized by several key features that distinguish it as a foreign policy approach. These features are —

Neutrality in Global Power Conflicts

The most defining feature of nonalignment is neutrality in the rivalry between major global powers. Nonaligned countries refuse to formally join any military alliances or blocs, such as NATO (led by the US) or the Warsaw Pact (led by the Soviet Union), during the Cold War. This neutrality allowed them to avoid entanglement in ideological conflicts.

Maintaining Sovereignty and Independence

Nonalignment is centered on the principle of national sovereignty, where mostly the newly independent countries retain the right to determine their own foreign and domestic policies free from external influence or pressure.

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Avoiding Military Alliances

Nonaligned countries deliberately avoided joining formal military alliances, as these alliances could drag them into conflicts that were not of their making.

Promotion of Peace and Disarmament

Nonalignment advocates for global peace and disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament and emphasized on mediation, dialogue, and international diplomacy as alternatives to war and aggression.

Non-Interference in Internal Affairs

Nonalignment supports the principle of non-interference and respect for sovereignty, where countries do not interfere in the domestic affairs of other states.

Economic Development

Many of these countries were newly decolonized and sought to focus on their economic development without being tied to the economic or trade policies of the superpowers. Nonaligned countries advocated for economic cooperation among developing nations (the Global South).

Support for Anti-Colonialism and Decolonization

Nonalignment strongly supported the global movement for decolonization and the end of imperial rule. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) actively supported liberation struggles in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, promoting independence and self-rule.

Multilateralism and International Cooperation

Nonaligned countries favored a multilateral approach to solving global problems, advocating for greater international cooperation, particularly through organizations like the United Nations.

Thus we can say that the key features of nonalignment—neutrality, independence, peace promotion, and multilateralism—allow countries to assert their sovereignty, maintain flexibility in foreign policy, and work for global justice.

4.4 Issues of Non-Alignment Movement

The non-align countries of the world have united themselves under Non-alignment Movement. Thus, the movement becomes an international platform for the states that are not formally aligned with or against any power block. The origin of the movement can be traced back to the year 1955 when 29 Asian and African nations met at Bandung (Indonesia). The name of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India needs special mention here. By taking the initiative of NAM, he said that coming together of the leaders of Asian and African states was an event of great importance in so far as it marked the birth of Asia and a new Africa. Besides Jawaharlal Nehru, G. Abdul Nasar from Egypt and Joseph Broz Tito from Yugoslavia took initiative in the emergence of Non Alignment Movement.

It is pertinent for you to know here that the NAM has a unique form of administrative style i.e. non-hierarchical, rotational and inclusive. It provides all the member states, irrespective of their size, the opportunity to participate in the global affairs. In every Summit, the movement rotates its Chair to the head of the state of the host country of the Summit. The Chair of the movement is entrusted with the responsibility for promoting the interests and activities of the Movement. Thus, the summits play a very important role in carrying forward NAM policies. Now let us discuss some of the important NAM summits and their policies.

Belgrade Conference (1961):

The non-alignment movement acquired an international character in the Belgrade Conference of 1961. Twenty-six Afro-Asian countries and one European nation took part in the Belgrade Conference. A declaration of 27 points is adopted in this conference. It made an appeal to the superpowers to preserve and protect the international peace and security. It also condemns all types of colonialism, imperialism and racialism. It also stood for complete disarmament

Cairo Conference (1964):

The Second meeting of the non-aligned countries was held in Cairo in October 1964. The conference was attended by the 47 countries and eleven observers all over the world. This conference was very significant

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because after the first meet al Belgrade in 1961, the world has witnessed several developments. During this period, world witnessed the Cuban missile crisis and Indo-China conflict in 1962. It was a great blow to a country like India who formulated their foreign policy on the basis on Panchsheel. The Cairo conference adopted a declaration entitled 'Programme for Peace and International Co-operation'. This declaration asserted that peace can be strengthened only if principles of universal freedom, equality and justice were observed and imperialism and neo-colonialism were abolished altogether.

The conference also emphasized principle of peaceful co-existence and insisted on the settlement of all international conflicts through peaceful means. This conference emphasized general and complete disarmament. The principles emphasized by the Cairo Declaration were non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, support to armed struggle or movements of colonial people against colonial powers.

Lusaka Conference (1970):

After that at Lusaka the third summit of non-alignment nations was held. In this summit, the number of countries was increased to 54 and 9 other countries sent their observers. The conference emphasized that the non-aligned countries can use their collective wisdom and influences to maintain the balance of power in favour of peace and international co-operation. It also emphasized the role of non-align countries as the vanguard of this peaceful movement to enrich human life. This conference produced a General declaration called, *Non-Alignment and Economic Progress* which highlighted the relevance of non-alignment and urged all the countries of the world to resolve conflicts through peaceful means. It further emphasized dissolution of military alliances, decolonization and economic co-operation.

Algiers Conference (1973):

In 1973, the fourth non-aligned Summit was held in Algiers. This time the number of members increased to 76 and observers of 9 countries attended it. Thus, this conference represented the majority of the population of the world. This Conference adopted a very detailed set of political and

economic resolutions. It laid emphasis on the need of strengthening struggle for freedom and peace throughout the world. This conference condemned the role of multinationals corporations in the economy of developing countries.

New Delhi Summit (1983)

On March 1983, the seventh non-aligned meet was held at New Delhi. In this meet 99 nations took part. This summit declared the non-aligned movement as the biggest peace movement in the history. This summit appealed to the great powers to desist from drift towards a nuclear conflict. It also called for immediate prohibition of nuclear weapons and establishing nuclear weapon free zones in different parts of the world. It also emphasized adopting new measures for establishing a new international economic order.

Jakarta Summit (1992)

The 10th Summit of non-aligned countries was held at Jakarta from 1st to 6th September' 1992. The Summit was attended by 102 countries of the world. Like the previous summits, this also emphasized disarmament with regard to the instruments of mass destruction. This summit also emphasized respecting human rights all over the globe and guaranteeing right to self-determination. It also called for solution of problems in Afghanistan and Palestine and restoring peace in the world.

Durban Summit (1998)

On September 1998, 12th Summit of NAM was held at Durban. This summit mainly focused on issues of cross-border terrorism, global disarmament and also relevance of NAM in the era of economic globalization. It also emphasized solving the problem of terrorism and nuclear disarmament. It also stressed on the significance of universal adherence to Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Further, the Summit calls for reviewing the role of financial bodies like the IMF, World Bank and WTO in developing countries.

Sharm el-Sheikh Summit (2009)

On July 2009, at Sharm el Sheikh of Egypt 118 nations met for the 15th NAM Summit. This summit emphasized the working out of a strategy to tackle world financial crisis and sought international solidarity to fight against terrorism and enhance peace and development. It also talked about

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promoting new international economic order of equality and sustainable development.

Tehran Summit (2012)

The 16th Summit of the NAM was held in Tehran from 26th to 31st August in 2012. This Summit was attended by leaders of 120 countries. This Summit emphasized on nuclear disarmament.

Baku Summit (2019)

The 16th Summit of the NAM was held in Tehran from 26th to 31st August, 2019 in Baku, Azrbaijan. This Summit was attended by leaders of more than 120 countries. The Summit's final document ratified on October 26 by the 120 members of NAM emphasies on strengthening NAM solidarity in combating terrorism. It also highlighted the fact that terrorism should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group.

Kampala Summit (2024)

The 19th Summit of the NAM was held in Kampala, Uganda in January 2024. The main theme of this Summit was “Deepening Cooperation for Shared global affluence”. It also slams Israeli military aggression and called for UN Security Council resolution of allowing humanitarian aid in to Gaza strip. This Summit was attended by 90 members. The External Affairs Minister of India led the Indian delegation at the 19th Summit and urged for a sustainable solution to the Gaza crisis. He also emphasized the need for providing relief in this humanitarian crisis.

Thus, from these summits it is clear to us that NAM plays an important role in fighting against racialism, colonialism, apartheid, terrorism, equitable and sustainable economic development and disarmament. It also strives to fight against climate change and financial crisis the world is facing today.

SAQ

Do you think that the Non-Aligned Movement has lost its relevance today? (80 words)

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4.5 Challenges to Nonalignment

It has already been mentioned that non-alignment as a policy emerged after Second World War and it became a movement during the cold war phase. We all know that during the Cold war, bi-polarism prevailed and the world was mainly divided in to two blocks. After the Second World War decolonization process started and many countries started getting independence from the colonial rule. These new independent countries wanted to secure their sovereignty and therefore, hesitated to join any power block. Many of them were influenced by the ideology of non-alignment advocated by J. Nehru in 1954 and adopted this policy.

Started in 1961, the non alignment movement played very important role in the cold war period by staying away from the superpowers. However after the dissolution of USSR the cold war came to an end. In that scenario, many questioned the relevance of the policy as well as the movement.

You must remember here that there is a difference between non-align movement and non-alignment as a principle. The movement played important role in the cold war period, but non alignment as a policy has always relevance. Though at the present time, both the principle as well as the movement is facing new challenges. Let us now discuss the challenges faced by the principle as well as the movement in this section.

- a) **Economic Interdependence:** In today’s globalized world, economic dependencies often make it difficult for countries to remain nonaligned. Countries may have to side with global powers based on trade, investment, and technology dependencies. Thus the Global economic integration may lead to dependencies on major economies, making it

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difficult for countries to remain truly nonaligned. Trade relations, investments, and financial aid from powerful countries can influence foreign policy decisions.

In the contemporary world, countries heavily involved in global trade and investment may find it challenging to maintain a neutral stance due to economic interests aligning with specific global powers or trade blocs. For example, India remains a strong proponent of nonalignment but is also engaged with multiple global powers, as seen in its membership in multilateral forums such as BRICS, the Quad, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

b) Security Dynamics: Increasingly complex global security challenges, such as terrorism, cyber warfare, and nuclear proliferation, often compel countries to enter military alliances or partnerships, thus compromising nonalignment. Moreover, Nonaligned countries may even face security threats that compel them to seek military alliances or partnerships. This makes it difficult for them to continue their neutral position and lead to involvement in military agreements or joint exercises.

Again, rising threats such as terrorism or insurgency may push nonaligned countries to collaborate with major powers for security assistance, thereby complicating their nonaligned status. . However, it has also been observed that the ASEAN member states often pursue nonalignment to maintain regional stability while avoiding direct confrontation with powers like China and the US.

c) Geopolitical Pressures: In a world with rising tensions between major powers (e.g., the US and China), nonaligned countries often face pressure to align with one side or the other, especially on key strategic issues like the Indo-Pacific or digital infrastructure. Thus, sometimes the countries tend to compromise with the non align principle and make strategic choices.

Again, it has also been observed that the regional conflicts and strategic rivalries create situations where nonaligned countries are drawn into alliances or diplomatic positions due to regional pressures

- d) **Internal Political Pressure:** Internal political pressures and party interests at the domestic level also effect the foreign policy decisions of a country. Leaders may face domestic pressure to align with a particular global power or block based on political, economic, or ideological considerations. In such situation the principle of nonalignment has to be compromised by the leaders. We all know that public opinion plays a vital role in the modern world. Public opinion and nationalist sentiments may drive governments to take sides or adopt policies that conflict with their nonaligned principles.
- e) **Global Governance and Reform:** Nonaligned countries often push for reforms in international institutions like the United Nations, but achieving consensus and influencing these bodies can be challenging. They may struggle to get their voices heard in a system dominated by major powers. Moreover, there are many issues of global importance such as climate change, health pandemics, and international terrorism that requires cooperation with major powers, which can complicate the nonaligned stance.
- f) **Strategic Autonomy vs. Alignment:** Many countries practicing nonalignment have adopted a policy of strategic autonomy, engaging with multiple powers without full alignment. However, this approach can sometimes blur the lines of neutrality and lead to perceptions of partiality.
- g) **Diplomatic Complexity:** Maintaining balanced diplomatic relationships with multiple global powers has become complex and challenging in the contemporary world, especially when those powers have conflicting interests or when international circumstances change rapidly. Nonaligned countries must navigate a complex web of international relations, making strategic decisions that align with their interests while preserving their neutral stance.
- h) **Historical and Cultural Context:** Sometimes, historical ties with colonial powers or former superpowers can influence a country's foreign policy decisions, making it challenging to remain neutral in modern geopolitical contexts. On the other hand, cultural, ideological, and

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historical factors can affect a country's foreign policy choices, potentially leading to alignment with specific global powers despite a formal stance of nonalignment.

- i) **Global Power Shifts:** The rise of new global powers and shifting alliances complicates the nonalignment strategy, as countries must navigate a more fragmented and competitive international landscape. Moreover, participation in regional conflicts or disputes also challenges a country's ability to maintain a neutral foreign policy stance, as seen with ongoing tensions in various parts of the world.

Nonalignment, while a valuable and principled approach to international relations, faces several challenges in the contemporary global environment. Geopolitical rivalries, economic dependencies, security concerns, domestic politics, and the complexities of global governance all impact the effectiveness and practical application of nonalignment. Despite these challenges, many countries continue to navigate these issues by adapting their nonaligned principles to modern realities, striving to maintain their independence and strategic autonomy in a multipolar world. These challenges highlight the difficulties of maintaining nonalignment in a rapidly changing and increasingly interconnected global environment.

Nonalignment, while a powerful and influential foreign policy doctrine, faces several challenges that can complicate its implementation and effectiveness. These challenges arise from evolving global dynamics, shifting geopolitical landscapes, and the practical realities of international relations.

4.6 India and Non-alignment

Non-alignment is a strategy aimed at maintaining national sovereignty and independence in foreign policy by avoiding military and ideological entanglements with major global powers. Initially developed during the Cold War, the principles of non-alignment continue to influence many countries' foreign policies today, especially those seeking to navigate a complex, multipolar world. From the discussions above, we know that India has been a prominent and influential advocate of nonalignment since its

independence. The country's approach to non-alignment has evolved over time, adapting to changing global dynamics while maintaining core principles.

We know that India's commitment to nonalignment was largely shaped by its first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, who, along with other leaders like Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt and Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, was instrumental in founding the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1961. It must be remembered here that Nehru's vision of nonalignment was rooted in the desire to maintain India's sovereignty and independence amid the Cold War tensions between the US and the Soviet Union. The non alignment policy has been adopted by India mainly to avoid formal alignment with either of the two superpowers and stand neutral during cold war. It also implies that the country focuses on its own national interests and maintaining neutrality in international conflicts. Moreover, the principle of sovereignty was central to India's foreign policy, ensuring that the country could pursue its own path without being influenced or controlled by external powers.

Thus, with the help of non alignment principle, India balanced its relations with both the US and the Soviet Union, seeking to gain economic and military support while avoiding entanglement in their rivalries. At the same time, India also engaged in diplomatic relations with both blocs, to secure favorable outcomes in international forums and negotiations.

We all know that India has been a strong advocate for nuclear disarmament and global peace and through its policy of nonalignment it emphasizes on peaceful conflict resolution. India has supported economic development and cooperation among developing countries, aligning with the NAM's goals of improving global economic equity and promoting South-South cooperation. India supported liberation movements and anti-colonial struggles in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, aligning with the NAM's support for decolonization and self-determination.

In the post cold war period the Nonalignment policy of India has also made certain changes in accordance to the changing global scenario. After the end of the Cold War, India's nonalignment evolved into a policy of strategic autonomy, where it continued to maintain independent decision-making while engaging with multiple global powers. Again, there were some

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important changes in the economic sector of India during this period as the country adopted globalization, privatization and liberalization policy. It marked a shift towards more open economic policies and greater engagement with global markets. However, it must be remembered here that the principles of nonalignment—particularly strategic independence—remained.

Therefore, we can say that in the contemporary multipolar world, India continues to practice nonalignment by engaging with major powers like the US, China, and the EU without fully aligning with any single power. Moreover, India plays a significant role in various international forums, such as the BRICS group (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) and the Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue with the US, Japan, and Australia), reflecting its balanced and independent approach to global politics.

However, many critics are of the opinion that India no longer follows the non-alignment principle. They have raised questions regarding India's growing relationship with the US, particularly in strategic and defense sectors.

Critics have pointed out that tensions with China, including border disputes and strategic competition, makes it difficult for India to follow the policy of nonalignment. It is also apprehended that as India integrates into the global economy, it will face challenges in balancing its nonaligned stance with the economic and strategic dependencies that come with global integration.

From the above discussion it is clear to us that India's approach to nonalignment has been a cornerstone of its foreign policy since independence. India has been a leading figure in NAM, using its platform to advocate for issues of global peace, development, and justice. While the context and strategies have evolved, the core principles of sovereignty, strategic independence, and global cooperation remain central to India's international stance. In a multipolar world, India's commitment to nonalignment continues to shape its interactions with major global powers and its role in international organizations. We can say that India continues to be an active participant in NAM, contributing to discussions on global governance, economic equity, and international cooperation.

Stop to Consider:

Basis of NAM

The Basis of Non-alignment lies in the Panchsheel principles. These principles are as follows:

- a) Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty
- b) Mutual Non-aggression
- c) Mutual non-interference in one another's affairs
- d) Equality and Mutual Benefit
- e) Peaceful co-existence

Reading of these principles will help you to understand the basic aims, objectives and priorities of the Movement.

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4.7 Role and Relevance of NAM:

From the above discussion, you have already learnt about various NAM summits and its changing programmes and priorities. The NAM has made significant contributions towards the preservation of world peace. It has also stood for economic justice in the world. It has successfully pointed out how realistic it is to divide the world between the North and the South than the East and the West. Another significant achievement of NAM is that it has taught the developing countries of the world to pursue independent economic policies for development

There is a debate going on the relevance of NAM in the contemporary world. As we all know, NAM is a product of Cold War which has come to an end with the dissolution of Soviet Union. Many scholars of the world are, therefore of the view that NAM has no relevance today. The basic aim of NAM, i.e keeping distance from both the power blocks is no longer valid since the world is not bi-polar today. Some others are also of the view that NAM has accomplished most of its programmes and therefore have no relevance today. According to them, colonies have attained independence and apartheid has been dismantled and alliances are also disintegrated and NAM has lost its relevance. Moreover, many criticized NAM for playing an ineffective role in conflict resolutions like the gulf crisis and the Kashmir issue.

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However, you must remember that, NAM has contributed a lot towards establishing peace in the world and it has still a lot to do in this regard. Since its inception, the Movement of non-aligned countries has waged a ceaseless battle to ensure that people being oppressed by foreign occupation and domination can exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence. During the 1970s and 80s, this movement has played a key role in the struggle for the establishment of a new economic order. The movement may also be considered as a success seeing its growing number of members with the passage of time. In spite of the ideological, political, economic, social and cultural differences, the member countries have accepted the founding principles and primary objectives of NAM. Historically also, the non-aligned countries have shown their ability to overcome their differences and found a common ground for action.

In the post Cold War period, NAM has tried to refocus its basic priorities and objectives. After the dissolution of Soviet Union, the threat of bipolarity to national independence is no longer there. But, there is a growing threat the nations receive from unipolarity and hegemony of one super-power. Smaller and medium-sized countries, particularly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, still value the ability to maintain their independence in foreign policy and avoid becoming influenced by great power rivalries. Therefore, NAM still has a greater role to play in bringing equality, development and establishing peace in the international scenario. Thus, it can be said that, NAM deals not only with the issues of developing countries, but all the principal global issues from disarmament, terrorism, climate change to financial crisis.

Thus we can say that NAM has contributed significantly towards peace and equitable development of the world till today. Although the Cold War ended in the early 1990s, the relevance of nonalignment has persisted, albeit with evolving challenges and opportunities. In today's multipolar world, characterized by power shifts between the US, China, the European Union, and rising regional powers like India, the principles of nonalignment remain pertinent. Moreover, it has still to play a greater role in a post Cold War unipolar world for strengthening democracy and combat terrorism. Countries like India have adopted a more nuanced version of nonalignment, often

referred to as “strategic autonomy,” balancing relations with major global powers without fully aligning with any. Its role is also significant in providing a platform for the countries in the Global South voicing their grievances in the international forums like the United Nations.

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4.8 Summing Up

In this unit you have also learnt about the principle of non-alignment and the Non alignment movement (NAM). The principle of non-alignment stands for maintaining distance from the two power blocks that emerged in the Cold War period. You have also learnt that Nonalignment, as a foreign policy strategy, has played a crucial role in shaping the political, economic, and diplomatic landscape of many countries, especially during the Cold War and even in today’s complex global system. The non-aligned countries through NAM have successfully contributed towards establishing peace in the world. The issues and focuses of NAM have been changing with time though it mainly aimed at abolishing colonialism and racialism. The significance of nonalignment lies in its ability to provide countries, especially those from the Global South, a platform to voice their opinion as well as to take an independent stand. It helps in protecting their sovereignty and fostering global peace, economic development, and cooperation. Therefore, even today, in a multipolar world, nonalignment (or strategic autonomy) remains an important strategy for countries to manage their foreign policy while avoiding overdependence on any single global power.

Check Your Progress:

- Q1. What do you mean by non-alignment? What are the factors responsible for the growth of NAM?
- Q2. Mention two reasons for the growth of non-alignment in the international politics.
- Q3. Name three founders of NAM.
- Q4. Fill in the blanks:
 - (a) The first Summit of NAM was held in _____ in the year _____.

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- (b) The New Delhi Summit was held in the year_____.
- (c) The 15th NAM Summit was attended by _____ nations.
- (d) The 20th Nam Summit was held in _____

- Q4. Write a note on the Non-alignment movement.
- Q5. Discuss the challenges faced by Non-alignment in the contemporary world.
- Q6. Critically analyse the relevance of NAM in the contemporary world.
- Q7. Discuss the role of India in NAM.

4.9 Reference and Suggested Readings:

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Unit - 5

Multi-alignment and Indian Foreign Policy

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Unit Structure:

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Objectives
- 5.3 India and Multi-alignment
 - 5.3.1 History
 - 5.3.2 Multi-alignment at Work
 - 5.3.3 Challenges
- 5.4 Summing Up
- 5.5 References and Suggested Readings

5.1 Introduction

The concept of non-alignment had a big impact on India's foreign policy during the Cold War, when the US and the USSR were at odds with each other. However, now India adeptly navigates between different international groupings, including those led by China or Russia such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), as well as those led by the US such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), which also includes Japan and Australia. While India has pushed for 'reformed multilateral system', it has also sought to emphasize on the '5S'-*Sammaan* (Respect for every nation's sovereignty), *Samvaad* (Greater dialogue with all countries), *Sahyog* (Greater cooperation with the global community), *Shanti* (Peace) *Samriddhi* (Shared prosperity).

Resurgent major power competition characterizes the present state of world affairs. It is easy to see the world in binary terms given the ongoing battles in Europe and West Asia between Israel and Hamas, Russia and Ukraine, and the US and China over economic, technical, and geopolitical issues. Nevertheless, recent events have demonstrated New Delhi's ability to engage with a diverse range of partners, even those who may be in conflict with each other. If India's claim to be equally far from both blocs during the Cold War characterized its non-alignment, at least in theory, its contemporary "multi-alignment" is driven by national interest and the desire

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to establish bilateral connections. This learning resource aims to offer a comprehensive analysis of India's transition from a nonaligned position to a multialigned approach. It will also examine the various challenges that India encounters in its foreign policy within a rapidly evolving global landscape.

5.2 Objectives

India's current strategic stance is focused on cultivating positive relationships with its neighbours, regional actors, and major countries. It aims to promote a rules-based order and ultimately establish a significant global position. In this unit, the key objectives are-

- *Describes* the transition from nonalignment to multialignment
- *Explain* the need for India to adopt a multialigned foreign policy
- *Understand* the features of India's multialigned relationships
- *Analyze* the challenges to India's multialigned foreign policy

5.3 India and Multi-alignment

India's growing significance in addressing global supply chains and economic stability was prominently showcased at the G7 summit. With its robust industrial base, demographic dividend, expanding market, and technological advancements, India has become an important player in the world economy where the government has emphasised that the country can help make supply chains less reliant on China. This is in line with the G7's goals for economic security and resiliency. As the world's politics change, India's ability to handle its ties with both Western and Eastern powers will be very important in determining the future of world security and government.

Stop to Consider

What is multi-alignment?

Multi-alignment, in technical terms, is the strategic approach of forming multiple alliances, which may or may not be military in nature, in order to meet a country's national interests. These interests can range from concrete concerns such as security and development, to more abstract

ones like ideology. According to Ian Hall, India's foreign policy has been characterised by multi-alignment for almost ten years. This approach involves active participation in regional multilateral institutions, the establishment of strategic partnerships, and the practice of "normative hedging"... The shift is perceived as a departure from a rigid policy of non-alignment. According to India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, the statement conveys a feeling of involvement and active involvement, as well as a practical perspective focused on improving not only India but also the world.

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Understanding foreign policy requires learning about the different parties involved and the rules that govern their interactions. The most rapidly expanding alternative school of IR theory is constructivism, although its rapid expansion is in large part due to the fact that it has yet to be well defined. Like all social disciplines, international relations (IR) requires ideas to make sense of the world it is attempting to study.

5.3.1 History

Following its independence in 1947, Indian foreign policy makers were faced with the challenge of navigating a world that was ideologically divided. The Western bloc, characterised by a liberal-capitalist ideology, was led by the United States of America (USA). On the other hand, the Eastern bloc, characterised by a communist ideology, was led by the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). India, along with several other newly independent colonies, chose not to align with either of the two blocs and instead established the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1961. This movement served as a platform for developing countries to express their views at multilateral forums. The World Order established during the Cold War period (1947-1991) was destabilised when the former USSR disintegrated in 1991. The conclusion of the Cold War prompted numerous countries, including India, to reassess their foreign policy and make necessary adjustments to their economic structures. Immediately after the end of the Cold War, India took a number of political steps to improve its relations with China, the United States, and Western European countries. In 1991,

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India implemented a new economic policy that focused on liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation.

Over the course of three decades following India's significant shift in its foreign and economic policy, numerous changes have occurred in global politics. India has strategically modified its foreign policy to safeguard its interests in a dynamic global landscape. The adjustments may have been made either due to compulsion or as a strategic choice. Nevertheless, certain fundamental principles of India's foreign policy have remained consistent, albeit subject to occasional modifications in order to serve the nation's interests. The first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, was widely regarded as a key figure in shaping Indian foreign policy during the early years of the country's independence. His policies, commonly referred to as Nehruvian policies, especially that of India being 'nonaligned' continue to have a lasting impact. Importantly, the successive prime ministers, including those who led coalition governments, have actively contributed to the formulation and development of Indian foreign policy. The significance of a leader and political leadership, as well as the alterations in Indian foreign policy following Narendra Modi's election in 2014, prompted certain scholars to argue that Modi has revitalised India's foreign policy.

Stop to Consider

What is strategic autonomy?

Strategic autonomy refers to the capacity of a nation to actively pursue its own national interests and implement its desired foreign policy without any limitations imposed by other nations. Strategic autonomy, in its purest form, assumes that the state in question has a significant advantage in terms of power. The ability to resist external pressures from other states and maintain its policy and interests is a key factor for a state's resilience. The concept of strategic autonomy is determined by the power capabilities of a state and the structure of the international system during a specific historical period. Strategic autonomy is a desired goal for all states, but many are unlikely to have the required power capabilities or a favourable international environment to effectively implement it.

For decades, India has presented itself as a shining example of liberal democracy in the developing world. During past administrations, New Delhi highlighted India’s syncretic, multi-religious culture, and its remarkable capacity to nurture and welcome diversity, even as neighbouring countries experienced civil wars and communal turmoil. Similar to his predecessors, Modi has envisioned India as a sovereign force in a world with multiple power centres. In the pursuit of that goal, Modi has maintained India’s traditional policy of neutrality, non-alignment, and remaining neutral. India’s approach to various issues, including the conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza, as well as relations with Iran and Taiwan, has been characterised by a lack of clear and consistent policy. Whenever New Delhi has expressed its views, it has done so to assert its stance of remaining silent and impartial.

Check Your Progress

Q1. What do you understand by multialignment? (20 words)

.....
.....

Q2. What in the relevance of NAM in contemporary period? (40 words)

.....
.....

Q3. What are the key goals of India’s foreign policy? (40 words)

.....
.....

5.3.2 Multialignment at Work

Multialignment signifies a network of parallel connections that enhance multilateral collaborations and tackle shared security challenges. India’s strategy for engaging with various countries and navigating global politics focuses on building strong partnerships with major powers and actively participating in multilateral frameworks such as the BRICS, SCO, and the Quad. In addition, India’s approach to multilateralism involves supporting and actively participating in global trade corridors, as well as acquiring

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defence equipment from different nations. India is effectively prioritising its national interests and safeguarding its “strategic autonomy.” Recent activities clearly reveal that India has truly embraced the idea of multialigned relationship with major powers.

First, India has strengthened relations with the US led West and Russia. India and the US have experienced a wide range of dynamics in their relationship, from periods of distance to periods of collaboration, ultimately leading to a strategic partnership. They have entered into several agreements to formalise their strategic partnership, including DPA, CND, LEMOA, COMCASA, and BECA. Nevertheless, the ever-evolving landscape of real-time challenges has consistently influenced the course of strategic alignment, with national interests occasionally aligning and frequently diverging. They have starkly different ideas about how the world should be organised. Likewise, India Russia relations too have been strengthened in the aftermath of the war in Ukraine (2022). While the US has expressed worries about India’s relations with Russia, it does underscore the difficult diplomatic balancing act that the Modi administration must attempt. However, Western criticisms of Modi’s visit ignore the complexity of the Russia-India relationship, which is nonetheless critical for both countries. For New Delhi, maintaining this partnership is a critical test of its diplomatic agility. The link between India and Russia, formed during the Cold War, remains strong. Russia has emerged as India’s top oil supplier, a critical source of fertiliser, and a major grain supplier. Since the start of the crisis in Ukraine and the imposition of the Western price restriction on Russian crude, India has emerged as a major benefactor, buying inexpensive oil that has benefited its industries. Russia continues to be India’s largest weapons supplier. Despite Western fears, Prime Minister Modi’s visit to Russia in 2024 demonstrates that Moscow remains an important part of India’s geopolitical strategy.

Second, New Delhi plays a crucial role in various global multilateral frameworks, including BRICS, SCO, and the Quad. India is one of the founding members of the BRICS grouping, which was formalised in 2006. The BRICS consists of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa - all emerging economies with the potential to drive global economic growth and serve as an alternate centre of power. This is in addition to other

groupings of wealthy countries like the G-7 and the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). India played a crucial role in the establishment of the New Development Bank (NDB), a new multilateral initiative that is anticipated to be a strong competitor to the World Bank.

India is not one of the original members of the SCO, as the organisation was established in 2001. India and Pakistan were both admitted as full members in 2017. The members of the grouping also consist of Russia, China, and four Central Asian countries, with the exception of Turkmenistan. India has benefited diplomatically on important occasions due to its shared platform with Pakistan and China, as well as its longstanding friendship with Russia. By utilising the SCO platform, member states can effectively address and mitigate existing differences, ensuring that they do not escalate into significant conflicts. India sees the SCO as a crucial platform to enhance relations between New Delhi and countries of Central Asia.

India is the sole nation in the Quad that possesses a land border in common with China. Simultaneously, India stands alone as the sole country without a formal security alliance with the United States. This implies that if India were to withdraw, the Quad would cease to exist, while the other three nations could still maintain their treaty alliances. Nevertheless, apart from the US, the collaboration between the other three Quad partners has also experienced significant growth in the past year. India views a free and open Indo-Pacific as a comprehensive geographic concept, promoting cooperation over conflict rather than targeting any specific country. Prime Minister Modi expressed this during his speech at the Shangri La Dialogue in Singapore in 2018. Other initiatives such as the Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) and the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI), further has enhanced India's maritime engagement with the region.

Third, India is dedicated to developing and strengthening trade corridors. Despite its opposition to the BRI-CPEC, New Delhi has focused on enhancing the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). This extensive 7,200-kilometer multi-modal transport corridor integrates road, rail, and maritime routes, linking Saint Petersburg (Russia) to Mumbai.

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In addition, the IMEC (India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor, announced in September 2023) holds significant value for India's transport sector, particularly in terms of shipping routes. The IMEC partners have the ability to utilise their technological capabilities and financial strength to establish a strong presence in this field. This project will require significant investments from the United States, India, the United Arab Emirates, and Germany, as well as ongoing involvement from their technology, telecommunications, and undersea cable companies.

Fourth, India has positioned itself as an important defence partner for the United States by establishing military-to-military cooperation treaties. In addition to the US, India expertly navigates its lengthy relationship with Russia, a geopolitical rival of the US, and continues with the procurement of Russian-made military systems, notably the S-400 missile defence system, despite the possibility of sanctions. However, in recent years, India has made steps to increase its defence purchases from nations such as France and Israel, while simultaneously supporting indigenous defence manufacture. Russia supplied 65% of India's weapons purchases of more than \$60 billion during the last two decades, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, but the Ukraine war hastened the impetus to diversify its weapons base.

Stop to Consider: NATO

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is a military alliance that was established in 1949. Its primary objective was to establish a counterbalance to the presence of Soviet armies in central and eastern Europe following the conclusion of World War II. After the conclusion of the Cold War, NATO underwent a transformation and was reimagined as a "cooperative-security" organisation. The total number of member states is 32.

The core principle of NATO is articulated in Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty (also known as the Washington Treaty), which established the alliance on April 4, 1949. According to Article 5, the signatory members have reached an agreement that-

An armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all; and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

As India's influence grows, it will be able to play a more active role as a bridge power and moderator in the Quad, G7, BRICS, and SCO. Despite its limitations, India's diplomatic achievement as a growing middle power has not gone ignored. India has progressively exploited many symbolic tools of power to boost its soft power appeal. Prime Minister Narendra Modi now portrays India as the "mother of democracies" and a "moral force" to uphold world peace.

Stop to Consider: SCO

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is recognised as the largest regional entity globally, both in terms of geographic coverage and population. It encompasses around 80% of the Eurasian landmass and represents approximately 40% of the global population. In 2023, the combined GDP of the subject was approximately 32% of the global total, based on purchasing power parity (PPP). The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a regional intergovernmental organisation that was established in 2001. It is the successor to the Shanghai Five, which was formed in 1996. The founding members of the SCO include the People's Republic of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) consists of 9 Member States: the Republic of India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, and

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the Republic of Uzbekistan. The SCO's primary objective is to enhance mutual trust and neighbourliness among its Member States. It aims to achieve this by promoting effective cooperation in various domains such as politics, trade, economy, research, technology, and culture. Additionally, the SCO seeks collaboration in education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental protection, and other relevant areas. The organisation also strives to maintain and ensure peace, security, and stability in the region. Ultimately, the SCO envisions the establishment of a democratic, fair, and rational new international political and economic order.

Although New Delhi has voiced its anguish over the war in Ukraine, it has refrained from adopting a definitive stance in many UN resolutions regarding the matter. This may be comprehensible since India has often adopted an evasive stance when it comes to crises involving its longstanding friends. Nevertheless, opponents make a valid point in contending that this lack of clarity is not fitting for a country that aspires to attain permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council. Such membership entails a responsibility to advocate as a worldwide authority against acts of territorial aggression and breaches of rights, like to the actions Russia has taken in Ukraine. Furthermore, the foundational principles of the democratic, self-assured, and morally superior "Vishwaguru" identity cannot be the same as those of the cynical hegemon that prioritises expanding its power regardless of moral considerations.

Furthermore, before the G20, India hosted the Voice of the Global South Summit, where it presented its vision for the year-long presidency. A total of 125 countries from around the world took part in this summit. Following the G20, India successfully organised the second edition of the Voice of the Global South summit. In general, India's commitment to engaging with the Global South on multiple occasions throughout the year demonstrates its strong focus on maintaining its reputation and security.

Check Your Progress

Q1. Why has India pushed forward the agenda of the Global South?

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Q2. What are the goals of the G20?

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Q3. Discuss the concept of “Vishwaguru”.

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Self Asking Question

Q1. Why is the SCO important for India? (60 words)

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5.3.3 Challenges

Navigating through the China-led, Russia-led and US-led minilateral structures,⁶ India has certainly moved beyond its non-alignment strategy from the Cold War era, which was motivated by the need to create scope for international peace by not participating in the military scenarios of a bipolar world. In the post-Cold War era, thus, India gradually gravitated towards a multi-aligned agenda. India’s multi-alignment policy is targeted at not only reducing political, economic or military dependence on any major power, but also at augmenting its position in a gradually changing international order – precipitated by the rise of China and other developing economies.

First, New Delhi’s pursuit of ‘multi-alignment’ has potentially provided diplomatic flexibility in the current conflict in Ukraine. Nevertheless, India’s attempt to act as a mediator between Russia and Ukraine may not be enough. India now lacks the tangible resources and the military might to equal the magnitude of China’s economic and military capabilities.

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Second, despite expressing disapproval of the Ukraine war, New Delhi has refrained from taking a definitive stance in numerous UN resolutions regarding the matter. It is not surprising that India has frequently adopted a cautious stance when it comes to conflicts involving its longstanding allies. Nevertheless, critics have raised valid points in suggesting that this lack of clarity is not fitting for a nation that aspires to attain permanent membership in the UNSC. Such membership implies a dedication to advocate as a global authority against acts of territorial aggression and human rights violations, much like the situation between Russia and Ukraine. Furthermore, the foundational principles of the democratic, self-assured, and ethically superior Vishwa Guru identity cannot be the same as those that support the cynical hegemon seeking to maximise its power without regard for morality.

Third, India has been actively participating in various multilateral forums, fostering diplomatic relations with a range of countries and organisations, including the Quad, BRICS, and the SCO. India is committed to maintaining positive relationships with all major powers. However, there is a potential risk in this strategy as it may lead to India not being taken seriously by others, as New Delhi runs the risk of being seen as unreliable. This will hinder the effectiveness of India's strategy as it relies on the assumption that other nations will place their faith, trust, and reliance on India, despite potentially having conflicting partnerships. If India lacks the trust and support of others, these diplomatic alliances will serve no purpose and offer no assistance when India requires it. India stands apart from the rest in all of these groups, be it the Quad, BRICS, or the SCO. It is observed that the other key members of the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) maintain stronger relationships among themselves compared to their relationship with India. The current scenario presents a potential difficulty, as an individual who is universally well-liked may encounter a lack of dependable allies during times of danger.

Stop to Consider: BRICS

The "Bric" group was formed in 2006 by Brazil, Russia, India, and China. In 2010, South Africa became a member of the "Brics" group. The organisation was established with the purpose of uniting the most significant developing countries worldwide in order to counterbalance

the political and economic dominance of the richer nations in North America and Western Europe. Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have been extended invitations to join as members, starting from 1 January 2024.

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Fourth, India's multi-alignment approach has allowed it to establish a significant presence in the current global system. Nevertheless, this may fall short of meeting the requirements for a permanent representative at the UN Security Council. The stance taken by India on the two significant armed conflicts that have occurred in the post-Covid world order is causing some concerns. It is believed that New Delhi's approach of maintaining multiple alliances may impede its ability to make decisive decisions. Adopting a multi-alignment approach gives India a significant presence in the current global order, but it also prevents it from attaining the decisive power necessary to become a major player. India's foreign policy and its global position have undeniably reaped the rewards of the multi-alignment approach. Nevertheless, it may not be the solution to New Delhi's aspirations at the UN Security Council.

Fifth, multialigned relations by India have not decreased strategic challenges in its neighbourhood and beyond the growing Russia-China axis presents a threat to India's foreign policy. Russia's involvement in the affairs of its neighbours has grown. Furthermore, sanctions imposed after the invasion of Crimea have pushed Russia closer to China, which may detract its interest in India. Importantly, India remains non-committal towards organisations such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Furthermore, India has opted out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Self-imposed isolation is inconsistent with India's goal to become a global force. Additionally, China's 'cheque book diplomacy' with Sri Lanka and Pakistan, as well as strains with Bangladesh over the National Register of Citizens (NRC) issue, have not helped India's case.

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Stop to Consider

Chequebook diplomacy

Chequebook diplomacy refers to a kind of diplomatic strategy that relies on financial indebtedness and is used in the context of bilateral relations between nations. It refers to a situation where a creditor country deliberately provides an excessive amount of credit to a debtor country, with the supposed aim of obtaining economic or political advantages from the debtor country when it is unable to repay its debts. This type of lending often involves using assets, such as infrastructure, as collateral. The terms of the loans are often undisclosed, and the borrowed funds are commonly used to remunerate contractors from the lending nation.

Check Your Progress

Q1. Why is BRICS important?

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Q2. How does India contribute to the Quad?

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Q3. Is the SAARC relevant in contemporary times?

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Self-Asking Questions

Q1: Is India really “neutral” in the war in Ukraine?

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Following the Ukraine crisis, Russia and China are interested in utilising BRICS as a way to counterbalance the influence of U.S.-led institutions and their staunchly anti-Russia positions. New Delhi strives to

maintain a balanced approach in its international engagements. While India actively participates in non-Western organisations such as BRICS and SCO, it does so not to align against the United States, but rather to counterbalance its growing influence within the US dominated QUAD and G7. India's efforts to maintain a delicate equilibrium in the midst of the Russia-Ukraine conflict have resulted in discontent among Quad members and Western partners. India has faced criticism from Western experts for its efforts to protect democracy against tyranny. India asserts that the conflict is outside its sphere of interest and that it is familiar with the consequences of war globally. The escalating tensions between the United States and Russia have fostered a stronger relationship between Moscow and Beijing. Completely excluding Russia from current markets and financial structures would expedite this process. India would face further problems as it seeks to control Chinese aggression. Currently, India skillfully manages its engagement with both China-led or Russia-led alliances like BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), while also participating in US-led alliances such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (or the Quad), which includes Japan and Australia. India is now not affiliated with any formal treaty alliance from a military standpoint. Instead, it participates in many informal alliances and regional organisations, led by opposing nations, each with distinct objectives and strategic priorities.

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5.4 Summing Up

It is also crucial to acknowledge the fundamental circumstances that have provided New Delhi with the ability to navigate the world arena. One of these factors is India's ongoing economic growth. Delhi has significant strategic and diplomatic influence because to its market size and potential for future expansion. Furthermore, due to China's increasingly assertive behaviour in Asia and other regions, a significant number of individuals in the United States and Western countries saw India as an essential regional force to counterbalance China's influence. India's credentials as a liberal, pluralist democracy are among the numerous elements that make it an appealing partner. India must carefully negotiate the complex realm of geopolitics and geoeconomics to safeguard its interests, being cautious not to falter in any area.

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Hence, adopting a multi-alignment strategy that upholds key principles of non-alignment is beneficial for India’s interests and progress towards the concept of “VasudevaKutumbakam”. India is now experiencing a period of intricate multi-alignment, which is distinct from the international system of the Cold War era. This new system is characterised by the presence of several centres of power. India has successfully adjusted to the changing conditions and power dynamics in the international system across various historical eras. India’s current strategic stance is aimed at fostering positive relationships with neighbouring countries, regional actors, and key global powers. The objective is to advance a system based on established norms and, in doing so, secure a rightful position in the international community.

India’s Minister of External Affairs, S. Jaishankar, has unequivocally said that India would not join any alliance structure, despite a growing inclination towards the United States due to concerns over China. Jaishankar also emphasised that the redistribution of global power is creating opportunities for middling nations like as India. In an effort to prevent another Cold War, particularly between the United States and China, the conflicting geopolitical interests in the Eurasian continent and the Indo-Pacific maritime area are expected to contribute to the many challenges faced by New Delhi in the future.

Check Your Progress

Q1. What is “VasudevaKutumbakam”?

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Self-Asking Question

Q1: In the larger scheme of things, why is Russia an important partner of India?

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BLOCK: II
**EMERGING THEMES IN INDIAN FOREIGN
POLICY**

Unit 1: India and the changing global balance of power

Unit 2: India and the nuclear non-proliferation order

Unit 3: India's foreign economic policy

Unit 4: Indian foreign policy and quest for energy security

Unit 5: India's soft power

Unit - 1

India and the Changing Global Balance of Power

Unit Structure:

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Objectives
- 1.3 Global Balance of Power
- 1.4 India and the Global Balance of Power at Cold War
- 1.5 India and the Changing Global Balance of Power
- 1.6 Summing Up
- 1.7 References and Suggested Readings

1.1 Introduction

As one of the world's largest democracies and fastest-growing economies, India's influence on global affairs is significantly increasing. The country's strategic geographic location, developing economic and technological capacities, and expanding diplomatic ties have positioned it as a pivotal player in the changing balance of power. Over the past few decades, India has transitioned from a regional power to an emerging global actor, influencing economic, political, and security dynamics. This shift is underscored by its active participation in multilateral organizations, strategic partnerships with major world powers, and a robust foreign policy aimed at promoting regional stability and global cooperation. In the context of global power structures, India's rise presents both opportunities and challenges. It must address its internal socioeconomic inequality, negotiate difficult relations with neighbours, and adjust to a more multipolar global order. As India continues to assert its role on the world stage, understanding the nuances of its strategic ambitions, domestic imperatives, and external engagements becomes crucial for comprehending the broader implications of the shifting global power balance.

1.2 Objectives

After completing this unit, you will be able to understand the evolving global balance of power and India's role within this context. This unit will cover the following topics:

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- Understanding the concept of Balance of Power
- Examining how the balance of power has shifted over time, particularly since the 1990s
- Exploring India's role in the changing balance of power from independence to the present
- Discussing how India maintains strategic relationships with major powers, international organizations, and neighbouring countries

1.3 Global Balance of Power

Hand J Morgenthau defines international relations as a struggle for power among nations, where each strives to preserve or overturn the status quo. This often leads to the balance of power, which is essential for maintaining stability among sovereign states. The balance of power is a fundamental concept of international relations. It ensures that no single nation can dominate others, thereby maintaining a system where all states can coexist independently. Balance of power involves continuous adjustments and alliances to ensure that no single nation gains overwhelming power. Nations may form coalitions, engage in diplomacy, or increase their military capabilities to counterbalance potential threats. The ultimate aim of balance of power is to create a self-regulating system where power is distributed in such a way that stability and independence are maintained. If stability alone were the goal, it could be achieved by allowing one entity to dominate, as seen with historical figures like Napoleon Bonaparte and Adolf Hitler. However, the true aim of the balance of power is to ensure stability and the preservation of each component's independence, allowing them to pursue their goals without overwhelming others. Since the establishment of the modern state system by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, the concept of the balance of power has been fundamental in maintaining global stability. It ensures that no single nation or alliance can dominate others and preserve the independence of each state. This balance has traditionally been preserved through various alliance systems that have evolved to adapt to the changing geopolitical landscape. Despite the theoretical principle of sovereign equality, the international political system functions as a near oligarchy, with major powers wielding significant influence over global affairs. Major powers

possess substantial military, economic, and political resources, enabling them to project power globally and shape the international system's structure and future development, with their interests and goals extending beyond territorial defence to maintaining the balance of power and international order. In contrast, minor powers lack the resources and influence to exert a significant impact on the international stage and are often subject to the decisions and pressures exerted by major powers, highlighting the disparity in power and influence. Positioned between major and minor powers, middle powers or great regional powers possess considerable regional influence and policy autonomy, dominating within their regions while maintaining a significant degree of foreign policy independence. In the present scenario, one can perceive India as a middle power. Historically, the world has been composed of several major powers, and due to the ever-changing nature of domestic politics, nations do not maintain permanent alliances but instead form alliances based on current strategic interests to either maintain the status quo or challenge it.

Since the 16th century, major wars have frequently reshaped the hierarchy of powers, with Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands losing their major power status in the 18th century due to military defeats and the loss of colonial empires. Austria-Hungary lost its major power status after World War I, and Germany and Japan were replaced by China as a major power after World War II. The victorious Allied powers in WWII (the United States, Soviet Union, Britain, France, and China) were granted major power status. They became the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. Only the United States and the Soviet Union were considered true superpowers during the Cold War. At the same time, Britain, France, and China had more limited global influence and were considered second-tier powers. After the Cold War, the US briefly emerged as the sole superpower. However, this unipolarity was soon replaced by a multipolar world order with the rise of China, Germany, Japan, Russia, and other influential actors. The balance of power remains a critical mechanism in maintaining international stability, preventing any single nation or alliance from achieving overwhelming dominance and ensuring stability and independence among nations. Understanding these mechanisms is essential for comprehending the ongoing

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shifts in global power and the efforts to maintain a stable and independent international order.

The transition toward a multipolar global order represents a fundamental shift in the distribution of power and influence among nations, characterized by the declining dominance of the United States and the simultaneous rise of other global powers. Historically, the U.S. has been the preeminent global power, exerting significant influence over world politics. However, various challenges, such as economic struggles exacerbated by events like the 2008 financial crisis, military overreach from prolonged engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan, and growing domestic polarization, have contributed to its relative decline. In contrast, countries like China, Russia, and India have risen to prominence, challenging the traditional power hierarchy. China's rapid economic growth and initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) illustrate its strategy to extend influence through infrastructure investments globally. Russia has reasserted itself under Vladimir Putin by employing military interventions and forming strategic alliances, disrupting the post-Cold War order. Additionally, India has emerged as a significant player on the world stage, actively participating in international forums such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) and BRICS, reflecting its ambitions to assert itself in global affairs. The rise of middle powers, such as Brazil and Turkey, further complicates the global order, as these nations seek to play mediatory roles in international conflicts and champion the interests of developing countries. Economic globalization has redistributed wealth and power across nations, promoting interdependence that creates opportunities for growth but also heightens vulnerability to disruptions like trade disputes and financial crises. Technological advancements have empowered both state and non-state actors, with tech giants often wielding influence that rivals that of nation-states. Meanwhile, the demand from the Global South for greater representation marks ongoing challenges to existing international structures, prompting calls for reforms in global governance. The retreat from multilateralism in some Western countries, driven by nationalist and populist movements, complicates efforts to address global challenges, leading to a fragmented and contentious international environment. In this shifting environment, countries must strike

a balance between cooperation and competition while developing new standards that accommodate the diverse interests of a multipolar world.

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1.4 India and Global BOP at Cold War

During the Cold War era, the world experienced a bipolar power structure dominated by the United States and the Soviet Union. This division compelled many nations to align with one of these superpowers, creating significant global political rifts. India's foreign policy after gaining independence in 1947 was shaped by these Cold War dynamics. The global arms race and military build-up, fuelled by alliances with the superpowers, strained the economies of newly emerging countries. In this context, Prime Minister Nehru emerged as the key architect of India's foreign policy, advocating for a strategy of nonalignment avoiding allegiance to any superpower bloc. This approach was driven by two main factors:

Nehru's concerns about the opportunity costs of defence spending and the imperative to safeguard India's hard-won independence. Nonalignment, as articulated by Nehru, aimed to keep India outside the ambit of the Cold War rivalry and positioned India as a leader in the nonaligned movement, advocating for global peace and disarmament.

During the period from 1947 to 1962, India's foreign policy was characterized by idealism, with active participation in multilateral institutions such as the United Nations. India played a significant role in peacekeeping operations and emerged as a proponent of the nonaligned movement. However, at the regional level, India faced significant challenges, particularly from the emergence of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as a major power. The unresolved border disputes with China and the Chinese aggression in 1962 posed a serious security threat to India. However, the military defeat against China in 1962 marked a turning point, prompting a reassessment of India's security policies and the initiation of a substantial program of military modernization. The NAM countries did not come to India's rescue at this war. India chose to prioritize national autonomy, rooted in the memories of colonial rule, and aimed to maintain independence in its foreign affairs.

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Despite Nehru's passing in 1964, India maintained its commitment to nonalignment, gradually adopting a more realist approach to its foreign policy. The USA's waning interest in India post-1966 and the Soviet Union's peace efforts in the subcontinent strengthened India's ties with the USSR. In the 1970s, under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, India balanced its advocacy for decolonization with a focus on defence preparedness. The 1971 war with Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh highlighted India's dominance in the subcontinent, but its global influence remained limited due to economic and diplomatic challenges. Economically, state-led industrialization and export pessimism hindered India's integration into the global economy, leading to slow growth and technological delays. Politically, leadership in initiatives like the Group of 77 did not yield significant benefits, further marginalizing India globally. Despite, India's non-alliance, India was being criticised by several western countries due to its soft corner towards USSR. Overall, India's Cold War foreign policy was characterized by balancing independence, regional and global power dynamics, and striving for economic development. Despite regional dominance, India's global influence was constrained by its inability to move beyond its South Asian sphere.

Stop to Consider

Key Drivers of India's Foreign Policy

Security Concerns: India's foreign policy is driven by its security imperatives, including threats posed by terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and cross-border tensions. Ensuring national security and territorial integrity remains a top priority for Indian policymakers.

Economic Interests: With the rise of globalization and economic interdependence, India has increasingly focused on expanding its economic engagement with the world. Trade, investment, and access to markets are central to India's foreign policy objectives, driving efforts to foster economic partnerships and enhance connectivity.

Regional Dynamics: India's foreign policy is influenced by its relations with neighbouring countries and regional dynamics. As a

major power in South Asia, India seeks to promote stability, connectivity, and cooperation in the region while managing complex bilateral relationships and addressing regional challenges.

Strategic Partnerships: India has pursued strategic partnerships with key countries and regional groupings to advance its geopolitical interests and enhance its influence on the global stage. Partnerships with countries such as the United States, Russia, Japan, and members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) play a crucial role in shaping India's foreign policy priorities.

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Check Your Progress

Q. Assess how India balanced its status in Cold War period.

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1.5 India and Changing Global Balance of Power

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the ensuing transformation of the global order compelled Indian policymakers to enact significant changes in India's foreign policy on multiple fronts.

Economically, India faced an unprecedented fiscal crisis following the first Gulf War in 1991, exacerbated by anticipated oil price spikes due to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. To address this crisis, Finance Minister Manmohan Singh led major economic reforms. These included abandoning the long-standing policy of import-substituting industrialization, deregulating the extensive public sector, and dismantling complex regulations that hindered economic growth. Despite resistance, these reforms were necessary for India's economic survival in the new global context.

Politically, India underwent substantial changes. The principle of nonalignment, once central to India's foreign policy, eroded in practice. Prime Minister Narasimha Rao recognized the need for a new approach, particularly in relations with the United States, though this shift faced obstacles, especially regarding nuclear non-proliferation.

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Economic liberalization and efforts to strengthen relations with the United States began. India adjusted its stance on the Israel-Palestine issue, upgrading diplomatic relations with Israel in 1992. Additionally, India implemented the “Look East” policy, focusing on enhancing economic ties with Southeast Asia to counterbalance Chinese influence. Efforts to improve relations with China saw limited progress, with confidence-building measures enacted but little advancement on the border dispute. Relations with Pakistan remained strained, worsened by the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir. India’s response involved a mix of force and attempts at dialogue, though with limited success due to continued Pakistani support for insurgents.

India successfully conducted nuclear tests in 1998 at Pokhran, which marked a significant milestone in its defence capabilities. These tests, known as Operation Shakti, established India as a nuclear power but also drew widespread international condemnation and sanctions, particularly from Western nations and the United Nations. In spite of these early difficulties, India pursued strategic diplomacy to negotiate the complicated international landscape. The improvement of ties with the US was essential to this endeavour. With continued diplomatic efforts and expanding economic ties, India and the United States eventually realised that a tighter alliance would benefit both parties. The U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement, or the 123 Agreement, was signed in 2008 as the result of this. The 123 Agreement allowed for civil nuclear cooperation between the two countries and effectively acknowledged India’s status as a responsible nuclear state, despite its non-signatory status to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This agreement paved the way for India to engage in nuclear commerce globally, securing fuel for its reactors and advancing its nuclear energy ambitions.

However, India continued to face significant security challenges, particularly with its neighbour Pakistan. The Kargil conflict in 1999 was a major military engagement that tested India’s resolve and strategic capabilities. Indian forces successfully repelled the infiltration by Pakistani troops and militants in the Kargil district of Jammu and Kashmir, demonstrating India’s military strength and strategic position. In 2001, India faced another severe provocation when terrorists attacked the Indian

Parliament, an event that brought India and Pakistan to the brink of war. Despite the high tensions and calls for retaliation, India managed to avoid a full-scale war through a combination of military readiness and diplomatic efforts. The restraint shown by both nuclear-armed neighbours showed the intricate and dangerous nature of their rivalry. Throughout these challenges, India's ability to manage conflicts without escalating to full-scale war highlighted its strategic maturity and the effectiveness of its foreign policy. The period following the 1998 nuclear tests marked a significant evolution in India's international standing, transitioning from a regional power to a more influential global player with recognized nuclear capabilities. India's responses to the evolving global order reflect its aspirations as a potential great power. However, significant challenges remain, including sustaining economic growth, ensuring energy security, and addressing internal security issues within the framework of democratic and secular principles. Overall, India's foreign policy adaptations underscore its efforts to assert itself on the world stage while managing complex geopolitical realities.

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Stop to Consider

Changing Global Balance of Power

In the 1990s, the global balance of power underwent profound transformations following the end of the Cold War. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the world moved away from a bipolar structure dominated by the United States and the USSR, towards a brief period of American unipolarity. However, this dominance soon gave way to a more multipolar world order characterized by the emergence of several significant global players. With the introduction of the Euro in 1999 and its enlargement to encompass nations that had been a part of the former Eastern Bloc, the European Union strengthened its political and economic unity. Meanwhile, China's swift economic growth emerged as a distinguishing characteristic of the decade, culminating with its 2001 entry into the World Trade Organisation and reaffirming its status as a significant player in the world economy. Worldwide relationships have been transformed by technological advancements, notably in the fields of information

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technology and communications. This has led to increased economic interdependence through the use of multinational corporations and global supply chains. In light of this, regional crises in the Balkans, Africa, and the Middle East have brought attention to the complexity of international security and the importance that peacekeeping and conflict resolution play for institutions like the United Nations. Changing geopolitical dynamics were reflected in NATO's eastward expansion and the creation of regional alliances like MERCOSUR and ASEAN. In addition, the 1990s saw a rise in cooperation and an awareness of global issues including degradation of the environment, climate change, and global health concerns. With economic, technical, and geopolitical variables continuing to impact international relations and global governance, these advances set the groundwork for the complex and interconnected world of the twenty-first century.

Check Your Progress

Q. Discuss India's Foreign Policy at the Changing Balance of Power of 1990

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C. Raja Mohan outlines India's grand strategy, which divides the world into three concentric circles, each representing different spheres of influence and strategic priorities. In the first circle, encompassing India's immediate neighbourhood, India aims for primacy and the ability to veto the actions of external powers. In the second circle, covering the extended neighbourhood across Asia and the Indian Ocean littoral, India seeks to balance the influence of other powers and safeguard its interests from being undermined. In the third circle, spanning the entire global stage, India strives to establish itself as one of the great powers, playing a pivotal role in international peace and security efforts.

(A) India and its Neighbourhood and Extended Neighbourhood

In the post-Cold War period, India's emergence as a rising power has been driven by several key factors, primarily its significant hard power capabilities. While India's military strength may not rival that of major powers, it surpasses those of other regional players, giving it a dominant position in South Asia.

Historically, several factors have hindered India's ability to fully realize its strategic objectives in South Asia. Firstly, the partition of the South Asian subcontinent in 1947, followed by further divisions in 1971, led to persistent conflicts with Pakistan and internal religious tensions between Hindus and Muslims. Additionally, these partitions physically separated India from historically linked states like Afghanistan, Iran, and Southeast Asian nations, limiting its regional connectivity and influence. However, the last decade of the twentieth century brought significant changes that liberated India from some of these constraints. The transition from state socialism to economic liberalization and globalization opened new avenues for India to assert its foreign policy with its South East Asian neighbours. Furthermore, the end of the Cold War removed the ideological barriers and geopolitical constraints that had previously limited India's strategic manoeuvrability. Consequently, New Delhi found itself in a position to reinvent its foreign policy approach, particularly in response to the rise of China and the evolving strategic landscape in its neighbourhood.

India's foreign policy towards its neighbours has evolved significantly over the decades, shaped by strategic doctrines and diplomatic initiatives aimed at fostering regional stability and enhancing bilateral relations. The "Indira Doctrine," articulated during Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's tenure, emphasized India's role as a regional power and advocated for active engagement with neighbouring countries to counter external influences and assert regional leadership. This doctrine aimed to maintain India's security interests while promoting cooperative relationships with its immediate neighbours. "Gujral Doctrine," introduced by Prime Minister I.K. Gujral in the 1990s, emphasized goodwill and non-reciprocity in India's relations with its smaller neighbours. It emphasized that India would not ask for reciprocity from its neighbours in responding to their needs, aiming to build

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trust and goodwill in the region. The doctrine emphasized the importance of resolving bilateral issues through dialogue and peaceful means, promoting mutual cooperation and respect.

India adopted the Look West Policy to strengthen its relations with countries in West Asia, which encompasses the Middle Eastern nations. This region holds immense strategic value for India, primarily due to its abundant energy resources, economic opportunities, and shared cultural ties. Historically, India's engagement with West Asian countries has been influenced by factors such as energy security, the presence of a large Indian diaspora, and geopolitical dynamics. The Look West Policy seeks to bolster economic cooperation, foster security alliances, and leverage cultural affinities with these nations. Despite these strategic intentions, the effectiveness of the Look West Policy has faced challenges, particularly concerning India's complex relationship with Pakistan. Ongoing geopolitical tensions and security issues have often overshadowed India's efforts to fully leverage its partnerships in West Asia, impacting the policy's outcomes and potential benefits. In addition to these regional policies, India's approach to its extended neighbourhood also encompasses broader initiatives aimed at enhancing connectivity and cooperation. For instance, the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) is a major infrastructure project spanning 7,200 kilometres. It integrates road, rail, and maritime routes linking Russia's Saint Petersburg to India's Mumbai via Iran and Central Asian Republics. The INSTC aims to significantly reduce freight costs and travel times compared to traditional sea routes through the Suez Canal, thereby facilitating greater trade and economic integration across Eurasia.

In 2015, Prime Minister Modi's announcement of the Act East Policy marked a strategic shift from India's previous Look East Policy, signalling a more proactive approach towards engaging with East Asian countries. These nations, including ASEAN members, Japan, South Korea, and others, are considered part of India's extended neighbourhood due to their geographical proximity and growing economic significance. The Act East Policy aims to deepen economic ties, enhance cultural exchanges, and strengthen strategic partnerships in East Asia, reflecting India's recognition of the region's importance in global affairs. This policy shift underscores India's commitment

to deepening its engagement with ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and participating actively in regional forums like the East Asia Summit. India aims to expand its influence in the Indo-Pacific region and counterbalance China's growing geopolitical presence. The significant increase in the value of goods traded between India and ASEAN countries, amounting to US\$ 110.40 billion between 2021 and 2022, highlights the effectiveness of India's collaborative efforts to boost trade relations under the Act East Policy. This surge in trade shows the tangible economic benefits arising from India's proactive regional diplomacy and trade initiatives. Moreover, India has pursued a proactive approach to strengthen trade relations globally, evident from its signing of 13 free trade agreements (FTAs) with key partners such as Japan, South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, and Australia. These FTAs play a crucial role in eliminating trade barriers such as tariffs, import quotas, and export restrictions, thereby facilitating smoother trade flows and promoting deeper economic integration among participating countries. India's embrace of such agreements reflects its commitment to fostering a conducive environment for international trade and investment, thereby enhancing its economic competitiveness on the global stage. India's diplomatic outreach and cultural diplomacy initiatives also focus on connecting with Southeast Asian countries. Historically linked through trade, culture, and shared heritage, India has deepened its engagement with ASEAN nations under its Act East Policy. Cultural exchanges, educational collaborations, and people-to-people interactions strengthen India's cultural influence in the region, contributing to its soft power projection. Recognizing the strategic significance of the Indo-Pacific region, India has adopted a proactive approach to regional engagement. The concept of the Indo-Pacific reflects India's vision of a free, open, and inclusive maritime domain, where countries abide by international law and respect freedom of navigation and overflight.

India's Neighbourhood First Policy emphasizes strengthening ties with neighbouring countries through enhanced connectivity, economic cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges. In recent years, India's "Neighbourhood First" policy under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reaffirmed the significance of strengthening ties with neighbouring countries

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based on shared historical, cultural, and economic linkages. This policy emphasizes mutual development and cooperation in areas such as trade, connectivity, and security. Prime Minister Modi's oath-taking ceremony in May 2014 symbolized India's dedication to regional engagement and diplomacy. Notably, leaders from neighbouring countries, including Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, attended, signalling India's willingness to foster dialogue and cooperation despite historical tensions. However, subsequent incidents such as the Pulwama and Uri attacks strained relations, leading India to undertake decisive actions like surgical strikes to address security threats. In 2019, Modi's re-election saw a significant shift in India's approach towards regional cooperation, highlighted by the attendance of leaders from BIMSTEC countries at the oath-taking ceremony. This choice reflected India's strategic focus on enhancing regional stability and economic integration, particularly within South Asia. Modi's vision emphasizes peaceful and collaborative relations with neighbouring nations, aiming for mutual development and stability across the region. These events illustrate Modi's commitment to proactive diplomacy and strengthening regional ties, reflecting India's evolving role in South Asia and its broader engagement in international affairs. India aims to promote a conducive environment for shared prosperity and development in South Asia by promoting regional stability and addressing common challenges.

India's Neighbourhood policy faces a myriad of challenges, most notably due to China's expanding influence in South Asia through its Belt and Road Initiative, which has significantly diminished India's traditional dominance in the region. Ongoing tensions with Pakistan, rooted in historical conflicts and the contentious Kashmir issue, further complicate diplomatic efforts and regional cooperation. Internal political instability in neighbouring countries like Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives disrupts consistent engagement, making it harder for India to establish stable relationships. Border disputes, particularly with China and Nepal, shows regional tensions and undermine trust. Additionally, economic disparities between India and its smaller neighbours, coupled with fears of over-dependence on India, results in suspicion and hinder effective collaboration. The ineffectiveness of regional forums such as SAARC, combined with the rise of Islamist radicalization in countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan, adds another layer

of complexity to India’s neighbourhood relations. In these challenging sceneries, India must work with its fragile neighbours to ensure that they flourish politically, economically, and even ecologically. New Delhi needs to proactively shape its regional environment in tandem with its neighbours. Though numerous and formidable, these challenges are not beyond the reach of India’s policy establishment. India needs a clear vision, the requisite political and institutional will, and effective leadership to address these challenges.

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SAQ:

Q. Discuss India’s initiative with its neighbourhood and extended neighbourhood.

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(B) Strategic Autonomy: India’s relation with great powers

The rise of China, India, and Russia has shifted global politics, challenging US pre-eminence and signalling a multipolar world order. This shift is evident in the growing focus on the Indo-Pacific region, highlighting Asia’s increasing global influence. India has adjusted its foreign policy to align with these new dynamics, recognizing the momentum towards multipolarity. China’s rapid economic growth and technological advancements have positioned it as a major global player, potentially rivalling the US. India’s economic expansion and 1998 nuclear tests initially marked its emergence as a significant global actor. The 2005 India-US nuclear agreement, despite India’s non-signatory status to the NPT, underscored a realignment of global power dynamics, countering China’s ascent. However, by the end of Manmohan Singh’s tenure (2004–2014), India appeared cautious in consolidating its position. India now emphasizes multipolarity by collaborating with other developing nations and emerging economies, aiming to influence global discussions while preserving its strategic independence through multilateral cooperation.

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India has adopted a pragmatic approach in the cold war period, avoiding confrontation with major powers while advocating for reforms within the existing international system. However, major powers, particularly the United States and China, have shown resistance to India's aspirations. The United States, for instance, pursued a containment policy towards India, supporting its regional rival Pakistan militarily and imposing sanctions aimed at hindering India's nuclear and missile programs. Similarly, China has actively supported Pakistan and contributed to regional tensions by aiding its nuclear and missile capabilities. The post-Cold War era marked profound shifts in global power dynamics, as new major players like India emerged. India has pursued an assertive foreign policy aimed at challenging established power structures, yet faces resistance from dominant nations keen on maintaining their international influence. Currently, the world is in transition, moving away from the bipolar Cold War framework towards multiple centres of power, rather than embracing a fully multipolar system. This transitional phase is characterized by an inconsistent global response to crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, underscoring the lack of a unified international order and the limitations of multilateral institutions.

There is a noticeable shift from globalization to regional trade, with Asia gaining prominence due to China's ascent and its rivalry with the United States. This shift has exacerbated inequalities and nurtured tendencies towards narrow nationalism and parochialism. Moreover, the information age has become polarised, and ecological crises, particularly climate change in the Anthropocene era, pose existential threats. Amidst these global shifts, India confronts the challenge of managing regional dynamics, particularly in response to China's assertive actions. India's response during the Russia-Ukraine conflict exemplifies its delicate balancing act in global diplomacy. With a longstanding strategic partnership dating back to the Cold War, India has maintained robust ties with Russia, marked by defence cooperation, energy partnerships, and alignment on global issues. Amidst international condemnation of Russia's actions in Ukraine, India has taken a nuanced approach, expressed humanitarian concerns and advocated for peaceful dialogue without resorting to overt condemnation or punitive measures. This stance underscores India's commitment to non-alignment

and strategic autonomy, avoiding alignment with military alliances. Concurrently, India has actively engaged in diplomatic efforts to manage relations with both Moscow and Washington. By maintaining open communication and expressing concerns through diplomatic channels, India aims to uphold principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity while preserving its strategic partnerships. Over the past two decades, India's relations with the United States have significantly strengthened, driven by economic cooperation, shared democratic values, and mutual security interests. The U.S. has become a major trade partner and a crucial collaborator in defence technology and cooperation for India. Moreover, cultivating relations with middle powers such as Germany and South Korea supports India's aspirations for economic and technological growth. Active participation in multilateral forums and initiatives provides India with opportunities to influence global agendas and uphold a rules-based international order. Through advocacy for institutional reforms, such as those in the United Nations Security Council, India aims to ensure that global governance structures accurately reflect contemporary power realities. India is increasingly recognized as an emerging soft power on the global stage, leveraging cultural influence, diplomacy, and international engagement to expand its global footprint. Central to this strategy is the promotion of yoga as a symbol of India's soft power. Yoga, with its roots in ancient Indian philosophy and spirituality, has gained immense popularity worldwide as a holistic practice for physical and mental well-being. The International Day of Yoga, proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and adopted by the United Nations in 2014, underscores India's efforts to propagate yoga as a universal practice promoting health and inner peace, thereby enhancing its soft power appeal globally. By forging strategic partnerships, engaging in multilateral diplomacy, and advocating for institutional reforms, India seeks to assert its influence and contribute to shaping the future trajectory of global politics in a multi-polar world.

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(C) Multi Alignment

During the Cold War, India sought to reject the prevailing world order, promoting non-alignment and equitable economic relationships through

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the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Group of 77 (G77). However, economic struggles in 1990s and the end of the Cold War make the NAM obsolete. Despite these changes, India's preference for strategic autonomy persisted, evolving from minimizing risks as a weak power to maximizing security and status as an emerging major power. Today, India employs a hedging strategy, building multiple strategic partnerships to enhance autonomy and security. This approach fits into a 'mixed system' where traditional power politics coexist with growing interdependence due to globalization and nuclear deterrence, limiting national leadership choices and reducing the likelihood of major-power wars.

India's Multi-Alignment Approach is prominently showcased in various international forums, each demonstrating India's strategic engagement with different regions and nations:

G20: India plays a pivotal role in the G20, a crucial platform for international economic cooperation and decision-making. As a member of this influential group, India actively shapes global economic policies, promote consensus on critical issues, and advocates for inclusive growth and development. It engages vigorously in G20 deliberations to tackle complex global challenges, pushing for reforms in international financial institutions to better represent the interests of developing countries and promote frameworks supporting sustainable and inclusive economic growth worldwide. India utilizes the G20 platform to spotlight issues vital to its development agenda, including infrastructure development, the digital economy, climate change, and renewable energy. It advocates policies that bolster food security, enhance financial inclusion, and combat poverty.

Hosting the 18th G20 Summit in New Delhi in 2023 marked a significant milestone for India, highlighting its growing influence and proactive engagement in global governance. As the inaugural host of the G20 Leaders' Summit, India articulated its vision under the theme "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," emphasizing global unity and interconnectedness. The summit culminated in the G20 Leaders' New Delhi Declaration, a testament to India's diplomatic leadership. This declaration garnered unanimous consensus among participating nations, addressing a range of urgent global

issues, including geopolitical tensions like the Russia-Ukraine conflict, where India advocated for dialogue and peaceful resolution. India also used the summit to champion initiatives promoting sustainable development, food security, and the launch of the Global Biofuel Alliance, showcasing its commitment to innovative and collaborative approaches in addressing global challenges such as environmental sustainability and energy security. India's role in the G20 underscores its proactive stance on global issues and commitment to fostering cooperation among nations. By collaborating closely with other G20 members, India contributes to initiatives aimed at combating climate change, managing financial risks, and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined by the United Nations.

BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) is a coalition of major emerging economies aiming for economic, political, and security cooperation, including people-to-people exchanges. India played a pivotal role in establishing the New Development Bank (NDB), a new multilateral institution designed to rival the World Bank and foster development initiatives.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a significant Eurasian organization focusing on political, economic, and military cooperation to ensure peace, security, and stability in the region. India is a member of SCO alongside nations like Kazakhstan, China, Russia, and others, with Iran and Belarus poised to join soon. Within SCO, China and Russia seek to counter Western influence, particularly NATO expansion, emphasizing a shift towards regional cooperation.

Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) is an informal strategic dialogue involving India, the United States, Japan, and Australia, sharing the common goal of fostering a "free, open, and prosperous" Indo-Pacific region and countering China's influence. This forum underscores India's proactive engagement in the Indo-Pacific region, aligning with like-minded nations to maintain regional stability and uphold maritime security.

Through active participation in these forums, India demonstrates its Multi-Alignment Approach, leveraging diverse partnerships to safeguard its strategic interests, promote economic development, and foster regional stability in a rapidly evolving geopolitical landscape.

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India's policy of multi-alignment and strategic autonomy is crafted to enhance its position in an increasingly complex and dynamic global order. This strategy allows India to manage the complexities of international relations, protect its national interests, and enhance its global influence. By adopting multi-alignment, India aims to cultivate relationships with a diverse array of global powers, ensuring it remains unbound by any single country or bloc. Meanwhile, strategic autonomy empowers India to make independent decisions based on its own national priorities, free from external pressures. Together, these policies facilitate India in achieving several key objectives. Multi-alignment approach allows India to engage simultaneously with various countries, including the United States, Russia, China, and European nations. Such flexibility is crucial for balancing relationships, enabling India to maximize its strategic options and effectively respond to global challenges. For instance, while strengthening ties with the U.S. in defence and technology, India can also engage with Russia to secure military hardware and energy supplies. India also seeks to secure economic and technological benefits through its policy of multi-alignment. By diversifying its partnerships, India aims to attract investments and enhance its technological capabilities across key sectors, including defence, renewable energy, and digital technology. Collaborations with countries like Japan, France, and Israel provide India access to advanced technologies and foster innovation within its economy. Strategic autonomy allows India to assert its leadership in the South Asian region and the broader Indo-Pacific. This leadership role involves advocating for a rules-based international order while promoting regional stability and security. By participating in various forums, such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), India seeks to foster cooperation among neighbouring countries and address shared challenges, such as terrorism and climate change. This proactive stance not only enhances India's influence in the region but also contributes to a more stable and prosperous environment. Furthermore, India's multi-alignment and strategic autonomy align with its ambition to promote a multipolar global order. In a world characterized by shifting power dynamics, India aims to represent the interests of developing countries, particularly those in the Global South. The fluidity of the current global order—marked by unpredictable

geopolitical shifts, economic interdependencies, and evolving security challenges—necessitates a nuanced foreign policy. India’s multi-alignment strategy equips it with the adaptability needed to respond to emerging threats and opportunities. For instance, as global power dynamics shift with China’s rise, India’s ability to maintain balanced relationships with both the U.S. and China enhances its strategic position in the Indo-Pacific. This adaptability allows India to assert its interests while contributing to regional stability in an uncertain environment.

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1.6 Summing Up

India’s foreign policy in the 1990s and beyond underwent a profound transformation, spurred by seismic shifts in the global order following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of a multipolar world. Faced with economic challenges and geopolitical complexities, India navigated these changes with strategic agility and adaptability. Economically, the liberalization reforms of 1991, spearheaded by Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, dismantled decades-old policies of import substitution and opened India’s economy to global markets. These reforms were essential to mitigate a severe fiscal crisis exacerbated by global events like the Gulf War, highlighting India’s readiness to embrace globalization despite initial resistance. Politically, India recalibrated its foreign policy, moving away from strict nonalignment towards a more pragmatic engagement strategy. This shift included strengthening ties with the United States and recalibrating relations with Israel, reflecting a nuanced approach to global diplomacy. Strategically, India asserted itself as a nuclear power with the Pokhran tests in 1998, a move that drew international scrutiny but also affirmed India’s security imperatives in a volatile regional context. Subsequently, the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement in 2008 underscored India’s rising stature and its ability to negotiate complex international agreements despite being a non-signatory to the NPT. Security-wise, India faced significant challenges, particularly in managing relations with Pakistan amidst ongoing tensions and occasional escalations such as the Kargil conflict in 1999 and the 2001 Parliament attack. India’s measured responses demonstrated both resolve and restraint, highlighting its maturity in handling regional security dynamics.

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Amidst these developments, India pursued a multi-alignment strategy, engaging with various global forums like the G20, BRICS, and the Quad, while maintaining strategic autonomy. These engagements underscored India's role as a pivotal player in shaping regional and global agendas, advocating for reforms in international institutions and promoting inclusive growth and sustainable development. Looking ahead, India's foreign policy continues to evolve, driven by its aspirations as a global power committed to upholding democratic values, fostering economic growth, and maintaining peace and stability in its immediate neighbourhood and beyond. As India navigates the complexities of a multipolar world, its adaptive foreign policy approach remains crucial in securing its interests and contributing to global governance and stability.

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Unit - 2

India and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Order

Unit Structure:

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Objectives
- 2.3 Process of Disarmament and Arms Control
 - 2.3.1 Major Arms Control and Disarmament Treaty
- 2.4 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
 - 2.4.1 Drawbacks of NPT and India
- 2.5 India's Nuclear Programme
- 2.6 Summing Up
- 2.7 References and Suggested Readings

2.1 Introduction

The term “threat to a nation” has taken on new significance with the development of nuclear weapons following World War II. The pursuit of nuclear capacity by nations worldwide since the end of World War II can be linked to several factors, including national strength, scientific advancement, technological proficiency, and national security and prestige. The goal of nuclear non-proliferation is to stop the development of atomic weapons technology and to cut down on the number of atomic weapons that are currently in stock. Many countries, both nuclear and non-nuclear, have opposed proliferation because they believe that more states possessing weapons will heighten the likelihood of nuclear war (including the so-called counter-value targeting of civilians with nuclear weapons), destabilize regional or global relations, or violate nation-states' sovereignty.

India's nuclear policy is shaped and influenced by international and domestic factors. The early years reflected the moral and idealistic content of the nuclear policy. Maintaining ambiguity about its nuclear option till 1998 suited the policymakers and it helped India to consolidate its nuclear program without being watched by the international bodies. India's nuclear policy was embedded in achieving the goal of complete nuclear disarmament. It helped India in mobilizing the support of Third World countries on this very

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important issue. Over a while, it was expected to assume realistic content in it. Mid-sixties and early seventies India's security scenario underwent massive change. Several changes within the subcontinent and at the international level had their impact on Indian thinking and strategies. The dismemberment of Pakistan, the Sino-U.S. rapprochement, the India-Soviet Union Treaty of Peace and Friendship, and the evolving closer relations between Pakistan and China were very important from the point of view of determining India's nuclear policy and its overall security. The end of the Cold War changed the security scenario in and around the region completely. A unipolar world under the leadership of the USA emerged on the scene. India's nuclear policy was expected to be relevant to the contemporary globalized world and India had to progress towards a fuller understanding of the nuclear regime formation at the international level and relate itself to the actors, principles, rules, and regulations. India went nuclear in May 1998 and declared it to be a State with nuclear weapons. India and the USA succeeded in formalizing the 'US-India Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation Agreement' in the changed environment. This unit consists of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and this unit also gives a sneak peek into India's defence and nuclear policies.

2.2 Objectives

This unit is an attempt to analyse India and nuclear non-proliferation order. After going through this unit, you will be able to -

- understand the concept of Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons
- understand the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
- explain why India never signed the NPT
- analyse India's defence and nuclear policies

2.3 Process of Disarmament and Arms Control

People have been hoping for disarmament and trying to control weapons and armed forces for thousands of years. Yet weapons systems have been modernized again and again as spending on arms rises. Annual global military expenditure had grown to more than US \$1.7 trillion in 2012. True, history has repeatedly seen breakthroughs by these efforts to agree arrangements for disarmament and arms control. But the world is still far

from achieving anything like the goal of “general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control”, to which almost every country committed itself in 1968 by signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The term “disarmament” refers to measures, usually formal agreements, to reduce or completely abolish military capacities and means (both weapons and troops). In contrast, “arms control” comprises agreements aimed at reducing the danger of war breaking out and minimizing the negative impacts of a war on human beings. The application of international humanitarian law to protect people and the environment in war situations also falls under the concept of arms control.

Right up to the recent past, the most widely occurring form of disarmament was imposed disarmament on those who had been vanquished in war. In Antiquity, for example, a victorious Rome demanded, in the aftermath of the second Punic War (218–201 BC) that Carthage give up all its war elephants and its entire battle fleet bar ten ships. To demonstrate their power, the Romans set hundreds of Carthaginian ships on fire before the gates of the city-state.

Stop to Consider

- The principal agreement resulting from the Paris Peace Conference at the close of World War I was the Treaty of Versailles. It was signed in the Hall of Mirrors of the Palace of Versailles on June 28, 1919, by Germany, the Allies, and other participating nations. It became operative on January 10, 1920.

In the modern era, the Treaty of Versailles of 1919 laid down far-reaching disarmament measures to be taken by Germany and its allies, in the wake of Germany’s defeat in the First World War.

Then there are unilateral measures in the form of a country independently deciding to reduce its military capabilities and assets. For instance, Costa Rica decided in 1948 to completely disband its armed forces, becoming the only country in the world to have done so. In the United States, President George H.W. Bush, responding to the new post-Cold War environment in 1991, announced a unilateral initiative to scrap thousands

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of American tactical nuclear warheads. A little time later the then-Soviet leader, President Mikhail Gorbachev, followed suit with a parallel move.

Finally, there are disarmament and arms control agreements that states negotiate and agree upon. Arrangements of this kind may be bilateral or multilateral.

Stop to Consider

- The Great Amphictyonic League of Ancient Delphi, in Greece: In ancient times, an Amphictyonic league was an association of town-states linked together to form a cultural and political union. In most cases, these town-states were in close distance to each other and had a common origin.

The history of humankind is a history of violence and war but also of repeated attempts to make and secure peace, and of efforts to limit the terrible consequences of war. Back in the 7th century BC, the Greek city-states jointly agreed, within the “Amphictyonic League”, to protect the temples of Demeter at Anthela and Apollo at Delphi. The Ancient Greeks also managed to agree that, in the event of war, cities should not be cut off from their water supplies or destroyed. Nevertheless, it should be noted that wars between the city-states or even wars over sanctuary sites still took place.

In Europe, during the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church tried to use its influence to limit at least the forms that war could take. In the 9th and 10th centuries, local and regional Pax Dei arrangements were agreed to protect the clergy, their property, and the non-combatant poor. The Second Lateran Council banned, in 1139, the use of crossbows against Christians, although they were permitted against dissenters. In 1675, France and Germany banned the use of poisoned bullets.

Parallel to the trend towards ever more potent firearms, international peace movements arose in the 19th century. In Germany, Bertha von Suttner became the most prominent advocate of peace, receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 1905. Disarmament and arms control efforts gained momentum internationally in that period. International peace conferences were held at

The Hague in 1899 and 1907, bringing together the most powerful countries in the world. Although they failed to agree on steps towards disarmament and principles for the peaceful settlement of international conflicts, the diplomats were able to agree with the standards for behaviour in war, including the prohibition of the use of poison gas. Unfortunately, when World War I broke out a short time later, not all signatory states adhered to these laws and customs of war.

After the horrors of WW I, the push for disarmament and arms control took on a renewed urgency. The Geneva Protocol of 1925 again banned the use of poison gas and biological weapons. Various other Geneva Conventions then formed the foundations for international humanitarian law, for instance by setting out rules for the treatment of prisoners of war. The first World Disarmament Conference took place in 1932, bringing national leaders together to discuss steps intended to lead from disarmament to the complete abolition of offensive weapons and mechanisms for preventing future wars. Nothing came of this initiative, however, especially because Nazi Germany was comprehensively rearming. In 1933, Hitler took Germany out of the League of Nations, which had been founded in 1919 and paved the way for today's United Nations.

World War II was soon followed by a Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union which was an era of bloc confrontation and military build-up. But despite the hostility, the perils of a catastrophic nuclear war did lead to renewed efforts to reach an arms agreement. By the 1960s there was some success, with the parties concluding the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which prohibited test detonations in the atmosphere, in space, and underwater, although still allowing underground testing. In 1968, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was signed. This multilateral agreement remains important today. Since the 1970s, the Soviet Union, later Russia, and the United States have repeatedly arrived at agreements on their nuclear arsenals, with various limitations and reductions.

With the passing of the Cold War, conventional weapons in Europe were limited in 1990 by the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. In 1997, the Chemical Weapons Convention entered into force, banning the possession of chemical weapons and providing for the

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destruction of any stockpiles in possession of treaty states. Progress was also made in nuclear disarmament.

In the 21st century, however, disarmament and arms control have tended to play a relatively minor role in international politics despite the gigantic arsenals still in existence. With the public becoming less worried by the prospect of a nuclear disaster, governments have shifted their focus to the task of preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons. Another reason for this shift is that the world's mightiest military power, the United States, insists on retaining its "freedom of action" and does not wish to lose its technological lead. Technological superiority in new weapons technologies such as missile defence, drones, and precision-guided munition would be hampered by binding international agreements.

2.3.1 Major Arms Control and Disarmament Treaty

Year	Treaty
1925	Geneva Protocol- Prohibits chemical and biological weapons in warfare.
1963	Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT)- Bans nuclear testing in the atmosphere, outer space, and under water.
1968	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)- Limits the spread of nuclear weapons.
1972	Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)- Bans development and production of biological weapons.
1972	Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM)- Limits ABM systems to two sites.
1987	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF)- Eliminates short- and medium-range missiles.
1993	Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)- Bans production, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons.
1996	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)- Bans all nuclear explosions.
2002	SORT (Moscow Treaty)- Reduces operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads.
2010	New START Treaty- Limits nuclear warheads and delivery systems between the U.S. and Russia.
2017	Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons- Bans nuclear weapons outright.

2.4 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

The United Nations-sponsored Eighteen Nation Committee on Disarmament, a Swiss-based organization, was responsible for the Non-Proliferation Treaty's drafting, drawing, and negotiation. The United States destroyed the twin Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945, using the terrifying and potent atomic bomb. World War II ended as a result of the deed but at a tremendous cost. Between the two cities, there were between 129,000 and 226,000 total deaths, as well as innumerable injuries and cases of radiation sickness. World powers were gravely concerned about the aftermath of the attacks as well as the possible abuse of the weapon. After the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and France obtained nuclear weapons, efforts to reach a global agreement to restrict the proliferation of nuclear weapons were initiated in the early 1960s. Calls for a safeguard to guarantee Nuclear Arms Control were implemented sprang from this worry. Thus, in 1961, a U.N. resolution called for a treaty to prevent an arms race for nuclear weapons. This treaty would go on to become the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

After China detonated a nuclear bomb in 1964, these efforts, which had stagnated in the early 1960s, resumed. The Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee (ENDC) governments completed drafting the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) language in 1968. June of 1968 saw the U.N. With General Assembly Resolution 2373 (XXII), the General Assembly approved the NPT. In 1968, the NPT became available for signature in Moscow, London, and Washington, D.C. The NPT became operative in March 1970.

The Non-proliferation Treaty, also known as the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, is an international agreement whose goal is to prevent the development of nuclear weapons and related technologies from growing further. The treaty also aimed to achieve total nuclear disarmament and to foster cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. 2020 was the 50th anniversary of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear weapons (NPT) being into effect.

Ever since NPT came into effect in 1970 after it was opened for signing in 1968, the Non-Proliferation Treaty has 187 nations who are a

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party to it which is more than any previous arms limitation treaty. The Non-Proliferation Treaty forbids nuclear states from assisting other countries in obtaining weapons while also forbidding non-nuclear states from getting nuclear weapons. NPT is striving towards complete disarmament concurrently. The United Nations Atomic Energy Commission's replacement, the International Atomic Energy Agency, confirms that the treaty is being followed. The United Nations Security Council then enforces the compliance. Nine countries have nuclear weapons. The US, UK, France, Russia, and China are the five countries that have signed the treaty. The remaining four countries, which are North Korea, India, Pakistan, and Israel, are not parties to the pact because they have not signed it.

Stop to Consider

- The first instance of atomic bombing occurred on August 6 and 9, 1945 by the United States that destroyed the twin Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- The Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee (ENDC) governments completed drafting the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) language in 1968.
- In June of 1968 the U.N General Assembly approved the NPT.
- The NPT became operative in March 1970.
- India did not sign the NPT or signed but withdrew.

2.4.1 Drawbacks of NPT and India

The treaty's primary flaw is that the five countries that had nuclear weapons when it was signed were never held responsible for their actions. However, there is also good reason to be concerned about how the pact is being enforced. There are significant gaps in the pact that other countries could take advantage of to develop their own nuclear weapons programs. Regardless, it's clear that the world is a better place because of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It was predicted that about twenty-five nations would possess nuclear weapons. But the mere presence of it has reduced it to nine. The NPT was not the only reason for this, but the mere presence of

the safeguard can at least promise an era of peace, and if the current loopholes are fixed, it will fulfil such a promise.

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Stop to Consider

Vertical proliferation can be defined as the advancement or modernization of a nation-state's nuclear arsenal, whereas horizontal proliferation is the direct or indirect transfer of technologies from one nation-state to another, which ultimately leads to the more advanced development and proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Non-nuclear weapon States (NNWS) criticize the treaty as being discriminatory as it focuses on preventing only horizontal proliferation while there is no limit for vertical proliferation. NNWS also feels that the restrictions on Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) technology are one-sided.

According to India, the treaty as it stands is unfair because it essentially declares that the five countries that won World War II are entitled to nuclear weapons while condemning the other countries that do not to be at the mercy of the whims and fancies of the countries that do. The deal, to put it briefly, separates the globe into nuclear "haves" and "have-nots."

India has always maintained that everyone should have the same rights as those who possess them, or the five countries should denuclearize. Additionally, the main reason India conducted its nuclear tests in the first place was the escalation of tensions with China, one of its nuclear-armed neighbours. Pakistan conducted its nuclear test as a deterrent to what it saw as "India's naked aggression" in response to the same escalation by India.

India and China are rapidly increasing their energy and particularly the use of electricity. They have well-considered policies to increase dramatically their use of nuclear power to make that electricity. Both countries see nuclear power as an important ingredient of sustainable development. However, for nearly four decades they have had very different status internationally regarding nuclear non-proliferation, with China enjoying the benefits of being party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and India excluded from those benefits, despite its scrupulous conformity to its principles.

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2.5 India's Nuclear Programme

India's nuclear program has evolved over several decades, driven by both energy security and national security concerns. India's aspirations for a nuclear programme began before its independence and were then consecrated through the creation of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission in 1948. Combining work at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research set up in 1945, Homi Jahangir Bhabha was the founding chair of the Atomic Energy Commission and guided India's nuclear development. Nehru had seriously focused on improving countries' capabilities in nuclear technology; he established, under his supervision, the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) in August 1954. DAE's focus in the early phase was technological rather than militaristic. The DAE would remain under the direct control of subsequent Indian prime ministers. Economic advancement initially drove India's nuclear considerations, which were simultaneously aimed at overcoming decades of colonial exploitation, developing India's technical infrastructure, and garnering international prestige through a display of scientific prowess.

Stop to Consider

- The Indian Atomic Energy Commission was created in 1948.
- Homi Jahangir Bhabha is often considered as the father of the Indian Nuclear Program.
- Nehru established the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) in August 1954.

India's strategic environment is evolving rapidly, calling for a review of nuclear doctrine also. However, the costs of reviewing nuclear doctrine should also be given equal importance by the decision-makers. For this a sound policy debate should be conducted across different platforms, involving all the stakeholders.

Check Your Progress

1. When did India Pass its first Atomic Energy Act?
2. Throw some light on the background of India's Nuclear Policy.

3. Discuss the three aspects of India's Nuclear Policy.
4. Critically Evaluate NFU Policy.

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The Nuclear program can be divided into four main phases: its origins, its development in the Cold War era, post-Cold War expansion, and the present phase focused on energy and security integration. Here's an overview:

1. The Foundational Phase (1940s - 1960s)

India's nuclear program began shortly after independence, with a focus on peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The father of India's nuclear program, Dr Homi J. Bhabha, laid out the initial vision for developing nuclear energy to support India's scientific, industrial, and energy needs.

- **Atomic Energy Act (1948):** India passed this act to institutionalize its atomic research and establish the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) in 1948.
- **International Cooperation:** In the early years, India received assistance from countries like the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom under the "Atoms for Peace" initiative.
- **Bhabha's Three-Stage Nuclear Power Plan:** Bhabha proposed a long-term vision for India's nuclear energy program in three stages:
 - Stage 1: Natural uranium-fuelled pressurized heavy-water reactors (PHWRs)
 - Stage 2: Fast breeder reactors (FBRs)
 - Stage 3: Thorium-based reactors (India has large thorium reserves)

2. Cold War Developments: Nuclear Ambiguity and Testing (1960s - 1990s)

- **Early Military Focus:** Although initially focused on peaceful nuclear energy, tensions with neighbouring countries, particularly China (after the 1962 Sino-Indian War and China's 1964 nuclear test), led India to reconsider its stance.
- **Smiling Buddha (1974):** India conducted its first nuclear test, codenamed Smiling Buddha, on May 18, 1974, in Pokhran, Rajasthan. The test was officially described as a "peaceful nuclear

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explosion,” but it marked India’s entry into the group of countries with nuclear weapons capability.

- **Global Reactions and Sanctions:** This test brought about international criticism and sanctions, particularly from the U.S. and other Western countries. It also led to the formation of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to prevent nuclear technology from aiding weapons programs.
- **Indigenous Development:** Cut off from many forms of international nuclear cooperation, India focused on developing its indigenous capabilities, particularly in reactor technology, fuel cycle management, and reprocessing.

3. Post-Cold War Era: Formal Nuclear Power and Diplomacy (1990s-2000s)

- **Nuclear Tests (1998):** India conducted a series of five nuclear tests in May 1998, also at Pokhran. These tests, led by the **Atal Bihari Vajpayee** government, were both strategic and symbolic, declaring India’s official status as a nuclear-armed state.
- **Nuclear Doctrine:** India announced a **No First Use (NFU)** nuclear policy and emphasized a minimum credible deterrent. The doctrine is designed to maintain credible nuclear deterrence, with a commitment to never be the first to use nuclear weapons in a conflict but retain the right to retaliate massively in case of an attack.
- **International Diplomatic Maneuvers:** After the 1998 tests, India faced sanctions again, but by the early 2000s, it had embarked on a path of nuclear diplomacy to break its isolation. India’s growing economic and strategic importance also shifted global attitudes.

4. Contemporary Phase: Civil-Nuclear Cooperation and Energy Expansion (2000s - Present)

- **India-U.S. Civil Nuclear Agreement (2008):** One of the key turning points in India’s nuclear journey was the India-U.S. Civil Nuclear Agreement (also known as the 123 Agreement). Signed in 2008 under Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and U.S. President George W. Bush, this agreement allowed India access to civilian nuclear technology and fuel, despite being outside the Nuclear Non-

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Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This was a major diplomatic achievement, marking India's integration into the global nuclear order.

- **NSG Waiver (2008):** India obtained a waiver from the Nuclear Suppliers Group, allowing it to engage in nuclear trade with countries like France, Russia, and the U.S.
- **Nuclear Energy Expansion:** India's nuclear energy program has been ramping up with ambitious goals for expanding its power generation capacity. India's Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) aims to increase nuclear power's contribution to the national grid, reducing reliance on coal and oil. Major projects include:
 - Expansion of PHWR and light-water reactors
 - Collaborations with Russia, France, and the U.S. for new reactors
 - Advanced research on thorium-based fuel cycles for long-term sustainability
- **Strategic Deterrent and Modernization:** India continues to modernize its nuclear arsenal with new delivery systems, including intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) like **Agni-V**, submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and the development of a nuclear triad.

Stop to Consider

- In 1948 the Atomic Energy Act was passed, and the Atomic Energy Commission was set up.
- The Department of Atomic Energy was created in the year 1954
- India always considered the NPT as discriminatory and had refused to sign it.
- India has opposed the international treaties aimed at non-proliferation since they were selectively applicable to the non-nuclear powers and legitimized the monopoly of the five nuclear weapons powers.

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Nehru on India's Nuclear Policy:

As India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru pondered "*What does independence consist of? – it consists fundamentally and basically of foreign relations*"¹. Nuclear power helped enable this vision of independence and encompassed Nehruvian principles of non-violence, non-alignment, peace, disarmament, self-reliance, and development. In turn, nuclear weapons were a means with which to protect Indian territory from external forces, secure her regional pre-eminence, and stake her claim to future influence in the international system.

Check Your Progress

1. Briefly write about Nehru's contribution to India's Nuclear programme.
2. Why did India refuse to sign NPT? Explain.

India's Nuclear Weapon: Pokhran I To Pokhran II:

By the early 1970s the ambiguity of the 'nuclear option' had effectively merged India's antinuclear and pro-nuclear opinions whereby a nuclear bomb would be developed but not used. India's refusal to declare South Asia a nuclear weapons-free zone, as proposed by the USA, underscored these aspirations and India's policy direction. In turn, although India had fought a successful conflict with Pakistan in 1971 which led to the creation of Bangladesh, and had signed the 20-year Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation with the USSR, India's regional security environment was deteriorating. This deterioration was typified by the US tilt to Pakistan in the 1971 war, by deepening China-Pakistan ties, and, most critically, by the US-China rapprochement from 1972. These relations effectively created a China-Pakistan-USA united front against India and were strengthened by China's regional nuclear monopoly. Such factors combined with a variety of domestic pressures, and India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi decided to carry out a nuclear test to demonstrate India's capability. With a sufficiently developed nuclear program at hand and under

the codename 'Smiling Buddha', India undertook its first nuclear test on 18 May 1974. This is a test described as a Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE). The test also became known as Pokhran I, named after the site where the test took place in the Thar Desert in Rajasthan. Despite these developments, India's diplomatic efforts to achieve unilateral nuclear disarmament continued and included a new dimension of self-restraint whereby India would not test any further nuclear weapons. As such, in 1978 India pursued negotiations for an international agreement on prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; in 1982 India called for a 'nuclear freeze' to prohibit the production of fissile materials for weapons, and in 1988 Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi tabled an Action Plan at the UN for the phased elimination of all weapons within a specific timeframe. India also supported plans for a Nuclear Weapons Convention akin to the Biological Weapons for signature on 10 April 1972 and entering into force on 26 March 1975, and the Chemical Weapons Convention which was opened for signature on 13 January 1993 and entered into force on 29 April 1997, both of which India signed. However, as had been the case for the NPT, India refused to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) that opened for signature in New York on 24 September 1996 and has been signed by 187 nations and ratified by 178. India argued that the Treaty favoured the P-5 powers, did not carry forward the disarmament process, and, therefore, effectively diminished India's nuclear potential. By the 1990s India's nuclear weapons programme appeared to face an existential crisis. Still contending with international sanctions, it seemed that many international proliferation controls were India-specific and intended to threaten its strategic autonomy and Great Power's emergence. Thus, Indian analysts talked of a US-EU-Japan (and even US-China) concert against India. The end of the Cold War signalled the demise of the USSR as a reliable counterweight for India to use against the international system, along with a now less meaningful NAM. Unable to benefit from Soviet arms trading and political support, India was increasingly isolated in a world now dominated by the USA.

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- China-Pakistan-USA united front against India and were strengthened by China's regional nuclear monopoly.
- Peaceful Nuclear Explosions (PNE) are nuclear explosions conducted for non-military purposes. Proposed uses include excavation for the building of canals and harbours, electrical generation, to drive spacecraft, and as a form of wide-area fracking.
- The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) prohibits "any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion" anywhere in the world.

Pokhran II

In 1998 a newly elected government led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power. With policies that promoted the image of a powerful, resurgent, and dynamic India to the world, the BJP had consistently advocated the induction of nuclear weapons in their election manifestos. As the new Minister of External Affairs, Jaswant Singh argued that international proliferation controls amounted to a 'nuclear apartheid' that cast South Asia and Africa outside of the dominant global 'nuclear security paradigm'. Such discrimination placed India in a position inferior to the Great Powers. This perspective is linked with the repeated calls from India's strategic enclave of analysts and academics to resume testing. Although India had the appropriate scientific military nuclear infrastructure in place, it was often only US pressure that stopped any new tests, particularly in the mid-1990s. These factors coupled with the BJP's desire to test often bolstered by their nationalism and a need to establish the power of their governing coalition. Against this backdrop, amid great secrecy, and only two months after coming to power and after new Pakistani missile tests (Ghauri) on 6 April, the BJP Government under Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee tested five nuclear devices on 11 and 13 May 1998. Confirming their capabilities and in response to domestic pressures, Pakistan carried out its nuclear tests at Chatham Hills in Baluchistan on 28 and 30 May. Codenamed Operation Shakti, and often called Pokhran II using the same test site as the 1974

PNE, India's 1998 nuclear explosions were the first overt tests since the NPT had come into force in 1970. Despite initial sanctions from the USA and Japan after the tests, and almost universal condemnation, Pokhran II resulted in India moving from an outlier of little significance to the international mainstream. Not only did the tests result in a new assertion of Indian autonomy in international affairs, but they also provided their nuclear guarantee, thus removing any need for dependence on external states. Indeed, the tests transformed her global relations, especially through their explicit enunciation of India's desire for a Great Power role, which was supported by her increasing economic and technological strength. This combination made India a state needed by other countries. In turn, policy concerning UNSC recognition became more prominent, with a permanent seat now seen as 'not a quest' but as 'India's rightful due'. While certainly less idealist, more belligerent, and increasingly pragmatic, India's leaders still argued for universal nuclear disarmament. India used their acquisition of nuclear weapons as a new point of leverage, stating that they would give up their proven nuclear capabilities in any new non-proliferation regime. Therefore, the paradox at the centre of India's nuclear programme between weaponization and disarmament that had been present since independence continued.

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Self-Asking Question

1. Write a note the circumstances that lead to PNE or Pokhran I nuclear explosion.
2. How do you understand the significance of Pokhran II for India's nuclear status?
3. Why has India refused to sign the NPT and CTBT?

Stop to Consider

- Nuclear apartheid is the condition of great powers maintaining nuclear arsenals while prohibiting other states from building similar weapons.
- The Ghauri-I was first test-fired on 6 April 1998 from the Mashhood Test Firing Range near Malute, Jhelum Cantt which is about 122.31 km south of Islamabad.

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India's Nuclear Doctrine

India's National Security Advisory Board unveiled the state's Draft of the Nuclear Doctrine on 17 August 1999. The main elements of the doctrine were a no-first-use policy, non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states, a moratorium on nuclear tests, the non-export of nuclear technology, and working towards universal nuclear disarmament. Conservative in nature, the doctrine displayed a commitment to using 'strategic nuclear assets as instruments of retribution in case deterrence fails', rather than as tools of aggression. However, three elements are crucial in India's Nuclear Doctrine that was pronounced in 1999. These are:

- **No First Use**

India will use nuclear weapons only as a response to an attack on Indian forces/territory. A caveat has been developed about the possibility of nuclear weapons in case of a chemical biological attack.

- **Massive Retaliation**

India will stage a massive response to a first strike, which shall inflict "unacceptable damage".

While the doctrine doesn't espouse a counter-value strategy (Civilian targets), the text implies the same meaning.

- **Credible Minimum Deterrence**

India shall maintain such numbers and capabilities of nuclear weapons and delivery systems, which would be merely sufficient to issue intolerable retaliation. India shall also keep in consideration the first-strike survival of its relatively small arsenal.

Relevance of India's Nuclear Doctrine

India's nuclear doctrine plays a crucial role in shaping the country's strategic posture and its stance on global nuclear issues. Its relevance today can be analysed through several key factors:

1. **Deterrence Strategy**

India follows a no-first-use (NFU) policy, which means it will not initiate a nuclear attack but will retaliate massively if attacked. This doctrine is significant as it underlines India's commitment to using nuclear weapons

as a deterrent, rather than for aggression. In an era of shifting geopolitical tensions, particularly in the Indo-Pacific and South Asia, India's deterrent posture remains critical for maintaining regional stability, especially about adversaries like Pakistan and China.

2. Regional Security and Stability

South Asia is one of the most volatile nuclear regions. India's nuclear doctrine is essential for preventing escalation during crises. For instance, during border skirmishes with Pakistan or China, India's commitment to NFU prevents potential pre-emptive strikes, which could spiral into a full-blown nuclear conflict.

3. Credibility of Second-Strike Capability

The relevance of India's nuclear doctrine also depends on the credibility of its second-strike capability, which is essential for ensuring the NFU policy works as a deterrent. With the development of a triad of delivery systems (land-based missiles, sea-based deterrence through submarines, and air-based nuclear weapons), India's ability to survive a first strike and respond effectively remains critical for regional security.

4. Strategic Autonomy

India's doctrine reflects its desire for strategic autonomy which means the ability to make independent decisions in matters of national security without external influence. Unlike some other nuclear powers, India has maintained a nuclear policy focused on minimal deterrence, avoiding an arms race. This strategic independence is relevant as India seeks to balance relations with major powers like the U.S. and Russia while managing regional tensions.

5. Global Non-Proliferation Norms

India's nuclear doctrine is also relevant to global non-proliferation efforts. Although not a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), India has maintained a responsible approach to nuclear weapons. It promotes non-proliferation norms, exemplified by its adherence to strict export controls and its constructive participation in initiatives like the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

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6. Modernization and Emerging Threats

As technological advancements like cyber warfare, missile defence systems, and hypersonic weapons evolve, India's nuclear doctrine must adapt. While the NFU principle remains a cornerstone, discussions around its revision have emerged in light of changing security dynamics. This shows the doctrine's need to stay relevant in the face of emerging threats from non-state actors, missile defence systems, or asymmetric warfare.

7. Political and Diplomatic Influence

India's nuclear doctrine also helps enhance its diplomatic standing in global forums. By maintaining a restrained and responsible nuclear posture, India can leverage its doctrine to strengthen ties with major powers and participate in discussions on global arms control and disarmament.

Indo-US Nuclear Deal

The developments in the nuclear front formed part of political leadership attempts to strategically lift India away from South Asia towards a greater global role and to improve her security environment. India has got best opportunity with enhanced Indo-US relations. As the cooperation progressed, the USA dropped all demands for India to sign the CTBT and join the related Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT). This improved relationship also paid other dividends, including a more neutral tilt towards Pakistan (particularly during the 1999 Kargil conflict) and de-hyphenating India and Pakistan when US policy-makers thought of South Asia, as well as heightened economic, political, cultural, and military cooperation.

Improved Indo-US relations led to the signing of their Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) of January 2004, which focused on the three-fold issue of civilian nuclear energy, civilian space programmes, and high technology trade, with a dialogue on missile defence being added. Under the joint US-India Civilian Nuclear Cooperation announcement (July 2005), India agreed to separate its civil and military nuclear facilities and to have all its civil nuclear facilities placed under IAEA safeguards. This agreement gave India de facto nuclear recognition. After being passed in

the US Congress (via the Hyde Act, which allowed the modification of Section 123 of the 1954 US Atomic Energy Act), it was then blocked from scrutiny in the Indian parliament, although only after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh survived a no-confidence vote in July 2008. Subsequently, in August 2008 the IAEA approved the safeguards agreement with India, and in September 2008 the NSG granted India a waiver, over Chinese obstruction, to give India access to civilian nuclear technology and fuel from other countries—developments that effectively allowed India to sidestep the requirements of the NPT. In October 2008 the deal was legislated as the United States-India Nuclear Cooperation Approval and Non-Proliferation Enhancement Act, ending the US sanctions on nuclear trade that dated from the 1974 PNE.

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Check Your Progress

1. How far has the Indo-US nuclear deal contributed to India gaining recognition as a Nuclear Weapons State (NPS)?
2. How do you understand India's Nuclear Doctrine? What are the important elements in it?

2.6 Summing Up

India's political leadership, ever since its independence, understood and recognised the importance of nuclear technology for advancing national interest; hence, efforts were made from the beginning to nurture and improve nuclear capabilities. However, the leadership's nuclear policy was mostly determined by global as well as regional context. The subsequent developments, particularly the strategic cooperation that evolved between India and the US, led to achieving what India is looking for in the long term which is recognition of India as a Nuclear Weapon State. It has also signed agreements with many countries like the US, Russia, France, Australia, and Japan, for supplying nuclear material and technology. Now India has become one of the very few countries that have developed nuclear 'triad'. These capabilities increased India's prominence and importance in international relations and further bolstered India's aspirations to become a Great Power.

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In this section, we learned what is a nuclear doctrine and how India developed its nuclear policy. We also understood the NFU policy of India's Nuclear doctrine along with its advantages and disadvantages. We also understood why India is opposed to CTBT & NPT.

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Unit - 3

India's Foreign Economic Policy

Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Objectives
- 3.3 Determinants of India's Foreign Economic Policy
- 3.4 Foreign Economic Aid
- 3.5 Foreign Trade
- 3.6 Demand for New International Economic Order
- 3.7 Role of India in International Economic Organizations
- 3.8 Comparing India's state of economy with China and the USA
- 3.9 India and the Global South
- 3.10 Foreign Investment in India over the Last Ten Years
- 3.11 Towards a Five Trillion Dollar Economy: Challenges and Opportunities
- 3.12 Summing Up
- 3.13 References and Suggested Readings

3.1 Introduction

Economic development is a key goal of India's foreign policy. Therefore, examining India's economic policies is essential to understanding its foreign policy thoroughly. Effective implementation of these economic policies is crucial for India to meet its foreign policy objectives. As Nehru noted, foreign policy ultimately stems from economic policy. Consequently, India is prioritizing economic issues. As part of its development strategy, India has largely stopped accepting foreign aid, except from a few selected countries. Additionally, India has forgiven the debts of some poor nations and is increasing its aid to other developing countries. This shift and India's growing economic strength are being leveraged for greater strategic global influence, forming a core component of its economic foreign policy. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is promoting India as an Emerging Economic Power to media, foreign investors, business leaders, think tanks,

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and foreign governments through regular publicity efforts, speeches, and interactions. India aims to strengthen its economy through multilateral trade negotiations, as well as regional and bilateral trade agreements. Like many other countries, India is signing Free Trade Agreements and Preferential Trade Agreements to enhance market access and economic influence. As part of its economic diplomacy, India is also engaging with its diaspora. The Ministry of External Affairs and Indian Missions collaborate with the Commerce Ministry and export organizations on initiatives like FOCUS-Latin America, FOCUS-Africa, and FOCUS-CIS to promote exports.

3.2 Objectives

This chapter will inform readers about the different aspects of India's foreign economic policy. The policy is shaped by a variety of internal and international factors. India has taken a multilateral approach to meet the objectives of its foreign economic policy. The chapter will focus on issues related to foreign economic aid (both received and provided by India) and India's foreign trade with other nations. It will also analyse India's role in advocating for a New International Economic Order. Additionally, the chapter will examine India's participation in various international, economic and financial institutions such as GATT, WTO, the World Bank, and the IMF. It will evaluate the Indian state of economy with China and the USA. It will also address the challenges faced by India in reaching the 5 trillion dollar economy as planned by PM Modi in 2024-2025. Lastly, the chapter includes key questions and recommended readings.

3.3. Determinants of India's Foreign Economic Policy

These determinants can be classified into two categories: (1) Domestic Determinants; and (2) International Determinants.

1. Domestic Determinants

- a) **Colonial Legacy:** India has been significantly influenced at conceptual, behavioural, and institutional levels by England's policies long after independence due to its dependence on England for trade

and institutional guidelines. This influence began to wane after the 1960s, but a form of intellectual dependency persists, affecting India's policies towards developing countries.

- b) Nature of Economic System:** India operates a mixed economy, which allows it to establish relationships with both capitalist and socialist nations in areas such as trade, capital investment, and joint ventures. This system incorporates both public and private ownership of production means.
- c) Compulsions of Economic Development for a Developing Country:** As a developing nation with a large population, extensive land, and numerous resources, India has a primarily rural and traditional economy. To modernize this economy, India requires economic, technical, and industrial assistance. Therefore, it must implement a foreign economic policy aimed at overcoming the obstacles hindering its economic development.
- d) Nature and Characteristics of Foreign Trade Policy:** India's Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) governs all export and import activities, primarily aiming to boost exports and use trade expansion to drive economic growth and job creation. As part of its market expansion strategy, India has signed various agreements with both developed and developing countries to increase market access for its exports. To improve export sector infrastructure, initiatives like "Towns of Export Excellence" provide additional support and incentives. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has simplified the rules for exporter credit, allowing them to secure long-term advances from banks for up to 10 years to fulfill their contracts. This measure supports long-term contracts and enhances overall export performance, benefiting the rupee in the short to medium term.

2. International Determinants

- a) India's Place in World Economy:** India's share in the global economy has been minimal. In 1950-51, it was just 2 percent, dropping to 0.5 percent by 1975-76. There was little improvement

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in the following years, with the share at 0.4 percent in 1980, 0.5 percent in 1985, 0.6 percent in 1990, remaining at 0.6 percent in 1992, and increasing to 0.7 percent in 1998. However, since the adoption of an open economy in 1991, this situation has gradually improved, though India has yet to fully realize its potential as a leading global economy. The significant economic growth India has experienced since the mid-1990s was driven by crucial reforms. After being criticized for its slow growth, India has emerged as one of the world's leading emerging markets. India influences the global economy in two main ways: first, as a significant potential exporter of technology, machinery, and computers (both hardware and software), along with other raw and finished materials; and second, as a large consumer market, ranking second only to China among the top 10 consumer markets in the world. Thus, India is poised to play an increasingly important role in the global economy in the coming years.

- b) International Economic Environment:** The international economic environment consistently affects a country's foreign economic policy, and India is no exception. During the Cold War, India had to align its foreign economic policy with both capitalist and socialist ideologies, leading to the adoption of a mixed economy. During this time, India's economic policy had to conform to international economic institutions like the World Bank, IMF, and GATT. The end of the Cold War brought three significant global economic changes: a shift from political to economic priorities, the decline of idealism in favour of realism, and the rise of liberalization, privatization, and globalization. In response to these changes, India adjusted its foreign economic policy by strengthening relations with economically developed countries despite political issues, such as with China and America. Additionally, India adopted a pragmatic approach and engaged with post-Cold War economic institutions like the WTO, SAFTA, and ASEAN. Thus, it is evident that India modified its foreign economic policy in response to the evolving international economic environment.

c) **Capital Investment and Multi-National Companies:** Before 1991, there was significant opposition to multinational companies (MNCs) in India. Regulations like the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA) were enacted to mitigate the negative impacts of MNCs on the country. However, the economic reforms of 1991 changed this perspective, attracting many multinational companies to the Indian market. These foreign companies are primarily driven by the profit potential in India, which offers a vast market due to its growing population and diverse consumer preferences. Factors such as favourable foreign policies, a competitive labor market, market competition, and macroeconomic stability make India an attractive destination for MNCs. India benefits from the presence of MNCs in various ways, including increased investment, reduction in the technology gap, better utilization of natural resources, narrowing of the foreign exchange gap, and strengthening of the basic economic structure. However, there are also drawbacks to hosting MNCs in a developing country like India. These include competition for small-scale industries, increased pollution and environmental risks, uneven distribution of profits, foreign exchange imbalances, slower decision-making processes, and occasional economic strain.

It's becoming increasingly clear that economic issues are taking on greater significance in global politics. Both domestic and international factors play a role in shaping India's foreign economic policy. To maximize its advantages, India must consider all these factors in its economic diplomacy.

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India's Foreign Economic Policy under Modi

The Modi government in its first term, had taken on some challenging tasks, including the introduction of Goods and Service Tax. The government had set up 355 million Indians with bank accounts for the first time. Its Swachh Bharat Abhiyan had built close to 100 million toilets. The Prime Minister's Jan Arogya Yojana aimed for universal health care and had reached 1.8 million beneficiaries by the end of Modi's first term.

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3.4 Foreign Economic Aid

Foreign aid is considered as an important ingredient for financing the developmental programs of the developing countries. Currently, it is considered as an important asset of the foreign policy of states. It acts as the most important source of foreign exchange earnings for developing countries. After World War II, developed countries have been providing foreign aid worth hundred billion to the developing world with a welfare motive. It was only in the post-war period that the flow of foreign aid began in a planned way, where developed Western economies started contributing solely for the development of infrastructure, alleviation of poverty, emergency relief, peace -keeping efforts and socioeconomic reconstruction programs of their war allies.

Objectives of Foreign Economic Aid:

There are a number of objectives which aid can contribute to die process of economic growth.

These may be followings:

- Foreign Economic Aid promotes investment in both physical and human capital.
- It enhances the ability to import essential capital goods and technology.
- It boosts the productivity of both capital and labour through technological transfers and encourages local technological innovation.
- It provides other vital resources for development, such as managerial skills, organizational capabilities, research ideas, and market access.
- It helps underdeveloped economies bridge three major gaps: the savings-investment gap, the export-import gap, and the technological know-how gap

At the same time huge amount of external assistance inflows may create threat for large amount of external debt burden to developing economies in the long run. Many countries in the world accept foreign aid and get different benefits along with a few adverse results.

Leading Foreign Aid Donors to India:

In 2012, the United Kingdom allocated \$180 million in foreign aid to India, which was previously the second largest bilateral program managed by the U.K. Department for International Development. However, towards the end of the year, Justine Greening, the U.K. Secretary of State for International Development, announced the cessation of all grant-based aid to India by 2015, citing the country's rapid economic growth and development progress. The World Bank also provided \$1.1 billion to India in 2012, making it India's largest donor. That same year, Japan contributed \$747 million in aid to India, retaining its status as the country's largest bilateral donor. The Japan International Cooperation Agency committed to financing six infrastructure projects in India, including the construction of transmission lines and substations in Tamil Nadu.

In 2012, Germany pledged 565.8 million Euros (\$736.2 million) in financial and technical assistance to India, an increase from 517.7 million Euros in 2011. The Asian Development Bank disbursed \$726 million in loans to India, including \$74.8 million for upgrading roads in the northeastern states. France committed \$160 million in aid to India in 2012, with \$67 million earmarked for infrastructure and livelihood support in Assam. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is notable among India's donors for its strategic partnership approach, focusing on health, agriculture, and energy as priority sectors for its innovative development programs. The Obama administration planned to continue allocating approximately \$100 million in annual aid to India. For 2011-2013, the European Union had committed a total of 210 million Euros in assistance to India, with 100-130 million Euros designated for education and 50 million Euros for health.

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Check Your Progress

1. What are the determinants of India's foreign economic policy?
2. Analyse the concept of India's foreign economic aid.
3. Discuss the objectives of India's foreign economic aid.
4. What are the characteristics of India's foreign trade policy?

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3.5 Foreign Trade

All exports and import-related activities are governed by the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP), which is mainly aimed at enhancing the country's exports and use trade expansion as an effective instrument of economic growth and employment generation.

Features of India's Foreign Trade:

India's Foreign Trade policy includes the following aspects: India experiences a trade deficit, with its exports lagging behind imports. There has been significant diversification in India's export commodities in recent years, now total over 7,500 different items. Since 1991, India has become a notable exporter of computer software, particularly to advanced countries like the USA and Japan. India has established trade connections with nearly every region globally, exporting to 190 countries and importing from 140 countries. Historically, India imported mainly food-grains and manufactured goods, but now oil is its largest single import commodity. The import and export of pearls and precious stones have seen considerable growth in recent years. Other major imports include iron and steel, fertilizers, edible oils, and paper. Approximately 95 percent of India's foreign trade is conducted via sea routes. India has 12 major ports along its coast, which manage about 90 percent of its overseas trade. Despite having about 16 percent of the world's population, India's share in global overseas trade is less than one percent, highlighting its minor role in global trade. The majority of India's international trade is conducted by state agencies in the public sector, with minimal involvement from private individuals.

Performance of India's Foreign Trade:

India's merchandise exports reached a level of US \$ 251.14 billion during 2010-11 registering a growth of 40.49 percent as compared to a negative growth of 3.53 percent during the previous year. India's export sector has shown remarkable dynamics in the recent years. Despite the recent setback faced by India's export sector due to global slowdown, merchandise exports recorded a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)

of 20.0 per cent from 2004-05 to 2010-11. Exports recorded a growth of 40.49 per cent during April-March 2010-11. The Government has set an export target of US \$ 300 billion for 2011-12. With merchandise exports reaching US \$ 217.66 billion in 2011-12(April-December), the exports target of 300 US \$ billion is expected to be achieved. The value of imports during 2011-12 (April-December) was US \$ 350.94 billion as against US \$ 269.18 billion as compared to previous year registering a growth of 30.4 per cent in \$ terms. Oil imports were valued at US \$ 105.6 billion during 2011-12 (April-December) which was 40.39 per cent higher than oil imports valued US \$ 75.2 billion in the corresponding period of previous year. Non-oil imports were valued at US \$ 245.3. The Trade deficit in 2011-12 (April-December) was estimated at US \$ 133.27 billion which was higher than the deficit of US \$ 96.21 billion during 2010-11 (April-December).

3.6 Demand for New International Economic Order

The call for a just and equitable economic system was first articulated in 1973. This demand was formally endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly during its sixth special session in 1974, advocating for the creation of a New International Economic Order (NIEO). The purpose of the NIEO is to address global economic disparities and promote equality. It aims to secure more advantageous trade conditions for developing nations. The NIEO is to be founded on principles of equity, sovereign equality, common interest, and cooperation among all states, regardless of their social and economic systems. Its goal is to correct existing inequalities, rectify injustices, bridge the widening gap between developed and developing countries, and ensure sustained economic and social development, along with peace and justice, for current and future generations.

Objectives of the NIEO:

NIEO aims at social justice among the trading countries of the world.

- It advocates for restructuring current institutions and creating new organizations to regulate trade, technology, and capital flows, ensuring the global economy benefits of all, especially the least developed countries (LDCs).

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- It embodies the vision of a world without borders.
- It proposes a fairer distribution of global resources by increasing aid from wealthy nations to poorer countries.
- It aims to alleviate global poverty and reduce the vast disparities between the living conditions of the rich and the poor worldwide.
- Its goal is to enhance the participation of poor nations in international decision-making processes.
- It envisions the creation of a new international currency, the implementation of SDR aid linkage, greater stabilization of the floating exchange system, and using IMF funds to subsidize loans for the poorest developing countries.
- Its primary objective is to foster economic development in poor countries through self-reliance and South-South cooperation.
- It seeks to address significant issues facing the South, such as balance of payments imbalances, debt crises, and currency shortages.

India's Role in Demand for NIEO:

India has consistently advocated for the New International Economic Order (NIEO) to achieve socio-economic development and secure proper rights through platforms like the UN, NAM, Third World Summits, Afro-Asian Solidarity Conferences, and other diplomatic channels. India's efforts for NIEO can be summarized as follows:

- 1974 UN Special Session: Then Foreign Minister Swaran Singh participated and proposed provisions to support developing countries, including equal voting rights in the IMF and other financial institutions, foreign capital investment, and financial and technical assistance.
- 1975 UN General Assembly Special Session: Then Foreign Minister Y.B. Chavan suggested measures to establish NIEO, advocating for trade expansion, productivity improvement, increased export earnings for developing nations, and the reduction or removal of trade barriers.

- UNCTAD-IV in Nairobi, 1976: India contributed to enhancing international trade markets for developing countries' goods, focusing on items like tea and jute.
- Prime Minister Morarji Desai's Statement in 1978: During a meeting at the Commonwealth Club of California, he emphasized the need for NIEO and highlighted the critical role of the USA in implementing decisions to eradicate global poverty.
- GATT and WTO Participation: India has been a member of GATT since its inception in 1948, actively participating in negotiations and advocating for developing countries' interests. India also engaged with the Dunkel proposals and continues to fight for developing nations' rights under the WTO framework.
- UNCTAD Summits: India played a key role in the seven major UNCTAD summits held between 1964 and 1987, advocating for developing countries' interests.
- North-South and South-South Cooperation: India has promoted trade between developing and developed countries. For instance, during the 1981 Cancun summit, India called for improved cooperation through the World Bank and IMF.
- G-15 Group Formation in 1990: India joined the G-15 group to push for NIEO, participating actively in six meetings held before the formation of the WTO to protect developing countries' interests.
- G-24 Group Membership: India is part of this group, which aims to safeguard developing countries' interests within the World Bank and IMF, advocating for reforms in these institutions.

Since the 1970s, India and other developing countries have made earnest efforts for NIEO. However, despite significant involvement during the Cold War, tangible results have been limited. Post-1991, the situation for developing countries has become more complex, with India now engaged in economic reforms influenced by the World Bank and IMF pressures.

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Check Your Progress

1. Analyse the features and performance of India's foreign trade.
2. What are the objectives of New International Economic Order?
3. Discuss the role of India in the demand for New International Economic Order.

3.7 Role of India in International Economic Organization

To know the India's foreign economic policy, it is essential to understand its role in International economic/financial organizations. In this regard, India's role can be analysed in the following organizations: – (1) IBRD/World Bank/IDA; (2) IMF; (3) GATT; and (4) WTO.

India and IBRD/World Bank/IDA: India is a member of four out of the five branches of the World Bank Group: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), International Development Association (IDA), International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA). In June 1944, India was one of 44 countries that signed the final agreement establishing the World Bank. India proposed the name "International Bank for Reconstruction and Development" (IBRD) and later suggested the creation of the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank's interest-free loan affiliate. India has received funds from the World Bank (mainly through IBRD and IDA) for various development projects and is a founding member of IBRD, IDA, and IFC. The World Bank's assistance to India began in 1948 with funding for the Agricultural Machinery Project. The World Bank established a resident mission in India in 1957. In August 1958, the first meeting of the Aid India Consortium was held in Washington, DC, under the World Bank's auspices. IFC made its first investment in India in 1959 with \$1.5 million. India became a member of MIGA in January 1994.

As of December 31, 2010, IBRD had extended \$39,075.96 million in loans to India. From January 1, 2011, to December 31, 2011, new commitments totaling \$3,049 million were approved, bringing the total assistance to \$42,124.96 million by the end of 2011. The main sectors receiving IBRD assistance included roads and highways, energy, urban

infrastructure (including water and sanitation), rural credit, disaster management, and financial services. As of December 31, 2010, IDA had extended \$37,299.16 million in credits to India. During 2011, new commitments of \$2,207.34 million were approved, bringing the total to \$39,506.5 million by the end of the year. The primary sectors receiving IDA assistance included health, education, agriculture, and poverty reduction.

India and IMF: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is a global organization aimed at regulating and managing the world's financial system. It achieves this by monitoring global payment balances and exchange rates. The IMF also provides technical and financial assistance to its member countries. Headquartered in Washington D.C., USA, the IMF has a positive relationship with India, having provided financial aid that has boosted the Indian economy. The IMF commended India for avoiding the Asian Financial Crisis in 1999 and for maintaining a consistent growth rate. In May 2005, IMF Managing Director Rodrigo De Rato visited India. That year, the IMF highlighted India's promising budget, predicting a 6.7% growth rate for the country. According to the IMF, India's economic growth can be attributed to the Reserve Bank of India's effective inflation control and monetary policy management. The IMF suggested that with further economic reforms, India could increase its growth rate to 8% and potentially become a financial superpower.

India and GATT: The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was established in 1947 to pave the way for the creation of the International Trade Organization (ITO), which was intended to oversee global trade. GATT originated from an international conference held in Geneva in 1947, which discussed a draft charter for the ITO. The United States initiated negotiations with 22 other countries, resulting in commitments to regulate 45,000 tariff rates. GATT was technically considered an agreement under the US Reciprocal Trade Act of 1934 and thus did not require congressional approval. It was seen as a temporary arrangement until the ITO could take over its functions. Consequently, GATT began its provisional existence on January 1, 1948, when 23 contracting parties signed the agreement. However, in 1950, the US Congress refused to ratify the treaty establishing the ITO.

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India actively participated in all the tariff negotiations at previous GATT conferences and has been a signatory from the beginning. The concessions granted and received by India cover about one-fifth of its foreign trade. India received tariff concessions on items such as raw jute, hessian cloth, mica, coir goods, lac, cashew nuts, cardamoms, ginger, tea, castor oil, linseed oil, jute bags and sacks, unmanufactured tobacco, and essential oils. In return, India granted concessions on various articles, including canned fruits and vegetables, motor cars and parts, ball and roller bearings, dairy products, tallow, lithopone, coal-tar dyes, toilet goods, chemicals, drugs and medicines, several types of machinery, nitrate of soda, fountain pens, ribbons, cigarette paper, electric bulbs for torches and automobiles, stoves, safety razors and blades, refrigerators, typewriters, plows, tractors, staple fiber, wireless apparatus, and more. According to the Charter, India is committed to progressively reducing quantitative restrictions, applying them non-discriminatorily, and consulting with GATT on the continued application of import restrictions. However, certain restrictions are permissible under specific conditions for economic development.

India and WTO: India was a founding member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1947 and its successor, the World Trade Organization (WTO), which began on January 1, 1995, after the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. By participating in this increasingly rule-based system for international trade governance, India aims to ensure greater stability and predictability, which should ultimately lead to increased trade and prosperity for itself and the other 149 WTO member nations. India benefits from Most Favoured Nation (MFN) and national treatment for its exports to all WTO members. According to a WTO Secretariat Report and a policy statement from the Government of India, India is poised to capture a significant share of business deals currently dominated by developed nations, particularly in major service industries such as telecom, financial services, and infrastructure services like transport and power. The rise in availability and reduction in tariffs has encouraged many developed countries to do business with India, especially in the IT sector. If this trend continues, India is expected to meet the software and service demands of major global business giants by 2025. Given India's

promising economic growth, it is anticipated that the country will enjoy a strong and positive relationship with the WTO and its member nations by 2025.

However, India has expressed reservations on certain issues. It has experienced imbalances and inequities in the implementation of WTO agreements, noting that some developed countries have not fully adhered to their obligations, and many Special and Differential Treatment clauses favouring developing countries remain unimplemented. Developed countries often exploit exception clauses in the WTO to enforce various regulations on foreign producers and suppliers. Extending the scope of the investment regime in the WTO beyond Trade Related Investment Measures and the General Agreement on Trade in Services is seen as inappropriate by India. Additionally, a multilateral framework does not guarantee increased FDI inflows and may negatively impact the quality of these inflows. There are other asymmetries, such as the WTO not addressing the responsibilities of corporations, which often impose trade restrictive clauses on their subsidiaries. The WTO has also been unable to eliminate non-trade barriers related to labour and environmental considerations, including their linkage to certain Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) schemes. Despite these concerns, India remains an active participant in all WTO activities. It needs to continuously stress and raise its concerns during WTO negotiations to shape outcomes in favour of developing countries.

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Self Asking Question

Q. Analyse India's participation in various international economic and financial institutions.

3.8 Comparing India's state of economy with China and the USA

➤ China:

India's economic scenario today bears resemblance to China's in 2007. Although India's current economic situation mirrors some aspects of China's 2007 economy, the differences are more pronounced and carry significant implications for India's future growth trajectory.

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Differences between the economies of India and China

- **Difference in Investment Ratios:** China's investment to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio remained consistently high, averaging about 40% between 2003 and 2011, whereas India's investment ratio during its period of high growth was roughly 33%, which is lower than China's. This indicates that China has dedicated a larger share of its economic resources to investment, fueling its fast-paced growth. Between 2012 and 2021, the gap expanded further, with China's investment ratio averaging nearly 43%, while India's dropped to around 29%.
- **The Twin Balance Sheet in India:** The Twin Balance Sheet (TBS) issue significantly impacted India's investment environment, leading to a notable slowdown. Additionally, the twin deficit problem, which includes the Current Account Deficit (CAD) and the Fiscal Deficit, poses further challenges. In particular, the worsening CAD could escalate the cost of imports, depreciate the rupee, and intensify external imbalances.
- **Differences in Export and Import Composition:** In the fiscal year 2022-23, India's total exports of goods and services surpassed USD 770 billion, while imports were approximately USD 890 billion. In contrast, back in 2007, when China's economy was of a comparable size, its exports had already surpassed USD 1.2 trillion, mainly fueled by goods rather than services. Moreover, China's imports stood at USD 950 billion, reflecting a greater level of integration into the global economy.
- **Tariff Rate Differences:** China has firmly established itself as a major hub in global supply chains, thanks in part to its steady reduction of tariff rates. Between 2003 and 2007, China's average tariff rate dropped from 10.69% to 8.93%, and by 2020, it further decreased to 5.32%. This consistent lowering of tariffs has strengthened China's integration into international trade and attracted significant foreign investment. On the other hand, India's tariff rate saw a reduction from 25.63% in 2003 to 8.88% by 2017, marking progress in trade liberalization. However, India's tariff rates have

risen since then, potentially limiting its capacity to attract investment and fully engage with global supply chains.

- **Labor Force Participation:** China has consistently upheld a high labor force participation rate over the years. In 2007, this rate was close to 73% for individuals aged 15 and above, as per estimates from the International Labour Organisation (ILO). However, it has gradually decreased and is currently around 67%.

In contrast, India's labor force participation rate was estimated at approximately 50% in 2022, indicating a lower proportion of the population engaged in the workforce compared to China.

- **Employment Generation Shortfall:** Despite the creation of numerous jobs in India, particularly in construction and service sectors like trade and transport, formal manufacturing remains significantly more efficient in terms of output per worker. The Economic Survey highlights that formal manufacturing is twice as productive as the transport sector, 2.5 times more productive than trade, and 3.75 times more productive than construction. Nevertheless, the main issue is the insufficient job creation in formal manufacturing, which hinders India's full economic growth potential.
- **Female Workforce Participation:** A key factor behind the labor force participation gap between China and India is the involvement of women. In China, the female labor force participation rate stood at 66% in 2007, but dropped to 61% by 2022. In India, however, this rate was significantly lower at 30% in 2007, and further declined to 24% in 2022. This indicates that a considerably smaller proportion of women in India are actively participating in the labor force compared to China.

Similarities Between India's Current Economic Situation and China's in 2007

- **Sectoral Distribution of the Labor Force:** In 2007, 41% of China's workforce was employed in agriculture, 27% in industry (including construction), and 32% in services. Comparatively, in India in 2021, 44% were engaged in agriculture, 25% in industry, and 31% in services. It's important to recognize that the actual workforce

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numbers in each sector differ between the two countries. This comparison sheds light on which sectors employ large portions of the population.

- Decline in Agricultural Labor: In China, the labor force in agriculture decreased by about 1.5 percentage points per year from 2003 to 2019, whereas in India, the decline was around 1 percentage point annually. The question arises about future employment opportunities for those leaving agriculture in India if this trend continues.

How can India catch up with China's economy despite all the obstacles the Indian economy has faced till now?

India can close the gap with China's economy by focusing on several key areas:

- Enhancing Infrastructure: India is heavily investing in the development of roads, ports, airports, and railways, pouring billions into these projects to improve connectivity and efficiency.
- Boosting Investment: The government can ramp up investments to accelerate economic growth and drive development across sectors.
- Increasing Economic Output: By expanding its overall economic production, India can work towards narrowing the economic gap with China.
- Advancing Digital Public Infrastructure: India has established digital platforms that have revolutionized commerce and services, aiding in the growth of the digital economy.
- Creating Competitive Policies: Formulating policies to counter import competition from China, while simultaneously strengthening domestic manufacturing, will be crucial for India's growth.
- Integrating into Global Supply Chains: India can expand its manufacturing sector by becoming more deeply integrated into global supply chains.

India's trade deficit with China remains significant. In 2023-24, India's exports to China were \$16.65 billion, while imports stood at \$101.75 billion, leading to a trade deficit of \$85.08 billion.

➤ **USA:**

1. GDP and Economic Size:

The US is the world's largest economy, with a nominal GDP of approximately \$27.36 trillion (as of 2023). It accounts for around 24% of global GDP. The US has a per capita GDP of roughly \$80,000, reflecting a highly developed, high-income economy. On the other hand, India is the fifth-largest economy globally, with a nominal GDP of around \$3.6 trillion (2023 estimate). Its share of global GDP is around 3.5%. India's per capita GDP is much lower, at about \$2,500, placing it in the lower-middle-income category. The US economy is about 7 times larger than India's in absolute terms, and its per capita wealth is vastly higher. However, India's economy has been growing rapidly, and it is projected to overtake economies like Germany and Japan in the coming decade.

2. Economic Growth Rates:

The US has a mature economy, with annual growth rates typically between 2% and 3% in normal economic conditions. Post-COVID recovery saw a sharp rebound, but inflation and monetary tightening have slowed growth to around 1.5%-2% in 2023. India has been one of the world's fastest-growing major economies, with growth rates averaging 6%-7% over the last decade. Even in 2023, it is expected to grow by about 6.5%, driven by domestic consumption, investment, and a young workforce. India's growth rate is significantly higher, driven by a growing population, urbanization, and industrialization. However, the US has a more stable and developed economy with slower but more sustainable growth patterns.

3. Labor Market and Employment:

The US labor market is tight, with unemployment at a historic low of around 3.8% in 2023. However, labor participation has slightly declined, and the economy faces challenges related to an aging population. The average annual wage in the US is about \$70,000, though income inequality remains a significant issue. India has a much higher unemployment rate, officially around 7%-8%, though

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underemployment is a more significant issue, especially in rural areas. The informal sector employs a large portion of the workforce, with lower wages and job security. The average wage in India is much lower, with large regional and sectoral disparities. While the US labor market is more structured and well-paying, India faces significant employment challenges despite its demographic advantage. The US has a higher labor productivity rate, while India has a large informal economy that drags on overall productivity.

4. Industrial Structure and Technology:

The US has a highly diversified and advanced economy, with major industries in technology, finance, healthcare, and manufacturing. Services account for about 80% of the US economy. The US is also a global leader in technological innovation, research and development (R&D), with companies like Apple, Google, and Tesla at the forefront. India's economy is also diverse, but agriculture still employs around 40% of the population, even though it contributes only about 15% to GDP. The services sector, particularly IT and software services, is a major driver, accounting for around 55% of GDP. India is rapidly advancing in technology, especially in fintech, telecommunications, and space exploration, though its R&D spending is much lower than the US. The US economy is more advanced, with a higher emphasis on high-tech industries, while India is still transitioning from an agrarian base to a more industrial and service-oriented economy. India has a strong IT sector but is behind in overall technological infrastructure.

5. Trade and Global Influence:

The US is a major global trade hub, importing and exporting goods and services worth trillions of dollars annually. It has a significant trade deficit, especially with China. The US dollar is the world's reserve currency, giving the US enormous leverage in global finance. India is also becoming a significant player in global trade, especially in IT services, pharmaceuticals, and textiles. However, it has a smaller share of global trade than the US. India runs a trade deficit, particularly in energy imports, as it relies heavily on oil and gas imports. The US remains the dominant force in global trade and finance and benefits from the

dollar's reserve status, while India faces challenges with energy dependence and trade deficits.

6. Debt and Fiscal Policy:

The US national debt is over \$33 trillion, over 120% of GDP, driven by large fiscal deficits and government spending. The US can borrow cheaply due to the dollar's global status. India's public debt is lower in percentage terms, around 85% of GDP. India's fiscal deficits remain a concern, though it has more room for growth-driven debt management. The US has higher levels of debt but greater fiscal flexibility due to the strength of the dollar and investor confidence. India has a more conservative fiscal approach but faces challenges in managing growth and social spending.

The US and India are at very different stages of economic development, with the US being a mature, high-income economy and India an emerging market with high growth potential. India has the advantage of a young population and rapid economic expansion, while the US maintains global leadership through its technological edge, financial system, and large consumer base. Over the next few decades, India's trajectory might bring it closer to the economic size and influence of the US, but the differences in per capita income, industrial structure, and technological infrastructure will persist for some time.

3.9 India and the Global South

India's role in the Global South has become increasingly significant in shaping trade, aid, and supply chain dynamics. As one of the largest and fastest-growing economies in this group, India's policies and actions have both immediate and long-term effects on developing nations, especially those in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia.

➤ Trade:

India has been working to strengthen its trade relations with other Global South countries. It is actively involved in various multilateral and regional platforms such as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South

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Africa), IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa), and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Additionally, India has been increasingly focused on building bilateral trade agreements with countries in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America.

a. *Growing Markets*

India's trade strategy is largely driven by expanding its markets in the developing world. In recent years, Africa has emerged as a major destination for Indian exports. According to reports, India-Africa trade has crossed over \$90 billion annually, with a focus on commodities, energy resources, and textiles. India also imports significant quantities of oil, minerals, and raw materials from African nations, contributing to a balanced trade relationship. Similarly, India's trade with Latin America, especially with Brazil and Mexico, has seen substantial growth in sectors like pharmaceuticals, information technology, and automotive parts.

b. *South-South Cooperation*

India's trade with the Global South is aligned with the philosophy of South-South cooperation, which emphasizes collaboration among developing countries without the influence of Western countries. India's role as a developing economy makes it a key player in helping build an alternative economic architecture that offers more equitable terms of trade for developing countries.

c. *FTA Agreements and Trade Diplomacy*

India has signed multiple Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and is negotiating others to boost its trade with various regions. For instance, India has strong ties with ASEAN countries, cemented through the ASEAN-India FTA, and is in talks with African countries under the India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) framework for deeper economic cooperation.

➤ **Aid:**

India has transformed from being an aid recipient in the past to becoming an important aid donor, especially for Global South nations. Indian aid is distinct from traditional Western aid because it is often more flexible,

focused on capacity building, and avoids stringent conditions like those attached to aid from institutions such as the World Bank or IMF.

a. *Development Partnerships*

The Indian government promotes its aid programs as “development partnerships” rather than traditional aid, emphasizing mutual growth. India’s development assistance spans sectors like infrastructure, education, healthcare, and technology.

India’s Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) program is a cornerstone of its aid diplomacy. ITEC provides technical assistance and capacity building to a large number of developing nations, offering scholarships, training programs, and technology transfer.

b. *Aid to Africa*

India has significantly increased its financial assistance to African nations, with the continent receiving billions in soft loans and concessional credit. The focus has been on critical sectors such as renewable energy, agriculture, and infrastructure development. India is also supporting Africa’s healthcare infrastructure by providing low-cost medicines and vaccines. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, India supplied vaccines to several African, Latin American, and Caribbean nations under the “Vaccine Maitri” initiative. India’s pharmaceutical industry, often referred to as the “pharmacy of the world,” plays a key role in its aid diplomacy by offering affordable medicines to developing countries.

c. *Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Aid*

India has been increasingly active in providing humanitarian assistance to Global South countries affected by natural disasters. For instance, after cyclones or floods in South Asian or African countries, India has quickly deployed aid in the form of food supplies, medical assistance, and rescue operations.

➤ **Supply Chains:**

India’s position as a manufacturing hub and its large consumer market gives it strategic importance in the evolving global supply chain landscape, particularly in the Global South.

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a. *Shift from China*

As global supply chains undergo reconfiguration due to geopolitical tensions between the U.S. and China, India is positioning itself as an alternative manufacturing hub, especially for developing nations. India's "Make in India" initiative aims to strengthen its manufacturing sector, not only for domestic consumption but also for exports to developing countries. The COVID-19 pandemic also revealed vulnerabilities in global supply chains, especially when countries were dependent on a single source, such as China. Many Global South countries are now looking to diversify their supply chains, and India is stepping in as a viable alternative supplier, particularly in sectors like pharmaceuticals, textiles, and electronics.

b. *Regional Value Chains*

India is fostering regional value chains by encouraging greater intra-regional trade and cooperation among Global South nations. This involves promoting production networks that span across developing countries, enhancing their collective capacity to produce and trade goods and services. India's collaboration with Southeast Asian countries under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) framework, although not yet a member, and efforts to connect South Asian economies are aimed at bolstering regional supply chains.

c. *Technology and Innovation*

India's burgeoning technology sector is another key asset in global supply chains. Indian tech firms, startups, and innovation hubs are increasingly collaborating with partners across the Global South to create digital infrastructure and enable smoother supply chain logistics. For instance, India has helped African countries digitize their financial systems and improve e-governance, contributing to more efficient trade and supply chains.

➤ **3rd Voice of Global South Summit (August 17, 2024):**

India hosted the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit virtually on August 17, 2024, under the theme "An Empowered Global South for a

Sustainable Future”. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the event and led the opening Leaders’ Session. Following this, 10 ministerial sessions were held, covering topics such as foreign affairs, health, finance, energy, education, and trade, among others. The summit saw participation from 173 dignitaries from 123 countries, including 21 Heads of State/ Government and 34 Foreign Ministers. The summit extends India’s philosophy of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” (One Earth, One Family, One Future) and Modi’s vision of inclusive growth and development. As the first plurilateral summit held since the formation of the new government in June 2024, it reflects India’s focus on the Global South and its commitment to advancing the region’s development goals. Participants used the platform to exchange solutions for global challenges such as development finance, health, climate change, technology, trade, and governance. In his opening remarks, Prime Minister Modi emphasized the need for unity among Global South nations to address the ongoing global crises, including the lingering effects of COVID-19, geopolitical tensions, and challenges related to energy and food security. He reiterated India’s commitment to sharing its expertise with partner countries. Modi proposed a four-point Global Development Compact centered on trade for development, capacity building, technology sharing, and concessional finance. India also announced initiatives to support Global South countries, including funds for trade promotion and capacity building, and pledged to help with affordable medicines and technology-sharing in agriculture. The Foreign Ministers’ sessions, led by External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar, focused on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), revitalizing multilateralism, and enhancing digital and economic resilience. Ministers voiced concerns over climate change, debt stress, and the limitations of current global governance structures, calling for a more inclusive international order. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman emphasized financial inclusion and concessional finance to support the Global South in achieving the SDGs. The Health Ministers’ session discussed strengthening global health systems, while the Education Ministers highlighted creating human resources to accelerate sustainable development. Other sessions addressed youth empowerment, trade, information technology, and energy security.

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Overall, the summit reinforced the importance of the Global South in shaping an inclusive future, with participants expressing hope for more effective global cooperation at the upcoming UN Summit of the Future.

3.10. Foreign Investment in India over the Last Ten Years

Financial Year (April- March)	Total FDI Inflows (US \$)	% of GDP
2013	28.19B	1.52%
2014	34.58B	1.70%
2015	44.06B	2.09%
2016	44.48B	1.94%
2017	39.90B	1.51%
2018	42.15B	1.56%
2019	50.55B	1.78%
2020	64.07B	2.41%
2021	44.73B	1.42%
2022	49.35B	1.47%
2023	28.16B	0.71%

3.11 Towards a Five Trillion Dollar Economy: Challenges and Opportunities

Over the past decades, India has experienced consistent growth rates averaging between 6-7%. This rapid economic expansion led to a significant achievement in 2022, when India's GDP surpassed the \$4 trillion mark. With an estimated GDP of \$4.12 trillion that year, India overtook its former colonial ruler, the United Kingdom, to become the fifth-largest economy in the world. Crossing this \$4 trillion threshold highlights India's increasing economic influence and has fueled aspirations to join the ranks of \$5 trillion economies in the near future. In 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi set a goal for India to reach a \$5 trillion GDP by 2024-25. The \$5 trillion target suggests almost doubling the size of India's economy within 5 to 6 years. In terms of purchasing power parity (PPP), India's GDP has

already surpassed \$10 trillion, making it the third-largest economy after China and the United States. However, achieving the \$5 trillion mark in nominal terms would require sustained rapid growth. The government's policy efforts are focused on creating the right environment for this accelerated expansion. Over the past three decades, India's economic growth has been driven by a young population, a vast domestic consumer market, and a shift towards a more open, market-driven approach. Since the 1991 balance of payments crisis, successive administrations have adopted economic reforms, moving away from the restrictive license-permit system and embracing globalization and foreign investments. Key reforms, such as industrial deregulation, privatization of public enterprises, and trade liberalization, have significantly reshaped the economy. However, India faces major challenges.

Massive infrastructure gaps- At its core, India needs to address significant infrastructure deficiencies that hinder productivity. Years of underinvestment have resulted in severe shortfalls in transportation, energy, irrigation, and urban infrastructure. Weak connectivity limits the cohesion of India's internal market, while electricity shortages and challenges with integrating renewable energy persist. Reviving the agricultural sector relies on large-scale irrigation initiatives, and the rapid pace of urbanization demands the development of smart cities with modern housing, sanitation, and transportation systems. Closing these infrastructure gaps requires greater public expenditure, foreign investments, and public-private partnerships. Additionally, a major challenge lies in streamlining a bureaucratic system burdened with red tape and convoluted regulations. Complicated administrative procedures obstruct business expansion and deter foreign investment. Simplifying bureaucracies across central, state, and local levels, reducing regulatory red tape, easing compliance, removing overlapping jurisdictions, and digitizing government services are crucial steps to foster a more dynamic economic environment. But India faces major challenges.

Geopolitical Tensions and Regional Conflicts: India's foreign economic policy is significantly influenced by its geopolitical landscape. The country's relations with neighbouring Pakistan and China remain fraught with tension. The longstanding border disputes with China, particularly the recent clashes in the Galwan Valley, have strained economic ties and heightened the need

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for strategic economic alliances. The issue of sluggish global economic growth has been further intensified by rising geopolitical risks in recent times. These risks include a variety of factors such as political tensions, trade conflicts, and regional disputes. For India, this scenario presents both challenges and opportunities.

Trade Imbalances and Protectionism: India faces significant trade imbalances, particularly with China, where the trade deficit has been a longstanding issue. While efforts are being made to diversify trade partners, the rise of protectionist policies globally, including in the United States and Europe, poses a challenge. These protectionist trends threaten India's export sectors and complicate negotiations for favourable trade agreements.

Global Supply Chain Disruptions: The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed vulnerabilities in global supply chains, prompting nations to rethink their economic dependencies. India's reliance on imports for critical sectors like pharmaceuticals and electronics has highlighted the need for a robust domestic manufacturing base. The disruptions have also emphasized the importance of securing alternative supply chains and reducing dependency on a single country, particularly China.

Technological Advancements and Digital Economy: The rapid pace of technological advancement presents both opportunities and challenges for India. While India has made strides in the digital economy, there is a need to align foreign economic policy with technological innovations. Issues such as data privacy, cybersecurity, and the digital divide must be addressed to fully leverage the potential of the digital economy. Additionally, competing in the global tech landscape requires significant investment in research and development.

Energy Security and Environmental Concerns: Energy security is a critical aspect of India's foreign economic policy. As a major importer of oil and gas, India's economy is vulnerable to fluctuations in global energy prices and geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. Moreover, the global push towards renewable energy and sustainable practices necessitates a transition that aligns with environmental goals. Balancing economic growth with environmental sustainability poses a complex challenge.

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Multilateral Trade Agreements and Bilateral Relations: India's stance on multilateral trade agreements, such as its decision to opt-out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), reflects its cautious approach to protecting domestic industries. While seeking to strengthen bilateral relations, India must navigate complex trade negotiations to secure beneficial terms. This involves balancing protection of domestic interests with the need for greater market access.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Ease of Doing Business: Attracting FDI is crucial for India's economic growth. Despite improvements in the ease of doing business rankings, challenges such as bureaucratic red tape, regulatory uncertainties, and inadequate infrastructure persist. Ensuring a stable and transparent investment climate is essential to attract and retain foreign investors. Policy reforms and consistency in regulatory frameworks are needed to enhance investor confidence.

Human Capital and Skill Development: India's large and youthful population presents a demographic dividend, but also a challenge in terms of skill development and employment. Aligning education and vocational training with the needs of the global economy is vital. Foreign economic policy must address the mismatch between the skills of the workforce and the demands of modern industries to harness the potential of its human capital.

Climate Change and Sustainable Development: Climate change poses a long-term challenge to India's economic policy. As global efforts to combat climate change intensify, India must align its economic policies with sustainable development goals. This involves transitioning to green energy, reducing carbon emissions, and participating in global climate initiatives. Balancing economic growth with environmental responsibility is imperative for sustainable progress.

Check Your Progress

1. Compare India's state of economy with China and the USA.
2. What are the challenges faced by India in achieving its target of becoming a 5 trillion dollar economy?

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3. How is India positioning itself as a leader in the Global South through its aid policies, trade initiatives, and participation in global value chains?
4. What are the implications of South- South Cooperation in a multipolar world?
5. What is the full form of IMF?
6. When was the WTO established?
7. What is the rank of India in the global economy?
8. Which country hosted the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit in 2024?
9. Discuss the various determinants of India's foreign economic policy.
10. Analyse the concept of South- South cooperation
11. How has India's position in attracting and managing foreign investment evolved over the past few years?
12. Analyse the concept of Foreign Direct Investment.

3.12 Summing Up

India is at a pivotal moment in its economic growth story. Since 1991, continuous reforms have propelled India into one of the fastest-growing major economies, now ranked as the fifth largest globally. However, growth has recently slowed due to a combination of cyclical and structural challenges. To revive growth and realize the goal of becoming a \$5 trillion economy by 2025, efforts across several areas are necessary. India's robust services sector, increasing domestic consumption, youthful population, and expanding middle class offer reasons for optimism. Furthermore, advancements in digital connectivity and innovations in technology, banking, education, and agriculture have added fresh momentum. Yet, more work remains to fully leverage these strengths. Improving manufacturing competitiveness is key for creating jobs and boosting productivity. Streamlining land and labor regulations, developing industrial corridors, and promoting research and development can create an environment where industries can flourish. Upgrading logistics infrastructure through coordinated

investments in roads, railways, ports, and inland waterways is equally critical. Enhancing agricultural productivity through irrigation, diversifying into high-value crops, promoting food processing, and encouraging Agri-tech innovations can improve farm incomes and increase exports. Similarly, there is significant potential for growth in services exports, particularly in information technology, healthcare, education, and tourism. Successfully implementing education and skills policies to prepare the youth for a modern economy will yield substantial benefits. Prioritizing the use of technology in governance to improve service delivery is also essential. Simplifying the complex indirect tax system, improving tax compliance, and strengthening dispute resolution mechanisms can boost business efficiency. Additionally, developing a competitive, market-based financial system will efficiently channel savings into productive investments. Most importantly, fostering a transparent, predictable, and consultative policy environment will reignite entrepreneurial energy and restore investor confidence. With prudent macroeconomic management that keeps inflation in check and maintains a sustainable fiscal deficit, India can return to a high growth path. Achieving the \$5 trillion economy vision is well within reach for a country of India's scale and potential. By combining economic openness, forward-thinking reforms, and effective policy implementation, India can enhance its productive capacity, raise stagnant incomes, and fulfil its growing aspirations. The world will be closely watching India's reform journey as its economy moves towards higher-income status.

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3.13 References and Suggested Readings

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Unit - 4

Indian Foreign Policy and Quest for Energy Security

Unit Structure:

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Objectives
- 4.3 India's Energy Security
- 4.4 Energy Policy of the Government of India
- 4.5 India's Energy Diplomacy
 - 4.5.1 Gas Pipelines and the TAPI pipeline
 - 4.5.2 Myanmar Pipeline
 - 4.5.3 Iran-Pakistan-India Pipeline
- 4.6 Energy Policy Initiatives by the Modi Government
- 4.7 Challenges to India's Energy Security
- 4.8 Summing Up
- 4.9 References and Suggested Readings

4.1 Introduction

Energy sufficiency and sustainability shape a country's development, and energy security is essential to maintaining the state and economy. International organizations and the government must safeguard energy security. Energy security is monopolized by trade routes, marine infrastructure, and OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries). An international oil company's enormous power—in terms of money, knowledge, and political ties—is typically seen as overwhelming, and working with them frequently results in a very unbalanced relationship. Power imbalances of this kind have traditionally formed the crux of numerous political and business disputes about energy security. Since the majors' aggressive expansion into new, possibly oil-rich territories has frequently been seen as an extension of Western empire-building goals, the term colonialism is essential to this discussion.

J. Peter Burgess claims that there are further reasons why the concept of energy security has become more significant in the late modern era. The

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main cause of this is how the world market has evolved into a platform for security politics. Energy-related risks are associated with the global economy's profound and largely unchecked integration. Beyond the instrumentality of goal-oriented international relations and the democratic processes that govern domestic demands, the world is intricately interwoven and highly dependent on one another. The world energy market is a major component of the global economy. Through it, the world's leading economies are connected less by a common need for energy which is quite obvious—than by a common desire for stability. According to Peter Burgess, developments in the energy market have a significant impact on overall economic conditions, but they also pose a considerably greater threat to the global capital system, which is the foundation upon which all others rely. The United States' levels of energy production and consumption are easily surpassed by China and India, which are positioned to become global economic powers, significantly increasing energy insecurity.

4.2 Objectives

After going through this topic, you should be able to:

- know the issues related to energy security;
- understand the energy policy of the government of India;
- various internal efforts by the government of India to increase the production of power generation.

4.3 India's Energy Security

India's energy security is tied to the energy transition and focuses on adopting clean energy while continuing to use oil and gas for growth. Using diplomatic means to further the nation's energy security aims has been a defining feature of Indian foreign policy in recent years. To maintain a steady energy supply in the face of shifting global security conditions, the UPA Government's foreign policy from 2004 to 2014 was heavily entwined with the national economy. Future energy consumption in India is anticipated to be mostly driven by the country's demographic trends and economic growth. "India will be forced to calculate its energy security requirements within a

more general geo-political environment that is characterized by rapid change and unpredictability,” some analysts predicted more than ten years ago. As a result, to meet the energy demands of its rapid economic expansion, India has begun implementing its integrated energy policy and engaging in “oil diplomacy” to find new energy resources. Energy security has become a “crucial” part of India’s foreign policy.

Cheap oil prices were prevalent throughout rapid economic growth in the Western world from 1945 until the first oil crisis in 1973. The situation became even more complex after the Iranian revolution of 1979, which set off the second oil crisis. High economic growth in recent years has occurred in nations like China and India during times of rising oil price concern. Since 2003, India’s 8%–9% annual growth in oil consumption has been subsidized by rising global oil prices. Indian policymakers were alerted to the impending crisis by the oil shock of July 2008, when oil prices hit a record high of \$147 per barrel. India, which gets nearly 80% of its energy from imports, hurried to find a solution as rising oil prices caused inflation and threatened to reverse the gains made over the previous two decades of rapid economic expansion. Rapid reactions to contain fires also revealed the shortcomings of a national energy policy that was still in the planning stages. The US Energy Information Administration (EIA) predicted that worldwide energy consumption would rise by 50% between 2005 and 2030, just before the world economy entered a recession. It was clear that the majority of the growth expected over the next 25 years would come from emerging economies. Asia was predicted to have the greatest demand among growing economies, especially in China and India. Their medium-to-long-term economic estimates remain optimistic, notwithstanding the downturns in 2008 and 2009. Fossil fuels—oil in particular—such as natural gas, coal, and natural gas will continue to provide the majority of the energy during this time. India is currently the fifth-largest energy consumer and is projected to rise to the third position by 2030 while having relatively low per capita energy consumption. The nation is currently the seventh-largest producer of energy in the globe in addition to being a significant producer.

In a speech at the Constituent Assembly in December 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru argued that in ‘*talking about foreign policies, the House*

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must remember that these are not just empty struggles on a chess board. Behind them lie all manner of things. Ultimately foreign policy is the outcome of economic policy, and until India has properly evolved her economic policy, her foreign policy will be rather vague, rather inchoate, and will be groping'.

Between 1981 and 2001, the primary commercial energy consumption increased at an annual rate of 6%, nearly tripling. India must expand at a rate of 8%–10% or more over the next 25 years to eliminate poverty and catch up with the rest of vibrant Asia. One of the main challenges is meeting its energy demand at a sustained 8%–9% yearly growth rate. India must enhance its primary energy supply by three to four times its 2004 levels, and its electricity generation capacity and supply by five to six times, as per the government's integrated energy program. Its commercial energy supply must increase at a rate of 4.3% to 5.1% per year starting in 2004. The capacity of power generation must rise from approximately 160,000 MW in 2004 to nearly 800,000 MW by 2030. Furthermore, the need for coal, which currently makes up the majority of India's fuel mix, would increase to 2,000 million tons annually. India must rely on imports to meet its energy needs because its oil and gas resources are comparatively limited. Its import bill for crude oil was around \$90,000 million in 2008–09, with imports already covering roughly 80% of its needs.

Stop to Consider

The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) is a principal agency of the U.S. Federal Statistical System responsible for collecting, analysing, and disseminating energy information to promote sound policymaking, efficient markets, and public understanding of energy and its interaction with the economy and the environment.

According to estimates from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in 2005, India utilized roughly 3% of the global oil supply and imported roughly 70% of its crude oil needs. In

2005, imports of LNG accounted for 17% of the overall gas supply. Additionally, roughly 12% of India's coal supply is imported. About 70% of India's electricity is generated from coal, which is also a major component of the country's economy. India is the third-largest user of coal worldwide, behind the United States and China. Natural gas now makes up little more than 9% of the energy mix because of government policy that aims to diversify it. Nuclear, solar, and wind energy still make up extremely minor portions of the energy mix.

While coal remains a vital energy source, the government's alternative policy scenario projects a decline in coal consumption by 2030. In the alternative scenario, fuel economy and the introduction of compressed natural gas (CNG) will cause the demand for coal to rise considerably more slowly and the demand for oil to fall somewhat. In a similar vein, nuclear power is expected to play an even larger role. India would still import between 29% and 59% of its total commercial primary energy even after all of these improvements are put into place. According to the most recent government estimates included in the Five-Year Plan 2007–12, India might import 90%–95% of its oil, half of its gas, and a third of its coal needs by 2030.

LNG imports did not begin until 2004, even though India has been a net oil importer since the 1970s. At the moment, India buys oil from roughly 25 nations, with four of those nations accounting for nearly two-thirds of all imports: Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Kuwait, and Iran. The majority of Indian analysts predict that the Middle East will continue to supply the lion's share of India's imports of gas and oil, which make up around two-thirds of the country's exports. Additionally, the Indian economy has suffered with each oil shock in this region. Because of this reliance, the volatility of the oil price and its effects on inflation, economic growth, and foreign exchange reserves are a concern for Indian policymakers. Furthermore, a disproportionate reliance on the Gulf area has political ramifications. India is more exposed to any disruption in the Gulf's oil supplies than it is to other large nations. Nonetheless, one could counter that India's reliance shouldn't be viewed as a vulnerability because the Gulf and India are encouraged to become more interdependent, which helps to keep the energy markets stable.

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India's energy security strategy is increasingly focused on alternative fuels, with natural gas as a substitute for petrol, and ethanol playing a pivotal role in blending. The rising use of ethanol has supported a reduction in fossil-based gasoline reliance, leading to lower crude oil imports. This shift should enhance domestic supply and reduce dependency on volatile global oil markets, ensuring significant savings on foreign exchange expenditure.

India has made significant strides in ethanol blending with gasoline, achieving a 15% average blend rate, and is looking to meet a 2025 target of 20% on an accelerated timeline. Many retail stations have already begun selling 20% blended gasoline. All of this was made possible by the government's push to expand feedstocks for ethanol production, new ethanol production plants, lucrative ethanol prices and fiscal support.

However, India's biodiesel program remains miniscule, and the absence of meaningful quantities of domestic feedstock is the biggest impediment. India's dependence on seed oil imports would potentially skyrocket if lucrative and nonnegotiable blending targets were set. The country's curious lack of used cooking oil (UCO), the most popular biodiesel production pathway in Asia, can be attributed to policy sensitivities around higher cooking oil imports, which again highlights the interplay between affordability and security.

Regarding sustainable aviation fuel, India has opted for the ethanol-to-jet fuel route to meet import substitution criteria, despite this being very expensive compared with the UCO route. The country's policy focus on compressed biogas is also an ethanol blending corollary targeting imported LNG.

Government policies and initiatives promoting biofuel use aim to reduce fossil fuel use by the equivalent volume, thereby lowering crude oil imports and enhancing energy security through increased domestic production.

Check Your Progress

1. What is Energy Security?
2. Write a note on India's Energy Security.

Stop to Consider

- India imports oil from about 25 countries, with nearly two-thirds of imports coming from four countries: Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Kuwait and Iran. Most analysts in India believe that the Middle East region will remain the source of the overwhelming proportion of India's oil and gas imports, accounting for around two-thirds of Indian exports.
- Due to India's dependence on the Middle East region, oil price volatility, and its impact on inflation, economic growth and foreign exchange reserves will always remain a concern.

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4.4 Energy Policy of the Government of India

Since more than 50% of the people in the nation lack access to electricity or any other type of commercial energy. India will be “energy secure when we can supply lifeline energy to all of our citizens irrespective of their ability to pay for it as well as meet their effective demand for safe and convenient energy to satisfy their various needs at competitive prices, at all times and with a prescribed confidence level considering shocks and disruptions that can be reasonably expected,” according to the Government of India's expert committee on integrated energy policy.

The expert committee's main discussions on Indian energy security included cutting down on energy needs, replacing imported energy with domestic alternatives, diversifying supply sources, growing resource bases, creating alternative energy sources, strengthening resilience to supply shocks, and boosting capacity to import energy while managing market risks. Overall, it is thought that the following steps will increase India's energy security: a) diversifying its energy mix and the sources from which it imports energy; b) actively pursuing the purchase of energy assets abroad; and c) starting policy reforms to draw in foreign investment while enhancing domestic production, distribution, and consumption.

The Indian government is also establishing 5 million metric tons of strategic crude oil storage reserves at Mangalore, Vishakhapatnam, and Padur as a precaution against temporary disruptions in supply. This strategic reserve will supplement the various public sector oil firms' current storage

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facilities. These depots are situated near the shore to facilitate the easy export of reserves in the event of problems. In his speech to the country on the eve of India's 59th Independence Day in January 2005, then-President A. P. J. Abul Kalam emphasized the need for "Energy Security" as a means of achieving complete "Energy Independence."

Since then, energy security has been underlined by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh as the second-most essential security priority, behind food security. India has decided to increase the share of nuclear energy in the nation's overall electricity generation in recent years. In India, energy security is defined as the capacity to reduce susceptibility to disruptions in the supply of oil and gas, guaranteeing the year-round opening of maritime routes, and maintaining a stable pricing for energy resources. With its numerous benefits, nuclear power may play a big part in providing a stable energy source. It is a significant substitute for pricey natural gas and oil.

Reducing carbon dioxide emissions dramatically and quickly enough to slow down climate change is possible with nuclear energy. Nuclear energy is crucial in today's world due to worries about energy security and climate change. It lessens India's steadily growing reliance on foreign oil imports. Additionally, it lowers the country's current account deficit and preserves a vital foreign exchange reserve. The Indian government has long held the belief that the continent's sizable and expanding markets offer potential for cooperation in the form of cooperative research and technical development aimed at supplying the public with more affordable and sustainable energy. Increasing India's natural gas consumption is one of the most significant and practical approaches to addressing the issues of energy security and climate change management.

The New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) was introduced by the Indian government in 1997–1998. Over US\$14 billion in investments and the discovery of 87 oil and gas blocks—three of which are currently in production—have been made possible by the policy. Following the conclusion of the ninth round of the NELP, which encompassed a sedimentary region of around 88,000 square kilometres, 37 companies eight of them foreign participated. There is now more domestic gas available as a

result of the oil and gas sector being opened to private business participation. Multinational corporations have also become more involved in this area. India has increased its investment in the construction of LNG re-gasification facilities to meet the country's high demand for gas. The nation's present import capacity of 14 million tonnes per year is expected to expand to 20 million tonnes per year by 2012–13 due to the construction of new re-gasification LNG facilities at Kochi and Dabhol.

According to Indian President Pranab Mukherjee, the country has also started a large-scale pipeline development initiative. By 2014, the pipeline length of the Indian Business Gas Authority of India alone increased from the current 9000 km to around 14,500 km. By the end of the 12th Five-Year Plan in 2017, the goal is to have around 30,000 km of gas infrastructure throughout the nation. Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri was speaking at the launch of the 12th City Gas Distribution (CGD) bidding round in New Delhi on Thursday, October 12 and said "At present, an about 23,500-km long gas pipeline network is under operation in the country and around 12,000-km pipeline is approved/under construction. Efforts are underway to complete the vision of One Nation One Gas Grid by 2030." Additionally finished is GAIL's 2000 km Dahej/Vijaipur-Bawana-Nangal/Bhatinda pipeline. India is also working to explore unconventional gas sources including coal bed methane and shale gas. In addition, India is making use of coal bed methane; four licensing rounds have been completed, and commercial production of the gas has started at Raniganj, West Bengal. India possesses one of the largest coal deposits in the world, hence efforts were made to collaborate with foreign businesses that had the necessary know-how and experience to extract coal seam gas.

India is undertaking various measures to address its increasing dependence on crude oil imports. These include investing in overseas upstream oil, diversifying crude oil imports, upscaling strategic petroleum reserves, increasing biofuel blending and promoting alternative automotive powertrains. While these initiatives address the issues of energy security and high oil import dependency to a degree, India needs to do more to successfully deal with its energy challenges.

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Stop to Consider

- In India, energy security has become almost equivalent to food security.
- India is striving to achieve energy independence which means it is the state in which a nation does not need to import energy resources to meet its energy demand.
- Energy security means having enough energy to meet demand and having a power system and infrastructure that are protected against physical and cyber threats.
- New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) is a policy adopted by the Government of India in 1997 indicating the new contractual and fiscal model for the award of hydrocarbon acreages towards exploration and production (E&P). NELP was applicable for all contracts entered into by the Government between 1997 and 2016.
- In March 2016, the Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP) replaced NELP, which has been in existence for 18 years.

Self-Asking Question

1. Do you think energy security is crucial for India's development?
Give your answer

4.5 India's Energy Diplomacy

Over the past ten years, “energy diplomacy” has emerged as a primary focus of the nation's foreign and security policy agenda. India is giving serious thought to importing energy from outside the Middle East and using nuclear power. This viewpoint might be used for bilateral nuclear agreements with the United States, France, Russia, and Canada, as well as ongoing interactions with the nations of Eurasia, Africa, and Latin America. The external aspect of India's energy endeavours comprises:

- a) acquisition of assets abroad through acquiring equity participation in developed fields, and obtaining exploration-production contracts in different parts of the world;
- b) entering into long-term LNG supply contracts;
- c) pursuing transnational gas pipeline proposals;
- d) promoting partnerships with foreign entities in the downstream sector, both in India and abroad.

Indian businesses are working hard to establish a solid presence in the Eurasian region to diversify their imports of gas and oil. Efforts in this regard included investments in Russia's Sakhalin-1 field and the 2009 acquisition of Imperial Energy by the Indian public sector enterprise Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC). Kazakhstan is seen by India as a significant energy actor in Central Asia. Since China is following the same course of action, competition in this region is quite intense. However, the fast-expanding commercial and trade ties between China and India might also force them to discuss forming alliances in other fields. Both have made it clear that they plan to work together on gas and oil bids. A conversation was started by India between the main Asian exporters, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Iran, Qatar, and Oman, and the main Asian purchasers, China, Japan, and South Korea, on the possibility of Asian regional cooperation in the energy sector.

The joint \$573 million proposal by China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and India's ONGC to purchase Petro-Canada's 37% interest in the al-Furat oil and gas reserves in Syria demonstrated some success for these efforts. They had previously been joint operators in Sudan. Even while China and India are working together in other areas, cash-rich China has proven it can outmanoeuvre India in energy transactions when it comes to Central Asian energy. This was amply demonstrated in late 2005 when CNPC increased its proposal to \$4,180 million, beating out India in the acquisition of Petro Kazakhstan, the country's third-largest oil producer.

An agreement for the exploration of oil and gas in the Satpayev block of the Caspian Sea was signed by ONGC Mittal Energy Limited (OMEL) and KazMunaiGas (KMG), the National Oil Company of Kazakhstan, during the 2009 visit of the Kazakhstani President to India. KMG will own 75% of the shares, with the Indian company owning 25%.

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Due to its low hydrocarbon potential, OMEL also relinquished its exploration blocks in Turkmenistan. South America and Africa are also pursuing similar initiatives. By signing a contract with the Corporación Venezolana del Petróleo in 2008, ONGC Videsh (OVL) obtained a forty per cent participating interest in the San Cristobal project. In that same year, OVL inked agreements with Colombia and Brazil. The business had already bought some new properties in Cuba, Colombia, the Congo, Sudan, and Egypt. OVL is present in 17 countries and is involved in around 40 oil and gas projects. With several projects being developed in Iran, Brazil, Myanmar, Egypt, Venezuela, and Kazakhstan, it produces oil and gas from Sudan, Vietnam, Syria, Russia, and Colombia. Furthermore, the company's affiliate, ONGC Nile Ganga BV (ONGBV), has contributed \$223 million to the alFurat project in Syria and \$669 million to the Greater Nile Oil Project in Sudan. Moreover, ONGBV has made over \$300 million in several Brazilian blocks.

Stop to Consider

- The Satpayev block covers an area of 1,582 sq. km and is at a water depth of 5 m–10 m. It is situated in a highly prospective region of the north Caspian Sea and is close to major fields, like Karazhanbas, Kalamkas, Kashagan and Donga, where significant quantities of oil have been discovered. It has estimated reserves of 1,850m. barrels.
- Energy diplomacy is a form of diplomacy and a subfield of international relations. It is closely related to its principal, foreign policy, and to overall national security, specifically energy security.

ONGC invested \$437 in Colombia through its fully owned subsidiary, ONGC Amazon Alaknanda Limited (OAAL), and invested in Nigeria through its subsidiary, ONGC Narmada Limited (ONL).

Check Your Progress

1. Briefly outline the Government of India's Energy Policy.
2. Highlight the important aspects of Energy Diplomacy.

4.5.1 Gas Pipelines and the TAPI Pipeline

Additionally, India is looking into the prospect of importing gas from Bangladesh, Turkmenistan, Iran, Myanmar, and Myanmar through pipelines. A lot of talk has surrounded the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline since 2002. The Trans-Afghanistan Pipeline, also called the Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India Pipeline (TAPI) is a natural gas pipeline that the Asian Development Bank is helping to create through the Galkynysh – TAPI Pipeline Company Limited. There have been some doubts over Turkmenistan’s gas reserves, Afghanistan’s security state, and the long-standing tense connections between India and Pakistan. All sides are still giving the plan careful thought. This 1,680-kilometer pipeline would be built alongside the Herat-to-Kandahar highway in Afghanistan, after which it would pass through Quetta and Multan in Pakistan, before beginning its journey from the Turkmenistan gas field Daulatabad. The pipeline would ultimately end up in Indian Punjab’s Fazilka. India had already taken part in the project as an observer before being formally invited to join in 2006. Several pipeline arrangements have already been suggested by the Asian Development Bank to draw in financiers, contractors, and investors. Turkmenistan notified the members in May 2006 that De Golyer & McNaughton, an independent firm, had verified reserves of more than 2,300 billion cubic meters of gas at the Daulatabad field. The field’s present ability to produce 80 million cubic meters of gas per day (cu m/d) might be boosted to around 125 million cu m/d. Turkmenistan has pledged to give Pakistan and India sovereign guarantees for continuous, long-term deliveries. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas was permitted by the Indian government to submit an official request to join the TAPI project in May 2006, marking the official approval of the country’s involvement in the project.

Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan inked a Framework Agreement in April 2008 to purchase gas from Turkmenistan. The participating nations also intended to talk about taxation structure, consortium difficulties, and transit payments to Afghanistan and Pakistan shortly. Over the past few years, TAPI has also been brought up at practically every significant gathering concerning the restoration of Afghanistan. During a recent tour to Russia

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and Central Asian nations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov of Turkmenistan on July 11, 2015, in the country's capital, and made a push for the \$ 10 billion TAPI gas pipeline project to be implemented as soon as possible. The pipeline, which is anticipated to begin operations in 2018, will transport gas from Turkmenistan's 16 trillion cubic foot Galkynysh field. According to a joint statement, both leaders acknowledged that the TAPI project's realization will have a revolutionary effect on commerce and referred to it as a "key pillar" of economic cooperation between the two nations. They allegedly decided to move forward with this significant regional project's early implementation. The leaders underlined their unwavering dedication to carrying out this key project on schedule, which would be a critical milestone. The United States of America, like other countries, is attempting to influence the Asian energy rivalry with its geopolitical agenda. Instead of encouraging the TAPI pipeline, it has deterred India from obtaining gas from Iran. A deal was reached by Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India to purchase natural gas from Turkmenistan. They signed the deal in Ashgabat on April 24, 2008. However, as of 2012, the transit cost for gas travelling through Afghan territory had not been decided upon by the governments of Afghanistan and India. The issue at hand pertained to the transit price for the pipeline that traverses Pakistani territory. The cost structure was designed to be based on an agreement between the governments of India and Afghanistan. On December 13, 2015, work on the project began in Turkmenistan, and it was finished by the middle of 2019. While building in Pakistan started in October 2019 and is proceeding according to plan, work on the Afghan side of the border began on February 24, 2018.

In light of the Afghanistan Peace Process, Turkmenistan wants to bring the TAPI project back as soon as possible. After interacting with these two pipeline proposals for more than ten years, Indian policymakers are beginning to realize that none of these projects will likely proceed anytime soon given the continued decline in the security conditions in Afghanistan and Pakistan and the stagnation of relations between India and Pakistan. However, if any of these projects come to pass in the foreseeable future, regional geopolitics and geoeconomics will completely shift.

Check Your Progress

1. Write the full form of TAPI.
2. Discuss briefly the TAPI project and its importance in India's Energy Security.

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4.5.2 Myanmar Pipeline

In a bid to counter China's dominance in the region and ensure energy security, India plans liquefied natural gas (LNG) pipeline connectivity with Myanmar and Bangladesh. The proposal for a gas pipeline connecting the three countries was initially discussed in 2005-06. The talks got scuttled after Myanmar decided to go ahead with a pipeline to China. However, guided by its Act East policy, and the recent volatility in energy markets due to the Ukraine war, India plans to renew the efforts for interconnectivity of the gas grids of the three nations. One of the officials related to the project said "Pipeline connectivity with the eastern neighbours is being looked at as both the countries have large gas reserves and they should be willing to sell their produce".

The plan is to connect the pipeline with the North East Natural Gas Pipeline Grid operated by the Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited (IGGL) in Tripura, said the official. IGGL is a joint venture of Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL), ONGC, GAIL, Oil India Ltd (OIL) and NRL. Estimates show that as of 2021, Myanmar's reserves of natural gas stood at 22.5 trillion cubic feet.

China and Thailand are among the major importers of LNG from Myanmar. Public sector major ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) and GAIL also own 17% and 8.5% stakes respectively, in the A1 and A3 blocks in the country. However, in 2013, China prevailed over the Myanmar government to sell its gas through a bilateral pipeline, after which the plan for a pipeline between India and Myanmar was shelved. While Bangladesh has seen a decline in its reserves, and has its high requirements for power generation, the government in Dhaka is making efforts to increase its reserves, taking up more exploration activities across the country. Last year, Bangladesh discovered a new gas field with the capacity to produce 20 million cubic

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feet of gas per day (MMCFD) at the Koilastila Gas field. Queries sent to the ministries of petroleum, external affairs, the Bangladesh High Commission in Delhi and the embassy of Myanmar remained unanswered till press time. Under the Hydrocarbon Vision 2030 for North-east India, the government also plans to make the North-east a hub of oil and gas transit. If this pipeline comes up, it would give the plan a boost.

4.5.3 Iran-Pakistan-India Pipeline

The \$7,500 million, 2,300-kilometer Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline remains a goal despite numerous challenges. Initially, 60 million cubic meters of Iranian gas per day will be transported by the proposed IPI pipeline and split equally between Pakistan and India. An 800-kilometer pipeline that runs through Pakistani territory will supply gas to India as well as Pakistan. The gas sale agreements between Iran and Pakistan have already been concluded. Iran has committed to providing 21 million cubic meters of natural gas per day to Pakistan starting in 2014. The Minister of External Affairs stated in a 2010 statement to the Indian parliament that India was still a party to the IPI project and that various issues were being discussed between the participating countries regarding natural gas pricing, delivery points, project structure, guaranteed supplies and pipeline security, transportation tariffs and transit fees, etc.

Stop to Consider

- Gas Pipeline infrastructure is an economical and safe mode of transporting natural gas by connecting gas sources to gas-consuming markets.
- At present, there are about 17000 km long natural gas pipeline network which is operational in our country.

4.6 Energy Policy Initiatives by the Modi Government

Gujarat, the state from which Prime Minister Modi is originally, has the potential to become the nation's centre for energy. The country's

aspirations for energy security are significantly impacted by the presence of the Reliance Company refinery and the multinational companies Essar and Cairn in Gujarat and Rajasthan. Energy-related concerns have been on Prime Minister Modi's plate since he was Gujarat's chief minister. As the head of the Indian government, Prime Minister Modi has every right to concentrate on energy-related matters. It was evident from his government's resolve to adopt the new Land Acquisition Bill in the Indian Parliament during the Budget Session itself how urgent it was to free up land for prospective nuclear and thermal power projects without any complications. On February 28, 2015, the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the second budget. The day before, the Annual Economic Survey 2014–15 was released, highlighting India's ambitious goal of producing one million megawatts of solar electricity by 2022. A project to create coal-based supercritical Ultra Mega Power Projects (UMPP) with a capacity of around 4000 MW each has already been started by the Ministry of Power. Four UMPPs have already been handed over to the designated developers and are in varying phases of implementation: Sasan in Madhya Pradesh, Mundra in Gujarat, Krishnapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, and Talaiya in Jharkhand. Now that it is completely operational, the Mundra UMPP (5x800 MW) is producing power. As of right now, three Sasan UMPP units (3x660 MW) have been put into service. The government expects an approximate investment of \$67 billion in natural gas infrastructure in the next 5-6 years with India's daily domestic gas sales likely to grow over four times from the current 35 MMSCMD (million metric standard cubic meters per day) to around 150 MMSCMD by 2028, as per the Petroleum Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB).

Oil Minister Puri also said he expects import dependence on gas to come down as India is on track to achieve '*Atmanirbharta*' (self-reliance) in gas production. He also said global demand for gas may soften after 2025, and he doesn't expect production cuts in global gas supplies like in crude oil.

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Self-Asking Question

- Q. According to you, what are the challenges in achieving energy security in India and suggest measures to ensure it?

4.7 Challenges to India's Energy Security

India's energy security is intricately linked to economic and population growth, accessibility, availability, affordability, and supply and demand. India's quest for energy security is going slow and after a late start. India embraced various domestic efforts and has drawn up supplier relationships around the globe in coal, oil, gas, nuclear, hydroelectric power, and renewable energy. It appears India is not likely to be fully independent of external sources of supply for its energy requirements in the short term as well as in the medium term. There is no major technological breakthrough in India in alternative energy to free the country from its energy predicament, thus, it needs to adopt multi-dimensional strategic energy security approaches. In the absence of major oil and gas reserves in Indian territory, the country may be forced down a perilous path that includes a massive increase in the use of coal, associated with environmental concerns, and increasing dependence on external sources. India faces several significant challenges to its energy security, which need to be addressed to ensure a sustainable and reliable energy supply. These challenges are multifaceted, encompassing economic, environmental, technological, and geopolitical dimensions:

(A) High Dependency on Energy Imports

India imports over 80% of its crude oil, primarily from the Middle East, making it vulnerable to geopolitical tensions and price volatility in global markets. Increasing dependency on LNG imports too poses similar risks.

(B) Inadequate Infrastructure

Inadequate infrastructure leads to high transmission and distribution losses, affecting the reliability and efficiency of power supply. Limited storage

capacity for oil, gas, and renewable energy hampers the ability to manage supply fluctuations.

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(C) Financial Constraints

Massive investments are required to upgrade existing infrastructure, develop renewable energy projects, and improve energy efficiency. Subsidies for fossil fuels and energy tariffs that do not reflect the true cost of supply create financial strain on utilities and discourage investment in cleaner technologies.

(D) Environmental Concerns

Heavy reliance on coal contributes to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, conflicting with environmental sustainability goals. The impacts of climate change, such as extreme weather events, can disrupt energy production and supply.

(E) Technological and R&D Challenges

Integrating intermittent renewable energy sources like solar and wind into the grid requires advanced grid management and storage technologies. There is a need for significant advancements in energy technologies, including energy storage, smart grids, and carbon capture and storage (CCS).

(F) Geopolitical Risks

Political instability in major oil-exporting regions can disrupt supply chains and affect energy security. Trade tensions and diplomatic relations with energy-producing countries influence energy import dynamics.

(G) Economic Growth and Demand Surge

Rapid economic growth and urbanization increase energy demand, putting pressure on existing infrastructure and resources. Expanding the industrial base requires a reliable and ample supply of energy.

(H) Global Market Dynamics

Fluctuations in global energy prices impact the cost of imports and economic stability. Global competition for energy resources can strain India's access to necessary supplies.

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Addressing these challenges is crucial for India to achieve energy security, economic growth, and environmental sustainability.

4.8 Summing Up

India is responding to economic globalization at this stage of its modernization. Its accelerated economic performance has affected its foreign policy generally, on its engagement within Asia and with great powers; it is aggressively pursuing regional trade arrangements and has started policy reforms to improve border trade. India, which is poised to become one of the world's largest economies, needs to maintain its current 8% economic growth rate to help eradicate poverty and meet its goals of economic and social development. More growth means more energy, so energy security is moving up the political agenda. India's lack of significant energy resources makes it vulnerable. India's rapid growth has also compelled it to align its diplomatic and security policies with its energy security concerns. India's relations with the United States of America, Russia, China, and Iran will be shaped by its actions and commitments on the energy front in the years to come. External energy policy used to entail obtaining a steady supply from the Gulf. In the future, safeguarding foreign assets and supplies from various sources will be included in national security. India's primary energy source will remain coal, and its primary supply of oil and gas will remain in the Gulf region, notwithstanding all of its ambitious attempts. As India seeks road transport gasification, e-mobility and emerging technology adoption, biofuel growth, and crude oil supply diversification, it is in a race against time to scale up the known and the novel. It is anticipated that renewable energy sources, including hydroelectric and nuclear power, will play a comparatively larger role. As a result, the main task will be to establish the institutional and legal structure necessary to carry out all of these programs.

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Unit - 5

India's Softpower

Unit Structure:

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Objectives
- 5.3 Historical Foundation of India's Soft Power
- 5.4 Assets of India's Soft Power
- 5.5 Soft Power- Why it's important for India?
- 5.6 India and India's Soft Power
- 5.7 Major initiatives of India's Soft Power
- 5.8 G20 and India's Soft Power: A New Era of Global Influence
- 5.9 Limits to India's Soft Power
- 5.10 Global Soft Power Index
- 5.11 Recommendations of the Standing Committee on Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy
- 5.12 Summing Up
- 5.13 References and Suggested Readings

5.1 Introduction

The term “soft power”, introduced by Joseph Nye, describes a nation's ability to influence others through attraction and appeal rather than force or monetary incentives. India's soft power is a combination of its rich cultural heritage, democratic principles, and modern economic progress. According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), soft power is the capacity to shape others' preferences through appealing and attractive non-coercive means, such as arts, dance, literature, cuisine, yoga, and traditional medicine.

As a civilization with ancient traditions and a modern state with significant global ambitions, India leverages its soft power to generate international goodwill and enhance diplomatic relations. Soft power is the ability of a country to sway the preferences and behaviour of various

international actors (including states, corporations, communities, and publics) through attraction or persuasion rather than coercion. Its defining characteristic is its non-coercive nature, using culture, political values, and foreign policies as its currency. It represents a persuasive strategy in international relations, utilizing a nation's cultural, historical, and diplomatic influence.

Soft power rests on three primary sources-

- *Culture*-Where it is attractive to others. Example: Hinduism, Buddhism etc
- *Political values*-When it lives up to them at home and abroad. Example: Democratic, Communist etc.
- *Foreign policy*- When others see them as legitimate and having moral authority. Example: Neighbourhood First Policy, Panchsheel Policy of Peaceful Coexistence.

5.2 Objectives

After going through this unit, we will be able to

- *Discuss the concept of soft power.*
- *Understand different assets of India's soft power.*
- *Analyse the importance of soft power for India.*
- *Discuss the challenges of India's soft power.*

5.3 Historical Foundation of India's Soft Power

India, as one of the world's oldest civilizations, has influenced cultures both east and west for millennia. In turn, India has also absorbed ideas from foreign cultures, particularly Islamic and European, over the centuries. The country's soft power is deeply rooted in its civil society, which has offered religious freedom to Jews, Parsees, Christians, and Muslims for thousands of years. Jewish communities have existed on India's west coast since Roman times, and Christians believe St. Thomas visited India shortly after Christ's crucifixion, with his burial place in India. India is home to more Muslims than Pakistan, the first modern state founded on religious grounds. As the birthplace of Hinduism and Buddhism, India has made a significant spiritual, artistic, and cultural impact globally. Indian ideas, such

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as the peaceful spread of Buddhism across Asia and the Gandhian message of nonviolence in the twentieth century, have travelled worldwide, enriching and exchanging with other cultures while also absorbing new ones. This exchange was driven by a quest for knowledge and coexistence, exemplified by Nalanda University in eastern India, a Buddhist learning center from AD 427 to AD 1200, which attracted students and scholars from across the world until it was destroyed in the twelfth century by the Turks who ruled northern India. India is globally recognized as a “non-aggressor country” with an inclusive vision and a worldview based on VasudhaivaKutumbakam, meaning “the world is one family”. This philosophy emphasizes diversity of lifestyles, a shared identity, and harmony between humans and nature. Indian civilizational thought promotes coexistence with nature rather than its conquest. The practice of soft power is intrinsic to India’s identity, even though the term itself is relatively new in foreign policy and cultural discourse.

Stop to Consider

Hard power vs Soft power:

Hard power and soft power represent two distinct approaches to international relations and influence. Hard power refers to the use of coercion and force, typically through military might or economic sanctions, to achieve political goals. It relies on tangible resources such as military strength, economic leverage, and technological advancements to compel other nations to act in a desired manner. For instance, a country might use military intervention or economic pressure to influence the policies of another state.

In contrast, soft power is the ability to shape the preferences of others through appeal and attraction rather than coercion. This form of power hinges on cultural influence, political values, and diplomacy. It encompasses a country’s ability to project its ideals and values in such a way that others find them appealing and aspire to emulate them. For example, a nation might use cultural diplomacy, international broadcasting, and foreign aid to build goodwill and foster long-term relationships.

While hard power can yield immediate results, it often leads to resistance and backlash. Soft power, though slower to manifest, tends to create more enduring influence by building alliances and fostering a positive image. The most effective foreign policies often integrate both hard and soft power strategies, recognizing that force and persuasion can be complementary tools in the complex arena of international relations.

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5.4 Assets of India's Soft Power

Indian Cinema:

India's film industry, Bollywood, produces the highest number of films globally and enjoys popularity in regions such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Central Asia, the Middle East, South East Asia, and beyond. Shashi Tharoor recounts how, even during the peak of violence in Afghanistan in the 1990s, people consistently watched the Indian soap opera "Kyun Ki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi". He also mentions that in Syria, under Hafez al-Assad's regime, a life-size portrait of Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan was as prominent as that of al-Assad.

During the Cold War era, film stars like Raj Kapoor served as cultural bridges between India and other nations. Kapoor and his films, such as "Awaraz" and "Mera Naam Joker", were extremely popular in the Soviet Union. In the Middle East, Indian films often run for extended periods, with the diaspora playing a key role in promoting them. In countries like the United States, Hindi films are increasingly shown in multiplexes to meet the demands of the growing Indian diaspora. Bollywood, at the core of the Indian film industry, has captivated audiences worldwide. It maintains close ties with the Indian Foreign Ministry, aiding in the formulation of foreign policy and enhancing India's global image by exporting Indian cultural products.

Dance and Music:

Indian music and cultural aspects like dance and drama, in addition to Bollywood, have significantly contributed to enhancing India's soft power. For example, organizations like Bollywood America in the USA organize annual cultural events to promote and celebrate the rich diversity and

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traditions of South Asian culture worldwide. Moreover, Indian actors are increasingly appearing in Hollywood films and television shows, further bridging cultural connections.

Food:

Indian cuisine, a significant component of soft power, has gained substantial popularity worldwide. Indian spices have captivated popular culture, appearing in films such as “Mistress of Spices” and “Today’s Special”, as well as numerous television shows like “Outsourced” and “The Big Bang Theory”. In the UK, Indian food stands out as a remarkable success story, with nearly 10,000 restaurants serving 2.5 million customers weekly. This industry employs approximately 80,000 staff and contributes an estimated £3.6 billion to the economy.

Sport:

Cricket has also functioned as a potent form of soft power for India. The concept of “cricket diplomacy” has been used to indicate a willingness to engage in negotiations. For instance, in 1987, when relations between India and Pakistan were strained, Pakistan’s President General Zia-ul-Haq visited India to attend an India-Pakistan cricket match, aimed at reducing tensions. Similarly, in 2008, following terrorist attacks in Mumbai by an Islamist group based in Pakistan that severely strained bilateral relations, the Prime Ministers of both nations met in Mohali, India, to watch the Cricket World Cup semi-finals three years later. This high-profile meeting was followed by significant diplomatic dialogue, contributing to the easing of tensions between the two countries.

Religion, culture, and spiritualism:

Yoga, described as “India’s gift to the world”, serves as a prominent soft power tool in India’s arsenal, engaging millions of dedicated practitioners globally. In 2014, India successfully advocated for 21 June to be designated as World Yoga Day by the UN. This initiative not only promotes the Indian way of life but also enhances India’s international image as a peaceful nation committed to non-aggression. In the realm of foreign policy, leveraging the holistic benefits of yoga fosters goodwill and strengthens diplomatic relations with other countries.

Buddhism, originating in ancient India and subsequently spreading to China, Southeast Asia, and beyond, forms a crucial component of India's diplomatic strategy. India employs Buddhist diplomacy to advance its strategic and economic foreign policy objectives, including countering Chinese soft power and promoting religious tourism within India.

The Indian diaspora:

The Indian diaspora, too, is a major asset of India's soft power diplomacy. In the US, it plays an important role in improving Indo-US relations by lobbying American politicians. It also offers a positive image of India to the American public. Information Technology has made its own contribution to India's soft power. When Americans in Silicon Valley speak of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) with the same reverence they used to accord to MIT, and when the "Indianness" of engineers and software developers becomes synonymous with mathematical and scientific excellence, it is India that gains respect.

Epics:

India has historically been a mosaic of religions, languages, and cultures. Sanskrit played a pivotal role in shaping India's cultural identity and soft power. According to Hart (1984: viii), Indian scholars had amassed around 160,000 Sanskrit texts over centuries. While Sanskrit held sway for a significant period, other languages and religions gradually integrated into the fabric of Indian culture and tradition. The epics Ramayana and Mahabharata are often likened to the Iliad and Odyssey, while Kalidasa, the renowned Sanskrit playwright and poet, is often compared to Shakespeare, and Kautilya to Machiavelli. Ashoka, a disciple of Kautilya known for his earlier aggressive foreign policy and militaristic rule, later adopted a more peaceful approach, focusing on soft power strategies

Culture And Spiritualism:

Indian culture and spirituality, as reflected in texts like the Vedas and Vedanta, beautifully illustrate this diversity. The Chhandogya Upanishad states, "Ekam Sat, Vipra Bahudha Vadanti" — the Truth is one, expressed differently by the wise. Similarly, "Sarve Bhavantu Sukhina, Sarve Santu Niramaya. Sarve Bhadrani Pashyantu, Ma Kashchit-Dukh-Bhaag-Bhavet"

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encourages universal happiness, health, and empathy. The Mundaka Upanishad's proclamation "Satyameva Jayate", also in India's national emblem, emphasizes the triumph of truth. Indian tradition values universal human principles over distinctions of religion, language, race, or color, encapsulated in the Sanskrit phrase "VasudhaivaKutumbakam" — the world is one family.

On India's independence in 1947, Sri Aurobindo articulated five dreams for India, including "India's spiritual contribution to the world". He foresaw India's spirituality spreading to Europe and America, offering hope and solace amid contemporary challenges, with increasing interest in both its teachings and spiritual practices.

Tolerance:

The portrayal of Hinduism as a tolerant and pluralistic religion has historically aided India in presenting itself as a peaceful and inclusive nation. US Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard highlighted, "The Hinduism I practice emphasizes karma yoga and bhakti yoga, urging love for God and all His children, irrespective of their background, and dedicating one's life to the welfare of all" (Balachandran, 2016). Niall Ferguson argues that religion plays a crucial role in shaping politics, with the enduring influence of religious and moral values often surpassing that of military power. The Dalai Lama, spiritual leader of the Tibetans, praised India's longstanding tradition of religious tolerance as a potential global model. He noted India's role as the birthplace of major religions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism, as well as a sanctuary for followers of Zoroastrianism, highlighting these as examples for the world. Throughout history, Islamic influences have also significantly shaped Indian culture, exemplified by figures like Mughal Emperor Akbar, who synthesized elements from various religions into his vision of Din-i-Elahi (Religion of God). Saints such as Nund Rishi and Noor-ud-Din in Kashmir, bearing Hindu and Muslim names respectively, demonstrate the syncretic nature of religious identities. Similarly, figures like Kabir attracted followers from both Hindu and Muslim communities.

Science:

India's soft power extends beyond spiritual, religious, and cultural realms to include scientific achievements. Figures like Aryabhata, Bhāskara

I, Brahmagupta, and Varāhamihira made significant contributions to mathematics and astronomy in ancient times. The profound devotion of these great Indian mathematicians and scientists to their religious beliefs has long intrigued the Western mind. In Indian thought, the boundary between science and spirituality is often blurred. The 2015 Hollywood film “The Man Who Knew Infinity”, depicting the life of Srinivasa Ramanujan, highlights this unique connection, reflecting a fundamental aspect of Indian culture and identity.

Gandhism:

Mahatma Gandhi, renowned as one of India’s foremost ambassadors of soft power, popularized the ideals of truth and non-violence during his activism in South Africa and subsequent leadership in India’s struggle against British rule. His advocacy resonated globally, inspiring countless freedom fighters. At the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi in April 1947, Gandhi urged embracing an “Asian Way”, emphasizing that understanding Asia should not be filtered through Western perspectives. Instead, he stressed the importance of conveying a message of love and truth when engaging with the West. Martin Luther King Jr. (2005: 136) hailed Gandhi as the beacon of nonviolent social change. Gandhi’s life embodied universal principles that mirror the moral fabric of the universe, akin to the undeniable force of gravity.

Yoga:

Yoga holds a significant place among India’s soft power assets. Rooted in Indian spiritual tradition, it symbolizes the union of individual and divine souls. International Yoga Day, recognized by the United Nations on 21 June, aims to globally promote the myriad benefits of yoga. Approximately 125 million people worldwide practice yoga. In 2016, during a Yoga Day event in Dubai led by Indian yoga guru Baba Ramdev, a record-breaking 100,000 people participated, earning a place in the Guinness Book of World Records. Recently, efforts have been made to harness yoga’s potential to foster peace in conflict zones.

Renowned yoga guru and founder of the Art of Living Foundation, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, advocates strongly for using yoga to promote peace and reconciliation in conflict-ridden areas worldwide. His foundation has

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undertaken initiatives in conflict zones across India and countries such as Iraq, Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, and Sri Lanka, promoting peace and harmony through yoga.

Ayurveda:

In addition to yoga, Ayurveda, which translates to “science of life”, is another ancient Indian practice used as a soft power tool. It is considered one of the branches of the Vedas. Ayurveda has gained popularity in the developed world, often complementing yoga. Currently, there are approximately 2,000 Ayurvedic retreat centers globally, with around 100 located in the United States. The Association of Ayurvedic Professionals of North America (AAPNA) aims to promote Ayurveda and its healing modalities within integrative medicine in the West. In November 2014, the Indian government elevated the Department of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy (AYUSH), established in November 2003, to a full-fledged ministry.

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR): The ICCR, under the Ministry of External Affairs, plays a significant role in promoting India's soft power and cultural diplomacy. It organizes cultural exchanges, scholarships, and performances by Indian artists abroad.

Objectives of ICCR-

- To actively participate in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes pertaining to India's external cultural relations.
- To foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries.
- To promote cultural exchanges with other countries and people.

Check Your Progress

- Discuss the concept of India's soft power.
- What are assets of India's soft power?

5.5 Soft Power: Why it's Important for India?

In addition to economic and military power, the idea of Soft Power has gained traction during the past few decades. Indian arts, culture, yoga and spiritualism, culinary varieties, festivals, music and dance forms etc, have attracted people from all around the world for centuries.

For creating Goodwill: Indian ethos and practices has helped it build a benevolent image and tremendous goodwill globally, but it has to be backed with quality project delivery.

As a Strategic Investment: To become a leading strategic investor in commercially viable and financially attractive public-private partnership infrastructure projects, India needs to deliver on its promises.

Post-Pandemic Changes: With increased scope of cooperation and the realisation that global problems require global efforts, India's role has gained prominence as the pharmacy of the World.

Trade and Investment Flow: To build an image of a trusted and reliable partner, India needs to make other countries believe in its commitment to deliver. This will lead to rising trade and investment flows to growing Indian markets.

Agreements and Communication: The projection of soft power can help India establish agreement and communication between states through peaceful methods. It also helps build a brand for itself by promoting its Non-aligned commitments, Democratic values, morals, ethos, etc.

In order to Reach Globally: There is no denying the fact that India can use these instruments of soft power to reach out to the global audience—in turn, making an all-embracing impact on the worldwide market. India's ancient wisdom and spirituality needed to be utilised to capitalise on India's leadership role in the world.

5.6 India and India's Soft Power

India has a strong history of leveraging its culture, political values, and foreign policy to achieve national objectives.

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- In the 1950s, India received substantial aid from both the United States and the Soviet Union. U.S. Democrats admired India as a leader in the developing world, while Soviet leaders viewed it as a strategic ally outside the communist bloc. These relationships resulted in the establishment of the Indian Institutes of Technology, crucial for India's software boom in the 1990s, and the Green Revolution in the 1960s, which made India agriculturally self-sufficient.
- In 1959, the Dalai Lama sought refuge in India, and his presence has continued to attract global visitors and supporters.
- In 1971, India garnered international support for its intervention in East Pakistan (leading to the creation of Bangladesh) by emphasizing the morality of its actions. This was partly aided by the appeal of Indian culture, highlighted by George Harrison's Concert for Bangladesh in New York, featuring Eric Clapton and Bob Dylan, which helped legitimize India's military intervention.
- After the Cold War, India's soft power continued to manifest. In the 1990s, ASEAN welcomed India into Asian institutions due to its growing economy and democratic values. In the 2000s, the U.S. facilitated India's exemption from nuclear sanctions, recognizing it as a de facto nuclear weapon state, thanks to India's positive reputation as a democracy and responsible nuclear power.
- Recently, India's neighbours, such as Bangladesh, Nepal, the Maldives, and Afghanistan, have sought India's help in conducting elections, drafting constitutions, and developing welfare schemes.

These examples show that metrics of soft power might understate India's achievements. India has effectively utilized its soft power as a democracy with rich cultural and principled international engagement, though it still needs to improve its global cultural and value projection.

The current government has innovated in Indian diplomacy by blending contemporary elements of soft power, using assets like the diaspora, yoga, Buddhism, and economic support for diplomatic successes. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has established a "soft power matrix" to measure the effectiveness of India's outreach, with initiatives like

‘Destination India’ and ‘Know India’. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) organized the first national convention for the ‘Destination India’ initiative in 2019, aiming for India to lead the global knowledge society. Post-COVID-19, India’s ‘Namaste diplomacy’ and ‘Medical diplomacy’ have gained attention. Given the appeal of India’s culture, values, and policies, alongside its economic and military strength, India is well-positioned to join the ranks of Asia’s great powers. Expected to become a superpower by 2025, India’s democratic system provides a soft power advantage over China’s communist regime. Over the past decade, India has enhanced its public diplomacy by using both traditional and innovative channels to strengthen its soft power.

5.7 Major initiatives of India’s soft power

Yoga and Spirituality:

Yoga, rooted in ancient Indian traditions, has become a global phenomenon. India has actively promoted yoga through various means. International Day of Yoga, proposed by India and adopted by the United Nations, June 21 is celebrated as International Day of Yoga. This annual event sees participation from millions across the globe, showcasing India’s spiritual heritage. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) supports yoga programs and instructors worldwide, helping spread the practice and philosophy of yoga.

Bollywood and Entertainment:

Bollywood, India’s prolific film industry is a major cultural export. Bollywood films are popular in South Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and increasingly in Western countries, promoting Indian culture and values. India participates in international film festivals and hosts its own, such as the International Film Festival of India (IFFI), attracting global attention to Indian cinema.

Cuisine:

Indian cuisine, known for its rich flavours and diverse dishes, has found a place on tables worldwide. Indian restaurants and culinary festivals abroad introduce international audiences to the country’s diverse gastronomic traditions.

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Art and Literature:

India's rich literary and artistic traditions play a significant role in its soft power. Events like the Jaipur Literature Festival attract writers, thinkers, and audiences from around the world, fostering cultural exchange. Indian art exhibitions and galleries showcase traditional and contemporary Indian art globally.

Educational and Academic Exchange:

India offers numerous scholarships to international students. Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) provides training and scholarships to students from developing countries. ICCR Scholarships offers scholarships to students from over 70 countries to study in India. India has established educational institutions abroad to promote its educational standards.

Nalanda University revived as an international university, it attracts students from various countries, focusing on Asian studies. Global Indian International Schools operates in several countries, providing education based on the Indian curriculum.

Diaspora Engagement:

PravasiBharatiya Divas- An annual event celebrating the contributions of the Indian diaspora. Honors notable members of the diaspora who have contributed to their host countries and maintained strong ties with India. India engages its diaspora through various initiatives. ICCR and Indian missions abroad organize cultural events to keep the diaspora connected to their roots. Engaging diaspora entrepreneurs and professionals in India's economic development.

Diplomatic Initiatives:

Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)- India's leadership in NAM reflects its commitment to global peace and cooperation. Multilateral Engagement advocates for the interests of developing countries and promotes South-South cooperation.

India's active participation in the UN enhances its diplomatic stature.

Peacekeeping Missions: Contributing one of the largest contingents to UN peacekeeping forces, demonstrating commitment to global peace. India has held various leadership positions in the UN, advocating for reform and representing the interests of the Global South.

Economic Diplomacy:

India promotes itself as a destination for trade and investment. Make in India is an initiative to encourage manufacturing in India, attracting global investors and fostering economic partnerships. Act East Policy enhances economic and strategic ties with Southeast Asian countries, leveraging cultural and historical connections.

India provides economic assistance to developing countries.

Lines of Credit-Extends lines of credit for infrastructure and development projects in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Technical Assistance: Offers expertise in IT, healthcare, and other sectors through programs like ITEC.

Humanitarian Assistance:

India's prompt response to natural disasters abroad enhances its image as a responsible global actor. Example- In COVID-19 pandemic India supplied vaccines, medical equipment, and expertise to countries in need, demonstrating global solidarity.

India helps build capacities in other countries through training programs and knowledge sharing. India supports healthcare programs and infrastructure development in partner countries and shares expertise in agriculture and rural development, particularly with African nations.

These initiatives aim to utilize India's soft power to bolster broader foreign policy efforts, including the Act East Policy, the Connect Central Asia policy, and the establishment of strategic aid and trade partnerships in Africa.

Check Your Progress

1. Analyse the importance of India's soft power
2. What are the major initiatives of India's soft power?

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5.8 G20 and India's Soft Power: A New Era of Global Influence?

After assuming the G20 Presidency from Indonesia in December 2022, India aimed to turn the hosting of G20 events into a grand celebration. India held the presidency until November 2023, when it successfully passed the role to Brazil. Hosting such an influential forum aligns with India's foreign policy goals of promoting multilateralism and striving for a multipolar world. India's chosen theme for the G20 was "VasudhaivaKutumbakam" – One Earth, One Family, One Future – which is rooted in ancient Indian philosophy. This theme is closely tied to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, emphasizing India's commitment to global cooperation rather than a self-centered approach to development. The idea of VasudhaivaKutumbakam highlights India's enduring values of diversity and inclusivity. First mentioned in the ancient Upanishads, the philosophy remains relevant, reflecting India's long-held belief that the world is one family. India has consistently respected and supported all nations and strives to offer assistance during times of crisis. The G20 2023 symbol, a lotus, served as a beacon of hope, unveiled by PM Modi as the world was still grappling with the pandemic, symbolizing aspirations for a brighter future. India's vaccine diplomacy demonstrated its willingness to contribute selflessly to global efforts. At the G20, India highlighted its digital public infrastructure, such as the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and the Aadhaar system, as models for inclusive growth in developing countries. By promoting technological solutions that address global challenges, India positioned itself as a leader in digital diplomacy. India's approach to the G20 underscored its commitment to strategic autonomy and multilateralism. In an increasingly polarized world, India maintained a balanced stance, fostering cooperation between competing global powers like the United States, China, and Russia. India's independent foreign policy, which seeks to avoid alignment with any particular bloc, has gained global respect. This strategy, coupled with its soft power diplomacy, allows India to act as a neutral party in global disputes, enhancing its influence in multilateral organizations like the G20.

New Delhi, India's capital, hosted its largest international gathering since the 1983 Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit during the G20 Presidency. While New Delhi has previously hosted prestigious events like

two Asian Games and the 2010 Commonwealth Games, the G20 Summit marked a significant moment in its history. Additionally, the city successfully organized the Third India-Africa Summit in 2015. Throughout its G20 Presidency, India showcased effective governance across various sectors, maintaining political and economic stability despite the challenges of the pandemic. While many nations were struggling with recession, slow growth, and high inflation, India remained resilient, achieving steady economic growth and low inflation.

India's global engagement is confronted by a variety of challenges that require careful diplomatic maneuvering and strategic solutions. Geopolitical tensions, both regional and global, significantly test India's diplomacy. Maintaining regional stability and fostering cooperative relationships with neighboring countries, while navigating historical disputes and rivalries, demands a delicate approach. Internally, economic disparities present another complex issue. Despite substantial economic growth, persistent inequalities impact social cohesion and development. Addressing these imbalances is essential for promoting a positive and inclusive international image. Furthermore, adapting to global economic fluctuations and trade uncertainties requires a refined strategy to maintain steady growth and stability. Security challenges, both traditional and emerging non-conventional threats, add another layer of complexity to India's global engagement. Addressing these requires ongoing enhancement of defense capabilities, improved intelligence sharing, and active involvement in international security frameworks. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the interconnected nature of global health. Effectively managing such crises, safeguarding public health, and participating in international health efforts while navigating geopolitical challenges remain vital. Climate change and environmental sustainability are critical concerns. As a leading developing nation, India faces the difficult task of balancing economic growth with environmental preservation. Active participation in global climate agreements and the implementation of sustainable practices are essential in addressing this global imperative. Successfully navigating these challenges will depend on India's ability to balance national priorities with global responsibilities. Strategic diplomacy, robust partnerships, and a commitment to resolving these issues are key to India's continued influence on the international stage.

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5.9 Limits to India's Soft Power

Lack of Funds and Institutional Framework:

India's limited capacity to finance infrastructure projects necessitates a strategic allocation of its funds, aligning with its key objectives. Additionally, enhancing the Indian economy and opening up the market can help India generate funds for international projects.

India requires an independent development partnership agency to formulate both long-term and short-term strategies, set priorities, and facilitate knowledge building and learning. Addressing internal institutional barriers, such as policy and bureaucratic delays, is crucial to meeting infrastructure goals.

Lack of Coordination and Shortage of Skilled Manpower:

There is no clear division of roles and responsibilities among various institutions involved in India's soft power diplomacy, such as the MEA, ICCR, Indian missions abroad, and other line ministries. This lack of synergy and communication leads to duplication of efforts and wastage of resources.

India lacks qualified and trained professionals to effectively manage and implement its soft power initiatives. The absence of incentives and recognition for those in this field affects their motivation and performance.

Indian Contributions Beyond Borders:

Third, there are Indian contributions that are not always directly linked to the country itself. For instance, Tata Motors, India's largest automobile manufacturer, has seen its most successful export in Jaguar Land Rover, a brand primarily produced in Britain. A very different example can be found in Buddhism, a religion with hundreds of millions of followers worldwide, despite having relatively few adherents in its birthplace of India. While Buddhism has deeply integrated into countries like Japan, Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Mongolia, India has only recently begun to position itself as the spiritual origin of the religion. This is evident in its efforts to encourage pilgrimages and support religious restoration projects in nations like China and Myanmar.

India’s Struggle with State-Led Cultural Promotion:

India performs poorly when it comes to state-driven cultural promotion, relying more on organic, citizen-led, and private sector efforts. A prime example is the country’s struggling national airline, Air India, which the government has had difficulty selling or attracting investment for. In contrast, four of the world’s fastest-growing airlines by aircraft orders—Indigo, SpiceJet, GoAir, and Jet Airways—are privately owned and operated in India. Similarly, much of India’s cultural exports, such as yoga and Bollywood, have reached global audiences with little to no involvement from the government. The state’s attempts to claim these as national achievements came only later. Likewise, the Indian government has made only limited efforts to promote the study of Hindi abroad, largely due to the country’s internal linguistic diversity. Recent moves to do so have sparked significant debate and controversy within India.

Engaging the Indian Diaspora:

Modi’s efforts to engage the diaspora often include organizing large-scale events in cities around the world, such as Brussels and Dubai, where he delivers powerful messages to this community. Despite these efforts, some argue that India’s outreach to the diaspora remains insufficient. Analysts suggest that India could make better use of diaspora bonds to finance development projects. Such bonds would offer the diaspora a chance to contribute to India’s growth while benefiting economically, aligning with Modi’s appeals for long-distance patriotism.

Criticism of Modi’s Media Approach:

However, Modi’s media strategy has its detractors. Critics argue that the government relies too heavily on one-way communication channels, such as social media and the Prime Minister’s monthly radio show, rather than engaging directly with the press. This has led to accusations of a lack of transparency, with some claiming that Modi views the media as adversarial and unwelcoming of scrutiny (Mukhopadhyay, 2016). Modi’s strained relationship with the Indian press, which dates back to his tenure as Gujarat Chief Minister, has only deepened with his increased reliance on social media.

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India's Global Appeal: A Focus on Developing Nations:

India's appeal often resonates more with developing countries than with high-end or prestigious markets. For instance, despite numerous challenges, Indian universities continue to attract a significant number of students from developing nations such as Nepal, Afghanistan, and various African countries. Indian cuisine, while popular globally, is frequently regarded as affordable comfort food rather than gourmet fare deserving of Michelin stars. Similarly, Indian cinema may not receive accolades at major film festivals like the Academy Awards or Cannes, but it enjoys a huge fan base across regions like China, Central Asia, and the Middle East. However, there are emerging indications that Indian culture is gaining traction in higher-value sectors. Notable examples include the luxury Taj Hotel properties in cities like Boston, San Francisco, and London, as well as the upscale New Delhi restaurant Indian Accent expanding to New York City in 2016.

5.10 Global Soft Power Index

India's ranking on the Global Soft Power Index 2024 has fallen to 29th position from the 28th position it had secured in 2023. Index is released by Brand Finance, the world's top independent brand valuation and strategy consultancy. It is the world's most extensive research study on impressions of nation brands, polling over 100,000 respondents from 121 countries.

5.11 Recommendations of the Standing Committee on Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy

Overseas Centres: The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) should strategically and systematically facilitate the establishment of more AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa, and Homeopathy) centres abroad.

Yoga Certification Board: To support the government's efforts to promote yoga, including the International Day of Yoga and related initiatives, the panel recommended that the AYUSH and external affairs ministries establish a 'Yoga Certification Board' to certify Indian yogic practices and therapies.

Diaspora Collaboration: The Indian diaspora is a significant asset in India's soft power diplomacy. Encouraging collaboration with the diaspora can help spread India's soft power in regions where it is less known.

In the Field of Medicine: There should be focused efforts to recognize Ayurveda as a medical system and adopt the Indian pharmacopeia, allowing products to be exported as medicine rather than dietary supplements and nutraceuticals, which are not yet recognized in many foreign countries.

Pricing System: Regarding the differential pricing of monument tickets for foreigners and Indians, the panel suggested revisiting this policy, as it is deemed unnecessary in a globalized world and could lead to a loss of foreign travellers.

Budgetary Allocation: The panel recommended increasing the annual budgetary allocation for the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) by ₹ 500 crore to strengthen India's soft power and cultural diplomacy.

Coordination Committee: A coordination committee with representatives from the MEA and other ministries should be established to address the lack of coordination among various institutions in projecting India's soft power and cultural diplomacy.

A Policy Document: The MEA should draft a policy document outlining India's soft power strategy, detailing the tools and methods of projecting soft power abroad, and presenting a vision statement for the future.

Restructuring ICCR: The ICCR should be reformed to become more autonomous, accountable, and efficient, with a clear mandate and vision statement. The central government should increase its budget by ₹ 500 crore to enable robust soft power and cultural diplomacy activities.

Check Your Progress:

1. Discuss the challenges and limits to India's soft power. Give recommendations.
2. Who introduced the concept of 'Soft Power'?
3. What are the primary sources of Soft Power?
4. What is the full form of ICCR?

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5. What is the ranking of India on the Global Soft Power Index 2024?
6. Analyse the growth and foundation of India's soft power.
7. How has India's rich cultural heritage, including yoga, Ayurveda, and Bollywood, contributed to its global soft power?
8. What are the key challenges India faces in enhancing its soft power influence globally, and how can it address obstacles such as cultural diversity, regional geopolitical tensions, and limitations in global perception?

5.12 Summing Up

India's soft power is a multifaceted and dynamic force that has evolved significantly over the years, positioning the country as a global cultural, economic, and diplomatic powerhouse. In understanding the full spectrum of India's soft power, we can see its roots in ancient civilization, the richness of its cultural heritage, and its modern-day contributions to global peace, development, and knowledge sharing. India's soft power is a remarkable blend of its ancient heritage and modern advancements, its cultural vibrancy and intellectual contributions, its economic dynamism and diplomatic engagements. As India continues to rise on the global stage, its soft power will play an increasingly crucial role in shaping international perceptions, building partnerships, and fostering a global community rooted in mutual respect and shared values. Through its rich tapestry of cultural heritage, intellectual prowess, and humanitarian efforts, India stands as a compelling force for global good, inspiring and influencing the world in myriad positive ways. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, India's soft power will continue to play a vital role in shaping its global influence and fostering a more harmonious and interconnected world.

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BLOCK: III
INDIA AND THE MAJOR GLOBAL POWERS

Unit 1: India in the Emerging World Order

Unit 2: India and the US

Unit 3: India and China

Unit 4: India and Russia

Unit 5: India and the EU

Unit – 1

India in the Emerging World Order

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Unit Structure:

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Objectives
- 1.3 New World Order
- 1.4 Evolution of India's Foreign Policy: From Non-Alignment to Strategic Autonomy
- 1.5 India's Role In Emerging World Order
 - 1.5.1 Economic Role
 - 1.5.2 Structural Role
 - 1.5.3 Leader of Global South
 - 1.5.4 Role in Multilateral Organisations And Agreements
 - 1.5.5 Role in Regional Security
 - 1.5.6 Role in Environmental Issues
 - 1.5.7 Role in Combatting Terrorism
 - 1.5.8 Cultural Role
 - 1.5.9 Role in Technology
 - 1.5.10 Strategic Autonomy
 - 1.5.11 Global Governance
 - 1.5.12 Approach to Ukraine
- 1.6 Summing Up
- 1.7 References and Suggested Readings

1.1 Introduction

The global order has been undergoing a steady transformation from the rigid bipolarity of the Cold War era to a more fluid multipolar world in the 21st century. As the international system has moved from a unipolar moment dominated by the United States in the post-Cold War period, to the current fragmented and competitive structure, India has risen as a key player. Its growing economy, military capabilities, and increasing engagement in multilateral organizations have positioned it as a central actor in shaping global governance. India's foreign policy, traditionally defined by non-

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alignment, has been recalibrated to reflect the emerging realities of the global power landscape.

In this unit, we will explore how India navigates the complexities of this new world order. The discussion will encompass India's foreign policy evolution, its multilateral engagements, strategic partnerships, and its stance on global challenges such as climate change, terrorism, and economic crises.

1.2 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to

- Understand the concept of new world order
- Analyse the evolution of India's foreign policy
- Examine India's role in emerging world order

1.3 New World Order

The term "New World Order" (NWO) has been used in various contexts, but it generally refers to a significant shift in political, economic, and social structures on a global scale. The term gained prominence after World War I and II, often used to describe the emerging global order following significant geopolitical changes. The establishment of institutions like the United Nations and the Bretton Woods system aimed to foster international cooperation and prevent future conflicts. After the Cold War, particularly in the early 1990s, the term was used by political leaders, including U.S. President George H.W. Bush, to describe a new era of international relations characterized by greater cooperation among nations and the promotion of democracy and free markets. In contemporary discussions, "New World Order" has also become associated with various conspiracy theories suggesting that a secretive elite is working to establish a totalitarian global government. These theories often lack credible evidence and have been widely discredited. The concept is sometimes used to discuss globalization and the increasing interconnectedness of economies, cultures, and political systems, which some argue has led to a new paradigm in international relations. Critics of globalization and the NWO concept often raise concerns about issues such as inequality, loss of national sovereignty, and the influence of multinational corporations over governments and

policies. Overall, the New World Order can be understood as a multifaceted idea that encompasses historical developments, geopolitical strategies, and contemporary debates on global governance.

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1.4 Evolution of India's Foreign Policy: From Non-Alignment to Strategic Autonomy

India's foreign policy has always been characterized by a desire to maintain independence in its global relations. In the early years after gaining independence in 1947, India's foreign policy under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was driven by a principle of non-alignment. Nehru recognized that aligning with either of the two superpowers—the United States or the Soviet Union—during the Cold War would limit India's ability to develop its own identity on the world stage. Thus, India, along with other post-colonial nations, established the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which aimed to carve out an independent space in global affairs. While NAM provided India with flexibility, it also constrained its ability to engage in global power politics. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the liberalization of India's economy ushered in a period of reorientation in Indian foreign policy. This marked the beginning of a pragmatic approach where strategic autonomy replaced rigid non-alignment. India, while still maintaining an independent foreign policy, began to seek closer ties with major global powers, recognizing the importance of strategic partnerships in a multipolar world. India's strategic autonomy refers to its foreign policy approach focused on maintaining independence in decision-making, without aligning itself rigidly with any major global powers or alliances. This policy aims to preserve India's ability to make choices based on its national interests rather than being constrained by the geopolitical agendas of others. India's principle of non-alignment has evolved into "multi-alignment," where India engages with multiple powers (U.S., Russia, China, and others) without becoming overly dependent on any single one. India's strategic autonomy enables it to maintain a balanced, pragmatic, and flexible foreign policy in an increasingly multipolar world.

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1.5 India's Role In Emerging World Order

In the Cold War Era the world was largely divided between two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, creating a rigid bipolarity characterized by ideological, military, and political divisions. Following the Cold War, the United States emerged as the dominant power, shaping global norms and institutions according to its interests. The 21st century has witnessed a shift towards a multipolar world, with rising powers like China, India, Brazil, and others increasingly asserting their influence. This transition is characterized by a complex interplay of cooperation and competition among multiple centers of power. The rise of regional powers and organizations has contributed to a more fragmented global landscape. Regional conflicts and alliances are becoming more pronounced, often challenging established global norms. The diverse interests and priorities of various states complicate consensus-building in multilateral forums, making effective governance more challenging.

India's role in the emerging world order is shaped by its growing economic, political, and strategic influence in a multipolar global system. As global power shifts from a unipolar U.S.-led order to a more distributed power structure, India has emerged as a key player, especially given its strategic location, large population, robust economy, and democratic institutions. Following are the different roles played by India in the new emerging world order -

1.5.1 Economic Role

As one of the fastest-growing major economies, India is projected to be a critical player in the global economy. Its large market and potential for innovation attract foreign investment and partnerships, making it a pivotal hub for trade and commerce. India has been a vocal proponent of reforms in global financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, calling for a greater voice for emerging economies. India has emphasized the need for inclusive and transparent global governance mechanisms that reflect the interests of developing nations. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, India has played a key role in advocating for equitable access to vaccines and supporting the global economic recovery. India has one of the fastest-

growing economies in the world, which has reinforced its influence in international trade, investment, and finance. Its large consumer market is increasingly attractive to global businesses.

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1.5.2 Structural Role

India has been actively forging strategic partnerships with various countries. Its relationships with the United States, Japan, Australia, and key ASEAN nations form part of the Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue), aimed at promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific region. This enhances its role in counterbalancing China's influence.

1.5.3 Leader of Global South

India positions itself as a leader of the Global South, advocating for the interests of developing countries in international forums. It seeks to amplify their voices on issues like climate change, sustainable development, and equitable global governance. India's role as a leader of the Global South is rooted in its historical, political, and economic engagement with developing nations, and it continues to evolve in the context of contemporary global challenges. The "Global South" broadly refers to countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean that share common experiences of colonialism, economic underdevelopment, and marginalization in global decision-making processes. India's leadership in this bloc is shaped by its historical commitment to anti-colonialism, its economic growth, and its active participation in multilateral institutions advocating for more equitable global governance. India has played a significant role in the G77 group of developing countries, which advocates for fairer global trade and economic policies. India is also an active participant in BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), where it collaborates with other emerging economies to promote alternative development models and enhance cooperation within the Global South. India co-founded the ISA in 2015 to promote the use of solar energy in developing countries, particularly in the Global South. This initiative highlights India's commitment to sustainable development and its leadership in global renewable energy efforts. India has taken a lead in advocating for the implementation of the SDGs, particularly in areas like

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poverty reduction, gender equality, clean energy, and sustainable infrastructure. India's development projects in Africa, Latin America, and Asia reflect its emphasis on shared prosperity. India has positioned itself as a key supplier of affordable generic medicines to many developing countries. During the COVID-19 pandemic, India's role as a global leader was reinforced through its "Vaccine Maitri" (Vaccine Friendship) initiative, where it provided vaccines to over 90 countries, especially in the Global South.

1.5.4 Role in Multilateral Organisations and Agreements

India is a key player in various multilateral organizations, including the United Nations, BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), G20, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Through these platforms, India pushes for reforms in global governance to reflect contemporary geopolitical realities.

- **India in the G20:** The G20 has become an important forum for India to engage with both developed and developing nations on a range of global issues such as financial stability, climate change, and global governance reforms. India's position in the G20 is crucial as it allows the country to voice the concerns of developing nations and push for a more equitable global economic order. As a member of the G20, India has advocated for more inclusive decision-making processes that benefit the Global South and reduce the dominance of Western powers in global financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.
- **BRICS and the Global South:** BRICS represents a key avenue through which India seeks to reshape global governance by promoting the interests of emerging economies. As one of the five members, India has focused on strengthening South-South cooperation and building a multipolar world order. The BRICS nations share common goals such as reforming international institutions, reducing dependence on the US dollar, and creating new financial institutions like the New Development Bank (NDB). For India, BRICS is also a counterbalance to China's dominance

in Asia, providing a platform to engage with China in a cooperative yet competitive environment.

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1.5.5 Role in Regional Security

India plays a crucial role in regional security, particularly in South Asia and the Indian Ocean region. Its military capabilities and participation in peacekeeping missions enhance its reputation as a responsible global actor. India's role in regional security, particularly in South Asia and the Indian Ocean region, is central to its broader strategic and geopolitical goals. As a rising power with growing military capabilities and a long history of diplomatic engagement, India positions itself as a stabilizing force in the region, advocating for peace, stability, and open maritime routes. Its active participation in United Nations peacekeeping missions also underscores its commitment to global peace and security, further enhancing its reputation as a responsible global actor. India has significantly invested in modernizing its military, making it one of the largest and most capable forces in the world. It maintains a strong army, navy, and air force, which are crucial for securing its borders and protecting its strategic interests, particularly in the Indian Ocean. Through initiatives like "Make in India" and the development of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), India aims to reduce reliance on foreign defense imports and strengthen its own defense capabilities. As a nuclear-armed state with a "no first use" policy, India's nuclear arsenal serves as a key deterrent, particularly in the context of its complex relationships with Pakistan and China. India's credible minimum deterrence doctrine aims to prevent conflicts through strategic balance in South Asia. The Indian Ocean region is vital to global trade, with key maritime routes connecting Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Approximately 80% of the world's seaborne oil passes through these waters. India, with its strategic location, plays a crucial role in ensuring the security of these maritime routes. The Indian Navy is one of the strongest in the region, with the ability to project power across the Indian Ocean. India's naval assets, including aircraft carriers, destroyers, and submarines, are instrumental in safeguarding its maritime interests. India has been active in anti-piracy operations, particularly off the coast of Somalia, where it has

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worked alongside international partners to ensure the safety of commercial vessels. India's proactive role in these missions enhances maritime security in the region. India has established key partnerships to strengthen maritime domain awareness, including agreements with countries like the U.S., Japan, and Australia. Initiatives like the Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) based in Gurgaon help monitor and secure maritime activities. India's "Act East" policy focuses on strengthening economic, diplomatic, and security ties with Southeast Asian and East Asian countries. This policy includes deeper security cooperation with ASEAN countries, Japan, South Korea, and Australia to ensure peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific. India is a key player in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), along with the U.S., Japan, and Australia. The Quad's focus on maintaining a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific is a critical component of regional security, especially in countering China's assertive maritime actions in the South China Sea and Indian Ocean. India has been instrumental in promoting regional naval cooperation through IONS, a forum that brings together coastal states of the Indian Ocean to discuss maritime security challenges, disaster relief, and humanitarian assistance. India has long been a victim of cross-border terrorism, particularly from Pakistan-based militant groups. India's counterterrorism operations, both domestically and regionally, focus on securing its borders and preventing terrorist infiltration. India's long and porous borders with countries like Pakistan, China, Bangladesh, and Myanmar pose significant security challenges. India has invested heavily in border infrastructure, surveillance, and fencing to secure these borders from threats, including terrorism, smuggling, and human trafficking. India works closely with countries in South Asia, such as Bhutan, Nepal, and Bangladesh, to address common security challenges. For example, India has provided intelligence and military assistance to help Bhutan and Nepal combat insurgencies and security threats. India is one of the largest contributors to United Nations peacekeeping missions, with thousands of Indian troops participating in missions across Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Indian peacekeepers have been praised for their professionalism, commitment, and humanitarian efforts in conflict zones. India has also led by example by deploying all-female police units in

peacekeeping missions, such as the one in Liberia, where they played a crucial role in maintaining peace and providing humanitarian assistance. This effort highlights India's commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women in global peace efforts. India plays a key role in responding to natural disasters in the region, such as the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004, where India provided significant aid to affected countries. The Indian Navy frequently participates in HADR missions, assisting countries in the IOR during crises. India has historically played a central role in SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation), focusing on regional security cooperation. However, SAARC has been hampered by India-Pakistan tensions, and India has shifted its focus to bilateral partnerships and other regional frameworks, such as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). India has actively promoted BIMSTEC as a forum for security cooperation in South and Southeast Asia, focusing on areas like counterterrorism, disaster management, and maritime security. India's role in regional security, particularly in South Asia and the Indian Ocean, is multifaceted, involving a blend of military capability, strategic partnerships, and active participation in multilateral forums. Its ability to project power, manage complex relationships with neighboring countries, and engage in global peacekeeping enhances its image as a responsible global actor. India's growing military capabilities, combined with its commitment to regional stability and development, position it as a key player in ensuring peace and security in one of the world's most strategically important regions.

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1.5.6 Role in Environmental Issues

India has been proactive in addressing climate change and promoting sustainable development. Its commitment to renewable energy and initiatives like the International Solar Alliance showcase its dedication to global environmental goals. India plays a critical role in global efforts to combat climate change. However, balancing its development needs with environmental sustainability has proven to be a challenge. India has committed to ambitious climate goals under the Paris Agreement, including a pledge to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070. India has also emerged as a leader in

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renewable energy, particularly in solar power, through initiatives like the International Solar Alliance (ISA). At the same time, India continues to advocate for climate justice, emphasizing that developed nations must bear the bulk of responsibility for historical emissions.

1.5.7 Role in Combatting Terrorism:

India has been at the forefront of global efforts to combat terrorism, having faced the threat of cross-border terrorism for decades. India's approach has focused on strengthening international cooperation through forums such as the UN and regional platforms like the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). India has consistently called for a comprehensive global framework to address terrorism, advocating for the adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) at the UN.

1.5.8 Cultural Role

India influences its soft power through cultural diplomacy, promoting Indian culture, traditions, and values globally. This enhances its global image and fosters goodwill among nations. India's use of soft power through cultural diplomacy is a crucial aspect of its foreign policy and global influence. By promoting its rich cultural heritage, traditions, and values, India enhances its global image, fosters goodwill, and builds strong people-to-people connections across nations. Unlike hard power, which relies on military or economic strength, soft power is about shaping the preferences and attitudes of others through attraction and persuasion, and India has successfully employed it through various means. Indian cinema, particularly Bollywood, is one of the most prominent cultural exports. Indian films are widely popular in countries across the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia, and parts of Europe. Bollywood's ability to transcend linguistic and cultural barriers has made it a powerful vehicle for cultural diplomacy. It often portrays Indian values such as family, resilience, and community, helping create a positive image of India. The global popularity of Indian cuisine also acts as a soft power tool. Indian restaurants and the proliferation of spices and traditional Indian foods around the world contribute to the country's cultural outreach

and connection with people globally. Yoga has become a global phenomenon, with millions of practitioners worldwide. India's promotion of yoga as part of its cultural heritage has enhanced its soft power. The International Day of Yoga, celebrated on June 21st and endorsed by the United Nations, was spearheaded by India, with the support of 177 countries. This event showcases India's leadership in promoting health and well-being while projecting its ancient spiritual traditions. The global influence of Indian spiritual leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda, and contemporary figures such as the Dalai Lama and Sri Sri Ravi Shankar further enhances India's soft power. Their teachings of non-violence, peace, and mindfulness resonate with people worldwide, aligning India with values of tolerance and spiritual growth. India's cultural diplomacy also extends through educational and cultural exchange programs. Through initiatives such as the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), India promotes cultural understanding by inviting scholars, students, and artists from various countries to experience Indian traditions. These programs foster mutual respect and long-term relationships between nations. Efforts to promote Hindi and other Indian languages globally are part of India's cultural diplomacy strategy. The annual World Hindi Conference is a prominent platform for promoting the language internationally. Indian authors like Rabindranath Tagore, Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, and Jhumpa Lahiri have gained global recognition for their works, highlighting Indian culture, history, and societal issues. Their contributions have further enriched global perceptions of Indian intellectual and cultural life. Festivals like Diwali, Holi, and Eid are celebrated with great enthusiasm not just in India but around the world, particularly in countries with large Indian communities. These festivals serve as windows into Indian culture, and they are often promoted through diplomatic channels. Embassies, cultural centers, and diaspora communities organize events that introduce international audiences to Indian traditions. India organizes various cultural festivals abroad, such as "Namaste India" in Japan and "Incredible India" events globally. These festivals showcase Indian art, music, dance, and cuisine, further strengthening India's cultural footprint in the host countries. India's tourism campaign, "Incredible India," is a major initiative to promote its cultural heritage, natural beauty, and historical landmarks to the global

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audience. It positions India as a unique and diverse destination, attracting tourists while also highlighting India's soft power. India's soft power is an integral part of its foreign policy, enabling it to build stronger ties with other nations through cultural diplomacy, humanitarian assistance, and people-to-people connections. By promoting its culture, traditions, and values globally, India enhances its image as a diverse, tolerant, and vibrant nation. Whether through Bollywood, yoga, festivals, educational exchanges, or its humanitarian initiatives, India's soft power diplomacy continues to foster goodwill, strengthen its global standing, and create lasting partnerships across the world.

1.5.9 Role in Technology

India's emergence as a technology powerhouse—particularly in information technology (IT), space, and biotechnology—has not only fueled its domestic growth but also positioned it as a global partner in technological innovation. India's expertise in these fields contributes significantly to addressing global challenges such as health, food security, climate change, and digital transformation. Its ability to leverage technology for both development and diplomacy enhances its role on the world stage. Indian IT companies like Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys, and Wipro provide services to major corporations worldwide, offering solutions in cloud computing, artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), data analytics, cybersecurity, and more. India's IT sector has built a reputation for high-quality, cost-effective services, contributing to global innovation in a range of industries, from healthcare to finance. India has pioneered large-scale digital infrastructure projects like Aadhaar, the world's largest biometric identification system, which supports financial inclusion and the delivery of public services to millions. India's digital payments ecosystem, led by Unified Payments Interface (UPI), has transformed financial transactions, inspiring similar models in other developing nations. India has one of the largest startup ecosystems globally, with significant innovations in fintech, edtech, healthtech, and agritech. Unicorns such as Byju's, Zomato, and Paytm illustrate India's capacity for tech innovation. The government's Digital India initiative aims to enhance digital infrastructure and literacy, promoting innovation across

sectors. India's space program, led by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), has made remarkable advancements in satellite technology, space exploration, and space applications, placing India at the forefront of global space activities. ISRO has garnered global attention for its cost-effective space missions, such as the Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan), which made India the first Asian country to reach Mars orbit and the first nation in the world to do so on its maiden attempt. The recent Chandrayaan-3 mission's successful lunar landing further underscores India's growing capabilities in space exploration. ISRO's satellite technology contributes to agriculture, disaster management, weather forecasting, telecommunications, and resource mapping. India's satellites have been crucial in providing early warnings for cyclones, improving agricultural productivity, and supporting connectivity in remote areas. India's biotechnology sector is rapidly growing, with significant advancements in pharmaceuticals, agricultural biotech, and healthcare innovations. The biotech industry contributes to India's goals of enhancing food security, improving healthcare, and addressing environmental challenges. India is known as the "pharmacy of the world," being the largest producer of generic medicines and a major supplier of vaccines. Indian pharmaceutical companies played a pivotal role in global healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing affordable vaccines and medicines to numerous countries through initiatives like Vaccine Maitri (Vaccine Friendship). India's growing health technology sector has developed solutions in telemedicine, providing remote healthcare services to underserved populations, both domestically and globally. These innovations are critical in expanding access to healthcare in developing countries. India's ability to provide affordable medicines, vaccines, and diagnostics helps developing countries combat a range of public health challenges. Through initiatives like Make in India, India is working to expand the production of healthcare technologies that can benefit low- and middle-income countries. India's rise as a technology powerhouse in IT, space, and biotechnology is transforming not only its own development trajectory but also its role in solving global challenges. Whether addressing public health crises, food security, or climate change, India's innovations offer scalable solutions for the world. This technological leadership enhances

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India's global standing and positions it as a critical partner in addressing shared challenges in the 21st century.

1.5.10 Strategic Autonomy

India navigates complex relationships with major powers, including the U.S., China, and Russia. Its ability to maintain strategic autonomy while engaging with these nations enhances its influence in the evolving world order. In the contemporary period, India's strategic autonomy means that while India engages with major powers like the US, Russia, and the European Union, it avoids becoming entangled in exclusive alliances that could compromise its sovereignty. India's participation in global groupings such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) reflects its strategy of leveraging multiple relationships to pursue its national interests. India's growing military and economic ties with the United States, alongside its continued defense partnership with Russia, exemplify its balanced approach to international relations.

- **India and the United States:** India's relationship with the US has transformed dramatically over the last two decades. From a period of estrangement during the Cold War to a "strategic partnership" today, the two nations now cooperate on a wide range of issues, including defense, counterterrorism, trade, and technology. The signing of the Indo-US Nuclear Deal in 2008 marked a turning point, as it allowed India access to civil nuclear technology while acknowledging India's status as a responsible nuclear power. In recent years, the focus of Indo-US relations has shifted to the Indo-Pacific region, with both nations cooperating through the QUAD framework to counterbalance China's growing influence.
- **India and Russia:** Despite India's growing closeness with the US, its relationship with Russia remains strong, particularly in the areas of defense and energy. Russia has historically been India's largest supplier of military equipment, and the two countries have deepened their defense cooperation with agreements such as the S-400 missile

defense system deal. However, India's relationship with Russia is increasingly complicated by the US-Russia rivalry, forcing India to carefully balance its interests to avoid alienating either partner.

- **India and Japan:** India-Japan relations have grown substantially in recent years, with both countries sharing concerns about China's assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific. Japan has become a key economic and strategic partner for India, investing heavily in infrastructure projects such as the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor. On the strategic front, the two nations have cooperated through joint military exercises and maritime security initiatives aimed at maintaining stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

1.5.11 Global Governance

India advocates for reforms in global governance structures, including the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), to reflect the realities of the 21st century. Its quest for a permanent seat on the UNSC is part of this broader effort.

- **India and the United Nations:** India has been a staunch supporter of the UN and its principles since its inception. However, one of India's longstanding goals has been to secure a permanent seat on the UN Security Council (UNSC). As the world's largest democracy and a nuclear-armed state, India argues that the current composition of the UNSC is outdated, reflecting the post-World War II order rather than contemporary realities. India's case for reform has gained significant support, particularly from fellow BRICS nations and countries in the Global South. However, opposition from permanent members such as China has made UNSC reform elusive. In addition to its quest for a UNSC seat, India has actively participated in UN peacekeeping operations, contributing over 200,000 troops in various missions since 1950. This underscores India's commitment to global peace and stability, enhancing its credibility as a responsible global actor.

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1.5.12 Approach to Ukraine

India's approach to the Ukraine crisis has been characterized by a careful balancing act, reflecting its broader foreign policy principles of strategic autonomy, non-alignment, and pragmatic engagement with multiple powers. India has abstained from multiple United Nations resolutions condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine, including votes in the UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, and the Human Rights Council. While this position signals India's desire to maintain neutrality, it also reflects its reluctance to criticize Russia openly. India's approach is consistent with its long-standing foreign policy principle of strategic autonomy. India has traditionally avoided aligning with any one bloc or power, preferring to maintain the flexibility to pursue its own national interests independently. India's close ties with Russia date back to the Cold War, when the Soviet Union supported India on key international issues and provided military assistance. Today, Russia remains a major supplier of defense equipment and technology to India. Given the deep defense and energy ties, India seeks to avoid alienating Russia, which it views as a reliable partner in maintaining regional stability and as a counterbalance to China. Russia has also supported India on issues like Kashmir at the UN. Amid rising global energy prices due to the Ukraine crisis, India has continued to import oil from Russia, citing the need to secure affordable energy for its growing economy. India has emphasized that its oil purchases are driven by national energy security needs, not politics. India and Russia have continued economic cooperation despite Western sanctions on Moscow. India views Russia as a critical partner for its energy, defense, and economic sectors, further motivating its neutral stance on the Ukraine issue. While maintaining its ties with Russia, India also seeks to deepen its partnerships with the West, especially the United States, European Union, and key democratic allies like the UK, France, and Germany. India's strategic cooperation with the U.S., particularly through the Quad (with Japan and Australia), adds complexity to its position on Ukraine. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has engaged in dialogue with European leaders and emphasized the need for peace and diplomacy. India continues to advocate for dialogue and diplomatic solutions to the conflict. India has consistently called for an end

to the violence in Ukraine and the peaceful resolution of the conflict through dialogue. Modi has stressed that “today’s era is not an era of war”—a message he conveyed directly to Russian President Vladimir Putin. India has provided humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, offering aid such as medical supplies and shelter for refugees. This reflects India’s concern for the humanitarian consequences of the war without directly criticizing Russia. While refraining from condemning Russia, India has reiterated the importance of respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, including Ukraine. India’s statements in international forums have focused on upholding international law and the UN Charter. India has supported the UN’s efforts to mediate peace and address the humanitarian crisis resulting from the conflict. However, it has not taken a direct mediation role itself, given the sensitivities of its relationship with both Russia and the West. While India seeks to preserve its relationship with Russia, the Ukraine conflict has introduced challenges, particularly as Russia becomes more reliant on China amidst its isolation from the West. India carefully watches this dynamic as it could impact India’s own strategic concerns, especially given India’s tense relationship with China. The conflict and resulting Western sanctions on Russia have raised concerns about the potential disruptions to India’s defense supply chains, given its reliance on Russian military hardware. India is therefore looking to diversify its defense partnerships, including increasing cooperation with Western defense manufacturers. India’s approach to the Ukraine crisis is also shaped by its concern over China’s increasing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region. Russia’s close ties with China complicate India’s stance, as New Delhi seeks to avoid pushing Russia further into Beijing’s orbit. India has positioned itself as a non-polarizing actor in the global community. By maintaining neutrality, India avoids taking sides in the growing geopolitical competition between the West and Russia-China, keeping its options open for future diplomatic maneuvering. India’s approach to the Ukraine crisis reflects its commitment to strategic autonomy, balancing its historical ties with Russia and its growing partnerships with the West. While avoiding direct criticism of Russia, India has called for peace and diplomacy, underscoring the importance of international law, sovereignty, and humanitarian aid. This delicate balancing act allows India to navigate

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the complexities of the emerging global order while safeguarding its national interests in energy security, defense, and international partnerships.

STOP TO CONSIDER

India's Approach to China:

India's approach to China is shaped by a complex mix of competition, cooperation, and strategic caution, driven by geopolitical, economic, and historical factors. The relationship between the two countries, both of which are major rising powers in Asia, is characterized by longstanding border disputes, economic interdependence, and divergent regional and global ambitions. The primary source of tension between India and China is their unresolved border dispute, particularly along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Himalayan region. This dispute led to the 1962 Sino-Indian War and has resulted in several standoffs, including recent military clashes. The most significant recent event was the violent clash between Indian and Chinese troops in the Galwan Valley in June 2020, which resulted in casualties on both sides. This event led to a serious deterioration in bilateral relations and increased military deployments along the border. In response to these tensions, India has significantly ramped up its military infrastructure and capabilities along the LAC, investing in roads, airbases, and enhanced troop presence. India has also strengthened its partnerships with key players like the U.S., France, and Russia for defense modernization. China's growing influence in South Asia and the Indian Ocean region, particularly through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its strategic partnerships with India's neighbors (e.g., Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal), has heightened India's concerns about encirclement and regional dominance. India is a member of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), along with the U.S., Japan, and Australia. While not an overt military alliance, the Quad is often viewed as a grouping that seeks to counterbalance China's assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region. India's participation in naval exercises like the Malabar drills underscores its commitment to maintaining a free and open Indo-

Pacific. India is also focused on strengthening its maritime capabilities in the Indian Ocean, where China's naval presence and the development of strategic ports (like in Gwadar, Pakistan, and Hambantota, Sri Lanka) have raised alarms about China's "String of Pearls" strategy aimed at encircling India. Despite political and military tensions, China is one of India's largest trading partners. The two economies are highly interdependent, especially in sectors like electronics, pharmaceuticals, and technology. India has a significant trade deficit with China, which has been a source of concern for New Delhi. India has attempted to diversify its supply chains, reduce its dependence on Chinese imports, and promote domestic manufacturing through initiatives like "Make in India." Following the Galwan Valley clash, there has been growing sentiment within India to decouple from China economically, particularly in sectors like telecommunications, infrastructure, and technology. India banned hundreds of Chinese apps, including TikTok, and scrutinized Chinese investments in strategic sectors. India continues to engage China diplomatically through regular dialogues, including high-level meetings between their leaders and military-to-military talks. These efforts are aimed at maintaining peace along the border and managing the overall bilateral relationship. Since the 2020 clashes, India and China have held multiple rounds of military and diplomatic talks to de-escalate tensions at the LAC. While some disengagement has occurred, the situation remains fragile, with both sides maintaining significant troop deployments along the border. India and China also engage in various multilateral forums like BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). While these platforms offer opportunities for cooperation, they also reflect the competing interests of both nations on the global stage. India seeks to maintain its strategic autonomy by balancing its relations with both China and the U.S. While India cooperates with the U.S. and other Western countries to counterbalance China, it avoids being drawn into an outright anti-China military alliance. India has made it clear that while it opposes China's aggressive posturing, especially

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on its borders, it is not seeking to “contain” China in a manner similar to the U.S. approach. India’s diplomatic language often emphasizes peaceful coexistence, while its actions reflect a pragmatic approach to dealing with China’s growing influence. One of India’s major concerns is the strategic partnership between China and Pakistan, especially in the context of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship BRI project. Parts of CPEC run through the Pakistan-administered region of Gilgit-Baltistan, which India claims as part of Jammu and Kashmir. China’s deepening military cooperation with Pakistan, particularly in terms of defense sales and joint projects, is seen by India as part of a broader strategy to contain and counter Indian influence in the region. At the United Nations and other international forums, China has often backed Pakistan, particularly on issues related to Kashmir, further complicating India-China relations. India and China both aspire to be major global powers, but their visions for the international order differ. While China’s rise has been characterized by assertiveness and expanding influence through initiatives like the BRI, India has promoted a multipolar world order based on respect for sovereignty and international law. India has sought to strengthen its global partnerships with the U.S., European Union, Japan, Australia, and ASEAN countries to expand its global influence and counter China’s dominance in global institutions. Despite their differences, India and China have maintained pragmatic cooperation in areas such as climate change, global health, and multilateral trade negotiations. Both countries understand the importance of managing their rivalry in a way that prevents outright conflict. India and China have signed various agreements to manage border tensions and prevent accidental escalation. However, the effectiveness of these agreements has been questioned, especially in light of the repeated border stand-offs. India’s approach to China is a complex blend of competition, caution, and selective engagement. While India remains wary of China’s growing influence in South Asia and the Indo-Pacific, it seeks to manage its relationship with Beijing pragmatically, balancing its economic ties with military preparedness and strategic partnerships. India’s focus

is on maintaining its strategic autonomy while deepening partnerships with other powers to counterbalance China's assertiveness, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region. At the same time, India remains open to dialogue and cooperation with China in areas of mutual interest, striving to avoid an escalation into direct conflict.

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- Check Your Progress:**
1. What do you mean by new world order?
 2. Trace the evolution of India's foreign policy.
 3. Examine the economic role played by India in the new world order.
 4. Discuss India's role as a leader of Global South.
 5. Analyse India's role in global governance.

Self Asking Questions:

Do you think India has played the role of a balancer in the Ukraine Crisis? Discuss. (80 words)

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1.6 Summing Up

After reading this unit you are now in a position to understand the concept of new world order. It generally refers to a significant shift in political, economic, and social structures on a global scale. You have also got a fair idea about the evolution of India's Foreign Policy from Non-Alignment to Strategic Autonomy. India's strategic autonomy refers to its foreign policy approach focused on maintaining independence in decision-making, without aligning itself rigidly with any major global powers or alliances. You have also learnt that India's role in the emerging world order is shaped by its growing economic, political, and strategic influence in a multipolar global system.

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1.7 References and Suggested Readings

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LINKS

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Unit-2

India and the US

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Unit Structure:

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Objectives
- 2.3 Historical Background
- 2.4 Basic Aspects Of The Relationship Between India and The US
 - 2.4.1 Strategic and Security Cooperation
 - 2.4.2 Economic and Trade Relations
 - 2.4.3 Regional Stability and Global Issues
 - 2.4.4 Multilateral Engagement
 - 2.4.5 Humanitarian And Development Assistance
 - 2.4.6 Technology and Innovation
- 2.5 Summing Up
- 2.6 References and Suggested Readings

2.1 Introduction

The relationship between the United States and India is one of the most strategic and consequential of the 21st century. The United States supports India's emergence as a leading global power and a vital partner in promoting a peaceful, stable, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region. The 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue between the U.S. Secretaries of State and Defense and their Indian counterparts is the premier recurring dialogue mechanism between the United States and India. Through the 2+2 mechanism, U.S. and Indian officials advance a wide range of initiatives across the breadth of the United States-India partnership. This unit will enlighten you about the different aspects of relationship between India and the US.

2.2 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to

- Analyse the historical background of India and the US relationship
- Examine the basic aspects related to India and the US relationship

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2.3 Historical Background

The relationship between India and the United States has evolved significantly over time. It is shaped by several factors like geopolitical, economic, and cultural factors. Before India gained independence in 1947, the US had limited direct relations with India, as India was a British colony. However, some American intellectuals and political figures, such as Mark Twain and President Franklin D. Roosevelt, took an interest in India, often advocating for its independence. During WWII, the US worked closely with Britain, and while it acknowledged Indian support for the Allies, it was also sympathetic to Indian leaders' demands for independence. After gaining independence in 1947, India, under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, adopted a policy of non-alignment, meaning it did not formally align with either the US-led Western bloc or the Soviet Union-led Eastern bloc during the Cold War. This led to lukewarm relations between India and the US, as the US was often suspicious of India's closeness to the Soviet Union. The US formed a close alliance with Pakistan in the 1950s and 1960s, which further strained relations with India. The US saw Pakistan as a key ally in containing Soviet influence in Asia, particularly in the context of the Cold War.

Despite shared democratic values, the US was wary of India's socialist-leaning economic policies and its support for the Non-Aligned Movement. Conversely, India criticized US military involvement in Vietnam and other global conflicts. The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 significantly altered the global geopolitical landscape. India began liberalizing its economy, moving away from the socialist model, which opened the door to stronger economic ties with the US. In 1998, India conducted nuclear tests, leading to US sanctions. However, the US began to reassess its relationship with India in light of its growing strategic importance in Asia. One of the most significant turning points in bilateral relations was the signing of the India-US Civil Nuclear Agreement in 2005. This marked a major shift, as the US recognized India as a responsible nuclear power and lifted long-standing nuclear sanctions. With India's economic rise and the growth of the IT sector, trade and investment between the two countries increased substantially. India became an important market for US goods and services,

and Indian professionals played a key role in the US technology sector. India and the US began to collaborate more on defense and security issues, with joint military exercises and defense deals. The US recognized India as a key partner in the Indo-Pacific region, aiming to counterbalance China's influence. In the 21st century, India and the US have developed a closer strategic partnership, with both nations cooperating on counterterrorism, defense, climate change, and regional security. The US supports India's ambitions to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. Despite closer ties, there have been challenges in trade relations, especially regarding tariffs, intellectual property rights, and market access. However, both countries have worked to resolve these issues through negotiations. In the recent scenario, the US views India as a crucial partner in its Indo-Pacific strategy to maintain regional stability and counter China's growing influence. Both countries have participated in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) alongside Japan and Australia. Economic ties continue to grow, especially in technology, with major US companies investing in India and Indian companies expanding in the US. Defense cooperation has deepened, with India purchasing US military equipment and participating in joint military exercises, such as the Malabar naval exercise. India and the US share strong cultural and educational exchanges, with a large Indian diaspora in the US contributing to academic, scientific, and business sectors. Indian students form a significant part of the international student body in US universities. India and the US have transformed their relationship from one marked by Cold War suspicion and divergent geopolitical interests to a robust strategic partnership. Today, the relationship is underpinned by shared democratic values, strong economic ties, and mutual interests in regional and global stability, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region.

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2.4 Basic Aspects of the Relationship between India and the US

The foreign policy relationship between India and the U.S. is characterized by cooperation, mutual interests, and strategic alignment. The relationship between India and the United States has undergone significant transformations, evolving from a phase of mutual caution during the Cold

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War era to a broad-based strategic partnership in the 21st century. The foreign policy relationship between India and the United States has shaped by changes in global politics, economic interests, and strategic priorities. The relationship has shifted from cautious engagement during the Cold War to a broad-based strategic partnership in the 21st century.

2.4.1 Strategic and Security Cooperation:

There is a close collaboration between India and us on security and defense matters. This includes joint military exercises, defence technology transfers, and counterterrorism efforts. Agreements such as LEMOA, COMCASA, and BECA facilitate closer defence ties and operational interoperability. Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) was signed in the year 2016. It facilitates logistical support and sharing of supplies and services between the two militaries. It develops operational co operation and interoperability. Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) allows for the transfer of advanced communication equipment and technologies. It also focused on improving interoperability and secure communications between Indian and US military forces. This was effective from 2018. Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) was signed in the year 2020. It enabled the sharing of geospatial intelligence, enhancing both country's navigation and targeting capabilities. India and the US conducted several joint military exercises. Malabar naval exercise was one of them. This cooperation involved complex maritime operations and enhance naval cooperation. These exercises improve coordination and readiness for joint operations. The collaborations are as follows -

- YudhAbhyas is an annual army exercise. It aims at improving interoperability and joint operational capabilities between the U.S. and Indian armies.
- There is collaboration between the two countries on counterterrorism efforts. These efforts are inclusive of information sharing, joint investigation, operational coordination etc. This partnership between India and the U.S. is very important in addressing the global and regional terrorism threats.

- There are also intelligence sharing agreements which help in dealing with common security threats. It also enhances the ability of both the nations to respond to security challenges.

To maintain stability in the Indo-Pacific region, the US and India worked together. They have also joined hands together to counter aggressive actions by countries like China. They also jointly addressed issues like maritime security and freedom of navigation. They support each other's strategic interests in the Indian Ocean. They have also collaborated on safeguarding key maritime routes. India imports a major part of defence technology and equipment from the US. It includes advanced aircraft, naval systems, and other defense hardware. Both countries are jointly working on research and development projects. Initiatives have been taken in defense technology and innovation. To coordinate policies and strategies to address common security challenges and enhance bilateral defence cooperation, regular strategic dialogues between leaders and defence officials are initiated.

2.4.2 Economic and Trade Relations

India and the US share a cordial economic relationship. Bilateral agreements and dialogues are signed between the countries to enhance trade and investment, reduce trade barriers, increase investment and address economic challenges. Economic and trade relations between India and the U.S. are robust and diverse, reflecting a deepening partnership in various sectors. The U.S. and India are significant trading partners, with bilateral trade reaching substantial figures. Both countries export and import a wide range of goods and services, including technology, pharmaceuticals, machinery, and agricultural products. The U.S. is one of the largest sources of foreign direct investment (FDI) in India. In India, American companies invest in sectors like technology, manufacturing and services. At the same time, Indian companies also invest in the U.S., contributing to job creation and economic growth. Technology is one of the important sectors of collaboration between India and the US. There is significant trade in software, IT services, technology products etc. Indian IT companies have a strong presence in the U.S., providing services and creating jobs. India is a major

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supplier of generic drugs to the US. They have collaborated on health related research and development. India imports energy products like crude oil and natural gas from the US. Both the countries have joined hands for clean energy initiatives and climate change mitigation. Both the nations are working together to enhance the economic cooperation. Initiatives have been taken to address trade barriers, improve market access, negotiate agreements to facilitate trade in goods and services. There is continuous dialogues and consultations between the economic and trade officials. It helps in addressing economic issues and promoting bilateral economic relations such as discussions on trade policies, investment opportunities, economic cooperation etc. Partnerships, joint ventures and collaborations are made between India and the US to expand business and investment opportunities. U.S. companies are involved in numerous sectors in India, while Indian firms are increasingly investing in the U.S. market. There are various challenges in maintaining the economic relationship. These includes trade imbalances, regulatory issues, market access etc. negotiations and policy adjustments between the two countries are necessary to address these issues. Overall, economic and trade relations between India and the U.S. are dynamic and continue to grow, reflecting the deepening strategic partnership and mutual benefits derived from their economic interactions.

2.4.3 Regional Stability and Global Issues

They are also jointly working in promoting stability in the indo pacific region and countering threats from countries like china. They also collaborate on global issues such as climate change, terrorism, and non-proliferation. India and the U.S. collaborate closely on regional stability and global issues, reflecting their shared interests and values. The importance of a free, open and inclusive Indo Pacific region is emphasised by both the countries. They work together to ensure regional stability. They also joined hands together to counter any action that threaten this principle. They have particularly focused on the growing influence of China in the region. To ensure the freedom of navigation and overflight in international waters, India and the US collaborated on maritime security. Malabar exercise is one of the prominent joint exercise to enhance naval capabilities and interoperability.

The US and India also cooperated on counterterrorism efforts in South Asia. They have also shared intelligence to prevent these attacks. In stabilising Afghanistan, both the countries have worked together. The US supported the Indian development and humanitarian assistance efforts in the region. This was to promote peace and security in Afghanistan. In mediating and supporting dialogue between India and Pakistan, the US has played an important role. But it needs mention here that this approach varies with each administration. The focus is often on reducing tensions and promoting peace in South Asia. On several global issues also India and the US has collaborated together. Both the countries are committed to address climate change issues. For example, Paris Agreement mainly focus on climate change. Both India and the US collaborated on climate initiatives, including renewable energy projects and technology sharing. The U.S. and India work together on sustainable development goals (SDGs). They have also shared best practices in areas like clean energy, water management, environmental protection etc. On global health issues also, India and the US have collaborated with each other. This includes responses to pandemic, vaccine development, distribution, public health measures etc. Both countries engage in health diplomacy to address global health challenges and improve health outcomes worldwide. India is not a signatory to the Nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty (NPT). It extended its support to the US on non – proliferation issues and contributes to global non – proliferation efforts. Both countries collaborate on global counterterrorism initiatives, sharing intelligence and working together to combat international terrorist threats. India and the U.S. promote democratic values and human rights on the global stage. They support initiatives to advance democracy, rule of law, and human rights in various regions. India and the U.S. have a strong partnership in addressing regional and global challenges. Their cooperation reflects a commitment to stability, security, and shared values, contributing to a more stable and prosperous international environment.

2.4.4 Multilateral Engagement

In international forums and organisations like United Nations, G20, World Trade Organisation, both the countries have worked together.

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Multilateral engagement between India and the U.S. is a key aspect of their strategic partnership, reflecting their commitment to addressing global challenges through collective action. Both India and the US have collaborated in the UNSecurity Council on issues related to international peace and security and worked together on sanctions, peacekeeping missions, and conflict resolution. Both the countries also take part in UN general assembly to discuss issues like sustainable development, human rights, climate change etc. India and the US also have worked together within the G20. They have addressed issues like global economic challenges, financial stability, trade policies, economic growth etc. They have cooperated with each other to focus on shaping global economic policies and responses to economic crises. They have also joined hands together to deal with issues like sustainable development goals, climate action, reforming global institutions etc..The collaboration between India and the US has helped in shaping global trade policies and reforms. This collaboration is playing an important role in addressing trade disputes. Improving global trade rules, promoting fair trade practices etc. Both countries are committed to the Paris Agreement. They have worked together on issues like climate, emissions reduction, clean energy promotion etc. Joint initiatives have also been taken to advance climate action and sustainability. Various multilateral agreements between India and the US are as follows —

- **The Quad** - Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, is a strategic partnership among India, the U.S., Japan, and Australia, aimed at enhancing security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. The Quad nations focus on ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight, particularly in the South China Sea, to counter aggressive territorial claims and promote a rules-based maritime order. The group works together to address regional and global terrorism threats, sharing intelligence and best practices to enhance security. The Quad promotes sustainable infrastructure investment in the Indo-Pacific, encouraging projects that adhere to high standards and foster economic growth while countering China's Belt and Road Initiative. The members also emphasize collaboration on climate action and disaster response, recognizing the region's vulnerability to climate-related challenges.

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Through these initiatives, the Quad aims to strengthen its collective influence and support a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific, addressing both security challenges and regional development needs. The Quad countries—India, the U.S., Japan, and Australia—collaborate on various strategic initiatives that enhance their partnership. The Quad nations conduct regular military drills, such as the Malabar Exercise, to improve interoperability among their forces and strengthen defense cooperation. These exercises focus on maritime security, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief. The Quad promotes quality infrastructure development in the Indo-Pacific region, supporting initiatives that prioritize sustainability and resilience. This includes partnerships on digital infrastructure, energy, and transportation projects. The Quad engages with other countries in the region to foster multilateral dialogue and cooperation on shared challenges. This includes addressing issues like health security, counterterrorism, and economic stability. The group is also focusing on enhancing cybersecurity collaboration and developing standards for emerging technologies to ensure a secure digital environment. Through these initiatives, the Quad aims to bolster regional security, promote democratic values, and address global challenges collaboratively.

- **ASEAN** - India and the U.S. actively engage with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to promote regional stability and economic integration. Both countries work with ASEAN to address security challenges, including maritime disputes and transnational threats like terrorism and cybercrime. This collaboration helps to maintain peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific. India and the U.S. support ASEAN's economic initiatives, fostering trade and investment opportunities that benefit both the region and their own economies. They participate in discussions aimed at enhancing economic connectivity and resilience. India and the U.S. collaborate with ASEAN on various global challenges, including climate change, public health, and disaster response. This partnership strengthens the capacity of ASEAN member states to address

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pressing issues. Enhancing cultural ties through educational exchanges, tourism, and people-to-people connections fosters mutual understanding and strengthens diplomatic relations. Through these engagements, India and the U.S. reinforce their commitment to a stable, prosperous, and interconnected Southeast Asia, promoting shared interests and values in the region. India and the U.S. both recognize ASEAN's central role in promoting regional security and economic frameworks. Both countries emphasize the importance of ASEAN as a hub for regional dialogue and cooperation. They engage with ASEAN-led mechanisms to address security and economic issues in the Indo-Pacific. India and the U.S. work with ASEAN to tackle various regional challenges, including maritime security, counterterrorism, and climate change. This cooperative approach enhances collective resilience and stability. They support ASEAN's efforts to strengthen economic integration through initiatives like the ASEAN Economic Community. This includes promoting trade, investment, and sustainable development. Both nations assist ASEAN member states in capacity building, providing technical assistance and resources to help them address contemporary challenges effectively. Through these efforts, India and the U.S. reinforce ASEAN's initiatives and contribute to a more secure, prosperous, and interconnected Southeast Asia.

- **BRICS** - While the U.S. isn't a formal member of BRICS, its engagement with the group highlights the importance of dialogue with emerging economies. This interaction allows for a better understanding of diverse perspectives on global economic governance and development issues. It also provides a platform for the U.S. to address shared challenges, such as climate change, trade, and sustainable development, while recognizing the growing influence of countries like India, Brazil, and China on the global stage. Overall, this collaboration can enhance mutual interests and foster a more inclusive approach to global governance.

- **International Financial Institutions** - India and the U.S. collaborate closely within institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to tackle global economic challenges. This partnership allows them to engage in policy discussions aimed at fostering financial stability and supporting development initiatives, particularly in emerging economies. Their joint efforts often focus on addressing issues such as poverty alleviation, infrastructure development, and climate finance. By working together, they can leverage their resources and influence to promote sustainable economic growth and resilience in various regions. This collaboration not only benefits the countries involved but also contributes to a more stable global economic environment.
- **Global Counterterrorism Initiatives**- India and the U.S. are actively involved in global counterterrorism initiatives, working together in various forums to enhance security and share intelligence. Their collaboration underscores a mutual commitment to combating terrorism and addressing security challenges that transcend borders. By participating in multilateral engagements, they not only advance their strategic interests but also contribute significantly to global governance. This partnership reflects their dedication to a rules-based international order, emphasizing the importance of international cooperation in addressing pressing issues like terrorism, cybersecurity, and regional stability. Through these efforts, both countries work to foster a safer global environment while strengthening bilateral ties, showcasing the importance of collective action in facing shared threats.

2.4.5 Humanitarian and Development Assistance

The U.S. and India collaborate on a range of development and humanitarian initiatives that significantly impact global challenges. Their partnership in areas like public health, education, and disaster relief reflects a shared commitment to promoting sustainable development. In public health, for instance, both countries have worked together on initiatives to combat diseases, improve healthcare access, and respond to global health

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emergencies. In education, they focus on improving access to quality education and fostering innovation through programs and partnerships. Additionally, their collaboration in disaster relief efforts demonstrates a proactive approach to addressing humanitarian crises, providing timely assistance and resources to affected regions. Overall, this cooperation not only enhances bilateral relations but also contributes to global stability and progress in addressing some of the most pressing issues facing the world today. Indeed, humanitarian and development assistance is a vital component of the India-U.S. bilateral relationship. This collaboration is marked by joint efforts to tackle various global challenges, such as poverty, health crises, and education disparities. Both countries share a mutual interest in improving lives and fostering sustainable development, which drives initiatives in areas like disaster relief, public health programs, and educational partnerships. Through these efforts, they not only address immediate needs but also build long-term resilience in communities. This cooperation strengthens their diplomatic ties and reflects a broader commitment to promoting stability and prosperity, not just in their respective nations but globally. Together, they are making significant strides toward creating a more equitable and sustainable future.

A. Humanitarian Assistance

The response to the 2015 Nepal earthquake is a prime example of the strong humanitarian collaboration between India and the U.S. During this crisis, the U.S. provided crucial aid and technical support, while India quickly mobilized to deliver significant relief efforts, including medical assistance and supplies. This joint response not only highlights the countries' commitment to humanitarian principles but also showcases their ability to work together effectively in times of crisis. Such cooperation strengthens their bilateral relationship and reinforces the importance of collective action in addressing natural disasters and supporting affected communities. Through these efforts, both nations demonstrate their dedication to alleviating suffering and promoting resilience in the face of adversity. In the aftermath of cyclones and floods in India, the U.S. has consistently stepped in with emergency aid. This support often includes financial assistance, essential supplies, and technical expertise to help facilitate effective relief and recovery operations.

Such assistance reflects the U.S. commitment to partnering with India during times of crisis, ensuring that affected communities receive timely help. This collaboration not only aids immediate recovery efforts but also strengthens the bilateral relationship by showcasing a shared commitment to humanitarian support and disaster resilience. Together, India and the U.S. exemplify how international cooperation can effectively address the challenges posed by natural disasters. India and the U.S. frequently coordinate their emergency response efforts through international organizations and joint initiatives. This collaboration includes developing preparedness plans, formulating response strategies, and mobilizing resources during humanitarian crises. By working together, they enhance the effectiveness of their response to disasters, ensuring a more comprehensive and coordinated approach. Their joint efforts not only streamline the allocation of resources but also promote best practices in disaster management. This partnership underscores their commitment to global humanitarian principles and reflects the strength of their bilateral relationship in addressing pressing challenges collaboratively.

B. Development Assistance

India and the U.S. collaborate on various public health initiatives aimed at combating diseases like tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and malaria. This partnership involves not only direct programs to address these health challenges but also significant support for improving health infrastructure and enhancing disease prevention efforts. Through organizations like the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Global Fund, both countries work together to implement effective strategies, share best practices, and mobilize resources. Their joint efforts help strengthen healthcare systems, increase access to essential services, and ultimately improve health outcomes for communities in India and beyond. This collaboration reflects a shared commitment to public health and underscores the importance of international cooperation in tackling global health issues. this development assistance involves various aspects –

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. played a crucial role in supporting India through various forms of assistance. This included supplying vaccines, medical equipment, and funding for healthcare initiatives to help combat the virus's impact. The collaboration

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extended to joint efforts in vaccine research and distribution, highlighting the importance of global cooperation in addressing health crises. By sharing resources and expertise, both countries aimed to enhance their response to the pandemic, ensuring that communities had access to essential care and vaccination. This partnership not only showcased their commitment to public health but also reinforced the strength of their bilateral relationship in times of crisis, demonstrating how collaborative efforts can make a significant difference in tackling global challenges.

- India and the U.S. actively promote educational exchanges that enrich their bilateral relationship. This includes providing scholarships for Indian students to study in the U.S., which helps foster cross-cultural understanding and strengthens ties between the two nations. Additionally, both countries encourage collaborative research projects between educational institutions, facilitating knowledge sharing and innovation. These initiatives not only enhance academic collaboration but also contribute to capacity building in various fields. By investing in education and research, India and the U.S. are nurturing the next generation of leaders and professionals, reinforcing their commitment to mutual growth and development. The U.S. supports various educational programs in India focused on improving educational outcomes and enhancing skill development. This includes initiatives aimed at promoting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education, which is crucial for fostering innovation and preparing students for the global job market. Additionally, the U.S. collaborates on vocational training programs that equip individuals with practical skills relevant to the workforce. These efforts not only help bridge the skills gap in India but also contribute to economic development and empowerment. By investing in education and skill development, the U.S. and India are working together to create opportunities and improve the quality of life for many individuals in India.

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- The U.S. and India collaborate on a variety of infrastructure projects that significantly contribute to economic growth and enhance living conditions. These projects encompass investments in transportation, energy, and urban development. For instance, initiatives in transportation improve connectivity and logistics, facilitating trade and mobility. In the energy sector, collaboration often focuses on renewable energy projects, helping India transition to cleaner energy sources while addressing climate change. Urban development projects aim to create sustainable and resilient cities, addressing challenges like housing, sanitation, and public services. Through these joint efforts, both countries not only support India's development goals but also strengthen their economic ties, reflecting a shared commitment to building a prosperous future.
- The U.S. and India collaborate on initiatives that support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), recognizing their crucial role in driving economic growth and job creation. These initiatives often include capacity-building programs designed to enhance the skills and knowledge of SME owners and employees. Additionally, efforts to improve market access for SMEs help them expand their reach and compete effectively in both domestic and international markets. By providing training, resources, and networking opportunities, these programs empower SMEs to innovate and thrive. This collaboration not only fosters entrepreneurship but also strengthens the overall economic relationship between the two countries, promoting sustainable development and inclusive growth.
- India and the U.S. are actively collaborating on clean energy projects, focusing on renewable energy initiatives like solar and wind power. This partnership aims to advance their climate goals and promote sustainable energy practices. Both countries have engaged in joint research, technology sharing, and investment in renewable energy infrastructure. Initiatives such as the U.S.-India Clean Energy Finance Task Force and the International Solar Alliance exemplify their commitment to enhancing clean energy capacity. By working

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together, they not only address climate change but also support economic growth and energy security. This collaboration reflects a shared vision for a sustainable future, showcasing how international partnerships can drive significant progress in the fight against climate change. Moreover, India and the U.S. engage in joint efforts to tackle climate change through funding and supporting various initiatives focused on climate adaptation and environmental protection. Their collaboration includes projects aimed at enhancing resilience to climate impacts, protecting biodiversity, and promoting sustainable land use practices. Programs such as the U.S.-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership highlight their commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and advancing clean technology solutions. By working together, both countries aim to address shared environmental challenges while fostering innovation and sustainable development. This partnership not only contributes to global climate goals but also strengthens bilateral ties, demonstrating their dedication to a sustainable future for both nations and the planet.

- India and the U.S. collaborate on agricultural development programs aimed at enhancing food security, improving crop yields, and promoting sustainable farming practices. This partnership often involves technical assistance, capacity building, and research collaboration to address challenges in agriculture. Initiatives may include sharing best practices in sustainable farming, developing drought-resistant crops, and implementing advanced technologies such as precision agriculture. By working together, both countries aim to increase productivity while minimizing environmental impacts. These efforts not only support rural livelihoods and food security but also contribute to broader goals of economic development and sustainability, reflecting a commitment to fostering resilient agricultural systems.

C. Civil Society and NGO Collaboration

India and the U.S. often collaborate with other countries and international organizations to tackle global development challenges and support humanitarian efforts. By forming coalitions and partnerships, they enhance the effectiveness of their initiatives, addressing issues such as poverty, health crises, and environmental sustainability. This multilateral approach allows them to pool resources, share expertise, and coordinate responses to humanitarian needs. For example, their involvement in initiatives like the G20 and various UN forums facilitates broader engagement with the international community. Through these collaborative efforts, India and the U.S. not only address immediate challenges but also contribute to building a more resilient and equitable global framework for development and humanitarian assistance. The humanitarian and development assistance between India and the U.S. exemplifies their commitment to addressing global challenges and enhancing the well-being of communities worldwide. This collaboration highlights their shared values, such as the importance of human rights, dignity, and sustainable development. By working together on various initiatives—ranging from public health to climate action—they not only respond to immediate needs but also lay the groundwork for long-term solutions. Their partnership reflects a mutual interest in promoting peace, stability, and resilience, demonstrating how collaborative efforts can lead to positive impacts on a global scale. Together, India and the U.S. are setting an example of how nations can unite to tackle pressing issues and foster a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

2.4.6 Technology and Innovation

India and the U.S. place a strong emphasis on technology and innovation as a cornerstone of their cooperation. Their collaboration includes joint research projects and partnerships in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and renewable energy. Both countries also work together to enhance digital infrastructure, aiming to improve connectivity and access to technology in various sectors. Initiatives focused on cybersecurity are crucial as they address shared concerns about digital threats and the protection of critical infrastructure. This focus on technology

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not only drives economic growth but also promotes knowledge sharing and innovation, reinforcing their strategic partnership. By watching each other's strengths, India and the U.S. are paving the way for advancements that can benefit both nations and contribute to global progress. Technology and innovation are key areas of collaboration between India and the U.S., driven by mutual interests in advancing technological development and fostering innovation. Here's a summary of their cooperation in these fields:

A. Technology Partnerships

India is a key player in the global IT services industry, with a robust ecosystem that supports software development, IT services, and business process outsourcing (BPO). Many U.S. companies rely on Indian firms for their expertise, cost-effectiveness, and skilled workforce. This partnership allows U.S. businesses to access high-quality services while benefiting from India's technological advancements and innovation. The collaboration not only enhances operational efficiency for U.S. companies but also creates significant employment opportunities in India. Overall, this dynamic relationship in the IT sector strengthens economic ties between the two countries, highlighting the importance of technology and services in their bilateral partnership. India and the U.S. collaborate extensively on IT innovation through joint ventures, research partnerships, and vibrant startup ecosystems. Indian IT companies have established innovation centers in the U.S., fostering collaboration and allowing for the exchange of ideas and technologies. Simultaneously, many U.S. tech giants have set up research and development (R&D) centers in India, taking advantage of the country's skilled workforce and dynamic tech landscape. This reciprocal relationship enhances innovation and accelerates the development of cutting-edge solutions. By utilising each other's strengths, both nations are able to drive advancements in technology, contributing to economic growth and reinforcing their strategic partnership in the tech sector. India and the U.S. collaborate on a wide range of R&D projects across sectors like information technology, biotechnology, and nanotechnology. These partnerships often involve universities, research institutions, and private companies from both countries, fostering an environment of innovation and knowledge sharing. Joint research initiatives facilitate the development of new technologies and solutions that

address global challenges. For example, collaborations in biotechnology can lead to advancements in healthcare, while work in nanotechnology can drive innovations in materials science. This collaborative approach not only enhances scientific research but also strengthens the ties between educational and research institutions, paving the way for future advancements and fostering a culture of innovation in both nations. Both India and the U.S. provide funding and grants for joint research projects, which play a crucial role in facilitating the development of new technologies and innovations. These financial resources support collaborative initiatives across various sectors, including health, agriculture, and clean energy. By investing in joint research, both countries enhance their capabilities to tackle pressing global challenges and drive scientific advancements. This funding often comes from government agencies, educational institutions, and private organizations, creating a robust framework for collaboration. Such initiatives not only promote innovation but also strengthen bilateral ties, showcasing a commitment to shared goals and mutual growth in technology and research.

B. Innovation Ecosystems

India and the U.S. boast vibrant startup ecosystems, fostering significant collaboration between startups in both countries. This collaboration includes cross-border investments, where U.S. investors often fund promising Indian startups and vice versa. Additionally, mentorship programs and accelerator initiatives facilitate knowledge sharing and provide valuable resources for entrepreneurs. These programs help startups scale their operations and navigate challenges in both markets. The synergy between the two ecosystems not only accelerates innovation but also strengthens economic ties, as both nations benefit from the exchange of ideas and technologies. This dynamic partnership highlights the growing importance of startups in driving economic growth and technological advancement in both India and the U.S. U.S. venture capital firms are increasingly investing in Indian startups, which supports innovation and growth across various sectors such as technology, healthcare, and fintech. This influx of capital helps Indian startups scale their operations and develop cutting-edge solutions. Conversely, Indian investors are also recognizing the potential of the U.S. startup ecosystem and are actively seeking opportunities there. This reciprocal investment trend

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not only fosters cross-border collaboration but also enhances the exchange of ideas and expertise between the two countries. Together, these investments contribute to a more dynamic global startup landscape, reinforcing the strong economic ties between India and the U.S. and promoting a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation in both nations. Both India and the U.S. support technology parks and incubators that foster innovation and entrepreneurship. These hubs provide startups with essential resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities, creating an environment conducive to growth. U.S. companies frequently collaborate with Indian incubators to support startups, offering expertise, funding, and access to global markets. This partnership enhances the capabilities of Indian startups, helping them scale innovative technologies and reach new audiences. By working together in these ecosystems, both countries not only drive technological advancement but also strengthen their bilateral ties, showcasing a shared commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and innovation.

C. Digital and Emerging Technologies

India and the U.S. collaborate extensively on AI and machine learning research through joint projects, conferences, and workshops. This partnership facilitates knowledge exchange and encourages the development of innovative applications across various industries, including healthcare, agriculture, and finance. Both countries are actively investing in AI technologies, recognizing their potential to drive economic growth and improve efficiency. Collaborative efforts often involve academic institutions and private sector players, fostering a rich environment for innovation. By working together in this cutting-edge field, India and the U.S. not only advance their technological capabilities but also contribute to shaping the future of AI on a global scale. This collaboration underscores their commitment to harnessing technology for positive societal impact. India and the U.S. are actively collaborating on developing policies and ethical guidelines for AI. This includes addressing critical challenges related to data privacy, security, and fairness in AI applications. By engaging in dialogues and joint initiatives, both countries aim to create frameworks that ensure responsible AI development and deployment. This collaboration is essential

in promoting transparency and accountability, helping to mitigate risks associated with bias and misuse of data. Working together on these issues not only strengthens their bilateral relationship but also contributes to setting global standards for ethical AI practices, reflecting a shared commitment to harnessing technology for the benefit of society. India and the U.S. are actively exploring blockchain technology and fintech innovations through cross-border collaborations. This includes initiatives focused on digital currencies, advanced payment systems, and efforts to promote financial inclusion. Both countries recognize the potential of blockchain to enhance transparency, security, and efficiency in financial transactions. Collaborative projects often involve sharing best practices and developing solutions tailored to the needs of diverse populations. By working together in this rapidly evolving sector, India and the U.S. aim to drive innovation in financial services, improve access to banking, and foster economic growth, all while ensuring a secure and inclusive financial ecosystem. India and the U.S. engage in discussions on regulatory frameworks for emerging technologies to foster an environment that promotes innovation while also addressing potential risks. These dialogues focus on creating balanced regulations that encourage technological advancement while ensuring safety, privacy, and ethical standards. By collaborating on regulatory approaches, both countries aim to navigate challenges related to data security, intellectual property, and consumer protection. This partnership helps to establish guidelines that not only support innovation but also protect public interest, facilitating a sustainable and responsible tech ecosystem. Through these efforts, India and the U.S. are setting a foundation for effective governance of emerging technologies, ensuring that they can harness their benefits while minimizing potential downsides. India and the U.S. have a strong collaborative relationship in space exploration and technology. This includes joint missions, satellite launches, and various research initiatives that leverage each country's strengths in space science. The U.S. has provided significant support to India's space program through technical assistance and collaboration on projects, such as Earth observation satellites and space science research. This partnership enhances capabilities in areas like satellite navigation, communication, and climate monitoring. Together, they are advancing not

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only their respective space programs but also contributing to global knowledge and innovation in space exploration, demonstrating a shared commitment to peaceful uses of outer space and scientific advancement.

D. Education and Talent Development

Indian and U.S. universities actively engage in joint research programs, academic exchanges, and collaborative projects focused on technology and innovation. These partnerships facilitate the sharing of knowledge, resources, and expertise, enhancing research outcomes in fields like engineering, computer science, and health. Through initiatives such as student exchange programs and faculty collaborations, both countries foster cross-cultural understanding and strengthen academic ties. These collaborations not only contribute to advancements in technology but also prepare a skilled workforce ready to tackle global challenges. Overall, this cooperation underscores the importance of education and research in building a robust bilateral relationship between India and the U.S. India and the U.S. both support various scholarships, fellowships, and training programs aimed at students and professionals in technology-related fields. These initiatives provide valuable opportunities for individuals to gain advanced knowledge and skills, fostering innovation and expertise. Programs such as the Fulbright-Nehru Fellowships and other exchange initiatives help facilitate academic and professional development, allowing participants to engage in cutting-edge research and collaborate with experts in their fields. By investing in education and training, both countries are not only enhancing their own technological capabilities but also contributing to a skilled global workforce ready to address pressing challenges in technology and innovation. This commitment to education reinforces the strong ties between India and the U.S. and promotes mutual growth. India and the U.S. collaborate on various skill development initiatives that focus on technical training programs and workshops aimed at enhancing expertise in emerging technologies. These initiatives are crucial for preparing the workforce to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving job market. Through partnerships between educational institutions and industry leaders, both countries facilitate training in areas such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data analytics, and more. These programs not only help participants acquire practical skills but also encourage

innovation and entrepreneurship. By investing in skill development, India and the U.S. are strengthening their economic ties and ensuring that both nations remain competitive in the global technology landscape. This collaboration underscores a shared commitment to fostering a skilled workforce capable of driving future advancements.

E. Policy and Regulatory Collaboration

India and the U.S. engage in important discussions on technology policy and regulatory issues, focusing on critical areas such as data privacy, cybersecurity, and intellectual property rights. These dialogues aim to create frameworks that promote innovation while ensuring protection for individuals and businesses. By collaborating on policy development, both countries can address challenges related to emerging technologies and establish standards that facilitate trade and investment. This cooperation is vital for fostering a secure digital environment and protecting intellectual property, which is essential for encouraging creativity and economic growth. Through these discussions, India and the U.S. not only strengthen their bilateral relationship but also contribute to shaping global standards in technology governance, ensuring a balanced approach to innovation and regulation. India and the U.S. collaborate on setting standards and protocols for emerging technologies to ensure interoperability and security. This cooperation is essential in creating a cohesive framework that facilitates the integration of new technologies across different systems and platforms. By working together on these standards, both countries can enhance the security of technology applications, addressing concerns related to data protection and cybersecurity. This partnership fosters trust and reliability in emerging technologies, enabling smoother adoption and deployment. Such collaboration not only benefits both nations but also contributes to global efforts in establishing best practices for technology governance, ensuring that innovations are safe, secure, and widely compatible. The collaboration between India and the U.S. in technology and innovation exemplifies their shared commitment to driving technological advancement and fostering a dynamic, competitive global technology ecosystem. This partnership accelerates technological development by facilitating knowledge exchange, joint research, and investments in emerging technologies. Together, they

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create new opportunities for businesses and entrepreneurs, while also addressing pressing global challenges through innovative solutions. By leveraging each other's strengths, India and the U.S. not only enhance their own technological capabilities but also contribute to advancements that can benefit communities worldwide. This collaborative spirit underscores the importance of international cooperation in shaping a sustainable and prosperous future, reflecting a mutual dedication to harnessing technology for the greater good. The foreign policy between India and the U.S. showcases a robust partnership rooted in shared values and strategic interests. Both countries are committed to strengthening their ties through ongoing efforts to enhance cooperation across various domains, including defense, trade, technology, and environmental sustainability. This partnership is characterized by a mutual dedication to democracy, human rights, and economic growth, fostering a collaborative environment that addresses global challenges. As they continue to deepen their relationship, India and the U.S. are not only enhancing their own national interests but also contributing to stability and prosperity in the broader region and beyond. Overall, this strong partnership reflects a forward-looking approach, with both nations working together to navigate complex global dynamics and promote a rules-based international order.

STOP TO CONSIDER

International Climate Forums:

India and the U.S. indeed play crucial roles in international climate forums like the Climate Action Summit and the Global Climate Fund. Both countries are significant contributors to global greenhouse gas emissions and have unique challenges and responsibilities in addressing climate change. At the Climate Action Summit, leaders from around the world come together to showcase commitments and innovative solutions aimed at reducing emissions and enhancing climate resilience. India has focused on renewable energy, sustainable development, and initiatives like the International Solar Alliance, while the U.S. emphasizes technology, funding, and international cooperation. The Global Climate Fund, on the other hand, supports developing countries

in their efforts to combat climate change by providing financial assistance for mitigation and adaptation projects. Both nations have made pledges to contribute to this fund, highlighting the importance of collaborative efforts to address the climate crisis. Through these platforms, India and the U.S. work towards shared goals, though their approaches may differ based on their specific economic contexts and developmental needs. This cooperation is vital for global progress in tackling climate change.

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- Check Your Progress:**
1. What is Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)?
 2. What is YudhAbhyas?
 3. Discuss the economic and the trade relations between India and the US.
 4. Define Quadrilateral Security Dialogue.
 5. Explain the civil society and NGO collaboration between India and the US.

Self Asking Questions:

Do you think focus on technological collaboration drives economic growth of India and the US? Discuss. (90 words)

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2.5 Summing Up

After reading this unit you have learnt that the relationship between Indian and the US is underpinned by shared democratic values, strong economic ties, and mutual interests in regional and global stability, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region. You have also learnt that the foreign policy

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relationship between India and the United States has shaped by changes in global politics, economic interests, and strategic priorities. The relationship has shifted from cautious engagement during the Cold War to a broad-based strategic partnership in the 21st century. This unit has also familiarised you with basic aspects of the relationship between India and the US.

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Unit - 3

India-China Relations

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Unit Structure:

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Objectives
- 3.3 Evolution of India-China Relations
- 3.4 India-China relations under the Modi Regime
- 3.5 Convergence
- 3.6 Issues in India-China Relations
- 3.7 India's China Policy
- 3.8 The future of India China relations
- 3.9 Summing Up
- 3.10 References and Suggested Readings

3.1 Introduction

India and China, two ancient civilizations of the world shared a history of 5000 years. Intellectual and scholarly exchanges between the two civilizations, dating back centuries, laid the groundwork for mutual understanding. Notably, figures like Fa Hien, Hsuan-Tsang from China, and Kumarajiva from India, contributed to this rich exchange. The relationship between India and China was generally amicable. However, tensions, often stem from territorial disputes and economic rivalries. Despite being separated by the formidable Himalayas, they maintain a 3488-kilometer-long border, a testament to their geographical proximity. Alongside this border, disputes over territories like Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh have persisted, albeit both nations have committed to respecting the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Since formalizing ties in 1950, both nations have had ups and downs in their interactions. As two of the world's most populous and rapidly growing economies, their relationship holds immense global significance.

The Spread of Buddhism and trade routes like the Silk Route established and fostered the foundations of their cultural and economic ties centuries ago, However, historical events such as the Opium Wars

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underscored periods of conflict and competition. Notably, both nations played pivotal roles in shaping global events, including checking the expansion of Imperial Japan during World War II. Jawaharlal Nehru, envisioning a resurgent Asia, championed friendship between India and China, rooted in the principles of peaceful coexistence. However, diverging interests in Tibet dashed some of his hopes for a harmonious partnership. The meteoric rise of China to prominence in the world stage has altered the nature of the relationship between the two countries, as well as their interactions with other superpowers such as the US. Today, there exists a noticeable gap in China's actions and its stated intention to work with India these days, which calls for tangible measures to be taken in order to bring about a significant improvement in bilateral relations. China's aims towards India are perceived to be centred around ideas of a unipolar Asia and to be directed against reducing India's power. To counter this, India must address concerns such as border disputes and its relationships with South Asian neighbours. In this unit, we will first discuss about the dynamics of India-China relations and later part discuss about India's policy on China.

3.2 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to learn,

- The relationship between India and China Relations.
- Area of convergence between the two countries.
- The issues concerning two countries, such as border disputes, BRI etc.
- India's policy on China.

3.3 Evolution of India-China Relations

Throughout their history, India and China have navigated a difficult relationship, influenced by historical legacies, geopolitical shifts, and contemporary challenges. The dynamic nature of international politics requires both countries to remain vigilant and proactive in managing their relationship for mutual benefit and regional stability. India-China relations have evolved significantly since their independence, shaped by historical legacies, geopolitical realities, and shifting global dynamics. While challenges remain,

both nations continue to seek avenues for cooperation and peaceful coexistence in the 21st century. India and China's relationship has evolved through distinct phases since their respective struggles for independence.

Early Years (1950s-1960s):

Following India's independence in 1947, leaders Jawaharlal Nehru and Mao Zedong envisioned a close friendship based on shared historical and anti-colonial sentiments. In 1950, India recognized the People's Republic of China, establishing diplomatic relations. The Panchasheel Agreement of 1954 emphasized peaceful coexistence, reflecting the desire for stability in the region. However, border disputes over Tibet escalated tensions, eventually leading to the Sino-Indian War in 1962, which resulted in a decisive victory for China.

Stop to Consider

Panchasheel:

The Panchasheel Agreement, established as the foundation for India-China relations, was designed to advance economic and security cooperation between the two nations. China emphasized the Panchsheel Agreement during negotiations with India concerning the disputed regions of Aksai Chin, South Tibet (as termed by China), and Arunachal Pradesh (as termed by India). The agreement, signed on April 29, 1954, was set to last for eight years. However, the deterioration of relations between the two nations, culminating in the Sino-Indian War of 1962, severely strained the Panchsheel Agreement, making its renewal unlikely.

The Five Principles of the agreement include:

1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty
2. Mutual non-aggression
3. Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs
4. Equality and mutual benefit
5. Peaceful co-existence

These principles were later expanded into a statement of ten principles at the Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, in April 1955, which contributed to the foundation of the Non-Aligned Movement.

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Strategic Distance (1960s-1970s):

After the 1962 war, diplomatic and trade relations between India and China were minimal, marked by mutual mistrust. India's alignment with the Soviet Union and China's rivalry with the USSR further strained ties. However, Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms in 1978 initiated a period of economic growth and openness in China. This shift laid the groundwork for improved relations by the end of the 1980s.

Efforts for Normalization (1980s):

In the 1980s, both countries sought to normalize relations through diplomatic engagement and confidence-building measures. Indira Gandhi's tenure saw significant strides, including the establishment of diplomatic relations and border talks. The 1980s witnessed high-level exchanges and agreements to defuse border tensions. Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's landmark visit to China in 1988 marked a significant step in this direction. The visit resulted in agreements aimed at maintaining peace along the disputed border, emphasizing the importance of dialogue and cooperation.

Post-Cold War Era (1990s onwards):

With the end of the Cold War, both nations aimed to develop a more cooperative relationship. Economic engagement became a central pillar of their engagement, with trade and investment increasing significantly. Efforts to address border disputes were made through mechanisms like the Special Representatives, although occasional military standoffs occurred. Despite economic opportunities, concerns continued regarding China's actions in regional and global domains. Post-Cold War developments saw renewed optimism, epitomized by Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's visit to China in 1993 and agreements to maintain peace along the Line of Actual Control. However, nuclear tests by India in 1998 strained relations, only partially alleviated by subsequent visits and assurances of non-aggression. By the early 2000s, both countries aimed for deeper economic and political ties, emphasizing cooperation over conflict. Visits by Indian leaders and agreements on counter-terrorism and economic cooperation marked this period. Efforts to address border disputes continued, underlining a commitment to stability and mutual respect.

3.4 India-China relations under the Modi regime

India-China relations under Narendra Modi have been characterized by a complex mix of engagement and tension, driven by historical intricacies and strategic ambitions. Modi's approach reflects India's ambition to bridge the power gap with its asymmetric rival. His government has adopted a mixed strategy of deterrence and cooperation, engaging with China in multilateral forums such as BRICS, G-20, and the SCO while simultaneously resisting Chinese ambitions in the Indo-Pacific and countering initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). To effectively manage this intricate relationship, Modi's administration has aimed to implement a 'checks and balances' approach. While enhancing economic ties with China, India has also focused on strengthening relationships with potential allies in Southeast Asia and the West. By identifying China as its primary rival, Modi has reinforced India's strategic partnerships with countries concerned about Chinese expansion. Additionally, his government has sponsored infrastructure projects to ensure that South Asian neighbours do not fall completely under Beijing's economic influence. Modi and Xi Jinping met on numerous occasions. During his first visit to China in May 2015, Modi emphasized that India-China bilateral engagement should be one of equals, highlighting the need to address issues causing distrust. Modi hosted Xi again in 2019 to discuss trade and manufacturing, yet shortly after, China unilaterally altered the status quo along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), culminating in the deadly clashes at Galwan Valley in June 2020. This confrontation marked a significant turning point in relations, with Indian officials labelling the situation as "abnormal." The Modi government swiftly shifted from engagement to a robust response against China across military, diplomatic, and economic fronts. India has upgraded its defence capabilities and infrastructure along the LAC, focusing on enhancing manufacturing to reduce reliance on Chinese imports and seeking new trade partners.

Modi's government also strategically invoked the Tibet issue to bargain with China, evidenced by high-profile visits from the Dalai Lama. However, the effectiveness of this tactic seemed limited, as India's success against China remained transient without a robust counter-strategy. Under Modi 2.0, the administration adopted a more cautious approach, refraining

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from provoking China on sensitive issues while focusing on military infrastructure and defence capabilities along the LAC. Recent initiatives, such as raising additional ITBP battalions and improving last-mile connectivity in border areas, reflect India's commitment to strengthening its defences. While Modi's government has encouraged local businesses under the 'Atma-Nirbhar Bharat' initiative to reduce dependence on Chinese imports, it has also sped up infrastructure development on India's side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Furthermore, joining the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) aims to contain Chinese influence in the Indo-Pacific, illustrating India's strategic recalibration in an increasingly multipolar Asia.

3.5 Convergence

India and China have identified numerous domains for cooperation, spanning political, strategic, and socio-economic spheres.

(A) Political Cooperation:

In 1950, India marked a historic milestone by becoming the first non-socialist bloc nation to establish diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China. Although the relationship came into freeze during the 1962 war, efforts have been made to normalise the relationship since the 1980s. Mutual visits by key leaders, exemplified by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's pivotal trip in 1988 and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's significant visits in 2014, 2015, and 2018, have significantly bolstered bilateral relations. The 1993 Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on the India-China Border Areas has been instrumental in fostering stability and substance in bilateral relations. To promote exchanges between Indian states and Chinese provinces, the States/Provincial Leaders Forum was instituted, facilitating deeper socio-economic cooperation at sub-national levels. Both nations have instituted a range of dialogue mechanisms across various levels to engage in discussions pertaining to political, economic, consular, and regional matters, fostering greater understanding and cooperation between the two nations.

(B) Economic Cooperation and Bilateral Trade:

The economic partnership between India and China has witnessed remarkable growth, surging to US\$100 billion by 2022. Both nations have expanded their economic linkages, with India emerging as a significant market for “project exports” from China. There has been a notable increase in Chinese investments in India and vice versa, particularly in sectors such as IT, pharmaceuticals, and automobiles, reflecting the deepening economic ties between the two nations. With a combined market encompassing over 2.7 billion people and a GDP constituting 20% of the world’s total, there exists immense potential for further economic collaboration between India and China. China has announced plans to establish two Industrial Parks in India, underscoring its commitment to enhancing investment in the country. In response, India has extended the e-visa facility to Chinese nationals, facilitating easier travel and fostering greater economic exchanges. The trade and economic relationship between India and China are steered through various dialogue mechanisms, including the Joint Economic Group led by the Commerce Ministers of both nations and the Strategic Economic Dialogues helmed by the Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog and the Chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission of China. The trajectory of trade and economic relations between India and China has been remarkable.

(C) Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges:

The historical ties between India and China have laid the foundation for extensive cultural exchanges spanning centuries. Various cultural events, performances, and agreements, such as the establishment of the Yoga College in China, exemplify the cultural cooperation between the two nations. Notably, yoga has gained popularity in China, with the country co-sponsoring the UN resolution designating June 21 as the International Day of Yoga. Educational cooperation has also flourished, with a growing number of Indian and Chinese students studying in each other’s universities and educational institutions. Mechanisms like the China-India High-Level People-to-People and Cultural Exchanges Mechanism facilitate exchanges and cooperation across diverse fields, including art, media, sports, tourism,

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traditional medicine, and think tanks. Organizations like the Pondicherry India China Friendship Association (PICFA) actively promote people-to-people relations in areas of education, culture, and tourism. Both India and China have initiated joint research workshops to stimulate collaboration and innovation in the realms of science and technology. Additionally, Indian companies have established IT corridors in China, fostering cooperation in information technology and high-tech sectors.

(D) Military Cooperation:

Although defence cooperation remains relatively modest, joint military exercises like 'Hand in Hand' have been conducted to enhance mutual understanding and counterterrorism capabilities. A significant development in 2008 was the extension of strategic and military relations between the two nations, underscored by the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to inaugurate an additional route for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra through Nathu La. India and China have established a High-Level Dialogue Mechanism on Counterterrorism and Security to address shared security concerns effectively.

(E) Multilateral Cooperation:

Both India and China are members of BRICS, a formal grouping of emerging economies, providing a platform for engagement on bilateral and global issues. Initiatives under BRICS, such as the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingency Reserve Arrangement (CRA), aim to provide alternative lending and financial mechanisms. Additionally, as members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), India and China collaborate on security, geopolitics, and economic matters at the regional and international levels. The Russia-India-China Trilateral (RIC) platform facilitates cooperation and coordination on global challenges, particularly regarding terrorism, Afghanistan, and West Asia. Furthermore, both countries are founding members of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which supports infrastructure development across Asia, including projects in India and China. Within the framework of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), India and China work together on various trade and agricultural

issues, advocating for fair trade practices. Lastly, as part of the BASIC grouping, which includes Brazil and South Africa, India and China address environmental concerns, particularly related to climate change, emphasizing the principle of climate justice for developing nations.

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Self Asking Questions:

Q. Discuss the convergences in India-China relations.

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3.6 Issues in India-China Relations

The principles of Panchsheel and the spirit of Bandung began to erode by the late 1950s, leading to a period of strain in the relationship between India and China. The border dispute and the status of Kashmir emerged as major points of contention, souring bilateral relations. China contested the border issue by rejecting the McMahon line as the official border between the two countries and laying claim to the Aksai-Chin region of Kashmir as part of its Sinkiang province. Furthermore, China began to challenge Kashmir’s accession to India, expressing support for the principle of self-determination in the region. Tensions escalated with the construction of a contentious road in the Aksai Chin area and frequent border skirmishes, culminating in the Sino-Indian War of October 1962, when China launched an attack on India.

The Sino-Indian War of 1962 had profound consequences. Firstly, it dealt a blow to Nehru’s domestic and international reputation, as he faced criticism for his idealistic foreign policy and perceived failure to defend the nation’s honour. India’s standing as a leader of the developing world suffered as a result. Secondly, India’s non-aligned stance was compromised, forcing Nehru to seek military assistance from the West, particularly the United States. Thirdly, the defeat had a demoralizing effect on the Indian military.

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Fourthly, India lost significant territory to China, totalling 38,000 square kilometres, including 35,000 sq. km. in the north-eastern part and 3,000 sq. km. in the western sector. Additionally, China lays claim to approximately 95,000 square kilometres of land in India's eastern sector.

➤ Issue of Tibet:

The issue of Tibet has been a significant point of contention between India and the People's Republic of China (PRC). The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Chairman Mao Zedong regarded Tibet as an integral part of the PRC and it viewed Indian concern over Tibet as interference in China's internal affairs. The PRC asserted control over Tibet forcefully in 1950, aiming to eradicate Lamaism (Tibetan Buddhism) and feudalism. To avoid antagonizing the PRC, Indian Prime Minister Nehru assured Chinese leaders that India harboured no political or territorial ambitions in Tibet, except for the continuation of traditional trading rights. In May 1951, with Indian support, Tibetan delegates signed an agreement recognizing PRC sovereignty while preserving Tibet's existing political and social system. Nehru believed that India's security was best ensured by establishing a psychological buffer zone in place of the lost physical buffer of Tibet. Tensions escalated in 1954 when India published new maps incorporating the Aksai Chin region within its boundaries. Upon discovering that China had constructed a road through this region, border clashes and Indian protests became frequent. In January 1959, PRC Premier Zhou Enlai wrote to Nehru, asserting that no Chinese government had accepted the McMahon Line, defined in the 1914 Shimla Convention as the eastern section of the border between India and Tibet. In March 1959, the Dalai Lama, Tibet's spiritual and temporal leader, sought refuge in Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh, where he established the Tibetan Government-in-Exile. Thousands of Tibetan refugees resettled in Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka. Subsequently, the PRC accused India of expansionism and imperialism in Tibet and the Himalayan region. China claimed approximately 104,000 square kilometres of territory that India's maps clearly showed as under Indian sovereignty, demanding the "rectification" of the entire border. India's hosting of the Tibetan government-in-exile and the Dalai Lama is contentious, with China accusing India of

supporting Tibetan separatism, while India maintains compliance with the “One China” policy while allowing Tibetan residents in India.

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➤ **Border Dispute and Its Ramifications:**

The border dispute between China and India erupted into a brief but intense conflict on 20 October 1962, resulting in an Indian defeat as the People’s Republic of China (PRC) pushed Indian forces to within forty-eight kilometres of the Assam plains in the northeast. Strategic points in the Aksai Chin and Demchok regions of Ladakh were occupied by China before it declared a unilateral ceasefire on 21 November. Despite China’s claim of withdrawal to twenty kilometres behind its contested line of control, India disputed this assertion. Further conflicts erupted in 1967 along the contested border in Sikkim, known as the “Nathu La Incident” and the “Cho La Incident.” In September 1967, clashes at Nathu La resulted in casualties on both sides, followed by another clash in the Chola incident in October 1967.

In August 1971, India signed a Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation with the Soviet Union, while the PRC sided with Pakistan during its 1971 war with India. Despite condemning India, China refrained from intervening on Pakistan’s behalf. In subsequent years, both India and China made strides in economic and military realms, engaging in regular discussions to address bilateral issues, including the critical border dispute. However, tensions remain high since the violent Galwan clash of 2020, necessitating a substantial deployment of additional troops in Ladakh.

Stop to Consider

Border Disputes:

The border between India and China lacks clear demarcation, leading to sporadic confrontations, including incidents in Demchok (2014), Depsang (2015), Doklam (2017), and the Galwan Valley clash in 2020.

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Western Sector (Ladakh):

Johnson Line vs. McDonald Line: The Western Sector encompasses Aksai Chin, a region claimed by both India and China. The British proposed the Johnson Line, placing Aksai Chin within the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. However, China rejects this and instead supports the McDonald Line, which places Aksai Chin within Chinese territory. At present, India asserts that Aksai Chin is an integral part of its territory (specifically part of Ladakh), while China maintains control over the region.

Middle Sector (Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand):

Line of Actual Control (LAC): Disputes in the Middle Sector are relatively minor compared to other sectors. India and China have exchanged maps and generally agree on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in this region. The LAC serves as a loosely defined boundary reflecting areas of actual control by each side.

Eastern Sector (Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim):

McMahon Line Dispute: The Eastern Sector includes Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim. China disputes the legality of the McMahon Line, which was drawn during the 1914 Simla Convention and delineates the boundary between Tibet and British India (now Arunachal Pradesh). China argues that Tibetan representatives at the conference did not have the authority to negotiate border agreements. This dispute has led to ongoing tensions and sporadic confrontations in the Eastern Sector. It underlies China's claims over Arunachal Pradesh and contributes to border instability in the region. The lack of clear demarcation along the entire India-China border, combined with differing historical interpretations and unresolved boundary disputes, has resulted in sporadic confrontations over the years. These disputes and tensions impact regional stability and influence strategic decisions by both India and China. Efforts to resolve these disputes through diplomatic channels have been ongoing, but progress remains slow and often subject to broader geopolitical dynamics.

Self-Assessment Question

Q. What is the significance of 1962 war. Discuss India’s border issues with China.

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➤ **Water Sharing:**

The water dispute between India and China centers on China’s control of rivers originating from the Tibetan Plateau, like the Brahmaputra (known as YarlungTsangpo in Tibet). China’s control over these rivers raises concerns by capitalizing on downstream nations’ reliance on hydrological data, leading to tensions over water-sharing. China has developed dams, hydropower projects, and infrastructure on these rivers, giving it significant control over downstream water flow. This control allows China access to crucial hydrological data vital for managing water resources, flood control, and agriculture in downstream countries like India. Alterations in water flow due to upstream activities can impact downstream economies reliant on these rivers for irrigation, drinking water, and hydroelectric power generation. Disputes over water distribution can arise if upstream development adversely affects downstream availability. China’s infrastructure projects in Tibet also raise geopolitical concerns, potentially leveraging water control as a tool of influence. Environmental impacts such as altered river flows and biodiversity loss complicate the issue further. India and China have engaged in bilateral dialogues and agreements to manage water-related concerns, yet progress can be hindered by broader tensions and differing priorities.

➤ **Trade Imbalance:**

A trade deficit occurs when a country imports more than it exports. According to data from the General Administration of Customs of the People’s Republic of China (GACC), India’s trade deficit with China

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reached \$90.27 billion between January and November 2023. The trade imbalance between the two nations has been a crucial part of their relationship, with India consistently experiencing a deficit, importing machinery, electronics, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals from China, while exporting predominantly raw materials like iron ore, cotton, and agricultural products. This trade pattern underscores China's manufacturing advantage and India's strength in raw material production. Chinese products often enjoy cost advantages due to lower production costs, including labor and infrastructure expenses, heightening their appeal in India and amplifying import volumes. In contrast, Indian exports to China confront barriers such as non-tariff measures, regulatory complexities, and restricted market access for specific goods. Currency fluctuations and the relative valuation of the Chinese yuan against the Indian rupee further influence the trade balance, impacting the competitiveness of imports versus exports. Initiatives aimed at rectifying the trade disparity encompass negotiations on trade pacts, tariff modifications, and discussions on enhancing market entry opportunities to foster more equitable trade flows.

➤ **Belt and Road Initiative (BRI):**

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), hailed by President Xi Jinping as the “project of the century” during its inaugural assembly in 2017, aims to mobilize trillions of dollars for infrastructure investments spanning over 60 countries. However, India raises several concerns regarding the BRI, primarily objecting to the inclusion of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which traverses through the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), territory that India claims as its own. India insists that BRI projects adhere to international norms, uphold the rule of law, ensure financial sustainability, and avoid creating debt traps or environmental and social risks for host countries. China's strategic rationale behind the BRI is both defensive and offensive. As the world's largest importer of commodities and exporter of finished goods, China seeks to counterbalance existing global power dynamics that limit its influence. The multilateral nature of the BRI aims to integrate Asian nations with China and each other, reviving historical Silk Roads without dominance but fostering deference among Asian nations.

With Asia's vast population, predominantly non-Chinese, there is a collective aspiration to avoid a Chinese-dominated world order. While many advocate for India's participation in the BRI, India refrained primarily due to concerns over the CPEC passing through PoK. Additionally, India abstained from endorsing the trilateral economic corridor proposed by China involving Nepal, China, and India, fearing the potential dumping of Chinese goods via Nepal. Similarly, India hesitated to sign the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) trade treaty, involving 16 countries including India and China, citing similar apprehensions about unfair trade practices.

Moreover, China persistently asserts its claim over Arunachal Pradesh, labelling it as Southern Tibet. Recently, China renamed 15 locations in Arunachal Pradesh, following a similar action in 2017 when it renamed six places. This move is part of China's effort to assert territorial claims over the region, which it calls "South Tibet," despite it being under Indian administration. China justifies this action based on historical, cultural, and administrative jurisdiction, arguing that these original names date back to ancient times and were altered by India's "illegal occupation." The renaming is seen as a strategy to reinforce China's stance in the border dispute with India. India has firmly rejected these actions, reaffirming that Arunachal Pradesh is an integral part of its territory. On January 1, 2022, Beijing implemented a new land border law, granting the People's Liberation Army (PLA) full authority to counter "invasion, encroachment, infiltration, provocation," and safeguard Chinese territory. India has vehemently opposed this law since its inception. India also citing concerns over sovereignty, particularly in light of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. The border dispute remains unresolved, with both countries bolstering military infrastructure along the border. Indian media frequently report Chinese military incursions into Indian territory. Additionally, China expresses apprehension about Indian military and economic activities in the South China Sea, mirroring India's concerns about Chinese activities in the Indian Ocean. Despite India support China on several global issues, China has not reciprocated. China opposed India's bid for permanent membership in the UN Security Council and entry into the NSG. Moreover, India faces a significant trade deficit with China, amounting to US\$62.9 billion in favour of China in 2017-18.

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Check Your Progress:

Q. What are the issues in India China relation.

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3.7 India's China Policy

India's perception of China has evolved, reflecting its changing geopolitical realities and historical experiences. India primarily views China as an authoritarian communist state that has emerged as a powerful neighbour and a global superpower. Historical events like the Tibet episode and the 1962 war have contributed to India's altered outlook, shaping its current perception of China as a powerful neighbour rather than a reliable partner. However, India expects reciprocity from China, acknowledging India's growing global stature and the need for mutual recognition of each other's power and interests. Relations between the PRC and India soured throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, coinciding with improved China-Pakistan relations and deteriorating Sino-Soviet relations. During India's 1965 war with Pakistan, China supported Pakistan, further straining ties. Between 1967 and 1971, China constructed a vital all-weather road across territory claimed by India, connecting the PRC's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region with Pakistan, prompting only protests from India. PRC's active propaganda campaign against India, coupled with assistance to insurgent groups in northeastern India, fueled tensions. The PRC accused India of aiding Tibetan rebels, while Sri Lanka mediated negotiations for the withdrawal of Chinese troops from Indian territory, with both nations ultimately agreeing to Colombo's proposals. China's robust strategic ties with Pakistan, Nepal, and Bhutan raise concerns as these countries serve as buffer states.

Various segments of Indian society perceive China differently. While the business community sees China as an opportunity for economic engagement, think tanks and media often view it as a strategic concern due

to geopolitical rivalries and security implications. The Indian government maintains a cautious stance, balancing its interests with diplomatic engagement while remaining watchful of Chinese actions.

Recent years have seen challenges in India-China relations, including territorial disputes, military standoffs, and differences on issues like terrorism. Despite efforts to maintain dialogue and cooperation, occasional tensions persist, requiring both countries to navigate complex geopolitical dynamics while safeguarding their respective interests. India's approach to China reflects a pragmatic understanding of the complexities and challenges inherent in the relationship between two major Asian powers. While striving for cooperation and peaceful coexistence, India remains vigilant and proactive in safeguarding its interests and addressing areas of concern through diplomatic engagement and strategic manoeuvring.

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Stop to Consider

China's geopolitical assertions are driven by various strategies:

Salami Slicing Strategy: China employs a divide-and-conquer approach, incrementally advancing territorial claims through alliances and incremental threats, as seen in the South China Sea and Himalayan regions.

Debt Trap Diplomacy: China extends loans to developing nations for infrastructure projects, creating economic dependence to gain strategic leverage or control over critical assets.

Five Fingers of Tibet Strategy: China aims to control or influence surrounding regions, including Ladakh, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, and Arunachal Pradesh, to extend its military reach and strategic influence.

String of Pearls: China builds a network of ports and maritime infrastructure across strategic locations in the Indian Ocean, such as Gwadar Port in Pakistan and Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka, to encircle India strategically.

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India is responding to China's aggressive measures through various strategic initiatives and diplomatic efforts:

Global Strategic Alliances: India collaborates with Australia, the US, and Japan through QUAD to counter China's influence in the Indian Ocean Region, focusing on maritime trade and security. India's recent inclination towards the Quad, underscores the potential for collaborative efforts to navigate regional challenges. Acknowledging the Quad's significance and engaging actively within this framework could shape future dynamics. However, China is also forming Himalayan Quads. India, Israel, the USA, and the UAE form an alliance I2U2 to bolster India's geopolitical standing. The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) aims to enhance India's presence in the Arabian Sea and the Middle East, funded by the Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment. India, Iran, and Russia establish the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) to create a multi-mode transportation network connecting the Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf, and Caspian Sea.

Prolonged Armed Coexistence: Post-resolution of the Ladakh standoff, India and China may enter a phase of prolonged armed coexistence. Returning to agreements and understandings established since 1993, while enhancing mutual trust, is crucial to maintaining stability along the border. The tension along the China-India border is emblematic of a larger strategic rivalry between the two nations, necessitating a nuanced approach to address underlying issues. Both parties must accord equal seriousness to the military escalation in eastern Ladakh, emphasizing the importance of de-escalation measures and adherence to past agreements to prevent further escalation.

Necklace of Diamonds Strategy: India is countering China's "String of Pearls" strategy by bolstering its naval presence, expanding military bases, and fortifying diplomatic relations in the Indo-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. India maintains a strong naval fleet comprising aircraft carriers like INS Vikramaditya, destroyers, frigates, submarines, and patrol vessels. Plans for the indigenous carrier INS Vikrant are also progressing. Regular naval exercises such as Malabar, conducted with the United States, Japan, and Australia, enhance interoperability and maritime security in the region. Military

infrastructure development on the strategically vital Andaman and Nicobar Islands includes expanding naval facilities, airstrips, and surveillance capabilities. India has forged defense agreements with key nations including the United States, France, Australia, and Japan, facilitating joint military cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. Actively engaging in regional forums such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and ASEAN-led mechanisms, India strengthens maritime cooperation and security architecture. This proactive approach aims to counterbalance China's "String of Pearls" strategy, which establishes military and commercial footholds along maritime routes from the South China Sea to the Indian Ocean. India's strategy ensures freedom of navigation and secures sea lines of communication, viewed as vital responses to China's expanding influence. It underscores India's commitment to promoting regional stability, safeguarding maritime security, and advancing economic connectivity in the evolving geopolitical landscape of the Indo-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions.

Foundational Agreements with the USA: India's recent agreements with the USA, including Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA, 2018), Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA, 2016) , and Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA, 2020), represent pivotal steps in bolstering defense collaboration between the two nations to effectively counter Chinese strategies and assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region. COMCASA facilitates secure military communications and intelligence sharing, enhancing operational coordination during joint exercises and enabling real-time situational awareness. LEMOA allows reciprocal access to military logistics support, facilitating refuelling and replenishment operations, which significantly boosts operational flexibility and efficiency for both Indian and US forces. Meanwhile, BECA focuses on geospatial intelligence sharing, providing critical data for accurate mapping, navigation, and targeting capabilities. Together, these agreements strengthen India's defence capabilities and strategic partnership with the USA, aligning their efforts to uphold maritime security, freedom of navigation, and stability in the face of increasing Chinese military activities and infrastructure developments. This deepening nexus underscores India's proactive stance in the Indo-Pacific,

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strategically leveraging international partnerships to safeguard its interests and ensure a balanced regional security environment amidst evolving geopolitical dynamics.

Diplomatic Engagement:

India engages in diplomatic discussions with China to address existing issues, such as the Ladakh border tension. Both countries must improve communication channels between their military forces to prevent misunderstandings and accidental escalations. Open dialogue is imperative for better understanding each other's regional initiatives and building trust. Engaging in discussions about the Indo-Pacific vision and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) can foster mutual understanding and pave the way for cooperation. Accommodating each other's legitimate interests, such as China's partnership with Pakistan and India's ties with the United States, is essential. While these partnerships may pose challenges, finding common ground and delineating red lines through dialogue is vital for managing differences.

Stop to Consider

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar outlined eight principles aimed at mending strained relations with China, emphasizing that both nations are at a pivotal juncture and must respect each other's interests and sensitivities within a multipolar Asia. He highlighted three core "mutuals" – mutual respect, mutual sensitivity, and mutual interests – as crucial for resolving the nine-month standoff in the Ladakh sector of the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Jaishankar's eight principles for managing ties with China are as follows:

Adherence to Agreements: All agreements already reached must be fully adhered to, both in letter and spirit.

Respect for the LAC: The LAC must be strictly observed and respected; any attempt to unilaterally change the status quo is completely unacceptable.

Peace and Tranquillity: Peace and tranquillity in the border areas are foundational for the development of relations in other areas.

Disturbances in border areas will inevitably affect the broader relationship.

Multi-Polar Recognition: Both nations, committed to a multipolar world, should recognize that a multipolar Asia is a critical component of this vision.

Reciprocal Sensitivity: Each state will have its own interests, concerns, and priorities, but sensitivity to them must be reciprocal as relationships between major states are inherently mutual.

Acknowledging Aspirations: As rising powers, both countries have their own aspirations, which must be acknowledged and respected.

Managing Differences: Divergences and differences will always exist, but their management is essential for maintaining bilateral ties.

Long-Term Perspective: Civilisational states like India and China must always take the long view in their relations.

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Check Your Progress

Q. Discuss how India is balancing China's hegemony.

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3.8 The future of India China Relations

The future of India-China relations is likely to be shaped by a combination of competition and cautious engagement, influenced by several longstanding issues. The ties between the two nations are troubled by an unsettled border, an unequal trade relationship, China's strategic ties to Pakistan, and significant political disagreements regarding their respective roles in Asia and beyond. The lack of strategic trust has been exacerbated since the June 2020 border clash, which undermined the carefully negotiated border-management regime that had taken generations to establish. Additionally, the war in Ukraine has brought China closer to Russia, India's

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historic defence partner, further complicating the landscape. Despite both nations sharing a desire to avoid another border war like the one in 1962, their national interests are diverging. Amidst lower economic growth prospects, President Xi Jinping has pursued an assertive foreign policy and security agenda, focusing on promoting global technology champions, advancing the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and securitizing the economy at home. This shift has generated insecurity for India, which concurrently views itself as a rising global economic force capable of leveraging strategic partnerships in Asia and beyond. Since the end of the Covid 19, India has gained confidence from its status as the world's fastest-growing major economy, while China's economic prospects have faced challenges. India's ambitions have shifted from seeking to be a "plus-one" in multinationals' China-focused strategies to positioning itself as a preferred, trusted supplier in global supply chains. This is part of a broader trend of "decoupling" that is reshaping economic dependencies and diminishing China's influence. India's "Make in India" initiative epitomizes its desire to expand its manufacturing and service sectors, utilizing foreign capital to bolster exports.

Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has emphasized the pivotal role of India-China relations in shaping the future of Asia and the world. In a rapidly evolving multipolar environment, he asserts that the dynamic between these two Asian giants will significantly influence the trajectory of the region. However, both nations often ascribe malign motives to each other's actions while viewing their own intentions as benign. This has led to a perception in India that China is indifferent to its core concerns, while China perceives India's actions as unreciprocated goodwill. Mistrust runs deep, fuelled by a mismatch in identity perception. India feels frustrated by China's reluctance to acknowledge its status as a significant regional and global player, while China does not see India as a threat, believing its approach to be inherently benign. Each side appears to be locked into a self-created understanding of the other's political behaviour and internal dynamics. This perspective has been echoed by scholars like Ye Hailin, who notes the contrasting interpretations of identity and standing, as well as the differing views on their respective international statuses. China perceives the China-India relationship as a non-zero-sum game, viewing itself as the

more powerful country, while India considers it a zero-sum game between two equally powerful nations. This fundamental divergence complicates the prospects for cooperation and mutual understanding. Ultimately, the trajectory of India-China relations will depend on their ability to deal with these deep-seated issues and find common ground amid growing competition and regional dynamics.

3.9 Summing Up

The relationship between India and China epitomizes a blend of cooperation and competition across multiple fronts. However, the relationship is more of a conflict-prone. Despite historical tensions, both nations have forged extensive political, economic, and cultural ties over the decades. But recent border clashes worsen the relationship. Political dialogues and bilateral agreements have been instrumental in maintaining stability along the Line of Actual Control only. Though Economically, their trade relations have flourished, showcasing substantial growth and mutual investment across various sectors, trade imbalance is a hard issue. Cultural exchanges and educational collaborations have further deepened their understanding and appreciation of each other's heritage. However, challenges persist, primarily rooted in unresolved border disputes, strategic rivalries, and differing geopolitical ambitions. Historical conflicts, such as the Sino-Indian War of 1962, continue to influence military strategies and regional policies, complicating efforts towards a completely harmonious relationship. Issues like water sharing, trade imbalances, and divergent approaches to multilateral initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative underscore the complexity of their engagement. India has responded with a multifaceted approach, bolstering military infrastructure, strengthening alliances like the Quad, and enhancing naval capabilities to counterbalance China's expanding influence in the Indo-Pacific region. The signing of pivotal agreements with the United States highlights India's proactive stance in safeguarding its territorial integrity and regional interests. Looking ahead, India's policy towards China necessitates a delicate balance of cooperation and strategic preparedness. While pursuing avenues for dialogue and cooperation in economic and cultural domains, India remains steadfast in safeguarding its

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national interests against geopolitical pressures. The evolving dynamics between these two major powers will continue to shape regional geopolitics, influencing global strategies and alliances in the foreseeable future.

3.10 References and Suggested Readings

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Unit - 4 India and Russia

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Unit Structure:

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Objectives
- 4.3 Historical Background
- 4.4 Aspects Of India Soviet Union Relationship
 - 4.4.1 Defense Cooperation
 - 4.4.2 Economic Relations
 - 4.4.3 Political Ties
 - 4.4.4 Cultural Exchange
 - 4.4.5 Geopolitical Dynamics
 - 4.4.6 Space Collaboration
 - 4.4.7 Nuclear Relation
- 4.5 Challenges To India Russia Relationship
- 4.6 Summing Up
- 4.7 References and Suggested Readings

4.1 Introduction

The India-Russia relationship is marked by a deep historical connection and mutual interests. As global dynamics evolve, both nations will need to adapt their strategies to maintain their partnership while addressing emerging challenges. Their cooperation remains vital for regional stability and global multipolarity. The relationship between India and Russia has evolved significantly since the mid-20th century, characterized by a strong partnership that encompasses political, economic, and military dimensions. This unit will familiarise you with different aspects of India Soviet Union relationship.

4.2 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to

- Trace the historical background of India Soviet Union relationship
- Analyse different aspects related to India Soviet Union relationship

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4.3 Historical Background

The bond between India and Russia dates back to the Cold War period. India sought to balance its foreign policy and Russia (then the Soviet Union) became a key ally, providing military equipment and support. During the Cold War, India adopted a non-aligned attitude but leaned towards the Soviet Union for military and economic support. The USSR provided India with essential military equipment, technology, and assistance in various sectors, helping India to modernize its armed forces. This partnership was also reflected in numerous treaties and agreements, which laid the groundwork for a strong, long-lasting relationship that continues to evolve today. During the Cold War, India and the Soviet Union established a close relationship, primarily due to India's non-alignment policy and its need for military and economic support. The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation in 1971 solidified this bond, enabling India to receive military technology and economic aid. This partnership helped India strengthen its defense capabilities while allowing the USSR to counterbalance Western influence in the region. India's official diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union were established in April 1947. The 1955 visits marked a significant turning point in India-Soviet relations, emphasizing mutual support and shared goals. Nehru's visit showcased India's interest in economic and technical collaboration, while Khrushchev's trip reinforced Soviet backing for India's territorial integrity, particularly regarding Kashmir and Goa. This support was crucial for India, as it sought to assert its sovereignty amid regional tensions. The relationship was further solidified through military and economic assistance, which helped India modernize its defense capabilities and infrastructure. These events underscored the Soviet Union's strategy to engage with non-aligned nations, positioning itself as a counterbalance to Western influence. India's diplomacy with the Soviet Union focused on mutual interests, including economic cooperation and military support. This relationship was crucial during the Cold War, as India sought to balance its ties with both Western and Eastern blocs. The ultimate goal was to enhance India's sovereignty and development while navigating global power dynamics. The relationship between India and Russia has historically been characterized by strong diplomatic, military, and economic ties.

4.4 Aspects of India Soviet Union Relationship

The partnership between India and Soviet Union is reflected in numerous treaties and agreements, which laid the groundwork for a strong, long-lasting relationship that continues to evolve today. There are various aspects related to this partnership. These can be analysed as follows –

4.4.1 Defense Cooperation

During the Cold War, the Soviet Union became India's primary arms supplier, providing advanced military technology. India continues to purchase military hardware from Russia, including aircraft, tanks, and submarines. Notable joint projects include the BrahMos missile and the development of the fifth-generation fighter jet, the PMF (Perspective Multi-role Fighter). Both nations conduct regular military exercises to enhance interoperability and strengthen defense ties. India and Russia have a robust defense partnership. Russia supplies a significant portion of India's military hardware, including aircraft, submarines, and missile systems. Joint exercises and collaborative projects, like the BrahMos missile, further cement this relationship. The following points explain the defence relationship between India and Russia.

- **Military Hardware Supply** - Russia has supplied India with various fighter jets, including the MiG series and the Su-30MKI, which have been customized for Indian requirements. The acquisition of Kilo-class submarines and the nuclear-powered INS Arihant highlights the significant naval collaboration. India has procured advanced missile systems like the S-400 air defense system, which enhances its defensive capabilities.
- **Joint Exercises** - Both countries regularly conduct joint military exercises, such as the INDRA series, which focus on improving interoperability and tactical cooperation. Russian training facilities host Indian military personnel, fostering deeper military cooperation.
- **Collaborative Projects** - This supersonic cruise missile, developed jointly by India and Russia, is a testament to their strong collaboration in defense technology. Ongoing discussions include projects like

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the fifth-generation fighter aircraft (PMF) and other advanced defense technologies. The BrahMos missile also cemented the relationship. The BrahMos missile is a supersonic cruise missile developed jointly by India and Russia, named after the Brahmaputra River and the Moskva River. BrahMos is one of the fastest cruise missiles in the world, capable of flying at speeds of Mach 2.8 to 3.0. The missile has a range of approximately 300 kilometers (for the land and naval versions) and can be extended for specific applications, depending on the platform. BrahMos can be launched from various platforms, including ships, submarines, aircraft, and land-based launchers. This flexibility enhances its operational utility. It can carry a payload of up to 300 kilograms, including conventional high-explosive and submunitions, making it effective against a wide range of targets. BrahMos enhances India's strategic deterrence capability, particularly against adversaries in the region. It plays a crucial role in India's defense strategy, providing a significant edge in power projection and quick strike capabilities. The missile has been tested extensively and integrated into various military exercises, demonstrating its effectiveness and reliability. BrahMos has garnered interest from several countries, with discussions ongoing regarding potential sales to nations looking to enhance their military capabilities. BrahMos II, an upgraded version is in the works, which aims to achieve hypersonic speeds (greater than Mach 5), further increasing its strategic relevance. The BrahMos missile is a key component of India's defense arsenal, showcasing advanced technology and enhancing its operational capabilities in regional security dynamics.

- Strategic Implications -This defense partnership is crucial for India's strategic posture in South Asia and the Indian Ocean Region, especially given the evolving security dynamics. The partnership enhances India's standing on the global stage and allows it to assert a more independent foreign policy.

Overall, the defense relationship is marked by a blend of traditional procurement and innovative collaboration, reinforcing the strategic alliance between India and Russia.

STOP TO CONSIDER

The India-Russia Intergovernmental Commission (IRIGC):

The India-Russia Intergovernmental Commission (IRIGC) plays a crucial role in strengthening bilateral ties, focusing on various sectors such as trade, investment, and defense. Established to facilitate cooperation, the IRIGC has become a platform for high-level dialogue, allowing both nations to address mutual interests and challenges. The IRIGC has been instrumental in defense collaboration, including joint military exercises, technology transfers, and procurement of defense equipment. The commission aims to boost trade and investment, encouraging Russian investments in sectors like energy, infrastructure, and pharmaceuticals in India, while promoting Indian exports to Russia. Enhancing people-to-people connections through cultural programs and educational exchanges is also a focus, fostering mutual understanding. The IRIGC underlines the strategic nature of the India-Russia relationship, reinforcing commitments to multilateral forums and global security. The commission's ongoing dialogues help navigate the evolving geopolitical landscape, ensuring both countries adapt to new challenges and opportunities. Recent developments under the IRIGC include enhanced defense cooperation agreements, particularly in areas like joint production of military equipment and technology sharing. Notably, India and Russia have collaborated on projects like the BrahMos missile system and the co-production of the AK-203 rifles. There have been efforts to increase trade volume, with a focus on reaching ambitious targets in sectors like energy and pharmaceuticals. The IRIGC has also addressed challenges posed by global supply chain disruptions, emphasizing the need for resilient economic ties. These ongoing initiatives reflect a commitment to deepening the strategic partnership despite shifting global dynamics.

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4.4.2 Economic Relations

Trade between India and Russia has been growing, with a focus on energy, agriculture, and technology. Russia is a major supplier of oil and gas to India. There are ongoing discussions about increasing investment in sectors

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like infrastructure, pharmaceuticals, and renewable energy. Russia has been instrumental in India's nuclear energy sector, contributing to the construction of nuclear power plants and technology transfer. The economic relationship between India and Russia is multifaceted and has been growing steadily over the years. Bilateral trade has seen significant growth, reaching around \$11 billion in recent years. The goal is to increase this figure to \$30 billion in the coming years. Key exports from India to Russia include pharmaceuticals, textiles, and agricultural products, while Russia primarily exports energy resources, military hardware, and raw materials to India. Russia is one of India's major suppliers of crude oil and natural gas. Recent collaborations include investments in oil fields and LNG projects. The LNG project between India and Russia primarily involves the cooperation for liquefied natural gas supply, enhancing energy security and trade relations. India and Russia have signed agreements for LNG supply, particularly focusing on sourcing natural gas from Russian fields like the Arctic. The projects involve significant investment from both nations, facilitating infrastructure development for LNG terminals in India. This partnership aims to diversify India's energy sources, reducing reliance on traditional fossil fuels and promoting cleaner energy. Strengthening ties with Russia provides India with a reliable energy source amidst global energy volatility. It also enhances India's strategic relationships with Russia, balancing its partnerships in the global energy landscape. The collaboration may lead to increased LNG processing capacity and the establishment of new import terminals in India. It supports India's transition to cleaner energy, aligning with its environmental commitments. This LNG partnership reflects a growing collaboration in the energy sector, aiming to meet India's rising demand for natural gas while fostering deeper ties with Russia. The two countries have a strong partnership in nuclear energy, with Russia assisting in building nuclear power plants in India, such as the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant. Indian companies are increasingly investing in sectors like pharmaceuticals, information technology, and infrastructure in Russia. Conversely, Russian investments are prominent in energy, defense, and telecommunications in India. Platforms like the India-Russia Forum on Trade and Investment facilitate dialogue and partnerships between businesses from both countries. There are several joint ventures in

sectors such as defense manufacturing, space technology, and agriculture, which enhance technological exchange and innovation. Recent efforts are aimed at fostering collaborations in the startup ecosystem, particularly in technology and IT. But this relation is not free from challenges. While trade has grown, India seeks to diversify its imports and increase its exports to Russia to address trade imbalances. Global geopolitical dynamics, such as Western sanctions on Russia, can impact trade flows and economic cooperation. Overall, the economic relationship between India and Russia is evolving, with both countries looking to deepen ties across various sectors.

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4.4.3. Political Ties

Both the countries share similar views on several global issues, including the need for multipolarity in international relations. They often collaborate in forums like BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The political ties between India and Russia are characterized by mutual respect, strategic collaboration, and shared interests. The roots of their political relationship were established during the Cold War when India sought to maintain a non-aligned stance while benefiting from Soviet support in various areas, including military and economic aid. Leaders from both countries frequently meet, strengthening bilateral ties through summits and state visits. The annual India-Russia Summit is a significant platform for discussing strategic issues. The **Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation** was signed in 1971. This treaty serves as a cornerstone of their political relationship, emphasizing mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation, signed in 1971, was a landmark agreement that solidified the political and military alliance between India and the Soviet Union. It emphasized mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and it included provisions for military assistance, which supported India during the Bangladesh Liberation War. This treaty not only strengthened India's defense capabilities but also positioned the USSR as a key ally in the Cold War context. The treaty had several significant impacts. Firstly, it enhanced India's military capabilities, providing advanced weapons and technology, which played a crucial role in the 1971 war against Pakistan.

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Secondly, it solidified India's position in South Asia, allowing it to assert itself regionally. Additionally, the treaty marked a shift in global alliances, showcasing India's tilt towards the Soviet bloc and influencing its foreign policy for decades. This alliance also facilitated economic cooperation, with Soviet support in various sectors. Both nations advocate for a multipolar world order, opposing unilateralism and promoting a balance of power in international relations. India and Russia often align on issues such as terrorism, climate change, and sustainable development, reflecting their commitment to global stability. Both countries are key members of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), where they collaborate on regional security, economic cooperation, and counterterrorism. India and Russia have historically supported each other's positions in the United Nations and other international forums. Russia has supported India's bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, advocating for a reformed council that reflects contemporary geopolitical realities. Both countries share concerns about terrorism and have cooperated on resolutions and initiatives aimed at combating it, often supporting each other's stances on related issues. Russia has backed India's positions on Kashmir and other territorial issues, while India has often supported Russia's stance on its regional concerns, such as in Chechnya and Ukraine. Russia has emphasized the importance of respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity. Russia has also consistently advocated for bilateral dialogue between India and Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir dispute, discouraging external intervention. This stance reinforces the strategic partnership between India and Russia, highlighting their mutual interests in regional stability. Russia has also expressed support for India's territorial claims in areas like Arunachal Pradesh, aligning with India's stance on maintaining its sovereignty. Russia's backing serves to strengthen India's position against perceived Western biases in regional conflicts. On the other hand, India has also often expressed support for Russia's position on various regional concerns, including conflicts in Chechnya and Ukraine. India has acknowledged Russia's right to maintain its territorial integrity and stability in Chechnya, emphasizing the importance of combating terrorism and separatism. Supporting Russia in this context aligns with India's broader strategic partnership with Moscow, which

includes defense cooperation and economic ties. India has maintained a neutral attitude on the Ukraine conflict, advocating for dialogue and diplomacy while refraining from condemning Russia's actions outright. India emphasizes the need for peaceful resolution and respect for sovereignty, aligning with its broader principles of non-alignment and strategic autonomy. India's support for Russia on these issues reflects its desire to maintain strong ties with a key partner while navigating complex global dynamics. India seeks to balance its relationships with both Western countries and Russia, aiming for a multipolar world where it can engage with multiple powers. Overall, India's positions on these issues underscore its commitment to its strategic partnership with Russia, while also adhering to its principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. This mutual support reflects a strategic partnership built on historical ties and shared geopolitical interests.

4.4.4. Cultural Exchange

There are numerous scholarships and exchange programs for students from both countries. Many Indian students study in Russian universities, especially in fields like medicine and engineering. Various cultural events, including film festivals, art exhibitions, and language courses, promote mutual understanding and strengthen people-to-people connections. It has already been mentioned above that the two nations have strong cultural ties, with educational exchanges and initiatives to promote cultural understanding. The cultural exchange between India and Russia is rich and vibrant, reflecting a deep-rooted connection that has evolved over decades. The relationship has historical roots dating back to the 1950s, with cultural diplomacy playing a significant role in strengthening ties during the Soviet era. Numerous Indian students study in Russian universities, particularly in fields like medicine, engineering, and science. Russia offers scholarships for Indian students, fostering educational exchange. Interest in the Russian language is growing in India, with many universities offering Russian language courses and cultural programs. Events such as the "Days of Indian Culture" in Russia and "Russian Cultural Days" in India showcase music, dance, art, and cuisine from both countries, promoting mutual understanding. Days of Indian Culture" in Russia is an event that showcases the rich heritage of

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Indian art, music, dance, and cuisine, aimed at promoting cultural exchange between India and Russia. It is strengthening ties through cultural understanding and appreciation. Traditional dance and music are performed by Indian artists. Culinary demonstrations and art workshops are also held to share Indian crafts and cooking techniques. It showcases Indian art, textiles, and handicrafts. It enhances awareness of Indian culture among Russian audiences. Fostering goodwill and strengthening the cultural connection between the two nations is the main objective of this event. Overall, “Days of Indian Culture” serves as a platform for cultural exchange, promoting mutual understanding and appreciation between India and Russia. Exchanges in literature, art exhibitions, and performances help to celebrate and explore each country’s rich cultural heritage. Indian films are popular in Russia, and there have been efforts to promote joint film projects. Film festivals often feature works from both countries. Russian media covers Indian culture and events, while Indian media increasingly highlights Russian perspectives. Collaborative sports events and competitions are held to strengthen ties among youth. Programs often focus on sports like cricket, wrestling, and chess. Initiatives aimed at youth engagement promote cultural understanding through workshops and cultural immersion. Digital platforms facilitate cultural exchange, allowing people to connect, share, and collaborate across borders. There is growing interest in each other’s cuisines, with Indian restaurants becoming popular in Russia and Russian cuisine being explored in India. Hence you have learnt that cultural exchange between India and Russia enriches the relationship, fostering goodwill and understanding between the two nations.

STOP TO CONSIDER

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a Eurasian political, economic, and security alliance founded in 2001. The SCO focuses on combating terrorism, separatism, and extremism, promoting stability in member states. It aims to enhance trade and economic collaboration among members, fostering regional development. Initially it included China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and

Uzbekistan. India and Pakistan joined in 2017, and other countries like Iran are also seeking membership. The key Areas of Cooperation includes security where joint military exercises and intelligence sharing happens to address regional threats. Initiatives for infrastructure development, trade facilitation, and connectivity projects are also taken into account. The SCO serves as a platform for China and Russia to strengthen their influence in Central Asia and counterbalance Western dominance. The SCO plays a crucial role in shaping regional dynamics and enhancing cooperation on security and economic issues in Eurasia.

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4.4.5 Geopolitical Dynamics

Both countries share a commitment to a multipolar world, often aligning on key international issues, such as counterterrorism and global governance. India is increasingly engaging with Western powers, especially the U.S., which poses challenges in its relationship with Russia. Nonetheless, India continues to prioritize its ties with Russia amid shifting global dynamics. India and Russia collaborate closely on regional security issues, particularly in Central Asia and Afghanistan, focusing on stability and countering common threats. Both nations engage in joint military exercises and share intelligence to combat terrorism and extremism in the region. They promote economic development in Central Asia to ensure stability and counter external influences. India and Russia emphasize a peaceful and stable Afghanistan, advocating for inclusive governance and countering extremist groups. Both countries have shown interest in providing humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, reflecting their commitment to regional stability. Their collaboration is driven by mutual interests in maintaining influence in Central Asia and ensuring security against terrorism. This partnership serves to balance against other powers, particularly in a changing geopolitical landscape. India and Russia's cooperation on these issues is vital for fostering regional stability and addressing common security challenges.

STOP TO CONSIDER

THE INDRA SERIES:

The Indra series began in the early 2000s, aimed at enhancing military cooperation and interoperability between India and Russia. It refers to joint military exercises conducted between India and Russia, focusing on enhancing interoperability and cooperation between their armed forces. These exercises cover various domains, including land, air, and naval operations, and typically involve counter-terrorism, peacekeeping, and humanitarian missions. The Indra exercises exemplify the deepening defense ties and strategic partnership between the two nations. The exercises focus on joint training in counter-terrorism, peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian assistance. These often involve army units practicing combined operations, tactics, and strategies in diverse terrains. Naval exercises are conducted in maritime zones and these drills focus on naval warfare, anti-piracy operations, and coordination in maritime security. Air Exercises involve air force units conducting joint operations, including air support, exploration, and aerial combat scenarios. Both armies, navies, and air forces participate, demonstrating comprehensive military collaboration. The exercises typically see the participation of thousands of military personnel, along with advanced equipment and technology. These exercises improve communication and operational coordination between the two forces. They signify a commitment to deepening military relations amidst changing global dynamics. The exercises serve as a signal to other regional powers about the strength of the India-Russia partnership. The Indra series is expected to evolve, incorporating new technologies and addressing contemporary security challenges. The exercises will likely adapt to include scenarios relevant to regional security dynamics, including threats from terrorism and maritime security. This multifaceted series of exercises not only strengthens military ties but also enhances diplomatic relations between India and Russia.

4.4.6 Space Collaboration

India and Russia have a long history of collaboration in space exploration, which has evolved over several decades. This partnership has been instrumental in the development of India's space program and has contributed to both countries' achievements in space technology and exploration. The Soviet Union (now Russia) was one of the earliest supporters of India's space program. In 1971, the Soviet Union helped India launch its first satellite, Aryabhata, using a Soviet Kosmos-3M rocket. This marked the beginning of significant cooperation between the two nations. In 1984, India's first astronaut, Rakesh Sharma, flew to space aboard the Soviet spacecraft Soyuz T-11 as part of the Soviet Intercosmos program. His famous words, "Sare Jahan Se Accha" (Better than the world), while in space, remain an iconic symbol of Indo-Russian space collaboration. Throughout the 1980s, the Soviet Union supported India's development of remote sensing satellites and shared satellite data, helping India establish its own space program infrastructure. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia continued to be a key partner for India's space program. In 1994, India launched its GSAT-1 satellite using a Russian GSLV (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle) rocket, marking a new phase in space collaboration. One of the most significant areas of recent cooperation is in India's ambitious Gaganyaan program, which aims to send Indian astronauts into space. In 2019, India signed a contract with Glavkosmos, a subsidiary of the Russian space agency Roscosmos, for training Indian astronauts for the Gaganyaan mission. Four Indian astronauts received training in Russia's Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center. Russia has provided technical support for developing life-support systems, crew modules, and emergency recovery systems, critical for human spaceflight. Russia has been a key partner in launching Indian satellites. In addition to the early launch of Aryabhata, Russia has launched several other Indian satellites using its rockets, including INSAT (Indian National Satellite System) and GSAT series satellites. India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) and GSLV technologies were developed with Russian assistance in the form of cryogenic engine technology. Russia provided India with crucial cryogenic engines in the 1990s, which helped India develop its own cryogenic engine program. Russia was initially

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involved in the Chandrayaan-2 mission, India's second lunar exploration mission. Russia was supposed to provide the Lander module. However, due to delays, India eventually developed its own lander, Vikram. Despite this, the collaboration laid the groundwork for future lunar missions. India has expressed interest in collaborating with Russia on potential International Space Station (ISS) missions, particularly after India's Gaganyaan mission. This would allow Indian astronauts to participate in international space missions. Both countries are exploring joint moon exploration projects, including possible collaboration on future missions to the moon and Mars, in line with India's ambitions to expand its deep-space exploration. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Roscosmos have also cooperated in the commercial space sector, providing satellite services to various countries and organizations. India's satellite navigation system, NavIC, and Russia's GLONASS have also discussed interoperability, creating synergies in global satellite navigation systems. India and Russia participate in various international forums, such as the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), where they advocate for the peaceful use of space and space technology. The Indo-Russian space partnership is rooted in a history of technological and scientific collaboration, which has helped India advance its space program and achieve milestones such as manned spaceflight ambitions, satellite development, and exploration missions. The future looks promising as both countries explore new areas of cooperation, including lunar and deep-space missions, human spaceflight, and joint commercial space ventures.

4.4.7 Nuclear Relation

India and Russia have had a long-standing partnership in the field of nuclear energy, with several important deals and agreements over the years. One of the most significant projects is the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KNPP) in Tamil Nadu, India. Built in collaboration with Russia, this plant is one of India's largest nuclear power facilities. The agreement for KNPP was signed in 1988, but construction began in the early 2000s after delays caused by the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In 2014, India and Russia signed a major agreement to expand nuclear cooperation. This

agreement included provisions for constructing additional nuclear reactors in India, including more reactors at the Kudankulam site. This agreement also allowed Russia to provide advanced nuclear technology and support India's nuclear power program. In 2017, both countries signed a General Framework Agreement (GFA) for the construction of Units 5 and 6 at Kudankulam. This deal emphasized Russia's continued role in helping India expand its nuclear energy capacity and secure energy independence through peaceful nuclear technology. Russia's Rosatom, a state-owned nuclear energy corporation, plays a key role in India's nuclear energy sector by providing nuclear fuel, equipment, and technological expertise. Both countries are exploring further collaboration in nuclear energy, including the potential for Russia to supply nuclear reactors and materials to India under long-term agreements. While India is not a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Russia has continued to engage with India on nuclear energy cooperation under safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This allows India to pursue civilian nuclear power projects while maintaining its strategic autonomy in nuclear weapon development. The nuclear deals between India and Russia are part of a broader strategic partnership, which includes military, space, and energy cooperation. These nuclear agreements also allow India to reduce its dependency on fossil fuels and diversify its energy sources, which is crucial for its growing economy. In conclusion, nuclear cooperation between India and Russia is a vital component of their bilateral relationship, with the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant being a symbol of this enduring partnership. The collaboration reflects India's goal of expanding its nuclear energy capacity with Russian technology while adhering to international safeguards.

4.5 Challenges to India Russia Relationship

While the India-Russia relationship is anchored in historical ties and strategic cooperation, the challenges could alter the balance of their partnership in the coming years. India will need to carefully navigate geopolitical shifts, sanctions, and its diversification of defense and energy partnerships to maintain a balanced relationship with Russia amidst changing global dynamics. These challenges can be listed as follows -

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- **Geopolitical Shifts:** India's growing ties with the U.S. and Western nations may create tension, as Russia seeks to maintain its influence in the region. India's growing strategic partnership with the United States, particularly through initiatives like the Quad (with Australia and Japan), creates potential friction with Russia. As India aligns more with Western powers, Russia may feel marginalized, leading to concerns about losing influence in South Asia.
- **Defense Procurement:** Delays and cost overruns in defense projects can strain trust and lead India to explore alternatives. While India relies on Russia for military hardware, there have been significant issues with defense procurement, such as delays in deliveries and increased costs for projects like the Sukhoi fighter jets and the BrahMos missile system. These complications may push India to diversify its defense sources, considering options from countries like the U.S. and France.
- **Regional Conflicts:** Divergent views on issues like Afghanistan and the Indo-Pacific region can complicate diplomatic alignment. India and Russia sometimes have differing perspectives on regional issues. For example, Russia's approach to the Taliban in Afghanistan contrasts with India's concerns over security and influence in the region. Similarly, their views on the Indo-Pacific strategy may not fully align, complicating cooperative efforts.
- **Economic Competition:** Russia's partnerships with countries that compete with India, especially in energy and technology, may pose challenges. Russia's partnerships with countries like China and Pakistan in energy and military sectors can create competition for India. For instance, joint projects between Russia and China in areas like the Arctic or energy supply routes could impact India's strategic interests.
- **Changing Global Dynamics:** The rise of multipolarity and new alliances can affect traditional partnerships, requiring both nations to adapt. The global shift towards multipolarity introduces new alliances and challenges traditional partnerships. As nations like China

expand their influence, both India and Russia must navigate this changing landscape carefully. This may require reevaluating their priorities and collaboration strategies to ensure mutual benefits.

These challenges necessitate ongoing dialogue and negotiation to maintain a robust partnership. Despite these challenges, both countries have a long history of cooperation and a shared interest in maintaining stability in their relationship. Continuous dialogue and strategic adjustments will be essential in addressing these issues.

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Check Your Progress:

1. Examine the defense cooperation between India and Russia.
2. Mention the political ties between India and Russia.
3. What was the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation?
4. Write a note on the space collaboration between India and Russia.
5. Discuss India's nuclear relation with Russia.

Self Asking Questions:

Do you think India's growing ties with the US is affecting India's relationship with Russia? Explain. (80 words)

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4.6 Summing Up

After going through this unit now you are in a position to trace the history of India Soviet Union relationship. The bond between India and Russia dates back to the Cold War period. India sought to balance its foreign policy and Russia (then the Soviet Union) became a key ally, providing military equipment and support. You have also learnt that the partnership between India and Soviet Union is reflected in numerous treaties and agreements, which laid the groundwork for a strong, long-lasting relationship

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that continues to evolve today. The unit also explained different issues related to this concept. Moreover, you have also learnt about the challenges faced in this relationship.

4.7 References and Suggested Readings

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Unit - 5

India and the EU

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Unit Structure:

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Objectives
- 5.3 Historical Background
- 5.4 The Relationship Between India And EU
 - 5.4.1 Political Relations
 - 5.4.2 Commitment To Democracy
 - 5.4.3 Economic and Trade Relations
 - 5.4.4 Trade Agreements and Initiatives
 - 5.4.5 Security Issues
 - 5.4.6 Climate And Sustainable Development Issues
 - 5.4.7 Cultural Field
- 5.5 Summing Up
- 5.6 References and Suggested Readings

5.1 Introduction

The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 European countries that aims to promote integration, stability, and prosperity among its members. It was established post-World War II to foster peace and prevent conflicts in Europe. It promotes a single market allowing free movement of goods, services, capital, and people. It also supports farmers and promotes sustainable agriculture. It aims to reduce disparities between regions, promoting economic development and job creation. The EU negotiates trade agreements as a bloc, enhancing its global economic influence. The EU plays a significant role in global diplomacy, promoting human rights, democracy, and sustainable development. In this unit you are going to study the relationship between India and EU. India and the EU share a comprehensive and evolving relationship characterized by economic cooperation, political dialogue, cultural exchanges, and collaborative efforts towards sustainable development.

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5.2 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to

- Trace the historical background of India EU relationship
- Analyse the relationship between India and EU
- Examine various aspects related to this relationship between India and EU

5.3 Historical Background

The roots of interaction can be traced back to the colonial period when European powers, particularly the British, had a significant presence in India. Post-independence in 1947, India sought to establish its own identity and foreign relations. The European Economic Community (EEC), a precursor to the EU, was established in 1957. India began formal diplomatic relations with European countries soon after its independence, but it took time for structured ties with the EU to develop. Diplomatic ties began in the early 1960s, but relations gained momentum in the 1990s after India's economic liberalization. The EU and India established a formal partnership in 2004 with the EU-India Strategic Partnership. This partnership marked a significant milestone in their relationship. This partnership aimed to enhance cooperation in areas like trade, security, climate change, and cultural exchange. It underscored a mutual commitment to democratic values and economic growth, paving the way for deeper political dialogue and collaboration across various sectors. The early relationship between India and the European Union (EU) has evolved over decades, marked by diplomatic, economic, and cultural exchanges. The EEC recognized India as a significant player in the global arena, especially as it embarked on its economic development post-colonization. Formal dialogue between India and EU started in the 1980s, focusing on shared interests such as democracy, human rights, and development. The establishment of the EU-India Joint Commission in 1994 marked a significant step in formalizing relations. In the economic front, early economic ties were limited, with trade focused on raw materials and agricultural products. Over the years, trade has diversified, with India exporting textiles, software, and pharmaceuticals to the EU. EU countries began investing in India in the late 20th century, particularly in

sectors like infrastructure and technology. India became one of the largest recipients of EU investment in Asia. Again, the cultural exchanges began in the 1990s, promoting understanding through art, education, and science. Initiatives included student exchange programs and collaborations in various cultural fields. The perception of each other has been shaped by historical narratives, media, and people-to-people contacts, fostering a growing interest in mutual cultures. It can be said that the early relationship between India and the EU was characterized by cautious engagement, evolving from colonial legacies into a more structured partnership. Over the years, it has expanded to cover a wide range of areas, from trade and investment to cultural exchanges, setting the stage for the robust relationship seen today. As the global landscape continues to shift, the partnership is likely to deepen further.

5.4 The Relationship between India and EU

The relationship between India and the EU developed through diplomatic engagements, trade partnerships, and shared interests in areas like democracy and human rights. Initial ties began in the 1960s, but the 1990s saw a significant boost with economic reforms in India and the EU's interest in expanding its global influence. High-level dialogues and cooperation in sectors like technology, climate change, and security further strengthened their bond over the years. India and the European Economic Community (EEC) established formal relations in the 1960s. Early interactions focused on development assistance and trade, with India receiving aid for agricultural and industrial projects. The relationship was primarily functional, lacking in-depth political dialogue. India's economic liberalization in 1991 opened up new opportunities for trade and investment. The EU recognized India's potential as a major market. The 1994 EU-India Cooperation Agreement marked a significant milestone, setting a framework for political dialogue, trade, and development cooperation. The India-EU Strategic Partnership was formalized, emphasizing cooperation in areas like counter-terrorism, climate change, and sustainable development. Annual summits began, fostering high-level dialogue and enhancing political relations. Trade increased significantly, with the EU becoming one of India's largest trading partners.

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By the late 2000s, bilateral trade was over €50 billion. Talks began in 2007 for a Broad-Based Trade and Investment Agreement, although they faced various challenges. The partnership deepened around global challenges, with joint initiatives on climate change, renewable energy, and sustainable development goals. Programs to enhance people-to-people connections, such as student exchanges and cultural programs, were promoted. The rise of geopolitical tensions prompted a renewed focus on security cooperation, cybersecurity, and technology partnerships. The pandemic highlighted the importance of cooperation in health and supply chain resilience, with both sides working to strengthen collaboration in these areas. Efforts to finalize the trade agreement continue, reflecting both parties' interests in enhancing economic ties. Both India and the EU emphasize democratic values, human rights, and a rules-based international order, paving the way for deeper cooperation. This depicts a relationship that has grown from basic diplomatic ties to a comprehensive partnership addressing a wide array of global issues. The issues related to India EU relationship can be discussed as follows -

5.4.1 Political Relations

In the political front, regular summits and meetings between Indian and EU leaders enhance cooperation on various issues, including climate change, security, and terrorism. Both India and the EU have recognized the urgency of addressing climate change. Collaborative initiatives include sharing best practices, technology transfer, and joint projects aimed at sustainable development have been taken. The partnership focuses on enhancing security cooperation, particularly in counter-terrorism efforts and cybersecurity. Both sides have committed to sharing intelligence and coordinating responses to global security threats. Economic ties have been a significant focus, with ongoing discussions aimed at negotiating a broad-based trade and investment agreement. This aims to reduce trade barriers and enhance mutual investments. The rise of technology and the digital economy has led to discussions on issues like data privacy, cyber governance, and digital innovation, emphasizing the importance of a secure and open digital space. The EU-India summits, held regularly, serve as a platform for leaders to discuss these issues, review progress, and set future agendas. They allow

for high-level dialogue that can adapt to changing global dynamics and emerging challenges. The strategic partnership between India and EU has evolved into a robust framework for addressing complex global challenges, reinforcing the importance of collaboration between India and the EU in promoting peace, stability, and sustainable development.

5.4.2 Commitment to Democracy

Both India and EU are committed to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, which forms the foundation of their partnership. Indeed, the commitment to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law is central to the EU-India partnership. This shared foundation fosters trust and collaboration, allowing both entities to advocate for democratic governance and human rights globally. Regular dialogues emphasize these values, enabling them to address issues like social justice, gender equality, and freedom of expression together. This alignment not only strengthens bilateral ties but also promotes a unified stance on these critical global issues. There are few specific initiatives and agreements that reflect the EU-India commitment to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law:

- Regular human rights dialogues are held to discuss concerns related to civil liberties, freedom of expression, and minority rights. These meetings aim to foster transparency and accountability in both regions.
- The EU-India Joint Action Plan outlines cooperation on governance issues, including strengthening democratic institutions and promoting the rule of law. It sets specific goals for collaboration in these areas.
- Initiatives like the “EU-India Cultural Heritage” project promote the exchange of cultural values and heritage, reinforcing democratic principles and social cohesion through shared history and values.
- Programs such as Erasmus+ facilitate student and faculty exchanges, emphasizing the importance of democratic education and civic engagement, helping to instil these values in future generations.
- Both sides support civil society organizations that advocate for human rights and social justice, enhancing grassroots efforts to uphold democratic values and accountability.

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These initiatives illustrate how the EU and India actively work together to uphold their shared commitment to democracy and human rights.

5.4.3 Economic and Trade Relations

From economic perspective, the EU is one of India's largest trading partners with bilateral trade exceeding €100 billion in 2021. This trade encompasses a diverse range of goods and services, including machinery, pharmaceuticals, textiles, and agricultural products. The strong economic ties are strengthened by ongoing negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement, aimed at further reducing trade barriers and enhancing investment flows. The partnership not only promotes economic growth but also creates opportunities for job creation and innovation in both regions. The EU exports a significant amount of machinery and equipment to India, including industrial machinery, electrical equipment, and automotive components. This sector is vital for supporting India's manufacturing and infrastructure development. It needs mention here that India is a major supplier of generic pharmaceuticals to the EU. The trade in medicines and healthcare products has been growing steadily. The collaboration also includes research and development, with EU investments in Indian biotech firms. You should also learn here that India exports a wide range of textiles and garments to the EU, benefiting from tariff concessions under the Generalized Scheme of Preferences (GSP). This sector is crucial for employment in India and represents a significant portion of exports to the EU. Again, Indian agricultural products, including spices, tea, and seafood, are exported to the EU market. The EU has stringent food safety and quality standards, prompting India to enhance its agricultural practices. India is a global leader in IT services, with many Indian companies providing software development, IT consulting, and business process outsourcing to EU firms. The digital economy is a growing area of collaboration, focusing on cybersecurity and innovation.

5.4.4 Trade Agreements and Initiatives

Negotiations for a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA) began in 2007 but have faced challenges. The Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) between India and the EU aims to enhance economic

ties by reducing trade barriers and promoting investment. Negotiations began in 2007, focusing on various sectors such as goods, services, investment, and intellectual property rights. The agreement seeks to boost bilateral trade, which was around €100 billion before the pandemic. However, talks have faced challenges, including differences in market access, regulatory standards, and intellectual property. Efforts to finalize the BTIA continue, reflecting both parties' interest in deepening economic collaboration. The BTIA aims to enhance trade in goods, services, and investment. Key areas of discussion of this agreement include tariff reductions, market access, and regulatory cooperation. The EU provides preferential trade treatment to Indian exports, helping to lower tariffs on various products, particularly textiles and agricultural goods. This scheme supports India's economic development by making its exports more competitive. EU-India Connectivity Partnership was launched in 2021. This initiative focuses on enhancing connectivity in areas like transport, digital infrastructure, and sustainable development. It aims to improve trade logistics and foster investment in infrastructure. Both sides have engaged in sector-specific dialogues, such as in renewable energy, which includes collaborations on solar energy and sustainable technologies. The EU-India trade relationship is robust and diverse, encompassing multiple sectors that are crucial for both economies. Ongoing negotiations for trade agreements highlight the commitment to enhancing these ties, promoting mutual growth, and addressing challenges.

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Horizon Europe Programme:

The Horizon Europe program is the European Union's flagship research and innovation initiative, running from 2021 to 2027 with a budget of approximately €95.5 billion. It aims to foster scientific excellence and support breakthroughs in innovation to address global challenges such as climate change, health crises, and digital transformation. It focuses on reinforcing and extending the excellence of the EU's science base through the European Research Council (ERC) and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), supporting researchers at all stages of their careers. It also supports collaborative

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research to tackle key global challenges (like health, climate, and energy), including partnerships with private sector actors to ensure industrial leadership. It promotes the scaling up of innovative small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and market-creating innovation, notably through the European Innovation Council (EIC). The program is open to researchers and innovators from all around the world, including those from India. It encourages international cooperation to tackle pressing issues such as climate change and pandemics. At least 35% of Horizon Europe's budget is earmarked for climate-related projects to contribute to the European Green Deal. It supports research aimed at improving health systems, developing new treatments, and addressing public health emergencies. Encourages research in artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, and cybersecurity. Countries like India are part of Horizon Europe collaborations, enabling joint projects in sectors such as water management, healthcare, renewable energy, and digital innovation . The Horizon Europe program aims to drive research that can lead to significant economic, environmental, and societal benefits, ensuring the EU's global competitiveness in science and innovation. India plays a significant role in the Horizon Europe program through collaboration in various research and innovation projects. As a non-EU partner country, India participates in key global challenges addressed by the program, particularly in fields such as science, technology, health, and sustainability. Indian research institutions, universities, and companies can join consortia under Horizon Europe, allowing them to collaborate with European partners on projects that address mutual challenges. This facilitates joint research in critical areas such as climate action, water management, renewable energy, and digital innovation. Through such collaborations, Indian scientists and innovators gain access to advanced European research infrastructure, boosting their capacities in cutting-edge fields like artificial intelligence (AI) and biotechnology. Horizon Europe places a strong emphasis on health and climate-related challenges, and India, facing similar challenges, has partnered with the EU in areas such as combating pandemics,

water management (via the Indo-EU Water Partnership), and renewable energy. These joint efforts aim to accelerate research for addressing environmental and health crises at both regional and global levels. The India-EU strategic partnership also covers science and technology cooperation, which aligns with Horizon Europe's objectives. Indian researchers can benefit from joint funding opportunities and exchanges under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) and other mobility programs, promoting knowledge-sharing between Europe and India. Horizon Europe promotes international cooperation by encouraging the participation of countries outside the EU. India, as a major player in global research, engages in projects that align with both EU priorities (e.g., the European Green Deal) and India's national development goals, such as its National Solar Mission. India's engagement in Horizon Europe highlights the country's growing importance in global science and innovation ecosystems, creating mutual benefits in tackling issues like climate change, healthcare, and technological advancement.

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5.4.5 Security Issues

Both India and the EU cooperate on intelligence sharing and joint exercises to combat terrorism. Both parties exchange information related to terrorist activities, funding networks, and emerging threats to enhance their security frameworks. Joint working groups facilitate coordinated responses to threats, improving situational awareness. India and EU countries also conduct joint training exercises for law enforcement and military personnel to enhance counter-terrorism capabilities. These exercises often include simulations of real-world scenarios, focusing on response strategies and crisis management. Moreover, legal frameworks are there to support cooperation, ensuring that intelligence sharing adheres to respective laws and regulations. The EU also provides technical support to enhance India's counter-terrorism infrastructure and capabilities. This partnership underscores a mutual commitment to ensuring regional and global security.

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Cybersecurity:

There has been increased collaboration between India and EU to address cyber threats and enhance digital security. This increased collaboration can significantly strengthen both regions' defenses. There are some strategies to foster this collaboration:

- Establish formal agreements focusing on cyber security cooperation, outlining shared goals, responsibilities, and protocols for information sharing.
- Conduct regular joint exercises and simulations to prepare both regions for cyber incidents, enhancing readiness and response capabilities.
- Develop dedicated platforms for sharing threat intelligence, best practices, and incident reports to help both parties stay informed about emerging threats.
- Implement training programs and workshops for cybersecurity professionals in both regions, sharing expertise and resources to improve overall skills.
- Promote joint research projects on emerging technologies and cybersecurity solutions, leveraging the strengths of both regions to address common challenges.
- Work towards aligning regulatory frameworks and standards, ensuring that both India and the EU have a cohesive approach to cybersecurity.
- Encourage partnerships between Indian and EU companies to foster innovation and share cybersecurity solutions, enhancing resilience across sectors.
- Launch joint campaigns to educate citizens about cyber threats and promote best practices for digital security in both regions.
- Establish mechanisms for rapid response and coordination during cyber incidents, ensuring effective communication and action plans are in place.
- Host annual dialogues focused on cybersecurity, bringing together government officials, industry leaders, and experts to discuss strategies and challenges.

By implementing these strategies, India and the EU can create a robust framework for collaboration that enhances digital security and resilience against cyber threats.

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5.4.6 Climate and Sustainable Development Issues

Both India and the EU share a strong commitment to the Paris Agreement and are actively working towards sustainable development and climate action. India has set ambitious goals for renewable energy capacity, aiming for 500 GW by 2030. The EU has also committed to a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and an increase in renewable energy sources across member states. The EU and India collaborate on various projects, such as the International Solar Alliance (ISA), which aims to promote solar energy and facilitate technology transfer among member countries. The EU provides financial assistance for renewable energy projects in India, supporting initiatives that enhance clean energy access and promote sustainable practices. Both parties focus on sharing technology and best practices in renewable energy, enabling India to influence European expertise in solar, wind, and other clean technologies. Collaborative research initiatives, such as the EU-India Clean Energy and Climate Partnership, promote innovation in clean energy technologies and address climate challenges. Regular dialogues and consultations help align policies and share strategies for achieving renewable energy goals, enhancing cooperation on climate resilience. The EU supports capacity-building programs in India, focusing on skills development and training in renewable energy sectors. Encouraging green finance and investment opportunities in India's renewable energy sector helps attract European investments, fostering economic growth and sustainability. By continuing to strengthen their collaboration, India and the EU can make significant strides towards achieving their climate goals and promoting a greener, more sustainable future. They have given joint efforts to promote sustainable practices in development projects. India and the European Union (EU) have been increasingly collaborating to promote sustainable practices in development projects. Both parties support research and innovation in green technologies, such as renewable energy, waste management, and sustainable agriculture. The EU provides access to

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advanced technologies that can help India meet its sustainable development goals (SDGs). The EU has been involved in financing sustainable infrastructure projects in India, emphasizing green building standards and eco-friendly materials. Initiatives like the Smart Cities Mission in India are enhanced through EU expertise in urban planning and sustainable city management. Joint efforts in tackling climate change through programs aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting climate resilience. Frameworks like the EU-India Strategic Partnership include commitments to uphold climate agreements and support each other's climate goals. Initiatives to protect biodiversity, manage natural resources sustainably, and restore ecosystems are being implemented in various regions. Sharing knowledge on conservation strategies and community engagement for sustainable land use. Promoting sustainable finance mechanisms, including green bonds, to fund environmentally friendly projects. Enhancing the capacity of financial institutions in both regions to support sustainable investments. Joint educational initiatives to train professionals in sustainable development practices. Programs aimed at increasing public awareness about sustainability and encouraging community involvement. The collaborative efforts between India and the EU reflect a shared commitment to achieving sustainable development. By leveraging each other's strengths, they aim to address pressing environmental challenges while fostering economic growth and social well-being. This partnership not only benefits both regions but also contributes to global sustainability efforts.

5.4.7 Cultural Field

Programs like Erasmus+ play a vital role in fostering international student exchanges and academic collaboration. They allow students to study abroad, experience different cultures, and gain valuable skills. This not only enhances their education but also promotes intercultural understanding and cooperation among institutions. Additionally, such programs often lead to stronger ties between universities and can facilitate joint research projects, enriching the academic community as a whole. Cultural diplomacy between India and the EU is an important aspect of their relationship, fostering mutual understanding and collaboration. Festivals, art exhibitions, and cultural

exchanges also strengthen mutual understanding. Initiatives like art exhibitions, film festivals, and music performances help showcase each other's cultures. Events such as the "India-EU Cultural Festival" promote artistic collaboration. Regular cultural dialogues allow both sides to discuss and promote cultural heritage, languages, and traditions, leading to joint projects and initiatives. The establishment of cultural centers, such as the India Centre at the University of Edinburgh, fosters academic and cultural engagement, promoting research and collaboration.

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Free Trade Agreement:

The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations between India and the EU have been ongoing for several years. The aim is to reduce tariffs, eliminate trade barriers, and enhance overall trade flows between the two regions. Key objectives include improving market access for goods and services, facilitating investment, and addressing regulatory challenges. Although progress has been made, issues such as intellectual property rights, labor standards, and sustainability have created complexities in the negotiations. Both sides remain committed to achieving a comprehensive agreement that will significantly benefit their economies.

The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations between India and EU is facing various challenges.

- India has concerns about reducing tariffs on sensitive sectors, such as agriculture, textiles, and automotive, which are crucial for its domestic economy. The EU seeks better market access for its products, but India's protective measures create friction.
- The EU prioritizes strong Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) protections, while India is wary of excessive protections that could hinder access to affordable medicines and technology. Balancing these interests remains a key challenge.

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- The EU emphasizes the inclusion of provisions related to labor rights and environmental sustainability, which India views as potential trade barriers. Negotiating these aspects requires careful consideration of both parties' economic contexts.
- Differences in regulatory frameworks can create hurdles for businesses operating across borders. Streamlining regulations and mutual recognition of standards is necessary but complex.
- Domestic political considerations in both regions can impact the pace and direction of negotiations. Changing political landscapes may introduce new priorities or shift focus away from trade discussions.

Benefits of FTA:

- The FTA is expected to significantly boost bilateral trade, creating new opportunities for businesses and enhancing economic growth in both regions. Reducing tariffs will lower costs for consumers and businesses alike.
- Indian exporters would gain improved access to the EU market, which is one of the largest consumer markets in the world. The EU's advanced technology and investment can benefit India's infrastructure and industrial sectors.
- Increased trade and investment can lead to job creation in both economies, particularly in sectors like manufacturing, services, and technology. The FTA could promote skills development and innovation.
- A successful FTA would deepen the economic relationship, fostering closer political and cultural ties. It would signal a strong commitment to a rules-based international trading system.
- The FTA negotiations offer an opportunity to integrate sustainable development goals, promoting environmentally friendly practices and social standards. Collaboration on issues like climate change could be enhanced through mutual commitments.

While the negotiations for the EU-India FTA face several challenges, the potential benefits could significantly impact both economies. Continued dialogue and compromise will be essential in overcoming obstacles and reaching a comprehensive agreement.

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Check Your Progress:

1. Describe the development of relationship between India and the EU.
2. Mention the initiatives that reflect the EU-India commitment to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.
3. Write down the strategies adopted by India EU collaboration to deal with the threat of cybersecurity.
4. Examine India EU collaboration on climate change and sustainable development issues.
5. Explain Free Trade Agreement.

Self Asking Questions:

Do you think collaboration between India and the EU is important in promoting peace, stability, and sustainable development? Examine. (80 words)

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5.5 Summing Up

After reading this unit you are now in a position to analyse the historical background of India EU relationship. The roots of interaction can be traced back to the colonial period when European powers, particularly the British, had a significant presence in India. Diplomatic ties began in the early 1960s, but relations gained momentum in the 1990s after India's economic liberalization. You have also learnt that The 1994 EU-India Cooperation Agreement marked a significant milestone, setting a framework

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for political dialogue, trade, and development cooperation..The strategic partnership between India and EU has evolved into a robust framework for addressing complex global challenges, reinforcing the importance of collaboration between India and the EU in promoting peace, stability, and sustainable development. The relationship, however, faces complexities, especially over issues like human rights, democracy, and environmental concerns. Additionally, India’s stance on the Russia-Ukraine war and its continuing engagement with Russia has added layers to the diplomatic balancing act between India and the EU . Overall, the India-EU partnership is on an upward trajectory with promising avenues in trade, technology, and security, though both sides are navigating significant regulatory and geopolitical challenges.

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BLOCK: IV
INDIA'S REGIONAL FOREIGN POLICY

- Unit 1 : India's Neighborhood First Policy and "Extended" Neighbourhood Policy**
- Unit 2 : India and South Asia**
- Unit 3 : India and East Asia and South East Asia**
- Unit 4 : India and Middle East**
- Unit 5 : India and Africa**

Unit -1

India's Neighborhood First Policy and "Extended" Neighbourhood policy

Unit Structure:

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Objectives
- 1.3 India's Neighborhood First Policy
 - 1.3.1 Background of India's 'Neighborhood First' Policy
 - 1.3.2 Measures under India's 'Neighborhood First' Policy
 - 1.3.3 India's Neighbourhood First Policy in Neighbouring Countries
 - 1.3.4 Some important Initiatives undertaken under Neighbourhood First Policy
- 1.4 Extended Neighbourhood Policy of India
 - 1.4.1 Background of India's Extended Neighbourhood Policy
 - 1.4.2 Major Aspects of India's Extended Neighbourhood Policy
 - 1.4.3 Regions under Extended Neighbourhood Policy India
 - 1.4.4 Major initiatives under this Policy
- 1.5 Summing Up
- 1.6 Reference and Suggested Readings

1.1 Introduction

Indian foreign policy is guided by many principles. One such guiding principle of this policy has been neighbourhood first policy. It is one of the key elements of India's regional policy. Through this policy India prioritizes strengthening relationships with its neighboring countries, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives. This involves addressing bilateral issues, enhancing economic cooperation, and ensuring regional stability. The concept of the Neighbourhood First Policy came into being in 2008. This Policy represents a shift towards proactive diplomacy, emphasizing the importance of goodwill, development partnerships, and regional integration to build a stable and prosperous South Asia. Under its 'Neighbourhood First' policy, India is committed to developing friendly

and mutually beneficial relations with all its neighbours. India's Extended Neighbourhood Policy represents a comprehensive approach to foreign relations, recognizing the importance of engaging with a diverse range of countries to foster economic growth, enhance security, and promote regional stability. Thus Neighbourhood first policy and extended neighbourhood policy priorities enhancing connectivity, infrastructure, development cooperation, security, and fostering greater people-to-people contacts. In this unit we shall discuss both these policies.

1.2 Objectives

India's regional foreign policy reflects its ambition to assert itself as a leading power in South Asia and the Indian Ocean, balancing its strategic interests with efforts to foster regional cooperation and stability. India's approach to engaging with its neighbouring countries is characterised by consultation, non-reciprocity, and a focus on achieving tangible outcomes. After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Discuss India's Neighbourhood Policy
- Explain India's Extended" Neighbourhood policy

1.3 India's 'Neighborhood First' Policy

In a multipolar world india is thriving to situate herself with a goal to achieve major power status. India shares border (land and maritime) with all South Asian countries making it a physical circle in the region (Pradip Roy). "Neighbourhood First Policy" is a key foreign policy initiative of India that emphasizes building strong and cooperative relationships with its immediate neighboring countries in South Asia. India shares its geographical land and maritime boundaries with its immediate neighbours in the South Asian region. These countries include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. India also shares civilizational relations with these countries, marked by a shared history, culture, and extensive people-to-people contacts.

The "Neighbourhood First Policy" is rooted in India's longstanding efforts to foster peaceful and cooperative relations with its neighboring countries. Dr. Manmohan Singh, the then Prime Minister of India attempted

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through new neighbourhood policy in 2005 to generate much trans-border connectivity. It took on a more formal and proactive shape in 2014 when the policy was explicitly articulated by the Indian government. In SAARC Summit 2014 in Kathmandu Modi in his speech called for regional integration through trade and commerce within the region. He also promised ‘no red tape, only red carpet’ for neighbours. Thus, after 2014, this policy aims to prioritize India’s diplomatic, economic, and strategic engagement with its neighbors to promote regional stability, security, and prosperity.

1.3.1 Background of India’s ‘Neighbourhood First’ Policy

Since gaining independence in 1947, India has sought to build cordial relations with its neighbors. However, regional complexities, differing political systems, and conflicts, such as wars with Pakistan and border tensions with China, made it challenging to establish strong ties in South Asia. During the Cold War, South Asia witnessed ideological and geopolitical divides, with countries aligning with either the Soviet Union or the United States. This further complicated India’s efforts to maintain friendly and cooperative relations with its neighbors. In the 1980s, the establishment of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was an effort to promote regional collaboration. However, political tensions, particularly between India and Pakistan, limited the effectiveness of SAARC in fostering strong regional ties.

Again, China’s increasing economic and strategic presence in South Asia, through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), prompted India to re-evaluate its approach toward its neighbors. This increased the urgency for India to strengthen its ties with neighboring countries to maintain its influence and security in the region. India’s economic liberalization in the early 1990s marked the beginning of a more outward-looking foreign policy. However, a more focused engagement with neighboring countries took shape in the 2010s, when India’s economic growth made it more capable of extending assistance and building partnerships. The “Neighbourhood First Policy” gained significant momentum in 2014 when Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited leaders of all SAARC countries to his swearing-in ceremony, signaling a clear intent to prioritize India’s

neighbours. This marked the first time an Indian government explicitly declared a structured approach to engaging with its neighbors.

Therefore, we can say that the “Neighbourhood First Policy” shows India’s commitment to being a responsible and proactive partner in South Asia, fostering closer ties, mutual trust, and regional cooperation for shared growth and development.

1.3.2 Measures under India’s ‘Neighborhood First’ Policy

India’s focus on security and counterterrorism under the Neighborhood First Policy implies its commitment to ensuring stability in South Asia. By fostering bilateral cooperation, enhancing intelligence sharing, and promoting regional frameworks for collective security, India aims to create a secure environment conducive to development and peace in the region. Under this policy India has taken different steps to strengthen relationship with her neighbours. These measures are as follows:

A. Bilateral Engagement: India seeks to build and strengthen relationships with its neighbors through high-level visits, diplomatic engagement, and dialogue. It is meant to address disputes and foster cooperation on various fronts, including trade, security, and infrastructure. India’s bilateral engagement with its neighbors encompasses a range of diplomatic, economic, and strategic initiatives. Initiatives like the **BBIN (Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal)** Motor Vehicle Agreement facilitate smoother trade and movement of goods is such an example. Moreover, India encourages joint ventures and partnerships between Indian companies and businesses in neighboring countries to promote investment and create employment opportunities

B. Development Assistance: India provides development assistance and aid to neighboring countries, including financial aid, technical support, and capacity-building programs. This assistance is intended to promote regional stability and economic growth. This approach not only aims to foster goodwill but also to promote stability, economic growth, and regional cooperation.

C. Economic Cooperation: India emphasizes enhancing economic ties with its neighbours through trade agreements, investment opportunities, and

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infrastructure projects. This includes initiatives like the India-Bangladesh Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade and the development of connectivity projects such as roads and railways.

D. Security and Counterterrorism: India collaborates with neighboring countries on security matters, including counterterrorism efforts, border management, and intelligence sharing. This cooperation aims to address security threats and maintain regional stability. This policy emphasizes on the fact that regional security is interconnected, and addressing terrorism is crucial for stability in South Asia.

E. Infrastructure Development: India provides grants and concessional loans to neighboring countries for infrastructure projects, including roads, bridges, schools, and hospitals. This assistance is aimed at improving connectivity and enhancing the living standards of communities. Through the ITEC program, India offers training and capacity-building programs for officials and professionals from neighboring countries in various sectors, including healthcare, education, and infrastructure development. India is involved in several railway projects in neighboring countries, including the Jiribam-Imphal railway project in Manipur (India) and the Kolkata-Khulna rail link with Bangladesh, enhancing connectivity and boosting trade.

F. Capacity Building and Skill Development: India focuses on imparting skills to the workforce in neighboring countries to enhance employability and support economic growth. Initiatives include training programs in vocational skills and professional development. India provides scholarships to students from neighboring countries for higher education in Indian institutions, fostering educational ties and creating future leaders in the region. India promotes cultural and educational exchanges, including collaborations between universities and institutions in neighboring countries to enhance knowledge-sharing and academic ties.

G. Humanitarian Assistance: India has been proactive in providing humanitarian assistance during natural disasters in neighboring countries. For example, During the COVID-19 pandemic, India extended its Vaccine Maitri initiative to neighboring countries, supplying vaccines and medical supplies to help combat the virus. Thus, India has been active in providing

healthcare support to neighboring countries, including establishing healthcare facilities and offering training to medical professionals.

H. Agricultural Development: India has launched initiatives to enhance agricultural productivity and food security in neighboring countries. This includes providing seeds, agricultural technology, and expertise to improve crop yields. India collaborates with countries like Bangladesh and Nepal on agricultural projects that focus on sustainable farming practices, irrigation development, and post-harvest management.

I. Energy Cooperation: India promotes renewable energy projects in neighboring countries as part of its commitment to sustainable development. Initiatives include solar power projects, sharing of technology, and capacity-building programs. India has signed agreements with countries like Bhutan and Nepal for power trade, facilitating electricity exchange and enhancing energy security in the region.

J. Cultural Exchanges and people to people Initiative: India promotes cultural diplomacy through initiatives like the International Day of Yoga. Cultural festivals and exchange programs help strengthen people-to-people ties and mutual understanding. Efforts to promote Indian languages and culture through educational programs and exchanges are integral to enhancing soft power in the region. India aims to resolve outstanding disputes with its neighbors through dialogue and negotiation. This approach includes addressing issues such as border disputes, water-sharing agreements, and other bilateral concerns.

K. Counterterrorism Dialogues: India engages in regular dialogues with neighboring countries, such as Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, to enhance counterterrorism cooperation. These discussions often focus on sharing intelligence, strategies, and best practices to combat terrorism effectively. Moreover, India conducts joint military exercises and training programs with neighboring nations to enhance their capabilities in counterterrorism operations. For example, exercises like “Mitrasakti” with Thailand and “Sampriti” with Bangladesh focus on counter-terrorism operations and humanitarian assistance.

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Thus, through India's neighbourhood first policy shows country's engagements with its neighbors, reflecting its efforts to foster cooperation, address challenges, and promote regional stability. Through this policy, India works to ensure regional stability by engaging in multilateral forums such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).

Stop to Consider

Regional Policy of India:

- 1. Look East Policy (Act East):** India has focused on deepening economic and strategic ties with Southeast Asian nations. This policy aims to bolster trade, investment, and political relationships with countries in the region, including those in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
- 2. Indian Ocean Region (IOR) Strategy:** India views the Indian Ocean as a critical area for its maritime security and trade. It seeks to enhance naval capabilities, build strategic partnerships with countries around the IOR, and promote regional maritime security.
- 3. Counterterrorism and Security:** India places a high priority on countering terrorism and addressing security threats from regional sources. It collaborates with neighboring countries and international partners to combat terrorism and enhance regional security.
- 4. China and Pakistan Relations:** India's policy towards China and Pakistan is a significant component of its regional strategy. It seeks to manage competition and conflict with China while addressing longstanding issues with Pakistan, including border disputes and cross-border terrorism.
- 5. Regional Organizations:** India is an active participant in regional organizations such as the South Asian Association for

Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). These platforms help India pursue its regional interests and collaborate on various developmental and security issues.

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1.3.3 India's Neighbourhood First Policy in Neighbouring Countries

The "Neighborhood First" policy reflects India's commitment to fostering positive relationships with its immediate neighbors, enhancing regional cooperation, and addressing challenges in a collaborative and constructive manner. Let us now discuss how India has engaged with its neighboring countries under Neighbourhood First Policy:

A) Bangladesh

Under this policy many initiatives are being taken to improve relationship with Bangladesh. In 2015, India and Bangladesh resolved a long-standing border dispute by ratifying the Land Boundary Agreement. India has worked with Bangladesh on water-sharing agreements for the Teesta River, although negotiations have faced challenges. India and Bangladesh have strengthened economic ties through trade agreements, investments, and infrastructure projects like the Maitree Express train service.

India and Bangladesh regularly engage in cultural exchanges, including art, music, and literature. Events such as the Dhaka International Film Festival and cultural festivals highlight the shared cultural heritage. Indian scholarships and educational programs are offered to Bangladeshi students, promoting academic exchange and strengthening ties between the youth of both countries.

India is one of Bangladesh's largest trading partners. Both countries have worked to enhance trade relations through agreements like the Trade Agreement on the Border Trade of Goods, which simplifies trade procedures. Indian companies have invested in sectors such as textiles, pharmaceuticals, and infrastructure in Bangladesh. Major Indian investments include those in the power sector and the development of economic zones.

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India has been involved in developing infrastructure projects in Bangladesh, such as the construction of roads and bridges and the upgrading of rail links.

B) Bhutan

India has played a major role in Bhutan's hydropower sector. Indian companies have invested in hydropower projects like the Tala and Chukha dams, which provide electricity to both Bhutan and India. India provides Bhutan with economic assistance and trade benefits, including duty-free access to Indian markets for Bhutanese goods and support for various developmental projects. India supports Bhutanese students through scholarships and educational programs in Indian institutions. Cultural exchanges, including festivals and art exhibitions, also help strengthen the bond between the two countries. Bhutanese tourists frequently visit India, and Indian tourists visit Bhutan, fostering people-to-people connections and mutual understanding

C) Nepal

India and Nepal made agreements to facilitate the movement of goods and services between the two countries, which are crucial for Nepal's trade. India provides aid for various development projects in Nepal, including infrastructure, education, and health. Both countries have worked on resolving border disputes through diplomatic negotiations, such as discussions on the Susta area. India has extended aid to Nepal and during earthquakes, providing medical assistance, food, and relief materials. India and Nepal celebrate various festivals together, including religious and cultural events. Festivals like Dashain and Tihar are celebrated by Nepali communities in India and vice versa. India offers educational scholarships and professional training to Nepali students and professionals, enhancing bilateral ties and mutual understanding.

D) Sri Lanka

India has provided economic aid and development support to Sri Lanka, including projects in infrastructure and healthcare. India and Sri Lanka have engaged in discussions to address issues related to fishing rights in the Palk Strait, aiming to balance the interests of fishermen from both countries.

India has supported Sri Lanka's post-war reconstruction efforts, including assistance in rebuilding and development initiatives in the northern and eastern regions. India has extended aid to Sri Lanka during floods, providing medical assistance, food, and relief materials. India has provided economic aid for various projects in Sri Lanka, including the construction of housing and infrastructure projects. India and Sri Lanka have a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which aims to boost trade and investment between the two countries. India and Sri Lanka engage in cultural collaborations, including art exhibitions, film festivals, and music events. Indian cinema and literature have a significant presence in Sri Lanka. The Tamil diaspora in Sri Lanka maintains cultural ties with Tamil Nadu, India, fostering people-to-people connections through family and cultural exchanges.

E. Maldives

India has supported the Maldives with funding and technical assistance for various development projects, including infrastructure, healthcare, and education. India has provided financial assistance to the Maldives during economic crises and has supported projects like the construction of a new Supreme Court building. India provides scholarships and training programs for Maldivian students and professionals, including in fields like medicine and engineering. Cultural events and exhibitions, as well as the promotion of Indian arts and culture in the Maldives, help build strong people-to-people ties.

F. Pakistan

Despite a complex relationship, India and Pakistan have engaged in trade agreements, such as the Most Favored Nation (MFN) status. However, trade has been affected by political tensions. India and Pakistan have conducted various rounds of dialogue to address bilateral issues, including the Kashmir dispute and cross-border terrorism. Despite political tensions, cultural exchanges continue through art exhibitions, music performances, and literary events. Initiatives like the Karachi Literature Festival and Indian film festivals promote cultural dialogue. Efforts to promote people-to-people ties include initiatives like the visa facilitation for elderly pilgrims and family reunification programs.

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G. Myanmar

India has engaged with Myanmar on economic projects, such as infrastructure development, and strategic cooperation in areas like counterterrorism and trade. India has invested in connectivity projects like the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, which aims to enhance regional trade and enhance connectivity between India and Southeast Asia, facilitating trade and movement of people. India and Myanmar participate in cultural festivals and exchanges that promote mutual understanding. Indian films and literature are well-received in Myanmar. India offers educational scholarships and training programs to Myanmar students and professionals, fostering bilateral ties and cultural exchange.

H. Afghanistan

India has engaged with Afghanistan to bolster its security forces against Taliban and ISIS threats, promoting stability in the region. This includes capacity-building assistance and training for Afghan security personnel.

From the above discussion now, you have got the idea that India's development assistance under the Neighborhood First Policy aims to create a positive impact on the socio-economic landscape of its neighboring countries. By focusing on infrastructure, capacity building, health, agriculture, and energy cooperation, India seeks to foster strong bilateral ties, promote stability, and contribute to the overall development of the region. This approach not only strengthens India's role as a regional leader but also enhances mutual benefits and goodwill among neighboring nations.

1.3.4 Some important Initiatives undertaken under “Neighbourhood First Policy”

Under the “Neighbourhood First Policy,” India has undertaken various activities to strengthen its ties with neighboring countries, focusing on areas such as infrastructure development, trade, security, humanitarian assistance, and cultural exchange. Here are some significant activities carried out in recent years:

- 1. Infrastructure and Connectivity Projects:** India has restored and built new rail links with Bangladesh to improve trade and transport, including the Agartala-Akhaura rail link. Additionally, several integrated check posts and border haats (markets) have been established to facilitate trade with Bangladesh.

Again, the 69 km long Motihari-Amlekhgunj petroleum pipeline, completed in 2019, is the first cross-border pipeline in South Asia and has significantly improved fuel supply efficiency to Nepal. Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project aimed at connecting India's northeastern states to Myanmar and beyond, this project includes road, river, and sea routes to improve connectivity with Southeast Asia. Moreover, India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway is an ambitious project to develop road connectivity between India, Myanmar, and Thailand, facilitating trade and travel between the three countries.

- 2. Trade and Economic Cooperation:** South Asian Satellite was launched in 2017. This communication satellite is dedicated to South Asian countries, providing services related to telecommunication, broadcasting, and disaster management. India has extended lines of credit to neighboring countries for various development projects, such as \$500 million to Bangladesh for defense purchases and \$400 million to Sri Lanka for infrastructure development. Moreover, as discussed earlier India has signed trade agreements and implemented measures to boost trade with countries like Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Nepal, facilitating smoother and more extensive cross-border trade.

- 3. Security and Defense Cooperation: Joint Military Exercises:** India conducts regular joint military exercises with its neighbors, such as "Mitra Shakti" with Sri Lanka, "Sampriti" with Bangladesh, "Surya Kiran" with Nepal, and "Dosti" with the Maldives, to enhance military cooperation and counter-terrorism efforts..India has worked with countries like the Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Mauritius to enhance maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region, including providing naval patrol boats, training, and technical assistance. India shares intelligence and works closely with neighboring countries to tackle terrorism and extremism, ensuring regional security and stability.

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4. **Engagement with Regional Organizations:** India actively engages with regional organizations like BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) and SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) to address common challenges such as climate change, disaster management, energy cooperation, and trade. India hosts the South Asian University in New Delhi, a collaborative project of the SAARC nations, providing opportunities for students from the region to study and engage in research.

7. **Promoting Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development:** India has worked with several neighboring countries as part of the International Solar Alliance, promoting solar energy projects and sustainable energy solutions. India has supported numerous infrastructure and development projects in neighboring countries, such as building schools, hospitals, housing, and community centers.

Hence we can say that India's "Neighbourhood First Policy" encompasses a wide range of activities aimed at building strong, cooperative, and mutually beneficial relationships with its neighboring countries. It has also extended help to its neighbours in times of crisis through medical help and financial aid. We all know about vaccine Maitri during the Covid-19 crisis. These initiatives highlight India's role as a reliable partner, focusing on economic development, connectivity, humanitarian assistance, security cooperation, and cultural engagement. In the present context, India's "Neighbourhood First Policy" continues to be a cornerstone of its foreign policy, adapting to evolving regional dynamics and geopolitical. The policy reflects India's aspiration to be a responsible and supportive partner in South Asia, focusing on cooperation, development, and security while navigating the challenges posed by regional power dynamics

SAQ:

How far India has been successful in improving relationship with her neighbours through The ‘*Neighbourhood First*’ policy ? Discuss (80 words)

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1.4 Extended Neighbourhood Policy of India

India’s “Extended Neighbourhood Policy” is an extension of its “Neighbourhood First” policy, expanding its strategic and diplomatic outreach beyond its immediate neighbors in South Asia to include countries in Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Gulf, Africa, and the Indian Ocean region. This policy aims to build stronger economic, political, and security ties with a broader array of countries, recognizing the interconnectedness of global geopolitics and the need for regional stability. By building strong partnerships across multiple regions, India aims to solidify its position as a key player in the global landscape. India’s “Extended Neighbourhood” policy refers to its strategic approach towards engaging with countries beyond its immediate geographical neighbors. This policy is aimed at enhancing India’s influence and fostering partnerships in regions that are of strategic interest, particularly in the Indian Ocean region, Southeast Asia, and beyond. The “Extended Neighbourhood” policy reflects India’s strategy to enhance its global presence and influence by engaging with countries and regions beyond its immediate borders. This approach aims to create a favorable environment for trade, security, and diplomatic relations, contributing to India’s broader strategic goals.

1.4.1 Background of India’s Extended Neighbourhood Policy

The background of India’s “Extended Neighbourhood Policy” can be traced to the evolving geopolitical, economic, and security dynamics that emerged post-Cold War, as well as India’s growing aspirations to be

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recognized as a major regional and global power. This policy marked a shift from focusing solely on immediate neighbors to engaging more extensively with countries beyond South Asia in regions such as Southeast Asia, Central Asia, West Asia (Middle East), Africa, and the Indian Ocean Region. Here's a detailed look at the background and evolution of this policy:

India's economic liberalization in 1991 played a crucial role in shaping its foreign policy. We know that it opened up to global markets and recognized the need to engage with a broader range of countries for trade, investment, and technology. This marked the beginning of India's efforts to expand its diplomatic and economic outreach beyond its immediate neighborhood. Again, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War led to a multipolar world order which prompted India to diversify its foreign policy to engage with multiple regions and emerging powers.

We must remember here that Launched in the early 1990s under Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao, the "Look East Policy" was the first major step toward India's extended neighborhood engagement. The policy aimed at strengthening economic and strategic ties with Southeast Asian countries, given their dynamic economies and strategic importance. India became a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1992 and a full Dialogue Partner in 1996, marking its growing interest in Southeast Asia's economic and strategic landscape.

With India's growing energy demands, Central Asia emerged as a crucial region due to its vast reserves of oil, natural gas, and other resources. Recognizing this, India began exploring avenues for greater engagement, which eventually led to the "Connect Central Asia Policy" announced in 2012 under the UPA (United Progressive Alliance) government. This policy emphasized enhancing economic ties, connectivity projects, and strategic partnerships, as well as cultural and people-to-people exchanges with Central Asian countries.

Under the leadership of Narendra Modi several initiatives were taken to ensure India's security. Ensuring Maritime security in Indian Ocean has been another aim which led to enhanced engagement with island nations like the Maldives, Seychelles, and Mauritius. The "Security and Growth for

All in the Region” (SAGAR) initiative, announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015, highlighted India’s commitment to promoting maritime security, regional cooperation, and sustainable development in the Indian Ocean Region.

China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), launched in 2013, aimed to build infrastructure and connectivity across Asia, Africa, and Europe. As China’s influence grew in India’s neighborhood and beyond, India also aimed at strengthening its engagement with countries in the extended neighborhood to protect its strategic interests.

Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government, the “Look East Policy” was rebranded as the “Act East Policy” in 2014, signaling a more proactive approach in engaging with Southeast Asia and the broader Asia-Pacific region. This shift emphasized deeper economic, strategic, and security ties with ASEAN countries, as well as increased collaboration with Japan, South Korea, Australia, and other key players in the Indo-Pacific region.

1.4.2 Major Aspects of India’s Extended Neighbourhood Policy

- 1. Expanding Diplomatic Engagement:** While traditional foreign policy focused on direct neighbors (like Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, etc.), the Extended Neighbourhood Policy broadens this focus to include countries that are strategically significant to India but are not its immediate neighbors. The policy emphasizes building partnerships with countries in Southeast Asia, Central Asia, and the Indo-Pacific region to promote stability, security, and economic growth.
- 2. Economic Cooperation:** India aims to enhance trade and investment ties with countries in its extended neighborhood. This includes signing free trade agreements (FTAs), fostering business collaborations, and exploring new markets for Indian goods and services. Initiatives like the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) are part of efforts to improve regional connectivity and facilitate smoother trade routes.
- 3. Security Collaboration:** The policy focuses on enhancing security cooperation, including counterterrorism initiatives and joint military

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exercises with countries in the extended neighborhood to address common security challenges. Given the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean, India emphasizes maritime security cooperation with IOR countries to safeguard trade routes and ensure regional stability.

4. **Cultural and People-to-People Ties:** The policy aims to promote India's cultural heritage and soft power through cultural exchanges, educational programs, and people-to-people contacts, fostering goodwill and mutual understanding. India seeks to strengthen ties with its diaspora in various countries, recognizing their role in enhancing bilateral relations and contributing to the host nations' economies.
5. **Response to Geopolitical Challenges:** With China's growing presence in the region through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), India's Extended Neighbourhood Policy seeks to counterbalance China's influence by deepening its own ties with neighboring countries. The policy reflects India's aspirations to play a more significant role in global governance and promote a multipolar world where power is distributed among multiple nations rather than dominated by a single country.
6. **Environmental and Development Cooperation:** India's policy includes a focus on climate change, renewable energy, and sustainable development. Initiatives like the International Solar Alliance (ISA) aim to collaborate on clean energy projects with countries in its extended neighborhood. The policy encompasses providing humanitarian aid and disaster relief to countries in need, enhancing India's image as a responsible regional player.

1.4.3 Regions under Extended Neighbourhood Policy India

Through the "Extended Neighbourhood" policy India seeks to maintain good relationship in the following regions:

1. **Indian Ocean Region (IOR):** India seeks to strengthen maritime security and enhance cooperation with countries in the Indian Ocean, such as Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Mauritius, and Seychelles. Initiatives include joint naval exercises, maritime patrols, and strategic dialogues.

India is involved in connectivity projects, such as the development of ports and infrastructure in countries like Sri Lanka and the Maldives, to boost regional trade and integration. India emphasizes the importance of the Indian Ocean for regional security and trade. It has been actively working to ensure the safety of sea lanes and countering piracy, terrorism, and illegal activities. Strengthening ties with countries such as the Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Sri Lanka, through infrastructure projects, defense cooperation, and maritime security partnerships. Thus, India is an active member of IORA and works on initiatives related to trade, investment, disaster risk management, and sustainable development.

2. **Southeast Asia:** India's "Act East" policy aims to deepen its engagement with Southeast Asian nations. This includes enhancing economic, political, and security ties with countries like Vietnam, Thailand, Singapore, and Indonesia. Moreover, India participates actively in regional forums such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the East Asia Summit, focusing on trade, investment, and regional security.
3. **Central Asia:** India seeks to increase its engagement with Central Asian countries like Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, focusing on energy cooperation, trade, and infrastructure development. India is involved in projects like the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) to improve connectivity. Besides, India promotes cultural exchanges and educational partnerships with Central Asian countries, offering scholarships and training programs.
4. **Middle East:** India has strengthened its ties with Middle Eastern countries, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Iran, focusing on trade, energy cooperation, and investment. India has also sought to enhance its strategic partnerships with these nations. India also engages with the large Indian diaspora in the Middle East, which plays a significant role in fostering bilateral relations and economic ties.

As a major source of oil and gas imports, India's policy focuses on securing energy supplies from Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia, the

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United Arab Emirates, Iran, and Qatar. Strengthening economic ties and encouraging investments, building security and defense cooperation with countries in West Asia to counter terrorism and ensure regional stability are some of the issues where India wants to strengthen ties with Middle East countries.

5. **Africa:** India has expanded its cooperation with African countries through initiatives like the India-Africa Forum Summit, which focuses on development assistance, trade, and investment and development partnerships with African countries in areas such as agriculture, healthcare, renewable energy, and infrastructure. India has also provided aid and support for infrastructure and capacity-building projects across the continent. India has increased its trade and investment with African nations, including partnerships in sectors like agriculture, energy, and manufacturing. It also aims at offering educational scholarships, training programs, and skill development initiatives for African nations. Working with East African countries to address maritime security concerns, piracy, and promote blue economy initiatives is another aim of India under this policy.
6. **European Union:** India seeks to enhance its strategic partnership with the European Union, focusing on trade, investment, technology, and global governance. This includes dialogues on issues such as climate change, security, and economic cooperation.

Overall, the policy underscores India's aspiration to be a more active player in regional and global affairs, leveraging its growing economic and strategic influence.

1.4.4 Major initiatives under this policy :

India has taken many initiatives that demonstrate India's growing engagement and proactive outreach in its extended neighborhood, encompassing Southeast Asia, Central Asia, West Asia, Africa, and the Indo-Pacific region. India's activities span trade, connectivity, defense cooperation, health, climate change, and cultural diplomacy, reflecting its commitment to fostering mutual growth, security, and stability in the broader region. These initiatives are —

A. Act East Policy: The “Act East Policy” is an initiative by the Indian government to enhance and strengthen its relations with the countries of Southeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific region. This policy was launched in 2014, which can be regarded as a modification of the earlier “Look East Policy” introduced in the early 1990s. The Act East Policy aims to build comprehensive and strategic partnerships with these countries, focusing on economic, political, cultural, and security aspects. Under this policy, India has focused on deepening its engagement with ASEAN through trade agreements, security dialogues, and summits. As part of the broader Indo-Pacific strategy, India has developed closer partnerships with these countries. These neighboring and regional countries are vital partners in India’s efforts to improve connectivity and regional cooperation.

It focuses on

1. Enhancing trade, investment, and connectivity with ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries, East Asia, and beyond.
2. Strengthening defense ties, maritime security, and collaboration on regional security issues, especially in the Indo-Pacific region.
3. Developing transport, digital, and energy networks to improve connectivity between India and Southeast Asia, including projects like the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway.
4. Promoting cultural exchanges, tourism, education, and academic collaborations.

The Act East Policy reflects India’s strategic shift towards becoming an active participant in the Indo-Pacific region, reinforcing its role as a major player in Asia.

B. Connect Central Asia Policy: The “Connect Central Asia Policy” is an initiative launched by India in 2012 to strengthen its engagement with the Central Asian republics, which include Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The policy aims to build deeper political, economic, security, and cultural ties with this strategically important region, leveraging historical, cultural, and civilizational links. It aims at —

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- Establishing regular high-level political exchanges, including bilateral visits, ministerial meetings, and strategic dialogues to strengthen diplomatic ties.
- Enhancing trade and investment by exploring opportunities in sectors like energy, pharmaceuticals, information technology, agriculture, and textiles. The goal is to develop connectivity projects and transport corridors to facilitate trade.
- Overcoming geographical barriers through initiatives such as the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) to improve access to the region. The Chabahar Port in Iran is a crucial part of this connectivity strategy.
- Enhancing cooperation in areas such as counterterrorism, defense, and regional security to address shared challenges, including extremism and drug trafficking.
- Promoting cultural ties, educational exchanges, tourism, and collaboration in healthcare and science and technology.

The Connect Central Asia Policy is part of India's broader efforts to engage with Eurasia, Central Asia is rich in energy resources like oil, gas, and uranium. India aims to secure energy partnerships to diversify its energy sources, including projects like the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline.

These examples highlight India's proactive approach in strengthening ties with countries in its extended neighborhood. By focusing on defense cooperation, economic partnerships, cultural exchanges, and humanitarian assistance, India aims to enhance its influence and promote regional stability in an increasingly interconnected world.

Check Your Progress

- Q1. 'The '*Neighbourhood First*' policy signals India's commitment to improve ties with its immediate neighbours'. Discuss.

- Q2. What are the challenges India face in implementing the ‘*Neighbourhood First*’ policy ?
- Q3. Discuss some of the initiatives under The ‘*Neighbourhood First*’ policy.
- Q4. What is Extended *Neighbourhood policy* ?
- Q5. What are the major initiatives under the Extended *Neighbourhood policy* ?

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1.5 Summing Up

After reading this unit you have learnt that “Neighbourhood First Policy” is a key foreign policy initiative of India that emphasizes building strong and cooperative relationships with its immediate neighboring countries in South Asia. the “Neighbourhood First Policy” shows India’s commitment to being a responsible and proactive partner in South Asia, fostering closer ties, mutual trust, and regional cooperation for shared growth and development. Through this policy, India works to ensure regional stability by engaging in multilateral forums such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). We have also learnt that India’s Extended Neighbourhood Policy represents a comprehensive approach to foreign relations, recognizing the importance of engaging with a diverse range of countries to foster economic growth, enhance security, and promote regional stability. We can also say that India’s “Extended Neighbourhood Policy” refers to its diplomatic and strategic approach to engage with countries beyond its immediate neighbors in South Asia. This policy seeks to strengthen ties with nations in various regions, including Southeast Asia, Central Asia, West Asia (Middle East), Africa, and the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

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Unit - 2

India and South Asia

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Unit Structure:

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Objectives
- 2.3 South Asia : An Overview
- 2.4 Importance of South Asia in the Global arena
- 2.5 Conflicts and Challenges Faced by South Asia
- 2.6 India's role in South Asia
- 2.7 Regional organisation in South Asia
- 2.8 Summing Up
- 2.9 Reference and Suggested Readings

2.1 Introduction

South Asia is a region in Southern Asia that includes eight countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. This region is characterized by its diverse cultures, languages, and histories, as well as its complex geopolitical dynamics. In the previous unit of this block we have studied India's relationship with neighbouring countries. As the largest economy and most populous nation in the region, India has played a central role in shaping the political, economic, and security landscape of South Asia.

2.2 Objectives

After reading this unit you will be able to:

- Understand socio-political and economic condition of South Asia
- Discuss India's role in South Asia

2.3 South Asia : An Overview

We already know that South Asia Covers Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. India as the largest and most populous country in South Asia, plays a vital role in regional politics, economics, and security. Its "Neighborhood First" policy reflects its focus

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on strengthening relations with neighboring countries and addressing regional issues. In this region, Pakistan and India have a complex and often contentious relationship, particularly over the Kashmir dispute. Despite tensions, both countries engage in dialogue and have areas of cooperation, including trade and counterterrorism. Bangladesh has seen significant economic growth and development in recent years. It maintains a cooperative relationship with India, particularly in areas such as trade, water resources, and infrastructures. Nepal shares close cultural and historical ties with India. The two countries have cooperative agreements on trade, transit, and development. Nepal also faces challenges related to its internal political stability and relations with its larger neighbors. India and Sri Lanka share strong cultural and historical connections. India has supported Sri Lanka in various post-conflict reconstruction efforts and continues to engage with Sri Lanka through economic and cultural diplomacy. Bhutan maintains a close relationship with India, relying on India for economic aid and trade. The two countries collaborate on several hydropower projects and have a strong partnership in areas of security and development. India has provided significant support to the Maldives in terms of development assistance and crisis management. The relationship is marked by cooperation in areas such as maritime security and economic development. Afghanistan's relationship with South Asian countries, particularly India and Pakistan, is influenced by its geopolitical situation and ongoing conflicts. India has provided development assistance and support for reconstruction in Afghanistan.

In the previous unit we have already discussed at length about India's neighbourhood first policy. From that unit we have learnt that there are many areas where the South Asian countries work together. South Asia is working towards greater economic integration through regional agreements like the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA). However, trade barriers and political tensions sometimes hinder progress. Various infrastructure projects, such as the India-Bangladesh and India-Nepal connectivity initiatives, aim to enhance regional trade and connectivity. The South Asian countries help each other by providing development assistance in times of crisis. From the previous unit we have learnt that India provides development aid to several South Asian countries, focusing on areas like education, health, and

infrastructure. Moreover, South Asian countries share many cultural, historical, and religious ties. Festivals, languages, and traditions often overlap, fostering cross-border cultural connections. The South Asian diaspora is significant in countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada. This diaspora plays a role in fostering connections between South Asian countries and the wider world.

Hence, we can say that South Asia is a region with dynamic and complex interactions, marked by both opportunities for cooperation and challenges that require collaborative approaches.

2.4 Importance of South Asia in the Global Arena

South Asia is of significant importance on various fronts—geopolitical, economic, cultural, and environmental. Let us discuss briefly South Asia's importance in the global scenario.

Geopolitical Importance:

South Asia is strategically located at the crossroads of major international shipping routes in the Indian Ocean. This location impacts global trade and maritime security. The stability of South Asia is crucial for regional and global security. Conflicts or instability in this region can have broader implications, affecting international relations and economic stability. The region's geopolitical dynamics are influenced by the rivalries between major players like India and Pakistan. These rivalries, along with regional issues, have implications for global diplomacy and security. Addressing regional conflicts, such as the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan, is crucial for regional stability and global peace. South Asia is of interest to major global powers, including the United States, China, and the European Union. These powers engage with the region for strategic, economic, and security reasons.

Economic Importance:

South Asia is one of the fastest-growing regions in the world, with significant economic potential. Countries like India and Bangladesh are experiencing rapid economic development, contributing to global economic growth. With a combined population of over 1.8 billion people, South Asia represents a

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large and growing market for goods and services. This demographic advantage attracts investment and trade opportunities. The region is vital for international trade routes, particularly through the Indian Ocean, which is a key conduit for global shipping and energy supplies. Efforts towards regional economic integration, such as the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), aim to boost trade and economic cooperation within the region.

Cultural and Social Importance:

South Asia is home to rich and diverse cultural traditions, including various languages, religions, and art forms. This cultural diversity contributes to global cultural heritage and understanding. The South Asian diaspora is influential in many countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada. This diaspora contributes to cultural exchange and strengthens global connections. The region's historical landmarks, natural beauty, and cultural festivals attract tourists from around the world, boosting global cultural and economic exchange.

Environmental Importance:

South Asia is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and water scarcity. The region's response to these challenges has global implications for environmental policy and sustainability. South Asia is home to diverse ecosystems and species. Conservation efforts in the region are crucial for global biodiversity and environmental health. Major rivers originating in South Asia, such as the Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Indus, are vital for the livelihoods of millions of people in the region and beyond. Sustainable management of these water resources is essential for regional and global water security.

From the above discussion we can say that, South Asia's importance is multifaceted, influencing global geopolitics, economics, culture, and the environment. Continued economic development and integration can enhance regional prosperity and contribute to global economic growth. South Asia's engagement in global issues such as climate change, terrorism, and trade can significantly impact global policies and solutions. Hence, the region's developments and challenges have far-reaching implications for global stability and progress.

Stop to Consider:

Major Challenges and Opportunities of South Asian Region

- **Conflict and Security:** The region faces various security challenges, including border disputes, terrorism, and political instability. Cooperation on security and counterterrorism is crucial for regional stability.
- **Economic Growth:** South Asia has one of the world's fastest-growing regions, with significant potential for economic development. Enhanced regional cooperation and integration can further boost economic growth.
- **Environmental Issues:** The region faces environmental challenges such as climate change, water scarcity, and natural disasters. Regional cooperation on environmental issues is vital for sustainable development.

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2.5 Conflicts and Challenges Faced by South Asia

South Asia faces several complex conflicts and challenges. Those challenges are rooted in historical disputes, economic disparities, and geopolitical tensions. These issues are often interwoven and affect regional stability, economic growth, and social progress. Let us have a look at the most significant conflicts and challenges facing South Asia:

Political Tensions and Historical Conflicts: Long-standing political disputes, such as the India-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir, hinder regional cooperation. These tensions often lead to distrust and a lack of willingness to engage in dialogue. The prolonged and volatile conflict between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir region creates instability in South Asia. Since the partition of British India in 1947, Kashmir has been a major point of contention between India and Pakistan. The 2019 revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status by India intensified tensions, leading to further militarization of the region and frequent border skirmishes. Again, terrorism and cross-border insurgency remain significant concerns, particularly between India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. These security challenges affect trust and the willingness to cooperate with each other. We all are aware

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about the attacks like the 2008 Mumbai attacks and the 2019 Pulwama incidents which have strained diplomatic ties between the countries. Again, both India and Pakistan are nuclear powers, which heighten the stakes of any military conflict.

Border Disputes: Several countries in the region, such as India and Nepal or India and Bangladesh, have unresolved border disputes that hinder cross-border cooperation and economic integration. India -China border issue is another conflicting issue in South Asia. India and China share a long, contested border, most notably in areas like Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh. The 2020 Galwan Valley clash in Ladakh, which resulted in the deaths of soldiers on both sides, marked the worst border conflict in decades. Both nations have since increased their military presence along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). We have already learnt that China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), including projects like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), challenges India's traditional influence in South Asia. India counters this by strengthening its relationships with neighboring countries through infrastructure and economic investments.

Economic issues: South Asia comprises countries with varying levels of economic development. Differences in economic strength, resources, and infrastructure make it difficult to establish mutually beneficial trade agreements and partnerships. South Asia is home to some of the world's poorest populations, despite overall economic growth in countries like India and Bangladesh. Economic inequality, unemployment, and lack of infrastructure development remain critical challenges, particularly in rural areas. Moreover, despite agreements to promote trade, non-tariff barriers such as customs regulations, import restrictions, and bureaucratic hurdles make it challenging to facilitate smooth trade between countries.

Again, it has been observed that, the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected South Asian economies, leading to job losses, disrupted supply chains, and exacerbating poverty levels. These have also created instability in the South Asian region.

Water Sharing Issues: South Asia's growing population puts immense pressure on natural resources, especially water. Shared river systems like

the Indus, Ganges, and Brahmaputra often lead to disputes over water usage and management, making it difficult to reach agreements on resource sharing. The Indus Water Treaty between India and Pakistan has so far managed water-sharing issues, but disputes over river projects, such as dams in India continues. Similarly, India and Bangladesh have disputes over the sharing of the **Teesta River** waters.

Internal Conflicts and Insurgencies: The region is engulfed with internal conflicts and insurgencies. Apart from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Northeast India faces challenges from such problem of insurgencies. With the Taliban's return to power in 2021 after the withdrawal of U.S. troops, Afghanistan faces severe challenges, including humanitarian crises, economic collapse, and the resurgence of extremist groups like ISIS-K. The instability in Afghanistan has affected neighbouring countries, especially Pakistan, with cross-border militancy, refugee influxes, and drug trafficking.

Again, the end of the civil war in 2009 did not fully resolve ethnic tensions between the majority Sinhalese and the minority Tamils. Recent economic crises in Sri Lanka, exacerbated by government mismanagement and debt burdens, have led to widespread protests and political instability.

You all are aware about insurgencies in northeastern region of India.. Although the intensity of these conflicts has decreased in recent years due to peace accords and government intervention, issues of ethnic identity, migration, and resource control remain sensitive.

Environmental and Climate Challenges: South Asia is one of the most vulnerable regions to the impacts of climate change, including rising temperatures, erratic monsoons, and more frequent natural disasters like floods, cyclones, and droughts. Countries like Bangladesh and the Maldives are particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels, which threaten to displace millions. Many South Asian cities, including Delhi, Dhaka, and Karachi, consistently rank among the most polluted in the world. Air pollution, caused by industrial emissions, vehicle exhaust, and agricultural burning, is a major public health crisis, contributing to respiratory diseases and premature deaths. Rapid urbanization, agricultural expansion, and illegal logging have led to

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deforestation in parts of India, Nepal, and Bhutan, threatening biodiversity and disrupting ecosystems.

Geopolitical Tensions and External Influence: China's growing presence in South Asia through infrastructure investments and strategic alliances, particularly with Pakistan and Sri Lanka, challenges India's leadership in the region. Countries like Nepal, Bangladesh, and the Maldives are also engaging with China to boost their economies, which may shift regional dynamics.

The strategic competition between the U.S. and China also has impact on South Asia. The U.S. seeks to strengthen ties with India through initiatives like the **Quad** (comprising the U.S., India, Japan, and Australia) to counterbalance China's influence. However, this rivalry puts South Asian nations in a delicate position as they seek to balance relations with both powers.

Ethnic and Religious Tensions: Many South Asian countries are home to diverse ethnic groups, which can lead to internal strife. For example, the Tamils and Sinhalese in Sri Lanka, the Madhesis in Nepal, and various ethnic groups in Afghanistan often experience tension and conflict over representation, resources, and autonomy. Religious radicalization and extremism pose challenges in countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh, where Islamist militancy continues to threaten domestic stability. In India, growing Hindu-Muslim tensions have sparked communal violence and polarized the political landscape.

Migration and Refugee Crises: The mass displacement of Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar to Bangladesh remains a pressing humanitarian issue. Bangladesh now hosts nearly one million Rohingya refugees, straining its resources and complicating its relations with Myanmar. Many South Asians migrate to the Middle East for employment, but their remittances are vital for the economies of countries like Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. However, the labor conditions faced by migrant workers are often exploitative, leading to human rights concerns. Moreover, South Asia has also a huge number of Internal Displacees who have become homeless because of conflicts, development projects and natural disasters. It has

become a challenge for the region to resettle and rehabilitate these migrants and internally displaced persons.

The challenges faced by South Asia are multifaceted, involving long-standing territorial disputes, socio-economic inequalities, ethnic and religious tensions, and emerging geopolitical shifts. Resolving these issues requires regional cooperation, sustainable development, and strategic diplomacy to ensure peace, stability, and progress in the region.

Institutional Weaknesses: Regional organizations like the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) have been largely ineffective in fostering cooperation due to a lack of strong leadership, internal disagreements, and an inability to enforce decisions.

Addressing these challenges requires political will, trust-building measures, and efforts to strengthen regional institutions

2.6 India's role in South Asia

India plays a central and influential role in South Asia due to its size, economic power, and strategic significance. India's role in South Asia has evolved significantly, especially under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. Here's a detailed overview of India's role in the region:

A. Regional Leadership

As the largest economy in South Asia, India is a key driver of regional economic growth. The Prime Minister also announced that the priority for neighbours in his foreign policy in the 69th session of United Nations General Assembly. Modi said that "A nation's destiny is limited to its neighbourhood. That is why my government has placed the highest priority on advancing friendship and cooperation with her neighbours. It engages in trade, investment, and development projects across the region, impacting economic dynamics and integration. India's political weight in South Asia is significant. It often plays a leadership role in regional forums like the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).

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India and Bangladesh share strong ties in trade, security, and infrastructure. India has been involved in major projects such as the development of the Dhaka-Chattogram rail corridor and has supported Bangladesh's economic growth through trade agreements and development assistance. India has a close relationship with Nepal, characterized by economic aid, trade agreements, and cultural ties. India supports Nepal's development through various projects and educational scholarships. India and Bhutan enjoy a special relationship, with India supporting Bhutan's economic development through hydropower projects and financial aid. The two countries collaborate closely on security and environmental issues. India has provided support to Sri Lanka in post-conflict reconstruction and development. The two countries engage in trade, cultural exchanges, and cooperation on security matters. India has been a key partner in the Maldives, offering development assistance and support during political crises. The relationship includes cooperation on maritime security and economic development. India and Pakistan have a complex relationship, marked by conflict over Kashmir and other bilateral issues. Despite tensions, there have been efforts to engage in dialogue and address common concerns like terrorism and trade.

B. Regional Stability and Security

India collaborates with its neighbors on counterterrorism efforts and regional security issues. This includes intelligence sharing and joint initiatives to combat cross-border terrorism. India has played a role in mediating conflicts in the region, including providing support for peace processes and negotiations.

It needs mention here that China's growing influence in South Asia, particularly through the BRI and investments in countries like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives, has challenged India's traditional dominance in the region. India has been trying to counter this through its own diplomatic outreach, development aid, and strategic partnerships with these countries.

Moreover, you should also know that India remains a regional security provider. It is involved in peacekeeping missions and has defense ties with countries like Bangladesh and Nepal. India's concerns about terrorism, particularly in relation to Pakistan and the Taliban's rise in Afghanistan, have shaped its security strategy in South Asia.

C. Economic Integration

India's role as an economic power in South Asia is pivotal, shaping regional economic trends, facilitating development, and driving economic integration. Its economic influence extends through trade, investment, development assistance, and regional leadership, impacting the overall economy of South Asia.

India is the largest economy in South Asia by GDP. Its economic performance impacts trade, investment, and development in neighboring countries. India's rapid economic growth contributes to regional economic dynamics, with its large market and economic policies affecting neighboring countries' economies. Initiatives like the India-Bangladesh trade agreement and investments in infrastructure projects enhance regional connectivity and economic integration. India supports various development projects in South Asia, including infrastructure, healthcare, and education. These projects aim to improve regional stability and prosperity. Moreover, India is a key trading partner for many South Asian countries. Its trade relationships with countries like Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka are vital for their economies. Indian companies invest in various sectors across South Asia, including infrastructure, energy, and manufacturing. Notable projects include Indian investments in hydropower projects in Bhutan and Bangladesh and infrastructure development in Sri Lanka.

India is involved in regional economic agreements such as the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). These agreements aim to enhance regional trade and economic cooperation. India supports regional connectivity projects, including transportation and logistics infrastructure, which facilitate trade and economic integration within South Asia.

India's large consumer market provides opportunities for South Asian countries to export goods and services. This market is crucial for countries like Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, which benefit from trade with India. Economic trends and policies in India, such as changes in trade regulations or investment policies, have ripple effects across South Asia, influencing regional economic conditions.

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D. Development Assistance

India provides significant development assistance to its neighbors, including financial aid, technical support, and infrastructure development. This assistance supports economic growth and stability in countries like Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives. India offers training and scholarships to students and professionals from South Asian countries, enhancing human resource development and contributing to regional capacity building.

E. Cultural and People-to-People Ties

India engages in cultural exchanges with its neighbors, promoting mutual understanding and cooperation. This includes festivals, educational programs, and artistic collaborations. The Indian diaspora in South Asia, particularly in countries like Nepal and Sri Lanka, contributes to regional ties and cultural connections.

F. Strategic Interests

India's strategic interests in the Indian Ocean region involve maritime security, trade routes, and regional influence. India collaborates with South Asian countries to enhance maritime security and protect vital sea lanes. India's role in South Asia is also shaped by its interactions with major global powers and its strategic positioning in the region. This includes balancing relationships with countries like China and engaging with global institutions. Hence we can say that India contributes to regional security through cooperation on counterterrorism, intelligence sharing, and joint military exercises. It plays a role in addressing security challenges and promoting stability in South Asia. Moreover, India has been involved in mediating regional conflicts and facilitating peace processes. Its efforts to address issues like the Kashmir dispute and other regional tensions contribute to its leadership role.

G. Regional Forums and Initiatives

India has been a founding member of SAARC, working to promote regional cooperation on issues such as trade, development, and security. But its role within the group has been complicated by tensions with Pakistan. As a result, India has focused more on sub-regional partnerships like **BIMSTEC** (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic

Cooperation) and bilateral agreements with other countries like Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal focusing on economic and technical cooperation with countries in the Bay of Bengal region.

Thus, India's role in South Asia is multifaceted, encompassing leadership in regional politics, economic influence, security cooperation, and cultural engagement. India's interactions with its neighbors shape regional dynamics and contribute to broader geopolitical and economic trends.

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Self Asking Questions:

Q. Do you consider India as a major power in South Asia? (80 words)

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2.7 Regional organisation in South Asia

Several regional organizations play a significant role in promoting cooperation, development, and integration in South Asia. Here are the key regional organizations in the region:

1. South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation in short SAARC was established as a balancing force of South Asian Region. Although the countries of South Asia has so much in common, yet they failed to create a common platform for themselves until 1985. it was in August 1983, the Foreign Ministers of seven countries met in Delhi and signed the declaration of SAARC. The first SAARC summit took place in Dhaka on 8 December 1985 and thus the SAARC was formally established. Members of SAARC are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Major objective of the organization is to Promote economic growth, social progress, cultural development, and regional cooperation. SAARC has launched initiatives such as the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) to facilitate trade among member countries and the SAARC Development Fund (SDF) to finance regional development projects. However, it faces many challenges due to political tensions, especially between India and Pakistan.

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2. Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). It was Founded in the year 1997.

The member countries of this organization are : Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. It thrives to enhance cooperation in areas such as trade, investment, connectivity, technology, energy, and tourism. BIMSTEC serves as a bridge between South Asia and Southeast Asia, promoting economic cooperation and regional integration, especially in light of SAARC's challenges.

3. Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) Initiative: this initiative was first launched in 1997. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal are the member nations of this initiative. The major objectives of this initiative has been to enhance connectivity, trade, and cooperation among the four member countries, particularly through initiatives like the BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement, which aims to facilitate the movement of goods and people across borders. It also focuses on Sub-regional cooperation, which enables members to bypass challenges faced by broader regional organizations like SAARC.

4. Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA): This Association was founded in the year 1997. It Includes South Asian countries like India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives, along with 21 other member states from the Indian Ocean region. Major objectives of this association is to promote maritime security, trade, investment, and sustainable development in the Indian Ocean region. Further, IORA focuses on fostering economic growth, trade facilitation, and security cooperation, particularly in maritime domains.

5. South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC): It was Founded in the year 2001, facilitated by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, and Sri Lanka are the members of this cooperation. It aims at improving infrastructure, connectivity, energy cooperation, and trade facilitation among member countries. You should remember here that SASEC has implemented projects in transport, energy, trade facilitation, and information and communication technology (ICT) to promote regional integration.

6. The Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) was founded in the year 1984.

It includes island nations like Maldives and other members from the Indian Ocean region (Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Réunion). Major objectives of this commission is to promote sustainable development, maritime security, and regional cooperation among island countries in the Indian Ocean. It focuses on addressing challenges such as climate change, maritime safety, and economic development.

7. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) – APEC was founded in the year 1989. India has applied for membership but is not yet a full member; however, APEC plays a significant role in the broader Asia-Pacific region. It aims at Promoting free trade, investment, and economic cooperation across the Asia-Pacific. Given India’s growing economic engagement, APEC’s initiatives indirectly influence South Asian economies, even though they are not full members.

8. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) : itb was founded in the year 1967. The members of this organization are Southeast Asian countries, but India is a dialogue partner. it aims at promoting economic growth, cultural exchange, and regional stability. While not a South Asian organization, ASEAN’s engagement with India through the “Act East Policy” aims to strengthen connectivity and economic ties between South Asia and Southeast Asia.

These regional organizations reflect South Asia’s efforts to enhance cooperation, economic integration, connectivity, and development. While SAARC remains the primary regional organization, others like BIMSTEC and BBIN have gained prominence due to their focus on practical cooperation and bypassing political challenges. Together, these organizations contribute to the region’s aspirations for economic growth, stability, and integration in the broader Asian context.

Check Your Progress:

1. Write a note on the importance of South Asia in the Global Arena.
2. Mention the conflicts and challenges faced by South Asia.
3. Examine the regional organisations in South Asia.

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2.8 Summing Up

After reading this unit you have understood that South Asia is a region with dynamic and complex interactions, marked by both opportunities for cooperation and challenges. The challenges faced by South Asia are multifaceted, involving long-standing territorial disputes, socio-economic inequalities, ethnic and religious tensions, and emerging geopolitical shifts. Resolving these issues requires regional cooperation, sustainable development, and strategic diplomacy to ensure peace, stability, and progress in the region. India's emergence as a leader in South Asia is driven by its economic strength, diplomatic influence, security contributions, and development assistance. It engages in trade, investment, and development projects across the region, impacting economic dynamics and integration. Its role in regional forums, strategic partnerships, and cultural diplomacy further solidifies its position as a key regional player. We have also learnt that there are several regional organizations to address the problems faced by the region. These regional organizations reflect South Asia's efforts to enhance cooperation, economic integration, connectivity, and development.

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Unit-3
India and East Asia and South East Asia

Unit Structure:

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Objectives
- 3.3 India's Foreign Policy
 - 3.3.1 Act East Policy
- 3.4 India's Regional Partnership: East Asia and South East Asia
 - 3.4.1 Northeast India: Gateway to Southeast Asia
- 3.5 Summing Up
- 3.6 References and Suggested Readings

3.1 Introduction

One of the main pillars of India's larger plan to become a major force in the world stage is its regional foreign policy toward East and Southeast Asia. The historical ties, geopolitical interests, economic engagements, and difficulties India faces in these regions are all covered in this chapter. India's connections with the nations of East and Southeast Asia are becoming more and more important as it continues to negotiate the challenges of a multipolar world.

India has been involved in trade routes with East and Southeast Asia for a very long time. Deep cultural and religious ties were established when Buddhism moved from India to Southeast Asia. The socio-cultural fabric of these areas was enriched by historical exchanges that allowed for the exchange of ideas in addition to goods.

India borders Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar on land, and it shares maritime borders with these countries as well as Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives. The states that are adjacent to India will be directly impacted by the ups and downs in India's relations with its neighbors. Examining India's neighbourhood policy since independence, it can be seen that New Delhi has repeatedly sacrificed the interests of the neighboring Indian states in order to improve bilateral

relations. India pursued a non-aligned foreign policy following its independence in 1947, avoiding alignment with superpowers and concentrating on forging close ties with its neighbors. India had little interaction with East and Southeast Asia during the Cold War, mostly because of its emphasis on domestic issues and regional stability. But India has had a significant impact on much of the Asia-Pacific area as well as East and Southeast Asia. From India, Buddhism and Hinduism first made their way throughout Asia via trade routes. While Buddhism thrived in nations closer to India, like Burma, Cambodia, and Thailand, Hinduism spread throughout most of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. Buddhism also reached Japan and Vietnam via China and Korea.

India's rise to the third rank in the Asia Power Index, which reflects its growing geopolitical influence, eclipsed Japan in a significant change. The 2024 Asia Power Index reveals that India's consistent ascent in the regional power rankings is among its most noteworthy discoveries.

3.2 Objectives

This unit is an attempt to analyse the India's Foreign Policy with India's position in East Asia and South East Asia.

After going through this unit, you will be able to –

- explain, India's Foreign Policy
- discuss about Act East Policy
- discuss about India and East Asia and Southeast Asia

3.3 India's Foreign Policy (IFP)

India is on the rise and wants to use its position to exert influence in the region and realize its full potential. India has become a dominant force in the region thanks to its dynamic growth, young population, and growing economy. India's post-pandemic economic recovery has been impressive, and this has helped the country's Economic Capability rise by 4.2 points. India is the third-largest economy in the world in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) thanks to its enormous population and robust GDP growth. There may be a demographic dividend as India's Future Resources score rose by 8.2 points. India has an advantage over its regional rivals, especially

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China and Japan, in that its young population will continue to fuel economic expansion and the expansion of the labour force in the ensuing decades. The leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has gained more recognition abroad. India's non-aligned strategic stance has made it possible for New Delhi to successfully negotiate challenging international waters. India's active participation in multilateral forums is reflected in its ranking of sixth in terms of diplomatic dialogues in 2023. Furthermore, India has a lot of promise due to its large population and strong economy. India's global diaspora and cultural exports have supported its score in Cultural Influence, which has also remained relatively strong. Given its strategic autonomy and growing diplomatic influence, India is a major actor in the Indo-Pacific area. India's increasing prominence in the economic, technological, diplomatic, political, and military domains in the region is evident in its interactions with East Asian nations. Launched in 1992, India's Look East policy is now paying off, as evidenced by the region emerging as India's largest trading partner, improved bilateral and multilateral diplomatic ties, and long-term agreements made in the domains of maritime, cyber, and space security. As evidenced by the wide range of interactions at the bilateral and multilateral levels, as well as by trade, investments, and people-to-people contacts in recent years, there is no doubt that relations between India and East Asia are deepening.

The relationship with China paints a much more complex picture, even though Japan and both Koreas do not present a significant obstacle to India's foreign policy objective of winning support for its fundamental cause of territorial integrity and sovereignty. As the two countries' power imbalances widen, so does India's lack of emphasis on the reciprocity principle in its interactions with China. India, therefore, has been attempting to strengthen defense cooperation with Japan and South Korea.

3.3.1 Act East Policy

With the implementation of the "Look East" policy in the early 1990s, India's strategy toward East and Southeast Asia underwent a dramatic change. Strengthening strategic and economic ties with ASEAN countries and other countries was the goal of this policy. The 2014 shift to the "Act

East” policy placed even more emphasis on proactive engagement, with a particular emphasis on trade, investment, and cooperation in security. In 1991, Look East was formally introduced by Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao. After Narasimha Rao, whatever government was there at the country belonging to different political parties: I K Gujral (1997-1998), Atal Bihari Vajpayee (1998-2004), Man Mohan Singh (2004-2014) and Narendra Modi (2014-) but the focus was always there to shift the country’s trading focus from the west and neighbors to the booming South East Asian countries. In light of East Asia’s expanding significance in the world economy, this policy sought to strengthen strategic and commercial ties with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and other East Asian nations. The main objectives were to increase investment, trade, and fortify political and cultural ties.

The need for integration with the dynamic economies of East Asia, especially Japan and the ASEAN member states, as well as India’s economic liberalization were factors that prompted the policy. It aimed to diversify its diplomatic engagements in order to offset India’s historical and geographic emphasis on South Asia. The Look East policy was renamed as “Act East” by the Modi administration in 2014 to reflect a more assertive and goal-oriented strategy. Enhancing India’s role in shaping regional geopolitics, addressing security concerns, and active participation in regional affairs were the main points of emphasis of the change.

The Act East policy aims to achieve several key objectives:

1. **Economic Engagement:** A key component of the policy is bolstering investment and trade relations with East and Southeast Asian nations. The goal of various bilateral agreements and initiatives like the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area (AIFTA) is to increase economic cooperation.
2. **Cultural and People-to-People Ties:** Promoting understanding and goodwill among people requires strengthening cultural ties and improving people-to-people interactions through travel, education, and cultural exchanges.
3. **Strategic Partnerships:** Japan, Vietnam, Australia, and other important nations in the region are among the countries with which India hopes

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to forge extensive strategic partnerships. These alliances are concentrated on technology cooperation, security, and defense.

4. **Maritime Security:** Given the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea, the Act East policy emphasizes ensuring freedom of navigation and addressing regional security challenges through joint naval exercises and security dialogues.
5. **Regional Connectivity:** Enhancing connectivity through infrastructure projects, such as roads, railways, and ports, is a vital aspect of the Act East policy. Initiatives like the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor aim to improve trade links and bolster regional integration.

Stop to Consider

A country's foreign policy is a set of values and guidelines that it adopts and applies to its interactions with other countries and all international actors in order to protect the clearly stated objectives of her national interest.

IFP Features based on Five Principles under Panchsheel :

- Opposition to export of ideologies, regime changes and breaches of national sovereignty.
- India opposes unilateral military action or sanctions.
- Intervention as opposed to meddling in other nations' internal affairs.

Check Your Progress -1

Q1. What is a foreign policy?

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Q2. What is India's rank as per Asia Power Index 2024?

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Q3. Who introduced Look East Policy?

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- **Key Initiatives and Developments**

Economic Initiatives: India has taken significant steps to bolster its economic ties with East and Southeast Asia. The establishment of the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area in 2010 marked a pivotal moment, facilitating tariff reductions and increasing market access. Trade relations with countries like Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia have grown substantially, reflecting the mutual benefits of deeper economic collaboration. The ASEAN region has been advocating for liberalization and free trade, and India is willing to attract investments from other ASEAN countries. ASEAN is trying to reciprocate the Indian gestures, acknowledging the importance of India as a great market where they find the existence of middle-class people in millions. Additionally, they have common historical, religious, and security interests. Both ASEAN countries support the policy of democratization, liberalization, and free trade. The purpose of the ASEAN-India Cooperation Committee's establishment was to serve as a crucial institutional mechanism for supplying relevant content to various areas of cooperation. A working group between ASEAN and India was also formed to identify potential areas of cooperation in trade, investment, human resource development, and science and technology. The Joint Co-operation Committee acknowledged India's scientific and technological proficiency, particularly in the areas of biotechnology and IT. Cooperatives in the food processing, medical, agricultural, engineering, electronics, communication, and service sectors submitted proposals. The establishment of the India-ASEAN fund to promote cooperation in trade, investment, tourism, computer technology, solar energy, and environmental protection was decided upon at the ASEAN-India cooperation committee meeting.

Another sub-regional economic alliance comprising Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand is called BIMSTEC. This is the first grouping of its kind where three South Asian countries and two ASEAN partners have united for economic cooperation. Since its founding in 1998, this organization has recognized several crucial areas for collaboration, including trade and investment, energy, infrastructure, communications, tourism, and fisheries. BIMSTEC, which was established on the Bay of Bengal Rim, seeks to utilize the enormous potential of this subregion's natural

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and human resources. The Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand Economic Cooperation, or BIMSTEC, aims to offer an economic forum where member nations can participate from both the public and private sectors in order to foster a high level of discussion about trade, investment, and economic cooperation.

Despite the progress made under the Act East policy, India faces several challenges:

1. **Geopolitical Rivalry:** The growing assertiveness of China in the Indo-Pacific region poses a significant challenge. India must navigate its relationships carefully to balance its interests while engaging with its neighbors.
2. **Regional Stability:** Political instability in some Southeast Asian countries can complicate India's engagement efforts. India's ability to adapt its strategies to changing political dynamics is crucial for sustained success.
3. **Infrastructure and Investment:** While India has made strides in economic engagement, it still faces infrastructure deficits and bureaucratic hurdles that can hinder its attractiveness as a partner for regional nations.
4. **Domestic Considerations:** Internal factors, including political will, economic reforms, and public sentiment, can influence the effectiveness of the Act East policy.

India's transition from the Look East policy to the Act East policy reflects a strategic shift in its approach to East Asia and Southeast Asia. By emphasizing proactive engagement, India aims to strengthen economic ties, enhance security cooperation, and promote regional stability. As the geopolitical landscape evolves, India's ability to navigate challenges while capitalizing on opportunities will be crucial in solidifying its role as a key player in the Indo-Pacific region. The Act East policy not only enhances India's regional presence but also contributes to the broader vision of a stable, prosperous, and interconnected Asia.

Strategic Interests:

Economic Engagement: India recognizes the economic dynamism of East Asia and Southeast Asia as vital for its own growth. The ASEAN-India Free Trade Area (AIFTA) is a significant milestone, promoting trade and investment by reducing tariffs and facilitating market access. Bilateral trade with countries like Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia has seen substantial growth, driven by India's increasing demand for resources and consumer markets.

Infrastructure Development: India's interest in infrastructure development is exemplified by initiatives like the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor, which aims to enhance connectivity through projects in Southeast Asia. This aligns with Japan's investments in infrastructure in India and other Southeast Asian nations, fostering deeper economic integration.

Security Cooperation: The Indian Ocean region, critical for trade and energy security, has seen increasing naval activities from various countries, particularly China. India's commitment to freedom of navigation in the South China Sea is crucial, as it underscores its stance against unilateral territorial claims. India has conducted joint naval exercises with countries like Vietnam, Australia, and Japan, enhancing maritime security cooperation.

India's security cooperation with Southeast Asian nations includes joint efforts in counterterrorism and combating transnational crime. Bilateral agreements with countries like Singapore and Malaysia focus on intelligence sharing and capacity building, crucial for addressing common security challenges.

3.4 India's Regional Partnerships: East Asia and South East Asia

India has various advantages when it comes to its relations with the countries of Southeast Asia. Indian political ideas, religion, art, and language have historically had a significant influence on Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, South Vietnam, Malaysia, and Indonesia. One of the greatest periods in the histories of both India and Southeast Asia is the dissemination of cultural influences that resulted in the cultural enrichment of those nations. Indian academics haven't done a lot of research on how culture affects Indian foreign policy. In fact, a closer examination and heightened focus

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should be placed on Southeast Asia's intriguing intersection of Indigenous, Indian, and Chinese influences. External influences had always been a part of Southeast Asia. However, the early periods of its history were dominated by Indian influences. Despite having substantial trade with China and the Far East, India was the primary source of inspiration for much of Southeast Asia's philosophy, religion, and artistic expression.

India-Japan Relations: The strategic partnership between India and Japan has deepened significantly in recent years. Both countries share democratic values and face similar challenges posed by China's assertiveness. The Japan-India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement has facilitated trade and investment, while joint military exercises have enhanced defense cooperation. Japan's investments in India are vital for infrastructure development, technology transfer, and capacity building. The two countries have also cooperated in multilateral forums like the Quad, emphasizing regional security and a free, open Indo-Pacific.

India-South Korea Relations: India's relationship with South Korea has evolved into a robust partnership, focusing on trade, technology, and defense. The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) signed in 2009 has enhanced bilateral trade, particularly in sectors like automobiles, electronics, and chemicals. Cultural exchanges, including K-pop and Korean cinema, have fostered goodwill between the two nations. Joint military exercises and defense cooperation have further strengthened the strategic partnership, especially in the context of maritime security.

ASEAN Engagement: India's engagement with ASEAN has intensified, recognizing the bloc's economic significance and geopolitical relevance. India's participation in the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Regional Forum reflects its commitment to regional security and stability. Enhanced trade and investment partnerships with ASEAN countries align with India's economic aspirations.

India-Vietnam Relations: The Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and Vietnam highlights mutual interests in defense, trade, and energy security. Joint military exercises and defense dialogues reflect a shared commitment to maintaining regional stability, especially concerning maritime security in the South China Sea. By leveraging its cultural heritage,

strategic partnerships, and soft power, India aims to solidify its role as a key player in East Asia, contributing to a prosperous and interconnected future.

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Check Your Progress -2

Q4. What is BIMSTEC?

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Q5. What has Japan-India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement facilitated?

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Q6. What is the full form of CEPA?

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Q7. What are the key historical ties between India and Southeast Asia?

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Challenges and Opportunities

India's foreign policy is shaped by the rising influence of China in East Asia and Southeast Asia. Many countries in the region face the challenge of balancing relations with both India and China. India's proactive engagement is essential to position itself as a viable alternative for these nations. Domestic factors, such as political stability and economic reforms, play a crucial role in shaping India's foreign policy. India must address infrastructure deficits and bureaucratic hurdles to enhance its attractiveness as a partner for East and Southeast Asian countries. India's democratic values, soft power, and cultural diplomacy present opportunities for deeper engagement with East Asian and Southeast Asian nations. Initiatives promoting people-to-people ties, cultural exchanges, and educational collaboration can enhance mutual understanding and cooperation.

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3.4.1 Northeast India: Gateway to Southeast Asia

By the 1990s, India's open economic policy started to promote external trade with emphasis on immediate neighbours, and directed its Look East policy to connect with several East and Southeast Asian countries through its Northeast having cultural affinity with these neighbours. The State therefore shifted towards the strategy to cultural diplomacy for interdependent global and regional cooperation and to explore the potential of geo-economics of the North-eastern region as a 'gateway', and accordingly repositioned the space to 'prepare' for a conducive trade, investment and entrepreneurial growth (Haokip T. , 2011). The decision-makers in New Delhi are beginning to recognize the importance of Northeast India as a gateway between Southeast Asia and India. The security aspect dominated New Delhi's thinking for a considerable amount of time. Northeast India was therefore seen as a burden and a liability. But within the framework of India's Look East policy, there's a growing recognition that, with proper infrastructure development, Northeast India has the potential to become a hub for the dynamic economies of Southeast Asia, Southern China, and India. Northeast India – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura – shares land borders with China, Bhutan, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Nepal. It accounts for 7.6 per cent of the area and 3.6 per cent of India's population. However, it makes up for 40 per cent of India's land borders with neighbouring countries. The inter-state boundaries of many Asian countries, including Northeast India, are colonial creations. Instead of uniting people who speak the same language, follow the same religion and belong to the same ethnicity, they tend to divide them. Mizos, Nagas, Meiteis are all divided between India and Myanmar. And in times of turmoil, they find sanctuary and support from kinsmen across borders. The Look (Act) East Policy received a new sense of direction in the North-eastern Region Vision 2020. The geographical isolation and landlocked settings of Northeast India has historically disfavoured NE but after the advent of AEP it is no more a burdensome peripheral region as it will play the important role of connecting the rest of the India with the booming economies of the Southeast Asian countries.

The policy is increasingly projected as the new economic development approach for India's North Eastern Region (NER) and the policy objective is the economic integration of the region with South East Asia (Panda, 2018). The Act East policy's potential is limited by the differences in Southeast Asia's and India's global perspectives. It is unlikely that India will be able to heal the rift through small-scale military drills or trade agreements. In order to become a major player in the region, India must actively look for areas of agreement with Southeast Asian nations on basic issues pertaining to regional governance.

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Check Your Progress -3

Q8. How has India's foreign policy towards East Asia evolved?

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Q9. What are the main objectives of the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area (AIFTA)?

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Q10. Identify two key partnerships that India has established in East Asia.

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Q11. What role does India play in maritime security in the South China Sea?

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Self Asking Questions

Do you think India is a growing superpower? Give reasons in support of your answer (20+50 words)

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Stop to Consider

Points to Remember:

- India's historical ties with East Asia and Southeast Asia are rooted in ancient trade and cultural exchanges.
- The transition from the "Look East" policy to the "Act East" policy signifies India's commitment to proactive engagement in the region.
- Economic cooperation through AIFTA and bilateral agreements plays a vital role in India's strategy.
- Security cooperation, particularly in maritime security and counterterrorism, is crucial in the face of regional challenges.
- India's rise to the third rank in the Asia Power Index.
- In order to promote high-level discussion about trade, investment, and economic cooperation, the BIMSTEC seeks to provide an economic forum where member nations can participate from both the public and private sectors.
- The establishment of the ASEAN-India Free Trade Area in 2010 marked a pivotal moment, facilitating tariff reductions and increasing market access.
- India's partnerships with countries like Japan, South Korea, and Vietnam are central to its regional foreign policy.

Check Your Progress:

1. What is Southeast Asia and how does it relate to India geopolitically?
2. Discuss about India's dialogue partnership's accomplishments with ASEAN.
3. Evaluate the potential for collaboration under BIMSTEC.
4. Analyse the idea behind the "Look East" policy and how it affects India.
5. Discuss the relationship of India with Southeast Asia.

3.5 Summing Up

India's regional foreign policy towards East Asia and Southeast Asia is a dynamic and multifaceted endeavour. As India seeks to assert its influence in a rapidly changing geopolitical landscape, its relationships in these regions will be critical for both national and regional stability. By leveraging historical ties, fostering economic partnerships, and enhancing security cooperation, India aims to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the Indo-Pacific region. The challenges are significant, but the opportunities for collaboration and mutual benefit are equally promising. Through sustained engagement and a commitment to a rules-based order, India can strengthen its position as a key player in East Asia and Southeast Asia, contributing to a stable and prosperous region.

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Unit - 4
India and Middle East

Unit Structure:

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Objectives
- 4.3 India's Relations with Middle East: An Overview
- 4.4 An Overview on Indo-Egyptian Relations
 - 4.4.1 Nehru-Nasser Epoch
 - 4.4.2 After Nehru-Nasser Era
 - 4.4.3 Modi-Sisi Era
 - 4.4.4 Bilateral Trade Relations
 - 4.4.5 Challenges in India-Egypt Relationships
 - 4.4.6 Significance of India-Egypt Relation
- 4.5 An Overview on India-Israel Relationship
 - 4.5.1 Changing Dimensions in Indo-Israel Relations after 2014
 - 4.5.2 Bilateral Trade Relations
 - 4.5.3 Challenges to Indo-Israel Relations
 - 4.5.4 Significance of Indo-Israel Relationship
- 4.6 India-Saudi Arabia Relationship: An Overview
 - 4.6.1 Bilateral Visits-From Nehru to Modi
 - 4.6.2 Bilateral Trade Relations
 - 4.6.3 Challenges to Indo-Saudi Arabia Relations
 - 4.6.4 Significance of Indo-Saudi Arabia Relationship
- 4.7 India's Relationship with Iran
 - 4.7.1 Bilateral Visits of Heads of States
 - 4.7.2 Bilateral Trade Relations
 - 4.7.3 Challenges to India-Iran Relations
 - 4.7.4 Significance of India-Iran Relations
 - 4.7.5 The Chabahar Port Deal- A Roadmap to Future Strategic India-Iran Relationship
- 4.8 Summing Up
- 4.9 References and Suggested Readings

4.1 Introduction

In a general parlance, the Middle East is a diverse cultural and geopolitical region encompassing countries like Egypt, Syria, Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Cyprus, Yemen, and Palestine. The Middle Eastern region is also popularly known as West Asian region. In other words, both Middle East and West Asia can be used interchangeably. Its western border is defined by Mediterranean Sea with countries like Israel, Lebanon and Syria sharing the coast opposite to Greece and Italy in Europe. Although Egypt is in Africa, yet it is often considered as a part of the Middle East. Additionally, Turkey and Cyprus straddling both Europe and Asia are sometimes included in this region.

The term 'Middle East' has evolved over time and its exact boundaries have caused some confusion. But it is a significant crossroad between Asia, Europe and Africa marked by its rich history, diverse cultures and strategic importance. Often hailed as the 'cradle of civilization', the Middle Eastern region remains a centre for world's three major religions-Islam, Christianity and Judaism.

The global significance of Middle Eastern countries has dramatically increased in 1908 when the first Middle-Eastern oilfield, i.e., Masjed Soleyman Oil Field in Iran was discovered. During the period of cold war, large scale oil production reshaped the region turning it into a strategic global hub and shifting the world's power dynamics. The once unassuming vastly deserted landscape became a key player in the world's affairs exemplifying the transformative impact on the globe.

MAP of Middle East (add)

4.2 Objectives

The unit is designed to help students to understand multiple aspects of India-Middle East Relationships in different phases of history. Middle East is a complex geopolitical region which encompasses a handful of countries which we have already come to know from the introduction part. Therefore, it is important to explore every trajectories of India's relationship with Middle Eastern countries. We have selected four Middle Eastern

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countries, namely, Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia and Iran to study for this unit. After reading this unit, you will be able to

- Understand India's engagement with Middle Eastern region from independence to till date.
- Explore challenges and significance of India's rendezvous with Egypt
- Analyse changing dimension between India-Iran relations depending on changes in domestic power regimes.
- Comprehend bi-lateral economic and cultural exchanges between India and Saudi Arabia.
- Assess India's increasing dependency on Israel and vice versa, specially after 2014.

4.3 India's Relation with the Middle East: An Overview

As the international community started acknowledging sources of oil as one of driving forces of modern civilization, the Middle Eastern region has started to attract global eyeballs specially after the second half of the 20th century. But with India, it has been a different story, for this region played a vital role in the historical development of this country and has been of key importance through the centuries. India's relations with this region can be traced back into hoary times, even before the advent of Islam. Historical trade routes lay through this region much before Islam came on the scene.

These links have been socio-economic and cultural with the Muslim world of the Gulf and Middle East, whether Shia or Sunni, beginning of course even before either was there. But both the streams of Islam flowed into India made a natural home here. This relationship acquired a new dimension with the struggle against imperialism in the modern world and post war colonial revolt. The non-alignment movement in the cold war period marked another watershed in the growth of present links and relationships.

In contemporary times, the Middle East is widely recognized for its significant wealth in terms of oil, infrastructure, business, tourism and devastating conflict making it a major geopolitical space attracting powerful international actors particularly USA, China and India. India has recognized abundant opportunities that engagement with the Middle East presence and

has been proactive in capitalizing on them. The aforementioned discussion has marked the fact of India's persuasion of a multi-faced approach involving diplomacy, economic cooperation and strategic efforts to foster and enhance its relations with Middle Eastern nations. India has established diplomatic ties with several Middle Eastern countries such as, Egypt, Qatar, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel and more. These diplomatic relationships encompass various aspects including trade, cooperation and energy sector and efforts to promote regional stability. India places her highest strategic importance on its partnership in the Middle East primarily due to consideration related to energy, security and geopolitical influence. This diplomatic connection also extends to cultural exchanges and welfare of Indian Diaspora residing in the Middle East.

4.4 An Overview on Indo-Egyptian Relations

The relationship between India and Egypt, two of the world's oldest civilizations, can be traced back to at least 3rd Century B.C. when Emperor of Maurya Dynasty the Great Ashoka sent ambassadors to Egyptian empire of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. This historical record were documented by Emperor Ashoka himself in his '13th Rock Edict' written in early decades on 13th century. Similarly, the Emperor of Egypt too sent an ambassador, named, Dionysius to the Pataliputra capital of Maurya empire. Both India and Egypt (erstwhile United Arab Republic) have common saga of British imperial domination throughout 18th and first half of 19th centuries. Therefore, the struggle against imperialism led to the emergence of a modern political and economic relationship between Egypt and India. The national freedom movements of both countries witnessed certain common threads. Mahatma Gandhi of India and Saad Zaghloul of Egypt shared a number of common goals in their national freedom struggle. When India got independence in 1947, Egypt remained under British rule till 1956. The struggle in Egypt erupted in a massive shape, started with the overthrow of the rule of the Pashas through Egyptian revolution in 1952, followed by the rise of elected president Gamal Abdel Nasser in 1956 as the symbol of progressive, Arab nationalism, and climaxing with the nationalization of the Suez Canal. A friendship treaty was signed between India and Egypt in 1955 as Egypt began to see world politics through Nehruvian lenses.

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4.4.1 Nehru-Nasser Epoch

When India and Egypt got independence in early years of cold war, both Nehru and Nasser shared common vision to new global order. When Nasser had to face attack from Britain and France due to nationalization of Suez Canal, Pt. Nehru vehemently opposed both super powers and stood by Nasser's army. Nasser's gravitation towards the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) led by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru provided political impulse and guidance to the NAM. In 1961, India and Egypt along with Yugoslavia, Indonesia and Ghana established the NAM. Apart from combating imperialism, both Nehru and Nasser were also in a mission to moderate the cold war and bring great powers in dialogue with each other. Actually meeting between Nehru and Nasser was viewed as a meeting of self-confidence and independent vision of two emerging titans in those periods of divided world order, which formed bedrock of Indo-Egyptian relations.

It may be noted that at a time when the western countries were trying to push resolutions on Kashmir unacceptable to India through the Security Council and to use the good offices of non permanent members of the Security Council, Egypt resolved not to go along with these resolutions. To take one instance, in June 1962, Egypt not only made known its unwillingness to sponsor a draft resolution inimical to India but influenced other non permanent members of Security Council too from taking harsh stand on India.

The decade of 1960s was considered troublesome for both India and Egypt. India had to face Indo-China war in 1962 followed by death of Pt. Nehru and Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1964 & 1966 respectively and Indo-Pak war in 1965. Similarly, the rise of Egypt- Israel aggression in 1967 and death of President Nasser in 1970 marked political instability and economic turmoil in Egypt. In 1973, the Egypt became strategic partner of USA and India's foreign policy had soft corner to USSR over USA during this phase. Therefore, after the death of Nehru and Nasser, India's relation with Egypt have seen highs and lows but diplomatic and political dialogue between the two countries has continued at regular interval.

4.4.2 After Nehru-Nasser Era

In 1973, the Egypt became strategic partner of USA and India's foreign policy had soft corner to USSR over USA during this phase. Therefore, after the death of Nehru and Nasser, India's relation with Egypt have seen highs and lows but diplomatic and political dialogue between the two countries has continued at regular interval. Hence, Indo-Egyptian relationship got stagnant till 2008 due to feeling of mutual negligence. In 2008, the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak visited India and both the countries established a Strategic and Security Policy Dialogue at foreign ministry level.

4.4.3 Modi-Sisi Era

India's relations with Egypt started to revive again since 2014 which has been diluted for last 20 years. In Modi era, a Joint Statement between India and Egypt in 2016 identified political-security cooperation, economic engagement and scientific collaboration, and cultural and people-people ties as the basis of a new partnership. In order to combat COVID-19 pandemic, the Egypt provided 3 lakhs doses of Remdesivir Vaccines to India. In 2021, the first ever joint tactical air exercise named 'Desert Warrior' was took place between the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Egyptian Air Force (EAF). Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi visited India as the Chief Guest for the 74th Republic Day celebration in January, 2023. This is happening for the first time in history that an Egyptian President has come as a chief guest on our Republic Day. During his visit, one Egyptian military contingent participated in the Republic Day parade. In this regard, the first 14 days long joint exercise between Special Forces of India and Egypt titled 'Exercise Cyclone' was organized from 14th January 2023 in Jaisalmer, India.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi too visited Egypt in the same year where a strategic partnership agreement was signed which happened to be a bilateral pact between the aforementioned two countries. It was the first bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Egypt in last 26 years as the last one was in 1997. This strategic partnership will have four elements-

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- Political, defence and security;
- Economic engagement;
- Scientific and academic collaboration; and
- Cultural and people-to-people contacts.

Egyptian President also honoured PM Modi with the ‘Order of the Nile’ -the highest civilian honour of Egypt on 25th June, 2023. Moreover, three important agreements were signed between them on three different sectors during this visit, they are,

- Agriculture and allied sectors;
- Protection and preservation of Monuments; and Archeological Sites; and
- Competition law.

The state visit also covered in-depth discussion on further cooperation in G-20, highlighting the issues of food and energy insecurity, climate change and the need for the Global South to have a concerted voice.

During this visit, PM Modi offered homage to Helipolis War Cemetery in Egypt-a graveyard of the Indian soldiers who bravely fought and laid down their lives in Egypt and Palestine during the WWI. Another significance of this state visit was PM Modi’s visit to the fourth oldest mosque in Cairo (Capital of Egypt) i.e. Al- Hakim Mosque, which was restored with the help of India’s Dawoodi Bohra Community.

Stop to Consider

The ‘Order of Nile’ the highest civilian honour of Egypt, which was instituted in 1915. The ‘Order of Nile’ is conferred upon

- ✓ Heads of States
- ✓ Crown princes
- ✓ Vice presidents who offer Egypt or humanity invaluable services.

In tune with NAM, both India and Egypt did not choose any side even during Russia-Ukraine War but craved their independent paths.

4.4.4 Bilateral Trade Relations

- Bilateral Trade Agreement has been in operation since March 1978 and is based on the Most Favoured Nation (MNF) clause.
- Bilateral trade in 2018-19 was US\$ 4.55 billion, US\$ 4.5 billion in 2019-20 and to US\$ 4.15 billion in 2020-21.
- Bilateral trade expanded rapidly in 2021-22, amounting to 7.26 billion registering a 75% increase compared to FY 2020-21.
- India as the 6th most important trading partner for Egypt in FY2021-22.
- India was Egypt's 5th largest trading partner including 5th largest exporter to Egypt for the period of April 2022-December 2022.
- India mainly imports mineral oil, fertilizers, cotton and textiles from Egypt. Again, major export products to Egypt include petroleum oils, bovine meat, ferro-alloys, rice, iron & steel etc.

4.4.5 Challenges in India-Egypt Relationship

Firstly, the relationship has been declined in post NAM era. The relationship between India-Egypt has gone through a period of decline in post 1990s with subsequent weakening of NAM. Both the countries are still grappling over finding the core issues between them to be pursued. Secondly, internal instability in Egypt is another hurdle between India and Egypt relationship. Egypt faces a burgeoning terrorist threat in its western desert where Al-Qaeda affiliate, Ansar al-Islam etc. has begun operating. Thirdly, Egypt's rising engagement with China is generating skepticism between India and Egypt. China and Egypt established a strategic partnership and also carried out some military engagements in recent years. India-Egypt relations can also be viewed in light of China's increased engagement with countries in West Asia and North Africa.

In spite of aforementioned challenges, the relationship between India and Egypt has achieved a new height specially after first decade of the 21st century. On 18th August, 2022, India and Egypt completed their 75 years of diplomatic relations. Amidst lows and turmoils, the Indo-Egypt relationship is significant in following ways:

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4.4.6 Significance of India-Egypt Relation

Firstly, Egypt is geo strategically and geo politically important for India. Egypt is considered a hub for trade routes between Europe, Africa and Asia due to its strategic location. Egypt's strategic location as a front line neighbor of Israel means its present policies are of vital relevance including India. Egypt is holding a role of significant partner to deepen India's tie with Arab nations as part of the renewed Indian focus on West Asia. By strengthening friendship with Egypt, India has improved relations with all major gulf countries. The country accords great importance to multilateral forums that comprise developing countries, such as, NAM and the G77 considering their contribution to South-South co-operation. Secondly, India-Egypt relationship is significant pertaining to mutual interests in terms of security. Egypt is a key player in West Asia and North Africa where the Islamic States and other terrorist organization have been expanding footprints. Thirdly, the bond is of crucial importance in terms of energy security. Egypt is an oil and gas exporting middle income country while India is oil and gas importing low income country. Both countries are potential partners in solar and other renewable energies. India is one of the leading countries in the world in solar energy and Egypt is one of the biggest producers of solar energy in the region having one of the largest solar parks in the world. Also, Egypt is one of the major countries attracting investments in green hydrogen energy, where Indian companies are also interested. Fourthly, the relationship is characterized by renewed dependency amidst Russia-Ukraine war. The ongoing war has exacerbated Egypt's economic woes by cutting off wheat impacts from Ukraine and Russia. Within this context, India has emerged as an alternative supplier of wheat to Egypt. India recently in 2022 also exempted Egypt from the wheat export ban imposed amid the brutal heat wave conditions in the country. Actually, the Egyptian Cabinet announced the inclusion of India on 14th April, 2022 in the list of accredited countries which can supply wheat to Egypt, thus ending a long pending Non-Tariff Barrier (A Non-Tariff Barrier is a trade restriction- such as a quota, embargo or sanction- that countries use to further their political and economic goals). India cleared a shipment of 61,500 metric tons of wheat to Egypt on May 17, 2022. Fifthly, the relationship is

characterized by cooperation in the field of science and technology. Both Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Agricultural Research Centre of Egypt are working together in the field of agricultural research. Science and technology cooperation is implemented through biennial Executive Programmes and Scientific Cooperation Programme between CSIR (India) and NRC (Egypt). Sixthly, a Joint Defence Committee (JDC) plays a crucial role in shaping the current defence cooperation between India and Egypt. Last but not the least, Maulana Azad Centre for Indian Culture (MACIC) in Egypt promotes cultural cooperation through activities such as language classes, seminars, film shows, exhibitions, and participation in local cultural events.

From the above discussion, we can consider that the partnership between India and Egypt is emerging as a win-win partnership and carries an explosive potentiality in upcoming days. Egypt has emerged as a natural choice for India to expand her strategic interest and materialize India's Look West Policy in the region.

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Stop to Consider

A **state visit** is a formal visit by a head of state (or representative of a head of state) to a foreign country, at the invitation of the head of state (or representative) of that foreign country, with the latter also acting as the official host for the duration of the state visit. Speaking for the host, it is generally called a **state reception**. State visits are considered to be the highest expression of friendly bilateral relations between two sovereign states, and are in general characterized by an emphasis on official public ceremonies.

Check Your Progress

1. Discuss India's engagement with Egypt from Nehru-Nasser Epoch to Modi-Sisi Epoch.
2. Analyze Bi-lateral trade relationships between India and Egypt.
3. Explain roadblocks/challenges as well as significance of India-Egypt relationship in contemporary world.

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4.5 An Overview on India- Israel Relationship

While India became independent in 1947 from British colony, Israel was also emancipated in 1948 from other Arab countries. But India did not recognize Israel as a separate state in 1948. In the initial days India was not in favour of Israel, she opposed the partition of Palestine, voted against Israel in the UNO in 1949. The reasons behind this decision were- **firstly**, in spite of having sympathy for the Jews, both Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru believed that the idea of two nations on the basis of religion would not sustain for eternity. They were of the view that any state based on religious exclusivity could not sustain on moral and political grounds, and hence vowed to the Palestinian cause. **Secondly**, as a newly independent country, India wanted to improve its alliance with Palestine and other Arab countries due to its dependency on Arab states for oil imports, to demonstrate solidarity of Indian Muslims with Palestinian Muslims and so on and so forth.

Eventually Israel secured UN membership in May 11, 1949, signed armistice agreements with its neighbours and was recognized as a sovereign state by the leading powers. Eventually, India also felt compelled to recognize Israel in 1950. Although India recognized Israel as an independent nation yet diplomatic relations continued to remain distant. Actually, India's leanings towards the Soviet Union during the cold war and status as a key architect of the NAM meant that its allegiance was with its Arab allies. Hence, it had very limited, if any, diplomatic relations with the western bloc-allied Israel at that time.

But situation started to change after 1990s when Israel tried to make peace negotiations with Palestine. The Israeli-Palestinian peace process in 1991 gave New Delhi the necessary leeway to correct its pro-Soviet and pro-Arab tilt in its global diplomacy. Therefore, India established formal diplomatic ties with Israel under the leadership of PM P.V. Narasimha Rao in 1992. There were two main reasons behind this relation- **Firstly**, India felt necessity to diversify her arms import sources after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and began to reposition itself in world politics in the wake liberalization, privatization and globalization. In order to develop her domestic defence sector, India began to seek for Joint Research &

Development Project Partners which made India to have a pragmatic approach towards Israel. **Secondly**, India wanted to be self-reliant in military equipment production like Israel. India wanted to boost her military production with Israel's state-of-the-art technology. All these developments led to improvement in Indo-Israel relationship.

Israel was one of such countries which did not condemn India's second nuclear test conducted in Pokhran in 1998. In spite of international sanctions and impositions against India's Pokhran-II nuclear tests from several super powers, Israel continued to supply weapons and surveillance systems. Israel marked herself as a reliable defence partner of India during the Kargil War in 1999. During the war, upgraded existing military hardware as well as supplied Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and surveillance system for Jaguar and Myriad to Indian Air Force. Moreover, Israel assisted India to upgrade Mig-21 Combat Aircraft as well as supplied laser-guided bombs and 16 MM Mortar Ammunition to Indian Army. This military cooperation still continued in the period of 2000s. The Indo-Israel arms trade covered another essential surveillance and intelligence related equipments like, Super Dvora-class patrol vessels, Airborne early warning, Control (AEW&C) System EL/ M-2075 Phalcon etc. In addition to that, Govt. of India purchased Israel's Barak Surface 2 missile during 2003-2006 for modernization of Indian Navy. Now-a-days, Israeli defence companies such as IAI, Elbit and Rafael are interested in manufacturing UAs, missiles, radars etc. with Indian private companies.

4.5.1 Changing Dimensions in Indo-Israel Relations after 2014

The period after 2014 has put Indo-Israel relationship on a pedestal as Israel's shares have increased very rapidly in Indian arms market during this period. According to experts, this happened due to Israel's eager to be an active player in India's Make in India policy; the policy which was designed to create an easy and friendly investment atmosphere so that a modern and efficient infrastructure can be developed and foreign capitals can be introduced in new sector.

The relationship has been strengthened with PM Narendra Modi's visit to Israel in July, 2017 and signed a \$2.6 billion arms and science and technology deal worth \$40 million. This visit considered historic as it was

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the first visit for any Indian PM to Israel after 7 decades of India's independence.

On 17th October, 2021, the External Affairs Minister of India Dr. S. Jaishankar paid an official visit to Israel. During his visit, India-Israel Joint Working Group (JWG) on defence cooperation decided to establish a task force to prepare a comprehensive roadmap to identify new areas of collaboration. In this respect, both parties agreed to form a Sub Working Group (SWG) based on defence-industry cooperation, technology flows and industrial capability sharing.

Israel's Defence Minister Benny Gantz visited India on 2nd June, 2022 in order to celebrate Israel and India's 30 years of friendship and official diplomatic ties. The Israeli Defence Minister met his Indian counter partner i.e. Mr. Rajnath Singh and talked about strengthening the security cooperation between the two countries. In order to reiterate the commitment to deepening and expanding defence cooperation, a 'Vision Statement' was signed by Mr. Gantz and Mr. Singh. The Vision Statement presented a vision for future collaboration between India-Israel through ensuring their economic and security interests together. They came to a consensus that both the countries can enhance their capabilities since they are together dealing with a number of common threats, such as, border security and terrorism, etc.

The above discussion has implied rich future prospects between India and Israel. There is a talk about a free trade agreement i.e. FTA which will invariably deepen economic ties between them. Again, the two countries have decided to recognize each other's COVID-19 vaccination certificates to encourage international travel. Further, Israel has decided to join the International Solar Alliance (ISA) launched by India, which indicates bi-lateral urge to intensify scope of soft power diplomacy in order to bear fruits of people-to-people contact and inter-country tourism.

4.5.2 Bilateral Trade Relations

- India is the largest buyer of Israeli military equipments. In other words, India is Israel's top destination for arms exports, buying 41% of Israel's arms export between 2012 and 2016.

- Israel is India's third-largest source of arms, with a 7.2% share of imports between 2012 and 2016, next to the USA (14%) and Russia (68%).
- India is Israel's third-largest Asian trade partner. Their bilateral ties cover a number of sensitive areas such as high technology products, defence equipment, space, security, intelligence etc.
- The most important emerging area of cooperation between these two countries is- joint production of key defense items. Apart from this, commercial and development ties between two countries cover sectors like agriculture, water management, pharmaceuticals and information technology etc.

4.5.3 Challenges to Indo-Israel Relations

Firstly, the prime challenge comes from India's Non-Aligned status. It is worth mentioning that one of the crucial aspects of Non-alignment movement was Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)'s support. The PLO supported NAM and India was the first non-Arab nation to recognize PLO, which Israel declared as a terrorist organization. *Secondly*, the rising intimacy with Israel does not prevent India from extending its support to the demand of a 'Free Palestine'. In 2017, **India voted in favour of Palestine** in United Nations General Assembly. *Fourthly*, India **voted against Israel** in the 46th session of United Nations Human Rights Commission in 2021 in 3 resolutions and abstained from voting in the 4th resolution. These 3 resolutions were- a) Palestinians' right to self determination, b) Israeli Settlement Policy; & c) Human Rights situation between Israel and Syria in the Golan Heights.

4.5.4 Significance of Indo-Israel Relationship

Firstly, According to a report published by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) on March 2021, India is Israel's top destination for arms exports, buying 41% of Israel's arms export between 2012 and 2016. Similarly, Israel is India's top 3 arms supplier in the last 5 years after Russia and France. India imports 13% of her arms supply from Israel. *Secondly*, there is an active collaboration between Indian spy agency

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Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and Israeli spy agency Mossad. The first spy chief RN Kao was tasked by the then Indian PM Indira Gandhi to establish ties with Mossad. **Thirdly**, Indian Air Force introduced a Medium-Range-Surface-to-Air-Missile (MRSAM) on 9th September, 2021. This MRSAM was jointly developed by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) which encompasses hi-tech systems such as, advanced radar, mobile launchers, command and control system etc. **Fourthly**, The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and Israel Space Agency (ISA) together are designing a space cooperation programme. In 2008, ISRO launched an Israeli reconnaissance satellite, known as “TecSAR”. **Fifthly**, India and Israel signed a \$3 billion deal in the last 6 years to secure a, Advanced surface-to-air missile system designed for all the three defence forces on India. **Sixthly**, the largest agriculture project of Israel is in India which covers 19 Indian states. The major terms of reference behind this Indo-Israel Agriculture Project is to increase agricultural productivity in India through using Israeli knowledge and technology. Actually, Israel’s desalination technique is very relevant to combat India’s water shortage problem. A number of 15 of the proposed 26 centres of excellence in agriculture are being developed in India with Israel’s help. For example, India has benefited from Israeli technologies in horticulture mechanization, protected cultivation, orchard and canopy management, nursery management, micro-irrigation and post harvest management, particularly in Haryana and Maharashtra. **Seventhly**, the relationship bears significance in the field of cyber security too. Both the countries have signed a MoU to start skill development and training programmes in this area of cyber security. **Last but not the least**, India-Israel signed a contract in March 2020 for 16,000 Negev NG-7 machine guns from Israel Weapon Industries (IWI). In 2021, a total number of 6000 general purpose machine guns were being supplied to Indian Army by Israel.

Although a number of obstacles can be drawn between Indo-Israel relationship, yet periodical high level visits of both Indian and Israeli leaders for last 6-7 years has marked significance of bi-lateral cooperation between India and Israel. From the history of defence partnership between India and Israel, it becomes vividly clear that shaping of policy decisions do

prioritize necessity over ideology in India's foreign policy during this era. India can be benefitted from Israel's ready-to-use critical technologies.

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Check Your Progress

1. Discuss the recent developments and future prospects of India-Israel bi-lateral ties.
2. Discuss the importance of Israel for India and how this relationship has evolved throughout the time

4.6 India-Saudi Arabia Relationship- An Overview

India-Saudi Arabia relations or Indo-Saudi relations are the bilateral relationship between the Republic of India and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Relations between the two nations are generally strong and close, especially in commercial interests. India and Saudi Arabia do enjoy cordial and friendly relations reflecting the centuries old economic and socio-cultural ties. Being linked by the waterways of the Indian Ocean, the history of trade relationship between India and Saudi Arabia can be traced back to 5000 years ago, even during the dawn of Indus valley civilization. Over 5,000 years ago, ships made with teak from Kerala freely traversed the waters of the Indian Ocean and linked the people of Sindh, Gujarat and Malabar with the different ports of the Gulf and the Red Sea, going up to Basra and Alexandria. The Cheraman Juma Masjid in Kerala is believed to be the first mosque built in India by Arab traders around 629 AD.

Indian Muslim scholars went to Mecca in order to learn Islamic theology. Arab Muslim scholars came to India to learn mathematics, science, astronomy and philosophy. These exchanges led to the widespread diffusion of knowledge in the sciences, arts, religion and philosophy. Today, Islam is an integral part of India's nationhood and ethos and of the rich tapestry of its culture. India has made significant contributions to all aspects of Islamic civilization. Centres of Islamic learning in India have made a seminal contribution to Islamic and Arabic studies. The Muslim population in India has considered the third largest in the globe.

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Their diplomatic relations were established from the very first year of India's independence, i.e., 1947, which was followed by high level visits from both sides in different phases of history.

4.6.1 Bilateral Visits-from Nehru to Modi

The Indo-Saudi relationship has witnessed periodical high level bilateral visits since independence. Till date, four Indian Prime Minister made state visits to the kingdom of Saudi. Similarly, the monarchs of Saudi also paid official visit to India for fourth times till today.

In 1955, when the King Saud of Saudi Arabia visited India, Nehru govt took him in a ceremonial procession on elephant back in Varanasi. He also visited Indian Military Academy and presented a sword made of gold to its commandant and then India's first PM Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru reciprocated the state visit to the kingdom in 1956.

The visit of PM Indira Gandhi to Saudi Arabia in April, 1982 further consolidated the bilateral ties. During this visit, both countries did underline the importance of maintaining an atmosphere conducive to further negotiations between Islamabad and New Delhi, to attain the objectives of non-aggression and non-use of force. They agreed that consolidation of Indo-Pak relations would contribute to the security, stability and peace in South Asia, and the entire region.

In January, 2006 Saudi King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz al-Saud's visit, the first by a Saudi monarch in last 51 years was considered landmark in the development of increased understanding and cooperation between the two countries and the creation of a mutually beneficial partnership. The Saudi king happened to be Chief Guest of India's 57th Republic Day, 2006. The Saudi monarch signed the famous Delhi Declaration with PM Manmohan Singh on 27th January, 2006 which envisages active cooperation in combating terrorism, a strategic energy partnership and dealing with regional issues from a broader global perspective. The declaration highlighted exchanges of high level bilateral visits & consultations, joint cooperation to fight the menace of terrorism and other transnational crimes like money-laundering, drugs and arms smuggling etc., closer cooperation in the field of technology, in particular in the field of information and communication

technology, agriculture, biotechnology, and non-conventional energy technologies as well as health sector etc.

In a response to more high level bilateral visits being kept in Delhi Declaration, PM Manmohan Singh too had a state visit to Saudi in February, 2010. Several agreements & MoUs representing a broad range of cooperation in the areas of energy security, science & technology, peaceful use of outer space, culture, media etc. were signed which would further enrich and institutionalize the strategic objectives and cooperation between India and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia . The visit led to signing of the Riyadh Declaration in which both the countries decided to boost their relationship from one of cooperation to one of a strategic partnership covering security, economic, defence and political areas. During his visit, PM Manmohan Singh was conferred an honorary doctorate by Saudi Arabia's prestigious King Saud University.

In February, 2014 the Crown Prince of Saudi Mohammed Bin Salman's visit to India further intensified efforts to finalize the framework agreement between the General Investment Authority in Saudi Arabia (SAGIA) and Invest India, which will facilitate investments by the private sectors in the two countries, especially in the fields of the petrochemical industries, pharmaceuticals, medical equipments, and for the establishment of joint ventures in these fields. This visit did ensure building strong cooperation in the area of radio and television, as also in fields of media coverage, exchange of programs and training via exchanging expertise in the regulation of audiovisual media between the concerned regulatory bodies of the two countries, as well as on activation of the agreement signed between Saudi Press Agency (SPA) and the Press Trust of India (PTI). The visit resulted signing of an MoU on Defense Cooperation between two countries.

India's current PM Narendra Modi visited Saudi Arabia twice- 2016 & 2019. The first official visit held in April, 2016 further consolidated the strategic partnership framework and witnessed signing of five agreements including plans to cooperate in intelligence sharing and increase recruitment and investments. The bilateral talks covered areas like- energy, security threats and Indian Diaspora etc. PM Modi is the first Indian to confer the highest civilian award of Saudi Arabia during this visit. The second official

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visit of PM Modi to Saudi Arabia was scheduled for two days in October, 2019. In order to coordinate on strategically important issues, the **Indo-Saudi Strategic Partnership Council**, headed by PM Narendra Modi and Crown Prince Mohammed was formed during this visit and the council agreed to meet in an interval of after every two years. The first meeting of the council was held on 11 September, 2023 in New Delhi, India. A number of MoUs pertaining to Energy, Civil Aviation, Security Cooperation, Defence, launch of RuPAY Cards and regulation of medical products were signed during this second visit. The PM of India invited Saudi companies in the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), 2021 to invest in India's energy sector as India has set a target of \$100 billion investment in the sector by 2024.

The Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud visited India in September, 2023 in order to attend the 18th G20 Summit hosted in India.

SAQ:

Do you think that state visits between Heads of States do enhance bilateral bonds between countries? Raise your opinion (80 words)

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.....
.....
.....

4.6.2 Bilateral Trade Relations

- Indo-Saudi bilateral trade reached US\$27.48 billion in the financial year 2017-18, up from US\$25.1 billion in the preceding year.
- Saudi Arabia's exports to India stood at US\$22.06 billion whereas India's exports were US\$5.41 billion.
- Saudi is India's 4th largest trade partner. In 2018-19, the India-Saudi bilateral trade was the US\$ 34.03 billion.
- Imported items from India to Saudi Arabia basically include- cereals, machinery, iron or steel products, meat, vehicles, ceramic products, electronic equipments, clothing (not knit or crochet) etc. Similarly,

exported items from Saudi Arabia to India include mainly, crude oil, plastics, organic & inorganic chemicals, fertilizers, gems & other precious metals, aircraft & spacecraft, aluminum, copper, etc.

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4.6.3 Challenges to Indo-Saudi Arabia Relations

Firstly, Pakistan is the skeptical factor between Indo-Saudi relationship. Although Saudi's soft corner for Pakistan is not affecting cordial ties with India, yet no one can forget the fact that Saudi stood in favour of Pakistan during Indo-Pak war in 1965 and 1971. Again, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are leading members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). During the 1990-91 Persian Gulf War, Pakistan sent troops to protect the Islamic holy sites in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, Saudi was the only country that was taken in complete confidence by PM Nawaz Sharif on Pakistan's decision on performing atomic test in weapon-testing laboratories-III. Furthermore, Saudi promised to supply 50,000 barrels per day of free oil to help Pakistan cope with likely economic sanctions in the aftermath. For decades, Pakistan has facilitated the Kingdom with military training programmes and some Pakistan army troops remain stationed on the ground there.

Secondly, India's closeness to USSR bloc and Saudi's close proximity to USA bloc during cold war period made the relationship between India and Saudi diplomatically complex. In fact, Saudi provided extensive financial and political support to the Afghan mujahideen fighting in the Soviet-Afghan War in the 1980s. Yet these complexities are not causing hostile relationship between the countries at any cost.

4.6.4 Significance of Indo-Saudi Arabia Relationship

Firstly, the significance of India-Saudi Arabia relationship lies in geographical and demographical connection between two countries. The Muslim population in India, the third largest in the globe, pay homage to Mecca and Medina of Saudi Arabia as the birth place of the Islamic prophet Hazrat Muhammad. As many as 165,000 Indian pilgrims perform Haj annually-which is the second largest group from any single country. A similar number perform the Umrah annually.

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Secondly, the relationship is significant for Indian Diaspora as well. Saudi Arabia is home to the largest Indian community abroad numbering about 2.6 million which indicates coming huge amounts of remittances to India in the form of dollar(\$). Indian workers and professionals have participated in the extraordinary development of this region. Indeed, it would be difficult to identify a major project in this region with which Indians have not been involved in some way or the other.

Thirdly, Saudi Arabia is India's second largest supplier of crude oil-providing about 18% of its energy needs. It also has a major role in India's Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPRs).

Fourthly, beauty and strength of any relationship lies in times of crisis. During the first wave of COVID-19 Pandemic, India provided 4.5 million COVISHIELD vaccines in two separate consignments to the kingdom. Similarly, during the second wave, Saudi provided India with COVID-relief material particularly liquid oxygen.

Stop to Consider

Air travel arrangements were temporary bilateral arrangements between countries meant to resume commercial passenger services during regular international flight operation suspension. The reciprocal nature of these air bubble agreements means that airlines from both countries are given similar benefits. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the majority of countries banning international flights, the Air Bubble agreement gained much attraction in recent times, specially during time of pandemic and international war. India has signed Air Bubble Agreement with 35 nations till date, Saudi Arabia remains one amongst them.

Both India and Saudi Arabia signed an Air Bubble Agreement in January, 2022 in place for air travel between the two countries, allowing all qualifying travelers to travel between the two countries. The agreement enables Indian carriers and Saudi Arabian carriers to operate flights between the two countries and transport passengers on flights defined in the contract.

Check Your Progress

1. Discuss the evolution of India-Saudi Arabia relationship.
2. How does bilateral trade relationship impact India's engagement with Saudi Arabia. Discuss.
3. Explain obstacles as well as relevance of India-Saudi Arabia relationship.

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4.7 India's Relationship with Iran

Iran seems to be the best example to demonstrate how a nation needs to maintain strategic gap as well as proximity considering one's national interest.

Both India and erstwhile Persia or today's Iran have had close relations from ancient history onwards as evidence from Indus valley civilization do suggest having trade relations with Mesopotamian civilization. During the middle ages, there was fusion of medieval Persian culture in India since the Delhi Sultanate till the period of Mughal. In modern age, after the partition of India in 1947, the newly independent India was no longer a neighbouring country to the state of Iran.

The formal diplomatic relations between India and Iran was established in 1950 through signing Treaty of Friendship and Perpetual Peace. But this relationship witnessed new low after 1953 when the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of Iran overthrew the then elected government and replaced Mohammad Mosaddegh by Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. The newly established Shah's government was a puppet government of USA, where the later used 'regime change' is a policy to intensify its club of satellite nations. Due to India's stand in NAM and inclination towards USSR, the relationship between India-Iran started to decline from this point. Under Shah's regime, Baghdad Pact was signed in 1954 which further establish roadblocks in this relationship, because Baghdad Pact was signed amongst countries like Great Britain, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq and Turkey resulted into the formation of Central Treaty Organization (CENTO).

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Stop to Consider

The **Central Treaty Organization (CENTO)**, formerly known as the **Middle East Treaty Organization (METO)** and also known as the **Baghdad Pact**, was a military alliance of the Cold War. It was formed on 24 February 1955 by Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. The alliance was dissolved on 16 March 1979. The organization's headquarter was in Baghdad, Iraq from 1955 to 1958 and thereafter in Ankara, Turkey from 1958 to 1979. Cyprus was also an important location for CENTO due to the British military bases in Akrotira and Dhekelia along with the island's location in the Middle East.

The institutions supported a wide range of non-military activities, with a particular focus on agriculture and development, In 1960, for example, CENTO had funded 37 projects covering agriculture, education, health, economic development and transportation. It also arranged at least one symposium on the problem of foot-and-mouth and rinderpest.

International relations always gets impacted by changes in domestic politics which becomes evident in case of India-Iran relationship. Due to USA's increasing hegemony and imposition of western values over the land of Iran, a mass protest occurred in order to safeguard Islamic culture and values in 1979, known as Islamic Revolution. The Islamic Revolution, 1979 replaced Shah Pahlavi dynasty by the theocratic Ayatollah Ruhollah Musavi Khomeini. The new regime under Khomeini in Iran re-established cordial relations with India as Khomeini was a firm believer of independent foreign policy. The establishment of India-Iran Joint Commission in 1983 further consolidated the relationship.

4.7.1 Bilateral Visits of Heads of States

In 1993, then PM P.V. Narasimha Rao visited Iran marking the first definite effort to set the bilateral relationship in a positive direction. Coming less than a year after the demolition of the Babri Masjid, both sides made an extra effort to make a new beginning in the bilateral relationship.

Two years later, then Iranian president Ali Akbar Hashemi Bahramani Rafsanjani visited India in 1995. Putting emphasis on Indian secular ethos in his speech, the Iranian president also promised to show a greater understanding of the dimensions of the Kashmir issue as well as India's multi-religious ethos.

In April, 2001 the Tehran Declaration was signed between then Indian PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee and then Iranian President Syed Muhammad Khatami signed the Tehran Declaration in order to enhance bilateral cooperation. Apart from the Tehran Declaration, a number of Top of FAp

four accords pertaining to including a memorandum of understanding for setting up a Joint Working Group to identify areas of co-operation in information technology. During the visit, India also decided to Top of Form set up a consul general's office in the Iranian port city of Bandar Abbas. Both parties reaffirmed their commitment to the goal of achieving general and complete disarmament under the effective international control and in this regard, emphasized the need for conclusion of a multilaterally negotiated agreement on the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specific time frame.

In 2003, Iranian President Muhammad Khatami visited India as a Chief Guest of 54th Republic Day of India. Realizing vast potential in the political, economic, transit, transport, energy, industries, science and technology and agricultural fields and of the benefits of cooperative endeavour between the two countries, a total number of 7 accords including a landmark New Delhi Declaration were signed between India and Iran during his visit. Both the countries agreed that combat against international terrorism should not be based upon double standards. States that aid, abet and directly support international terrorism should be condemned. They did reiterate their resolve to work for an early finalization of a Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism with a condemnation to states which aid, abet and directly support terrorism for their vested interests. Moreover, both parties also agreed to explore opportunities for co-operation in defence in agreed areas, including training and exchange of visits. The declaration decided to formulate a joint mechanism to promote cooperation in the field of oil and gas.

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Very recently, on 21st May, 2024, the Government of India has declared one-day national mourning tomorrow as a mark of respect to Dr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran who tragically passed away in a helicopter crash. The National Flag had been flown at half-mast on the day of mourning throughout India on all buildings where the National Flag was flown regularly and no official entertainment was held on the day. Both PM Narendra Modi and Minister of External Affairs Dr. S. Jaishankar expressed their deep condolences to the sudden tragic demise of Iranian President as well as Foreign Minister of Iran.

4.7.2 Bilateral Trade Relations

- Iran was one of the largest supplier of crude oil to India, supplied more than 4,25,000 barrels per day (before sanctions).
- Consequently, India was one of the largest foreign investors in Iran’s oil and gas industry.
- Iran’s trade with India exceeded US\$13 billion in 2007, an 80% increase in trade volume within a year via third party countries such as UAE this figure reached \$30 billion.
- In 2008-09, Iranian oil accounted for nearly 16.5% of India’s crude oil imports.
- Iran emerged as India’s second largest oil supplier.
- Iran’s exports to India stood at \$361 million during **January-July 2022** while it was \$267 million during the same period in 2021.
- India’s exports also saw a 54% increase during the first seven months in 2022.

SAQ:

Do you think that changes in domestic politics do have impacts in international relations? If so, justify your answer in light of Indo-Iran relationship. (80 words)

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4.7.3 Challenges to India-Iran Relations

The Indo-Iran relationship started facing roadblocks after 2005 when India decided to have better technique and nuclear resources in the field of civil nuclear technology through becoming a partner of International Groupings. **Firstly**, this necessity of the hour compelled India to have a close proximity with USA. But simultaneously that was also a period when India used to import gas and oil from Iran in massive amounts. Therefore, USA's pre-requisite for Indo-USA Nuclear deal was India must back off its relationship with Iran because Iran was placed under western sanctions. Initially India maintained that Iran had the right to have its nuclear programme, but western pressure to reduce trade relations with Iran was too enormous for India to ignore. Hence, India was compelled to vote against Iran in the International Atomic Energy Agency in 2005

Secondly, US officials warned New Delhi in 2010 that Indian companies using the Asian Clearing Union (ACU) for financial transactions with Iran run the risk of violating a recent US law-the law which was designed to ban international firms from doing business with Iranian banks and Tehran's oil and gas sector. The US criticized the ACU of being insufficiently transparent in its financial dealings with Iran as it was suspected by the USA that ACU's assets were funneled to blacklisted organizations in Iran such as the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. As instructed by the USA, the Indian government advised country's lenders on 27th November, 2010 to stop processing current-account transactions with Iran using the ACU.

Thirdly, an important roadblock between Indo-Iran relationships is differences in religious ideologies. While India do cherish democratic values and secular credentials, Iran is headed by an unelected theocratic leader who celebrate Islamic values including in state affairs too.

Fourthly, India's enormous stakes in Saudi Arabia, U.A.E. and Israel is another hurdle between India-Iran relations as Iran does not have proximity with aforementioned Middle Eastern states. Hence, Indian bonhomie with Iran can upset these Middle Eastern powers at odds with the Iranian regime.

Fifthly, the Farzad-B gas field of Iran is another obstacle in India-Iran relations. Actually, Indian company ONGC Videsh Limited cooperated to

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a great extent in the exploration of Farzad-B gas field in 2008 but later on Iran asserted that India would not receive preferential treatment and compete with other bidders. India is upset that Iran wishes to auction the Farzad-B field even when India asserted in 2017 that it is willing to put in \$11 billion in the project.

Stop to Consider

Asian Clearing Union (ACU) is a payment arrangement whereby the participants settle payments for intra-regional transactions among the participating central banks on a net multilateral basis. Being established in December 1974 with headquarter in Tehran, Iran, when the countries in the region were facing settlement difficulties mainly due to resource constraints, the ACU provided a platform to settle payments, on a multilateral basis, for current international transactions among the territories of participants. The other terms of references include –

- a) to promote the use of participants' currencies in current transactions between their respective territories and thereby effect economies in the use of the participants' exchange reserves;
- b) to promote monetary co-operation among the participants and closer relations among the banking systems in their territories and thereby contribute to the expansion of trade and economic activity among the countries of the ESCAP region; and
- c) to provide for currency SWAP arrangement among the participants so as to make Asian Monetary Units (AMUs) available to them temporarily.

Over the years, the ACU has displayed a sense of true commitment, consolidated and nurtured throughout its operations. By applying sound strategies, it achieved pre-determined objectives to facilitate settlement on a multilateral basis, to promote the use of participants' currencies, to improve monetary and banking co-operation, and to expand trade and economic activity among the countries of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) region.

The aforementioned hurdles cannot undermine significance of India-Iran relationship whose roots had been found in ancient period as well. Therefore, India stated clearly that India is not willing to stop trade relations altogether with Iran in spite of getting increased pressure by the USA and Europe. To the contrary, India aimed at expanding the commodity trade with Iran.

4.7.4 Significance of India-Iran Relations

In spite of USA's continuous supervision over Indo-Iran relationship, it has been significant in many ways. The Indo-Iran relationship is mostly significant for infrastructure which is a part of India's connectivity diplomacy. For example, *firstly*, a highway between Zaranj and Delaram (Zaranj-Delaram Highway) has been built with financial support from India. *Secondly*, the Chabahar Port which is the only oceanic port of Iran, has also been jointly financed by Iran and India. India is helping to develop the Chabahar Port which will give it access to the oil and gas resources in Iran and the Central Asian states. India alone plans to invest 20 billion US Dollars towards development of Chabahar port because India wants to be a part of Iran's plan to use Chabahar port for trans-shipment to Afghanistan in Central Asia. This factor led to further signing of an agreement amongst India, Iran and Afghanistan to give Indian goods heading for Central Asia and Afghanistan, preferential treatment and tariff reductions at Chabahar. *Thirdly*, a partnership between India, Iran and Russia is intended to establish a multi-modal transport link connecting Mumbai with St. Petersburg, which will provide Europe and the former Soviet Republics of Central Asia access to Asia and vice versa. Fourthly, there are about 8000 Iranian students studying in India. India provides 67 scholarships every year to Iranian students under ITEC, ICCR, Colombo Plan and IOR-ARC schemes. Around 40,000 Iranian students do visit India every year for various purposes. Kendriya Vidyalaya Tehran, the Embassy of India School, serves Indian citizens living in Tehran. *Fourthly*, India and Iran have stakes in the Indian Ocean and both can cooperate for regional security from piracy. *Fifthly*, Iran sees India as a strong partner that will help Tehran to avoid strategic isolation as well as an extended helping hand to break out of the anti-Iran

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stance created by the US in the region. *Sixthly*, India regards the Iranian connection as serving a variety of tangible and specific Indian interests. Most importantly, the nexus with Iran is seen as helping India with its energy needs. Iran is India's preferred choice for the transit for natural gas from Central Asia.

4.7.5 The Chabahar Port Deal-A Roadmap to Future Strategic India-Iran Relationship:

India and Iran signed a 10 year contract on 13th May, 2024 for the operation of a terminal at the strategically important Chabahar port in Iran, which is a deep water port in Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan province which is the Iranian port that is the closet to India and is located in the open sea, providing easy and secure access for large cargo ships.

Modern Chabahar came into being in the 1970s and the Tehran realized the strategic importance of the port during the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s. In 2002, Hassan Rouhani (Seventh President of Iran from 2013 to 2021 as well as member of Expediency Council (1991-2013) and leader of National Security Agency of Iran (1989 to 2021) held discussions with his Indian counterpart Brajesh Mishra on developing the port. In January 2003, President Khatami and then PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee signed off on an ambitious roadmap of strategic cooperation. Among the key projects the two countries agreed on was Chabahar as it held the potential link South Asia with the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Europe. But the ambitious timelines for the project were undone by India's growing relationship with the United States under President George W. Bush. The US, which declared Iran as one of the 'axis of evil' along with Iraq and North Korea, pushed New Delhi to abandon its strategic relationship with Tehran.

The aforementioned halt came to an end after the period of 2015 when India spent about \$100 million to construct a 218 km road from Delaram in western Afghanistan to Zaranj on the Iran-Afghan border to link with Chabahar. In 2015, then Afghan President Ashraf Ghani visited India and stressed importance of the Chabahar port with a commitment to make the port project a reality. Over the next one year, coordination between

the three countries led to the signing of a Trilateral Agreement to establish the International Transport and Transit Corridor and thereafter India's shipping Ministry worked at a brisk pace to develop the project. The attitude of the Donald Trump administration towards Iran complicated matters after 2017 but South Block appeared determined to stay the course this time. The government of India managed to get a waiver from the US from the Chabahar project, citing access to Afghanistan as a reason.

India has so far supplied six mobile harbor cranes and other equipment worth \$25 million. The India Ports Global Limited (IPGL) has been operating Chabahar port through its wholly owned subsidiary India Ports Global Chabahar Free Zone (IPGC) since 2018. The port has also facilitated the supply of humanitarian assistance, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. Till date, a total of 2.5 million tons of wheat and 2000 tons of pulses have been transshipped from India to Afghanistan through Chabahar port. In 2021, India supplied 40,000 litres of the environment friendly pesticide (malathion) through the port to Iran to fight locust attacks.

In August 2023, PM Modi and President Ebrahim Raisi gave a clear political direction during BRICS Summit to finalize the long pending long-term contract on Chabahar between India and Iran and finally both the countries signed a 10 year contract on 13th May, 2024 for the operation of a terminal at the strategically important Chabahar port in Iran, which is a deep water port in Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan province which is the Iranian port that is the closet to India and is located in the open sea, providing easy and secure access for large cargo ships.

The Indo-Iran Chabahar Agreement, 2024 should be seen as a bold step amidst the current geopolitical flux. Chabahar also becomes important as the India-Middle East Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) hangs in limbo amidst the Gaza crisis. In this climate, India, which sees itself not just as a member of the Global South but as one of its leaders, will have to do a careful balancing act. Therefore, to ink such a deal right now speaks of a great resolve.

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Check Your Progress

1. What are the hindrances between India-Iran relationship? Does the relationship have any significance despite these obstacles?
2. What are the strategic significance of Chabahar Port in marking India's relationship with Iran?

4.8 Summing Up

The aforementioned analysis has concluded that India has fitted herself suitably into the complex Middle Eastern power dynamics. Indian foreign policy has been credited with successfully navigating the multiple contestations in the Gulf and Middle Eastern countries by maintain positive engagement with all key actors in the region.

India's multi-faced engagement in Middle East serves to enhance its geopolitical influence and economic interests. Among the US-China competition in the region, India leverages its cultural ties, historical engagements and strategic partnerships to create a favourable positions for itself. The emergence of the Middle East squad i.e., I2U2 consisting of India, Israel, UAE and USA highlights India's efforts to create a platform for economic, technological and diplomatic cooperation spanning South Asia, the Middle East and the USA. It demonstrates India's interest to leverage its historical ties and cultural connection in the region to expand its influence. The recent announcement of India-Middle East-Europe economic corridor at the G-20 Summit, 2023 underscores India's strategic foresight and strengthening regional connectivity and fostering economic cooperation. This corridor's capacity to establish a connection between India and Europe through countries like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Jordan and Israel represents a substantial advancement. It has the potential to significantly boost India's economic pursuits and regional relationships by expanding trade opportunities and simultaneously serving as a strategic response to China's Belt & Road initiatives.

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(Footnotes)

- ¹ The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), founded in 1964, is a Palestinian nationalist coalition which is internationally recognized as the official representative of the Palestinian people.

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Unit - 5

India and Africa

Unit Structure:

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Objective
- 5.3 Historical Background
- 5.4 Basic Aspects Related to India Africa Relationship
 - 5.4.1 Strategic and Diplomatic Relations
 - 5.4.2 Economic Relations
 - 5.4.3 Development Cooperation
 - 5.4.4 Cultural Exchanges
 - 5.4.5 Multilateral Engagement
 - 5.4.6 Support for African Integration
 - 5.4.7 Countering External Influence
- 5.5 Challenges to India Africa Relationship
- 5.6 Summing Up
- 5.7 References and Suggested Readings

5.1 Introduction

Africa is a vast and diverse continent, known for its rich cultural heritage, immense natural resources, and historical significance. It is made up of 54 countries, making it the second-largest continent by both land area and population. Africa is home to over 1.3 billion people, accounting for around 17% of the global population. India and Africa have a multifaceted relationship with deep historical, economic, and cultural connections. India's advocacy for the African Union (AU) to become a permanent member of the G20 was one of the most noteworthy accomplishments of its presidency. This move was seen as a major step toward amplifying the voice of the African continent in global decision-making forums that had traditionally been dominated by the world's wealthiest and most powerful nations. The inclusion of the AU as a permanent member not only strengthened India's position as a representative of the Global South but also marked a significant shift in global governance. It underscored the need for more inclusive global

platforms where both developing and developed countries could participate equally. In this unit you are going to study the relationship between India and Africa and its various issues.

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5.2 Objective

After reading this unit, you will be able to

- *Understand* the relationship between India and Africa
- *Analyse* the issues related to this cooperation
- *Examine* the challenges to India Africa relationship

5.3 Historical Background

The historical relationship between India and Africa is a rich and multifaceted one, characterized by centuries of trade, migration, shared colonial experiences, and cooperation in international politics. The relationship between India and Africa dates back to ancient times. Indian traders were engaged in maritime trade with East African coastal regions, including present-day Somalia, Kenya, and Tanzania. Goods like spices, textiles, and beads were exchanged for African ivory, gold, and other raw materials. This long-standing trade fostered cultural exchanges. For instance, Indian influence can be seen in Swahili culture, with borrowed words from Indian language incorporated into the Swahili language. During the Abbasid Caliphate in the 9th century, enslaved Africans from East Africa, known as Zanj, were brought to southern Iraq, where they staged one of the most significant slave revolts in history. This indicates an interaction with India indirectly via the Islamic world, though this relationship was exploitative in nature. Indian communities began settling in Africa as merchants and traders, primarily along the Swahili coast and parts of Southern Africa, further solidifying commercial and cultural links. One of the most significant chapters in the India-Africa relationship came with British colonialism. After the abolition of slavery, the British Empire imported thousands of Indian bonded laborers to work on plantations and railways, particularly in East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania) and Southern Africa (South Africa). This migration of laborers and traders led to the establishment of a substantial Indian diaspora in various African countries, notably South Africa, where

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Mahatma Gandhi began his activism in the late 19th century, shaping both the Indian and African nationalist movements. Both India and African countries were subject to European colonial rule, and many anti-colonial struggles were interconnected. Gandhi's work in South Africa was pivotal, and his philosophy of non-violent resistance (Satyagraha) inspired African leaders like Nelson Mandela in the fight against apartheid. Following India's independence in 1947 and the subsequent wave of decolonization in Africa in the 1950s and 1960s, India and African nations forged political ties through organizations like the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Under the leadership of figures like Jawaharlal Nehru, India supported African nations' independence movements and opposed apartheid in South Africa. India also established strong diplomatic relations with African countries and began to extend developmental assistance in various fields like agriculture, education, and health. Indian technical and educational assistance programs, such as the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) program, helped build capacity in newly independent African states. In recent decades, economic ties between India and Africa have deepened, with trade and investment playing a major role. India has become one of Africa's largest trading partners, with Indian companies investing in sectors like telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, infrastructure, and energy. Both India and Africa collaborate on key issues like climate change, security, and international trade in forums such as the India-Africa Forum Summit. India has also provided military and peacekeeping support in African conflict zones under the aegis of the United Nations. The Indian diaspora in Africa remains a vital link in the relationship. Cultural exchanges continue, with Bollywood films being popular in many African countries and Indian educational institutions attracting African students. There have been occasional political tensions, such as the expulsion of Asians from Uganda by Idi Amin in 1972, but these episodes have not significantly hampered the broader relationship. India's engagement with Africa has grown significantly in the 21st century, driven by shared economic interests, the quest for energy resources, and a focus on South-South cooperation. India's development assistance to Africa, including infrastructure development and capacity-building initiatives, has become a cornerstone of this relationship. The India-

Africa relationship is one of deep historical roots, shaped by both mutual cooperation and shared struggles, particularly against colonialism. In the contemporary era, the relationship is marked by increasing economic, political, and cultural exchanges, positioning both India and Africa as important partners in global affairs.

5.4 Basic Aspects Related to India Africa Relationship

The India-Africa relationship has gained prominence over the years, encompassing various dimensions including economic, political, cultural, and strategic aspects. Following are the basic aspects related to India Africa Relationship –

5.4.1 Strategic and Diplomatic Relations

Both India and Africa engage in strategic partnerships to enhance their global influence. They collaborate on various international platforms, including the United Nations and other global forums. India aims to strengthen its strategic ties with African countries to enhance its global influence and security. This includes cooperation in areas like counter-terrorism, maritime security, and peacekeeping. Strategic partnerships between India and Africa encompass a wide range of cooperative efforts aimed at enhancing mutual interests and addressing global challenges. These can be summarised as follows -

- India and Africa collaborate on defense and security issues, including joint military exercises, training programs, and information sharing. India provides support in areas such as counter-terrorism and maritime security, contributing to regional stability.
- India, a major contributor to United Nations peacekeeping missions, works with African countries in conflict resolution and peacekeeping efforts. India's involvement in African peacekeeping missions highlights its commitment to stability and security on the continent.
- Strategic partnerships extend to economic and trade relations also. India and African countries engage in trade agreements and investments, focusing on key sectors like energy, infrastructure, and

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technology. Indian companies are active in various African markets, contributing to economic development.

- India supports infrastructure development in Africa through bilateral and multilateral projects. This includes building roads, railways, and power plants, often financed by Indian loans or grants.
- Strategic partnerships also cover healthcare and education. India provides technical assistance, training, and support for health initiatives in Africa. Indian educational institutions offer scholarships and training programs to African students, fostering skill development and knowledge transfer.
- India and Africa work together on environmental issues and climate change. Collaborative efforts include sharing best practices, technology transfer, and joint initiatives to address environmental challenges and promote sustainable development.
- Cultural diplomacy plays a role in strengthening strategic ties. This includes exchanges of cultural programs, art exhibitions, and official visits by leaders. Diplomatic engagement through high-level meetings and summits also reinforces strategic partnerships.
- Both regions collaborate in multilateral forums, such as the United Nations and the African Union. They work together on global issues, including development, security, and climate change, enhancing their collective influence on the international stage.

You must remember here that the strategic partnerships between India and Africa are designed to foster mutual growth, security, and development, reflecting a shared commitment to addressing both regional and global challenges.

5.4.2 Economic Relations

In recent decades, economic relations between India and Africa have grown significantly. India is one of Africa's major trading partners and investors. Indian companies are involved in various sectors in Africa, including telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, and infrastructure. India's foreign policy emphasizes boosting trade and investment in Africa. India has been increasing its presence in African markets, focusing on sectors

such as energy, infrastructure, and technology. Initiatives like the India-Africa Forum Summit are platforms for promoting economic collaboration and addressing mutual interests. Economic engagement between India and Africa is a dynamic and growing aspect of their relationship. The major components of this economic relation are as follows -

- Trade between India and Africa has been expanding significantly. India exports a variety of goods to Africa, including pharmaceuticals, machinery, and textiles, while importing raw materials, such as minerals and oil, from the continent. The trade volume has seen considerable growth, and both regions aim to further enhance economic ties.
- Indian companies are major investors in Africa, with interests spanning sectors like telecommunications, energy, infrastructure, and manufacturing. Investments often focus on developing local industries, creating jobs, and boosting economic growth in host countries. Key Indian firms involved include Tata, Mahindra, and Bharti Airtel.
- India contributes to infrastructure projects in Africa through bilateral cooperation and development aid. This includes constructing roads, bridges, and power plants, as well as improving transportation and logistics networks. Indian financing and expertise are crucial for many large-scale infrastructure projects on the continent.
- India provides development assistance to African countries through grants, loans, and technical support. This aid is often used for projects related to healthcare, education, and agriculture, aiming to support sustainable development and poverty reduction.
- India and Africa collaborate on technology and innovation initiatives. Indian technology firms help in developing digital infrastructure, providing affordable tech solutions, and fostering innovation in areas like IT, telecommunications, and e-commerce.
- Agricultural cooperation is a significant part of economic engagement. Indian firms provide technology, training, and investment in agricultural projects to enhance productivity and food

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security in Africa. This includes initiatives in crop management, irrigation, and agro-processing.

- India offers scholarships and training programs for African students and professionals. This educational collaboration helps in building a skilled workforce and fostering knowledge exchange between the regions.
- The India-Africa Forum Summit, held periodically, serves as a key platform for discussing economic collaboration and setting future directions for trade and investment. These forums facilitate dialogue between leaders and business communities from both regions.
- There are numerous joint ventures and partnerships between Indian and African businesses. These collaborations often focus on mutual benefits, such as resource sharing, market access, and technology transfer.

So, you have learnt that economic engagement between India and Africa is characterized by a mutually beneficial relationship that supports growth and development in both regions. The focus on trade, investment, infrastructure, and development assistance highlights the depth and breadth of this partnership.

5.4.3 Development Cooperation

India has been active in providing development assistance to African countries. Through initiatives like the India-Africa Forum Summit, India offers training programs, scholarships, and financial aid to support African development. India's foreign policy includes a strong component of development assistance. Through various programs, India provides financial aid, technical assistance, and capacity-building support to African countries. This includes offering scholarships, training programs, and healthcare support. Development cooperation between India and Africa is a key aspect of their partnership, focusing on various initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable development and improving livelihoods. The following points will summarise the main areas of development cooperation:

- India provides both technical and financial assistance to African countries through various programs. This includes grants,

concessional loans, and technical support for development projects in areas such as infrastructure, education, healthcare, and agriculture.

- India offers training programs and capacity-building initiatives to enhance skills and expertise in African countries. This includes training for government officials, professionals, and entrepreneurs in sectors such as IT, agriculture, and health.
- India provides scholarships to African students for higher education and technical training at Indian institutions. These scholarships cover various fields, including engineering, medicine, and business, contributing to the development of a skilled workforce in Africa.
- India supports healthcare development in Africa through initiatives such as medical training programs, health infrastructure projects, and the provision of medical supplies and equipment. Indian pharmaceutical companies also play a role in supplying affordable medicines to the continent.
- India is involved in financing and implementing infrastructure projects across Africa. This includes building roads, bridges, railways, and power plants, which are crucial for economic development and connectivity.
- India's development cooperation includes support for agricultural projects aimed at improving food security and enhancing productivity. This involves providing agricultural technology, training farmers, and supporting agro-processing industries.
- India collaborates with African countries on programs that focus on empowering women and youth. This includes initiatives to support women's entrepreneurship, education, and leadership, as well as youth skill development and employment opportunities.
- India and Africa work together on environmental issues and climate change. Collaborative efforts include sharing best practices, technology transfer, and joint projects aimed at sustainable development and environmental protection.
- India shares its experiences and best practices in various sectors with African countries. This includes knowledge transfer in areas such as rural development, disaster management, and governance.

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- Development cooperation is facilitated through bilateral agreements and multilateral platforms like the India-Africa Forum Summit. These platforms allow for strategic planning and coordination of development initiatives.

It is clear from the above discussion that India's development cooperation with Africa is designed to support the continent's growth and development, addressing key challenges and contributing to sustainable progress.

STOP TO CONSIDER

The 2009 India-Africa Hydrocarbons Conference:

The 2009 India-Africa Hydrocarbons Conference was a significant event aimed at strengthening energy cooperation between India and Africa. Held in New Delhi, India, from December 7-8, 2009, the conference marked an important step in India's strategic efforts to secure energy resources from Africa while enhancing diplomatic and economic ties. The primary goal of the conference was to explore ways in which India and Africa could collaborate in the hydrocarbons sector, including oil, natural gas, and petroleum. India sought to diversify its energy sources and reduce its dependence on Middle Eastern oil, while African countries were keen to attract investment in their hydrocarbons sector, benefiting from India's growing demand for energy. The conference attracted participation from 15 African countries with significant oil and gas potential, including Nigeria, Angola, Sudan, Egypt, and Algeria. Senior government officials, policymakers, and representatives from India's energy companies (like ONGC Videsh and Indian Oil Corporation) as well as major African national oil companies were present. Given India's rapidly growing energy needs, the country sought to secure long-term partnerships with African nations for reliable and steady supplies of hydrocarbons. African nations, on the other hand, were looking for investments and expertise to develop their hydrocarbon industries, particularly in exploration, production, and refining. The conference focused on creating a platform for Indian companies to explore

investment opportunities in Africa's oil and gas sectors. Indian firms were encouraged to invest in exploration, refining, and infrastructure development in African countries. African nations offered various opportunities, including joint ventures, infrastructure development, and knowledge-sharing in the areas of refining and gas processing. For India, securing hydrocarbons from Africa was part of a broader strategy to diversify its sources of energy imports. This was important for energy security given the volatility in Middle Eastern oil markets and the increasing global competition for energy resources. India also emphasized the importance of technical cooperation and capacity building, offering training programs and technology transfer to help African countries develop their oil and gas infrastructure. Indian companies were willing to share their expertise in refining technology and oilfield services, areas in which India had developed considerable capacity. One of the main challenges highlighted during the conference was the issue of infrastructure deficits in Africa, which hampered the full realization of its hydrocarbon potential. Another issue was the political instability in some African countries, which posed risks to energy investments. While specific deals may not have been the immediate outcome, the conference laid the groundwork for enhanced India-Africa energy diplomacy. It opened doors for future collaboration in oil and gas exploration, infrastructure development, and technical support. The conference reinforced India's commitment to engaging with Africa not only as a source of raw materials but also as a partner in sustainable development. India saw Africa as a key component in its quest for energy security. African countries also benefited from the prospect of diversifying their customer base and securing investments in their energy sectors, helping them reduce reliance on Western markets and partners like China. The 2009 India-Africa Hydrocarbons Conference was a pivotal event in fostering closer energy ties between India and African nations. By focusing on mutual benefits in the hydrocarbons sector, the conference paved the way for deeper economic and diplomatic cooperation, contributing

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to India's long-term energy security and Africa's development in the oil and gas sectors. This event marked a strategic shift in India's approach to Africa, focusing on sustainable partnerships and energy cooperation for mutual growth.

5.4.4 Cultural Exchanges

There is a strong cultural connection through the Indian diaspora in Africa, which has contributed to a shared cultural and social bond. Additionally, educational exchanges and collaborations between Indian and African institutions foster mutual understanding and skills development. India seeks to build on historical and cultural connections with Africa. This involves promoting people-to-people ties, cultural exchanges, and enhancing mutual understanding. The cultural and historical ties between India and Africa are rich and multifaceted, reflecting centuries of interactions and shared influences.

Let us now discuss this aspect -

- Historical records indicate that trade between India and Africa dates back to ancient times. Indian merchants and explorers travelled to the East African coast, engaging in trade with local communities long before the advent of European colonialism.
- The Indian diaspora has played a significant role in Africa. Indians began migrating to Africa in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, particularly to countries like Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and South Africa. The Indian community has contributed to the economic and cultural life of these nations.
- Indian cultural influences, including languages, customs, and religious practices, have been integrated into African societies. For example, Swahili, a major language in East Africa, has incorporated numerous Arabic and Indian words.
- Indian art forms, including music and dance, have been appreciated and adopted in Africa. Bollywood films, Indian music, and dance forms like Kathak and Bharatanatyam have found audiences in various African countries. Cultural festivals and performances often showcase this exchange.

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- Indian cuisine has influenced African food cultures, particularly in countries with significant Indian communities. Dishes and spices from Indian cuisine have also become part of the local culinary traditions.
- Indian festivals like Diwali and Holi are celebrated by Indian communities in Africa, and sometimes they are even observed by local communities who have embraced these cultural practices.
- India promotes cultural diplomacy through exchanges, art exhibitions, and cultural programs. Initiatives like the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) work to strengthen cultural ties and mutual understanding between India and African countries.
- Indian scholars and explorers have studied and written about Africa, contributing to the intellectual exchange between the regions. This has enriched the understanding of African history and culture in India and vice versa.
- Indian educational institutions and cultural organizations often collaborate with their African counterparts, facilitating student exchanges, academic conferences, and collaborative research.
- The Indian diaspora in Africa has integrated into local societies, contributing to social and cultural diversity. This integration has led to a blending of cultural practices and mutual enrichment.
- Indian communities in Africa often engage in community development activities, cultural preservation, and charitable work, further strengthening the bonds between India and Africa.

So you have seen that the cultural and historical ties between India and Africa are characterized by deep historical interactions, vibrant cultural exchanges, and a shared legacy that continues to evolve and enrich both regions.

5.4.5 Multilateral Engagement

India and African countries collaborate on global platforms such as the United Nations. They work together on issues like climate change, sustainable development, and global governance. Multilateral engagement between India and Africa involves collaboration through various international

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organizations and forums to address global challenges and advance mutual interests. Key aspects of this engagement include:

- India and African countries collaborate on UN peacekeeping missions, with India being one of the largest contributors of troops. They work together to address conflicts and promote peace and stability in Africa. Both regions support the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They work together on initiatives related to poverty alleviation, education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability.
- India supports the African Union's efforts to promote regional integration and political stability. This includes backing AU initiatives for conflict resolution, economic development, and democratic governance. India and the AU collaborate on various projects, including those related to agriculture, education, and infrastructure. These projects aim to enhance the overall development of the continent.
- The India-Africa Forum Summit is a key platform for strategic dialogue between India and African countries. It serves as a forum to discuss and promote economic cooperation, development assistance, and political collaboration. The summit leads to the formulation of action plans and initiatives that guide bilateral and multilateral cooperation. It helps in setting priorities and objectives for future engagement.
- India, as a member of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), collaborates with African countries to address global governance issues. South Africa's inclusion in BRICS strengthens the link between the group and the African continent. India and African countries work together within BRICS to tackle issues such as climate change, trade imbalances, and global security challenges. India and African countries engage in discussions within the WTO to advocate for fair trade policies and address trade-related issues. They work together to promote economic growth and development through equitable trade practices. India supports African countries in building capacity to participate effectively in international trade negotiations and agreements.

- Several African countries are members of the Commonwealth, and India, as a key member, engages with these nations on various issues including education, governance, and development. The Commonwealth provides a platform for India and African countries to collaborate on development projects and share best practices in areas such as education and democracy.
- India and African countries collaborate in global forums on health issues, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), and climate change discussions, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). They also work with regional development banks like the African Development Bank (AfDB) to support infrastructure and development projects.
- India and African countries engage in South-South cooperation, focusing on sharing resources, technology, and expertise to address common challenges and promote sustainable development. India provides technical assistance and expertise to African countries in various fields, including agriculture, health, and technology, through South-South cooperation mechanisms.

Multilateral engagement between India and Africa is characterized by a collaborative approach to addressing global and regional challenges, promoting development, and enhancing diplomatic and economic ties.

5.4.6 Support for African Integration

India supports African regional integration efforts and the development of African institutions, such as the African Union (AU). This aligns with India's broader goal of supporting Africa's economic and political stability. India's support for African integration is an important aspect of its engagement with the continent. This support aligns with both regions' goals of promoting regional stability, economic growth, and development. India actively supports the African Union's efforts to promote regional integration, political stability, and economic development. This includes backing AU initiatives and participating in AU-led projects and conferences. India engages with various Regional Economic Communities in Africa, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the East

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African Community (EAC), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). India supports their integration efforts through trade, investment, and technical assistance. India contributes to infrastructure projects that facilitate regional connectivity and integration. This includes funding and implementing projects like roads, railways, and energy infrastructure that enhance cross-border trade and movement. Indian investment in regional transport networks, such as the Trans-Africa Highway, supports the integration of African economies by improving transportation links between countries. India encourages and supports trade agreements that enhance regional economic integration. This includes promoting intra-African trade and investment through various regional trade agreements and initiatives. Indian companies invest in regional markets across Africa, contributing to economic integration by establishing operations and creating jobs in multiple countries. India provides technical assistance and capacity-building support to African regional institutions and governments. This includes training programs, workshops, and knowledge-sharing initiatives to strengthen regional governance and integration efforts. Indian development programs often focus on enhancing regional capabilities, such as improving agricultural productivity, health services, and educational opportunities, which contribute to regional stability and integration. India supports educational initiatives that promote regional integration, including scholarships and training programs for students and professionals from across Africa. These programs help build a skilled workforce and foster regional collaboration. Cultural exchanges and diplomacy enhance mutual understanding and foster a sense of regional identity. Indian cultural programs, festivals, and exhibitions contribute to building connections between African nations. India supports the African Continental Free Trade Area, which aims to create a single market for goods and services across Africa. This support includes providing technical assistance and promoting trade opportunities within the AfCFTA framework. India participates in and supports regional integration summits and conferences, providing a platform for dialogue and collaboration on integration-related issues. India and African countries undertake joint projects that promote regional integration. These projects often focus on areas such as infrastructure, technology, and development, enhancing regional

cooperation and connectivity. India partners with regional bodies and institutions to support various integration initiatives, contributing to the overall stability and growth of the African continent. Overall, India's support for African integration is characterized by a multifaceted approach that includes infrastructure development, trade and economic integration, capacity building, and cultural exchanges. This support aligns with the shared goals of promoting regional stability, economic growth, and sustainable development across Africa.

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5.4.7 Countering External Influence

Part of India's policy is to counterbalance the influence of other major powers, such as China, in Africa. By strengthening its own ties, India aims to offer alternative partnerships and development models. Countering external influence is an aspect of the strategic relationship between India and Africa, reflecting their mutual interests in maintaining sovereignty, promoting balanced international relations, and fostering independent development. Both India and African countries aim to diversify their international partnerships to avoid over-reliance on any single external power. By strengthening ties with each other, they create a more balanced geopolitical landscape. India and African nations engage with multiple global players, including the United States, China, and the European Union, to ensure a range of support and avoid being dominated by any one external influence. India and African countries advocate for the respect of national sovereignty and autonomy in international relations. This includes resisting external pressures and interventions that could undermine their independence. By supporting regional institutions like the African Union (AU) and various Regional Economic Communities (RECs), India and Africa work together to build strong, independent regional frameworks that can counteract external influences. India's investments in Africa focus on creating sustainable economic opportunities that enhance the continent's self-reliance. This includes investing in infrastructure, technology, and industry, which reduces dependence on external economic actors. By promoting trade and economic ties between India and Africa, both regions seek to diversify their economic relationships and reduce vulnerability to external economic pressures. India

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and African countries collaborate on security issues, including counter-terrorism and maritime security. This cooperation helps to safeguard their interests and counteract external threats and influences. India supports African-led peacekeeping missions and stability efforts, contributing to regional security and reducing the influence of external actors in conflict zones. India and Africa use multilateral platforms like the United Nations and the G20 to advocate for their interests and promote a more balanced global order. This collaborative approach helps counteract unilateral external influences. Both regions work together to address global challenges such as climate change, trade imbalances, and development issues, using their combined influence to advocate for fair policies and practices. India provides technical assistance and capacity-building support to African institutions, helping them strengthen their governance and policy-making capabilities. This support enhances their ability to resist external pressures. By offering scholarships and training programs, India helps build a skilled workforce in Africa that can better manage external influences and contribute to national and regional development. Cultural exchanges and people-to-people ties between India and Africa foster mutual understanding and solidarity, reducing the impact of external influences and promoting a shared vision of development. The Indian diaspora in Africa plays a role in strengthening bilateral ties and providing a counterbalance to external influences by fostering connections and collaboration within the region. Overall, India and Africa work together to counter external influence by promoting sovereignty, diversifying partnerships, enhancing economic cooperation, and leveraging multilateral platforms. This collaborative approach helps both regions maintain their independence and achieve their development goals. Now hereby it can be said that India's foreign policy towards Africa is focused on creating a mutually beneficial relationship that supports economic growth, development, and regional stability.

5.5 Challenges to India Africa Relationship

While India and Africa share a strong historical relationship and growing economic and political ties, several challenges still exist that could

hinder the full potential of this partnership. Below are some vital challenges to the India-Africa relationship:

- While India-Africa trade has grown significantly, it remains uneven. India primarily imports raw materials (such as oil, minerals, and agricultural products) from Africa and exports manufactured goods. This imbalance can create dependency on commodity exports for African countries and limit the development of local industries. African products, particularly agricultural goods, sometimes face tariff and non-tariff barriers when entering the Indian market. This can limit Africa's ability to expand exports and diversify its trade with India.
- China is the largest trading partner and investor in Africa, and its presence often overshadows India's. China has invested heavily in infrastructure projects across Africa and provided large-scale loans, while India's investments are more modest. India faces stiff competition in this regard, and many African nations may prioritize Chinese partnerships due to their scale and speed of project execution. The United States, European Union, and other Western countries are also actively engaged in Africa, offering financial aid, investments, and development assistance. India must navigate these competing influences while trying to carve out its own niche in Africa.
- In many parts of Africa, infrastructure remains underdeveloped, particularly in transportation, energy, and telecommunications. This poses a challenge for Indian businesses looking to invest or trade with African countries. Poor infrastructure can increase the cost of doing business and slow down economic growth, limiting the potential for stronger ties. Maritime and air connectivity between India and Africa is still limited, which hampers the flow of goods and people. There are relatively few direct flights and shipping routes between India and key African markets, making it difficult to streamline trade and investment processes.
- Some African countries, particularly in regions like the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and Central Africa, experience political instability, civil conflicts, or even terrorism. This makes it difficult for Indian businesses to establish a presence or invest in these regions due to

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concerns over security and political risk. Corruption in certain African countries can be a barrier for Indian companies, as it complicates business operations, increases costs, and undermines trust in legal and regulatory frameworks.

- While the Indian diaspora has played a vital role in connecting India and Africa, there have been episodes of tension. For example, the 1972 expulsion of Indians from Uganda by Idi Amin is a reminder of how political upheaval can strain India-Africa relations. In recent years, there have been periodic incidents of xenophobic violence against Indians and other immigrant communities in African countries, particularly in South Africa. Such tensions can strain people-to-people ties and cause hesitations for Indian investors and workers.
- Underinvestment in Africa's Development: While India has undertaken several capacity-building and development programs in Africa, it is often seen as not being as involved as other major powers, particularly in large-scale infrastructure projects, healthcare, and education initiatives. India's aid programs are smaller compared to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) or Western aid programs, limiting its visibility. Many Indian-funded projects in Africa, such as those under the India-Africa Forum Summit framework, face delays in implementation due to bureaucratic inefficiencies, regulatory hurdles, and logistical challenges on both sides.
- There is still limited knowledge and understanding among many African nations about India's potential as a trade and investment partner. In some cases, India is not seen as a major player compared to Western nations and China, which dominate media coverage and diplomatic efforts in Africa. Some African governments and local populations perceive Indian investments as extractive or self-serving, particularly in sectors like mining and oil, where India is focused on securing its own energy and resource needs. This perception can create tension and reduce trust in India's role as a development partner.
- Both India and Africa are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. While they share common interests in climate negotiations,

the capacity to collaborate on sustainable development and climate adaptation projects is limited by resources, technology, and political will. Both regions face challenges in balancing development with environmental sustainability. Addressing challenges related to gender inequality, public health, education, and governance remain shared concerns between India and many African countries. However, both India and Africa need more coordinated efforts in these areas to ensure that social and developmental goals are met.

- The evolving nature of international geopolitics, including India's own foreign policy re-alignments with Western nations and its balancing act with China, can complicate its engagement with Africa. India needs to navigate its partnerships carefully, ensuring that it does not alienate African countries in its broader geopolitical pursuits. Historically, India and African nations were aligned under the umbrella of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). However, as geopolitics has evolved, the relevance of NAM has waned, and new geopolitical alliances have emerged. India will need to reinvent and deepen its ties with Africa outside the traditional NAM framework.

While India and Africa share a historical bond and are committed to deepening their relationship, several economic, political, social, and logistical challenges remain. Overcoming these obstacles will require both sides to address structural imbalances, enhance mutual trust, improve infrastructure, and promote more inclusive and sustainable economic cooperation. Strengthening diplomatic ties and focusing on areas of mutual interest such as climate action, capacity building, and technology transfer could help India and Africa unlock the full potential of their relationship.

STOP TO CONSIDER

The India Africa Forum Summit:

The India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) is a key platform for strengthening ties between India and Africa. The July 2024 edition got momentum as there is a gap of nearly nine years has occurred since the last summit in 2015 due to various global disruptions,

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including the pandemic. Despite this, there is considerable momentum following India’s successful advocacy for the African Union (AU) to gain permanent membership in the G20 during India’s 2023 G20 presidency. The 2024 summit addresses several critical challenges including Africa’s food security and debt sustainability, which have been worsened by the pandemic and global conflicts like the Russia-Ukraine war. India’s focus on these issues strengthen its partnerships with African nations, especially in areas such as economic development, health, and defense cooperation. Moreover, India’s trade with Africa has grown significantly, reaching \$90 billion in 2022, and the 2024 summit has promoted further collaboration in areas like infrastructure, technology, and healthcare.

Check Your Progress

1. Analyse the historical background of India Africa relationship.
2. Explain the economic relation between India and Africa.
3. Discuss the multilateral engagements between India and Africa.
4. What is the full form of ECOWAS?
5. Examine the challenges to India Africa relationship.

Self Asking Question

Analyse the role played by NAM in India Africa relationship.
(70 words)

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5.6 Summing Up

After going through this unit you have learnt that the historical relationship between India and Africa is a rich and multifaceted one, characterized by centuries of trade, migration, shared colonial experiences, and cooperation in international politics. Overall, the relationship is

characterized by mutual benefit and growing collaboration, reflecting a shared interest in economic growth and development. You have also learnt that India's foreign policy towards Africa is driven by several strategic, economic, and diplomatic goals. This unit has also familiarised you with various challenges faced by this co operation. Overcoming these obstacles will require both sides to address structural imbalances, enhance mutual trust, improve infrastructure, and promote more inclusive and sustainable economic cooperation.

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