PG HT S4-04 (DSE)

TWO YEAR MASTER'S DEGREE COURSE

(CBCS in Accordance with NEP 2020)

SEMESTER-IV

INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

HISTORY

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POST-GRADUATE PROGRAMME

HISTORY

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

This course is Core Course for MA 4th Semester learners of History under Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University. The Course is titled 'India's Foreign Policy. India's foreign policy has evolved through historical experience, strategic necessity, economic priorities, and regional realities. This Unit is an essential reading on the understanding of 'India's Foreign Policy' and the factors that shape the international relations of India with the rest of the world.

The first Unit titled 'Determinants of India's Foreign Policy' explains that colonial rule, India's geographical location between South, Central, and Southeast Asia, and the international outlook developed by the Indian National Congress shaped the foundations of foreign policy.

The second Unit titled 'Principles of India's Foreign Policy' outlines its guiding principles: Nehru's emphasis on strategic autonomy, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Panchsheel, non-violence, anti-colonialism, and later the Gujral Doctrine of good-neighbourly relations.

The third Unit titled 'India During the Cold War' examines India during the Cold War, when it sought to remain outside military blocs while promoting peace, decolonization, and cooperation among newly independent nations.

The four Unit titled 'India-US Relations' traces India–US relations from PL-480 food assistance to a broad strategic partnership involving defence, technology, and cooperation in the QUAD framework.

The fifth Unit titled 'India-USSR Relations' discusses India's close relationship with the Soviet Union, culminating in the 1971 Indo-Soviet Treaty, Soviet economic and industrial assistance, and contemporary cooperation through forums such as BRICS.

The sixth Unit titled 'Economic Aspects of India's Foreign Policy' highlights the economic dimension of foreign policy, including trade expansion, technology transfer, foreign aid, and international financial cooperation aimed at national development.

The seventh Unit titled 'India's Nuclear Policy' reviews India's nuclear policy, its criticism of the unequal structure of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the significance of the Pokhran nuclear tests of 1974 and 1998 in establishing India as a nuclear-weapon state.

The eighth Unit titled 'India-Pakistan Relations' focuses on India–Pakistan relations, marked by cooperation through the Indus Waters Treaty but also by the Kashmir dispute and the wars of 1965, 1971, and the 1999 Kargil conflict.

The ninth Unit titled 'India and Bangladesh' studies India's role in the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971 and subsequent issues concerning borders and water sharing.

The tenth Unit titled 'Indo-Nepal Relations' examines Indo-Nepal relations, emphasizing the 1950 Friendship Treaty, the historical legacy of the Treaty of Sagauli, and the influence of Nepal's monarchy and domestic politics on bilateral ties.

The eleventh Unit titled 'India and Sri Lanka' analyses India–Sri Lanka relations, particularly the Tamil question, the rise of the LTTE, the 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka Accord, and the difficulties that followed India's peacekeeping involvement.

The twelfth Unit titled 'Indo-China Relations' discusses India–China relations, beginning with the Panchsheel Agreement and moving to the causes and long-term consequences of the 1962 Sino-Indian War, including enduring border tensions.

The thirteenth Unit titled 'Multilaterialism and India' explains India's commitment to multilateralism through active participation in the United Nations, SAARC, BRICS, the G20, ASEAN-related mechanisms,

and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation to advance regional and global interests. Finally,

The fourteenth Unit titled ‘Look East/Act East Policy’ examines the Look East and Act East policies, which seek stronger economic, strategic, and cultural ties with Southeast and East Asia, improve connectivity with India’s Northeast, and enhance India’s role in the Indo-Pacific.

While going through this paper, you will notice that some boxes are put in the left hand or right hand side of the text. These boxes are meant to serve the purpose of in-text glossary for you. Again, you may find some boxes marked with: “LET US KNOW”. These boxes will provide you with some additional interesting and relevant information. The boxes marked with “ACTIVITY” will help you in making your learning more active and efficient. And, at the end of each section, you will get “CHECK YOUR PROGRESS” questions. These have been designed to self-check your progress of study. It will be better if you solve the problems put in these boxes immediately after you go through the sections of the units and then match your answers with “ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS” given at the endof each unit.

UNIT 1: DETERMINANTS OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

UNIT STRUCTURE

1.1 Learning Objectives

1.2 Introduction

1.3 Colonial Connections

1.4 Geography

1.5 Indian National Congress and the World View

1.6 Let Us Sum Up

1.7 Further Reading

1.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

1.9 Model Questions

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explore the global connections determining foreign policy.
- Understand India's role and her world view of foreign connections

1.2 INTRODUCTION

Foreign policy refers to the set of principles, objectives, decisions, and courses of action through which a state conducts its relations with other states, international organizations, and other actors in the international system. It expresses how a country seeks to protect and advance its national interests, security, economic priorities, values, and broader conception of its place in the world. In the Indian context, foreign policy has evolved through the interaction of historical experience, geographical circumstances, political institutions, economic requirements, ideological commitments, and changes in the international environment.

The term "determinants of foreign policy" refers to the conditions and influences that shape the formulation and implementation of a state's external policies. Determinants do not mechanically produce particular foreign-policy decisions. Rather, they create opportunities, constraints, and preferences that are interpreted by political leaders and institutions and translated into policy choices. The same geographical or historical condition can therefore produce different policies at different moments depending upon leadership, national priorities, available resources, and the international context. Foreign policy is consequently best understood as the outcome of an interaction between domestic factors–such as political institutions, public opinion, economic interests, and national ideology–and international factors, including the distribution of global power, regional conflicts, alliances, and changes in the international system.

This unit examines three important determinants of India's foreign policy. The first is the colonial connection, which shaped India's historical understanding of imperialism, sovereignty, racial hierarchy, economic dependence, and international politics. The second

is geography, which provides the physical setting within which India encounters neighbouring states, maritime spaces, strategic corridors, and trans-boundary environmental challenges. The third is the Indian National Congress and its world view, through which the nationalist movement developed an organized understanding of international affairs and linked India's freedom struggle with wider debates on peace, anti-colonialism, international cooperation, and self-determination. Together, these determinants help explain why independent India's foreign policy developed particular preferences while remaining responsive to changing circumstances.

1.3 Colonial Connections

The colonial connection is an important historical determinant of India's foreign policy because British rule shaped both the external position of India and the political ideas through which Indian nationalists understood international relations. Under colonial rule, India did not possess independent authority to determine its foreign policy. External relations were conducted primarily according to British imperial interests, while India's territory, economic resources, and military manpower were incorporated into wider imperial strategies. Indian participation in the First and Second World Wars, for example, demonstrated the extent to which decisions affecting India's international position could be taken without the consent of its own political representatives.

The experience of colonial subordination produced a strong concern with sovereignty and independent decision-making. Nationalist leaders increasingly regarded foreign policy not as a technical matter confined to governments but as an essential dimension of political freedom. The demand for independence therefore came to include the demand that India should determine its own relations with other countries and international institutions.

The nationalist movement gradually transformed this experience into a broader international outlook. During the 1930s and 1940s, Indian political thinking became increasingly attentive to developments beyond the subcontinent. The rise of fascism, the Spanish Civil War, the Second World War, the expansion of Japanese power in Asia, and anti-colonial struggles elsewhere influenced debates within the nationalist movement. Congress leaders did not all interpret these developments identically, but there was growing recognition that India's future was connected with wider changes in the international order. The Congress supported the principle that colonized peoples should have the right to determine their own political future and developed contacts with other anti-colonial movements.

This internationalization of nationalist thinking is important because it marked a transition from simply reacting to British imperial policy to developing an independent conception of India's place in the world. The colonial experience provided the historical basis, but nationalist leaders actively interpreted that experience and converted it into political positions concerning sovereignty, decolonization, racial equality, and international cooperation. Racial discrimination was another significant dimension of the colonial experience. Indians encountered racial hierarchies not only in British India but also in other parts of the empire, including South Africa, Kenya, and Malaya. These experiences

encouraged Indian nationalists to view racial discrimination as a political issue with international implications. Gandhi's experiences in South Africa were especially influential in demonstrating how racial inequality operated within colonial societies. After independence, this historical memory contributed to India's opposition to apartheid and racial discrimination in international forums.

The colonial economic experience also influenced India's understanding of international economic relations. British policies had integrated India into an imperial economy in which the interests of the metropolitan power frequently took precedence over Indian developmental priorities. Nationalist economic thought consequently placed considerable emphasis on economic sovereignty, industrial development, and the ability of the Indian state to determine its own developmental path. These concerns later informed India's approach to international economic cooperation and its preference for maintaining policy space in a world economy marked by unequal levels of development.

The colonial period also left institutional and strategic legacies that independent India had to inherit and reinterpret. Administrative services, military structures, legal institutions, diplomatic practices, and territorial arrangements established under British rule continued to influence the functioning of the post-colonial state. The partition of British India in 1947, for instance, created new borders and security problems that immediately affected India's relations with its neighbours, particularly Pakistan.

The colonial legacy also contributed to India's preference for maintaining freedom of judgement in international affairs. However, it would be too deterministic to describe non-alignment as a direct result of colonial experience. The memory of imperial domination was an important historical influence, but non-alignment also emerged from the particular circumstances of the Cold War, India's developmental and security requirements, Nehru's political and intellectual orientation, the aspirations of newly independent Asian and African states, and the desire to preserve freedom of policy choice. In this sense, the colonial experience provided part of the intellectual and historical background for strategic autonomy, while the international environment and contemporary national interests shaped its specific post-1947 expression.

The colonial connection should therefore be understood as a historical influence rather than a single causal explanation. It shaped the experiences, institutional inheritance, political memories, and intellectual concerns through which Indian leaders approached international affairs. Its importance lies in the way Indian nationalism interpreted colonialism and transformed that experience into preferences for sovereignty, decolonization, racial equality, economic autonomy, and freedom of diplomatic choice. These preferences subsequently interacted with geography, domestic politics, leadership, and the changing international system to shape India's foreign policy.

1.4 Geography

Geography provides the physical setting within which India's foreign policy operates. It includes territory, borders, location, mountains, rivers, coastline, maritime spaces,

climate, natural resources, and proximity to other regions. These features do not determine policy automatically; rather, they create particular opportunities and constraints that political leaders and institutions interpret in relation to national interests. For this reason, it is useful to distinguish geography from geopolitics. Geography concerns the physical characteristics and location of a state, whereas geopolitics examines how political actors interpret and use geographical space in relation to power, security, connectivity, resources, and strategic interests.

India's location gives it a distinctive geopolitical position. It occupies a central place in South Asia, shares land borders with Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar, and extends deep into the Indian Ocean. Its position connects South Asia with West Asia, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and the wider Indo-Pacific. This creates both strategic opportunities and vulnerabilities. India's foreign policy consequently has to consider continental security, maritime interests, regional relationships, connectivity, and access to major trade routes.

The Himalayan region illustrates the relationship between geography and geopolitics. The mountains historically provided a formidable physical barrier, but they do not constitute an impenetrable boundary. India shares Himalayan frontiers with China, Nepal, and Bhutan, and these borders have significant strategic implications. The unresolved boundary question with China, including disputes concerning Aksai Chin and the eastern sector, has made the management of the Himalayan frontier a continuing concern. The Sino-Indian War of 1962 demonstrated how geographical conditions can become central to questions of national security. Yet the policy response to these conditions-military preparedness, infrastructure development, border negotiations, confidence-building measures, or diplomatic engagement is determined by political choices rather than by geography alone.

The western frontier presents another example. The partition of 1947 created an international boundary between India and Pakistan and left unresolved territorial questions, most notably Jammu and Kashmir. Subsequent wars, cross-border tensions, and security concerns have made the western frontier a major consideration in India's external relations. Geography thus creates a strategic context, while political developments determine how that context is interpreted and addressed.

India's geographical position has also encouraged a strong emphasis on relations with its immediate neighbourhood. The country's location among several smaller South Asian states creates incentives for regional connectivity, economic cooperation, political dialogue, and security coordination. India's participation in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and its later Neighbourhood First approach reflect attempts to manage these relationships within a regional framework.

The northeastern region provides another illustration of the geopolitical significance of location. India's land connection with Myanmar gives the Northeast a potential gateway to Southeast Asia. This geographical condition contributed to the development of the Look East Policy, subsequently expanded into the Act East Policy, which seeks closer economic, cultural, connectivity, and strategic relations with Southeast Asian countries. Here again,

geography provides an opportunity, but policy depends upon how governments interpret that opportunity and invest in connectivity, diplomacy, and regional institutions.

India's maritime geography is equally important. Its long coastline and central position in the Indian Ocean place it near major sea routes linking Asia, Africa, and Europe. Maritime trade, energy supplies, naval security, and relations with Indian Ocean states therefore form important dimensions of India's external relations. India's proximity to the Strait of Malacca and other maritime chokepoints also gives the country a significant geopolitical position in the wider Indo-Pacific. Relations with the countries of West Asia are similarly influenced by the importance of energy imports, trade, and the movement of Indian citizens across the region.

Geography also creates environmental and resource interdependence. Rivers such as the Indus, Ganga, and Brahmaputra cross or originate beyond national boundaries, making water management a subject of diplomacy with Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and China. Floods, cyclones, climate change, biodiversity, and disaster management likewise encourage forms of regional cooperation. These issues demonstrate that geography is not limited to military strategy: it also encompasses ecological interdependence, human security, resources, and development.

Geography therefore conditions, rather than mechanically determines, India's foreign policy. Its strategic location generates particular opportunities and constraints, but political leadership and state institutions decide how these are interpreted and translated into policy. A geographical understanding of Indian foreign policy must consequently be complemented by geopolitical analysis, which explains how space, power, security, connectivity, resources, and political interests interact.

1.5 Indian National Congress and the World View

The Indian National Congress developed an international outlook gradually through the nationalist movement. The central question in this section is not simply what individual leaders thought about world affairs, but **how the Congress transformed India's experience of colonial rule into an organized political world view that later informed foreign policy**. During its early decades, the Congress concentrated primarily on political representation and constitutional reform. By the twentieth century, however, its political horizon had expanded. International events were increasingly discussed in Congress forums, resolutions, public meetings, newspapers, and political organizations, creating an institutional setting in which questions of imperialism, war, peace, and self-determination could be debated.

The nationalist movement's international outlook was not completely uniform. Gandhi emphasized ethical politics, non-violence, and the moral consequences of imperial domination; Subhas Chandra Bose favoured a more militant and strategically oriented approach; Maulana Abul Kalam Azad emphasized anti-colonial solidarity and Hindu-Muslim unity; and Jawaharlal Nehru became the most systematic articulator of the Congress's international political thinking. These differences are important because they show that

the Congress world view was produced through political debate rather than being the personal doctrine of one leader.

The Congress increasingly treated international affairs as relevant to India's own political future. During the 1920s and 1930s, it responded to developments such as the Russian Revolution, the rise of fascism, anti-colonial struggles in Asia and Africa, and the growth of international organizations. Congress participation in international gatherings, including the Brussels Congress of 1927, reflected an effort to establish contacts with other anti-colonial forces. The organization also expressed sympathy with peoples struggling against colonial domination and developed a broader conception of Indian nationalism as part of an international movement for self-determination.

Nehru was particularly influential in articulating this approach, but his role should be understood within the wider institutional and ideological development of the Congress. His international interests helped give coherence to positions that were increasingly being debated within the nationalist movement. His emphasis on socialism, anti-fascism, international cooperation, and Asian solidarity made him a major interpreter of the Congress's international outlook rather than its sole creator.

The Congress also developed a distinctive approach to international conflict and political power. Gandhi's influence gave non-violence and ethical resistance an important place in nationalist political thought, while Congress debates recognized that questions of war, militarism, and international security could not be separated from the problem of imperialism. The result was not a simple rejection of power politics but a preference for negotiation, peaceful settlement, international institutions, and collective approaches to security where these were compatible with national independence.

The Congress's international outlook was gradually translated into political practice before independence. The Faizpur Congress of 1936, for example, and other Congress forums continued to connect domestic economic and political questions with the wider international order. By the 1940s, nationalist leaders were thinking seriously about the kind of international environment in which an independent India would operate. This helped create an intellectual bridge between the nationalist movement and the foreign-policy institutions of the post-colonial state.

The Congress also developed ideas about international economic relations and Asian cooperation. Nationalist economic thinking stressed that political independence would have limited meaning without the capacity to pursue independent development. This encouraged support for economic cooperation that respected national sovereignty and reduced dependence upon unequal economic relationships. At the same time, the Congress increasingly regarded Asia as a significant political and cultural space in which newly independent countries could cooperate. The Asian Relations Conference of 1947, held in New Delhi shortly before independence, reflected this wider aspiration for Asian cooperation and demonstrated that India's international outlook had already begun to operate beyond the immediate framework of British India. It is therefore important to distinguish the Congress's pre-independence world view from the foreign policy of the Republic of India. The former supplied ideas, political experiences, networks, and expectations; the latter

had to respond to the concrete conditions of a sovereign state, including partition, security threats, economic development, and the Cold War.

The Indian National Congress thus served as an important institutional bridge between the nationalist movement and independent India's foreign-policy outlook. Its significance lay in converting historical experience and political ideals into organized positions on international questions. Gandhi, Nehru, Bose, Azad, and other leaders contributed different perspectives, while Congress debates, resolutions, international contacts, and political campaigns provided an institutional setting in which these ideas were developed and contested. This process helped establish a broad nationalist preference for sovereignty, self-determination, international cooperation, peace, and freedom of diplomatic choice. After 1947, these inherited ideas were adapted to the very different strategic and economic circumstances of a sovereign India.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) What is foreign policy?

Q2) Which geographical feature acts as a natural barrier in northern India?

Q3) Who played a major role in shaping India's foreign policy after independence?

Q4) Which policy reflected India's strategic autonomy during the Cold War?

1.6 LET US SUM UP

- India's foreign policy is best understood as the outcome of an interaction between historical experience, geographical and geopolitical conditions, political institutions, national interests, and the international environment.
- The colonial connection supplied historical memories and political concerns especially sovereignty, decolonization, racial equality, and economic autonomy-that influenced the choices available to independent India.
- Geography created a distinctive strategic setting, but its effects were mediated through geopolitics: political leadership interpreted borders, maritime space, regional connectivity, resources, and environmental interdependence in relation to national interests.
- The Indian National Congress transformed nationalist experience into an organized international outlook through political debate, institutional activity, international contacts, and the contributions of diverse leaders, with Nehru emerging as its most influential articulator.
- The central analytical lesson is that determinants condition foreign policy rather than mechanically determine it; India's external choices emerged from the interaction of inherited ideas, material circumstances, institutions, leadership, and changing global conditions.

1.7 FURTHER READING

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1.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Foreign policy is the strategy adopted by a country in dealing with other nations and international organizations.

Ans to Q No 2: The Himalayan mountain ranges

Ans to Q No 3: Jawaharlal Nehru

Ans to Q No 4: The policy of Non-Alignment.

1.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Type Questions (Answer each questions within 50 words)

Q 1: What is meant by foreign policy?

Q 2: Which mountain range forms India's natural northern boundary?

Q 3: Name the first Prime Minister of independent India.

Q 4: Which policy emphasized India's independence from power blocs during the Cold War?

B) Short Answer Type Questions (Answer each questions within 150 words)

Q 1: How did colonialism influence India's foreign policy after independence?

Q 2: Explain the importance of geography in determining India's foreign policy.

Q 3: What role did the Indian National Congress play in shaping India's world view?

Q 4: Why did India adopt the policy of non-alignment?

C) Long Answer Type Questions (Answer each questions within 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss the major determinants of India's foreign policy.

Q 2: Examine the impact of colonial connections on the evolution of India's foreign policy.

Q 3: Analyze the role of geography in shaping India's diplomatic and strategic priorities.

Q 4: Evaluate the contribution of the Indian National Congress in developing India's foreign policy outlook and world view.

*** ***** ***

UNIT 2: PRINCIPLES OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives

2.2 Introduction

2.3 Nehruvian Policy

2.4 Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

2.5 Gujral Doctrine

2.6 Non-Violence

2.7 Panchsheel

2.8 Anti-Colonialism

2.9 Let Us Sum Up

2.10 Further Reading

2.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

2.12 Model Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Explain the key features and significance of the Nehruvian approach to India's foreign policy.
- Describe the objectives and importance of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in India's diplomatic strategy.
- Examine the principles and regional significance of the Gujral Doctrine in India's relations with neighbouring countries.
- Discuss the role of non-violence and Panchsheel as guiding principles of India's foreign policy.
- Analyse the importance of anti-colonialism in shaping India's international outlook and support for global decolonization movements.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

India's foreign policy is founded on a set of enduring principles that reflect the country's historical experiences, constitutional values, and aspirations for peaceful international cooperation. Emerging in the aftermath of independence in 1947, these principles were shaped by the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, who envisioned India as an independent, peace-loving, and morally responsible nation in world affairs. Rather than aligning with competing power blocs during the Cold War, India adopted an autonomous approach that emphasized strategic independence, peaceful coexistence, and support for decolonization and global justice.

The Nehruvian approach laid the intellectual and diplomatic foundation of India's external relations through ideals such as non-alignment, international cooperation, and respect for sovereignty. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) became a significant platform

through which India sought to preserve its strategic autonomy while advocating peace, development, and the interests of newly independent nations. Over time, India's foreign policy also incorporated the Gujral Doctrine, which promoted trust, goodwill, and non-reciprocity in relations with neighbouring countries to strengthen regional cooperation.

The principles of non-violence and Panchsheel further reinforced India's commitment to resolving disputes peacefully and respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states. At the same time, India's strong anti-colonial stance reflected its support for national liberation movements and opposition to imperialism, racial discrimination, and foreign domination. Together, these principles have shaped India's diplomatic identity and continue to influence its engagement with the international community while adapting to changing global realities.

2.3 NEHRUVIAN POLICY

Nehruvian policy refers to the political, economic, social, and foreign policy framework introduced by Jawaharlal Nehru after India attained independence in 1947. As the country's first Prime Minister, Nehru inherited a nation struggling with the consequences of colonial exploitation, Partition, poverty, and widespread illiteracy. His vision was to build a modern India based on democracy, secularism, economic planning, scientific advancement, and an independent foreign policy. These principles not only guided India's early years as an independent nation but also influenced its long-term developmental trajectory (Nehru, 1946).

A central feature of Nehruvian policy was the establishment of parliamentary democracy. While several newly independent countries moved towards authoritarian forms of government, India adopted a democratic system based on universal adult franchise, free and fair elections, and an independent judiciary. Nehru regarded democracy as more than a political arrangement; he believed it encouraged public participation, safeguarded civil liberties, and strengthened national unity in a country marked by immense linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity (Guha, 2007). His commitment to democratic institutions played a significant role in ensuring political stability during the formative years of the Republic.

Economic development occupied a prominent place in Nehru's vision. Convinced that rapid industrialisation was essential for overcoming poverty and achieving self-reliance, he introduced the system of planned economic development. The Planning Commission, established in 1950, was entrusted with preparing Five-Year Plans to guide national development. Particular emphasis was placed on heavy industries, infrastructure, power generation, and public sector enterprises, as these were considered the foundation of long-term economic growth (Frankel, 2005). Although agriculture remained important, Nehru believed that industrial expansion would accelerate overall national progress.

Instead of following either a purely capitalist or a completely socialist model, Nehru favoured a mixed economy. Under this system, strategic sectors such as steel, mining, transport, and energy were placed under state ownership, while private enterprises were allowed to function in other areas. The objective was to promote economic growth while ensuring that wealth and resources were distributed more equitably among different

sections of society (Chandra et al., 2008). This approach reflected Nehru's belief that the state should play an active role in reducing inequality without eliminating private enterprise altogether.

Another defining aspect of Nehruvian policy was the promotion of scientific temper and education. Nehru considered science and technology indispensable for national development and repeatedly argued that India's future depended on cultivating a rational and scientific outlook. During his tenure, several premier institutions, including the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), and various national research laboratories, were established to strengthen higher education and scientific research (Guha, 2007). These institutions later became important centres of excellence and continue to contribute significantly to India's development.

Nehru also attached great importance to secularism. He believed that the Indian state should maintain equal respect for all religions and should not favour any particular religious community. Given India's diversity and the communal tensions following Partition, secularism was viewed as essential for preserving social harmony and protecting the constitutional rights of every citizen.

In the sphere of foreign policy, Nehru pursued an independent course that eventually became the foundation of the Non-Aligned Movement. During the Cold War, India refused to join either the Western or Soviet military blocs, choosing instead to maintain strategic autonomy and peaceful relations with all countries. Nehru also supported decolonisation, peaceful coexistence, and international cooperation, believing that newly independent nations should determine their own foreign policies without external pressure (Gopal, 1984).

Despite its many achievements, Nehruvian policy has attracted criticism. The expansion of the public sector and the licensing system led to bureaucratic delays, administrative inefficiency, and slower economic growth in some sectors. Critics further argue that greater attention should have been given to agriculture and defence preparedness, particularly before the Sino-Indian War of 1962 (Frankel, 2005). Nevertheless, many scholars acknowledge that Nehru's policies provided India with stable democratic institutions, an industrial base, scientific infrastructure, and an independent identity in world affairs (Guha, 2007).

In conclusion, Nehruvian policy represented a comprehensive blueprint for nation-building during the early decades of independent India. Although many of its economic strategies have been modified through later reforms, its emphasis on democracy, secularism, scientific progress, and independent decision-making continues to shape India's political and developmental discourse.

2.4 Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) emerged during the Cold War as a collective response by newly independent countries that wished to protect their sovereignty without becoming part of the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. Rather than aligning with either military bloc, these countries sought to pursue an independent foreign

policy based on their own national interests. For many Asian and African nations that had recently gained independence, non-alignment represented not neutrality or isolation but the freedom to make decisions without external influence.

The origins of NAM can be traced to the period following the Second World War, when decolonisation was transforming the political landscape of Asia and Africa. Many newly independent states faced the challenge of safeguarding their political independence while also addressing economic underdevelopment. At the same time, the growing tension between the two superpowers increased the pressure on these countries to join one of the competing blocs. Leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Sukarno of Indonesia, and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana believed that genuine independence could only be preserved if newly independent nations retained the freedom to formulate their own foreign policies.

The principles that guided the movement were influenced by the Panchsheel Principles of peaceful coexistence, which India and China had endorsed in 1954. These principles included mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality, mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. Such ideas later became central to the philosophy of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Although its intellectual foundations had already been laid, the movement was formally established at the Belgrade Summit in 1961, where representatives from twenty-five countries gathered to create a platform that would safeguard the interests of developing nations. The summit marked the beginning of an organised effort to promote peace, oppose military alliances, and strengthen cooperation among newly independent states.

India played a particularly significant role in the development of NAM. Under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, India consistently argued that joining either the Western or Soviet bloc would compromise its strategic autonomy. Instead, India maintained diplomatic relations with both sides while reserving the right to take independent positions on international issues. This approach enabled India to support peace initiatives, mediate international disputes, and maintain its identity as an autonomous actor in world politics.

Beyond the Cold War, NAM became a strong advocate of decolonisation, racial equality, and global justice. The movement openly supported liberation struggles in Asia and Africa, condemned apartheid in South Africa, and consistently called for nuclear disarmament. It also highlighted the economic challenges faced by developing countries and demanded reforms in international economic institutions to create a fairer global order. Through the United Nations and other international forums, NAM gave developing countries a stronger collective voice in global decision-making.

Following the end of the Cold War in 1991, many observers questioned whether the movement had lost its relevance because the bipolar world order had disappeared. Nevertheless, NAM continues to exist and has broadened its agenda to include issues such as sustainable development, climate change, terrorism, economic inequality, and South-South cooperation. While its political influence may not be as significant as it was

during the Cold War, the movement still serves as an important platform for dialogue among developing nations.

Despite its achievements, the Non-Aligned Movement has faced criticism. Some scholars argue that several member states occasionally acted in ways that favoured one superpower over the other, making the principle of non-alignment difficult to maintain in practice. Others believe that the movement often lacked unity because its members differed widely in their political systems, economic priorities, and regional interests. Even so, NAM remains one of the most influential diplomatic initiatives of the twentieth century, representing the aspirations of newly independent countries to preserve sovereignty, promote peaceful coexistence, and pursue development on their own terms.

In conclusion, the Non-Aligned Movement played a crucial role in shaping post-colonial international relations by giving newly independent nations the confidence to pursue independent foreign policies. Although global politics has changed considerably since its formation, the ideals of strategic autonomy, mutual cooperation, peaceful coexistence, and respect for national sovereignty continue to make NAM relevant in contemporary international affairs.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) When was the Non-Aligned Movement formally established?

2.5 GUJRAL DOCTRINE

India shares borders with several South Asian countries, and good relations with them are essential for regional peace and development. In the 1990s, however, many smaller neighbours felt that India was too dominant and did not fully trust its intentions. To remove this mistrust, I.K. Gujral, then External Affairs Minister and later Prime Minister (April 1997 to March 1998), put forward a new approach to neighbourhood relations, which came to be known as the Gujral Doctrine.

The Gujral Doctrine is a set of five principles guiding India's relations with its immediate neighbours. Its main aim is to build trust, friendship and cooperation in South Asia by treating smaller neighbours with generosity and respect. It applies mainly to Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka, and in abroader sense to the whole of South Asia. The five principles are:

With its neighbours, India does not ask for reciprocity but gives and accommodates what it can in good faith and trust (non-reciprocity).

No South Asian country should allow its territory to be used against the interests of another country in the region.

No country should interfere in the internal affairs of another.

All South Asian countries must respect one another's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

All disputes should be settled through peaceful bilateral negotiations.

The doctrine produced some notable results. The Ganga Water Sharing Treaty was signed with Bangladesh in 1996, and the Mahakali Treaty was concluded with Nepal in the same year. Relations with Sri Lanka, Bhutan and the Maldives improved, and dialogue with Pakistan was revived in 1997, covering all major issues including Jammu and Kashmir.

The doctrine has also faced criticism. Critics argue that non-reciprocity is one-sided and may weaken India's bargaining power. It did not bring much progress in relations with Pakistan, and its influence declined after 1998, when India conducted nuclear tests and regional tensions rose.

Even so, the Gujral Doctrine marked a shift from a dominant to a friendly and cooperative approach in India's neighbourhood policy. It helped reduce suspicion among smaller states and improved India's image as a responsible regional power. Its spirit can still be seen in India's present "Neighbourhood First" policy.

2.6 NON-VIOLENCE

Non-violence has occupied an important place in the evolution of India's foreign policy since independence. Although the Indian Constitution does not explicitly identify non-violence as a formal principle of external relations, the philosophy profoundly influenced the thinking of India's early leaders, particularly Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Gandhi viewed non-violence as a universal moral principle, while Nehru translated many of its values into diplomatic practice by promoting peaceful coexistence, dialogue, respect for sovereignty, and the peaceful settlement of international disputes. Consequently, non-violence became one of the ethical foundations upon which India's foreign policy was initially constructed.

The philosophical roots of non-violence lie in the Indian concept of Ahimsa, which has long been associated with Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Mahatma Gandhi expanded this traditional moral ideal into a practical instrument for political action during India's struggle against British colonial rule. According to Gandhi, violence could produce temporary victories but could not establish lasting peace or justice. He believed that conflicts should be addressed through truth, persuasion, dialogue, and voluntary sacrifice rather than coercion or military force. These ideas later influenced India's approach towards international relations after independence.

Following 1947, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru incorporated the spirit of non-violence into India's foreign policy without adopting complete pacifism. India recognised the necessity of maintaining armed forces for national security but consistently argued that war should remain the last option after peaceful methods had been exhausted. As a result, India advocated negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and diplomatic engagement as the preferred means of resolving international disputes. This approach reflected the belief that lasting peace could only be achieved through mutual understanding and respect rather than military confrontation.

The influence of non-violence is clearly visible in India's support for peaceful coexistence, which became a defining feature of its diplomacy during the Cold War. India promoted friendly relations with countries irrespective of differences in political ideology and consistently opposed the formation of hostile military alliances. This policy found expression in the Panchsheel Principles, signed between India and China in 1954. These principles—mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence—reflected the Gandhian preference for resolving differences without resorting to force.

Non-violence also shaped India's leadership in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). During the Cold War, India refused to join either the Western or Soviet military blocs because such alliances were viewed as contributing to international tension and the possibility of armed conflict. Instead, India advocated independent decision-making, dialogue between rival powers, and the peaceful settlement of disputes. By remaining non-aligned, India attempted to reduce Cold War polarisation and encourage cooperation among newly independent nations.

Another important dimension of India's commitment to non-violence has been its consistent support for nuclear disarmament and global peace initiatives. Although India developed nuclear weapons for strategic deterrence, successive governments have argued that the ultimate objective should be a world free of nuclear weapons. India has repeatedly called for universal, non-discriminatory, and verifiable nuclear disarmament through international negotiations rather than an arms race. This position demonstrates the continuing influence of non-violent ideals in India's diplomatic thinking despite changing security realities.

The principle of non-violence also influenced India's support for decolonisation and opposition to racial discrimination. India strongly backed the independence movements of Asian and African countries and consistently condemned apartheid in South Africa. Rather than advocating violent intervention, India sought to mobilise international opinion through the United Nations and other multilateral forums. This reflected the belief that international justice should be achieved through collective diplomacy, moral pressure, and adherence to international law.

Despite its importance, the role of non-violence in India's foreign policy has often been debated. Critics argue that international politics frequently requires the use of military force to safeguard national interests. Historical events such as the 1962 Sino-Indian War, the conflicts with Pakistan, and contemporary security challenges have demonstrated that moral principles alone cannot guarantee national security. Consequently, India's foreign policy has gradually combined its traditional commitment to peaceful conflict resolution with the practical necessity of maintaining credible defence capabilities. This evolution illustrates that non-violence has functioned as a guiding ideal rather than an absolute rule.

Even in the twenty-first century, non-violence continues to influence India's diplomatic identity. The country remains committed to dialogue, multilateral cooperation, respect for international law, and peaceful settlement of disputes. India's active participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations, advocacy of global disarmament, and preference for

diplomatic engagement in regional conflicts all reflect the enduring relevance of this principle. Although national security considerations sometimes require stronger responses, the broader orientation of Indian diplomacy continues to favour peaceful coexistence over confrontation.

In conclusion, non-violence has played a significant role in shaping India's foreign policy since independence. Inspired by Gandhian philosophy and adapted by Nehru to the realities of international politics, it encouraged India to promote peaceful coexistence, strategic restraint, dialogue, decolonisation, and international cooperation. While changing geopolitical circumstances have required a more pragmatic approach, non-violence remains one of the ethical foundations that continues to shape India's conduct in world affairs.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q2) Whose philosophy inspired India's policy of non-violence?

2.7 PANCHSHEEL

Panchsheel is one of the most important principles of India's foreign policy. It reflects Jawaharlal Nehru's belief in peace, friendship and cooperation among nations, especially newly independent countries that wanted to stay away from Cold War rivalries.

The word Panchsheel comes from two Sanskrit words, pancha (five) and sheel (virtues or principles of conduct). It is also known as the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and the idea is rooted in Buddhist ethics. The principles were first formally stated in the Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet Region of China and India, signed on 29 April 1954. Jawaharlal Nehru of India and Zhou Enlai of China are closely associated with it. The five principles are:

- Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty.
- Mutual non-aggression.
- Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs.
- Equality and mutual benefit.
- Peaceful co existence.

Panchsheel became a basic guideline of India's foreign policy and of the Non-Aligned Movement. It promoted peace and cooperation among countries with different political and social systems, and it gave newly independent nations a moral basis for dealing with one another as equals. Its ideas were carried forward at the Bandung Conference (1955) of Asian and African countries, which adopted principles of peace and cooperation based on it.

Panchsheel has also been criticised. It was seen as idealistic, since it trusted that other countries would follow the same values. The slogan "Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai" created a false sense of security about China, and the 1962 Sino-Indian War showed that the

principles were not followed in practice. By accepting Tibet as a "Region of China", India also gave up its special position there.

Despite these criticisms, Panchsheel continues to symbolise respect for sovereignty, non-interference and peaceful settlement of disputes. Its principles are still cited in international diplomacy, and its 60th anniversary was marked in 2014.

2.8 ANTI-COLONIALISM

Anti-colonialism has been one of the fundamental principles of India's foreign policy since independence. It refers to the opposition to colonial rule and the support for the right of all nations to achieve political independence, sovereignty, and self-determination. India's own experience under nearly two centuries of British colonial rule deeply influenced its external relations after 1947. Consequently, Indian leaders viewed the struggle against colonialism not only as a national achievement but also as a moral responsibility to support other countries fighting for freedom. Under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, India consistently opposed imperialism, racial discrimination, and foreign domination, making anti-colonialism a cornerstone of its foreign policy.

India's anti-colonial foreign policy was rooted in the belief that political independence was essential for international peace, equality, and justice. Having experienced economic exploitation, political subordination, and cultural domination under British rule, India strongly advocated the principle of self-determination, which allows people to decide their own political future. This principle became central to India's diplomatic engagement with newly emerging nations in Asia and Africa.

Soon after independence, India actively supported national liberation movements across the world. It extended diplomatic and moral support to countries in Asia and Africa that were struggling against European colonial powers. India consistently raised the issue of decolonisation in the United Nations, urging colonial powers to grant independence to their colonies. It welcomed the adoption of the UN principle of self-determination and supported resolutions calling for an end to colonial rule. India's diplomatic efforts reflected its commitment to creating an international order based on sovereign equality rather than imperial domination.

A major milestone in India's anti-colonial diplomacy was its participation in the Bandung Conference (1955), where leaders from twenty-nine Asian and African countries met to promote solidarity among newly independent nations. The conference condemned colonialism, racial discrimination, and foreign intervention while encouraging peaceful coexistence and economic cooperation. India played a leading role in shaping the conference's agenda and strengthening Afro-Asian unity. The principles adopted at Bandung later became the foundation for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), of which India was a founding member.

India also strongly opposed racial discrimination, particularly the system of apartheid in South Africa. It was among the first countries to sever trade relations with the apartheid regime and consistently raised the issue in international forums. India supported the struggle

of the Black majority against racial oppression and advocated economic and diplomatic sanctions against South Africa until apartheid was dismantled. This reflected India's broader commitment to equality, human rights, and justice in international relations.

Another important aspect of India's anti-colonial foreign policy was its support for the independence of territories that remained under colonial control after 1947. India supported the liberation of countries such as Indonesia, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and Angola. It also integrated the Portuguese colonies of Goa, Daman, and Diu into the Indian Union in 1961 after prolonged diplomatic efforts failed, arguing that colonial rule had no place in the post-war international order.

India's anti-colonial approach was closely linked with its policy of non-alignment. Rather than joining either the Western or Soviet military blocs during the Cold War, India sought to preserve its independence in foreign policy while supporting newly independent countries facing external pressures. Through NAM, India encouraged developing nations to cooperate politically and economically without becoming dependent on major powers. This approach reinforced the anti-colonial objective of protecting newly independent states from external domination in both political and economic forms.

Although formal colonialism largely ended during the twentieth century, India has continued to oppose newer forms of domination often described as neo-colonialism. Indian policymakers have argued that unequal trade relations, excessive external debt, and economic dependence can undermine the sovereignty of developing countries. Consequently, India has consistently advocated for a more equitable international economic order, greater representation of developing countries in global institutions, and South-South cooperation to promote sustainable development and reduce dependence on advanced economies.

In conclusion, anti-colonialism has remained a defining feature of India's foreign policy since independence. Rooted in India's own struggle against British rule, it shaped the country's support for decolonisation, self-determination, racial equality, and the sovereignty of newly independent nations. Through its active role in the United Nations, the Bandung Conference, the Non-Aligned Movement, and its opposition to apartheid and neo-colonialism, India established itself as a leading voice for freedom and justice in international affairs. Although the nature of global challenges has evolved, the principles of anti-colonialism continue to influence India's foreign policy and its commitment to promoting equality, independence, and cooperation among nations.

2.9 LET US SUM UP

- In this unit, we examined the foundational principles that have shaped India's foreign policy since independence. India's foreign policy emerged from its colonial experience and the vision of its first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, who sought to carve out an independent path for India in a world sharply divided by Cold War rivalries.

- The Nehru vian approach laid the intellectual and moral foundation of India's external relations, emphasising peaceful co-existence, sovereign equality of nations, and India's right to pursue an independent foreign policy free from bloc alignments. This found concrete expression in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which India co-founded along with Yugoslavia, Egypt, Indonesia, and Ghana, offering newly decolonised nations a platform to resist pressures of joining either the US-led or Soviet-led blocs while pursuing their own developmental and strategic interests.
- The principle of Panchsheel (the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence), first articulated in the 1954 Sino-Indian agreement, formalised India's commitment to mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful co-existence. Closely tied to this was India's philosophy of non-violence, drawn from Gandhian thought, which shaped India's preference for dialogue, arbitration, and restraint in settling international disputes rather than resorting to force.
- India's foreign policy was also deeply rooted in anti-colonialism, reflecting solidarity with other nations struggling against imperial domination and India's actives upport for decolonisation movements across Asia and Africa at forums like the United Nations.
- In the post-Cold War period, the Gujral Doctrine, formulated by I.K. Gujral, marked an important evolution in India's approach toward its immediate neighbourhood. Item phasised non-reciprocity and generosity in India's dealings with smaller neighbouring states, arguing that India, as the larger power in South Asia, should extend good will without insisting on strict quid proquo, thereby strengthening regional trust and cooperation.
- Together, these principles— Nehruvian idealism, non-alignment, Panchsheel, non-violence, anti-colonial solidarity, and the Gujral Doctrine—illustrate the continuity and evolution of India's foreign policy from a newly independent nation seeking to protectits autonomy to arising power balancing idealism with pragmatic regional diplomacy.

2.10 FURTHER READING

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2.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: 1961

Ans to Q No 2: Mahatma Gandhi

2.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 50 words)

Q 1: What is Panchsheel?

Q 2: Name the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement. Who formulated the Gujral Doctrine?

Q 3: In which year was the Panchsheel agreement signed? Define non-alignment in one sentence.

B) Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 150 words)

Q 1: Explain the key features of the Nehruvian approach to foreignpolicy. Discuss the origin and objectives of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Q 2: What are the five principles of Panchsheel? Briefly explain each. How did Gandhian non-violence influence India's foreign policy?

Q 3: Explain the significance of anti-colonialism in shaping India's early foreign policy.

C) Long Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 300-500 words)

Q 1: Critically examine the Nehruvian vision of foreign policy and assess its relevance in contemporary international relations.

Q 2: Discuss the origin, evolution, and current relevance of the Non-Aligned Movement in India's foreign policy.

Q 3: Explain the Gujral Doctrine and analyse its impact on India's relations with its South Asian neighbours.

Q 4: "Panchsheel and non-violence together formed the moral foundation of India's foreign policy." Discuss.

Q 5: Trace the evolution of India's foreign policy principles from the Nehruvian era to the post-Cold War period, highlighting continuity and change.

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UNIT 3: INDIA DURING THE COLD WAR

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives

3.2 Introduction

3.3 NAM and India

3.4 Ideational Policy of Jawaharlal Nehru During the Cold War

3.5 Let Us Sum Up

3.6 Further Reading

3.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.8 Model Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will be able to:

- Explain India's position during the Cold War period,
- Discuss India's international partnership strategies with reference to the Non-Aligned Movement and
- Analyse the Ideational Policy of Nehru during the Cold War.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

The Cold War (1947–1991) was a prolonged period of geopolitical, ideological, and strategic rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union following the end of the Second World War. Although the two superpowers never engaged in direct military confrontation, their competition shaped international politics through military alliances, proxy wars, nuclear arms races, and ideological contestation between capitalism and communism.

For newly independent states such as India, the Cold War presented the challenge of preserving sovereignty amid intense superpower rivalry. While India's diplomacy evolved in response to changing strategic realities, the Cold War remained the defining context within which its foreign policy principles of strategic autonomy, anti-colonialism, and multilateral engagement were formulated.India's foreign policy during the Cold War was characterized by strategic autonomy, anti-colonial solidarity, peaceful coexistence, and leadership within the Non-Aligned Movement. NAM served as both a moral and diplomatic platform through which India sought to safeguard its sovereignty and enhance the voice of newly independent nations in world politics. In this Unit, we shall be discussing NAM and Nehru's Ideational Policy during the Cold War period.

3.3 NAM AND INDIA

India's foreign policy emerged in the aftermath of independence in 1947 amidst a rapidly changing international environment marked by the onset of the Cold War. The

world had become divided into two rival military and ideological blocs led by the United States and the Soviet Union. Newly independent Asian and African nations sought to preserve their sovereignty without becoming instruments of superpower rivalry. In this context, India, under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, played a pioneering role in formulating the doctrine of non-alignment, which later evolved into the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

The idea of non-alignment originated from India's determination to protect its newly won independence and maintain strategic autonomy in foreign affairs. Rather than joining either of the Cold War alliances, India advocated the freedom to judge every international issue on its own merits. Non-alignment did not imply political neutrality or indifference to global affairs. Instead, it represented an active and independent foreign policy that enabled countries to oppose colonialism, racism, and imperialism while promoting peace and international cooperation.

India became one of the principal architects and leading voices of NAM. The movement reflected India's aspiration to exercise independent judgment while simultaneously contributing to global peace and stability. Rather than viewing international politics solely through the lens of power rivalry, India sought to encourage dialogue, peaceful coexistence, and diplomatic solutions to international conflicts. Non-alignment therefore became both a practical strategy for safeguarding national interests and an ethical commitment to justice in international relations.

The guiding principles of India's foreign policy were closely linked to this philosophy. The foremost principle was strategic autonomy, which emphasized India's right to make sovereign decisions free from external pressure or alliance obligations. Strategic autonomy allowed India to engage with different countries without compromising its national interests. This principle has remained central to Indian foreign policy even as global power structures have evolved.

Another important principle was peaceful coexistence, reflected in the Panchsheel principles agreed upon by India and China in 1954. Panchsheel became an important normative framework for India's diplomatic engagement with other countries and influenced broader international discussions on peaceful interstate relations.

Support for international peace and multilateralism constituted another core principle. India actively participated in the United Nations and consistently advocated peaceful settlement of disputes through negotiation and diplomacy. It viewed multilateral institutions as essential mechanisms for maintaining international peace and protecting the interests of developing countries.

Economic development also shaped India's external relations. During the early decades after independence, foreign policy was designed to create favourable international conditions for domestic economic growth. India sought development assistance from both the Western and Soviet blocs while avoiding exclusive dependence on either. This balanced approach reflected the practical dimension of non-alignment, which enabled India to diversify its international partnerships without sacrificing policy independence.

However, the international environment has changed significantly since the end of the Cold War. The collapse of the Soviet Union, economic globalization, the rise of China, and the emergence of a multipolar international system have reduced the relevance of classical non-alignment in its original Cold War form. India's foreign policy has consequently evolved toward what is increasingly described as multi-alignment. Instead of maintaining equal distance from competing powers, India now actively cultivates strategic partnerships with multiple countries simultaneously, including the United States, Russia, Japan, Australia, European nations, and regional organizations. This approach enables India to maximize diplomatic, economic, technological, and security opportunities while retaining its strategic autonomy.

Despite this evolution, Mishra argues that the underlying objective of Indian foreign policy has remained remarkably consistent. The shift from non-alignment to multi-alignment does not signify the abandonment of India's traditional foreign policy principles but rather their adaptation to changing global realities. Strategic autonomy continues to guide India's decisions, although it is now exercised through diversified partnerships instead of political distance from rival powers. Thus, India's contemporary diplomacy reflects continuity in objectives alongside change in methods.

3.4 IDEATIONAL POLICY OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU DURING THE COLD WAR

The foreign policy of independent India under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was deeply shaped by ideas, moral principles, and historical experiences.In the context of the Cold War, when the world was divided into two hostile ideological blocs led by the United States and the Soviet Union, Nehru attempted to formulate an independent path for India based on anti-colonialism, peaceful coexistence, international cooperation, and non-alignment. His approach is often described as the "ideational" foundation of Indian foreign policy because it relied heavily on values, philosophies, and intellectual traditions. Nehru's ideational policy was rooted in his intellectual background and political experiences. He was deeply influenced by Enlightenment rationalism, Fabian socialism, Marxist critiques of imperialism, and Gandhian moral politics. His writings such as *The Discovery of India* and *Glimpses of World History* reveal his broad humanistic worldview and his faith in science, progress, secularism, and international cooperation. Nehru saw nationalism not as an aggressive or chauvinistic force but as a means of liberation from colonial domination.

One of the most important foundations was anti-colonialism. Having experienced British colonial rule, India strongly opposed imperialism and supported liberation movements in Asia and Africa. India consistently advocated the principle of national self-determination and criticized racial discrimination and foreign domination.

Another important influence was internationalism. Jawaharlal Nehru believed that nations should cooperate peacefully instead of engaging in military rivalry. He argued that world peace could not be achieved through military alliances or power politics. Therefore, India emphasized diplomacy, peaceful coexistence, and negotiation in international affairs.

Gandhian ideas also shaped Indian foreign policy. Nehru was also influenced by socialist ideas, especially state-led economic planning and social justice. However, he rejected authoritarian communism and instead supported a democratic socialist framework with a mixed economy.

From an idealist perspective, Nehru believed that international cooperation, diplomacy and institutions such as the United Nations could reduce conflict and promote peace. A realist interpretation, however, argues that Non-Alignment also served India's national interests by protecting its strategic autonomy and avoiding dependence on either superpower. Constructivists emphasize the importance of ideas, identity and norms, suggesting that India's experience of colonialism shaped its understanding of sovereignty and its role in world politics. A postcolonial interpretation further views Nehru's foreign policy as an attempt by a newly independent state to challenge colonial hierarchies and give the Global South a stronger voice in international affairs. Nehru's "ideational policy" combined normative ideals with pragmatic national interests, making his foreign policy neither purely idealist nor purely realist.

Foreign Policies under Nehru

Panchsheel

Panchsheel refers to the "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" formulated in 1954 as part of an agreement between India and China regarding Tibet. It became one of the most important foundations of Jawaharlal Nehru's foreign policy during the Cold War. Panchsheel aimed to promote peaceful international relations at a time when the world was divided between the American and Soviet blocs.

Five Principles of Panchsheel

1. Mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty.
2. Mutual non-aggression.
3. Mutual non-interference in internal affairs.
4. Equality and mutual benefit.
5. Peaceful coexistence.

Nehru hoped these principles would reduce Cold War tensions and encourage peaceful international relations.

Bandung Conference

Afro-Asian Solidarity was an important political and diplomatic movement that emerged after the Second World War among newly independent countries of Asia and Africa. These nations shared common experiences of colonialism, economic exploitation, racial discrimination, and underdevelopment. Leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Sukarno, and Josip Broz Tito believed that cooperation among Asian and African countries was necessary to resist imperialism and Cold War domination. The Bandung Conference, held in Bandung in 1955, became a landmark event in the history of Afro-Asian solidarity. Representatives from twenty-nine Asian and African countries participated in the conference to discuss issues such as colonialism, racism, economic

cooperation, peace, and international relations. The conference strongly opposed colonialism and emphasized peaceful coexistence, sovereignty, and mutual respect among nations.The Bandung Conference laid the ideological foundation for the later Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). It also increased the international importance of newly independent nations and promoted the idea that Asian and African countries could maintain independence from both the American and Soviet blocs during the Cold War.

Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

One of the central pillars of Nehru's ideational policy was non-alignment. Non-alignment did not mean neutrality or political passivity. Instead, it represented the freedom to make independent decisions according to national interests and ethical principles. Nehru rejected the argument that nations must inevitably choose between the American and Soviet blocs. He argued that military alliances increased tensions and threatened world peace. According to him, the Cold War was dangerous because it transformed local conflicts into global confrontations and encouraged an arms race that diverted resources from development. Therefore, India refused to join military alliances such as NATO, SEATO, and CENTO which he believed were instruments of power politics and neo-imperialism.

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was an international organization of newly independent countries that emerged during the Cold War to maintain independence from both the American and Soviet power blocs. It was formally established in 1961 at the Belgrade Conference in Belgrade. The movement was mainly inspired by leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Josip Broz Tito, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Sukarno, and Kwame Nkrumah.The main objective of NAM was to protect the sovereignty and independence of newly decolonized nations and to prevent them from becoming part of Cold War military alliances.

Several factors influenced the adoption of Non-Alignment. Politically, India wanted to preserve its sovereignty and avoid foreign domination. Economically, India required assistance from multiple sources for development and industrialization. Strategically, Non-Alignment allowed India to avoid military entanglements and maintain diplomatic flexibility. Ideologically, it reflected India's commitment to peaceful coexistence, anti-colonialism, and international cooperation.

The philosophy of non-alignment was closely connected to anti-colonialism. Nehru viewed colonialism as one of the greatest evils of modern history. Having witnessed British imperial rule in India, he strongly supported independence movements across Asia and Africa. India under Nehru became an active supporter of decolonization in Indonesia, Vietnam, Algeria, Egypt, Kenya, Congo, and other colonized regions. Nehru argued that political freedom was essential for world peace because imperialism created exploitation, racial discrimination, and international conflict. India therefore emerged as an important voice for newly independent nations in global forums such as the United Nations.

India's Relation with other countries

India and the U.S.

India's relations with the United States during the Cold War were complex and

characterized by both cooperation and tension. Despite ideological disagreements, the two countries cooperated in several areas such as food assistance, educational exchange, economic aid, and technical development. American assistance contributed to India's developmental programs during the early years of independence. However, significant tensions also emerged when India strongly opposed American military alliances such as SEATO and CENTO because Nehru believed that such alliances intensified Cold War rivalries and threatened world peace. Relations became further strained due to American military and diplomatic support for Pakistan, which India viewed as a threat to regional stability. Moreover, the United States often regarded India's Non-Aligned policy with suspicion and interpreted it as indirect sympathy toward the Soviet bloc. Thus, Indo-US relations during the Cold War reflected a mixture of cooperation, strategic disagreement, and ideological differences shaped by the larger context of Cold War politics.

Indo-China Relations and the 1962 War

Initially, relations between India and China were marked by friendship and cooperation. Jawaharlal Nehru believed that India and China, as two ancient Asian civilizations emerging from colonial domination, could work together to promote peace and Asian solidarity. This spirit of friendship was reflected in the popular slogan "Hindi-Chini Bhai-Bhai." India supported China's entry into the United Nations and emphasized the principles of peaceful coexistence through the Panchsheel Agreement of 1954. However, despite these diplomatic efforts, tensions gradually developed over unresolved border disputes, particularly in Aksai Chin and the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA), presently Arunachal Pradesh. These disputes eventually culminated in the Sino-Indian War of 1962, which became a major turning point in Indian foreign policy. The war shocked India and damaged Nehru's faith in Asian solidarity and peaceful coexistence. The conflict exposed the limitations of moral diplomacy in an international system often shaped by strategic interests and power politics.

The Sino-Indian War of 1962 was shaped by a combination of territorial disputes, strategic competition and Cold War geopolitics. The main territorial disagreements concerned Aksai Chin in the western sector and the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA), now Arunachal Pradesh, in the eastern sector. China's construction of a strategic road through Aksai Chin and competing territorial claims increased tensions. The failure of diplomatic negotiations and the escalation of India's Forward Policy further contributed to the conflict. International factors also played an important role. The growing Sino-Soviet split, China's tensions with the United States and the wider Cold War environment influenced Chinese and Indian calculations. India's policy of Non-Alignment did not prevent it from seeking Western assistance during the war. The conflict exposed weaknesses in India's defence preparedness and created a major reassessment of its security policy.

The war had important consequences for Indian foreign policy. India increased defence expenditure, military modernisation and border infrastructure and strengthened its security partnerships, including closer defence cooperation with the Soviet Union. At the same time, India retained its commitment to Non-Alignment, but increasingly interpreted it through the lens of national security and strategic autonomy.

India's Nuclear Policy during the Cold War

India's nuclear policy during the Cold War was shaped by the twin objectives of peaceful use of nuclear technology and national security. Under Jawaharlal Nehru, India supported global nuclear disarmament and opposed the nuclear arms race. At the same time, India developed an indigenous nuclear programme to promote energy, scientific development and technological self-reliance.

India opposed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1968, considering it discriminatory because it divided the world into nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon states without requiring adequate disarmament by the nuclear powers. India also refused to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) on similar grounds.

The 1974 Pokhran-I nuclear test, officially described as a *"peaceful nuclear expolsion,"* marked a major shift. It demonstrated India's nuclear capability but also led to greater international restrictions on nuclear technology transfers to India. Nevertheless, India maintained its commitment to strategic autonomy and universal nuclear disarmament.

India's Responses to Major Cold War Crises

India's response to major Cold War crises was largely guided by Non-Alignment, peaceful diplomacy, anti-colonialism and respect for national sovereignty. During the Korean War (1950-53), India supported a peaceful settlement and played a mediating role through the United Nations. During the Suez Crisis of 1956, India strongly opposed the British, French and Israeli intervention in Egypt and supported Egypt's sovereignty. In the Hungarian Crisis of 1956, India adopted a cautions position, criticizing the use of force while emphasizing peaceful settlement and non-interference. During the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, India supported negotiations and the peaceful resolution of tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. In the Vietnam War, India advocated a negotiated settlement and supported the principle of Vietnamese self-determination. These responses show that India's Non-Alignement was not passive neutrality; rather, it sought to promote peace, oppose colonialism and military intervention, and protect the sovereignty of nations while maintaining its own independent foreign policy.

India-Soviet

The Cold War provided the broader international context within which India and the Soviet Union gradually developed close political, economic and strategic relations. Although India adopted Non-Alignment and did not formally join either superpower bloc, its relations with the Soviet Union strengthened considerably, particularly from the 1960s onward. The Soviet Union supported India's industrialisation and economic development through assistance in major projects in steel, heavy machinery, energy and technology. It also became a major source of defence equipment, supplying aircraft, tanks, submarines and other military technology. This cooperation strengthened India's defence capabilities and reduced its dependence on Western sources. Political and diplomatic cooperation also expanded. The USSR generally supported India on important international issues, including Kashmir, and its position became particularly significant during the 1971 India-Pakistan War. The signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation in 1971

marked a high point in bilateral relations and provided a framework for closer political and strategic cooperation.

However, India continued to emphasize that its Soviet partnership did not mean abandoning Non-Alignment or an independent foreign policy. India maintained relations with the United States and other countries, while pursuing its own national interests.

India-Pakistan Relations

The Cold War significantly influenced the nature of India-Pakistan relations, as regional conflicts became connected with the wider rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. The two countries had already been in conflict over Kashmir, and their rivalry intensified through wars and disputes over security and territory. Pakistan increasingly aligned itself with the United States and Western military alliances. It joined SEATO in 1954 and CENTO in 1955, receiving substantial military and economic assistance from the United States. India viewed these alliances with suspicion, seeing them as a threat to regional security and a departure from South Asian autonomy. India, meanwhile, followed Non-Alignment but developed increasingly close relations with the Soviet Union, particularly from the 1960s. The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation (1971) further strengthened this relationship.

Major conflicts occurred in 1965 and 1971. The 1971 war resulted in the creation of Bangladesh, fundamentally altering the regional balance. The Simla Agreement of 1972 subsequently established a framework for bilateral negotiations and peaceful settlement of disputes.

Conclusion

Historians and political scientists have debated the nature of Nehru's ideational policy for decades. Earlier scholars often portrayed Nehru as an idealist whose policies were driven primarily by moral considerations. According to this interpretation, Non-Alignment represented a principled commitment to peace and anti-colonialism. However, more recent historians such as Srinath Raghavan and Zorawar Daulet Singh argue that Nehru combined ethical principles with strategic calculations. They suggest that Non-Alignment was also a pragmatic strategy for preserving India's autonomy in a bipolar world where the country lacked the economic and military strength to compete directly with the superpowers. From this perspective, Nehru's diplomacy was not merely moral idealism but a sophisticated attempt to maximize India's diplomatic flexibility while focusing on domestic development.

Despite criticisms, Nehru's ideational policy had a profound impact on global politics and the postcolonial world. India emerged as a leading voice of newly independent nations and played an important role in shaping debates on decolonization, racial equality, nuclear disarmament, and international cooperation. Nehru's emphasis on strategic autonomy and independent decision-making continues to influence Indian foreign policy even today. Modern India's approach to multipolarity, South-Asian cooperation, and balanced diplomacy reflects many elements of Nehruvian thought.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Who introduced the policy of Non-Alignment in India?

Q2) In which year was the Bandung Conference held?

Q3) What does Panchsheel mean?

Q4) Which war challenged Nehru's policy of peaceful coexistence?

Q5) Name the movement established in 1961 to promote independent foreign policy during the Cold War.

3.5 LET US SUM UP

After going through this text, you have learnt:

- the major features of India's foreign policy during the Cold War.
- the ideological foundations of Jawaharlal Nehru's diplomacy.
- the meaning and significance of Non-Alignment in international politics.
- the principles of Panchsheel and peaceful coexistence.
- the importance of Afro-Asian solidarity and the Bandung Conference.
- the nature of India's relations with the United States, Soviet Union, and China during the Cold War.
- the impact of the Sino-Indian War of 1962 on Indian foreign policy.
- Jawaharlal Nehru's ideas on nuclear disarmament and world peace.

3.6 FURTHER READING

1) Raghavan, Srinath, 2010. *War and Peace in Modern India: A Strategic History of the Nehru Years*. Permanent Black,Ranikhet, India.

2) Muni, S. D., 2009. *India's Foreign Policy: The Democracy Dimension*. Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, India.

3) Nehru, Jawaharlal, 1981. *The Discovery of India*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

4) Mishra, R. (2023). From non-alignment to multi-alignment: assessing India's foreign policy shift. The Round Table, 112(1), 43–56. DOI: 10.1080/00358533.2023.2165367

5) Singh, Z.D. (2019). Power and Diplomacy: India's Foreign Policies during the Cold War. Oxford University Press, New Delhi

3.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Jawaharlal Nehru introduced the policy of Non-Alignment in India.

Ans to Q No 2: The Bandung Conference was held in 1955.

Ans to Q No 3: Panchsheel means the "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence."

Ans to Q No 4: The Sino-Indian War challenged Nehru's policy of peaceful coexistence.

Ans to Q No 5: The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was established in 1961.

3.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Questions (Answer each question within 50 words)

Q 1: Where was the Bandung Conference held?

Q 2: What was the slogan of India-China friendship?

B) Short Answer Questions (Answer each question within 150 words)

Q 1: Write a short note on the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Q 2: Write a short note on Panchsheel and peaceful coexistence.

C) Long Answer Questions (Answer each question within 300-500 words)

Q 1: Critically discuss the ideological foundations of Jawaharlal Nehru's foreign policy during the Cold War.

Q 2: Evaluate India's relations with the United States and China during Nehru era.

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UNIT 4: INDIA-US RELATIONS

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning Objectives

4.2 Introduction

4.3 PL 480

4.4 Indo-US strategic relations

4.4.1 Political and Strategic Relations

4.5 QUAD

4.6 Let Us Sum Up

4.7 Further Reading

4.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.9 Model Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- Explain the historical background of India-US Relations.
- Explore the India-US strategic relations at the present time.
- Discuss the different dimensions (Political and Strategic, economic, cultural etc.) of the India-US Relations.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

India, being the world's largest democracy, and the United States, one of the oldest constitutional democracies, have emerged as significant partners in the changing global order in contemporary international politics. Rooted in shared democratic values, the relationship has evolved from initial Cold War–era mistrust to a broad-based strategic cooperation in the 21st century. Today, India and the US engage across multiple domains, including defence, trade, technology, counterterrorism, and climate change. With the rise of the Indo-Pacific as a strategic space, the partnership has acquired greater geopolitical importance. Overall, India-US relations now reflect a mix of strategic alignment, economic engagement, and people-to-people connections.

The history of India-U.S. relations been complex and multidimensional. During the Cold War, international politics was dominated by bipolarity, with the United States leading the Western bloc and the Soviet Union leading the communist bloc. India, under Jawaharlal Nehru, rejected alignment with either power bloc and adopted a policy of Non-Alignment, seeking to preserve strategic autonomy and support peaceful coexistence and anti-colonialism. In contrast, the United States pursued alliance politics to contain communism and established military alliances such as NATO, SEATO and CENTO. The U.S. also developed close strategic relations with Pakistan, which joined SEATO and CENTO.

Consequently, India's non-alignment and its growing relations with the Soviet Union often created tensions and mutual suspicion in India-U.S. relations during the Cold War.

4.3 PL 480

PL-480 (Public Law 480), also known as the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954, was a U.S. programme that provided food grains to developing countries, including India, mainly through concessional sales and food assistance. After the end of the World War II in 1945, the United States rose as a global superpower. In the Cold War era, India followed a strategy of autonomy by avoiding military alliances while maintaining relations with both blocs. India showed statesmanship by not joining either alliance. Rather, India initiated a highly strategic plan to form the Non-Alignment Movement and became a founding member of it. To support this idea, India became a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) emerged during the Cold War as an expression of the newly independent countries' desire to remain outside the rival power blocs led by the United States and the Soviet Union. India, under Jawaharlal Nehru, was one of its leading proponents. NAM strongly supported anti-colonialism, national sovereignty and territorial integrity, opposing colonial domination, racial discrimination and foreign intervention. It also advocated an independent foreign policy, allowing states to make decisions according to their own national interests rather than following either superpower. Thus, non-alignment was not.

In the 1950s, relations between India and the US were mixed. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru followed a policy of non-alignment, which often clashed with America's Cold War strategy against the Soviet Union. India accepted economic and technical aid from the US but refused to join Western military alliances. Meanwhile, The US strengthened strategic relations with Pakistan through its membership with South East Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO). India saw this as an unfriendly move. SEATO and CENTO were part of America's broader Cold War strategy of containing communism and strengthening its military alliances against the Soviet Union. India feared that Pakistan's participation in these alliances would increase U.S. military influence in South Asia and disturb the regional balance.

The 1960s brought both cooperation and strain. On one hand, U.S. aid was crucial in alleviating India's recurring food crises, with large-scale grain shipments under PL-480. On the other, India's socialist economic model and state-led planning conflicted with Washington's preference for liberal market systems. The Sino-Indian War of 1962 temporarily improved ties, as the U.S. provided military aid to India against China. However, relations soured again after the 1965 India-Pakistan War, when USA imposed ban on arms on both India and Pakistan, which India perceived as unjust, as U.S. given support to Pakistan.

The **Public Law 480 (PL-480) program,** started by the US in 1954, sent surplus American food grains to countries facing shortages. India became the largest recipient of this program in the 1950s and 1960s, receiving wheat and other staples at concessional rates. This aid helped India deal with repeated food crises but also created a sense of

dependency. During the 1965 war, US President Lyndon Johnson slowed grain shipments to pressure India, showing the political side of food aid. This experience pushed India to aim for self-sufficiency in food through the Green Revolution.

LET US KNOW

Cold War

The Cold War was a period of political, military, and ideological tension between the United States and its allies (the Western bloc) and the Soviet Union and its allies (the Eastern bloc) after the Second World War, roughly from 1947 to 1991. It was called “cold” because it did not involve direct military fighting between the two superpowers but was marked by proxy wars, arms races, nuclear competition, espionage, and ideological rivalry between capitalism and communism.

The 1970s marked the lowest point in India–US relations. America’s close friendship with Pakistan strained ties with India. The situation became more serious in 1971, when political turmoil in Pakistan led to the Bangladesh Liberation War and a massive refugee crisis in India. During the war, the US under President Nixon actively supported Pakistan, while the Soviet Union backed India. The dispatch of the US Seventh Fleet to the Bay of Bengal was seen in India as a direct threat of intervention. After India’s victory in 1971War, relations with the US declined further.The nuclear issue added to the tension. In 1974, India conducted its first nuclear test at Pokhran, known as Smiling Buddha. This shocked the United States and other countries of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, leading to strong criticism and the creation of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to restrict nuclear trade with India.

During the 1980s, India and the U.S. started to improve relations, but mistrust was still strong. The then Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi reopened talks with Washington, while US President Ronald Reagan looked for closer ties with India because of the Soviet–Afghan War. However, the US gave major military and economic aid to Pakistan, calling it a “frontline state” against the Soviet Union. This was a big concern for India.At the same time, the USA began to see India’s importance in the region and started limited cooperation in areas like science, technology, and higher education. When Rajiv Gandhi became Prime Minister of India (1984-1989), exchanges with the US increased, especially in computer technology and defence talks. Still, India’s strong dependence on the Soviet Union for weapons and support prevented a deeper partnership with America.

In short, during the Cold War decades, India and the United States struggled to build trust because of their different worldviews. While India focused on non-alignment and anti-imperialism, the USA prioritized containing communism through regional alliances. These differences kept the relationship distant and often uneasy until later years.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) When did the U.S become a superpower?

Q2) What was India's position during the Cold War?

Q3) What is the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)?

4.4 INDO-US STRATEGIC RELATIONS

India-U.S. relations can be understood through four key concepts. Realism highlights the role of national interest, power and strategic competition, particularly regarding China and the Indo-Pacific. Liberalism emphasizes economic interdependence, democratic values, institutions and cooperation. Strategic autonomy explains India's effort to maintain independent decision-making while engaging with multiple powers. Finally, strategic convergence helps explain the growing cooperation between India and the U.S. in defence, technology, trade and regional security despite differences on certain issues. Together, these perspectives show that India-U.S. relations are shaped by a combination of national interests, shared values, economic interests and changing geopolitical realities.

The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 transformed the international system from bipolarity to a more fluid and increasingly U.S.-centred global order. This created conditions for a major improvement in India-U.S. relations. India gradually moved from a traditional emphasis on non-alignment towards strategic autonomy, maintaining independent decision-making while engaging pragmatically with major powers. Economic liberalisation in 1991 also encouraged stronger commerical and technological ties with the United States.

At the same time, India increasingly engaged with the liberal international order, particularly through trade, investment, technology and multilateral institutions. Shared concerns over China's rise, Indo-Pacific security, terrorism, maritime security and advanced technology gradually produced greater strategic convergence.

After the end of the Cold War, the U.S. became the sole superpower and its ideology of liberalism gained momentum. The 1991 economic reforms, that is, the Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization (LPG) reforms in India, opened the door for foreign private investment. This encouraged American investors to enter the Indian market. At the same time, several Indian Americans (the Indian diaspora) influenced the U.S. Congress's policies towards South Asia and India.

India-U.S. relations were marked by considerable differences over nuclear policy and strategic interests. India opposed the unequal nature of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and maintained that nuclear disarmament should be universal. After India's 1974 Pokhran nuclear test, the United States became more criticial of India's nuclear programme and supported stronger non-proliferation measures. At the same time, the U.S. strategic partnership with Pakistan and India's growing defence relationship with the Soviet Union limited bilateral strategic cooperation.

Nevertheless, the two countries maintained dialogue and cooperation in areas such as economic assistance, food aid, science and technology. Cold War India-U.S. relations combined nuclear disagreement and strategic mistrust with limited areas of cooperation, rather than constituting a close strategic partnership.

After the end of the Cold War, the relevance of the Non-Aligned Movement came into question. India then adopted a foreign policy guided more by national interest than by ideology. In 1998, India conducted its second nuclear test, Pokhran-II, and declared itself a nuclear weapon state.India faced criticism for these tests, and the United States along with several other nuclear powers refused to recognize it as a nuclear weapon state. However, India presented itself as a responsible nuclear power at the international level.

Pokhran-II (1998) marked a major turning point in India-U.S. nuclear relations. India conducted a series of nuclear tests at Pokhran in May 1998 and openly declared itself a nuclear-weapon state. The United States initially imposed economic sanctions and strongly criticized the tests. However, sustained diplomatic dialogue like the Jaswant Singh-Strobe Talbott dialogues (1998-2000) were carried out. The talks happened between external Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and addressed major differences over India's nuclear programme, non-proliferation, the NPT and CTBT, as well as broader bilateral relations.

The transformation was also supported by growing U.S.-India defence cooperation, including military exercises, defence trade and institutional dialogue. At the same time, changing geopolitical calculations, particularly the rise of China, instability in South Asia and the emergence of India as an important regional power, encouraged both countries to reassess their strategic interests.

The major breakthrough came with the India-U.S. Civil Nuclear Agreement (2005-08). The agreement allowed India access to civilian nuclear technology and international nuclear commerce despite India not being a signatory to the NPT. The 2008 NSG waiver further enabled India to engage in international civil nuclear trade. It represented a shift from earlier nuclear disagreement and non-proliferation tensions towards strategic accommodation and partnership. The 2000s marked a turning point in Indo-U.S. relations. President Bill Clinton's landmark visit to India in the year 2000 signaled a new era of engagement. Under President George W. Bush, ties deepened significantly with the signing of the 2005 Civil Nuclear Agreement, which ended India's nuclear isolation and recognized it as a responsible nuclear power. Bush assured New Delhi that the United States would work with friends and allies to adjust international regimes to enable full civil nuclear energy cooperation and trade with India. This commitment was realized in 2008, when the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) granted India a country-specific waiver from its core conditions. Alongside this, defence cooperation expanded through joint exercises and arms sales; while economic ties strengthened as India emerged as a growing market for American goods and services. This period, thus,transformed the relationship from suspicion to strategic convergence.

The improvement in India-U.S. relations was shaped by several broader geopolitical developments. The rise of China encouraged both countries to cooperate more closely

on regional security and the Indo-Pacific. After 9/11, counter-terrorism and security cooperation became important areas of bilateral engagement. The United States also gradually moved away from its earlier "hyphenated" approach, which treated India and Pakistan primarily as a single South Asian strategic equation, towards developing a distinct relationship with India. At the same time, India's foreign policy evolved from Cold War non-alignment towards strategic autonomy, allowing it to build closer partnerships with the United States while maintaining independent relations with other major powers. Together, these factors created greater strategic convergence and facilitated the India-U.S. rapprochement.

LET US KNOW

NSG (Nuclear Suppliers Group)

It is a multilateral export control regime established in 1974 to regulate the export of nuclear materials, equipment, and technology and prevent nuclear proliferation. The NSG sets guidelines for nuclear trade, ensuring that nuclear technology and materials are used only for peaceful purposes. In 2008, the NSG granted India a country-specific waiver, allowing it to engage in civilian nuclear trade despite not being a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

After 2010, India-US relations entered a phase of deeper strategic and economic convergence. Under President Barak Obama, India was termed an "indispensable partner," with cooperation expanding in defence, counterterrorism, and clean energy. The 2015 Joint Strategic Vision underlined shared interests in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean. The Trump administration emphasized defence sales, counterterrorism, and the Indo-Pacific strategy, while occasionally clashing over trade. Under Biden, ties have further strengthened through the Quad, the iCET initiative on critical technologies, climate partnerships, and health security cooperation during COVID-19. Despite differences over trade and relation with Russia, the relationship has become one of comprehensive global partnership.

India's closer partnership with the United States does not necessarily represent formal alliance formation. India maintains strategic autonomy by preserving independent decision-making and avioding binding military commitments to any major power. At the same time, multi-alignment allows India to deepen cooperation with the United States while simultaneously maintaining relationships with Russia, Europe, Japan, and other partners. India's participation in the Quad and cooperation with the U.S. in defence, technology and the Indo-Pacific are therefore largely issue-based partnerships, rather than an exclusive alliance. This approach enables India to cooperate with Washington where interests converge while retaining the flexibility to pursue independent policies where interests differ, such as on Russia, trade and certain global issues.

The Indo-Pacific has emerged as a key pillar of India-U.S. strategic cooperation because of its importance for global trade, maritime routes and regional security. Both

countries support a free, open and rules-based Indo-Pacific order, emphasizing freedom of navigation, maritime security, respect for international law, connectivity and regional stability.

During the Trump administration (2017-2021), India-U.S. relations were marked by both the consolidation of strategic cooperation and the emergence of new economic frictions. The Indo-Pacific has emerged as a key pillar of India-U.S. strategic cooperation beacuse of its importance for global trade, maritime routes and regional security. Both countries support a free, open and rules-based Indo-Pacific order, emphasizing freedom of navigation, maritime security, respect for international law, connectivity and regional stability. Theadoption of the Indo-Pacific strategy and the revival of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) elevated India's role as a key partner in balancing China's regional influence. The Quad-India, the United States, Japan and Australia– **provides an important plateform for cooperation in areas such as maritime security, disaster relief, critical technologies, resilient supply chains and health security. However, the Quad is not a formal military alliance. For India, it is consistent with strategic autonomy and provides an opportunity for cooperation without binding military commitments.

India-U.S. defence relations have also been strengthened through three major foundational defence agreements. Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) established in 2016 facilitates reciprocal access to military logistics and support facilities. Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement COMCASA (2018) enables secure communication and the sharing of advanced defence information. Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement BECA (2020) facilitates the exchange of geospatial intelligence and improves the accuracy and effectiveness of defence operations. These agreements have increased interoperability and defence cooperation between the two countries while India continues to maintain and independent foreign policy and defence relationships with other major powers. Thus, the Indo-Pacific partnership represents strategic convergence without abandoning strategic autonomy. U.S. support to India following the Pulwama terror attack further underscored growing counterterrorism convergence. At the same time, however, Trump's "America First" orientation created strains, including the termination of India's benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program, recurrent tariff disputes, and restrictive policies on H-1B visas, which affected Indian professionals. The administration also adopted a firmer stance against Pakistan, urging India to play a larger role in Afghan security-signaling a shift in U.S. South Asia policy. Despite Pakistan's lack of cooperation, the U.S. continued efforts to project India as a net security provider in South Asia and the Indian Ocean. While this projection positioned India as an emerging champion of regional security, it also carried significant strategic consequences.

Under the President Joe Biden (2021–2025), India–U.S. relations have expanded into a comprehensive global partnership, with greater emphasis on technology, defence, clean energy, and multilateral cooperation. The launch of the Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET), co-production of jet engines, and agreements under INDUS-X deepened defence and innovation ties. In climate and energy, initiatives such as the Clean Energy Agenda 2030 and the Strategic Clean Energy Partnership mobilized

investments in green infrastructure. Multilaterally, Biden strengthened India's role through the Quad, the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), and the Mineral Security Partnership, highlighting shared concerns over maritime security, supply chains, and critical minerals. Despite ongoing trade frictions and differing approaches to Russia, the Biden era has reinforced India's role as a central pillar of the USA's Indo-Pacific strategy while underlining shared democratic values and strategic convergence.

Contemporary India-U.S. relations are best understood as strategic convergence rather than a formal military alliance. The two countries have developed extensive cooperation in defence, technology, counterterrorism, the Indo-Pacific, energy and critical technologies. However, India has deliberately avoided entering a binding alliance that would restrict its independent foreign-policy choices. This reflects the principle of strategic autonomy, under which India seeks to cooperate with major powers while retaining freedom of decision-making.

India's continued relationship with Russia clearly illustrates this approach. Despite growing U.S.-India cooperation, India has maintained important defence, energy and diplomatic ties with Russia. Similarly, during the Russia-Ukraine conflict, India adopted and independent position rather than fully aligning with the U.S. and its allies. Differencess have also emerged over trade, tariffs, market access and other economic issues. This approach can be understood as multi-alignment–building partnerships with several major powers simultaneously–and issue-based partnership, where cooperation depends on shared interests in particular areas.

Since returning to office for the second term in January 2025, President Donald Trump has pursued a more transactional foreign policy, straining India–U.S. ties through steep tariff hikes—up to 50% on Indian goods—over New Delhi's Russian oil imports and by canceling trade delegations. Yet, India's strategic importance remains central. Critics argue that Trump's economic nationalism, marked by state-led interventions in sectors like semiconductors, signals a drift toward state-run capitalism, adding uncertainty to the ideological direction of U.S. policy.

These developments can be understood through realism and economic nationalism, where states prioritize national interests, economic security and strategic advantage. U.S. tariff pressure and technology policies reflects economic nationalism, while India's response reflects strategic autonomy and the protection of its own interests. At the same time, economic disagreements coexist with continued cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, defence, critical and emerging technologies, and regional security, where both countries share strategic interests. Thus, India-U.S. relations reflect strategic convergence without complete alignment–cooperation where interests overlap and competition or bargaining where they diverge.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q4) When wasthe Civil Nuclear Agreement signed ?

4.4.1 Political and Strategic Relations

The political and strategic dimension of India–US relations has undergone a remarkable transformation from the Cold War period to the present day. In the decades following independence, India's adoption of a non-aligned foreign policy was often met with skepticism in Washington, which viewed global politics through the lens of the U.S.–Soviet rivalry. The American decision to support Pakistan militarily through SEATO and CENTO in the 1950s deepened Indian mistrust, while India's tilt towards the Soviet Union during the 1970s created further distance. However, the end of the Cold War and the onset of globalization in the 1990s provided new opportunities for cooperation. Today, the United States recognizes India as a key partner in maintaining stability in the Indo-Pacific region, particularly in countering China's assertiveness. The two democracies increasingly frame their partnership around shared values of democracy, pluralism, and rule of law, even while acknowledging occasional divergences on foreign policy issues. The strategic partnership is institutionalized through regular high-level dialogues such as the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue, and their cooperation is evident in forums like the Quad and the G20. Thus, political and strategic ties have shifted from suspicion to cooperation, reflecting a convergence of interests in the evolving global order.

4.5 QUAD

Defence is a strong pillar of Indo-US relations. India and the U.S. have signed several important defence agreements. Today, the two countries share a comprehensive partnership, cooperating on a wide range of issues. The U.S. has accorded India with strategic designations such as Major Defence Partner and NATO Ally-like status.One of the earliest agreements between the two countries was the **General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA),** signed in 2002. This provides the framework for sharing classified military information between the two governments and marked the beginning of deeper defence cooperation.

Over time, India also signed the three other key foundational agreements with the U.S.:

1. **LEMOA (Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement)**, signed in 2016, allows mutual access to each others military bases for logistics support.
2. **COMCASA (Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement)**, signed in 2018, enables secure communication and interoperability between armed forces.
3. **BECA (Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geospatial Intelligence),** signed in 2020, facilitates sharing of geospatial intelligence and advanced military technology.

Together, these agreements have made defence and strategic cooperation, the backbone of the Indo-U.S. relations.

Two important mechanisms further anchor this cooperation:

2+2 Dialogue (since 2018): Brings together Foreign and Defence Ministers of both countries to review military cooperation and address issues such as terrorism, cybersecurity, and maritime security.

Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad): Quadis a strategic forum comprising India, the United States, Japan, and Australia. Initially formed in 2007 and revived in the last decade(2017), the Quad is not a formal military alliance but rather a platform for cooperation on regional and global issues. It emphasizes ensuring a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific, while promoting maritime security, infrastructure development, climate action, technology sharing, and disaster management. Though it conducts joint naval exercises like Malabar, its role is primarily diplomatic and strategic, focusing on balancing China's growing influence in the Indo- Pacific region.

Thus, defence and strategic cooperation form the backbone of contemporary India–U.S. relations, reflecting shared security interests and a converging vision for the Indo-Pacific.

LET US KNOW

Indo-Pacific

The Indo-Pacific refers to a geostrategic region that stretches from the eastern coast of Africa and the Indian Ocean to the western and central Pacific Ocean, including countries like India, Japan, Australia, and the United States. The term emphasizes the strategic, economic, and security linkages among the countries of the Indian and Pacific Oceans. It is widely used in international relations to promote a free, open, and inclusive region, ensure maritime security, safeguard trade routes, and balance the influence of major powers, particularly China, in the region.

Economic and Trade Relations

The economic aspect of India–US relations is extensive and growing. Bilateral trade has expanded from just a few billion dollars in the early 1990s to over $190 billion in 2022–23, making the U.S. one of India's largest trading partners. Indian exports to the U.S. include IT services, pharmaceuticals, textiles, and gems, while India imports aircraft, defence equipment, energy products, and high-end technology.American companies such as Google, Amazon, Microsoft, and Apple have expanded operations in India, creating jobs and boosting investment. Similarly, Indian firms in IT and pharmaceuticals have made significant inroads into the U.S. market. The services sector, particularly information technology outsourcing, has become a symbol of interdependence.

However, trade relations are not without friction. Disputes over tariffs, intellectual property rights, visa restrictions for Indian professionals, and market access continue to generate tensions. The U.S. withdrawal of Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) benefits in 2019 highlighted these challenges. Nonetheless, both governments remain committed to resolving differences through dialogue, as seen in the India–US Trade Policy Forum.Looking ahead, new areas such as semiconductors, supply chain resilience, green

energy, and digital economy are emerging as priorities. The economic partnership is increasingly linked to strategic concerns, as both countries aim to reduce overdependence on China.

Science, Technology, and Energy

Cooperation in science and technology has been one of the most innovative aspects of India–US relations. The 2008 Civil Nuclear Agreement was a landmark, giving India access to global nuclear technology despite not being a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This deal symbolized U.S. recognition of India's growing energy and security needs.In the field of space research, NASA and ISRO collaborate on satellite projects and space exploration, including joint missions such as NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar). Cooperation in high technology sectors—from artificial intelligence and biotechnology to advanced manufacturing—is deepening through frameworks like the **U.S.-India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET)** in 2023.

Energy security is another major area. The U.S. has become an important supplier of crude oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) to India. Clean energy cooperation focuses on solar, wind, hydrogen, and climate-friendly technologies, with initiatives under the U.S.–India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership. These collaborations align with India's renewable energy goals and America's climate diplomacy.Thus, science, technology, and energy cooperation not only drive economic growth but also strengthen the strategic dimension of the partnership.

Global and Multilateral Cooperation

India and the U.S. increasingly collaborate on global issues. Both are members of the United Nations, G20, and World Trade Organization, where they coordinate on matters such as counterterrorism, peacekeeping, and global governance reform. The U.S. supports India's aspiration for a permanent seat in a reformed UN Security Council, reflecting recognition of India's rising global role.Climate change has emerged as a key area of cooperation. Through initiatives like the International Solar Alliance (co-led by India) and joint commitments under the Paris Agreement, the two countries coordinate on clean energy transitions. Differences remain over climate finance and responsibilities, but the partnership is expanding.Global health cooperation also gained prominence during the COVID-19 pandemic, when India and the U.S. collaborated under the Quad Vaccine Partnership and medical supply chains. Both nations also work together on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region.At the same time, differences persist. India maintains an independent stance on issues like Russia's war in Ukraine, while the U.S. often pushes for alignment with its foreign policy objectives. Nevertheless, the overarching trend is toward greater collaboration on multilateral platforms.

India-U.S. cooperation in the UN, G20 and WTO is significant because it enables both countries to influence international rules, institutions and global decision-making. U.S. support for India's permanent membership of a reformed UN Security Council reflects recognition of India's growing role in global governance. Cooperation on climate change, the International Solar Alliance and the Paris Agreement contributes to shaping global approaches to clean energy and sustainable development. Similarly, Quad vaccine

cooperation, global health initiatives, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief strengthen collective responses to transnational challenges. However, differences over issues such as Russia-Ukraine, climate finance and development responsibilities show that cooperation does not mean complete policy alignment.

LET US KNOW

G 20

G 20, or the Group of Twenty, is an international forum of 19 major economies and the European Union that brings together the world's largest industrialized and emerging economies. It was established in 1999 to discuss and coordinate global economic policy, financial stability, and sustainable development. The G20 addresses issues such as international trade, investment, climate change, and economic growth, making it a key platform for cooperation among the world's leading economies.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q5) What is the Quad?

Q6) What is the 2+2 Dialogue in India–U.S. relations?

Q7) What is GSOMIA and when was it signed?

- **Challenges to Indo–US Relations**

  Despite a strong and multifaceted partnership, India-U.S. relations face several challenges–

  1. **Trade and Economic Frictions:** Disagreements over tariffs, market access, and trade benefits such as the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP).
  2. **Strategic and Foreign Policy Differences:** India's close ties with Russia and differing approaches to regional security and global conflicts.
  3. **Defence and Procurement Challenges:** Complexities in defence deals, procurement processes, and military technology sharing.
  4. **Geopolitical Divergences:** Divergent perspectives on global governance, security priorities, and regional influence.

4.6 LET US SUM UP

- After the World War II, the US emerged as a superpower, while India adopted Non-Alignment and became a founding member of NAM.
- During the 1950s, India sought US economic and technical aid but resisted joining Western military blocs; US strengthened ties with Pakistan through SEATO (1954) and CENTO (1955), causing mistrust.

- In the 1960s, US aid under PL-480 helped India during food shortages, the 1962 Sino-Indian War temporarily improved ties, but the 1965 Indo-Pak War and banon arms strained relations.
- Relations hit the lowest point in the 1970s, India signed a Treaty with USSR, the US supported Pakistan in the Bangladesh Liberation War, sent the Seventh Fleet to Bay of Bengal, and opposed India's 1974 nuclear test.
- In the 1980s, limited rapprochement occurred under Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, with modest cooperation in science, technology, and defence, but US support to Pakistan remained a major irritant.
- The collapse of the Soviet Union and India's economic reforms in 1991 opened the door for increased US investment and greater influence of the Indian diaspora on American policy.
- India's 1998 nuclear tests strained relations, but Prime Minister Vajpayee highlighted shared democratic values, framing India and the US as "natural allies."
- Landmark engagements, including President Clinton's visit and the 2005 Civil Nuclear Agreement under President Bush, legitimized India's nuclear status and strengthened defence, trade, and technology ties.
- Strategic and security cooperation expanded through joint defence exercises, counterterrorism collaboration, and technology partnerships, while trade and visa issues occasionally caused friction.
- Multilateral initiatives like the Quad, IPEF, and climate partnerships enhanced India's role in regional and global frameworks, reinforcing shared strategic interests.
- Even amid recent economic tensions, India remains a key partner in the US Indo-Pacific strategy and broader geopolitical considerations.

4.7 FURTHER READING

1. Pant, H. V. (2021). India–US relations in the Modi era: Aligned but autonomous. HarperCollins India.
2. Singh, S., & Rai, B. (2010). India–US relations. Regal Publications.
3. Jain, B. M. (2018). India–US relations in the age of uncertainty. Routledge India
4. Malone, D. M., & Mukherjee, R. (2010). The Oxford handbook of Indian foreign policy. Oxford University Press.

4.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: The United States emerged as a global superpower after the end of the Second World War in 1945.

Ans to Q No 2: During the Cold War, India adopted a policy of non-alignment, choosing not to formally join either the U.S.-led Western bloc or the Soviet-led Eastern bloc. India focused on maintaining strategic autonomy, promoting peaceful coexistence, and pursuing development, while being a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Ans to Q No 3: The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is an international organization of countries that chose not to align with any major power bloc during the Cold War. Founded in 1961, it aimed to protect the sovereignty and independence of newly independent nations, promote peace, and prevent them from becoming subordinates of the neo-colonial poweres (U.S. or the Soviet Union).

Ans to Q No 4: The India–U.S. Civil Nuclear Agreement, also called the 123 Agreement, was signed in 2005 during the presidency of George W. Bush. It ended India's nuclear isolation, recognized it as a responsible nuclear power, and allowed civilian nuclear trade and cooperation between the two countries.

Ans to Q No 5: The Quad, or Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, is a strategic forum consisting of India, the United States, Japan, and Australia. It was first formed in 2007, revived in 2017, and aims to promote a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific, enhance regional security, and serve as a counterbalance to China's growing influence. It is not a formal military alliance like NATO.

Ans to Q No 6: The 2+2 Dialogue is a high-level diplomatic forum started in 2018 between India and the U.S., bringing together their Foreign and Defence Ministers. It provides a platform to discuss defence cooperation, security, regional stability, counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and maritime security. The dialogue strengthens strategic coordination and reflects converging interests in regional and global security.

Ans to Q No 7: GSOMIA stands for the General Security of Military Information Agreement. It was signed between India and the United States in 2002. The agreement provides a framework for sharing classified military information between the two countries, enabling deeper defence cooperation, ensuring secure communication, and strengthening strategic and military ties.

4.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Questions (Answer each question within 50 words)

Q 1: How did India–U.S. relations evolve during the Cold War?

Q 2: What is the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)?

Q 3: What role did PL-480 play in India–U.S. relations?

B) Short Answer Questions (Answer each question within 150 words)

Q 4: What was the impact of the 1971 India-Pakistan War on bilateral ties?

Q 5: How did India's 1991 economic reforms impact U.S. relations?

Q 6: Discuss the historical background of India USA relations.

C) Long Answer Questions (Answer each question within 300-500 words)

Q 7: How did Cold War Politics impact on the India US relations?

Q 8: Discuss the various dimensions of the India US relations.

Q 9: How do India and the U.S. cooperate in defence and strategic matters?

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UNIT 5: INDIA-USSR RELATIONS

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives

5.2 Introduction

5.3 Background

5.4 Factors leading to Indo-USSR pact (1971)

5.5 Economic Help from USSR

5.6 BRICS

5.7 Let Us Sum Up

5.8 Further Reading

5.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

5.10 Model Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through the unit, you will be able to

- Discuss the historical context of Indo-USSR relations
- Trace the Indo-USSR pact (1971)
- Assess different aids India received from USSR
- Discuss about the disintegration of USSR
- Trace the latest development

5.2 INTRODUCTION

In the international arena, no country can exist in complete isolation, whether developed or developing, every nation is, to some extent, dependent on others, as no country is entirely self-sufficient. To meet their diverse needs (economic, political, social) countries must engage and cooperate with one another. This interdependence forms the very foundation of international relations.

India as a developing nation has a long history of reliance on other countries across the world. Amongts many international partners, India have maintained particularly strong and enduring relations with the former USSR(Union of Soviet Socialists Republics) and continue to share close ties with Russia today. India's relationship with former Soviet Union is longstanding and historically significant. The Commonwealth's membership, the non-alignment policy and Stalin's strict foreign policy stance all contributed to India's initial slowness in fortifying this relationship after independence, but things startedimproved in the early 1950's.During the Sino-Indian war in 1962, the USSR provided assistance to India and in the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation was signed forging close defense, economic and political ties between the two countries. This close relationship persisted until the Soviet Union broke up in 1991 at which point India had to rethink its foreign policy and mend fences with the Russian Federation, the most powerful

successor and main envoy of the former Soviet Union.

Deep trust, strategic cooperation and common national interests have defined India's long-standing relationship with the former Soviet Union and its successor, the Russian federation. India greatly benefited from Soviet aid in developing its industrial and technological base during these early years, especially in areas like infrastructure, steel, heavy machinery and energy. The USSR remained steadfastly supportive of India on important global issues, such as the issue of Jammu & Kashmir, during cold war. The partnership was reinforced by joint ventures in the fields of science technology, nuclear energy and space exploration. An enduring framework for reciprocal cooperation was established in 1971 with the signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. Due to India's access to Soviet technology, training and weapons-connections that have remained strong with Russia, its defense capabilities were also greatly influenced. However, a period of transition was brought about by the 1990s.Significant geopolitical changes brought about by the fall of Soviet Union forced to Russia to focus on internal restructuring, which momentarily changed the nature of Indo-Russian relations.

Soviet Union's views on India progressively became more clear-cut and articulated during the Lenin-Stalin era (1917-1953). Both leaders acknowledged the strategic importance of India in the broader context of anti-imperialist movements, but Stalin's strategy was mainly limited by ideological dogmatism. Because of the Comintern's doctrinaire and class-based analysis, the Soviet strategy toward India frequently miscalculated the character of Indian nationalism and placed and excessive emphasis on the role of communist movements in the nation. Because of this inflexible ideological framework, USSR policy was disconnected from colonial India's sociopolitical realities. The USSR consequently did not completely comprehend the wider significance of India's 1947 independence and its potential as a sovereign actor in world politics. Only during the Khrushchev era did Moscow start to acknowledge India's actual significance in its foreign policy and anti-imperalialist agenda, signing a change to a change to a more cooperative and practical approach.

A combination of regional and international factors influenced the USSR's security outlook toward India during the Khrushchev era, giving it ban amore defined and strategic character. This change was caused by the cold war rivalry, the United States expanding sway over South Asia and the USSR's changing approach to recently independent Afro-Asian countries.Inparticular in 1954 defense pact between Pakistan and India strengthened Moscow's view that India was a counterbalance to western influence in the region. Closer military and strategic cooperation between the two nations began during this time ans was further strengthened following the Sino-Indian war in 1962 through frequent military assistance and high level defense delegation exchanges. Recognizing the interdependence of these areas, the USSR also started incorporating political and economic instruments into its larger South Asian security strategy. Unlike the Stalin era, Khrushchev's ideology no longer stood in the way of state-to-state interaction but rather served as a catalyst. This practical and strategically nuanced policy framework was reflected in the reoriented communist party of India (CPI) directives and the updated Soviet academic and political

approach in India.

Even as the world has changed, India's ties with the former USSR and its successor, the Russian Federation have remained strong and enduring. Despite shifts in global politics, the two countries have long been seen as natural allies, upholding mutual trust and collaboration. India formed a special and strategic alliance with the USSR that was unmatched at the time and the signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation in 1971 was a turning point. This partnership represented the resilience of bilateral relations in the current geopolitical environment and endured a number of trials without degenerating into an antagonistic relationship. Up until the USSR's dissolution in 1991, there was a strong continuation of political, economic and defense cooperation. India had to adjust its foreign policy to deal with a complicated diplomatic situation that arose in the cold war era. Reestablishing ties with the newly independent countries, especially with the Russian federation , the main successor state and the most powerful USSR was imperative for India following the dissolution of the USSR. Russia remained reliable and essential ally. Two countries quickly realized their shared strategic and economic interests, despite some difficulties in the early stages of post-soviet relations. Growing economic interdependence, similar worldviews and shared historical experiences strengthened their alliance and allowed India Russia to maintain a solid and cooperative relationship in the face of a changing international order.

5.3 BACKGROUND

Since the British colonial era, when British officials played the 'Great Game' to thwart Russian expansion in South Asia, a sense of mistrust has pervaded Indo-USSR relations. India's top external worry after gaining independence in 1947 was an antagonistic Pakistan, which was followed by the Soviet Union. The USSR was seen as another powerful nation that could pose a threat to India's national interests, despite the fact that the Himalayas geographically protected the country from China. The late 1930s and early 1940s saw the emergence of tensions between Indian and Soviet leaders. During that period, Moscow backed Communists backed Britain after Hitler invaded Russia, strengthening their position and undermining that of the Congress leaders, while Nehru and other Congress leaders were imprisoned by the British for taking part in the freedom struggle. The Communists vigorously opposed the new government after India gained its independence, occasionally using force. Because of the USSR's prior support for revolutionary activities in the early years after independence, Indian leaders maintained a cautious attitude toward it, even though they later adopted less aggressive tactics.

Up until the middle of the 1950's, India and the USSR had largely formal relations that considered of regular diplomatic contracts, trade and cultural exchanges. But following Stalin's passing, the Soviet Union adopted a new foreign policy aimed at reducing western influence in developing countries, which included a closer focus on India. The then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on June 1955, visit to Moscow, Soviet leaders Bulganin and Khrushchev returned to India in November and December of the same year. Khrushchev openly endorsed India's stance on Kashmir during this visit. At the same time of this

Soviet initiative, New Delhi was particularly receptive to forming new international alliances. As India's relations with China deteriorated in the late 1950s and the early 1960s , along with the Sino-Soviet ideological conflict, Soviet Union as the ally, the Indians leaned more on Nehru's official position, which was not shielded by its old formal agreements or military pacts. Many Indians tried to persuade themselves that the Soviet Union would actively support them in the event of a conflict with the Chinese were convinced that superpowers posed the greatest threat to India's security and he disagreed. However, Indian expectations were not entirely met when the Sino-Indian border war broke out in 1962.The USSR did not provide the kind of dramatic support that New Delhi had hoped for, despite continuing to provide military and announcing that they would construct a MIG aircraft factory in India.As long as possible, the USSR refrained from picking sides in the then- current Cuban missile crisis. They quickly and humiliatingly issued a pro forma statement after that. Thisdeclaration, along with the animosity and Pakistani-US tensions continued the claim that the clunese "have adequate armed strength."Nehru's government was only to be a pawn in a larger scheme to achieve effective military and economic reforms, redefining national priorities in order to achieve the ideal of self-reliance that his daughter Indira Gandhi would declare as soon as possible the Indian policy nine years later. Self-sufficiency is a long term goal, while Nehru was working hard toward it. The country stated that to become more closely involved with USSR. The construction of a complex MIG assembly plants in India started in February 1962 after the USSR sent four of the original order of twelve MIG-21 fighters to India. The USSR confirmed in September, 1964 that they were willing to assist in the construction of the massive Bokrao steel plant and to continue their path with the Indian government. In the meantime, the Taliban continued to follow a peaceful, parliamentary engagement with Pakistan along the Sino-Indian border and ludia the Rann of Kutch, a remote region that is currently at odds over a dispute near of the Indo-West Pakistani border.

By the middle of 1965, India's main source of military and diplomatic assistance was the Soviet Union. In September 1965, when the full–scale Indo-Pakistani war broke out, New Delhi thought the " special relationship" was over. In contrast to the United States and Great Britain, the USSR persisted in providing military assistance and other forms of support. However, complete support was short-lived .PremierKosygin; representing piomatic Moscow was soon demanding a distance from New Delhi after the warended, presumably to strengthen its position as a mediator at the Tashkent conference. Moscow did this for a number of reasons; including bolstering its reputation in Pakistan and lessoning its increasing reliance on Iran to be perceived as a peacemaker and to acknowledge that India's ongoing relations with the United States and United Kingdom had not been significantly loosened. As an attempt to counter Indian power, the new Soviet strategy scan in New Delhi, resulted in a Soviet supply military that was anticipated to be negative for Pakistan. The Indians continued to ignore their need for unqualified support from Moscow in the UN support for their clauns in Kashmir despite this. On matters that were essential to Soviet interests, New Delhi persisted in siding with Moscow. Therefore New Delhi came out in favor of the Soviets in their border dispute with the Chinese in April 1969 and refused to denounce the Soviets for their invasion of Czechoslovakia.In the middle of 1970, the

Indians put a halt to talks on a potential friendship treaty between the USSRR ans India and New Delhi did not actively endorse party chief Brezhnev's proposal for a system of collective security in Asia. Indian anxiety over the USSR influence on the subcontinent increased in 1970. Though tensions surfaced in a few relatively minor areas, the main point of contention was over Soviet arms to Pakistan. The administration of military and economic aid, the ongoing publication of official Soviet maps under construction of a Chinese cultural complex, the Soviet Union's decision to take a stronger public stance in favor of Soviet positions on Vietnam and the Middle East without informing Indian officials and other issues all arose.

During this period, the USSR voiced their discontent over India's failure or reluctance to effectively utilize the aid extended to it. They blamed this situation on inadequate management, recurring labor strikes, delays in domestic component production and the inefficient functioning of several projects. Due to 1966 recession, India's prudent fiscal administrators cut back on government expenditure, which caused investment to plummet. This cut made it more difficult to use Soviet economic aid, which was primarily intended for the construction of heavy industrial facilities. Many completed factories consequently operated below capacity due to a decline in government demand for investment goods , which further reduced the need for the kind of aid that the USSR offered. More than $200 million in USSR credits went unused as a result of Moscow's refusal to allow New Delhi to reroute project aid toward the import of industrial raw materials .India most likely contrasted these stringent Soviet conditions with Western aid initiatives, which provided non-project support to the tune of about 85% of aid. In spite of obstacles, India remained dependent on the Soviet Union for sophisticated military equipment. Since Soviet military aid began in November 1966, Moscow had provided over $1.1 billion worth of arms. After 1965, the annual supply averaged more than $1.3 million, encompassing MIG-21 jet fighters, SA-2 surface-to-air missiles, MI-8 helicopters, OSA –class guided missile patrol and tanks.

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A wartime high point in 1969, the Soviets believed that their efforts to win over Pakistan were costing them more goodwill in New Delhi than they were winning. In 1971, the Soviets were limiting their activities in Pakistan to projects related to economic development. The leaders in New Delhi thus persuaded themselves once more that Moscow would back them in a major conflict with Pakistan. According to their experience, Moscow would prefer a swift and non-violent way to diffuse the explosive Indo-Pakistani situation, but Mrs. Indira Gandhi very confident regarding once the leaders of Kremlin realized there was no other option, she could secure Soviet breakup, the special relationship in a pointless attempt by the Soviets to avert war.New Delhi took action to coordinate its defense and diplomatic plans with Moscow as the subcontinent's events were inevitably heading toward full-scale conflict. Apart from guaranteeinga steady supply of military equipment, Indian strategists were concerned that every measure be taken to prevent Chinese meddling. The USSR was able to provide guarantees on both.

In the period between 1971 to 1991 stands out as the most definingphase in the history of India-USSR relations, marked by unparalled warmth, trust and cooperation .The

Treaty of Peace,Friendship and Cooperation of 1971 laid the foundation for a multidimensional partnership that extended far beyond mere diplomatic gestures.The Soviet Union emerged as India's most reliable ally during crucial moments, particularly in the aftermath of the Bangladesh liberation war and amid global cold war tensions. Through extensive economic collaboration, technological assistance and defense partnerships, the USSR played a vital role in strengthening India's industrial base and military capabilities, contributing significantly to the country's path toward modernization and self-reliance. The exchange of culture, education and ideology further deepened the people to people connection between the two nations, creating a sense of mutual respect and solidarity that was rare in international relations of that era. Although the late 1980s witnessed a gradual shift in the Soviet Union's foreign policy orientation under Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms, leading to the eventual disintegration of the USSR in 1991, the legacy of Indo-USSR friendship continued to influence India's strategic outlook. The understanding and cooperation built during these two decades laid a strong foundation for the evolution of India's post-Soviet relationship with the Russian federation, proving that the spirit of Indo-Soviet relations remained a cornerstone of India's foreign policy even after the end of the cold war.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) What is the full form of USSR?

Q2) What was the name of the single party which ruled in USSR?

Q3) Write the name of some aid equipment provided by USSR to India?

5.4 FACTORS LEADING TO INDIA-USSR PACT (1971)

The 1971 Indo-USSR Pact initiated a strategic partnership that reshaped South Asia's geopolitics. This alliance with its significant focus on the Indian Ocean Region established a framework for the modern Indo-Pacific concept long before the United States adopted the term. The history underscores India's enduring strategic interest in the region and highlights Russia's crucial role in maintaining the regional balance of power. It laid the groundwork for the evolving Indo-Pacific concept within India-Russia relations, their proactive engagement in the Indian Ocean during the 1970s preceded later US strategic focus on the region. This history confirms India's longstanding view of Indo-pacific as a sphere of influence and Russia's key role in its geopolitical balance.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q4) In which year Indo-USSR Pact was signed?

Q5) What was the other name of Indo-USSR pact?

Q6) How many articles were in the Indo-USSR Pact, 1971?

5.5 ECONOMIC HELP FROM USSR

The Indo-USSR Pact (1971) which was better known as The Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation between the government of India and the government of USSR, signed in New Delhi on August 9, 1971, was established to expand and consolidate the existing sincere friendship between the two nations, reflecting a shared belief that such strengthened cooperation served their fundamental national interests and contributed to lasting peace in Asia and the world, furthermore the treaty demonstrated their determination to promote universal peace and security, exert steadfast efforts towards relaxing international tensions and support the final elimination of colonialism, all while upholding their firm faith in the principles of peaceful coexistence among states with differing political and social systems being convinced that international problems require cooperative rather than conflict-based solutions and reaffirming their commitment to the United Nations charter.

The first article of the treaty declares that enduring peace and friendship shall prevail between the two countries and their peoples. The second article declares their determination to continue their efforts to preserve and to strengthen peace in Asia and throughout the world to halt the arms race and to achieve general and complete disarmament. The article three condemns colonialism and racialism in all forms and manifestations and reaffirms their determination to strive for their final and complete elimination. The article four states that the Republic of India respects the peace-loving policy of the USSR and the USSR respects India's policy of non-alignment. The article five declares that the parties will maintain regular contacts on major international problems through meetings, exchanges and diplomatic channels. The article six affirms that the parties will continue to consolidate and expand mutually advantageous economic, scientific and technological cooperation and trade. The article seven states that the parties shall promote further development of ties in cultural and humanitarian fields such as science, art, education and sports. The article eight declares that it shall not enter into or participate in any military alliance directed against the other party. The article nine states that each party will not assist any third party in an armed conflict with the other and will enter into immediate mutual consultations if either is attacked or threatened to take appropriate measures to ensure peace and security. The article ten declares that the treaty is concluded for twenty years and will be automatically extended for successive five-year periods unless terminated with twelve months notice and it will come into force after ratification and exchange of instruments in Moscow. The article eleven affirms that any differences in the interpretations of the treaty will be settled bilaterally by peaceful means in a spirit of mutual respect and understanding. The article twelve states that any dispute over the treaty's interpretation shall be resolved peacefully through mutual respect and understanding.

The USSR, a vast federal state that existed until its dissolution in 1991, was composed of 15 constituent republics which included Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Ltvia, Lituania, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan with Russia being the largest and most politically dominant, serving as the core of the union both geographically and administratively, while together these republics represented a diverse

tapestry of culture, language and ethnicitiesacross eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, all unified under a single communist government until their independence following the collapse of USSR.

On December 25, 1991, the USSR was peacefully dissolved as Mikhail Gorbachev resigned and the Soviet flag over the Kremlin was replaced by the Russian tricolor, marking the transition of power to Boris Yeltsin and the emergence of multiple independent nations.Following the Soviet Union's dissolution, the Bush administration prioritized ensuring stability across the new states, swiftly recognizing and establishing diplomatic relations with all 12 former Republics.This was followed by a series of high-level visits, including summits with Russian president Yeltsin and leaders from other new nations to solidify these relationships.

The disintegration of USSR was ultimately caused by a confluence of severe economic weaknesses, including massive military spending and the financial burden of maintaining satellite states and poorer central Asian republics which led to chronic shortage of consumer goods and public dissatisfaction. This was compounded by decades of political unaccountability under an authoritarian single party system (Communist Party) marked by corruption and nepotism which Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms namely Glasnost and Perestoika inadvertently exposed and accelerated, unleashing pent–up demands for greater frrdoms and faster convergence with the west.These forces in turn, fueled the rapid rise of nationalism, thereby dissolving the USSR within.

5.6 BRICS

Peace and security are the primary objectives of every nation. To uphold these ideals, countries strive to establish strong and healthy relations with others across the globe. Accordingly, various initiatives are undertaken from time to time. Among which intergovernmental organizations play a crucial role .These intergovernmental organizations are formed thought treaties among nations, united by the shared commitment to promoting and preserving global peace and security.

BRICS stands as a significant intergovernmental organization that embodies the spirit of cooperation among emerging economies. Originally comprising five nations namely Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa established in the year 2009. It has recently expanded to include additional members, reflecting its growing global influence. Established primarily to promote economic collaboration and mutual development, BRICS also serves as a strategic platform for political dialogue and global governance reform. In post-USSR era, the forum has become an essential medium through which India and Russia continue to strengthen their bilateral ties, deepen economic engagement and enhance cooperation in diverse fields such as trade, technology and sustainable development.

After the disintegration of the USSR, Russia continued legacy of cooperation and strategic partnership established by the former Soviet Union. Inthis context, India maintained and further strengthened its relations with Russia, which found a new platform for collaboration through the formation of BRICS.

The longstanding India-Russia partnership is facing increasing strain due to a fundamental realignment of global alliances. While India has strengthened its ties with the United States, viewing it as a vital source of investment, technology and a strategic counterweight to China, its relationship with China has deteriorated sharply. This decline is a result of China's assertiveness, exemplified the Belt and Road initiatives,repeated border confrontations, diplomatic opposition and culminating in the deadly 2020 Galwan clash. This convergence of India's warming relations with the US and its deepening rivalry with China creates a complex challenge for its traditional strategic partnership with Russia.

The core of India's BRICS role continues to be its long-standing relationship and common strategic interests with Russia. Rooted in the cold war era with the former Soviet Union, this partnership has undergone significant change since India's liberation, privatizationand globalization(LPG) reforms in the 1990s.The two countries cooperation has grown over time to encompass economic, technological and infrastructure development in addition to political and military domains. The 2024 BRICS summit reaffirmed how India's active participation in the BRICS framework is shaped by their historic bond and emphasized the strength and continuity of Indo-Russian collaboration in important areas like energy, trade, infrastructure and financial integration.

The India-Russia relationship is characterized as a strong, resilient and 'Special and privileged strategic partnership'. This bond, rooted in mutual interest and public support has endured both nations political and economic changes. It intensified in 2000 with the establishment of annual leader summits, making Russia India's first formal strategic partner.

As leading BRICS nations, India and Russia collaborate to push for greater representation of emerging economies in global institutions like UN and IMF.Their economic relationship has expanded dramatically, with bilateral trade soaring to $ 65 billion in 2023, making India Russia's second –largest trading partner. Thissurge however is accompanied by persistent challenges related to trade imbalances. India'sdeepening partnership with Russia is underscored by robust energy and defense cooperation.India's increased imports of discounted Russian oil align with the BRICS bloc's goals of de-dollarization and stronger economic ties among global South nations. Furthermore, defense remains a cornerstone of the relationship with Russia remaining India's primary arms supplier and their interoperability being strengthened through regular joint military exercises across all domains. From Moscow's perspective, the relationship with India is characterized by a significant trade asymmetry, while China is its top trade partner; India is a major destination for Russian exports but not a significant source of imports. However, since the war in Ukraine, bilateral ties have intensified marked by a substantial expansion in trade, growing nuclear cooperation and a dramatic surge in Russian oil exports to India which grew from under 2% to over 40% India's oil imports by mid 2024. Amid a shifting global order, India and Russia are leveraging their historic partnership within the BRICS framework to advance shared interests, despite facing significant geopolitical crosswinds. Their cooperation is anchored in robust economic and defense ties, with bilateral trade soaring to $65 billion driven largely by a massive increase in India's import of discounted Russian oil. Russia remains a key defense supplier and joint military exercises continue. However, the

relationship faces challenges. India is deliberately diversifying its arms sources through its 'Make in India' initiative, reducing its dependency on Russian equipment. Furthermore, a fundamental ideological difference exists while Russia often adopts an anti-western stance; India pursues a multi-aligned, non-western strategy, using BRICS to advocate for a multicolor world order rather than as an anti-western bloc. This nuanced partnership remains a cornerstone of India's strategic autonomy, even as New Delhi carefully balances its ties with both Moscow and the West.

In navigating the emerging multipolar world order, India and Russia must manage persistent complexities within BRICS including China's growing dominance, western sanctions on Russia and India's own multi-alignment strategy. While their partnership remains crucial, bolstered by energy trade and shared strategic interests. India maintains a cautious stance toward the deepening Russia-China axis. Amid global shifts such as the Ukraine war and Indo-Pacific security dynamics, Russia seeks deeper economic integration with India continues to exercise strategic autonomy by balancing its engagements with the United States, Europe and QUAD ensuring it can advance its interests amid evolving powerdynamics.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q7) In which year USSR disintegrated?

5.7 LET US SUM UP

In conclusion, the Indo-USSR relationship anchored in the 1971 Treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation was a defining strategic partnership of the cold war era, built not only on ideological alignment but also on a pragmatic convergence of interests. For India, it provided a vital security and diplomatic counterweight to the US, Pakistan and China axis and crucial economic support, while for the USSR, it secured an influential, non-aligned partner in the global South. Although the USSRs collapse in 1991 forced India into a dramatic strategic reorientation, the relationships legacy endures profoundly in India's military infrastructure, its enduring principle of strategic autonomy and its contemporary practice of multi-alignment, demonstrating how a historically pivotal partnership continues to inform its navigation of today's complex multipolar world.

5.8 FURTHER READING

1) Sharma, Ram. 1999). India-USSR Relations, 1947-1971: From Ambivalence to Steadfastness, Part 1. Discovery Pubilishing House.

2) Thakur, Chandra. Ramesh. (1992). Soviet relations with India Vietnam. Springer.

3) Moulik, Achala. (2021) Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation of 1971. Authors Up Front

5.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Ans to Q No 2: Communist Party

Ans to Q No 3: MIG-21 jet fighters, SA-2 surface-to-air missiles, MI-8 helicopters, OSA – class guided missile patrol and tanks.

Ans to Q No 4: 1971

Ans to Q No 5: The Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation

Ans to Q No 6: 12

Ans to Q No 7: 1991

5.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Questions (Answer each question in about 50 words)

Q 1: What forms the foundation of international relations?

Q 2: What were the long-standing factors responsible for India's relation with USSR?

B) Short Answer Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Write a short note on Indo-USSR Pact, 1971?

Q 2: When and how did USSR provided different aids to India?

Q 3: Why the powerful USSR disintregated?

C) Long Answer Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Write an essay on the historical context of Indo-USSR relations.

Q 2: Discuss the leading factors of disintregation of USSR?

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UNIT 6: ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives

6.2 Introduction

6.3 Technology Transfer

6.4 International Grant

6.5 Trade

6.6 Let Us Sum Up

6.7 Further Reading

6.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

6.9 Model Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Learn about the economic aspects of India's foreign policy.
- Understand about technology transfer, international grant and trade that influence in the economic aspects of the country's foreign policy.

6.2 INTRODUCTION

The economic dimension of India's foreign policy has emerged as one of the most important factors influencing its involvement with the international community. While political sovereignty, decolonization, non-alignment, and national security dominated India's foreign policy in the years following independence, economic considerations have increasingly taken center stage in defining its external relations. Since 1991, India's foreign policy has shifted toward expanding commerce, attracting foreign investment, obtaining advanced technology, getting development aid, and establishing international economic alliances. Since 1991, India's foreign policy underwent a significant transformation with the introduction of Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation (LPG) reforms. Economic liberalisation reduced state controls, encouraged foreign investment and opened the Indian economy to global markets. Consequently, foreign policy became increasingly driven by economic diplomacy, with greater emphasis on expanding trade, attracting investment, accessing technology and integrating India into the global economy. Economic diplomacy has thus become an essential tool for India's pursuit of long-term growth, increased global competitiveness, and strengthened strategic position in the international system.

India's economic foreign policy is based on the idea that domestic economic progress and international collaboration are mutually beneficial. India, as one of the world's fastest-growing major economies, requires access to global markets, energy resources, technological innovation, capital investment, and international financial institutions to achieve its development goals. As a result, economic aims are increasingly driving the country's external relations, in addition to traditional political and strategic factors. Bilateral and

multilateral agreements, participation in regional economic organizations, and engagement with institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have all played an important role in India's foreign policy framework. Technology transfer is an important part of India's economic diplomacy, having had a revolutionary impact on the country's industrial, agricultural, scientific, and defense modernization. Since independence, India has actively pursued technical cooperation with developed countries while also encouraging local research and innovation. International collaboration has accelerated progress in fields such as information technology, telecommunications, renewable energy, biotechnology, medicines, nuclear energy, and space research. Agreements with technologically advanced nations such as the United States, France, Russia, Japan, Germany, and Israel have allowed India to acquire essential technology while enhancing its own technological capabilities. As a result, technology transfer has emerged as a key tool for increasing productivity, boosting industrial competitiveness, and fostering national development.

Another critical component of India's economic foreign policy is the mobilization and effective use of international funds and development aid. During the first decades after independence, India relied heavily on financial help from bilateral and international development agencies to fund infrastructure development, agricultural modernization, education, public health, and poverty alleviation programs. Although India's reliance on foreign aid has decreased significantly due to economic growth, international grants continue to play an important role in areas such as climate change mitigation, sustainable development, disaster management, renewable energy, capacity building, and humanitarian assistance.Simultaneously, India's own transformation into a development partner through initiatives such as the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme and concessional Lines of Credit reflects the country's evolving position from an aid recipient to an emerging development partner within the Global South.

International commerce is another important aspect of India's economic involvement with the world. Trade policy has grown inextricably linked with foreign policy goals as India attempts to increase exports, diversify markets, safeguard supply chains, and attract foreign direct investment. The country's involvement in global and regional economic frameworks such as the WTO, BIMSTEC, ASEAN discussion platforms, the G20, and several bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) illustrates the growing relevance of commercial diplomacy. India's export portfolio has expanded beyond conventional agricultural commodities and textiles to include engineering goods, pharmaceuticals, petroleum products, vehicles, chemicals, and information technology services. Similarly, imports of crude oil, modern machinery, electronic equipment, and vital minerals are still required to sustain industrial expansion and provide energy security. Consequently, trade has become an important instrument for promoting economic development while simultaneously strengthening diplomatic relations with major partners across Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas.

The increasing importance of economic concerns has broadened the scope of India's foreign policy beyond traditional diplomacy. Contemporary initiatives, such as the Act East Policy, the Neighbourhood First Policy, the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative, and collaboration

with the European Union, Gulf countries, Africa, and Latin America, are increasingly combining economic cooperation with strategic and political goals. Investment promotion, digital connectivity, energy security, infrastructure development, climate finance, and technical collaboration are increasingly key priorities in India's bilateral and international partnerships.

The economic aspects of India's foreign policy show a dynamic convergence of development goals and international collaboration. Technology transfer, international assistance, and trade have all become critical tools for attaining economic modernization, increasing national competitiveness, and strengthening India's place in the global economy. As global economic interconnectedness grows, economic diplomacy will likely continue to be a distinguishing characteristic of India's foreign policy, allowing the country to pursue both national growth and increased influence in international events.

6.3 TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Technology transfer has evolved as one of the most important economic aspects of India's foreign policy. In an increasingly knowledge-driven global economy, access to innovative technology is critical for driving industrial growth, promoting scientific innovation, strengthening national security, and raising overall economic competitiveness. Since independence, India has understood that technical progression is critical to achieving self-sufficiency (Atmanirbhar Bharat), sustainable development, and long-term economic growth. As a result, technology transfer has played a significant role in India's bilateral and multilateral diplomatic engagements, facilitating collaboration in sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, defense, energy, healthcare, space research, information technology, and environmental sustainability.

In the years following independence, India faced weak industrial infrastructure and technological skills. To address these obstacles, the government implemented a strategy of obtaining foreign technology while establishing indigenous scientific institutes. Collaboration with technologically advanced countries such as the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, France, and Japan allowed India to build significant industries in steel manufacture, heavy engineering, machine tools, petroleum refining, and power generation. The construction of public-sector firms such as the Bhilai Steel Plant, built with Soviet assistance, and the Rourkela Steel Plant, established with German participation, exemplifies how technology transfer aided India's industrialization in the early decades after independence.

Technology transfer had a transformative impact on India's agricultural development. During the Green Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s, India implemented high-yielding wheat and rice varieties, new irrigation systems, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and enhanced agricultural technology thanks to international scientific cooperation. Institutions like the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) worked with Indian agricultural scientists to considerably expand food grain production and lessen the country's reliance on food imports. This

technological collaboration greatly aided India's attainment of food security and agricultural modernization.

Scientific and technological collaboration has also been an important aspect of India's foreign relations. The government has signed a number of bilateral agreements with advanced countries to collaborate on research, innovation, and capacity building. Cooperation with the United States has grown in fields such as artificial intelligence, semiconductor manufacturing, clean energy, biotechnology, and essential and emerging technologies. The India-US Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET), which was launched in 2023, aims to strengthen collaboration in quantum computing, defense innovation, telecommunications, space technologies, and advanced manufacturing, demonstrating the growing importance of technology partnerships in modern diplomacy. Similarly, India's strategic partnerships with Japan, France, Germany, Israel, and the European Union have encouraged technology transfer in renewable energy, transportation infrastructure, cybersecurity, digital transformation, and long-term industrial development.

The defence sector is another key area of technology transfer in India's foreign policy. For decades, India has relied on international collaboration to modernize its armed forces by acquiring superior defense technologies. Collaboration with Russia has resulted in technology transfer for the development of fighter aircraft, submarines, missile systems, and armored vehicles. The licensed production of the Su-30MKI fighter aircraft by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and the joint development of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile through Indo-Russian collaboration are examples of successful technology partnerships that have strengthened India's indigenous defense manufacturing capabilities. Recently, defense collaboration with countries such as France, Israel, and the United States has boosted technology transfer in areas such as surveillance systems, aeronautical engineering, naval technology, and unmanned aerial systems.

India's foreign policy has also fostered technology transfer in areas such as space exploration and nuclear energy. International collaboration has greatly aided the evolution of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), particularly in satellite applications, remote sensing, navigation systems, and commercial space services. Partnerships with NASA, the European Space Agency (ESA), and CNES (France) have improved India's capabilities in satellite technology, climate monitoring, and scientific research. Similarly, the India-United States Civil Nuclear Agreement (2008) was a significant diplomatic achievement that facilitated international cooperation in civilian nuclear technology while integrating India into the global nuclear commerce framework despite its non-signatory status to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The rapid growth of India's digital economy has emphasized the need of technology transfer. Foreign investment and international collaboration have made a substantial contribution to the development of information technology, telecommunications, finance, digital governance, and startup ecosystems. Global technology corporations have created R&D centers in India, supporting innovation, skill development, and job creation. Simultaneously, India has increasingly positioned itself as a recipient and provider of digital technologies, sharing expertise in digital public infrastructure, e-governance, digital

payments, and capacity building with developing countries through initiatives such as the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Program.

One of the major achievements of India's G20 Presidency was the international recognition of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI). India presented its experience with Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker, CoWIN and other components of India Stack as a model that could be adapted by other countries. The G20 framework emphasized secure, interoperable and inclusive digital systems based on open standards and specifications.

UPI (Unified Payments Interface), developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), enables instant bank-to-bank and merchant payments through mobile applications. Its interoperability and low-cost architecture have made it an important example of technology developed for large-scale financial inclusion. India has subsequently promoted the internationalization of UPI and cooperation on India Stack with other countries.

The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) was announced during the G20 Summit in New Delhi in September 2023. The participating countries envisaged two major sections: an eastern corridor connecting India with the Arabian Gulf and a northern corridor connecting the Gulf with Europe. The project combines maritime transport, railways, electricity connectivity, digital cables and clean-hydrogen infrastructure. Its objectives include reducing transportation costs, improving connectivity, strengthening supply chains and promoting economic integration between India, the Middle East and Europe.

Semiconductors and critical minerals have become central to India's economic and strategic diplomacy because modern industries, artificial intelligence, telecommunications, electric vehicles and renewable-energy technologies depend heavily on them. India launched the Semicon India Programme in 2021 with an outlay of 276,000 crore to promote semiconductor fabrication, packaging, design, research and manufacturing. India has also developed international partnerships to diversify semiconductor supply chains and strengthen technological capabilities.

Similarly, India has increasingly pursued critical-minerals diplomacy. Lithium, cobalt, nickel and rare-earth elements are essential for batteries, electronics, renewable energy and advanced manufacturing. India joined the Mineral Security Partnership in 2023, reflecting its effort to diversify sources of critical minerals and participate in global mineral value chains. During its G20 Presidency, India emphasized the need to expand and diversify critical-mineral and renewable-energy supply chains.

The disruption of global supply chains during the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the dangers of excessive dependence on a limited number of suppliers. India responded by supporting supply-chain diversification and resilience through initiatives such as the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI) with Japan and Australia. Formally launched in 2021, SCRI seeks to diversify sources of supply, promote investment, strengthen manufacturing and improve the resilience of Indo-Pacific supply chains.

India also promoted the G20 Generic Framework for Mapping Global Value Chains during its G20 Presidency. The framework seeks to identify vulnerabilities in global value

chains and improve their transparency, resilience and inclusiveness, particularly enabling developing countries to participate more effectively in global production networks.

However, technology transfer in India's foreign policy faces numerous hurdles. Advanced technology are frequently subject to intellectual property rights, export prohibitions, strategic constraints, and geopolitical considerations. Access to dual-use technology like as defense, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, semiconductors, and cybersecurity is frequently influenced by global geopolitical competition. As a result, India has endeavored to combine foreign technological cooperation with the promotion of domestic research and innovation through initiatives such as Make in India, Digital India, Startup India, and Atmanirbhar Bharat. These projects aim not merely to absorb foreign technologies, but also to develop native capabilities that will lessen long-term technical dependence.In recent years, India's approach to technology transfer has shifted from a focus on technology acquisition to one that prioritizes collaborative innovation, joint research, co-development, and co-production. This move reflects India's expanding scientific capabilities and ambition to become a global center for innovation and advanced manufacturing. Technology diplomacy now includes emerging sectors such as green hydrogen, semiconductor fabrication, biotechnology, climate technologies, digital infrastructure, and artificial intelligence, demonstrating the growing integration of technological cooperation with economic development and strategic foreign policy goals.

Technology transfer has become an important part of India's economic foreign policy since it enables industrial modernization, agricultural transformation, scientific advancement, defense preparation, and digital innovation. India has increased its economic competitiveness and raised its global diplomatic profile through long-term multilateral alliances and strategic technical cooperation. As technological innovation impacts international relations, technology transfer will remain a critical tool in India's foreign policy, promoting both national development and its emergence as a leading global knowledge economy.

6.4 INTERNATIONAL GRANT

International grants and development assistance have been an essential part of India's economic foreign policy since independence. Although India has always prioritized economic self-sufficiency and strategic autonomy, it has also acknowledged the value of international financial cooperation in advancing national development. Grants from foreign governments, multilateral financial institutions, international organizations, and development agencies have significantly aided India's economic modernization, infrastructure development, technological advancement, capacity building, public health, environmental conservation, and social welfare. Over the decades, India's participation with international funding has changed significantly, reflecting its evolution from a major aid recipient to an emerging development partner in the Global South.

In the immediate aftermath of independence, India inherited an economy characterized by widespread poverty, low industrialization, poor infrastructure, and limited financial resources. The country's ambitious Five-Year Plans necessitated significant

investments in agriculture, manufacturing, education, transportation, and public health, far beyond domestic financial capacity. As a result, India sought financial assistance from bilateral partners including the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, Japan, Germany, and Canada, as well as multilateral organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and, later, the Asian Development Bank (ADB). International grants and concessional assistance complemented domestic resources and helped India's developmental ambitions while not significantly compromising its non-alignment policy.During the 1950s and 1960s, international grants were used to support community development programs, irrigation projects, agricultural research, and educational institutions. International organizations and donor countries contributed funding for rural development, disease control, technical education, and institutional capacity building. These measures helped to improve agricultural output, increase literacy, enhance healthcare systems, and promote socioeconomic growth in newly independent India. International grants were extremely important during the Green Revolution. Organizations such as the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the World Bank, and international agricultural research centres provided financial and technical assistance to promote the adoption of high-yielding crop varieties, modern irrigation techniques, fertilizer use, and agricultural extension services. These combined initiatives helped India to significantly expand food grain output and minimize dependence on food imports throughout the later half of the twentieth century.

The healthcare industry has also benefited greatly from international grant aid. The World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation have worked with the Indian government on immunization, maternal and child health, disease eradication, nutrition, and public health infrastructure initiatives. International grants have helped to fund campaigns against diseases including polio, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and malaria, as well as to enhance health systems and improve access to key healthcare services, especially in rural and neglected areas. Environmental protection and climate change have emerged as key topics of international grant cooperation. As a signatory to international environmental agreements, India has received grant assistance through mechanisms such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and various United Nations agencies for projects relating to biodiversity conservation, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, disaster risk reduction, and climate resilience. Such assistance has facilitated the implementation of sustainable development initiatives while enabling India to meet its commitments under international environmental frameworks, including the Paris Agreement on climate change (Mawdsley, 2018).

International grants have also contributed significantly to higher education, scientific research, and human resource development. Collaborative programmes supported by agencies such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the British Council, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and other international institutions have strengthened research collaboration, faculty exchange, skill development, and technical

education. These partnerships have enhanced India's scientific capabilities while promoting knowledge exchange and innovation across various sectors.The nature of India's engagement with international grants underwent a significant transformation following the economic liberalization reforms of 1991. As India's economic growth accelerated, dependence on foreign aid gradually declined. The country increasingly relied on foreign direct investment, international trade, and domestic resource mobilization rather than traditional development assistance. Consequently, international grants shifted from financing broad developmental programmes toward supporting specialized sectors such as renewable energy, climate adaptation, digital governance, public health, disaster management, urban development, and technological innovation. This transition reflected India's emergence as a rapidly growing economy with greater financial capacity and increased participation in global governance.

The transition from assistance receiver to development partner is a defining element of India's current foreign policy. India now provides training, technical expertise, scholarships, and capacity-building assistance to numerous developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Pacific, and the Caribbean via initiatives such as the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme, which was established in 1964. India also provides development aid through concessional lines of credit managed by the Export-Import Bank of India, infrastructure projects, humanitarian relief operations, and grants for education, healthcare, agriculture, and digital connectivity. This strategy represents India's commitment to South-South Cooperation, which prioritizes collaboration, mutual benefit, and respect for state sovereignty over conditional aid.

India has broadened its grant diplomacy to include humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Following natural calamities such as earthquakes, cyclones, floods, and pandemics, India has contributed financial aid, medical assistance, food supplies, and emergency relief to neighboring countries and developing nations. Vaccine Maitri, an initiative launched during the epidemic, showcased India's developing ability to combine humanitarian aid with diplomatic engagement, bolstering its international image as a responsible global actor.Despite these gains, international grant cooperation poses certain hurdles. Donor priorities, accountability requirements, project implementation delays, and shifting geopolitical factors all have an impact on the effectiveness of development assistance. Furthermore, as India takes on a more important international role, balancing its status as both a beneficiary of specialized funding and a giver of development assistance necessitates careful policy coordination.The government has therefore increasingly emphasized transparency, institutional efficiency, and alignment of international assistance with national development priorities.

International grants have had a considerable impact on the economic dimension of India's foreign policy by fostering national development, institutional capacity building, scientific collaboration, and furthering sustainable development goals. While grants were critical in meeting India's developmental needs in the early decades after independence, modern economic prosperity has allowed the country to rethink its worldwide role as both a recipient and a producer of development assistance. This shift reflects India's expanding

economic might, diplomatic influence, and dedication to developing equitable international partnerships through development-oriented foreign policy.

6.5 TRADE

Trade has long been a key component of India's foreign policy and an essential tool for economic diplomacy. Since gaining independence, India has viewed international commerce as a means of achieving economic growth, industrial development, technological advancement, and strategic involvement with the global community. While India's foreign policy in the early decades prioritized self-reliance and import substitution to preserve indigenous industries, the country's stance changed dramatically after 1991's economic liberalization changes. Since then, trade has played a vital role in India's external relations, affecting bilateral relationships, regional integration, multilateral talks, and global economic governance.Today, India's foreign policy seeks to utilize trade not merely as an economic activity but as a strategic instrument for enhancing national prosperity, strengthening diplomatic relations, ensuring supply chain resilience, and promoting sustainable development.

During the first four decades after independence, India's trade policy was heavily influenced by the planned economic development approach. The government implemented an import-substitution industrialization strategy, which attempted to lessen reliance on imported commodities by encouraging indigenous manufacture. To protect emerging sectors and conserve limited foreign exchange reserves, high tariff barriers, import licensing, quantitative limits, and stringent foreign exchange controls were implemented. Although these restrictions helped to develop a diverse industrial base, they also hampered India's entry into global markets and reduced export competitiveness.

The balance-of-payments crisis of 1991 represented a watershed moment in India's economic and diplomatic policies. The economic reforms launched by Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao and Finance Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh liberalized commerce by lowering tariffs, eliminating import regulations, promoting exports, and opening up the economy to foreign investment. These reforms substantially altered India's relationship with the global economy. Foreign policy became increasingly focused on trade promotion, recognizing that larger participation in global commerce and multinational production networks was necessary for economic progress.

India's export profile has grown significantly since deregulation. Exports have traditionally included agricultural goods, tea, cotton textiles, jute products, spices, and handicrafts. India's exports now include engineering goods, petroleum products, pharmaceuticals, vehicles, chemicals, gems and jewellery, software services, business process outsourcing (BPO), and information technology-enabled services. The fast growth of India's information technology sector has made software exports one of the country's most important foreign exchange earners, with Indian firms delivering digital services to clients in North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. This diversification illustrates India's transformation from a largely agrarian economy to a knowledge-based and manufacturing-oriented economy embedded in global value chains.

Imports are equally important in shaping India's foreign policy. As a fast expanding economy, India imports crude oil, natural gas, coal, electronic equipment, semiconductors, machinery, fertilizers, precious metals, and modern industrial technology. Energy imports are especially important because India is still one of the world's major consumers of petroleum. As a result, India's foreign policy has prioritized maintaining stable relations with Gulf oil-producing countries such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Kuwait, and Qatar. Similarly, trading links with technologically advanced economies such as the United States, Japan, Germany, South Korea, and France are crucial for ensuring access to capital goods, advanced machinery, and developing technologies required for industrial modernization.

Regional and multilateral trade cooperation occupies an increasingly important place in India's economic diplomacy. India is a founding member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and actively participates in negotiations concerning agricultural subsidies, intellectual property rights, services trade, digital commerce, and dispute settlement. India consistently advocates a fair, transparent, and development-oriented international trading system that accommodates the interests of developing countries. At the WTO, it has defended issues relating to food security, public stockholding programmes, and the protection of small farmers while simultaneously seeking greater market access for Indian goods and services.

India has also increased its economic engagement through regional and bilateral trade agreements. Participation in organizations such as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), and the G20 demonstrates the alignment of trade goals with broader strategic and diplomatic aims. In recent years, India has signed comprehensive trade agreements with the United Arab Emirates (Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, 2022) and Australia (Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement, 2022), while still negotiating with the European Union, the United Kingdom, and Canada. These accords aim to lower trade barriers, encourage investment, promote market access, and strengthen economic cooperation across a variety of areas.

Trade has also become an essential tool for implementing India's regional foreign policy goals. The Act East Policy focuses on strengthening business and connectivity linkages with Southeast Asia via the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Similarly, the Neighbourhood First Policy encourages economic integration with surrounding nations via cross-border commerce, infrastructure development, energy cooperation, and transportation connectivity. India's engagement with Africa, Latin America, and the Indo-Pacific region also mixes commercial expansion with developmental partnerships, capacity building, and investment promotion, increasing its diplomatic and strategic footprint in these regions.

In recent years, new features of trade diplomacy have evolved as a result of global economic changes. Supply chain resilience, digital trade, e-commerce, semiconductor manufacturing, renewable energy technology, and essential minerals are now key topics in India's foreign economic strategy. Government initiatives such as Make in India, Production

Linked Incentive (PLI) Schemes, Digital India, and Atmanirbhar Bharat aim to boost domestic manufacturing while better integrating India into global production networks. Rather than pushing for economic isolation, these measures seek to boost India's competitiveness and eliminate vulnerabilities in strategically vital industries. Despite tremendous success, India confronts a number of hurdles in its trade diplomacy. Persistent trade deficits with certain nations, non-tariff restrictions imposed by trading partners, global commodity price variations, geopolitical concerns, and disruptions in global supply chains all continue to have an impact on India's external trade. Balancing domestic industry interests and international trade responsibilities remains a significant policy concern. Furthermore, securing balanced gains for agricultural, small and medium-sized businesses, and labor-intensive industries necessitates ongoing adaptation of trade policy to changing global circumstances.

Trade has emerged as one of the most active and significant economic pillars of India's foreign policy. It is used not only to promote economic growth and employment, but also as a strategic tool to strengthen foreign collaborations, improve technological capabilities, ensure energy security, and enhance India's worldwide influence. As global economic interconnectedness grows, trade diplomacy will remain key to India's foreign policy, allowing the country to pursue long-term growth while solidifying its place as a significant economic power in the international system.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Which economic reform significantly integrated India into the global trading system?

Q2) Which programme was established by India in 1964 to provide technical assistance and capacity building to developing countries?

Q3) What is meant by technology transfer in the context of India's foreign policy?

Q4) Which multilateral organization regulates international trade and of which India is a founding member?

6.6 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit, you have learnt that:

- Economic development has become a central objective of India's foreign policy
- Technology transfer has played a vital role in India's modernization and development.
- International grants and development assistance have significantly contributed to India's socio-economic progress.
- Financial and technical support from foreign governments, multilateral institutions, and international organizations has facilitated infrastructure

development, agricultural modernization, healthcare, education, climate action, and capacity building.

- International trade has emerged as a key instrument of India's foreign policy and economic diplomacy.
- The economic dimensions of India's foreign policy collectively enhance its global influence and strategic position. By integrating technology transfer, development cooperation, trade, investment, and economic partnerships into its diplomatic engagements, India seeks to achieve long-term economic growth, strengthen international partnerships, and establish itself as a leading economic and strategic power in the global arena.

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6.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: The Economic Liberalization Reforms of 1991.

Ans to Q No 2: The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme.

Ans to Q No 3: The acquisition and sharing of advanced technologies through international cooperation to promote India's economic and technological development.

Ans to Q No 4: The World Trade Organization (WTO).

6.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Type Questions (Answer each questions within 50 words)

Q 1: What is meant by technology transfer in the context of India's foreign policy?

Q 2: Which programme was launched by India in 1964 to promote technical and economic cooperation with developing countries?

Q 3: Which international organization regulates global trade and of which India is a founding member?

Q 4: In which year did India introduce economic liberalization reforms that transformed its foreign economic policy?

B) Short Answer Type Questions (Answer each questions within 150 words)

Q 1: Explain the role of technology transfer in promoting India's economic development and foreign policy objectives.

Q 2: Discuss the significance of international grants and development assistance in India's post-independence economic development.

Q 3: Examine the importance of international trade as an instrument of India's foreign policy.

Q 4: Analyse the impact of the 1991 economic reforms on the economic dimensions of India's foreign policy.

C) Long Answer Type Questions (Answer each questions within 300-500 words)

Q 1: Critically examine the economic aspects of India's foreign policy with special reference to technology transfer, international grants, and international trade.

Q 2: Discuss the evolution of India's economic diplomacy since independence, highlighting the changing role of trade, technology cooperation, and development partnerships.

Q 3: Evaluate the role of technology transfer in India's industrial, agricultural, scientific, and strategic development through international cooperation.

Q 4: Analyse how international trade and development assistance have contributed to strengthening India's global economic position and foreign policy objectives.

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UNIT 7: INDIA'S NUCLEAR POLICY

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives

7.2 Introduction

7.3 Background of India's Nuclear Policy

- 7.3.1 Nehru's Approach and the Origin of the Nuclear Program
- 7.3.2 The China Factor and Strategic Insecurity
- 7.3.3 The Pakistan Factor

7.4 The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

- 7.4.1 Origin and Structure of the NPT
- 7.4.2 India's Fundamental Opposition to the NPT
- 7.4.3 The NPT and the Global Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime

7.5 The 1974 Pokhran Nuclear Test

- 7.5.1 Background
- 7.5.2 International Reaction and Impact

7.6 The 1998 Pokhran Nuclear Test

- 7.6.1 Strategic Environment in the Late 1990s
- 7.6.2 Operation Shakti: The Nuclear Tests
- 7.6.3 The Nuclear Doctrine and the No First Use (NFU) Policy
- 7.6.4 International Reaction to the 1998 Tests

7.7 Let Us Sum Up

7.8 Further Reading

7.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

7.10 Model Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- Understand the historical development of India's nuclear policy.
- Analyze India's stance within the global non-proliferation regime, particularly its approach toward the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).
- Evaluate the strategic reasons behind India's Pokhran nuclear tests in 1974 and 1998.
- Assess the geopolitical impacts of India's nuclear decisions on its bilateral and multilateral relationships.

7.2 INTRODUCTION

India's nuclear policy stands as a pivotal aspect of postcolonial governance. After

the atomic age began with the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, countries around the world began to confront the implications of nuclear weapons. For independent India nuclear capability was both a symbol of hope for modern scientific progress and a means of ensuring national security.

This developmental journey was closely linked with the geopolitics of the Cold War, the influence of the Non-Aligned Movement and the political developments inthe South Asian region. Under its first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, India demonstrates a complex stance toward nuclear weapons. On one hand, She advocated for global disarmament and opposed the militarization of great powers, while on the other hand, She acknowledged the critical value of nuclear technology for national development and security. These fundamental contradictions between idealism and realism, and between moral principles and practical necessities has greatly influenced India's nuclear policy for over seven decades.A unique feature of India's concern is that it has always viewed nuclear issues in connection with global disarmament efforts. India has long maintained that the existing global nuclear order is unjust, discriminatory and biased. It is precisely because of this stance that India rejected the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and conducted its nuclear tests in 1974 and 1998.

Dear learner, the present unit outlines the major phases in the development of India's nuclear policy: the early period under Nehru's leadership, the development of India's indigenous nuclear program, the contradiction with the NPT and the Pokhran tests of 1974 and 1998.After going through this unit you be able to discuss how these events underscore the complex interplay between domestic politics, strategic decisions, regional tensions and moral principles that together shaped India's nuclear development journey.

7.3 THE BACKGROUND OF INDIA'S NUCLEAR POLICY

7.3.1 Nehru's Approach and the Origin of the Nuclear Program

The foundation of India's nuclear program can be traced to the visionary ideas of Jawaharlal Nehru and physicist Homi J. Bhabha. In 1944, Bhabha proposed establishing an institution focused on basic physics research before the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust this initiative resulted in the establishment of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) in 1945. After India's independence, Bhabha successfully convinced Nehru to invest substantial resources in nuclear research, which was regarded as an essential part of India's scientific and industrial development. In 1948, India established the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and enacted the Atomic Energy Act the same year. This initiative contributed in bringing all nuclear-related activities entirely under state control and confidentiality.

Nehru's stance on nuclear issues reflected a 'dual-use' approach. He believed that nuclear technology could be used not only for military purposes but also for electricity generation, agricultural improvement, medical advances and industrial development. At the same time, considering India's security environment at the time, he did not completely

rule out the possibility of developing nuclear weapons. This carefully crafted strategic ambiguity was commonly referred to as 'keeping the nuclear option open' which became a key feature of India's nuclear strategy over the next two decades. It provided India with strategic flexibility amid changing regional security threats.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) When was the Atomic Energy Commission established?

7.3.2 The China Factor and Strategic Insecurity

Two major events completely transformed the strategic rationale behind India's nuclear efforts. These were the Indo-China War of 1962 and China's first nuclear test in October 1964. India's defeat by China in the 1962 war inflicted a deep psychological blow to the nation's morale and exposed major deficiencies in India's defense capabilities. The war raised concerns about the vulnerability of Nehru's non-alignment policy. Amid this, in 1964 China conducted a nuclear test at Lop Nur which occurred immediately after the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) of 1963. This development dramatically altered the security landscape of the Asian region and highlighted that nuclear capability could decisively shift the balance of power.

China's emergence as a nuclear power brought a direct strategic crisis for India. With a nuclear-armed neighbour with whom India had an unresolved border dispute and which had already engaged in military conflict, Indian defence strategists faced a unavoidable challenge. In response to China's nuclear test, Dr.HomiJ. Bhabha in 1964. publicly stated that India had the technical capability to build nuclear devices within eighteen months. It emphasised India's scientific preparedness and the growing strategic necessity of acquiring nuclear capability.

After Nehru's death in May 1964, Lal Bahadur Shastri and later Indira Gandhi assumed leadership. This transition of power gradually strengthened India's nuclear stance. During Shastri's tenure, the discussions regarding nuclear options continued, while the final decision for the 1974 Peaceful Nuclear Explosion was taken under Indira Gandhi. The strategic necessity was now absolutely clear that India needed to establish a nuclear deterrence, or at least demonstrate its capacity to develop one, to balance China's growing nuclear arsenal and avoid any future strategic humiliation.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q2) When did China conduct its first nuclear test?

7.3.3 The Pakistan Factor

Although China was the primary strategic force driving India's nuclear program, Pakistan added another layer of regional immediacy to the issue. The historical legacy of

partition has always maintained tension in the relations between the two countries. Both the countries engaged in wars in 1947, 1965 and 1971. Amid this tensions, Pakistan's nuclear ambitions arose and this cycle of mutual insecurity ultimately paved the way for the nuclearization of South Asia. India's victory in the Indo-Pak War of 1971 resulted in the partition of Pakistan and the liberation of Bangladesh. The series of defeats provoked Pakistan to go for nuclear power.

India-Pakistan nuclear relations have always been a central part of the overall development of India's nuclear policy. All of India's major nuclear decisions, whether conducting nuclear tests, officially declaring itself a nuclear-armed nation, or maintaining strategic ambiguity have been made in the context of anticipating Pakistan's potential response, maintaining regional stability and preventing escalation of crises.

7.4 THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT)

7.4.1 Origin and Structure of the NPT

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is an international agreement prepared in 1968, whose main objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to more and more countries. This treaty is based on a core exchange mechanism according to which the countries that do not possess nuclear weapons agree not to develop nuclear weapons. In return, they are allowed to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes such as electricity generation.

The Treaty was formally opened for signature on July 1, 1968 officially entered into force on March 5, 1970. This treaty came into existence amid growing international community concerns about the proliferation of nuclear weapons, as the United States, Soviet Union, Britain, France and China had already conducted their nuclear tests before this The treaty's purpose is to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons, promote nuclear disarmament and cooperate in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It rests on three main pillars - nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The treaty clearly distinguishes between five Nuclear Weapon States - the United States, Russia, Britain, France, and China, and all other Non-Nuclear Weapon States.

7.4.2 India's Fundamental Opposition to the NPT

India has always taken the stance of not joining the NPT, and this position has been firm and principled. From its early stages, Indian diplomats and strategic analysts have systematically criticized the framework of this treaty. The Indian government's main opposition is that the NPT establishes an unequal two-tier structure. On the one hand, it allows five countries to keep their nuclear weapons while on the other hand demands that other countries forego the option to develop nuclear weapons indefinitely. Further it has imposed no binding obligation on the nuclear-armed states themselves to disarm. India believes this system is clearly discriminatory, fundamentally unjust and contrary to the

principle of equality among sovereign nations. In India's view, this treaty is not a genuine disarmament mechanism but rather an institutional arrangement designed to maintain the nuclear monopoly of major powers under the name of non-proliferation. India's Ambassador to the United Nations, V.C. Trivedi, clearly expressed this stance during the treaty negotiations. He advocated for a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty and demanded that nuclear-armed states commit to completely destroying their nuclear weapons. However, these suggestions were ultimately not included in the final draft of the treaty.

India has also criticized the lack of adequate security guarantees in the NPT. The treaty does not provide effective protection for non-nuclear countries against nuclear threats or blackmail from nuclear-armed states. For India, which was facing a nuclear-armed China and lacked a credible security guarantee from any great power, the NPT offered no strategic benefit. It exposed the weakness in this global system that failed completely to address this major inequality in international security.

7.4.3 The NPT and the Global Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime

The NPT is commonly regarded as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. So far, 191 countries have joined this treaty, making it one of the most widely accepted arms control agreements in history. Several other mechanisms work in support of this treaty, including the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) of 1996, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system, and several treaties related to Nuclear Weapon Free Zones.

Despite this, the history of NPT implementation also reflects its limitations. North Korea announced its withdrawal from the treaty in 2003 and subsequently conducted several nuclear tests. Iraq, Libya and particularly Pakistan's A.Q. Khan global nuclear network proved that determined countries could advance their nuclear programs whether inside or outside the NPT framework. Additionally, deep disagreements between nuclear armed and non-nuclear countries over the pace and responsibilities of disarmament have consistently emerged openly at NPT Review Conferences.

India's stance of staying outside the NPT regime led to prolonged tensions in its relations with the international community, particularly with the United States and Western European countries. Due to not signing the NPT, India remained under a ban for decades on acquiring civilian nuclear technology and related equipment. The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) was established in 1974 largely in response to India's Pokhran nuclear test, to impose strict restrictions on the export of nuclear materials and technology to non-NPT countries.

The India-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement signed in 2008, also known as the 123 Agreement, was a major historical shift in this policy. Achieved through the efforts of US President George W. Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, this agreement allowed India to obtain civilian nuclear technology despite maintaining its nuclear weapons program and staying outside the NPT regime. Critics of this agreement argued

that it somehow rewarded India's defiance of the NPT weakening the global non-proliferation regime; while supporters believed it practically mainstreamed India into the global nuclear order and simultaneously strengthened strategic partnership between the world's two largest democracies.

7.5 THE 1974 POKHRAN NUCLEAR TEST

7.5.1 Background

India's first nuclear test was conducted at Pokhran on May 18, 1974. The test, codenamed 'Smiling Buddha' proved to be a historical turning point in India's strategic development. This test made India the sixth country in the world to successfully detonate a nuclear device, and it was also the first country outside the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council to conduct a nuclear test. The decision to proceed with this test by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was the culmination of more than a decade of India's scientific research and strategic planning.

The main background driving this test was linked to the international situation in the early 1970s. India had achieved a decisive military victory in the 1971 Indo-Pak War, which resulted in the birth of Bangladesh, but this success also heightened India's concerns about potential responses from the United States and China. During the 1971 war, U.S. President Richard Nixon sent an aircraft carrier task force led by the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise into the Bay of Bengal to pressure India. This incident created deep dissatisfaction among the Indian leadership. It also exposed India's strategic vulnerability and further strengthened the demand for developing a nuclear deterrence.It was viewed as an important means to demonstrate national power and technological progress, which would help promote national unity and establish India's image as a significant country on the global stage. By the time under the leadership of Raja Ramanna and scientists at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), the Indian scientific community had already confirmed that the country possessed the technical capability to conduct a nuclear test.

The nuclear explosion conducted at the Pokhran test site in the desert region of Rajasthan on May 18, 1974, used a plutonium implosion device. The test was conducted deep underground in the Pokhran test area of the Thar Desert to control the effects of the explosion and prevent radioactive materials from spreading into the atmosphere.The Indian government officially described this event as a Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE), deliberately emphasizing that it was not a weapons test. The purpose of this terminology was, on one hand, to minimize international criticism and avoid it being directly viewed as a nuclear weapons test; on the other hand, it also reflected the uncertainty within India at that time regarding the long-term goals of nuclear testing. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi firmly stated that India had no plan to develop nuclear weapons, and India did not immediately begin the process of nuclear weaponization after this test.

However, from the perspective of science and engineering, this test was a major success. India proved that it could independently design, build and detonate a nuclear device.

7.5.2 International Reaction and Impact

The international community's reaction to the Pokhran test of 1974 was immediate and primarily critical. Canada immediately suspended its nuclear cooperation with India, and the United States also reduced nuclear assistance provided to India. Directly as a result of this test, the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) was established in 1974-1975 which was an organization of nuclear exporting countries aimed at preventing the transfer of materials and technologies that could be used in nuclear weapons programs.Pakistan showed deep concern and firm resolve in response to this test. Then Prime Minister of Pakistan Zulfikar Ali Bhutto accelerated Pakistan's nuclear weapons program and viewed India's nuclear test as a direct threat to Pakistan's sovereignty and existence. Thus, this event actually marked the beginning of nuclear competition in South Asia. Despite international pressure, this nuclear test gained India a certain level of strategic recognition. By demonstrating its nuclear capability, India proved that it was emerging as a major scientific and technological power and was not willing to remain in a subordinate position in international affairs for the long term.

However, a major contentious issue in India's nuclear history has been why Indira Gandhi did not immediately advance nuclear weaponization after the success of Pokhran test of 1974. Despite the successful test, India did not immediately develop deliverable nuclear weapons that could be deployed by the military, nor did it formally incorporate nuclear power into its military strategy.This state of affairs is called recessed deterrence or hidden deterrence, that means that India had the capability to build nuclear weapons but chose not to formally deploy them. This situation persisted for more than two decades until new strategic pressures emerged in the late 1990s.

7.6 THE 1998 POKHRAN NUCLEAR TEST

7.6.1 Strategic Environment in the Late 1990s

The decision to conduct the Pokhran - II nuclear tests in May 1998 was made in a completely different strategic environment compared to 1974. By the mid-1990s, several factors had converged to make Indian policymakers feel that taking action had become unavoidable. The first of these was the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). India had refused to sign this treaty because, once it came into force, the possibility of India conducting nuclear tests in the future would be permanently eliminated. This could weaken its capacity to establish a credible nuclear deterrence.The second important factor was India's concerns about the modernization of China's nuclear forces and China's continuous support for Pakistan's nuclear and missile programs. This China-Pakistan cooperation was viewed by Indian diplomats and policy makers as a direct threat to national

security.The third factor was related to domestic politics. In March 1998, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power at the center under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. This party had long publicly supported developing nuclear weapons capability and had made a clear promise in its election manifesto to implement the nuclear option.

7.6.2 Operation Shakti: The Nuclear Tests

On May 11, 1998, India conducted three nuclear tests simultaneously at the Pokhran test site under the codename Operation Shakti. These included one thermonuclear (hydrogen) device, one fission device and one low-yield device. Their total explosive yield was estimated at approximately 45 kilotons of TNT. On May 13, 1998, India conducted two more low-yield nuclear tests, completing the Pokhran-II series with a total of five devices.

This entire operation was carried out under extremely strict and unprecedented secrecy. Through precise planning and better coordination of timing, India successfully evaded surveillance by American reconnaissance satellites. After the successful completion of the tests, Prime Minister Vajpayee publicly announced that India had now become a nuclear-weapon state. He cited China and Pakistan as the primary security factors behind this decision.The thermonuclear test was particularly important because it made clear that India wanted to build a second-generation nuclear arsenal far more powerful than the 1974 nuclear device. Additionally, the participation of the country's top scientists like A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and R. Chidambaram further enhanced the symbolic significance and national pride of this test.

7.6.3 Nuclear Doctrine and the No First Use (NFU) Policy

After the 1998 nuclear tests, India quickly began working toward developing a formal Nuclear Doctrine. In August 1999, the National Security Advisory Board released the Draft Nuclear Doctrine,which was officially approved in 2003. This doctrine is based on three main pillars: No First Use (NFU) policy; Maintaining a credible minimum deterrent; and Massive retaliation if India is attacked with nuclear weapons.

The No First Use policy, means that India will not be the first country to use nuclear weapons in any conflict. It is considered as the most mature and stability-providing part of India's nuclear doctrine. The concept of credible minimum deterrent reflects India's efforts to balance the needs of deterrence with the heavy costs of an arms race. India does not want to engage in a nuclear weapons numbers race with China or Pakistan, but instead focuses on developing a second-strike capability that can launch a counter-attack even after withstanding an enemy's first strike and can inflict unacceptable damage on any aggressor country. Under this strategic thinking, India has been continuously developing nuclear systems based on ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and fighter aircrafts.

7.6.4 International Reaction to the 1998 Tests

The international community's reaction to Pokhran-II was much harsher than the 1974 test. One reason was that these tests were openly military in nature; and the second reason was that they were conducted in the post-Cold War global environment when worldwide hopes for nuclear disarmament had significantly increased.

The U.S. government under President Bill Clinton imposed comprehensive economic and military sanctions on India under the Glenn Amendment. Japan, then India's largest aid provider country, also imposed strict sanctions and recalled its ambassador. The United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1172, urging India to halt further tests and immediately sign the CTBT. Pakistan's reaction was also immediate and far-reaching. Exactly two weeks after Pokhran-II, on May 28 and 30, 1998, Pakistan conducted its nuclear tests at Chagai and declared itself a nuclear-weapon state. These back-to-back tests in South Asia brought the region to the brink of nuclear conflict, deepening global concerns about regional stability.

However, what happened next was unexpected; the 1998 tests ultimately accelerated India's process of joining the global nuclear order. As the United States gradually realized India's strategic value in balancing China's growing influence and its capacity as a major economic partner, the sanctions on India were slowly lifted. The 2008 India-US Civil Nuclear Agreement was the culmination of this journey, which practically gave India recognition as a responsible nuclear power despite remaining outside the NPT regime.

At a deeper level, the Pokhran-II nuclear tests were symbolic of the establishment of India's strategic autonomy in the post-Cold War era. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, India had lost its most important strategic partner and had to face a unipolar world led by the United States. This test was largely a political declaration: India clearly refused to remain a silent observer or follower in an international order determined by others. From a historical perspective, Pokhran-II announced the formal end of India's era of nuclear strategic ambiguity and marked the beginning of a new chapter in its strategic history.

7.7 LET US SUM UP

- India's nuclear policy evolved from the Nehru era to the 1974 and 1998 Pokhran tests.
- Security threats from China and Pakistan shaped India's nuclear strategy.
- India also linked its policy with sovereign equality and global disarmament.
- India rejected the NPT, considering it discriminatory and unequal.
- The criticism of the NPT remains relevant due to slow global disarmament.
- The 1974 Pokhran test demonstrated India's nuclear capability while maintaining ambiguity.
- The 1998 tests officially established India as a declared nuclear power.

- India's nuclear doctrine is based on No First Use and credible minimum deterrence.
- India's restrained doctrine contributed to relative stability in South Asia.
- Pakistan adopted a comparatively more aggressive nuclear posture.
- India's global nuclear status changed after the 2008 Indo-US Civil Nuclear Agreement.
- Strategic diplomacy and partnerships helped India gain wider international acceptance.

7.8 FURTHER READING

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7.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: 1948

Ans to Q No 2: October 1964, at Lop Nur.

7.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 50 words)

Q 1: In which year was the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) established?

Q 2: What was the code name of India's 1974 nuclear test?

Q 3: When did the NPT formally enter into force?

Q 4: Under what code name were the 1998 nuclear tests conducted?

Q 5: What is meant by No First Use (NFU) policy?

B) Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 150 words)

Q 1: Explain Nehru's "dual-use" approach to nuclear technology.

Q 2: Explain India's main objections to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Q 3: What is meant by "recessed deterrence"?

Q 4: Why did India adopt this position after 1974?

Q 5: Discuss the factors that led India to conduct the Pokhran-II tests in 1998.

Q 6: Explain the significance of the India-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement of 2008.

C) Long Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 300-500 words)

Q 1: Trace the historical development of India's nuclear program from Nehru's era to the 1974 Pokhran test.

Q 2: Critically examine India's opposition to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and assess whether its concerns remain valid today.

Q 3: Discuss the strategic environment of the late 1990s that led India to conduct the Pokhran-II tests in1998.

Q 4: How did this differ from the context of 1974?

Q 5: Explain India's Nuclear Doctrine and analyse how the policy of No First Use and credible minimum deterrence shape India's strategic posture.

Q 6: Analyse the international response to India's 1974 and 1998 nuclear tests and assess how India eventually gained acceptance within the global nuclear order despite remaining outside the NPT.

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UNIT 8: INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

UNIT STRUCTURE

8.1 Learning Objectives

8.2 Introduction

8.3 Indus Water Treaty

8.4 Kashmir Dispute

8.5 Indo-Pakistan War (1965, 1971)

8.6 Kargil War

8.7 Let Us Sum Up

8.8 Further Reading

8.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

8.10 Model Questions

8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the historical background of India–Pakistan relations.
- Explain the origin and persistence of the Kashmir dispute.
- Analyze the causes and consequences of wars fought between the two countries.
- Describe the significance of the Indus Waters Treaty.
- Evaluate peace efforts, areas of cooperation, and the challenges ahead.

8.2 INTRODUCTION

The partition of British India in 1947 resulted in the creation of two independent nations-India and Pakistan. This division, based on religious lines, came with immense human suffering, including the displacement of approximately 14 million people and the loss of nearly one million lives due to communal violence.From the very beginning, relations between the two countries were marked by deep mistrust, aggravated by disputes over territorial boundaries, communal tensions, and political differences. The most prominent and persistent conflict has been the Kashmir issue, which has sparked wars and crises over the decades.

Despite these challenges, there have been several attempts to establish peace through diplomatic dialogues, confidence-building measures, and treaties such as the Indus Waters Treaty (1960), the Simla Agreement (1972), and the Lahore Declaration (1999). However, these efforts often collapsed due to renewed hostilities, acts of terrorism, and domestic political pressures on both sides.This unit provides a comprehensive overview of India–Pakistan relations by examining their historical roots, major conflicts, efforts at reconciliation, and the current scenario, while exploring possible future prospects for peace and cooperation.

8.3 INDUS-WATER TREATY

Background

The relationship between India and Pakistan goes back to the partition of 1947. This division was based on the *Two-Nation Theory,* which said that Hindus and Muslims were two different nations with separate cultures and could not live together in one country. The idea, supported by Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the Muslim League, influenced the British to accept partition. The Mountbatten Plan of 3rd June, 1947, laid out the process, and the Indian Independence Act created two new countries-India and Pakistan on 15 August 1947.The partition caused huge human suffering. This was one of the largest migrations in history. Violence broke out, especially in Punjab and Bengal, leading to nearly a million deaths.

LET US KNOW

The Radcliffe Commission worked in secrecy, and its award was announced two days after independence, creating shock and confusion in both nations. Muhammad Ali Jinnah had initially hoped for cordial relations with India, but mistrust soon overshadowed that vision. Interestingly, some princely states such as Bhopal and Travancore considered remaining independent for a short time before eventually acceding to India.

When India and Pakistan became independent in 1947, they divided not only land and people but also the river systems that were essential for farming and daily life. The Indus River system has six main rivers— Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej. These rivers rise in the Himalayas, flow through India, and then pass into Pakistan before entering the Arabian Sea.

The problem was that many of the headworks (the points where canals begin) were in India, while the canals themselves flowed into Pakistan. This meant India could control the water reaching Pakistani fields. At first, both countries agreed to keep the water flowing through a temporary Standstill Agreement. But on 1st April 1948, India stopped water to Pakistan's canals for a short period, saying a new agreement was needed. Though the supply was quickly restored, Pakistan feared India could use water as a political weapon. Bilateral talks could not solve the issue, so in 1951, the World Bank stepped in as a mediator. After nearly a decade of negotiations, the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) was signed in 1960.

The Indus Waters Treaty was signed on 19 September 1960 in Karachi by Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, Pakistani President Ayub Khan, and World Bank President Eugene Black, who acted as guarantor. The treaty divided the rivers between the two countries instead of trying to share each river. The three eastern rivers—Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej were given to India for unrestricted use. The three western rivers—Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab were allocated to Pakistan. However, India was allowed limited rights on the

western rivers for domestic use, navigation, and certain run-of-the-river hydroelectric projects that did not significantly reduce water flow.

To make sure the treaty worked, a Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) was created with representatives from both countries to share data, monitor usage, and handle day-to-day issues. The treaty also set up a dispute resolution system: technical issues could be referred to a Neutral Expert, while legal disputes could go to a Court of Arbitration. As part of the agreement, India also paid £62 million to Pakistan to help build new dams and canals.

The Indus Waters Treaty is considered one of the most stable and long-lasting water agreements in the world. Its biggest achievement is that it has survived wars and conflicts between India and Pakistan, including the wars of 1965, 1971, and the 1999 Kargil War. By clearly dividing the rivers, the treaty reduced the chances of constant disputes over water. The involvement of the World Bank also gave the treaty international recognition and credibility.

Even though the treaty has worked for over six decades, it faces several challenges today. Pakistan has repeatedly objected to India's hydroelectric projects on the western rivers, such as the Baglihar Dam on the Chenab and the Kishanganga Project on the Jhelum, because it fears these projects could reduce water supply.

Another major challenge is climate change. Melting glaciers and unpredictable rainfall threaten the stability of the river system. Political tensions also play a role—after terrorist attacks; some Indian leaders have suggested reviewing or even ending the treaty, while Pakistan considers the treaty vital for its survival. Additionally, growing populations in both countries are creating more pressure on water resources.

The treaty's dispute-resolution mechanisms have been tested in recent years. In 2007, the World Bank's Neutral Expert allowed India to continue the Baglihar project but ordered some design changes. In 2013, the Court of Arbitration ruled on the Kishanganga case, allowing India to proceed but requiring it to maintain a minimum flow of water to Pakistan. Despite worsening diplomatic relations, both India and Pakistan continue to participate in meetings of the Permanent Indus Commission. This shows that the treaty remains resilient and is one of the few areas where cooperation between the two countries continues.

8.4 KASHMIR DISPUTE

Post Partition, both India and Pakistan faced institutional breakdown after partition. These strains slowed governance and economic stability in the formative years.Disagreements quickly emerged over territorial and resource issues. The Kashmir conflict erupted in 1947 after tribal militias from Pakistan invaded, leading to India's military intervention and the first war. Disputes also arose over Junagadh, which was integrated into India despite its accession to Pakistan, and Hyderabad, annexed by India in 1948. Water tensions surfaced in 1948 when India temporarily cut canal supplies to Pakistan, foreshadowing future disputes over the Indus system.Despite hostility, early efforts were

made to ease tensions. Inter-Dominion agreements dealt with refugee property, military withdrawals, and asset division, while joint tribunals were set up to resolve disputes. However, the unresolved status of Kashmir overshadowed these measures and set the stage for enduring conflict in India–Pakistan relations.

When India and Pakistan were created in 1947, the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) became a special case. The state was geographically linked to both India and Pakistan. It had a Muslim-majority population of about 77%, but its ruler was a Hindu Maharaja, Hari Singh. At first, Hari Singh tried to remain independent and signed a "Standstill Agreement" with Pakistan to continue trade and communication. However, this arrangement collapsed when tribal militias from Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province, backed by Pakistani elements, invaded Kashmir on 22 October 1947. Their aim was to force Kashmir to join Pakistan. The Maharaja, unable to defend his state, asked India for military help. India agreed but only if he signed the Instrument of Accession, officially joining J&K to India. He signed on 26 October 1947, and Indian troops were airlifted to Srinagar the next day. This marked the beginning of full-scale war between India and Pakistan.

LET US KNOW

Pakistan calls Kashmir its "jugular vein" for symbolic and strategic reasons. The UN set up UNMOGIP in 1949 to monitor ceasefires, but India stopped recognizing it after 1972. Sheikh Abdullah first backed accession to India but later sought greater autonomy, complicating Kashmiri politics.

After Kashmir's accession to India, fighting broke out between India and Pakistan from October 1947 to January 1949. Indian forces managed to secure Srinagar and drive back invaders from the capital, while Pakistani troops and irregular fighters occupied large parts of western Jammu and northern Kashmir. India calls this region Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), while Pakistan refers to it as Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

As the war dragged on, India took the issue to the United Nations on 1st January 1948. The UN Security Council passed Resolution 47, which suggested three steps: *first*, Pakistan should withdraw its forces; *second*, India should reduce its troops to a minimum level; and *third*, a plebiscite (people's vote) should be held under UN supervision to decide Kashmir's future. However, disagreements over the withdrawal process meant the resolution was never implemented.

A ceasefire was finally declared on 1st January 1949, which left about one-third of Kashmir under Pakistan's control and the rest with India. The dividing line, first called the Ceasefire Line, later became the Line of Control (LoC) under the 1972 Simla Agreement.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Jammu and Kashmir was granted special status under Article 370, but Pakistan continued to dispute India's claim and raised the issue in global forums. The wars of 1965 and 1971 further complicated matters, though the 1972 Simla Agreement converted the Ceasefire Line into the Line of Control and committed both sides to settle issues bilaterally. However, tensions flared again in 1989 when political

unrest and allegations of rigged elections triggered an armed insurgency in the Valley, with militant groups backed from across the border fueling violence.

The conflict escalated in 1999 with the Kargil War, though a ceasefire in 2003 briefly reduced cross-border firing and allowed confidence-building measures such as trade and bus services. Relations soured once more after the Uri (2016) and Pulwama (2019) terrorist attacks, leading India to carry out strikes inside Pakistan. The situation changed dramatically on 5 August 2019, when India revoked Article 370 and reorganized Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories. Pakistan strongly opposed this move, cutting trade and diplomatic ties, which pushed relations to a new low.

Kashmir remains unresolved because India treats the 1947 Instrument of Accession as final, while Pakistan calls for a plebiscite, stressing the region's Muslim majority. For India, Kashmir is tied to national security and sovereignty, especially with Pakistan-based militant groups active in the region.The dispute is further complicated by global involvement, with the US, China, and the UN influencing the issue at different times. Conflicting claims, religious sensitivities, terrorism, and geopolitics have kept the Kashmir problem alive for more than seven decades.

8.5 INDO-PAKISTAN WAR (1965, 1971)

The First Indo-Pak War (1947-1948)

The first armed conflict between India and Pakistan began in the aftermath of partition and the accession of Jammu and Kashmir. When India gained independence on 15 August 1947, the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, ruled by Maharaja Hari Singh, had the option to accede to either dominion or remain independent. Hari Singh initially chose to stay independent, hoping to maintain sovereignty over his territory.

This situation changed dramatically when tribal militias from Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province invaded Kashmir on 22 October 1947. Backed by elements of the Pakistani army, these invaders committed widespread atrocities, looting and killing civilians in their path. Facing an imminent fall of Srinagar, the Maharaja sought military assistance from India. India agreed on the condition that Kashmir accedes to the Indian Union. Consequently, on 26 October 1947, Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession, making Jammu and Kashmir a part of India.

Indian troops were airlifted to Srinagar to repel the invaders, marking the beginning of the first Indo-Pak war. Fighting continued in various sectors, including Baramulla, Uri, and Poonch. The conflict soon escalated, as Pakistan deployed regular troops to support the tribal forces. Despite India's advances in securing the Kashmir Valley, the war reached a stalemate by late 1948.

Seeking to prevent further bloodshed, India referred the issue to the United Nations on 1 January 1948. The UN Security Council passed Resolution 47, which called for a ceasefire, withdrawal of Pakistani troops and tribal fighters, and a plebiscite to decide the state's future once normalcy returned. However, disagreements over the sequence of withdrawal prevented the plebiscite from taking place. A ceasefire came into effect on 1

January 1949, dividing the territory along a Ceasefire Line (later known as the Line of Control). Pakistan retained about one-third of the territory, now called Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK), while India held the remainder, including the Kashmir Valley.

This war set the stage for a prolonged and unresolved dispute over Kashmir, which continues to be the core issue in Indo-Pak relations.

The Second Indo-Pak War (1965)

The second major conflict between India and Pakistan broke out in 1965, mainly over Kashmir. After the 1947-48 war, Pakistan remained dissatisfied with the territorial status quo and, encouraged by India's defeat in the 1962 war with China, believed India was militarily weak. In August 1965, Pakistan launched Operation Gibraltar, sending armed infiltrators into Kashmir to spark an uprising, but the plan failed as locals did not support it and Indian forces quickly responded. Pakistan then launched Operation Grand Slam against Akhnoor, prompting India to open a new front across the international border, leading to large battles around Lahore and Sialkot.

The seventeen-day war involved heavy fighting, with both countries suffering significant losses. International pressure, especially from the UN and major powers, led to a ceasefire on 22 September 1965. The Tashkent Agreement of January 1966, mediated by the Soviet Union, required both sides to return to pre-war positions and restore relations. Though the war ended without a clear winner, it deepened mistrust and confirmed Kashmir as the core dispute, showing that neither side could secure an easy military victory.

The Third Indo-Pak War (1971) and the Birth of Bangladesh

The third war between India and Pakistan occurred in 1971, but unlike the previous two, it was primarily driven by developments in East Pakistan rather than Kashmir. The seeds of this conflict were sown in the linguistic and political discrimination faced by the Bengali population in East Pakistan at the hands of the ruling elite in West Pakistan. The situation deteriorated after the 1970 general elections, in which the Awami League, led by SheikhMujibur Rahman, secured a majority but was denied power by Pakistan's military regime. In March 1971, the Pakistan Army launched Operation Searchlight to suppress Bengali nationalism. This led to mass atrocities, causing millions of refugees to flee into India, creating a severe humanitarian crisis. India, already hosting nearly ten million refugees, decided to intervene after months of diplomatic efforts failed to resolve the situation.

On 3rd December 1971, Pakistan launched air strikes on Indian airfields in the western sector, prompting India to declare war. The conflict lasted only thirteen days, making it one of the shortest wars in modern history. Indian forces in coordination with the Mukti Bahini (Bangladeshi guerrillas), achieved rapid success in East Pakistan, leading to the fall of Dhaka on 16 December 1971.

Pakistan suffered a humiliating defeat, with 93,000 soldiers surrendering to Indian forces, the largest such surrender since World War II. The war resulted in the creation of Bangladesh as an independent nation, drastically altering South Asia's political map.The conflict ended with the signing of the Simla Agreement in July 1972, where both nations

agreed to resolve disputes bilaterally and converted the Ceasefire Line into the Line of Control (LoC).

8.6 KARGIL WAR

The fourth major conflict between India and Pakistan took place in 1999 in the Kargil sector of Jammu and Kashmir. Unlike earlier wars, it was a limited conflict fought at high altitudes in extreme conditions, and its timing was especially shocking as it came soon after the Lahore Declaration, which had promised peace. During the winter of 1998–99, Pakistani soldiers and militants crossed the Line of Control and occupied key peaks to threaten the Srinagar–Leh highway. The intrusion was detected in May, and India launched Operation Vijay, recapturing positions like Tiger Hill and Drass after intense battles.

By July 1999, Indian forces had regained most territory, and under strong international pressure—particularly from the United States—Pakistan was forced to withdraw. The conflict not only destroyed the trust built through the Lahore process but also exposed Pakistan's role in cross-border militancy. Most importantly, it raised global concern as it was the first war fought between two newly nuclear-armed neighbors, highlighting the risks of escalation.

Since the Kargil War of 1999, India and Pakistan have avoided full-scale war but faced several serious clashes. The 2001 Parliament attack and the 2008 Mumbai attacks showed how terrorism continues to harm relations. In 2016, India carried out surgical strikes after the Uri attack, and in 2019, the Pulwama bombing led to India's Balakot airstrike inside Pakistan. This caused aerial battles and raised fears of war between two nuclear powers.

In recent years, new threats such as drones, cyber-attacks, and smuggling have emerged. These events show that conflict is no longer only about armies and borders but also about hybrid warfare, combining terrorism, technology, and propaganda. Some reports also mention smaller or localized actions, such as "Operation Sindoor" though these have not been officially documented or studied in detail.

8. PEACE INITIATIVES AND AGREEMENTS

India and Pakistan have made several attempts to improve relations through agreements and dialogues, but most efforts ended without lasting success. The Tashkent Agreement of 1966, mediated by the Soviet Union after the 1965 war, required both sides to withdraw troops and restore diplomatic ties, but it left the Kashmir issue unresolved. The Simla Agreement of 1972, signed after the Bangladesh war, converted the Ceasefire Line into the Line of Control and committed both countries to bilateral negotiations. While it provided a framework for future relations, Pakistan's later support for militancy in Kashmir weakened its impact. Hopes rose again with the Lahore Declaration of 1999, when Prime Minister Vajpayee and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif pledged to reduce nuclear risks and continue dialogue, symbolized by Vajpayee's bus journey to Lahore. However, the goodwill collapsed soon after with the Kargil conflict.

Another attempt came with the Agra Summit in 2001, but talks failed as India emphasized cross-border terrorism while Pakistan focused on Kashmir. These repeated failures show that peace efforts often collapse due to mistrust, political pressures, and terrorism. India accuses Pakistan of using militancy as state policy, while Pakistan insists on Kashmir as the central issue. Changing global dynamics, including U.S. and Chinese involvement, add further complications. Thus, despite repeated initiatives, lasting peace between the two nations has remained out of reach.

9. OTHER ISSUES IN BILATERAL RELATIONS

Beyond wars and peace talks, many issues strain India–Pakistan ties. Cross-border terrorism has fueled mistrust, with India blaming Pakistan for attacks like the 2001 Parliament, 2008 Mumbai, and 2019 Pulwama incidents, while Pakistan denies this and accuses India of interfering in Balochistan. Territorial disputes also remain, especially over the Siachen Glacier and Sir Creek. Trade relations are weak, as Pakistan never granted India MFN status and both sides suspended trade after the Pulwama attack and the removal of Article 370. External powers add complexity: the US leans toward India but still engages Pakistan, while China is Pakistan's closest ally through projects like CPEC, which India opposes.

Despite tensions, cultural ties in food, music, cinema, and cricket show common heritage, though such exchanges stop during crises. Overall, mistrust and unresolved disputes continue to dominate relations.

LET US KNOW

The Siachen Glacier, called the "coldest war zone," has claimed more lives from weather than combat. Sir Creek is the key for fixing maritime boundaries in the Arabian Sea. After the 2019 Pulwama attack, India revoked Pakistan's MFN status, sharply reducing trade and people-to-people exchanges.

10: CURRENT TRENDS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

In the 21st century, India–Pakistan relations have been shaped by terrorism, diplomatic isolation, and economic disengagement. Tensions peaked in August 2019 when India revoked Article 370, ending Jammu and Kashmir's special status. Pakistan strongly opposed the move, downgraded diplomatic ties, suspended trade, and raised the issue in global forums such as the UN and OIC, though with little impact. India, meanwhile, insisted that Kashmir was an internal matter to be addressed bilaterally. Earlier the same year, the Pulwama terror attack, which killed 40 Indian soldiers, and India's Balakot airstrike on a terrorist camp in Pakistan triggered one of the most serious escalations in decades, underscoring the risks of conflict between two nuclear powers.

Since then, formal dialogue has remained suspended, with contacts limited to consular exchanges and military hotlines. A minor breakthrough came in 2021 when both sides reaffirmed the 2003 ceasefire, which reduced cross-border firing but failed to open the way for broader talks. Normalization remains blocked by core disputes: India accuses

Pakistan of using terrorism as state policy, while Pakistan seeks international mediation on Kashmir, which India rejects. Domestic politics in both countries and Pakistan's close ties with China add further obstacles.

Despite these challenges, opportunities for peace exist. Expanding trade, promoting cultural exchanges, and cooperating on regional issues such as climate change and disaster relief could help build trust. Yet such progress requires strong political will, and without addressing terrorism and Kashmir, the cycle of hostility is likely to persist.

CONCLUSION

India and Pakistan have shared a turbulent relationship since 1947, dominated by wars, terrorism, and diplomatic hostility. While both countries have attempted dialogue through agreements like Tashkent, Simla, and Lahore, these efforts have failed to produce a lasting settlement. The Kashmir dispute remains the core issue, but new challenges—such as terrorism, nuclear deterrence, and geopolitical rivalries—have made the situation more complex. The recent freeze in dialogue following Article 370 abrogation and the Pulwama–Balakot episode reflects deep mistrust.

Despite these obstacles, there are opportunities for peace through trade, cultural exchanges, and regional cooperation. The future of Indo-Pak relations depends on whether both nations can move beyond the burden of history and embrace cooperation for mutual prosperity.– As a matter of fact, India's Ministry of External Affairshas always maintained that "talks and terror cannot go together," requiring Pakistan to cease support for militant networks and take concrete action to end its sponsorship of cross-border terrorism and extremism as a prerequisite for bilateral talks and for comprehensive negotiations to resume.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) When did the tribal invasion of Kashmir occur?

Q2) What did UN Resolution 47 propose?

Q3) Name the international body set up in 1949 to monitor the ceasefire in Kashmir.

Q4) What was operation Gibraltar?

Q5) When was the Lahore Declaration signed?

Q6) What was the Tashkent Agreement and when was it signed?

Q7) Which war led to the creation of Bangladesh?

8.7 LET US SUM UP

- India–Pakistan relations are rooted in the legacy of partition, with Kashmir at the core of disputes tied to identity, sovereignty, and security. The two nations have fought four wars—1947–48, 1965, 1971, and 1999—yet the issue remains unresolved.

- Peace efforts such as the Tashkent Agreement, Simla Agreement, and Lahore Declaration created dialogue frameworks, but mistrust, terrorism, and external pressures derailed progress. Additional disputes over Siachen, Sir Creek, and water sharing have further strained ties.
- In recent years, cross-border terrorism and the abrogation of Article 370 have deepened hostility, freezing dialogue. Still, steps like the 2021 reaffirmation of the ceasefire show limited cooperation is possible. The future depends on trust-building, trade, cultural exchange, and strong political will.

8.8 FURTHER READING

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8.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: October 1947.

Ans to Q No 2: UN Resolution 47, passed in 1948, called for the withdrawal of Pakistani troops from Jammu and Kashmir, followed by a reduction of Indian forces, and then a plebiscite to decide the state's future.

Ans to Q No 3: The United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP)

Ans to Q No 4: Operation Gibraltar was Pakistan's plan in 1965 to infiltrate armed men into Jammu and Kashmir to incite rebellion against Indian control, which eventually led to the Indo-Pak war.

Ans to Q No 5: 1999.

Ans to Q No 6: The Tashkent Agreement was a peace accord signed on 10 January 1966 between India and Pakistan after the 1965 war. It was mediated by Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin and aimed at restoring economic and diplomatic relations.

Ans to Q No 7: The 1971 Indo-Pak war.

8.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 50 words)

Q 1: When was the Indus Waters Treaty signed?

Q 2: Who was the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir in 1947?

Q 3: Which agreement converted the Ceasefire Line into the Line of Control?

Q 4: What was the Indian military operation in the Kargil War called?

Q 5: On what date was Article 370 revoked?

B) Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 150 words)

Q 1: Why did the location of headworks and canals create a water problem between India and Pakistan after 1947?

Q 2: State the main provisions of the Indus Waters Treaty regarding the division of rivers.

Q 3: Explain the circumstances that led to Kashmir's accession to India in 1947.

Q 4: What were the terms of UN Security Council Resolution 47, and why was it never implemented?

Q 5: Why is the Kargil War considered significant in India-Pakistan relations?

C) Long Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss the background, main provisions and challenges of the Indus Waters Treaty. Why is it regarded as one of the most durable water agreements in the world?

Q 2: Trace the origin of the Kashmir dispute from 1947 to the revocation of Article 370 in 2019. Why does the dispute remain unresolved?

Q 3: Examine the causes, events and consequences of the 1971 war and the creation of Bangladesh. What was the significance of the Simla Agreement?

Q 4: Evaluate the peace initiatives between India and Pakistan (Tashkent, Simla, Lahore, Agra). Why have they failed to produce a lasting settlement?

Q 5: Discuss the major issues in India-Pakistan relations today, including terrorism, territorial disputes, trade and external powers. What are the prospects for peace?

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UNIT 9: INDIA AND BANGLADESH

UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1 Learning Objectives

9.2 Introduction

9.3 Liberation of Bangladesh and the role of India

9.4 India-Bangladesh Boundary Disputes

9.5 Water Sharing Disputes

9.6 Let Us Sum Up

9.7 Further Reading

9.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

9.9 Model Questions

9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the historical background that led to the formation of Bangladesh.
- Explain the role played by India in the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971.
- Analyze the nature and resolution of boundary-related disputes between India and Bangladesh.
- Discuss the major water sharing issues and treaties, particularly concerning the Ganga and Teesta rivers.
- Evaluate the current state of India-Bangladesh relations in the context of historical disputes and cooperation.

9.2 INTRODUCTION

India and Bangladesh share a multifaceted relationship rooted in history, culture, language, and geography. The relationship gained historical significance in 1971 during the Bangladesh Liberation War, where India played a decisive role. India was the first country to recognize it as a separate nation. Bangladesh's Liberation Day on December 16 is celebrated as "Vijay Diwas" in India, reflecting their shared sacrifices.

The outstanding nature of bilateral ties is reflected in an all-encompassing partnership based on sovereignty, equality, trust, and understanding. This partnership has evolved as model for bilateral relations for the entire region and beyond.

India shares its longest international border with Bangladesh, making it the most extensive boundary India has with any neighboring country. Bangladesh and India share a 4,096-kilometre-long (2,545 mi) international border, the fifth-longest land border in the world, including 262 km (163 mi) in Assam, 856 km (532 mi) in Tripura, 318 km (198 mi) in Mizoram, 443 km (275 mi) in Meghalaya and 2,217 km (1,378 mi) in West Bengal. Bangladesh and India, as common members of SAARC, BIMSTEC, IORA, and the Commonwealth, share a close and strategic partnership. Despite the friendly ties, this

shared boundary has historically been a source of conflict, especially regarding enclaves, adverse possessions, and illegal migration. Similarly, with 54 common rivers flowing from India into Bangladesh, water sharing has emerged as a significant issue, particularly in relation to the Ganga and Teesta rivers.Before delving deeper into these topics, it is essential to understand why Bangladesh holds strategic importance for India.

The relationship between the two nations is vital for several interconnected reasons.

***Geopolitical Importance**:* Bangladesh shares a long land, riverine, and maritime boundary with India, making it a key player in India's security and foreign policy landscape. Cooperation from Bangladesh is crucial for India to counter strategic challenges, such as China's increasing presence in the Indian Ocean Region, often referred to as the 'String of Pearls'.

Economic Ties: India and Bangladesh enjoy strong economic relations. India is one of Bangladesh's largest trading partners, with bilateral trade reaching USD 18.2 billion in 2021–2022. Enhanced connectivity, trade agreements, and cross-border infrastructure have further strengthened these ties.

***Cultural and Historical Links**:* The two countries share deep-rooted cultural, linguistic, and historical bonds. Their peoples are connected through familial ties, shared festivals, literature, and a common heritage, with a significant population of Indian-origin people residing in Bangladesh.

Strategic Connectivity: Geographically, Bangladesh is located at the crossroads of South Asia and Southeast Asia. This makes it an essential partner in India's Act East Policy, which seeks to deepen ties with Southeast Asian nations and promote regional integration and connectivity.

Environmental Cooperation: India and Bangladesh share numerous trans-boundary rivers and ecological systems, including the Sunderbans. Collaborative efforts in areas like water management, flood control, and climate resilience are essential to mitigate environmental challenges affecting both countries.

This unit will take a comprehensive look at the Liberation of Bangladesh with a special focus on the role played by India, explore boundary and water-sharing disputes, and assess efforts to resolve these issues.

9.3 LIBERATION OF BANGLADESH AND THE ROLE OF INDIA

The roots of the Bangladesh Liberation War lie in the partition of British India in 1947, which led to the creation of Pakistan. The new country was geographically divided into West Pakistan (now Pakistan) and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), separated by over 1,600 km of Indian territory. Despite forming a single country, the two wings were culturally, linguistically, and economically disparate.

The capital of Pakistan was initially Karachi but was moved to Islamabad in 1958. Over time, disparities in economic development and political representation between the two regions grew increasingly evident. By 1971, these issues had reached a boiling point, leading to the outbreak of the Liberation War.

Causes of Bangladesh Liberation War

Several critical factors fueled the desire for independence in East Pakistan:

- **Economic Disparities**: East Pakistan contributed significantly to Pakistan's economy but was consistently deprived of its fair share of resources. Between 1948 and 1960, East Pakistan generated 70% of Pakistan's exports while receiving only 25% of the imported revenue. Additionally, the East saw a decline in the number of fabric mills, from 11 in 1948 to just 26 in 1971, while West Pakistan's mills surged to 150.
- **Political Marginalization**: Despite being the most populous region, East Pakistan had minimal political power compared to West Pakistan. This imbalance led to growing unrest and demands for greater autonomy.
- **Language Controversies**: The imposition of Urdu as the sole national language by Pakistan's founder, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, was met with strong resistance in East Pakistan, where Bengali was the predominant language. The February 21, 1952, protest against this policy resulted in the deaths of seven students and is now commemorated as International Mother Language Day.
- **Natural Disasters**: The 1970 Bhola Cyclone, which killed around 500,000 people and left many homeless, exacerbated the plight of East Pakistanis. The inadequate response from the central government further intensified the region's grievances.

The liberation struggle gained momentum when the Awami League, led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won a decisive victory in the 1970 national elections. Despite winning a majority, the party was denied the right to form a government by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Chairman of the Pakistan People's Party. This denial led to widespread unrest and eventually the outbreak of war.

Operation Searchlight and Refugee Crisis

On 25 March 1971, the Pakistani military launched Operation Searchlight to crush the Bengali nationalist movement. This led to widespread killings, sexual violence, and the targeting of intellectuals and minorities. The number of civilians killed during the conflict is estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands, with millions displaced.

Approximately 10 million refugees poured into India, particularly into the border states of West Bengal, Assam, and Tripura. This created a massive humanitarian crisis and placed considerable pressure on India's economy and administrative machinery

Initially, India provided humanitarian aid to refugees and voiced strong diplomatic opposition to Pakistan's actions. However, as the situation deteriorated, India extended political and military support to the Mukti Bahini (the Bengali freedom fighters). The Indian government, under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, launched a global diplomatic campaign to garner support and expose the atrocities being committed in East Pakistan.

On 3 December 1971, Pakistan launched a pre-emptive strike on Indian airbases, which prompted India to enter the war formally. The Indo-Pak war of 1971 lasted for 13 days, making it one of the shortest wars in history. Indian forces, along with the Mukti

Bahini, swiftly defeated the Pakistani army. On 16 December 1971, the "Instrument of Surrender" was signed by General Niazi of Pakistan and General Aurora of India, marking the end of the war and the birth of Bangladesh as an independent nation.

India played a pivotal role in the Bangladesh Liberation War. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, India provided crucial support to the Mukti Bahini. This support included:

- **Shelter and Training**: India offered refuge to Bangladeshi refugees and provided training to the MuktiBahini fighters.
- **Military Assistance**: Indian forces, including the Army, Air Force, and Navy, engaged in direct combat against the Pakistani troops. The operations were launched from the Indian states of West Bengal, Assam, and Tripura.
- **Coordination with Mukti Bahini**: The Indian military coordinated with Mukti Bahini to launch a three-pronged offensive on Dhaka, which was crucial in the eventual defeat of the Pakistani forces.

9.4 INDIA-BANGLADESH BOUNDARY DISPUTES

The India-Bangladesh land disputes, rooted in the 1947 Partition of British India, have centered on issues like enclaves, adverse possessions, and undemarcated borders. Below is an overview of the disputes and their resolutions, with a focus on solutions implemented and ongoing challenges:

India-Bangladesh border, one of the longest in the world, was established by the 1947 Radcliffe Award, which divided British India into India and East Pakistan (later Bangladesh).

The 4096 km long border between India and Bangladesh is the longest land border that India has with any of its neighbors. Its borders are shared with Assam, West Bengal, Tripura, Meghalaya, and Mizoram states of India. Various parts of the boundary between India and Bangladesh are the subject of a dispute.

Key Disputes

Enclave Problem (Chhitmahals): The most complex issue was the existence of enclaves—pockets of one country's territory completely surrounded by the other. Before 2015, there were 111 Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh (mainly in Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Nilphamari, and Panchagarh districts of Bangladesh) and 51 Bangladeshi enclaves inside India (primarily in Cooch Behar district of West Bengal). These enclaves were legacies of historical land grants and princely state arrangements. People living in them were stateless, with no access to schools, hospitals, or basic governance. The most famous example is the Dahala Khagrabari enclave, which was a third-order enclave (an Indian enclave inside a Bangladeshi enclave inside an Indian enclave). These made administration and law enforcement nearly impossible.

Adverse Possessions: Adverse possessions referred to areas where citizens of one country lived on land legally claimed by the other, creating confusion in sovereignty. Key areas included Pyrdiwah in the Meghalaya-Bangladesh border (claimed by Bangladesh

but administered by India), and Boroibari, where a fatal border clash occurred in 2001 between the Border Security Force (BSF) of India and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR). Other regions included Karimganj (in Assam), Jalpaiguri, and parts of Malda district in West Bengal. Villagers had cultivated and lived on these lands for generations, but without clear legal titles or recognition.

Undemarcated and Disputed Sections: Several parts of the 4,096 km border were historically undemarcated, especially in riverine and hilly areas, where natural features shifted over time. Notable places include: Sylhet-Karimganj sector (Assam-Bangladesh border) South Berubari in Jalpaiguri, a historically disputed territory Teen Bigha Corridor, a small strip of Indian land leased to Bangladesh to connect the Bangladeshi enclave Dahagram-Angarpota with the mainland. River shifts in areas such as the Teesta River basin also made border identification difficult, affecting districts like Dinajpur, Malda, and Rangpur.



Source: Google image

1974 Land Boundary Agreement (LBA):

Signed by Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the LBA aimed to resolve enclave and adverse possession issues by exchanging territories and allowing residents to choose citizenship. However, its implementation was delayed due to political instability, including Mujibur's 1975 assassination.

2011 Protocol: An amendment to the 1974 LBA, agreed upon by Manmohan Singh and Sheikh Hasina, addressed undemarcated borders, adverse possessions, and enclave exchanges. It faced delays due to political opposition in India but set the stage for the 2015 resolution.

2015 Land Boundary Agreement: Ratified on June 6, 2015, this agreement resolved most enclave issues

Enclave Exchange: India transferred 111 enclaves (17,160.63 acres) to Bangladesh, and Bangladesh transferred 51 enclaves (7,110.02 acres) to India.

Adverse Possessions: India received 2,777.038 acres and transferred 2,267.682 acres to Bangladesh. Citizenship Residents could choose to stay or relocate, though

most stayed due to social and economic ties to the host country. Only about 1,000 moved from Bangladesh to India, contrary to expectations of larger migrations.

Un-demarcated Borders: Resolved most of the 6.1 km in three sectors (West Bengal, Tripura, Assam), though a 2 km section along the Muhuri River remains under negotiation.The LBA was a historic milestone, improving bilateral relations and enabling cross-border trade and security cooperation.

India-Bangladesh Sea Boundary Dispute

India and Bangladesh had a sea boundary dispute for over forty years. The total disputed area was 25,602 square kilometers in the Bay of Bengal. The main issues were where the land border between the two countries ends and how to draw the sea boundary in the territorial waters. Bangladesh wanted a fair and equal solution, while India wanted to use the "equidistance" method. This method draws the boundary by measuring equal distance from the shores of both countries. Talks to solve the issue began in 1974, soon after Bangladesh became independent in 1971. However, after many years without progress, Bangladesh went to the United Nations' International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in 2009. Later, in 2011, the case was moved to the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague. The main question was how to fairly divide the sea area so that both countries could access resources like fish and oil. In 2014, the UN tribunal gave 19,467 square kilometers of the disputed area to Bangladesh. This was nearly one-fifth of the total disputed sea area. Both India and Bangladesh accepted the decision peacefully.

The India-Bangladesh border remains porous, and issues like illegal migration, cattle smuggling, and human trafficking continue. India has fenced significant portions of the border, but terrain and demography make complete fencing impractical.

Despite periodic tensions, both countries have set up mechanisms like the Joint Boundary Working Group and regular flag meetings between Border Security Forces to manage incidents and maintain peace.

9.5 WATER SHARING DISPUTES

Water is often an issue among neighbouring counties that have to share resources flowing from one country to another. The same holds true for India and Bangladesh.

India and Bangladesh share 54 rivers, making water sharing a critical component of their bilateral relations. These rivers are vital for agriculture, fisheries, transportation, and ecology. However, water sharing has often been contentious, especially during the dry season.

Farakka Barrage and the Ganges Water Dispute

The Ganga River, called Padma in Bangladesh, is one of the most important shared rivers. The dispute over the Farakka Barrage is one of the oldest and most contentious water issues between India and Bangladesh. The barrage, constructed by India in 1975 in West Bengal, aimed to divert water from the Ganges into the Hooghly River to keep the Kolkata Port functional. However, this diversion reduced the flow of the Ganges into Bangladesh, especially during the lean season, leading to water scarcity for agriculture

and increased salinity in Bangladesh's southwestern region.

Bangladesh first raised its concerns during the mid-1970s. A temporary understanding was reached in 1977, followed by another short-term agreement in 1982 and again in 1985. Finally, after years of negotiations, the two countries signed the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty in 1996 for a 30-year term.

Ganga Water Sharing Treaty (1996)–

The Ganga Water Sharing Treaty was signed on 12th December 1996 between the Prime Minister of India, H.D. Deve Gowda, and the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina. The treaty provides a framework for sharing the waters of the Ganga River at the Farakka Barrage, located about 10 kilometers from the Bangladesh border, during the dry season (from 1st January to 31st May each year). The treaty was signed for a duration of 30 years, and is set to expire in 2026, unless extended.

The treaty:

- Ensured a fair and equitable distribution of Ganga waters.
- Created a joint mechanism for monitoring water flow.
- Guaranteed Bangladesh a minimum share even during dry periods.
- The treaty is considered a landmark in bilateral water cooperation.

The Teesta River Dispute

The Teesta River, which originates in Sikkim and flows through West Bengal before entering Bangladesh, is extremely important for irrigating northwestern Bangladesh, particularly the Rangpur region. The dispute over Teesta dates back to 1951, during the India-East Pakistan period, when initial discussions were held for water sharing. The matter was later taken up seriously in 1983, when a temporary agreement gave Bangladesh 36% and India 39% of the dry season flow, with the rest unallocated.

In 2011, both countries were close to finalizing a long-term treaty during Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Dhaka. However, the signing was stalled at the last minute due to strong objections from West Bengal's Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee, who claimed that her state's farmers would be affected. As a result, no permanent agreement has been signed, and Bangladesh continues to suffer from reduced Teesta flows, particularly from December to April, which severely affects dry-season farming.

India proposed the Tipaimukh Dam project on the Barak River in Manipur in the early 2000s. Initially planned for flood control and irrigation, the project later shifted focus toward hydroelectric power generation. The Barak River flows into Bangladesh, where it splits into the Surma and Kushiyara rivers— important sources of water for the Sylhet region.

Bangladesh strongly protested, fearing reduced water flow, environmental harm, and disruption of livelihoods. Massive civic movements opposed the project in Bangladesh, and even within India's northeast. In 2005, India laid the foundation stone, but the plan stalled due to protests. Later, India assured Bangladesh that it would not implement any harmful plan and shifted the focus to smaller "run-of-the-river" hydroelectric projects. In 2013, India agreed to inform Bangladesh before any construction, but trust remains fragile.

India's National River Linking Project (NRLP), first proposed in 2002 and revived under the Modi government in 2015, plans to connect 37 rivers through 30 canals to manage drought and flood-prone areas. While the project mostly focuses on Indian rivers, parts of it aim to transfer water from the Brahmaputra and Ganges basins, which could reduce flows to Bangladesh.

Bangladesh expressed serious concern that this project, if implemented without consultation, could lower water availability, affect navigation routes, increase salinity, and harm agricultural production. While India has promised not to take any unilateral decision affecting the Himalayan component, formal agreements or guarantees are still pending.

There have also been disputes regarding smaller rivers like the Feni, Manu, Muhuri, and Khowai, mostly in the eastern and northeastern border areas. In 2019, India and Bangladesh signed an agreement allowing India to withdraw a limited amount of water from the Feni River for drinking purposes in Tripura. While the agreement was symbolic of cooperation, Bangladeshis worry that similar extractions from other small rivers could accumulate and harm local ecology.

To address these disputes, the two countries established the Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) in 1972. The JRC's purpose is to foster mutual cooperation in water management and planning. Initially, it played a useful role in coordinating efforts and data sharing. However, over time, its meetings became irregular and its influence declined. Despite dozens of meetings since its formation, no major agreement (except the 1996 Ganges Treaty) has been fully executed with lasting effect. There is a growing demand to empower the JRC with more authority and independence.

India and Bangladesh maintain one of the most dynamic and strategically significant bilateral relationships in South Asia. In recent years, their ties have deepened across sectors like trade, energy, infrastructure, and security cooperation. India is one of Bangladesh's largest trading partners, with bilateral trade crossing $10 billion. Both nations have invested heavily in connectivity through projects like cross-border rail services, inland waterways, and energy pipelines. Security collaboration has also strengthened, especially in managing cross-border insurgency, smuggling, and illegal migration. Cultural and educational exchanges—such as scholarships, language programs, and joint festivals—continue to reinforce people-to-people bonds. Despite ongoing challenges like the Teesta water-sharing deadlock and concerns in Bangladesh over India's Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and National Register of Citizens (NRC), diplomatic dialogue has generally helped manage tensions.

A major shift occurred in August 2024 when a violent uprising in Bangladesh, referred to as the 'Monsoon Revolution,' led to a political regime change and ended Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's fifteen-year rule. Political shifts in Dhaka have historically influenced India-Bangladesh relations, and Hasina's fall marks a significant transition. As one of New Delhi's closest allies, she played a vital role in ensuring strong cooperation on trade, connectivity, and counter-terrorism.

Bangladesh's landscape shifted dramatically following its February 2026 general elections, where the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) secured a sweeping supermajority and Tarique Rahman became Prime Minister. This new government permanently replaced the Awami League era, forcing a delicate recalibration of India-Bangladesh relations. While New Delhi signaled a diplomatic reset by congratulating the new administration and appointing a high-profile envoy to Dhaka, deep frictions persist over India sheltering ousted leader Sheikh Hasina. Moving forward, both nations must navigate complex geopolitical shifts, including Dhaka's deepening ties with China, alongside critical bilateral issues like border management and the renewal of the 1996 Ganges Water Sharing Treaty.

9.6 LET US SUM UP

The India-Bangladesh relationship is shaped by a shared history, geographical proximity, and mutual dependence. The Liberation of Bangladesh in 1971 is a defining moment in South Asian history where India played a pivotal role. The boundary disputes, especially regarding enclaves and adverse possessions, were long-standing issues that were peacefully resolved through the 2015 Land Boundary Agreement.However, water sharing remains a sensitive and unresolved issue, particularly in the case of the Teesta River. Despite diplomatic goodwill and mechanisms like the Ganga Water Treaty and Joint Rivers Commission, a lasting solution has not yet been achieved.Moving forward, the future of India-Bangladesh relations depends on sustained political will, mutual respect, and people-centric cooperation to resolve disputes and deepen ties.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Who was the Prime Minister of India when India intervened in the Bangladesh Liberation War?

Q2) On which date did Pakistan sign the Instrument of Surrender?

Q3) When did India attack Pakistan in the Bangladesh Liberation War?

Q4) What was the name of the Indian General who accepted Pakistan's surrender?

Q5) What is the total length of the India-Bangladesh border?

Q6) In which year was the Land Boundary Agreement ratified by India?

9.7 FURTHER READING

- Md. Shariful Islam – Fifty Years of Bangladesh-India Relations: Issues, Challenges and Possibilities
- Y. M. Bammi – India Bangladesh Relations: The Way Ahead
- Rup Kumar Barman – The Enclaves of the India-Bangladesh Border: History, Statelessness and Bilateral Relations

- Smruti S. Pattanaik – Four Decades of India-Bangladesh Relations: Historical (Hardcover)
- Pranjal Khare – Exploring the Complexities of India-Bangladesh Relations

Additonal:

1. Islam, M. S. Fifty Years of Bangladesh-India Relations: Issues, Challenges and Possibilities.
2. Bammi, Y. M. India Bangladesh Relations: The Way Ahead.
3. Barman, R. K. The Enclaves of the India-Bangladesh Border: History, Statelessness and Bilateral Relations.
4. Pattanaik, S. S. Four Decades of India-Bangladesh Relations: Historical Perspectives.
5. Khare, P. Exploring the Complexities of India-Bangladesh Relations.
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10. Intergovernmental Research and Policy Journal. (2023). Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971: Decisive Role of India in Mediation and Conflict Resolution.
11. Joint Rivers Commission, India-Bangladesh. Annual Reports and Meeting Summaries.
12. Government of Bangladesh. Foreign Affairs Briefing Documents on India Relations.
13. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (1972). India: Refugee Response during the 1971 Bangladesh Crisis.

9.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Indira Gandhi

Ans to Q No 2: 16th December 1971

Ans to Q No 3: 3rd December 1971

Ans to Q No 4: General Jagjit Singh Aurora

Ans to Q No 5: 4,096 km

Ans to Q No 6: 2015

9.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 50 words)

Q 1: On which date was the "Instrument of Surrender" signed in 1971, ending the Liberation War?

Q 2: Name the military operation launched by Pakistan on 25 March 1971 to crush the Bengali nationalist movement.

Q 3: Who signed the Ganga Water Sharing Treaty of 1996 on behalf of India?

Q 4: In which year was the Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) established?

Q 5: Which river originates in Sikkim and is the subject of an unresolved water-sharing dispute with Bangladesh?

B) Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 150 words)

Q 1: Why does Bangladesh hold strategic importance for India?

Q 2: Explain the main causes of the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971.

Q 3: What was the enclave problem (Chhitmahals) between India and Bangladesh, and how was it resolved in 2015?

Q 4: Describe the Farakka Barrage dispute and the main provisions of the 1996 Ganga Water Sharing Treaty.

Q 5: Why has the Teesta water-sharing treaty remained unsigned since 2011?

C) Long Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss the causes of the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971 and examine the role played by India in the liberation of Bangladesh.

Q 2: Examine the land boundary disputes between India and Bangladesh. How did the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement, the 2011 Protocol and the 2015 Agreement help resolve them?

Q 3: Write a note on the India-Bangladesh sea boundary dispute and explain how it was settled in 2014.

Q 4: Analyse the major water-sharing disputes between India and Bangladesh, with special reference to the Farakka Barrage, the Ganga Treaty and the Teesta River.

Q 5: Evaluate the current state of India-Bangladesh relations after the political changes of 2024 and 2026. What are the key challenges and opportunities ahead?

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UNIT 10: INDO-NEPAL RELATIONS

UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1 Learning Objectives

10.2 Introduction

10.3 Friendship Treaty

10.4 Treaty of Sagauli

10.5 Role of Nepal Monarchy and India-Nepal Relations

10.6 Let Us Sum Up

10.7 Further Reading

10.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

10.9 Model Questions

10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will be able to–

- Explain the historical background of Indo-Nepal relations.
- Discuss the Treaty of Friendship and its significance.
- Describe the treaty of Sagauli,
- Explain the role of the monarchy of Nepal in Indo-Nepal relations in different phases.

10.2 INTRODUCTION

India and Nepal share a long history of cultural relations since the ancient times. Both the countries, being neighbours have influenced each other through history, geography, religion, faith and linguistic affinity. The relationship, often described through the colloquialism “Roti-Beti Ka Rishta”, signifying the shared bonds of sustenance (Roti) and matrimony (Beti) between India and Nepal is an interesting aspect in international relations, due to an open border, deeply entangled civilizational roots, and a level of people-to-people connectivity. Nepal, a land-locked state situated between India and China has historically required a delicate balancing act, famously articulated by King Prithvi Narayan Shah as being a “yam between two boulders”. The structural framework of this relationship is defined by two important agreements- the Treaty of Sagauli in 1816, which demarcated the modern boundaries of the Nepalese state, and the Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1950, which institutionalized the “special relationship” between India and Nepal.

The Indo-Nepal relationship cannot be understood without first acknowledging the fundamental role of geography and shared mythology. Nepal shares an 1,850 km open border with five Indian states: Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, West Bengal, and Sikkim. This absorbent frontier has facilitated the unrestricted movement of people, goods, and cultural practices for a significantly long period. Economically and logistically, Nepal relies heavily on Indian ports and transit corridors for its international trade and essential supplies,

including medicine, petroleum and coal. The civilizational principles of both nations is based on the shared traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism. Sacred sites such as Pashupatinath in Kathmandu and Lumbini, the birthplace of Gautama Buddha, draw millions of Indian pilgrims, while Nepalese citizens regularly partake in the *Char DhamYatra* and visit the holy city of Kashi (Varanasi) in India. The *Ramayana* provides a foundational narrative for this bond, with the marriage of Lord Rama of Ayodhya to Princess Sita of Janakpur symbolizing the ancient origins of the "Roti-Beti" relationship. This cultural continuity is strengthened by linguistic similarities.The Nepali language originates from Sanskrit, and many border communities speak shared dialects such as Maithili, Bhojpuri, and Awadhi.

10.3 FRIENDSHIP TREATY

Following India's independence from British rule in 1947, the geopolitical environment in the Himalayas changed dramatically. The Communist revolution in China and the subsequent occupation of Tibet in 1950 created a new security perspective for both New Delhi and Kathmandu. The then-ruling Rana oligarchy in Nepal, fearing both Chinese expansionism and internal democratic movements, sought a strategic alliance with the newly independent Indian Republic. This led to the signing of the Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship on July 31, 1950. The treaty was signed to strengthen the spiritual ties and peaceful co-existence of both the countries since the ancient times.It remains the foundational document of bilateral relations, envisaging "everlasting peace and friendship" and mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Treaty had 10 articles and it was signed on behalf of India by Chandreshwar Prasad Narain Singh, Ambassador of India in Nepal and Mohun Shamser Jang Bahadur Rana, Maharaja, Prime Minister and Supreme Commander-in-Chief of Nepal on behalf of Nepal. The treaty ensured mutual recognition of sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence. Both the countries agreed to inform each other of any serious friction or misunderstanding with any neighbouring State likely to cause any breach in the friendly relations existing between the two Governments. The treaty resulted in the establishment of embassies of India in Nepal and vice versa with diplomatic privileges and immunities as granted by existing international law. Moreover, the two Governments agreed to appoint Consuls-General, Consuls, Vice-Consuls and other consular agents, who shall reside in towns, ports and other places in each other's territory as may be agreed to. Another important clause of the treaty granted Nepal the facility to import, from or through the territory of India, arms, ammunition or warlike material and equipment necessary for the security of Nepal.

According to the treaty, the Governments of India and Nepal agreed to grant, on reciprocal basis, to the nationals of one country in the territories of the other the same privileges in the matter of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, movement and other privileges of a similar nature. The most crucial aspects of the treaty are Articles 6 and 7, which establish a "national treatment" framework for the citizens of both nations.

- **Article 6:** Commits each government to give the nationals of the other "national treatment" regarding participation in industrial and economic development, including the grant of concessions and contracts.
- **Article 7:** Grants, on a reciprocal basis, the same privileges in the matter of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, and free movement of people.

These provisions effectively institutionalized the "Roti-Beti" relationship, allowing millions of Nepalese to live, work, and own property in India without any legal barriers. For India, the treaty served as a mechanism to consolidate its regional dominance and ensure that Nepal remained within its strategic orbit. For Nepal, it provided an economic support and a security during a period of transition.

Despite its benefits, the 1950 Treaty has been a source of significant political friction in Nepal since its inception. Nationalist and communist factions in Kathmandu often label it as "unequal," arguing that it was signed by a non-representative Rana regime and that it imposes Indian security hegemony over Nepal. The requirement for mutual consultation on security matters is seen by some as an infringement on Nepal's sovereign right to conduct its own foreign policy. In response to these concerns, both governments established an Eminent Persons Group (EPG) in 2016 to review the treaty and recommend changes to reflect contemporary realities, though the final report has yet to be officially accepted by either side.

10.4 TREATY OF SAGAULI

The relations between India and Nepal gained a political recognition in the early part of the 19th century. India practically was ruled by the British East India Company. Since 19th century the East India Company had maintained commercial relations with Nepal. The Company imported dyes, oil seedsand timber from Nepal. During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Gorkha Kingdom, following its unification under Prithvi Narayan Shah, pursued an aggressive policy of expansion. This brought the Gorkhalis into conflict with the British East India Company, which was consolidating its own control over the Indian plains. Soon the Company started considering Nepal as a threat as there was a possibility of an alliance between Nepal and the Sikhs. A British residency was established in Kathmandu to keep an eye on the government of Nepal. The policy makers of the Company thought that by expelling Nepal from Terirari region that danger could be averted. In 1814 a few company officials were killed in Nepal and the Governor General of Bengal Warren Hastings declared war on Nepal. The war continued for two years and it was characterized by the extreme bravery of the Gorkha forces in battles such as Nalapani, Jaithak, and Makwanpur, where they earned the lasting respect of the British military. However, the British superiority in manpower and heavy artillery eventually forced the Nepalese court to capitulatewhen the British force marched towards Kathmandu and the Nepalese agreed to sign a treaty. A draft was prepared at Sagauli in Bihar and the Treaty of Sagauli was signed on December 2, 1815, and ratified on March 4, 1816. It is often described in Nepalese historiography as an "unequal treaty" because it was signed under military

pressure and resulted in the loss of nearly one-third of Nepal's territory. Under the treaty's terms, Nepal had to surrender its western conquests, including the basins of the Gandaki and Karnali rivers and the regions of Garhwal and Kumaon, to the British. In the east, Nepal was forced to withdraw from Sikkim, which subsequently became a British protectorate.

The treaty established the Mahakali (Kali) River as the western boundary and the Mechi River as the eastern boundary. Article 5 of the treaty specifically states that the "Rajah of Nipal renounces for himself, his heirs, and successors, all claim to or connextion with the countries lying to the west of the River Kali". While these boundaries seemed clear at the time, the lack of precise geographical coordinates and the shifting nature of Himalayan rivers have led to modern-day disputes. The current conflict between the two countries over the Kalapani-Limpiyadhura-Lipulekh tri-junction originates from differing interpretations of the actual source of the Kali River. Similarly, the everchanging course of the Gandak River has created a territorial anomaly in the Susta region, where former Nepalese land now lies on the eastern bank of the river in India.

The Treaty of Sagauli also mandated that a British Resident be stationed in Kathmandu, marking the first time a Western representative was allowed to live permanently in the kingdom. This was a significant blow to the policy of isolation of the Gorkha rulers, but it also ensured that Nepal remained a sovereign buffer state rather than being fully colonized by the British. One of the most lasting impacts of the war was the British decision to recruit "Gurkhas" into their own army, recognizing their fighting spirit. This practice was later formalized and continued by both the British and Indian armies after 1947. The treaty also marked the beginning of Nepal's role as a buffer state between British India and China (Tibet). The monarchy learned that maintaining cordial relations with the dominant power in the south was essential for the survival of the regime.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Who was the Governor General of Bengal during the Anglo-Nepal War?

Q2) Which ruler unified the Gorkha kingdom?

Q3) What became the western boundary of Nepal according to the Treaty of Sagauli?

10.5 Role of Nepal Monarchy and India-Nepal Relations:

The institution of the monarchy was the primary driver of Nepal's foreign policy for much of the 20th century. The kings of Nepal approached the intricate dynamics with India through a series of planned tactical shifts, ranging from deep strategic reliance to assertive nationalism and equidistance.

King Tribhuvan:

The modern political history of Nepal began with the restoration of the Shah monarchy in 1951. For over a century, the kings had been figureheads under the autocratic Rana prime ministers. During the mid-twentieth century, there was a general demand from the

people to end the autocratic nature of the Rana regime and to establish a constitutional monarchy. The King, Maharaja TribhuvanNarain Shah was also in favour of a constitutional monarchy, but he was under the pressure of Rana Shamsher Jang Bahadur, who had support from the Western Powers. Under the circumstances, the king took shelter in the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu on November 6, 1950. The Rana made a failed attempt to capture the king and ultimately declared a minor Jainendra as the new king of Nepal. Maharaja Tribhuvan fled to New Delhi, where he was promised full support from India.Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, mediated the "Delhi Accord" of 1951 between the King, the Ranas, and the Nepali Congress. This agreement ended the Rana rule and introduced a constitutional monarchy. During Tribhuvan's reign, Nepal was extremely close to India; Indian advisors were sent to help reorganize the Nepalese administration and military, and India's ambassador enjoyed unprecedented access to the palace.

King Mahendra:

The Indo-Nepal relation shifted quite drastically under King Mahendra, the successor of Tribhuvan in 1955. This was due to Mahendra's personality and the growing power of China. Mahendra was a staunch supporter of nationalism who opined that Nepal's survival depended on maintaining its own identity and at the same time, diversifying its foreign relations. He first dismissed the democratically elected government under B.P. Koirala in 1960 and introduced the Rashtriya Panchayat System, which centralized power in the hands of the monarch. He also put his opponents in prison.

Mahendra wanted to get rid of India's influence over Nepal. He followed an anti-India policy. He felt that being a strong neighbour, India was trying to control Nepal's foreign policy. Therefore, he laid emphasis on:

1. **Diversification:** He established diplomatic ties with 45 countries, including China and the Soviet Union, to show that Nepal was an independent nation.
2. **Equidistance:** He sought to balance India's influence by moving closer to China. Mahendra sought economic assistance from China. In the 1960s, he allowed China to build the Kodari Road (Arniko Highway), connecting Kathmandu to Tibet, which was a strategic threat for India.
3. **Cultural Identity:** He promoted the Nepali language, established the Nepal Rastra Bank to replace the Indian currency in circulation, and nurtured a sense of "Nepali-ness" distinct from Indian identity.

In 1969, Mahendra further asserted independence by asking the Indian Military Mission and Indian personnel stationed at border posts to withdraw from Nepal—a major diplomatic brushoff that signaled the end of the "special relationship" era.

King Birendra:

The successor of Mahendra, King Birendra reigned from 1972 to 2001. He attempted to assert Nepal's neutrality and wanted to improve Indo-Nepal relations. His most significant foreign policy initiative was the proposal that Nepal be declared a "Zone of Peace" (ZoP). Introduced during his coronation in 1975, the proposal sought international recognition that Nepal would not be involved in regional conflicts and would remain a neutral buffer state.

While 116 countries, including China and the USA, supported the ZoP proposal, India refused to approve it. New Delhi viewed the proposal as an attempt by Nepal to unilaterally walk away from the security obligations of the 1950 Treaty. The tension reached a boiling point in 1988-1989 when Nepal purchased anti-aircraft guns from China. India responded with a 15-month economic blockade that crippled the Nepalese economy. The blockade acted as a catalyst for the 1990 "People's Movement," which forced King Birendra to accept a constitutional monarchy and multi-party democracy. However, it was during the reign of Birendra that India and Nepal became founder members of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC), formed in 1985. It strengthened the trade relations between both the countries.

King Gyanendra:

The monarchy's role ended abruptly under King Gyanendra, who seized absolute power in 2005 to quell the Maoist insurgency. His actions alienated the international community, including India, which suspended military support. In November 2005, with Indian mediation, the mainstream political parties and the Maoist rebels signed a "12-point understanding" in New Delhi. This historic agreement united all political forces against the "autocratic monarchy." The subsequent mass protests of 2006, popularly known as Jana Andolan II forced Gyanendra to reinstate parliament, and in 2008, the monarchy was abolished, transforming Nepal into a secular, federal democratic republic.

The post-monarchy era in Indo-Nepal relations has been marked by economic cooperation and frequent diplomatic crises. While India remains Nepal's largest trade partner and aid donor, the emergence of a multi-party democratic system has empowered nationalist sentiments and allowed for a greater role for third parties, most notably China. Perhaps the most significant rupture in recent relations occurred in 2015. After years of transition, Nepal promulgated its new constitution on September 20, 2015. India expressed concerns that the document marginalized the Madhesi and Tharu communities of the Terai region, who have strong cultural ties to India. When protests by Madhesi parties led to the obstruction of border checkpoints, Kathmandu accused India of imposing an "unofficial blockade".The 2015 blockade, occurring just months after a devastating earthquake, caused a humanitarian crisis. Hospitals ran out of life-saving medicines, and the acute shortage of fuel brought transport and industry to a standstill. India denied orchestrating the blockade, citing security concerns for its truck drivers, but the event severely damaged India's image in Nepal. For the first time, Nepal turned to China for emergency fuel supplies, and the government began actively seeking to reduce its dependence on India by joining China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2017.

China's presence in Nepal has grown greatly in the last decade. Under the framework of the BRI and the "Trans-Himalayan multi-dimensional Connectivity Network," China is investing in major infrastructure projects designed to turn Nepal from a "land-locked" to a "land-linked" country. These projects include a proposed cross-border railway from Keerung to Kathmandu, tunnels, hydroelectric dams, and the upgrading of north-south road corridors. India has observed these developments with strategic caution, fearing that China's presence in the Himalayas could undermine India's traditional security buffer.

India has responded by boosting its own investments in connectivity, such as the Motihari-Amlekhgunj petroleum pipeline and cross-border rail links, and by implementing policies that favor the purchase of electricity only from projects without Chinese involvement. The territorial legacies of the Treaty of Sagauli continue to haunt the relationship. In 2020, tensions flared when India inaugurated a new road to the Lipulekh Pass for Kailash Mansarovar pilgrims. Nepal responded by publishing a new official map that included Kalapani, Lipulekh, and Limpiyadhura—territories currently administered by India. This dispute is centered on the origin of the Kali River; Nepal argues the river originates at Limpiyadhura, while India identifies its source further east.

In the south, the Susta region remains disputed due to the eastward shifting of the Gandak (Narayani) River. Nepal maintains the boundary should remain at the river's 1816 course, while India claims the territory based on the river's current path through the principle of "accretion". These disputes have become potent instruments for political mobilization in Nepal's domestic politics, complicating diplomatic resolution. Water is perhaps Nepal's most valuable natural resource, and its management is a core component of the "special relationship." The four major river systems—the Kosi, Gandaki, Karnali, and Mahakali—provide the lifeblood for agriculture and hydropower in both countries. However, transboundary water governance has often been a source of animosity.

Early agreements such as the Kosi and Gandak treaties are viewed by many in Nepal as disadvantageous, providing more benefits to India in terms of flood control and irrigation than to the Nepalese farmers. The Mahakali Treaty of 1996, which includes the Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project, was supposed to usher in a new era of cooperation. However, more than 25 years later, the project remains stalled due to disagreements over the "equal entitlement" of water and the finalization of the project report.

Despite the friction, there has been progress in the energy sector. India has become a significant investor in projects like Arun-III, and in 2022, the two countries concluded a power-purchase deal for up to 10,000 MW over the next decade. However, India's "Procedure for Approval and Facilitating Import/Export (Cross Border) of Electricity" explicitly excludes electricity generated by projects with investment from countries that do not have a bilateral power cooperation agreement with India (implicitly China), which creates a significant hurdle for Nepal's efforts to attract diverse foreign investment.

The recruitment of Nepalese citizens into the Indian Army remains one of the most visible and symbolic aspects of the bilateral relationship. This tradition, dating back to 1815, was formalized after independence through the 1947 Tripartite Agreement between India, Nepal, and the UK. Today, over 32,000 Nepali Gorkhas serve in the Indian Army, and there are approximately 1.35 lakh ex-servicemen in Nepal who receive pensions from the Indian government. This "military diplomacy" is currently under strain due to the Indian government's "Agnipath" scheme, introduced in 2022. The scheme replaces permanent enlistment with a four-year contract, after which only 25% are retained. The Nepalese government has suspended Gorkha recruitment, arguing that the scheme's short-term nature violates the spirit of the 1947 agreement and fails to provide the long-term financial security that has traditionally sustained Gorkha families in Nepal. This suspension

represents a significant loss of a “diplomatic bridge” between the two nations and has potential economic consequences for the hill districts of Nepal.

The historical trajectory of Indo-Nepal relations, from the Treaty of Sagauli to the 1950 Treaty and the abolition of the monarchy, demonstrates a relationship that is fundamentally resilient but currently in need of structural modernization. The “Roti-Beti” bond remains a powerful social reality, but the political and strategic dimensions of the partnership are being reshaped by the “new normal” of a multi-party democracy in Kathmandu and a more assertive regional presence for China. Ultimately, the geographic reality of the Himalayas and the civilizational roots of the people will continue to bind India and Nepal together. However, the future of this partnership will depend on the ability of both nations to manage their differences with mutual sensitivity and to transform their shared geography into a corridor of economic prosperity and regional stability.

Nepal has witnessed significant political transformation in recent years, moving from prolonged coalition instability to a major regime change following the youth-led political upheaval in 2025. The resignation of Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli and the subsequent 2026 elections brought the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) and Balendra Shah to power, marking a decisive break from the recalibration of Indo-Nepal relations. India is seeking to strengthen bilateral cooperation through economic connectivity, hydropower, trade, defence and people-to-people ties, while Nepal continues to pursue a balanced foreign policy between India and China. The new political dispensation’s emphasis on economic development and regional connectivity could therefore provide fresh avenues for strengthening India-Nepal relations, while longstanding issues such as border disputes and Nepal’s strategic autonomy remain important challenges.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) On which date was the Treaty of Friendship signed?

Q2) Who signed the Treaty of Friendship on behalf of India?

Q3) How many articles did the Treaty of Friendship have?

Q4) Which monarch freed the monarchy of Nepal from the control of the Rana?

Q5) Which king asked the Indian Military Mission and Indian personnel stationed at border posts to withdraw from Nepal?

Q6) What is the full form of ZOP?

Q7) Which country has invested in the Trans-Himalayan Multi-dimensional Connectivity Network project in Nepal?

10.6 LET US SUM UP

- India and Nepal share a long history of cultural, geographical, religious and linguistic connection.

- The Treaty of Sagauli (1816) marked the beginning of political relations between the two countries in the modern era.
- The Friendship Treaty of 1950 brought a new aspect of Indo-Nepal relations after India attained independence.
- The ten articles of the Friendship Treaty strengthened the spiritual ties and peaceful co-existence of both the countries.
- The Treaty granted Nepal the use of Indian territory to import goods, thereby strengthening Nepal's economy.
- The Treaty of Sagauli, finalized in 1816 demarcated the Indo-Nepal border.
- Since the reestablishment of the monarchial power in Nepal, different kings have pursued different attitude towards India.
- King Tribhuvan was quite friendly towards India, whereas his successor, King Mahendra wanted to assert Nepal's position, undermining India's influence.
- The geographical factor and the cultural background have binded India and Nepal together. The existing differences can be resolved through mutual sensitivity in order to attain economic prosperity and regional stability.

10.7 FURTHER READING

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10.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: July 31, 1950

Ans to Q No 2: Chandreswar Prasad Narain Singh, Ambassador of India in Nepal

Ans to Q No 3: Ten

Ans to Q No 4: Warren Hastings

Ans to Q No 5: Prithvi Narayan Shah

Ans to Q No 6: The Mahakali (Kali) River

Ans to Q No 7: King Tribhuvan

Ans to Q No 8: King Mahendra

Ans to Q No 9: Zone of Peace

Ans to Q No 10: China

10.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 50 words)

Q 1: On what date was the Indo-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship signed?

Q 2: Which river was made the western boundary of Nepal under the Treaty of Sagauli?

Q 3: Who proposed the “Zone of Peace” (ZoP) for Nepal?

Q 4: Which Nepali king took shelter in the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu in November 1950?

Q 5: In which year was the monarchy abolished in Nepal?

B) Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 150 words)

Q 1: What is meant by “Roti-Beti Ka Rishta” in India-Nepal relations?

Q 2: Explain the significance of Articles 6 and 7 of the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship.

Q 3: Why is the Treaty of Sagauli described as an “unequal treaty” in Nepalese historiography?

Q 4: What was the Delhi Accord of 1951, and what role did India play in it?

Q 5: Why has the Agnipath scheme strained Gorkha recruitment in the Indian Army?

C) Long Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss the background, main provisions and significance of the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship. Why has it been criticised in Nepal?

Q 2: Examine the causes and consequences of the Anglo-Nepal War and the Treaty of Sagauli. How do its territorial legacies continue to affect India-Nepal relations?

Q 3: Analyse the role of the Nepalese monarchy (Tribhuvan, Mahendra, Birendra and Gyanendra) in shaping India-Nepal relations.

Q 4: Discuss the major irritants in India-Nepal relations after the abolition of the monarchy, including the 2015 blockade, border disputes and water-sharing issues.

Q 5: Evaluate the growing role of China in Nepal and its impact on India-Nepal relations. What are the prospects for the future?

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UNIT 11: INDIA AND SRI LANKA

UNIT STRUCTURE

11.1 Learning Objectives

11.2 Introduction

11.3 Tamil Problem and Treaties

11.4 LTTE Problems and Indo–Sri Lanka Accord, 1987

11.5 Post-Accord Complications

11.6 Let Us Sum Up

11.7 Further Reading

11.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

11.9 Model Questions

11.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- Explain the main issues in India–Sri Lanka relations, especially the Tamil question and ethnic conflict.
- Explore the background and significance of the 1987 Indo–Sri Lanka Accord.
- Discuss India's role and experience during the peacekeeping mission and its aftermath.
- Asses the long-term impact of the conflict on India's foreign policy.
- Analyse how India–Sri Lanka relations have evolved in the post-war and contemporary period.

11.2 INTRODUCTION

India and Sri Lanka share a long and close relationship that goes back to ancient times. The two countries are separated by the Palk Strait, a narrow stretch of water only about 22 miles wide, yet their historical and cultural ties bridge that distance easily. Sri Lanka, an island nation in the Indian Ocean, has always been of great importance to Indianot only because of its proximity, but also because of their deep cultural, religious, and economic connections.

Historically, there have been strong civilizational links between the two countries. Many Sri Lankans trace their ancestry to India, and religious traditions such as Buddhism, which originated in India, took firm root in Sri Lanka more than two thousand years ago. Buddhist monks from India, most notably Mahinda, the son of Emperor Ashoka,played a major role in spreading the teachings of the Buddha across the island. Likewise, cultural and artistic exchanges flourished through centuries of trade and migration across the Indian Ocean. These early connections laid the foundation for a bond that continues to shape relations even today.

After gaining independence from Britain on February 4, 1948, Sri Lanka (then known

as Ceylon) followed a path similar to India's. Both countries became members of the Commonwealth, and both supported principles of nonalignment in world affairs. Sri Lanka joined the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) at its founding in 1961 and, like India, continues to uphold the ideals of peaceful coexistence and international cooperation. It is also a member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), working alongside India to promote regional development and stability.Despite being smaller in size, Sri Lanka has always maintained an independent foreign policy. Since 1957, it has preferred to build balanced relationships with all major powers. For instance, Sri Lanka has engaged diplomatically with the United States, China, and Russia without aligning exclusively with any one of them. In 2009, it was invited to become a dialogue partner of the Shanghai Cooperation Council led by China and Russia. At the same time, it has cooperated with the United States through agreements like the Access and Cross Servicing Agreement (2007), which allowed American naval and air forces to use Sri Lankan ports and airfields in return for economic assistance.

Economically, Sri Lanka's strategic location in the Indian Ocean makes it one of the most important maritime nations in Asia. More than 45% of global trade passes close to its southern shores. Major infrastructure projects such as the Hambantota Harbor and Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport have been developed to transform Sri Lanka into a global commercial hub, connecting trade routes between Singapore and the Middle East. These developments are of great interest to India because they have implications not only for trade and investment, but also for regional security and balance of influence among global powers.

India's approach toward Sri Lanka has always been guided by the spirit of friendship and mutual respect. While smaller countries sometimes fear the dominance of their larger neighbors, India has consistently avoided acting as a hegemonic power. Its foreign policy in South Asia rests on peaceful coexistence, non-interference, and cooperative development. However, despite these cordial ties, the relationship has also faced challenges especially due to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka involving the Tamil population of Indian origin and the Sinhalese majority.In essence, the India-Sri Lanka relationship represents a blend of shared heritage and strategic interdependence. Culturally and historically, their connections are ancient and enduring; politically and economically, their interests are closely intertwined. Understanding this background is essential for examining later developments such as the Tamil ethnic problem, the rise of the LTTE, and the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of 1987, which profoundly shaped regional diplomacy in South Asia.

11.3 TAMIL PROBLEM AND TREATIES

Sri Lanka is often described as an ethno-religious mosaic, meaning that its society is made up of a mixture of ethnic and religious communities living together on one small island. However, this diversity, though culturally rich, has also been one of the main reasons for political tension and conflict in the country's modern history.

According to the 1981 Census, the Sinhalese community forms the overwhelming majority of the population, constituting about 74 percent (approximately 10.9 million people).

The Sri Lankan Tamils make up about 13 percent (around 1.9 million), while Indian Tamils, who were originally brought by the British from southern India to work on tea and coffee plantations in the central highlands, account for about 5.5 percent (819,000 people). The Muslims, who are also known as Moors, form about 7 percent of the population. Smaller communities include Burghers (of mixed European descent), Malays, and other minority groups such as the Veddas (the island's indigenous people), as well as small numbers of people of African and Chinese origin.

Religion in Sri Lanka is closely linked with ethnicity. Most Sinhalese are Buddhists, forming about 69 percent of the total population. The Tamils, both Sri Lankan and Indian, are mainly Hindus, making up around 15 percent. The Muslim population follows Islam, and in their case, ethnicity and religion are almost identical "Muslim" describes both their religious and ethnic identity. Together with the smaller Malay Muslim community, they make up about 7.5 percent of the people. Christians, who include Burghers and small numbers of Sinhalese and Tamils, account for another 7.6 percent.

This ethnic and religious diversity also has a strong regional pattern. The Tamil Hindus are concentrated mainly in the Northern Province, particularly around Jaffna, and also have a significant population in the Eastern Province, especially in districts like Batticaloa and Trincomalee. These areas form the historical and cultural heartland of the Tamil-speaking population, which is why later political demands for autonomy or separation such as the call for a separate state of Tamil Eelam were focused in these northern and eastern regions.

The Indian Tamils, who are the descendants of plantation workers brought by the British in the nineteenth century, are concentrated in the Central, Uva, and Sabaragamuwa Provinces, where the tea estates are located. Unlike the Sri Lankan Tamils of the north and east, these Indian Tamils are mainly a labouring community, and for a long time after independence, they were denied citizenship rights one of the earliest sources of political discrimination in the country. The Sinhalese Buddhists are found throughout the island but are most dominant in the southern, western, and central regions, where they form the political and cultural majority. The Muslim population is scattered across the island, though they have strong concentrations in the Eastern Province, often living in mixed communities alongside Tamils and Sinhalese. The Christians, due to centuries of European colonial influence, are more numerous in the coastal regions, especially, around Colombo, Negombo, and Galle where Portuguese, Dutch, and British missionary activities were most intense. The Malays, another small Muslim group, are largely settled around Colombo and the Western Province.

Thus, Sri Lanka's ethnic geography is not only diverse but also highly regionalized, with each group having historical and emotional attachments to specific parts of the island.

The roots of the Tamil problem in Sri Lanka lie deep in the island's ethnic composition, colonial legacy, and post-independence politics. Although the country was expected to become a model democracy after gaining independence from Britain in 1948, communal tensions between the Sinhalese majority and the Tamil minority gradually transformed Sri Lanka into a deeply divided society.

During the colonial period, the British had introduced administrative and economic systems that unintentionally encouraged ethnic divisions. The British relied heavily on English-educated Tamil elites for government service and education, which gave the Tamils disproportionate representation in bureaucracy and professions. The Sinhalese majority, who formed about 70% of the population, began to resent this advantage.

When Sri Lanka (then called Ceylon) achieved independence, the country inherited a democratic framework but not the social cohesion necessary to sustain it. The Donoughmore Constitution (1931-1946) had already introduced universal franchise, replacing earlier communal electorates that had allowed Tamils to act as a "second majority." The later Soulbury Constitution of 1946, which guided Sri Lanka at independence, included only limited safeguards for minorities under Article 29 (2)-which vaguely required the government to treat all communities impartially. In practice, this protection was soon ignored as Sinhalese-majoritarian politics began to dominate.

The Tamil population in Sri Lanka consisted of two distinct groups:Sri Lankan Tamils (Ceylon Tamils): Their ancestors had migrated from India centuries ago and settled mainly in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. They were largely middle class, well-educated, and formed a strong community with a deep sense of cultural identity.

Indian Tamils (Plantation Tamils): They were brought by the British in the 19th century from Tamil Nadu to work in the tea and coffee plantations of the central highlands. Many of them remained poor and uneducated. After independence, their citizenship status became a major political issue, as they were denied citizenship and voting rights, leaving hundreds of thousands of people stateless.

This citizenship issue soon became the first major irritant in India-Sri Lanka relations. In 1953, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Sri Lankan Prime Minister Sir John Kotelawala signed an agreement to resolve the matter, but its implementation was slow and incomplete. Later, the Sirimavo-Shastri Pact (1964) and Sirimavo-Gandhi Pact (1974) attempted to divide the stateless Tamils between the two countries-some to be repatriated to India and others to receive Sri Lankan citizenship-but many Tamils continued to live without legal status.

In the years immediately after independence, Sri Lanka appeared peaceful and democratic. Leaders like D.S. Senanayake initially assured justice and fair treatment to the Tamils. However, after his death in 1952, political competition led Sinhalese leaders to use ethnic and linguistic nationalism to gain popular support.

The turning point came in 1956, when S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike and his party, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), came to power on the slogan of "Sinhala Only." The Official Language Act (No. 33 of 1956) made Sinhala the sole official language of the country, replacing English. This law marginalized the Tamil-speaking population in education, administration, and employment. Peaceful Tamil protests were met with violent attacks by Sinhala mobs, first in Colombo and later across the country. These events marked the beginning of organized ethnic violence in post-independence Sri Lanka.

Although Bandaranaike signed the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact (1957) with

Tamil leader S.J.V. Chelvanayakam to grant limited autonomy to Tamil regions, he was forced to withdraw it due to opposition from Buddhist monks and Sinhalese nationalists. This reversal deeply hurt Tamil trust in the central government.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, ethnic divisions hardened further. The 1972 and 1978 Constitutions, both drafted by Sinhalese-majority governments, declared Sri Lanka a unitary state and gave Buddhism a "foremost place," further alienating minority communities. Educational reforms like the "standardization policy" made university admissions more difficult for Tamil students, reducing their representation in higher education and public service.

Frustrated with the lack of progress through peaceful political means, Tamil youth began to lose faith in traditional leaders. In the 1970s, several militant groups emerged, including the Tamil New Tigers (TNT)-which later became the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) under VelupillaiPrabhakaran. The LTTE aimed to establish a separate sovereign state, called Tamil Eelam, covering about 18,000 square kilometers in the Northern and Eastern provinces.

11.4 LTTE PROBLEMS AND INDO–SRI LANKA ACCORD, 1987

The rise of Tamil militancy in Sri Lanka was the outcome of long years of political exclusion, economic discrimination, and broken promises after independence in 1948. The Tamil community, which had expected equal citizenship in the new nation, gradually found itself marginalized. Successive governments introduced policies that favored the Sinhalese majority in education, language, and employment. The "Sinhala Only Act" of 1956, which made Sinhala the sole official language, was a turning point. It not only reduced Tamil participation in government services but also became a powerful symbol of ethnic inequality.

Attempts at reconciliation repeatedly failed. The Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact (1957) and the Dudley-Chelvanayakam Pact (1965), which promised regional autonomy, were either abandoned or violated under pressure from Sinhala nationalists. Violent anti-Tamil riots in 1958, 1977, and 1981 deepened the mistrust. By the 1970s, a growing number of Tamil youth lost faith in peaceful protest and parliamentary politics. They began to view armed struggle as the only path to safeguard their rights and identity.

Student movements such as the Tamil Students Movement and the Tamil New Tigers (TNT) expressed these frustrations through underground resistance. Their actions marked the early stage of Tamil militancy, which gradually evolved into a well-organized armed movement. The decisive moment came in July 1983, when an LTTE ambush killed 13 Sri Lankan soldiers. The incident triggered "Black July", a wave of anti-Tamil riots that left thousands dead and displaced nearly 100,000 Tamils to refugee camps in India. This tragedy radicalized an entire generation and transformed the ethnic problem into a civil war that would last for decades.

Formation of the LTTE

Amid growing militancy, one group gradually overshadowed all others-the Liberation

Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Founded on May 5, 1976, by VelupillaiPrabhakaran, a determined and secretive young leader from Jaffna, the LTTE evolved from his earlier organization, the Tamil New Tigers. Under his leadership, the LTTE absorbed or eliminated rival groups such as TELO (Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization) and EPRLF (Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front), emerging by the mid-1980s as the most dominant and feared Tamil militant force.Headquartered in the Wanni region, the LTTE developed a tightly centralized structure, with Prabhakaran as its Commander-in-Chief. He built a network of military, administrative, and intelligence units that functioned like a parallel state. Members were bound by an oath of absolute loyalty and underwent rigorous military and ideological training.

Objectives of the LTTE

The LTTE's ultimate goal was the creation of an independent Tamil homeland, Tamil Eelam, comprising the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka-areas where Tamil-speaking people were concentrated.

Its main objectives included:

- Secession from Sri Lanka to form a sovereign Tamil state.
- Protection of Tamil people from ethnic violence and state persecution.
- Establishment of a self-reliant Tamil administration reflecting Tamil culture, language, and identity.

Although the LTTE presented itself as a liberation movement, it rejected democratic politics and relied on violent methods-assassinations, bombings, and suicide attacks-to achieve its aims.

Ideology of the LTTE

The LTTE was secular and nationalist, rather than religious or Marxist in orientation. Its ideology combined uncompromising Tamil nationalism with strict militant discipline. The movement glorified martyrdom-every fighter carried a cyanide capsule to avoid capture, symbolizing the ultimate sacrifice for Tamil Eelam.

At its core, LTTE ideology rested on:

- Tamil self-determination - the right to govern and preserve their own culture.
- Charismatic leadership - Prabhakaran was treated with near-reverence, viewed as a savior of the Tamil people.
- Social reform and gender equality - women were trained and armed as equals in the struggle, reflecting a radical transformation of traditional gender roles.
- Moral discipline and secrecy - cadres were expected to live austere, loyal, and celibate lives, devoted entirely to the cause.

Through its propaganda, the LTTE cultivated a culture of sacrifice and heroism, portraying fallen fighters as martyrs and turning remembrance into a sacred ritual.

Tactics and Military Structure

The LTTE was distinct in its military sophistication and organizational discipline, unmatched by other insurgent groups in South Asia. At its peak, it commanded around

18,000 trained cadres and operated a structure resembling a conventional army, divided into specialized units:

- **Tigers (Ground Forces) -** engaged in direct combat and territorial defense.
- **Sea Tigers -** a naval unit led by Soosai, employing fast attack boats, explosive-laden vessels, and even mini-submarines to challenge the Sri Lankan Navy.
- **Air Tigers -** an aerial division under Charles Anthony, Prabhakaran's son, which executed limited air raids and reconnaissance missions.
- **Black Tigers -** an elite suicide commando unit responsible for high-profile assassinations, including those of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi (1991) and Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa (1993).
- **Women's Wing (Vituthalai Pulikal Makalir Munani) -** formed under Col. Vithusha, women made up nearly one-third of LTTE forces and participated equally in combat and intelligence operations.
- **Baby Brigade -** composed of child soldiers aged 9-18, trained under strict discipline and indoctrination in nationalist ideology.

The LTTE's operations blended guerrilla warfare with semi-conventional battles. It mastered the use of ambushes, landmines, and sabotage, while also fielding coordinated attacks on military bases, airports, and government installations.

By the early 1980s, India found itself drawn into the unfolding ethnic crisis in Sri Lanka, a conflict that had begun as a domestic issue but soon assumed regional dimensions. For India, Sri Lanka was not merely a neighbouring island-it was a maritime partner, a security concern, and a site of deep cultural and ethnic connections, especially with the Tamil population of southern India. Nearly 89 percent of India's trade moved by sea, and over 70 percent of its imports passed through the port of Colombo for bulk-breaking before being distributed to Indian ports. Such interdependence made Sri Lanka's stability critical for India's economic and strategic interests in the Indian Ocean. Historically, Sri Lanka's location had been coveted by colonial powers-the Portuguese, Dutch, and British-as a naval base and gateway to Indian trade routes. After independence, India remained acutely aware of the island's strategic vulnerability and the potential for external powers-first the USA during the Cold War, and later China and Pakistan-to gain a foothold there. The eruption of violence in July 1983, following an LTTE ambush that killed 13 Sri Lankan soldiers, shook India profoundly. The subsequent anti-Tamil riots, known as Black July, saw thousands of Tamils killed and displaced. Nearly a hundred thousand refugees crossed the Palk Strait into Tamil Nadu, transforming the conflict into a humanitarian and political crisis that India could no longer ignore. The emotional response in Tamil Nadu was immediate and intense. With over 50 million Tamils living in the Indian state, public sentiment and pressure from regional parties such as the DMK and AIADMK urged New Delhi to act decisively in defence of Sri Lankan Tamils.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's government faced the dual challenge of containing domestic outrage while managing its foreign policy priorities. Her approach was multipronged: India sought to act as a mediator between the Sri Lankan government and

Tamil representatives, while also exerting subtle pressure on Colombo. Indira persuaded President J.R. Jayewardene to open talks with Tamil leaders, resulting in the Annexure "C" proposals for devolution of power. India's external intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), simultaneously began offering limited training, funds, and arms to Tamil militant groups, hoping to build leverage and restrain Colombo from inviting unfriendly foreign powers into the region.

However, India's sympathy for the Tamil cause was viewed in Colombo as partial and intrusive. To many Sinhalese nationalists, New Delhi appeared less as a neutral mediator and more as a protector of Tamil militancy. As the conflict deepened, this perception hardened, and India's influence became both indispensable and suspect.

When Rajiv Gandhi assumed office after Indira Gandhi's assassination in 1984, he recalibrated India's Sri Lanka policy. Unlike his mother, who had engaged directly with Tamil groups, Rajiv adopted a more state-centric approach, aligning more closely with Colombo. He demanded that the Tamil militants cease hostilities before any negotiations could proceed-a position similar to the Sri Lankan government's own. He also authorized joint naval patrols in the Palk Strait to curb the movement of Tamil insurgents and arms between Tamil Nadu and northern Sri Lanka.

Yet, despite these efforts, Rajiv's strategy faltered. By 1985, peace talks in Thimphu collapsed, and both the Sri Lankan military and Tamil militants resumed large-scale hostilities. The humanitarian situation in the Jaffna Peninsula deteriorated rapidly. When Colombo imposed a blockade on Jaffna in 1987, leading to acute shortages of food and medicine, India intervened directly. After its attempts to send relief by ship were rebuffed, New Delhi launched Operation Poomalai-a daring air mission in which Indian Air Force planes dropped food parcels, or "bread bombs," over Jaffna.Although this act was justified on humanitarian grounds, it marked a turning point in India's engagement. To many observers, it symbolized India's open defiance of Sri Lanka's sovereignty; yet, domestically, it was seen as a moral stand against Tamil suffering. As one Sri Lankan minister remarked, India now had a "moral obligation" to help resolve the conflict it had entered so visibly.

Thus, humanitarian intervention became a prelude to formal diplomatic engagement. The growing military crisis, refugee influx, and regional instability prompted direct talks between Rajiv Gandhi and President Jayewardene. Their negotiations culminated in the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord on 29 July 1987-a watershed moment that would reshape the political and military landscape of the island and redefine India's role in South Asian regional security.

The Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord, signed in July 1987, represented an ambitious attempt to end the protracted ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka through bilateral engagement between India and Sri Lanka. Drafted to allow Indian intervention with the Sri Lankan government's consent, the Accord formally acknowledged Sri Lanka's sovereignty and unitary character while accommodating several demands of the Tamil population in the North and East. It sought to balance Sri Lankan territorial integrity with Tamil autonomy within a unified state structure, and to secure India's strategic and political influence in the island's affairs.

- **Main Features of the Accord**

  a. Recognition of Tamil Habitation and Cultural Identity:

  The Accord formally recognized the Northern and Eastern provinces as areas of historical habitation of Tamil-speaking peoples, affirming their distinct linguistic and cultural identity within Sri Lanka.

  b. Formation of a Unified Provincial Administration:

  The Northern and Eastern provinces were to be merged temporarily into a single administrative unit governed by one Provincial Council, one Governor, one Chief Minister, and one Board of Ministers.

  c. Referendum Clause:

  A referendum was to be held by 31 December 1988 to determine whether the Eastern Province would continue its merger with the Northern Province or remain a separate administrative entity. The President of Sri Lanka retained the right to postpone the referendum at his discretion.

  d. Ceasefire and Disarmament:

  A cessation of hostilities was to come into effect within 48 hours of signing the Accord. All Tamil militant groups were required to surrender their arms within 72 hours in the presence of representatives from the Indian and Sri Lankan Red Cross Societies.

  e. Withdrawal of Security Forces:

  The Sri Lankan Army and all paramilitary forces, including the Home Guards, were to withdraw to their barracks from the Northern and Eastern provinces to facilitate the peace process.

  f. Amnesty and Rehabilitation:

  The President of Sri Lanka was to grant general amnesty to all political prisoners and detainees held under emergency or anti-terror laws. Efforts were to be made to rehabilitate former militants, particularly Tamil youth, to reintegrate them into civil society, with India's cooperation.

  g. Linguistic Parity:

  The Accord recognized Sinhala, Tamil, and English as the official languages of Sri Lanka, reinforcing linguistic equality and minority rights.

  h. Emergency Provisions:

  The state of emergency in the Northern and Eastern provinces was to be lifted by 15 August 1987, restoring civil administration.

  i. Indian Peacekeeping Contingent:

  A clause authorized Sri Lanka to request military assistance from India to guarantee and enforce the cessation of hostilities, resulting in the deployment of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF).

Exchange of Letters (Security Clauses):

Supplementary letters between Rajiv Gandhi and J.R. Jayewardene defined the strategic conditions of cooperation:

- No foreign military or intelligence presence in Sri Lanka that might jeopardize Indo-Sri Lankan relations.
- Trincomalee Port and other installations would not be used for foreign military purposes contrary to India's interests.
- Trincomalee Oil Tank Farm to be restored and operated as a joint Indo-Sri Lankan venture.
- Foreign broadcasting organizations would only operate for civil and public purposes, not intelligence activities.
- India would deport Sri Lankan nationals engaged in terrorism or separatism within Indian territory.
- Joint consultative mechanisms were to be established to monitor implementation and review common security concerns.

Monitoring Mechanisms:

A Joint Indo-Sri Lankan Observer Group was to monitor the ceasefire, arms surrender, and implementation of the Accord.

Electoral Provisions:

Elections were to be held for the new Provincial Council of the merged North-East Province by December 1987, under Indian observation.

Implementation and Political Dynamics

Following the signing of the Accord, the North-East Provincial Council was established as per the agreed framework. Elections were held under the supervision of the Indian Peace Keeping Force. The Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) and the Eelam National Democratic Liberation Front (ENDLF) participated and later formed the provincial government, while the LTTE boycotted the polls, refusing to legitimize the Accord.

The electoral process was marred by irregularities and coercion. Although EPRLF secured 41 seats and ENDLF 12, these results were widely seen as unrepresentative, as the LTTE-the dominant Tamil group-had abstained. VaratharajaPerumal became Chief Minister but had to take his oath in Colombo due to the fragile security situation in Jaffna.

Meanwhile, Prabhakaran's disillusionment was evident. In interviews given shortly after the Accord, he declared that the LTTE had been excluded from the negotiation process and would not accept an agreement made "without consulting the Tamil people." His skepticism quickly materialized into hostility when disarmament operations began under Indian supervision.

In India, Parliament debated the Accord on 11 August 1987. Several members, including K.P. Unnikrishnan, criticized the government for rushing the process and failing to secure LTTE's participation. Tamil Nadu's population initially celebrated India's

intervention, perceiving it as a safeguard for ethnic Tamils; yet soon, dissatisfaction grew as the IPKF's mandate shifted from peacekeeping to armed enforcement.

Role and Operations of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF)

The Indian Peace Keeping Force, deployed on 4 August 1987, was initially welcomed with jubilation by the Tamil population in Jaffna. Indian troops were garlanded and hailed as liberators. However, the absence of clear operational directives from New Delhi led to confusion. The Indian Army prepared for various scenarios-from small-scale peacekeeping to a multi-division intervention-mirroring a "Cyprus-style partition" model if hostilities persisted.

When the LTTE refused full disarmament, sporadic clashes escalated into open conflict. The IPKF, originally conceived as a peacekeeping contingent, was drawn into counter-insurgency operations against the very group it had once covertly trained and supported. The confrontation was fierce: both sides suffered heavy losses, and India's mission turned politically and militarily untenable.

The death of Thileepan, a senior LTTE member who fasted unto death in September 1987, deepened tensions. The LTTE retaliated, leading to fierce urban warfare in Jaffna. Reports indicated hundreds of civilian casualties, further alienating the Tamil population from India. The IPKF's presence, initially framed as humanitarian, was now perceived as an occupation by many Sri Lankans-both Sinhalese and Tamil.

11.5 POST-ACCORD COMPLICATIONS

By 1988, political developments in Colombo reshaped the Accord's trajectory. President Jayewardene was succeeded by RanasinghePremadasa, who sought to assert Sri Lanka's sovereignty and demanded IPKF withdrawal. Negotiations with the LTTE reopened, sidelining India's role. Under growing domestic and international pressure, Prime Minister V.P. Singh ordered the IPKF's withdrawal in early 1990.

The episode marked a turning point in Indo-Sri Lankan relations. India's involvement had evolved from covert assistance to Tamil militants in the early 1980s to direct military intervention, only to culminate in diplomatic isolation and military loss. The mission's toll exceeded 1,200 Indian casualties, leaving scars on both the political establishment and the armed forces.

For Sri Lanka, the Accord deepened Sinhalese nationalist backlash. The JanathaVimukthiPeramuna (JVP) launched a violent insurgency against the government, portraying the Accord as evidence of "Indian domination." Simultaneously, Tamils viewed India's actions as a betrayal, since the IPKF's combat operations targeted their own population.

Following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 by LTTE operatives, India formally terminated all direct involvement in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict. Thereafter, New Delhi adopted a non-interventionist policy, focusing instead on diplomatic engagement and regional stability under the rubric of South Asian cooperation.

The Indo-Sri Lanka Accord represented an experiment in regional conflict management and an assertion of India's hegemonic responsibility in South Asia. While the agreement was comprehensive in design-offering constitutional devolution, linguistic parity, and security guarantees-its implementation was plagued by mutual mistrust, incomplete disarmament, and lack of consensus among stakeholders.

Strategically, the Accord's clauses-particularly the Exchange of Letters-ensured India's influence over Sri Lanka's foreign and defense policies, safeguarding against external powers' presence in the Indian Ocean. Yet politically, it exposed the limits of India's power projection when local actors resisted external arbitration.

Ultimately, the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord remains a case study in regional diplomacy, ethnic federalism, and peace enforcement gone awry. It reflected both the aspirations and contradictions of India's regional policy-seeking stability through intervention, but achieving only estrangement and unintended conflict.

The long-term implications of the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord were profound, reshaping both India's regional diplomacy and Sri Lanka's internal trajectory. The most consequential development was India's gradual shift towards a non-interventionist foreign policy after 1991. The experience in Sri Lanka exposed the dangers of direct military involvement in another state's internal conflict, even when motivated by peacekeeping objectives. India's loss of soldiers, the complex local dynamics, and the backlash from multiple sides-Sinhalese nationalists who viewed India as an aggressor and Tamil militants who saw betrayal-collectively dissuaded future interventions of this kind. This marked the beginning of a more cautious, diplomacy-centric approach in India's neighbourhood policy, emphasizing sovereignty, dialogue, and economic engagement over military presence.

The assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 by the LTTE became a defining moment. It not only brought an end to any residual sympathy for the Tamil cause in Indian political circles but also deeply altered India's perception of non-state armed groups. The tragedy transformed India's counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism posture, leading to the official proscription of the LTTE as a terrorist organisation under Indian law. In the years following the assassination, New Delhi began to reassess its strategic priorities in South Asia, moving from ethnic-based interventions to a broader regional stability framework guided by realism and multilateral cooperation.

Furthermore, the Tamil question in Sri Lanka lost its earlier momentum in Indian domestic politics after the early 1990s. Many Tamil political organisations in India, especially in Tamil Nadu, distanced themselves from the LTTE following Rajiv Gandhi's death. While humanitarian concern for Sri Lankan Tamils persisted, political endorsement of militant separatism waned. India's role henceforth focused on humanitarian and diplomatic channels, advocating for Tamil rights through dialogue rather than force.

The Civil War in Sri Lanka continued for nearly two decades after India's withdrawal, culminating in 2009 with the Sri Lankan government's decisive military victory over the LTTE. This final phase of the conflict was conducted without Indian military involvement, reflecting both the lessons India had drawn from its previous intervention and its new

emphasis on regional restraint. India's support remained largely diplomatic and developmental-providing post-war reconstruction aid, pushing for Tamil rehabilitation, and promoting reconciliation efforts under the United Nations framework.

From a strategic perspective, the Accord and its aftermath taught India critical lessons in regional diplomacy and peacekeeping. It underscored the limits of external intervention in ethnically charged domestic conflicts and the importance of anticipating local political realities before committing to large-scale operations. It also revealed that peace enforcement, without long-term political consensus or clear exit strategies, risks eroding both moral legitimacy and strategic credibility.

In the broader context of India's neighbourhood policy, the episode reinforced a more pragmatic, interest-based regionalism. Future Indian engagements in Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and the Maldives were marked by subtler diplomacy, economic cooperation, and soft-power influence, avoiding overt military entanglements. The Peace Accord thus became a cautionary benchmark-a reminder that even well-intentioned regional leadership requires careful calibration between moral commitment and geopolitical prudence.

In summary, while the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord of 1987 aimed to achieve reconciliation and stability, its long-term impact lay in reshaping India's strategic thinking. It propelled a shift from intervention to engagement, from direct control to calibrated influence, and from ethnic solidarity to state-centric diplomacy-principles that continue to guide India's regional policy well into the 21st century.

The end of Sri Lanka's twenty-six-year civil war in May 2009 marked a new era in Indo-Sri Lankan relations, shaped by reconstruction, diplomacy, and strategic recalibration. India was among the first countries to congratulate the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) on its military victory over the LTTE, viewing it as a moment of closure to a protracted regional conflict that had long tested India's foreign policy. Soon after, New Delhi dispatched a high-level delegation to Colombo on 23 May 2009, led by National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan and Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon. The visit conveyed India's dual message-acknowledging the end of armed conflict while urging Colombo to pursue a comprehensive political solution that addressed the root causes of Tamil separatism through meaningful devolution of power and reconciliation.

In June 2009, Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa's visit to India further cemented this phase of post-war engagement. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh reaffirmed India's support for post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation, announcing that India would assist in rebuilding war-affected areas, resettling displaced persons, and restoring normalcy in the northern and eastern provinces. India's role soon expanded beyond moral support into large-scale humanitarian and developmental assistance. It provided emergency relief, including medicines, temporary shelters, and demining operations, with an initial investment of about USD 110 million, followed by long-term development projects across multiple sectors.

Between 2010 and 2013, India extended over USD 1.5 billion in post-war financial assistance, making Sri Lanka one of its largest aid recipients in the region. Key initiatives

included a housing project of 50,000 homes for displaced Tamil families in the north and east under a full grant of USD 270 million, symbolizing India's people-centric approach. India also contributed to infrastructure renewal-rebuilding the Northern Railway Line from Omanthai to Pallai and Madawachchiya to Talaimannar under a credit line of USD 416.4 million, and investing in industrial and cultural projects such as the Duraiyappa Stadium, a cultural center in Jaffna, healthcare facilities in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu, and the revival of the Palmyra Development Board in Jaffna. Furthermore, the Sampur coal power project and Trincomalee energy cooperation reflected the strategic deepening of economic engagement alongside humanitarian aid. By 2010, India accounted for nearly 15% of Sri Lanka's foreign finance commitments, reaffirming its role as a critical partner in the island's recovery.

However, the post-war years also witnessed political turbulence in Indo-Sri Lankan relations, largely due to domestic pressures within India. The Tamil Nadu factor once again influenced New Delhi's foreign policy calculus. Tamil Nadu's Chief Minister, J. Jayalalithaa, along with other pro-LTTE parties such as the DMK and MDMK, accused the Sri Lankan government of war crimes and human rights violations during the final phase of the conflict. From 2012 to 2013, widespread protests erupted across Tamil Nadu-led by students, political parties, and activists-demanding international investigations into alleged atrocities and urging New Delhi to impose economic sanctions on Colombo. The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly even passed a resolution in 2013 calling for an embargo on Sri Lanka and action against those responsible for "genocide." The state-level agitation created diplomatic strain, forcing India's central government to balance its regional commitments with domestic sensitivities.

Anti-Sri Lankan sentiment in Tamil Nadu soon escalated into violence. Sri Lankan pilgrims and monks were attacked in Trichy and Chennai, the "Mihin Lanka" airline office was vandalized, and Sri Lankan sports teams were expelled from the state. These incidents compelled Colombo to issue travel advisories against visiting Tamil Nadu, highlighting the fraught intersection of domestic politics and foreign policy. Yet, despite these tensions, both governments maintained diplomatic engagement, seeking pragmatic cooperation while managing public anger.

Another recurring challenge was the Palk Strait fishing dispute, which intensified after the war. Tamil Nadu fishermen routinely crossed into Sri Lankan waters for trawling, a practice that depleted marine resources and often resulted in arrests by the Sri Lankan Navy. Colombo accused Indian trawlers of environmental damage and illegal poaching, while Tamil Nadu politicians accused the Sri Lankan Navy of harassment and violence. The issue became a bilateral irritant, particularly during the 2011 Tamil Nadu elections when political parties used it to mobilize coastal constituencies. High-level meetings, including the 17th SAARC Summit in Maldives, led to the establishment of a Joint Working Group on Fisheries, signaling both nations' intent to seek a durable diplomatic resolution. Closely linked to the fisheries dispute was the Kachchativu Island controversy. This tiny, uninhabited island, ceded by India to Sri Lanka under the 1974 Maritime Boundary Agreement-became a symbol of Tamil Nadu's grievances. Successive state governments,

especially under Jayalalithaa, demanded that India reclaim the island, arguing it was essential to Tamil fishermen's livelihoods. The Tamil Nadu Assembly passed resolutions in 2011, and former Chief Minister Karunanidhi even petitioned the Supreme Court to annul the 1974 pact. The issue, though legally settled, persisted as a political flashpoint in India's domestic discourse.

In the international sphere, the years 2012 and 2013 marked a delicate juncture in India's diplomatic stance. At the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva, India voted in favor of U.S.-sponsored resolutions urging Sri Lanka to ensure accountability for alleged war crimes and to uphold human rights during and after the war. While India proposed amendments to limit international interference and emphasize domestic reconciliation, its vote strained relations with Colombo. Sri Lankan leaders viewed India's stance as a departure from traditional solidarity within the South Asian regional bloc. Nevertheless, India justified its position as consistent with its principles of democracy, human rights, and justice for Tamil minorities-while reaffirming support for Sri Lanka's sovereignty and stability.

Despite these occasional tensions, India continued to play a pivotal role in Sri Lanka's post-war reconstruction. Its efforts centered on resettling approximately 300,000 displaced Tamils, promoting inclusive governance through devolution, and encouraging dialogue between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil National Alliance (TNA). India's aid also facilitated greater trade and connectivity, including the proposal of a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), the revival of ferry services between Rameswaram and Talaimannar, and the integration of power grids across the Palk Strait. This period saw growing interdependence between the two nations-India as Sri Lanka's largest trading partner with bilateral trade exceeding USD 5.5 billion in 2022, and Sri Lanka emerging as one of India's major development partners with grant and credit assistance surpassing USD 3.5 billion.

India's strategic significance in Sri Lanka further increased during the 2022 economic crisis, when the island nation faced severe debt, inflation, and fuel shortages. India extended credit lines and currency swaps worth nearly USD 4 billion, provided essential goods, and deferred trade liabilities. It was also the first country to offer a formal letter of support to the IMF for Sri Lanka's debt restructuring, enabling the initiation of bailout negotiations. These timely interventions not only alleviated humanitarian distress but also enhanced India's geopolitical leverage, reinforcing its image as a dependable regional power. In the wake of this goodwill, India secured tangible outcomes such as the Trincomalee oil tank farm development, the 100-megawatt Sampur power project, and the cancellation of a Chinese contract for a nearby micro-grid, reflecting Colombo's renewed sensitivity to India's strategic interests.

The importance of Sri Lanka for India cannot be overstated. Its strategic location in the Indian Ocean along vital sea lanes-through which nearly two-thirds of global oil shipments and half of world container traffic pass-makes it indispensable for India's maritime security calculus. Ports such as Hambantota and Trincomalee have the potential to become critical maritime hubs, heightening India's interest in countering external

influences, especially China's growing footprint. The geographical proximity between the two nations fosters both interdependence and vulnerability, making stability in Sri Lanka vital for India's own coastal security and regional peace. Yet, India remains wary of multiple challenges: the rising Chinese presence in Sri Lanka's infrastructure sector, the recurring fishing disputes, the exclusion of Tamils and Muslims from governance structures, and the slow implementation of the 13th Amendment, which promises devolution of power to Tamil-majority provinces. India also faces domestic political pressures, particularly from Tamil Nadu, to ensure that justice and reconciliation remain part of its diplomatic agenda toward Colombo.

Looking ahead, the way forward in Indo-Sri Lankan relations rests on balancing pragmatism with principle. India must continue to address its security concerns, particularly regarding Chinese naval activity and potential intelligence operations in Sri Lankan waters. Diplomatic finesse will be required to safeguard Indian investments, such as the Adani-backed renewable energy projects, from political fluctuations within Sri Lanka. A "wait and watch" strategy, emphasizing stability, mutual respect, and regional frameworks such as Neighbourhood First and SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region), offers the most sustainable path forward. Ultimately, the future of Indo-Sri Lankan relations lies in reinforcing economic cooperation, maritime security, and political inclusivity, ensuring that peace in the Palk Strait and the Indian Ocean translates into prosperity for both nations.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) What is the geographical feature that separates India and Sri Lanka?

Q2) Who played a key role in spreading Buddhism in Sri Lanka?

Q3) What was the main objective of the "Sinhala Only Act" of 1956?

Q4) Who founded the LTTE and in which year?

Q5) What triggered the 'Black July' riots in 1983?

Q6) What was the purpose of the Indo–Sri Lanka Accord of 1987?

Q7) Why did India send the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to Sri Lanka?

11.6 LET US SUM UP

- The Tamil issue in Sri Lanka originated from post-independence ethnic discrimination and linguistic nationalism.
- The marginalisation of Tamils led to the rise of militant movements demanding autonomy and later, separatism.
- The LTTE emerged as the most powerful militant group, known for its rigid ideology and violent tactics.
- India's involvement was shaped by humanitarian concern, domestic Tamil Nadu politics, and regional security interests.

- The 1987 Indo–Sri Lanka Accord aimed to ensure Tamil autonomy through devolution and to end the civil conflict.
- The deployment of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) led to direct conflict with the LTTE, straining bilateral relations.
- Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in 1991 by the LTTE marked a turning point, leading to India's policy of non-intervention.
- The Sri Lankan Civil War ended in 2009 with the military defeat of the LTTE, reshaping regional political dynamics.
- Post-war India–Sri Lanka relations have focused on reconstruction, reconciliation, and economic cooperation.
- India's experience in Sri Lanka highlighted lessons in peacekeeping, regional diplomacy, and the complexities of ethnic conflicts in South Asia.

11.7 FURTHER READING

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11.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: India and Sri Lanka are separated by the Palk Strait, a narrow stretch of water about 22 miles wide.

Ans to Q No 2: Mahinda, the son of Emperor Ashoka, played a major role in spreading Buddhism in Sri Lanka.

A**ns to Q No 3:** The Act made Sinhala the sole official language of Sri Lanka, marginalizing Tamil-speaking communities in administration and education.

Ans to Q No 4: The LTTE was founded by VelupillaiPrabhakaran in 1976.

Ans to Q No 5: The killing of 13 Sri Lankan soldiers by the LTTE triggered anti-Tamil riots known as Black July.

Ans to Q No 6: The Accord aimed to resolve the ethnic conflict by granting autonomy to Tamil regions while preserving Sri Lanka's unity.

Ans to Q No 7: India sent the IPKF to enforce the ceasefire, oversee disarmament of militants, and maintain peace under the 1987 Accord.

11.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 50 words)

Q 1: On what date was the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord signed?

Q 2: Who founded the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in 1976?

Q 3: What was the name of the Indian air mission that dropped food parcels over Jaffna in 1987?

Q 4: Which act of 1956 made Sinhala the sole official language of Sri Lanka?

Q 5: Which island was ceded by India to Sri Lanka under the 1974 Maritime Boundary Agreement?

B) Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 150 words)

Q 1: Who are the Indian Tamils in Sri Lanka, and why did their citizenship become an irritant in India-Sri Lanka relations?

Q 2: Why was the "Sinhala Only" Act of 1956 a turning point in the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka?

Q 3: Write a short note on Black July (1983) and its impact on India.

Q 4: Why did the LTTE boycott the elections held under the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord and oppose it?

Q 5: What is the Palk Strait fishing dispute, and why has it remained a bilateral irritant?

C) Long Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 300-500 words)

Q 1: Trace the roots of the Tamil problem in Sri Lanka, from the colonial period to the rise of Tamil militancy in the 1970s.

Q 2: Discuss the formation, objectives, ideology and military structure of the LTTE.

Q 3: Examine the background and main features of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of 1987. Why did India get involved in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict?

Q 4: Evaluate the role and failure of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF). What were the long-term impacts of the Accord on India's foreign policy?

Q 5: Discuss the evolution of India-Sri Lanka relations after the end of the civil war in 2009, with reference to reconstruction aid, the Tamil Nadu factor, and the 2022 economic crisis. What are the key challenges ahead?

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UNIT 12: INDO-CHINA RELATIONS

UNIT STRUCTURE

12.1 Learning Objectives

12.2 Introduction

12.3 Panchasheel Agreement

12.4 Sino-Indian War 1962- Causes and Aftermath

12.5 Let Us Sum Up

12.6 Further Reading

12.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

12.8 Model Questions

12.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will be able to–

- Explain the Panchasheel Agreement,
- Discuss the causes of the Sino Indian War of 1962,
- Explain the diplomatic relations between India and China after the War, and
- Explain the changing nature of Indo China relations.

12.2 INTRODUCTION

India and China, two of the world's oldest civilizations have been maintaining a cultural, religious and commercial connection since the ancient times. There is a rich history of commercial transactions between the two countries from the monarchical era. During the colonial period, both the countries were entangled in a race for geographical dominance in the frontier region. British imperial designs to become the master of South East Asia met the challenge of Chinese imperialism. In the middle of the twentieth century, both the countries underwent major transitions. India became an independent nation and in China, a republic was formed under the Communist Party. These events had a major impact in Asian geopolitics as the two nations were the most populous and largest nations of the continent. Being neighbours, India and China were expected to have cordial relation and there were early signs of such relations. However, due to some factors, the relation became far from cordial. Indo-China relations have affected modern day world politics as major world powers have their interest in the bilateral relations of both the countries.

12.3 PANCHASHEEL AGREEMENT

Indo-China relation was formally articulated in the 1954 Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet Region of China and India, an instrument that introduced the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, popularly known as the Panchasheel Agreement. While the agreement was initially intended to regularize trade and pilgrimage after the People's Republic of China asserted control over Tibet, its principles quickly

evolved into a universal doctrine for the post-colonial world, influencing the Bandung Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement. The preamble of the 1954 agreement contained the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, which were jointly formulated by the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and the Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai. The term "Panchasheel" was an Indian branding exercise,likely suggested by Ambassador K.M. Panikkar, that connected the diplomatic principles to the "Pancha Sila" or five moral precepts of Buddhism, thus giving the document an ancient, spiritual weight.

The principles were intended to serve as a code of conduct for international relations, emphasizing mutuality and equality over power politics.

- **Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty:** This principle aimed to establish clear boundaries of national jurisdiction, a vital goal given the un-demarcated nature of the frontier.
- **Mutual non-aggression:** A commitment to refrain from the use or threat of force, providing a framework for the peaceful resolution of disputes.
- **Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs:** This principle was particularly relevant to the status of Tibet and the various social and political systems of the two nations.
- **Equality and mutual benefit:** Focused on ensuring that economic and diplomatic interactions were conducted on an equal footing, preventing the exploitation common during the colonial era.
- **Peaceful co existence:** The overarching philosophy that nations with different political ideologies could inhabit the international arena without conflict.

Indian Prime Minister Nehru considered the Panchasheel as a moral doctrine intended to bind China to internationally accepted norms. He believed that as China was not yet a member of the United Nations, these principles would fill the gap and provide a baseline for responsible behaviour. Thus, Nehru professed moral diplomacy, where peace could be achieved through dialogue rather than military deterrence.

On the other hand, the People's Republic of China, under President Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, considered the principles as strategically advantageous. China sought to break out of Western-led isolation and project an image of peaceful intent to other Asian and African nations. By embracing Panchasheel, China could articulate a foreign policy that emphasized national sovereignty and non-interference, which the newly independent countries could connect with. China used these principlesto secure its borders while continuing to support communist movements elsewhere.

The Panchasheel principles quickly moved beyond the bilateral Sino-Indian relationship to become a foundational element of the global diplomatic identity. In April 1955, 29 Asian and African countries gathered in Bandung, Indonesia, for a historic conference co-sponsored by India, Indonesia, Burma, Pakistan, and Ceylon. The conference's stated aims were to promote Afro-Asian economic and cultural cooperation and to oppose colonialism in all its forms. At Bandung, Zhou Enlai played an important role and emphasized the principle of seeking common ground while abandoning differences.

He made it clear that China was not there to "market ideology" but to build unity against imperialist threats.

The Bandung Conference expanded the Five Principles into the "Ten Principles of International Peace and Cooperation" (the *Dasasila Bandung*). These ten principles integrated the core of Panchsaheel with specific references to human rights and the United Nations Charter. The "Bandung Spirit" and the expanded principles laid the groundwork for the formal establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in Belgrade in 1961. Leaders such as Nehru, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, and Ahmed Sukarno of Indonesia adopted Panchasheel as their blueprint for a third way in world politics, independent of the superpowers.

The 1954 Panchasheel Agreement was a landmark diplomatic event, where two newly independent Asian countries sought to redefine the international order on their own terms. While the idealism of the "Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai" era was crushed by the 1962 war, the principles themselves survived as a universal model for post-colonial diplomacy. The failure of the agreement was not a failure of its principles, but a failure of the two states to align their moral rhetoric with the practical realities of a disputed frontier.

12.4 SINO-INDIAN WAR 1962- CAUSES AND AFTERMATH

The 1962 Sino-Indian War is one of the most crucial conflicts in the modern history of Asia. It marked the transition from a period of solidarity to a state of geopolitical rivalry between the continent's two most populous nations. The conflict was seemingly a border war fought over isolated Himalayan territories, its origins can be traced back to colonial legacies, existential crises regarding sovereignty, failed high-level diplomacy, and the opportunistic exploitation of Cold War politics

Border Dispute:

The foundational cause of the 1962 conflict lies in the different interpretations of the frontiers inherited from the British rule. Unlike European nation-states, whose borders were often the result of centuries of consolidation and formal treaties, the Himalayan borders remained largely indeterminate zones where the actual boundary lines were blurred by extreme geography and a lack of administrative presence.

In the Western Sector, the dispute centered on the Aksai Chin, a high-altitude plateau situated between the Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir and the Chinese regions of Xinjiang and Tibet. The origins of the boundary dispute in this sector date back to the 19th-century expansion of the Sikh Empire and the subsequent establishment of British suzerainty over Kashmir. Following the 1834 conquest of Ladakh by the Dogra armies of Raja Gulab Singh, a treaty was signed with Tibet in 1842. This agreement committed both parties to respect "old, established frontiers," although these frontiers were never properly surveyed or defined.

The British boundary commissioners who arrived in 1846 following the defeat of the Sikhs fixed the southern end of the boundary at Pangong Lake but regarded the area north toward the Karakoram Pass as *terra incognita*. The Maharaja of Kashmir, however,

maintained a more expansive view of his domains. Relying on trade routes that connected Leh to Central Asia, the Maharaja treated the Kunlun Mountains as his northern boundary, establishing a fort at Shahidulla in 1864. In 1865, the British surveyor W.H. Johnson proposed a boundary that incorporated the entire Aksai Chin plateau into Kashmir. Subsequent proposals reflected the shifting strategic priorities of the British "Great Game" with Russia. The Macartney-Mac Donald Line of 1899, for instance, suggested a more southerly boundary that would have placed most of Aksai Chin under Chinese sovereignty. However, the Qing government never formally responded to this proposal, leaving the legal status of the region in a state of suspended ambiguity.

In the Eastern Sector, the dispute involved the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA), now the state of Arunachal Pradesh. The main point of disagreement was the McMahon Line, a 550-mile boundary drawn in 1914 during the Simla Convention between British India, Tibet, and the Republic of China. The British negotiator, Sir Henry McMahon, sought to establish a frontier along the highest watershed of the Himalayas to protect the Brahmaputra Valley from Chinese encroachment. While the Tibetan representatives accepted the line, the Chinese representative signed the draft but refused to sign the final convention. The Chinese government rejected the agreement, primarily because it disagreed with the internal boundaries between "Inner" and "Outer" Tibet, rather than the specific Indo-Tibetan border. Consequently, the British and Tibetans signed a bilateral accord, attaching a note that denied China any privileges under the treaty until it ratified the document. The People's Republic of China later argued that Tibet lacked the sovereignty to enter international treaties, making the McMahon Line an "illegal" colonial imposition. India, conversely, maintained that the line was the "firm and definite" border, sanctioned by both treaty and geographical usage.

Issue of Tibet:

While the border dispute was a cause for the conflict, the status of Tibet was the catalyst that transformed a territorial disagreement into a war. For the People's Republic of China, the "peaceful liberation" of Tibet in 1950 was a non-negotiable step toward restoring national sovereignty. For India, Tibet had historically served as an essential buffer state. The 1950 Chinese occupation of Tibet fundamentally altered the Himalayan geopolitics. For the first time, India and China shared a direct, militarized border. Indian Prime Minister Nehru initially tried to manage this transition through the 1954 "Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet Region of China and India". By conceding that Tibet was a region of China, Nehru abandoned the extraterritorial rights inherited from Britain, hoping to make peace with China through the "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" (Panchasheel). However, this endeavour was bound to fail. Chinese leaders viewed the agreement in instrumental terms, while India renounced its rights in Tibet, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) continued to support internal communist movements in India, and Mao Zedong thought that it would be contradictory to maintain peaceful coexistence while working on a world revolution.

The 1959 Tibetan Uprising was the decisive turning point in Indo-China relations. The forceful suppression of the revolt by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) led to the

flight of the 14th Dalai Lama, who was granted asylum in India on March 31, 1959. Chinese leadership, particularly Mao Zedong, interpreted the granting of asylum not as a humanitarian gesture, but as a hostile act of interference in China's domestic affairs. India viewed its actions as a defence of its territorial integrity and a response to humanitarian crises and China perceived it as an effort to undermine its control of Tibet. The presence of the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala became an issue that affected Chinese strategy, leading to a shift toward a more aggressive military posture along the border. As border skirmishes intensified in late 1959, the two countriess entered a period of diplomatic impasse. In a final attempt to resolve the dispute, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai visited New Delhi in April 1960 and proposed a "package deal" or "east-west swap". The proposal was for both countries to accept the *de facto* status quo, India would recognize Chinese sovereignty over the Western Sector (Aksai Chin), which China already controlled and where it had built a strategic highway, in exchange for China recognizing Indian sovereignty over the Eastern Sector (NEFA).

Nehru rejected this offer for internal political pressure. The failure of the 1960 summit was profound. Zhou Enlai left New Delhi convinced that India was not interested in a settlement and was instead seeking to use the border dispute to oppose China. Chinese internal notes from this period alleged that the Indian government had distorted Zhou's statements in press translations to portray his position as more uncompromising than it was, further eroding trust between the two capitals.

Forward Policy of India:

By late 1961, the Indian government adopted a strategy known as the "Forward Policy" after diplomatic attempts failed. This directive, issued on November 2, 1961, ordered the Indian Army to establish outposts in disputed territories to "reclaim" land occupied by China and to block further Chinese advances. Nehru and his intelligence chief, B.N. Mullik, believed that China was preoccupied with internal economic crises and external tensions with the United States over Taiwan. They assumed that China would not launch a full-scale war even if India established posts in territory China claimed, provided India did not use force to evict existing Chinese installations.

This policy was pursued despite warnings from the Indian Army's field commanders. General Daulat Singh, in charge of the Ladakh border, warned of the numerical superiority of the Chinese and the helplessness of the Indian forces due to a lack of supplies. By 1962, the Indian Army was short of 60,000 rifles, 700 anti-tank guns, and basic logistical infrastructure like radio sets and winter clothing.

The immediate tactical trigger for the war occurred at the Dhola Post in the Eastern Sector. Established in June 1962, the post was located on the southern bank of the Namka Chu river, just north of the line China defined as the McMahon Line but south of the Thag La Ridge, which India claimed was the true watershed boundary.

On September 8, 1962, approximately 60 Chinese soldiers descended from the Thag La Ridge and surrounded the Indian post. While no firing occurred for twelve days, the incident set in motion a chain of escalation. Nehru ordered the military to "evict" the

Chinese from the ridge in Operation Leghorn. On October 10, a patrol from the 9 Punjab regiment encountered an entrenched force of 1,000 Chinese soldiers. The resulting skirmish caused heavy casualties and convinced the Chinese leadership that India was committed to a military offensive.

The Sino-Indian War ended abruptly on 21 November, 1962 when China declared cease-fire. China proposed that both the countries should honour the line of actual control (LOC) by withdrawing the army 20 kilometres from the LOC. India refused the proposal and suggested to maintain the status quo as on 8 September, 1962. The future course of action was left to be decided by the statesmen of both the countries.

The immediate aftermath of the war was marked by shock and disillusionment in India. China's unilateral ceasefire and withdrawal in certain sectors created a temporary silence, but the absence of a negotiated settlement ensured that mistrust continued. Diplomatic exchanges became minimal between India and China, and the boundary question emerged as the central issue shaping all subsequent interactions.One of the most significant consequences of the war was the collapse of Panchsaheel as a guiding norm in Indo–China relations. The principles of peaceful coexistence, which had formed the moral foundation of India's China policy, were widely perceived as inadequate in the face of power politics.

The aftermath of the war witnessed militarisation of the India China border. The Indian state undertook extensive defence reforms, expanding the army, modernising equipment, and investing heavily in border infrastructure. Institutions such as the Border Roads Organisation and Indo-Tibetan Border Police assumed central roles in securing frontier regions.For China, the war consolidated territorial control and reinforced a deterrence-based approach towards India. The Himalayan frontier was transformed from a zone of limited interaction into a heavily securitised boundary, reflecting the deep strategic mistrust that defined post-war relations.

The Colombo Proposals:

The Colombo Proposals, a diplomatic initiative led by six non-aligned states sought to prevent escalation and restore stability in Indo–China relations by offering a neutral framework for disengagement and dialogue. On 10 December, 1962, six non-aligned countries, Sri Lanka, Burma, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia and Cambodia met in Colombo for a conference to find a solution the Sino-Indian dispute. The recommendations of the conference, called the Colombo Proposals were intimated to India and China. The proposals were that China should demilitarize the western sector by 10 kilometres, India should maintain its position in both the sectors, the area evacuated by China would be guarded by neutral posts chosen by the two countries and in the middle sector, the positions before 8 September should be maintained. An appeal for peaceful solution was also made. India accepted the proposals, but China did not. China put the demands that only China should maintain its civil posts in the demilitarised zone in the western sector and India would not have any right in the area and Indian troops must not move up to the McMahon Line in the eastern sector. India was not ready to fulfil these demands and hence, the Colombo Proposals were not implemented.

Following the 1962 war, diplomatic relations were effectively frozen. For fourteen years, the two nations did not exchange ambassadors, and the border remained a militarized zone of silence. During this period, the geopolitical landscape was further complicated by the deepening of the Sino-Soviet split and India's growing reliance on the Soviet Union, culminating in the 1971 Indo-Soviet Treaty. In May 1974, India conducted its first nuclear test, "Smiling Buddha," at the Pokhran site. While India characterized the test as a "Peaceful Nuclear Explosion" (PNE), the strategic reality was shaped by China's 1964 nuclear test. India did not sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) because India thought that the treaty was discriminatory, allowing five powers to retain weapons while denying others the right to defend themselves against nuclear neighbours. The 1974 test had a mixed impact on bilateral ties. While it increased Beijing's suspicion of New Delhi's regional ambitions, it also eventually contributed to a realization on both sides that a direct military conflict between nuclear-capable neighbours was unsustainable. By 1976, both nations agreed to restore ambassadorial representation, marking the beginning of a slow normalization process. Both the countries proceeded cautiously in the following decade. An important event during this period was Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's 1988 visit to China. He was the first Indian PM to visit China in 34 years. This visit established anexample that would direct the relationship for the next three decades.

The 1990s and early 2000s were the "golden age" of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). A series of landmark agreements were signed to ensure that even if the boundary was yet to be demarcated, it would remain peaceful. The 1993 Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity was the first to formalize the concept of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) as a de facto military boundary. Both sides committed to keeping their forces to a minimum level and strictly respecting the line, even where they disagreed on its alignment. The 1996 Agreement on Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field was even more specific. It introduced the "no-fire" protocol, which prohibited the use of firearms, hazardous chemicals, or blast operations within two kilometers of the LAC. It also established strict limits on large-scale military exercises.

In 2005, the two countries took a significant step by signing the "Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India-China Boundary Question". This agreement moved beyond mere management to provide a roadmap for a final settlement. A key clause of Article VII of the agreement stated that "the two sides shall safeguard due interests of their settled populations in the border areas". This was widely seen as a concession by China, potentially protecting India's claim to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh. This era also saw the establishment of the Special Representatives (SR) mechanism, where high-level envoys (usually the National Security Advisor in India and the Foreign Minister in China) were empowered to discuss the boundary from a political rather than just a technical perspective.

The course of Indo-China relations in the 1962 War period represents a full circle of distrust, trauma, diplomatic manoeuvre, occasional and limited violent confrontations, and rational stabilization. The Himalayan frontier remains the ultimate litmus test for the peaceful rise of two of the world's most significant civilizations.

The India-China border dispute remains one of the most persistent sources of tension in contemporary bilateral relations, primarily because the two countries have not reached a mutually accepted boundary or a commonly demarcated **Line of Actual Control (LAC).** Although a series of agreements since 1993 helped maintain relative peace, repeated military face-offs occurred at Depsang (2013), Chumar (2014), Doklam (2017) and Tawang (2022). The most serious confrontation occurred in eastern Ladakh in 2020, when military tensions at several points culminated in the violent Galwan Valley clash on 15-16 June, resulting in fatalities on both sides. Scholars argue that the Galwan crisis exposed the weakening of the earlier border-management framework and significantly eroded mutual trust. Subsequent negotiations and disengagement arrangements, including the October 2024 agreement on patrolling in Depsang and Demchok, have reduced some immediate tensions, but the fundamental boundary dispute remains unresolved.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Where is the Aksai Chin located?

Q2) When did the Dalai Lama flee to India?

Q3) When did China declare cease-fire?

Q4) What was the full name of the 1954 agreement between India and China?

Q5) Who suggested the term 'Panchasheel'?

Q6) The concept of Panchasheel was borrowed from which religion?

Q7) When was the Colombo Conference convened

Q8) For how many years, India and China did not exchange ambassadors after the War of 1962?

Q9) In which year did China conduct Nuclear test?

Q10) Who was the first Indian Prime Minister to visit China after Jawaharlal Nehru?

12.5 LET US SUM UP

After going through this Unit, we have learnt that-

- India and China share deep historical roots, shaped by cultural, religious and commercial contacts, but colonial-era boundary issues and changing political circumstances created tensions between the two countries.
- The Panchasheel Agreement of 1954 established the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, emphasising sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.
- The Sino-Indian War of 1962 was rooted in multiple factors, particularly unresolved border disputes, the issue of Tibet, the Tibetan uprising and the Dalai Lama's asylum in India, failed diplomatic negotiations, and India's Forward Policy.

- The 1962 war profoundly affected bilateral relations, resulting in mistrust, reduced diplomatic engagement and militarisation of the border. The Colombo Proposals were an attempt by non-aligned countries to facilitate a peaceful settlement, but they were not implemented.
- Indo-China relations gradually moved towards normalisation after 1962, beginning with the restoration of ambassadorial relations in 1976, followed by Rajiv Gandhi's 1988 visit and several Confidence Building Measures and boundary-related agreements during the 1990s and 2000s.

12.6 FURTHER READING

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- Pollock, Sheldon, and Benjamin Elman (2018) *What China and India Once Were: The Pasts That May Shape the Global Future*. Columbia University Press.
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12.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet Region of China and India

Ans to Q No 2: K. M. Panikkar

Ans to Q No 3: Buddhism

Ans to Q No 4: Between Ladakh in India and Xinjiang and Tibet

Ans to Q No 5: March, 1959

Ans to Q No 6: 21 November, 1962

Ans to Q No 7: 10 December,1962

Ans to Q No 8: 14 Years

Ans to Q No 9: 1964

Ans to Q No 10: Rajiv Gandhi

12.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 50 words)

Q 1: Who jointly formulated the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (Panchasheel)?

Q 2: On what date was the 14th Dalai Lama granted asylum in India?

Q 3: What was the boundary drawn in 1914 during the Simla Convention called?

Q 4: On which date did China declare a unilateral ceasefire in the 1962 war?

Q 5: Which 1993 agreement first formalised the concept of the Line of Actual Control (LAC)?

B) Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 150 words)

Q 1: List the Five Principles of Panchasheel and explain why Nehru and China viewed the agreement differently.

Q 2: What was the Forward Policy of India (1961), and how did it contribute to the 1962 war?

Q 3: Explain the dispute over the Western Sector (Aksai Chin) between India and China.

Q 4: What were the Colombo Proposals, and why were they not implemented?

Q 5: Write a short note on the Galwan Valley clash of 2020 and its impact on India-China relations.

C) Long Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss the Panchasheel Agreement of 1954 and its significance. How did it influence the Bandung Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement?

Q 2: Examine the border dispute in the Western and Eastern Sectors (Aksai Chin and the McMahon Line) as a cause of the 1962 Sino-Indian War.

Q 3: Analyse the role of the Tibet issue, including the 1959 uprising and the Dalai Lama's asylum, in deteriorating India-China relations.

Q 4: Discuss the causes, events and aftermath of the 1962 Sino-Indian War. How did it change India's defence policy and its relations with China?

Q 5: Trace the normalisation of India-China relations after 1962, with reference to the Confidence Building Measures of 1993 and 1996, the 2005 Political Parameters agreement, and the border tensions from 2013 to 2024.

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UNIT 13: MULTILATERALISM AND INDIA

UNIT STRUCTURE

13.1 Learning Objectives

13.2 Introduction

13.3 United Nations Organization (UNO)

13.4 South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

13.5 BRICS

13.6 G20

13.7 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

13.8 Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

13.9 Let Us Sum Up

13.10 Further Reading

13.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

13.12 Model Questions

13.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain India's role and contributions to multilateral organizations,
- Discuss India's strategic engagement with International organisations- UNO, SAARC, BRICS, G20, ASEAN, and SCO,
- Assess the impact of India's multilateral diplomacy on its global standing,
- Analyse the challenges and opportunities India faces in multilateral frameworks.

13.2 INTRODUCTION

Multilateralism is fundamental to India's foreign policy as a growing global power with a long history of strategic autonomy and non-alignment India does not adhere to a single model of multilateralism; instead, it adopts a layered and adaptive approach, engaging with different international institutions based on changing global dynamics and its own strategic interests.At the normative level, India's multilateralism is rooted in principles such as equality, non-domination, and the democratization of global governance. Drawing from its postcolonial experience, India consistently advocates for a more inclusive international order that gives greater voice to developing countries. A key feature of this policy is the emphasis on strategic autonomy. India engages in multiple multilateral platforms without binding itself to any single bloc or alliance, thereby preserving its decision-making independence. This "variegated multilateralism" allows India to balance its national interests with its global responsibilities, while also responding to domestic developmental priorities. India's engagement with multilateralism has developed through distinct historical phases shaped by changing global and domestic contexts. In the early post-independence period, India adopted an idealist and normative approach rooted in anti-colonialism, peaceful

coexistence, and leadership among newly independent nations. It actively supported institutions like the United Nations and played a prominent role in the Non-Aligned Movement, emphasizing sovereignty, decolonization, and global equity.In the post-Cold War phase, India's strategy became more pragmatic and economically oriented. Faced with globalization and domestic economic reforms, it began to engage more actively with global economic institutions such as the World Trade Organization, while also seeking stronger integration into the global economy. This period marked a shift from purely ideological commitments to interest-driven multilateral participation.In the 21st century, India's multilateralism has taken on a more assertive and diversified character. It participates in a wide range of regional and global forums, including BRICS, G20, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, using these platforms to enhance its global influence, promote the interests of the Global South, and push for reforms in global governance institutions such as the United Nations system.

This Unit examines India's participation in these organisations, its strategic objectives, and how its multilateral relations have impacted its influence both at the local and global levels.

13.3 UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION (UNO)

The United Nations, which was founded in 1945, is the leading international forum for multilateral cooperation on matters like human rights, development, security, and peace. As a founding member, India has made a substantial contribution to the goals of the UN, coordinating its involvement with its foreign policy tenets of global equity and non-alignment. In the 1940s and 1950s, India supported independence movements in Asia and Africa and pushed for decolonization, which marked the beginning of its involvement with the UN. With leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru highlighting the significance of sovereignty for recently independent nations, India played a crucial role in defining the UN's agenda on self-determination. With more than 250,000 troops deployed to 49 missions since 1950, including operations in Congo, South Sudan, and Mali, India has made a substantial contribution to UN peacekeeping. Indian peacekeepers are known for their professionalism, dedication and commitment towards humanitarian postulates.

Additionally, India has been an outspoken supporter of UN reforms, especially the UN Security Council's (UNSC) extension to include permanent representation for poor countries. India, one of the G4 (India, Brazil, Germany, and Japan), is advocating for a permanent seat on the UNSC, claiming that the current setup is a holdover from the post-World War II era. During its most recent non-permanent tenure on the UNSC (2021–2022), India chaired important committees and promoted causes like maritime security and counterterrorism.

India has supported a number of UN programs, such as the International Solar Alliance (ISA), which it co-founded with France, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and climate action under the Paris Agreement. With its main office in India, the ISA supports renewable energy and supports the UN's climate goals. India's proactive approach is demonstrated by its leadership in the UN General Assembly and its involvement in the

crafting of resolutions on topics like global health and nuclear disarmament.

Navigating big power rivalry at the UN, especially those between the US and China, presents difficulties for India. Permanent members are opposed to its campaign for UNSC reform because they are concerned about weakening their veto power. Furthermore, India's stances on matters such as human rights and peacekeeping missions occasionally draw criticism, necessitating careful diplomatic balancing.

LET US KNOW

India has gained international recognition for its contributions to UN peacekeeping. For example, in difficult circumstances, Indian troops delivered humanitarian relief and protected civilians in South Sudan, helping to stabilize combat areas.

13.4 SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION (SAARC)

The South Asian countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, the Maldives, and Afghanistan are members of SAARC, which was founded in 1985 with the goal of fostering regional cooperation. India, the most prominent and populated member, is crucial in determining SAARC's agenda, but it confronts difficulties because of regional conflicts.

In order to improve transmission and crisis management in the area, India has spearheaded crucial initiatives such as the SAARC Satellite, which was launched in 2017. Additionally, it has backed connectivity initiatives like the BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal) program and encouraged economic integration through the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA). India's dedication to regional development is demonstrated by its contributions to the SAARC Development Fund and disaster response systems.

Since 2016, tensions between India and Pakistan have stopped summits, impeding SAARC's progress. Following terrorist strikes connected to Pakistan, India and other nations boycotted the 19th SAARC Summit, which was supposed to take place in Islamabad in 2016. In order to avoid bilateral conflicts, India has now given priority to sub-regional organizations such as BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation). SAARC's effectiveness is further limited by problems including political mistrust, trade restrictions, and cross-border terrorism.

India is still supporting SAARC's comeback by emphasizing economic cooperation and partnership, cultural diplomacy, and people-to-people connectivity. But in the face of SAARC's stagnation, its emphasis on alternative platforms like BIMSTEC points to a practical approach to regional collaboration.

LET US KNOW

India's technological supremacy in the region is demonstrated by the SAARC Satellite, also called the South Asia Satellite, which offers member states communication and meteorological services.

13.5 BRICS

In 2009, BRICS-Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, arose as a forum for developing nations to collaborate on international political and economic concerns. India sees BRICS as a way to strengthen the voice of the Global South and as a counterbalance to Western-dominated organizations.

India has played a significant role in forming the institutional framework of the BRICS, especially with the 2014 founding of the Shanghai-based New Development Bank (NDB). The NDB provides funding for sustainable development initiatives, and India has obtained sizeable loans for renewable energy and infrastructure. Particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, India's leadership during its BRICS chairmanship in 2016 and 2021 concentrated on topics like digital inclusion, counterterrorism, and health cooperation.

India can work with superpowers like China and Russia through BRICS while retaining its strategic independence. It offers a forum for discussing global issues like trade disparities, climate change, and changes at organizations like the World Bank and IMF. India wants to lessen its reliance on the US dollar, which is why it is pushing for intra-BRICS commerce in local currencies.

India-China tensions, particularly after the 2020 Galwan clash, pose challenges to BRICS cooperation. Balancing its strategic rivalry with China while maintaining BRICS unity requires deft diplomacy. Additionally, differing priorities among members-Brazil's focus on agriculture, Russia's on energy, and China's on global dominance-complicate consensus-building.

LET US KNOW

A renewable energy project was financed by the NDB's first loan to India in 2016, indicating the country's dedication to sustainable development within the BRICS framework.

13.6 G 20

The European Union and 19 other nations make up the G20, a leading platform for global economic governance that tackles issues including trade, finance, and climate change. India is now a major G20 player due to its expanding economic influence.

In 2023, India hosted the G20 Summit with the theme "One Earth, One Family, One Future," highlighting inclusive growth, digital transformation, and sustainable development.

India's reputation as a Global South leader was enhanced in 2023 when it pushed for the African Union to become a permanent member of the G20. Additionally, India has advocated for coordinated responses to crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2008 financial meltdown, as well as reforms in international financial institutions.

Women-led development, digital public infrastructure (such as UPI), and climate finance are all on India's G20 agenda. Its dedication to global resilience is demonstrated by its leadership in the G20's Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group and programs like the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI). India's economy is expected to develop to become the third largest in the world by 2030, which increases its clout in G20 negotiations.

It is still difficult to steer US-China contestations and harmonize the various G20 interests and objectives. Developed countries who are hesitant to give funding are opposing India's push for climate finance. Furthermore, India must strike a balance between its international obligations and its home interests due to issues like economic inequality and infrastructure deficiencies.

LET US KNOW

India demonstrated its technical innovations and their worldwide relevance during the 2023 G20 Summit by promoting UPI as a paradigm for digital public infrastructure.

13.7 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), comprising of ten countries namely, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam in Southeast Asia, is crucial of India's Act East Policy, which seeks to strengthen relations with the Indo-Pacific area. India's economic and strategic interests in a region vital to international trade and security are reflected in its engagement with ASEAN.

In 1996, India joined ASEAN as a full dialogue partner or interlocutor, participating in the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN-India Summit. Trade has increased after the 2009 signing of the India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which reached $80 billion in 2022. India encourages connectivity through initiatives like the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and backs ASEAN's centrality in Indo-Pacific frameworks like the Quad.

Despite China's assertiveness in the South China Sea, regional security is strengthened by India's maritime cooperation with ASEAN, which includes joint naval exercises and the Delhi Dialogue. Initiatives like the renovation of temples in Vietnam and Cambodia strengthen cultural links that are based on a common Buddhist and Hindu past. ASEAN is emphasized as a gateway to Asia-Pacific integration in India's Look East/ Act East Policy.

India's economic influence is at risk due to China's dominance in ASEAN's finance and trade environment. Regional collaboration is complicated by Myanmar's political unrest

and the divergent agendas of ASEAN members. In order to compete with China, India must also improve its economic standing and address trade imbalances.

LET US KNOW

India's dedication to conserving our common cultural heritage is demonstrated by its renovation of the Angkor Wat temple in Cambodia with ASEAN cooperation.

13.8 SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANISATION (SCO)

China, Russia, India, Pakistan, and Central Asian nations make up the SCO, a Eurasian political, economic, and security group that was established in 2001. In order to combat terrorism and increase its influence in Central Asia, India became a full member in 2017.

In order to fight terrorism and extremism, India shares intelligence with the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS). SCO summits on connectivity, trade, and cross-cultural interactions have been held there, including virtually in 2023. An alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative, India's Chabahar Port project in Iran supports the SCO's objective of improving regional connectivity.

India gains access to Central Asian energy markets and resources through the SCO, which is crucial for both its economic growth and energy security. Additionally, it enables India to fortify its relations with Russia and counterbalance China's influence in Eurasia. India strengthens its security cooperation with member states by taking part in SCO military drills.

The SCO's unity is weakened by the tensions between India and Pakistan and the competition between India and China, particularly after Galwan. Since the majority of SCO members support China's Belt and Road Initiative, India's reluctance to do so causes friction. It takes deliberate manoeuvring to bring its non-aligned attitude into line with the SCO's security-focused agenda.

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) is an informal strategic grouping comprising India, the United States, Japan and Australia, aimed at promoting a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific. The grouping originated from cooperation among the four countries following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, but its first formal meeting took place in 2007. After becoming inactive for several years, the Quad was revived in 2017 in response to the changing strategic environment in the Indo-Pacific. Its significance has increased with the growing strategic and economic influence of China and concerns regarding freedom of navigation, maritime security and unilateral attempts to alter the regional status quo. However, the Quad is not a formal military alliance or an "Asian NATO"; its members retain their independent foreign and security policies.

The Quad's agenda has gradually expanded beyond traditional security concerns. It promotes maritime security, freedom of navigation, supply-chain resilience, critical and emerging technologies, cybersecurity, health security, climate action, infrastructure and

connectivity, counter-terrorism, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR). The grouping also emphasizes respect for international law, sovereignty, territorial integrity and peaceful settlement of disputes. For India, the Quad is particularly important as it strengthens its strategic engagement with the Indo-Pacific while allowing New Delhi to pursue its policy of strategic autonomy. At the same time, the Quad seeks to reassure smaller Indo-Pacific states that its objective is not domination but the creation of a stable regional order in which countries can exercise their strategic choices without coercion.

LET US KNOW

By giving Central Asian nations access to the Indian Ocean without going through Pakistan, India's Chabahar Port, which was built in collaboration with Iran, improves SCO connectivity.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) When was the last time India served as a non-permanent member of the UNSC?

Q2) Identify one UN-sponsored project that India co-founded.

Q3) What does SAFTA stands for?

Q4) What caused the cancellation of the 19th SAARC Summit?

Q5) Where is the headquarters of the New Development Bank located?

Q6) What will be the main focus of India's 2021 BRICS chairmanship?

Q7) What was the "subject" of the G20 Summit in India in 2023?

Q8) Identify one G20 effort that India is spearheading.

Q9) When did India ASEAN as a full dialogue partner?

Q10) Identify one India and ASEAN connectivity initiative.

Q11) When did India join the SCO as a full-fledged member?

Q12) What is the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the SCO focused on?

13.9 LET US SUM UP

- India seeks to emerge as a major global power while promoting peace and prosperity through active engagement with international institutions and multilateral diplomacy.
- It advocates for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council and participates in forums like SAARC, BIMSTEC, and ASEAN to strengthen regional cooperation and connectivity.

- Platforms such as BRICS, G20, and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation enhance India's global role by promoting the Global South, economic cooperation, climate action, and counterterrorism efforts.
- Despite challenges like regional tensions, geopolitical rivalries, and economic constraints, India balances strategic autonomy with global responsibilities, contributing to a more multipolar world order.

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13.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: 2021-2022

Ans to Q No 2: International Solar Alliance (ISA)

Ans to Q No 3: South Asian Free Trade Area

Ans to Q No 4: Cancelled due to India and other members' boycott following terrorist attacks linked to Pakistan.

Ans to Q No 5: Shanghai

Ans to Q No 6: Digital inclusion

Ans to Q No 7: One Earth, One Family, One Future

Ans to Q No 8: Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)

Ans to Q No 9: 1996

Ans to Q No 10: India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway

Ans to Q No 11: 2017

Ans to Q No 12: Combating terrorism and extremism

13.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 50 words)

Q 1: Which four countries form the G4 that seeks permanent seats on the UN Security Council?

Q 2: In which year was the SAARC Satellite launched?

Q 3: Which bank was founded by BRICS in 2014, and where is it headquartered?

Q 4: What was the theme of India's 2023 G20 Summit?

Q 5: In which year did India become a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)?

B) Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 150 words)

Q 1: Describe India's contribution to UN peacekeeping.

Q 2: Why has SAARC become largely inactive since 2016, and how has India responded?

Q 3: Explain India's objectives in BRICS and the challenges it faces there.

Q 4: What was India's role in the 2023 G20 Summit?

Q 5: What is the Quad, and why is it not considered a military alliance?

C) Long Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss the nature and historical phases of India's multilateralism. What is meant by "variegated multilateralism" and strategic autonomy?

Q 2: Examine India's role and contributions in the United Nations, including peacekeeping, the demand for UNSC reform and the International Solar Alliance. What challenges does India face?

Q 3: Evaluate the significance of SAARC for India's regional diplomacy. Why has it stagnated, and how have BIMSTEC and other sub-regional groupings emerged as alternatives?

Q 4: Analyse India's engagement with BRICS and the G20. How have these platforms enhanced India's standing as a leader of the Global South?

Q 5: Discuss India's engagement with ASEAN and the SCO in the context of the Act East Policy and Eurasian connectivity. What opportunities and challenges arise from China's growing influence in these forums?

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UNIT 14: LOOK EAST POLICY/ ACT EAST POLICY

UNIT STRUCTURE

14.1 Learning Objective

14.2 Introduction

14.3 Trade Ties

14.4 Implications

14.5 Let Us Sum up

14.6 Further Reading

14.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

14.8 Model Questions

14.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVE

After going through this Unit, you will be able to:

- Explore the historical background and the transition from the “Look East Policy” (initiated in 1991) to the more proactive “Act East Policy”
- Identify the economic, political, and security reasons behind India’s increased engagement with East and Southeast Asia.
- Examine the significance of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements, focusing on section
- Discuss the implications for India’s internal development, particularly regarding the connectivity and growth of Northeast India.

14.2 INTRODUCTION

India’s foreign policy has evolved significantly since independence. During the Cold War, India focused primarily on relations with neighboring countries, major powers, and the Non-Aligned Movement. However, after the end of the Cold War and the onset of economic liberalization in 1991, India adopted a new foreign policy approach known as the Look East Policy. The policy aimed to strengthen India’s economic, political, and strategic relations with countries of Southeast Asia and East Asia, especially members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The Look East Policy was launched in 1991 during the tenure of Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao. The policy emerged at a time when India was facing a severe balance of payments crisis and was introducing economic reforms and liberalisation. The changing global order after the Cold War also encouraged India to diversify its foreign relations and seek new economic opportunities.

One of the major objectives of the policy was to improve economic relations with the rapidly growing economies of Southeast Asia. ASEAN countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia had achieved remarkable economic growth, and India aimed to benefit from regional trade and investment opportunities. India sought to establish

stronger economic ties, attract foreign investment, expand trade opportunities, and integrate itself with the rapidly growing economies of the Asia-Pacific region.

During the initial phase, emphasis was placed mainly on economic diplomacy and regional cooperation. India became a sectoral dialogue partner of ASEAN in 1992 and a full dialogue partner in 1996. Diplomatic engagement with countries such as Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Vietnam increased considerably during this period.

Gradually, the Look East Policy expanded beyond economic cooperation and acquired political and strategic dimensions. India increased participation in regional organisations such as the ASEAN Regional Forum and the East Asia Summit. Maritime security, defence cooperation, counter-terrorism, and strategic partnerships became increasingly important aspects of India's engagement with the region. India also sought to strengthen connectivity through infrastructure projects linking Northeast India with Southeast Asia.

In 2014, the Look East Policy was upgraded to the Act East Policy. The transition from "Look" to "Act" reflected the need for more proactive engagement and effective implementation of regional initiatives. The Act East Policy focuses on strengthening economic integration, improving connectivity, enhancing security cooperation, and promoting India's role in the Indo-Pacific region. The policy also reflects India's strategic response to changing geopolitical developments, including the growing influence of China in Asia.

The Act East Policy has contributed to closer relations between India and ASEAN countries in areas such as trade, investment, tourism, defence cooperation, and cultural exchanges. At the same time, the policy has highlighted the strategic importance of Northeast India as a bridge connecting India with Southeast Asia. Despite several achievements, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, delays in project implementation, and regional security concerns continue to affect the full realization of the policy's objectives.

14.3 TRADE TIES

Trade ties formed one of the most important aspects of India's Look East Policy and later the Act East Policy. Economic cooperation became an important dimension of India's Look East Policy after the introduction of economic liberalisation in 1991. India sought to strengthen commercial relations with the rapidly developing economies of Southeast Asia in order to expand markets, attract investment, and encourage regional integration. This marked a significant shift in India's foreign policy towards greater engagement with the economies of the Asia-Pacific region.

A major focus of this engagement was ASEAN, which includes countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, Myanmar, the Philippines, Brunei, Cambodia, and Laos. India became a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of ASEAN in 1992 and a Full Dialogue Partner in 1996. These developments strengthened institutional cooperation and created new opportunities for economic interaction between India and Southeast Asian countries. Over time, ASEAN emerged as one of India's major trading partners. An important

milestone in India-ASEAN economic relations was the signing of the ASEAN-India Free Trade Agreement in goods in 2009, which came into force in 2010. Agreements relating to services and investment were later signed in 2014. These agreements aimed to reduce tariff barriers, improve market access, and promote economic integration between India and ASEAN countries.

India exported pharmaceuticals, petroleum products, engineering goods, automobiles, chemicals, machinery, and textiles to Southeast Asian markets. At the same time, India imported palm oil, coal, electronic products, natural gas, machinery, and raw materials from countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia. Information technology, tourism, telecommunications, banking, healthcare, and digital services also became important areas of collaboration.

Connectivity initiatives under the Act East Policy further strengthened commercial relations between India and Southeast Asia. Infrastructure projects such as the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project were designed to improve transportation and communication networks between India and ASEAN countries. These projects aim to facilitate border trade, reduce transportation costs, and promote regional integration. Northeast India occupies a strategically important position in this framework because it serves as India's gateway to Southeast Asia. Improved connectivity is expected to generate employment opportunities, encourage industrial growth, and enhance regional commerce in the border areas. Furthermore, increasing business activities encouraged cultural exchanges, tourism, educational cooperation, and people-to-people contacts between India and Southeast Asia.

Despite considerable progress, several challenges continue to affect India's economic engagement with the region. India faces trade deficits with certain ASEAN countries because imports often exceed exports. Competition from Chinese products in Southeast Asian markets also remains a significant concern for Indian industries. Inadequate infrastructure, delays in connectivity projects, bureaucratic obstacles, and political instability in neighbouring countries such as Myanmar have slowed the pace of regional integration. Therefore, although trade ties remain an important pillar of the Act East Policy, stronger implementation mechanisms, improved infrastructure, and deeper regional cooperation are necessary for achieving its long-term objectives.

14.4 IMPLICATIONS

The Look East Policy and the Act East Policy significantly strengthened India's engagement with Southeast and East Asia. These policies enhanced India's diplomatic presence in the region and contributed to stronger political cooperation with countries of the Indo-Pacific. Through active participation in regional organisations such as ASEAN, ASEAN Regional Forum, East Asia Summit, BIMSTEC, and Mekong-Ganga Cooperation, India increased its role in regional affairs and multilateral cooperation. These engagements helped India strengthen diplomatic partnerships and expand its influence in Asia.

The growing significance of the Indo-Pacific region increased India's involvement in issues relating to maritime security, freedom of navigation, and regional stability. India strengthened defence cooperation and strategic partnerships with countries such as Japan, Vietnam, Singapore, Australia, and the United States. Participation in initiatives such as the Quadreflected India's efforts to maintain strategic balance and respond to changing geopolitical developments in the region, particularly the growing influence of China.

Another important implication of the Act East Policy was the increasing importance of Northeast India in India's foreign policy. The region came to be viewed as a gateway connecting India with Southeast Asia. Connectivity and infrastructure projects were expected to improve transportation, encourage border interaction, promote tourism, and support economic development in the region. The policy also created opportunities for local industries, cultural exchanges, and greater regional integration in Northeast India.

The policies further strengthened cultural and people-to-people relations between India and Southeast Asian countries. Historical and civilisational linkages through Buddhism, trade, and maritime contacts contributed to stronger cultural diplomacy, educational cooperation, tourism, and mutual understanding between the regions.

Despite its growing significance, the policy continues to face several limitations and challenges. Slow implementation of connectivity projects, administrative inefficiencies, inadequate infrastructure, and security concerns in border areas have affected the pace of regional cooperation. Political instability in Myanmar has further complicated India's connectivity and diplomatic initiatives. Moreover, uneven economic gains and persistent trade deficits remain important concerns in India's relations with ASEAN countries. Therefore, although the Look East and Act East Policies have substantially strengthened India's regional engagement and strategic influence, their long-term success depends upon sustained political commitment, efficient implementation, stronger regional coordination, and balanced economic development.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Name one regional organisation associated with India's Act East Policy.

Q2) Which region of India is considered the gateway to Southeast Asia?

Q3) In which year did the ASEAN-India FTA in goods come into force?

Q4) What is the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway?

Q5) Which neighbouring country's political instability has affected connectivity projects?

Q6) Mention one cultural link between India and Southeast Asia.

Q7) What is BIMSTEC?

14.5 LET US SUM UP

After going through this Unit, we have learnt that:

- The Look East and Act East Policies have transformed India's engagement with Southeast Asia from primarily economic cooperation to comprehensive strategic, political, and security partnerships.
- These policies have strengthened India's relations with ASEAN and Indo-Pacific countries, enhancing trade, connectivity, regional cooperation, and diplomatic ties.
- The Act East Policy has reinforced India's role as an important stakeholder in the Indo-Pacific, with a greater focus on maritime security and regional stability.
- Northeast India has emerged as a key gateway linking South Asia and Southeast Asia, highlighting the importance of connectivity and infrastructure development in regional integration.
- Despite challenges such as infrastructure gaps, implementation delays, and geopolitical competition, the policies remain vital instruments for expanding India's regional influence and advancing its long-term foreign policy objectives in Asia.

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14.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: ASEAN is one regional organisation associated with India's Act East Policy.

Ans to Q No 2: Northeast India is considered the gateway to Southeast Asia.

Ans to Q No 3: The ASEAN-India FTA in goods came into force in 2010.

Ans to Q No 4: The India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway is a connectivity project linking India with Myanmar and Thailand by road.

Ans to Q No 5: Political instability in Myanmar has affected connectivity projects.

Ans to Q No 6: Buddhism is an important cultural link between India and Southeast Asia.

Ans to Q No 7: BIMSTEC stands for the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation.

14.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 50 words)

Q 1: In which year was the Look East Policy launched, and under which Prime Minister?

Q 2: In which year was the Look East Policy upgraded to the Act East Policy?

Q 3: In which year did India become a Full Dialogue Partner of ASEAN?

Q 4: Name one connectivity project linking India with Southeast Asia under the Act East Policy.

Q 5: Which region of India is regarded as the gateway to Southeast Asia?

B) Short Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 150 words)

Q 1: What were the main objectives of the Look East Policy when it was launched in 1991?

Q 2: How does the Act East Policy differ from the Look East Policy?

Q 3: Write a short note on the ASEAN-India Free Trade Agreement.

Q 4: Explain the importance of Northeast India in the Act East Policy.

Q 5: What challenges have affected India's economic engagement with Southeast Asia?

C) Long Answer Questions (Answer each questions within 300-500 words)

Q 1: Trace the historical background and evolution of the Look East Policy from 1991 to its transition into the Act East Policy in 2014.

Q 2: Discuss the economic, political and strategic reasons behind India's increased engagement with East and Southeast Asia.

Q 3: Examine the trade ties between India and ASEAN under the Act East Policy, with reference to trade agreements, major exports and imports, and connectivity projects.

Q 4: Analyse the implications of the Look East and Act East Policies for India's diplomatic, strategic and cultural relations in the Indo-Pacific region.

Q 5: Evaluate the significance of the Act East Policy for the development of Northeast India. What challenges limit the full realisation of the policy's objectives?

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