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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

PRELIMS 2026



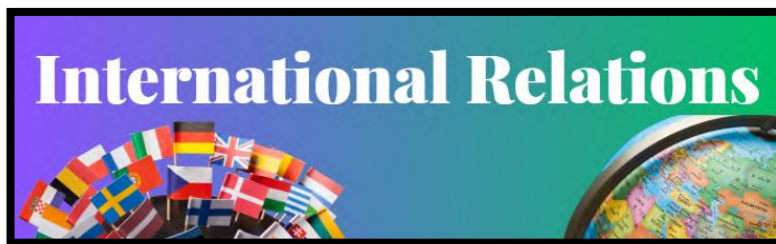
COVERAGE JUNE 2025 TO FEB2026

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TOPICS COVERED-

- **Polar Research Vessel (PRV)** – India’s first indigenous vessel for deep-sea, polar research, enhancing scientific and strategic capabilities.
- **Civil Defence Mock Drills** – Nationwide drills simulating air raids and emergencies under the Civil Defence Act, 1968.
- **Kartarpur Corridor Closure** – India suspends visa-free Sikh pilgrimage corridor to Pakistan due to security concerns.
- **National Security Doctrine (NSD)** – Proposed framework to coordinate India’s response to traditional, non-traditional, and hybrid threats.
- **Indo-Saudi Strategic Partnership** – Cooperation in defense, climate, culture, and trade advanced during PM Modi’s 2025 visit.
- **FATF Greylisting Pakistan** – India seeks action against Pakistan for terror financing under FATF monitoring framework.
- **IMF Loans to Pakistan** – \$2.4B funding approved; India abstains citing cross-border terrorism risk.
- **Bangladeshi Export Restrictions** – India blocks land exports via north-east ports in retaliation to Bangladesh’s trade limits.
- **Article 51 UN Charter** – India invokes self-defense against Pakistan-based terrorists under “unwilling or unable” doctrine.
- **India-SCO Engagement** – India refuses SCO draft statement over terrorism double standards while engaging strategically.
- **China-Pakistan-Bangladesh Nexus** – Regional connectivity meeting challenging India’s influence; strategic partnerships counter required.
- **Israel-US-Iran Conflict** – Operation Rising Lion & associated US strikes impact regional security, energy, and Indian interests.
- **WTO Reforms** – India calls for multilateral trade reform addressing NTBs, SDT, and dispute resolution.
- **UNSC Membership & Reforms** – Five new non-permanent members elected; India monitors equity, regional representation, and counter-terrorism committees.
- **US Withdrawal from GAVI** – Impacts funding for vaccines, global health governance, and opens leadership gaps.
- **IOMed Formation** – China-led international mediation organization offering alternative dispute resolution.
- **India-Kyrgyzstan BIT** – Updated treaty ensuring investment protection, local remedies, and policy-space exceptions.
- **E-Passport & Passport Seva 2.0** – Digital passports with biometric security improving travel authenticity and border control.
- **WESP 2025** – UN economic outlook revises India’s GDP at 6.3%; highlights global slowdown and food insecurity.
- **India-Maldives Treasury Support** – USD 50M rollover under G2G framework; strengthens trade, currency, and defense ties.
- **G7 Summit** – India participates as outreach country; emphasizes critical minerals, supply chains, and climate coordination.
- **Operation Sindhu (Iran)** – Evacuation of Indians via Armenia amid rising Israel-US-Iran tensions.
- **India-Japan Maritime Cooperation** – Collaboration on ports, shipbuilding, smart islands, seafarers, and green shipping technology.
- **India-Central Asia Dialogue** – Strengthening regional security, trade, connectivity, counter-terrorism, and critical minerals.

- **CRVS Bangkok Conference** – Asia-Pacific commitment to universal birth/death registration by 2030.
- **Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF)** – US-Israel backed NGO providing aid in Gaza crisis outside UN framework.
- **West Bank** – Palestinian territory under partial Israeli occupation; central to peace negotiations.
- **Netzarim Corridor** – Militarized zone in Gaza for Israeli monitoring and movement control.
- **Operation ATALANTA (EU NAVFOR)** – EU anti-piracy mission in Western Indian Ocean collaborating with India.
- **MERCOSUR Expansion** – Bolivia joins; promotes trade integration in South America; India holds PTA.
- **IMEC Corridor** – Multi-modal India-Middle East-Europe trade route reducing Suez dependency.
- **Northern Sea Route (NSR)** – Arctic maritime route reducing Europe-Asia transit by ~50%; India explores feasibility.
- **BRICS Parliamentary Forum** – Legislative cooperation among BRICS nations; India chairs in 2026.
- **Hodeidah Port & IALA** – Yemen port critical for aid; IALA standardizes maritime navigation; India is member & host.
- **Congo Fever (CCHF)** – Tick-borne viral hemorrhagic fever; high-risk human-livestock infection; supportive care only.
- **Operation Midnight Hammer** – US precision strike on Iran's nuclear facilities using B-2 bombers and MOP bombs.



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SOURCE – PIB

India to Build First-Ever Polar Research Vessel (PRV)

Recent Context :

India's GRSE signed an MoU with Norway's Kongsberg to build the first indigenously developed Polar Research Vessel, enhancing oceanographic research, climate studies, and India's maritime strategic and scientific capabilities.

ABOUT:

1. **First Indigenous PRV:** Enhances polar and deep-sea research capabilities; aligned with NCOPR requirements.
2. **Make in India:** High-tech vessel built domestically, boosting shipbuilding sector.
3. **Scientific Capabilities:** Equipped for oceanographic, climatological, and polar ecosystem studies.
4. **Strategic Significance:** Supports Antarctica policy, climate research, and maritime presence.
5. **MAHASAGAR Vision:** Expands SAGAR initiative; focuses on maritime cooperation, security, and environmental sustainability.
6. **India-Norway Cooperation:** Strengthens shipbuilding, logistics, green shipping, and seafarer supply partnerships.
7. **Global Maritime Role:** Positions India as an emerging maritime power with innovation-driven, sustainable ocean trade leadership.

Civil Defence Mock Drills in India

Recent Context :

Amid India-Pakistan tensions after Pahalgam attack, civil defence mock drills ('Operation Shield') conducted nationwide to assess preparedness of authorities and public under Civil Defence Act, 1968.

ABOUT:

1. **Legal framework – Civil Defence Act, 1968** empowers government to manage emergencies.
2. **Powers under Act** – Restrict movement, impose curfews, control transport, requisition property, censor communications.

3. **Purpose of drills** – Simulate air raid, blackout, and emergency response scenarios.
4. **Target areas** – Sensitive districts near LoC and International Border.
5. **Last major drills** – During 1971 war build-up.
6. **Objective** – Evaluate civil authority, emergency services, and local population readiness.
7. **Significance** – Enhances national security preparedness for potential external threats.

India Shuts Kartarpur Corridor

Recent Context :

Kartarpur Corridor closed indefinitely after the Pahalgam attack; it connects Gurudwara Dera Baba Nanak (India) to Darbar Sahib (Pakistan) for visa-free Sikh pilgrimage.

ABOUT:

1. **Location** – Punjab, India → Kartarpur, Pakistan; 4.7 km cross-border corridor.
2. **Purpose** – Visa-free religious pilgrimage for up to 5000 devotees daily.
3. **Historical proposal** – Proposed in 1999 by Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
4. **Completion** – Inaugurated for Guru Nanak Dev 550th birth anniversary, 2019.
5. **Gurdwaras connected** – Dera Baba Nanak & Darbar Sahib.
6. **Closure reason** – Security concerns after terrorist attacks in India.
7. **Significance** – Important for India-Pakistan religious diplomacy and Sikh community access.

India Needs National Security Doctrine (NSD)

Recent Context :

Recent events like Pahalgam attack highlight India's lack of a comprehensive National Security Doctrine for coordinated responses to traditional, non-traditional, and hybrid threats.

ABOUT:

1. **NSD definition** – Framework outlining national interest, security objectives, threats, and agency accountability.

2. **India's status** – No explicit **National Security Doctrine** currently exists.
3. **Challenges addressed** – Internal (terrorism, insurgency), external (border disputes, BRI), non-traditional (climate change, cyber threats).
4. **Committees recommending NSD** – **Naresh Chandra Task Force (2012), Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence (2021).**
5. **Significance** – Ensures **strategic guidance, integrated defense planning, SOP standardisation.**
6. **Outcome** – Reduces **ad-hoc decision-making**, enhances **coordination among ministries, intelligence, armed forces.**
7. **Global role** – Positions India as **net security provider**, e.g., **Mission Sagar** humanitarian missions

SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS

PM Modi's Visit Imparts New Momentum to Indo-Saudi Strategic Partnership

Recent Context :

PM Modi visited Saudi Arabia (April 2025), meeting Crown Prince MBS; despite being cut short due to the Pahalgam terror attack, the visit advanced strategic ties in unconventional sectors beyond energy and trade.

About:

1. **Strategic Partnership Council (SPC)** – Apex body (headed by PM & MBS) now expanded with new Ministerial Committees on Defense Cooperation & Tourism-Culture.
2. **Environment & Food Security** – Cooperation on agriculture, food supply chains, green hydrogen, solar energy, and sustainable use of resources.
3. **Climate Change Collaboration** – Joint work under UNFCCC & Paris Agreement; India's ISA, CDRI, LiFE, Green Credit; Saudi's Green Initiative & circular carbon economy.
4. **Defense & Counter-Terrorism** – Military exercises, training, cybersecurity, drone/missile control; joint condemnation of

cross-border terrorism (veiled reference to Pakistan).

5. **Cultural Cooperation** – Committee on Tourism & Cultural Cooperation; synergy with Saudi Vision 2030 (NEOM, Al-Ula, Red Sea Film Festival); promoting tourism, films, and exchanges.
6. **Indian Diaspora** – 2.5 million Indians in Saudi Arabia remain a strong bridge in bilateral relations.
7. **Geostrategic Significance** – Indo-Saudi cooperation linked to IMEC, regional maritime security, sustainable development, and multipolar global order.

India Plans to Push Pakistan on FATF Grey List

Recent Context :

India seeks **FATF grey-listing for Pakistan**, citing **Operation Sindoor evidence** on destroyed terror bases and ongoing **terror infrastructure** in Pakistan to curb cross-border terrorism financing.

ABOUT:

1. **FATF** – Intergovernmental body combating **money laundering & terrorist financing**; HQ: **Paris, France**, established 1989.
2. **Members** – 39 members (37 jurisdictions + 2 regional bodies); **India, China, Israel, UK, USA** included.
3. **Standards** – **40+9 Recommendations**: 40 AML + 9 CFT standards.
4. **Lists** – **Black List** (Non-cooperative countries: Iran, North Korea), **Grey List** (strategic deficiencies, action plan required).
5. **Pakistan's status** – Greylisted multiple times: 2008, 2012–15, 2018–2022; removed with conditional monitoring.
6. **Greylisting effect** – Limits access to **international loans** and foreign investment.
7. **India's role** – Plans to submit **latest evidence on Pakistan-based terrorism** to FATF to push for re-listing.

IMF's Loan to Pakistan

Recent Context :

IMF approved **\$1B under Extended Fund Facility (EFF)**

and **\$1.4B under Resilience & Sustainability Facility (RSF)** to Pakistan; **India abstained**, citing risk of misuse for cross-border terrorism.

ABOUT:

1. **EFF purpose** – Assists countries with **medium-term balance of payments problems** due to structural weaknesses.
2. **Structural weaknesses** – Poor infrastructure, underdeveloped banking, inadequate capital, lack of skilled workforce.
3. **Conditionality** – **Structural reforms**, policy commitments, periodic **tranche-based review** by IMF Board.
4. **Duration & repayment** – Typically **3–4 years**; repayment over **4.5–10 years**, in **semiannual installments**.
5. **RSF purpose** – Affordable **long-term financing** for low/middle-income countries; focuses on **macro-critical reforms**, climate and pandemic resilience.
6. **Duration & repayment** – Minimum 18 months, max 20-year repayment with **10.5-year grace period**.
7. **India's response** – **Abstained from voting**, citing Pakistan's **misuse of IMF funds** for cross-border terrorism; 28 IMF programs in 35 years.

India Restricts Bangladeshi Exports via Land Ports

Recent Context :

India blocks **Bangladesh's land-based exports** (ready-made garments, plastic, cotton yarn) via north-eastern **LCS/ICP ports**, responding to **Bangladesh restrictions on Indian yarn and rice exports**.

ABOUT:

1. **Affected ports** – Tripura, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram; Kolkata & Mumbai ports allowed with inspections.
2. **Affected items** – Ready-made garments, plastic, wooden furniture, juices, carbonated drinks, cotton yarn, bakery items, dyes.
3. **Bilateral trade context** – Bangladesh largest South Asian trade partner (~\$18B in FY23).

4. **Previous arrangements** – India allowed **Transshipment Facility** since 2020; now terminated.
5. **Bangladesh's counter** – Imposed restrictions on **Indian yarn exports via land ports**.
6. **Strategic impact** – Protects **India's north-east manufacturing sector**; counters unfair trade practices.
7. **Geopolitical context** – Reflects **rising India-Bangladesh tensions**, with Bangladesh increasing **ties with China**.

Article 51 of UN Charter: Self-Defence Clause

Recent Context :

India justified **Operation Sindoor** against **Pakistan-based terrorists** under **Article 51 UN Charter**, invoking '**unwilling or unable**' doctrine while following **necessity and proportionality principles**.

ABOUT:

1. **Article 51** – Permits **use of force in self-defence** after an armed attack; exception to **Article 2(4)**.
2. **Principles** – **Necessity** (only option left) and **Proportionality** (response proportional to attack).
3. **Procedural duty** – **Report military measures to UNSC** immediately.
4. '**Unwilling or unable**' doctrine – Targets **non-state actors** in another country if host state fails to act.
5. **Traditional use** – Between **sovereign states**; post-9/11 extended to **terrorist organisations**.
6. **ICJ stance** – Self-defence valid **only with state attribution**, exceptional cases if state supports terrorists.
7. **Significance** – Provides **legal basis for counter-terror operations** while adhering to **international law** norms.

SOURCE – VISION MONTHLY

INDIA AND SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION (SCO)

Recent Context :

India refused to sign the SCO Defence Ministers' joint declaration in Qingdao over double standards on terrorism, emphasizing principled stance while

engaging strategically with Central Asia, China, and Pakistan.

ABOUT :

1. **India's SCO Membership:** Observer in 2005; full member since 2017.
2. **Refusal Reason:** Joint declaration ignored Pahalgam attack but mentioned Balochistan; India insists on consistent anti-terror stance.
3. **Strategic Opportunities:** Engagement with Central Asian Republics, energy cooperation (e.g., Kazakhstan uranium), and regional connectivity (INSTC).
4. **Geopolitical Concerns:** China's dominance, BRI promotion, expansion beyond Central Asia, and perceived anti-Western tilt.
5. **Selective Participation:** India engages in SCO selectively, e.g., Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) and development-focused sub-groups.
6. **Balancing Autonomy:** Prioritizes national interests over Chinese/Pakistan agenda, maintaining strategic autonomy.
7. **Global Role of SCO:** Covers 80% of Eurasia, 42% of global population, ~25% global GDP; addresses Afghanistan security vacuum.



CHINA-LED TRILATERAL NEXUS

Recent Context :

China, Pakistan, and Bangladesh held their first trilateral meeting to promote BRI and regional connectivity, challenging India's influence; India must counter through strategic partnerships and regional engagement.

ABOUT:

1. **Trilateral Engagement:** First meeting under China-South Asia Cooperation Forum; follows China-Pakistan-Afghanistan initiative.
2. **Strategic Nexus:** Links China, Turkey, and Pakistan; coordinated responses observed during Pahalgam crisis.
3. **China's Role:** Expanding geopolitical footprint, infrastructure diplomacy, and asserting influence to counter India.
4. **Regional Concerns for India:** Potential geostrategic encirclement, undermining India-led platforms (BIMSTEC, BBIN), and diminished influence in Bangladesh (Teesta River project).
5. **Connectivity Competition:** China promotes BRI; India promotes BBIN and India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC).
6. **Indian Strategy:** Strengthen partnerships with US, Japan (QUAD), implement development projects, and utilize multilateral/regional frameworks.
7. **China's Regional Influence:** Evident in Pakistan (defence dependence), Maldives (infrastructure), Nepal (airports), Sri Lanka (Hambantota Port), Bangladesh (defence supplier).

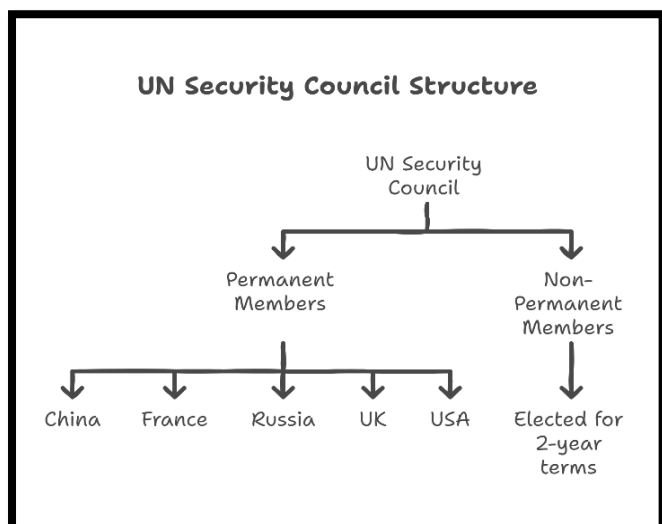
ISRAEL-US-IRAN CONFLICT

Recent Context :

Israel launched "Operation Rising Lion" against Iran's nuclear sites; the US joined with precision strikes. Rising tensions threaten energy security, undersea cables, and India's strategic, trade, and connectivity interests.

ABOUT:

1. **Military Operations:** Israel's Operation Rising Lion; Iran's retaliation Operation True Promise 3; US Operation Midnight Hammer using GBU-57 MOP.
2. **Israel's Defence:** 'Barak Magen' (Lightning Shield) protects navy from drones, missiles; complements Iron Dome, David's Sling, Arrow systems.



3. **Nuclear Tensions:** Iran may withdraw from NPT; undermines global non-proliferation norms.
4. **Energy & Trade Risk:** Strait of Hormuz closure threat; 35% global seaborne oil, 20% LNG pass through it.
5. **Undersea Cable Vulnerability:** Cables like EIG, FLAG risk disruption in Red Sea, Gulf of Oman, affecting Africa, Gulf, South Asia.
6. **Impact on India:** Decline in trade with Iran (\$1.4B) and Israel (\$3.75B); projects like Chabahar Port, INSTC affected.
7. **Indian Nationals & Diplomacy:** Operation Sindhu evacuates Indians; careful balancing of relations with Israel (defence, tech) and Iran (energy, Eurasian connectivity).

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (WTO) REFORMS

Why in the News?

India recently called for reforms to the WTO during a high-level mini-ministerial meeting in Paris, ahead of the 14th Ministerial Conference in Cameroon, 2026.

About WTO

1. **Genesis:** Est. 1995 (Marrakesh Agreement), successor to GATT; outcome of Uruguay Round (1986–94); 166 members (~98% global trade); HQ: Geneva; India member since 1995.
2. **Functions:** Administers trade pacts, forum for negotiations, dispute settlement, trade policy review, capacity building.
3. **Structure:** Ministerial Conference (biennial, top body); decisions by consensus; Secretariat in Geneva.

4. **India's Reform Demands:** Address NTBs, curb distortions by non-market economies (e.g., China), restore dispute settlement system.
5. **Key Priorities:** Resist JSIs/plurilaterals in multilateral system; permanent solution on public food stockholding; flexibility in fisheries pact obligations.
6. **Contentious Issues:** Development status & Special and Differential Treatment (SDT); U.S. vs China on "developing" claims.
7. **Emerging Concerns:** CBAM, trade protectionism, digital economy rules, climate-trade linkages.

UN SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC)

Recent Developments:

Five countries—**Bahrain, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Latvia, and Liberia**—were elected as non-permanent members of the UNSC.

About UNSC:

- **Genesis:** Established in 1945 via the UN Charter as one of the six principal organs of the UN.
- **Purpose:** Maintain international peace and security.
- **Members:**

Key Provisions of Proposed Reforms:

- **Expanded Membership:** 11 permanent and 14–15 non-permanent members
- **Equitable Regional Representation:** 6 new permanent seats distributed among Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America & Caribbean, Western Europe/Other States
- **No Veto Initially:** New permanent members will not have veto power for the first 15 years; provision to be reviewed afterward

UNSC Committees – Pakistan's Roles (2025):

1. **Taliban Sanctions Committee (TSC):**
 - **Genesis:** UNSC Resolution 1988 (2011)
 - **Function:** Monitor and enforce sanctions on Taliban-linked individuals/groups threatening Afghanistan's peace and security
2. **Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC):**

- **Genesis:** UNSC Resolution 1373 (2001), post-9/11
- **Members:** All 15 Security Council members
- **Functions:** Ensure countries criminalize terror financing, freeze terrorist-linked funds, share intelligence, and implement counter-terrorism measures

US PULLS FUNDING FROM GAVI, THE VACCINE ALLIANCE

Why in the News:

The **United States** has withdrawn funding from **Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance**, accusing it and the **World Health Organization (WHO)** of suppressing dissenting views and legitimate questions regarding vaccine safety. The US has historically been one of Gavi's largest supporters.

Rising Trend of US Withdrawal from Global Alliances:

- In recent years, the US has reduced participation or withdrawn from major global institutions:
 - WHO
 - Paris Climate Agreement
 - UN Human Rights Council
 - UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)
- As a global superpower, US withdrawal has significant implications for international governance.

Impact of US Withdrawing from Global Alliances:

1. **Weakening Multilateralism / Rule-Based Order:**
 - Example: Israel withdrew participation from UN Human Rights Council.
2. **Undermining Climate Action:**
 - 2024 was recorded as the hottest year globally.
 - The US is the world's **second-largest greenhouse gas emitter**, behind China.
3. **Shortage of Funds for Health Initiatives:**
 - US exit may create funding gaps.

- Example: In 2024, the US contributed ~15% of WHO's total funding.
4. **Leadership Vacuum and Geopolitical Shifts:**
 - China may fill the leadership void in global institutions, potentially reducing **India's influence** in multilateral decision-making.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR MEDIATION (IOMed)

Why in the News:

China has formally established the **International Organisation for Mediation (IOMed)** as a global alternative to traditional institutions like the **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** and the **Permanent Court of Arbitration**.

About IOMed:

- **Purpose:** Dedicated to resolving international disputes through **mediation**.
- **Members:** Over 30 founding countries including **Indonesia, Pakistan, and Belarus**, primarily from **Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean**, indicating a non-Western orientation.
- **Scope:**
 - Disputes **between states**
 - Disputes **between a state and nationals of another country**
 - **International commercial disputes**

INDIA-KYRGYZSTAN BILATERAL INVESTMENT TREATY (BIT)

Why in the News:

The **BIT signed in June 2019** came into force on **5th June 2025**, replacing the earlier 2000 agreement and ensuring continued investment protection.

Key Features of the BIT:

1. **Definition of Assets:**
 - Enterprise-based definition with inclusions/exclusions
 - Clarifies investment characteristics like **capital commitment, profit expectation, and risk assumption**
2. **Exclusions for Policy Space:**

- Local government, government procurement, taxation, and compulsory licenses are excluded
- 3. **Removal of Most Favored Nation (MFN) Clause:**
 - Ensures **consistent treatment** by preventing selective import of favorable treaty provisions
- 4. **General and Security Exceptions:**
 - Allows policy space for the state
 - General exceptions include **environmental protection, public health, and safety**
- 5. **Revised Dispute Resolution Mechanism:**
 - Investors must first **use local remedies** before international arbitration
 - Promotes **alternative dispute resolution**

E-PASSPORT & Passport Seva Programme 2.0

Why in the News:

The **Ministry of External Affairs** has rolled out **e-Passports** along with an upgraded **Passport Seva Programme 2.0**.



About e-Passport:

- **Definition:** Combines a traditional paper passport with an **electronic chip** (RFID) embedded in the passport inlay.
- **Contents of Chip:**
 - Personal particulars of the holder
 - Biometric information (like fingerprints or facial data)
- **Security Technology:**

- Uses **Public Key Infrastructure (PKI)** to ensure authenticity and prevent tampering.
- **Purpose & Benefits:**
 - Prevents **forgery and fraudulent use** of passports
 - Confirms **genuineness at border controls**
 - Enhances **global travel security and credibility**

SOURCE – DRISHTI MONTHLY

World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2025

Recent Context:

India's GDP growth forecast for 2025 has been revised down to 6.3% in the UN WESP mid-2025 update, reflecting global economic slowdown and domestic trends.

About WESP – Key Points for Prelims:

1. Released by **UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)** with **UNCTAD** and 5 UN regional commissions.
2. Provides **global and regional economic outlooks** to support **SDG-oriented growth policies**.
3. **India's GDP** projected at **6.3% in 2025**, highest among major economies.
4. **Inflation** in India expected to be **4.3%**, within RBI's target of 2–6%.
5. Global GDP growth projected at **2.4% in 2025**, slowdown due to trade tensions, weak demand, and commodity volatility.
6. **Food insecurity:** 343 million people face acute food insecurity; 1.9 million at famine risk.
7. **Key drivers of India's growth:** manufacturing, exports, and rising defence production.

India-Maldives Financial Support – USD 50 Million Treasury Bill Rollover

Recent Context:

India has rolled over a **USD 50 million Treasury Bill** to the Maldives under the government-to-government framework, continuing economic support and strengthening bilateral ties.

About India-Maldives Relations – Key Points for Prelims:

1. **Historical Ties:** India recognized Maldives in **1965**; diplomatic mission established in **Malé, 1972**; both are **SAARC founding members**.



2. **Trade & Economy:** India is Maldives' **largest trade partner (2023)**; bilateral trade framework since **1981**.
3. **Financial Assistance:** India extended **USD 400 million support in 2024**, plus a **Rs 3,000 crore currency swap**.
4. **Treasury Bills:** India's **rollover of USD 50 million** and SBI's **USD 100 million** support under G2G arrangement
5. **Tourism & Culture:** Tourism is **25% of Maldives' GDP**; India is the **top tourist source since 2020**; enhanced by **2022 Open Skies agreement**.
6. **Defence Cooperation:** India provides critical support under **Neighborhood First & SAGAR/MAHASAGAR**, including **Operation Cactus (1988)** and training **70% of Maldives NDF personnel**.
7. **Currency & Trade Facilitation:** 2024 framework promotes **use of local currencies for cross-border trade**, reducing reliance on third currencies.

51st G7 Summit

Recent Context:

India's Prime Minister attended the 51st G7 Summit in Kananaskis, Canada, as an invited outreach country for the 12th time. The European Commission President attended for the first time.

About:

1. **G7 Overview:** Informal forum of seven advanced economies — US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Canada; EU participates as a non-enumerated member.
2. **Origin:** Began in 1975 as G6 (post-1973 oil crisis), became G7 in 1976 with Canada; briefly G8 (1997–2014) before Russia's expulsion over Crimea.
3. **Nature:** No formal treaty or secretariat; presidency rotates annually; decisions are by consensus and non-binding.
4. **Economic Weight:** Accounts for ~40% of global GDP, 10% of population, 36% of power generation capacity, 30% of energy demand, and 25% of CO₂ emissions.
5. **India's Role:** Supported critical minerals security and global supply chain resilience under RISE Partnership.
6. **Significance:** Acts as a platform for policy coordination among major economies on climate, trade, technology, and security.



Operation Sindhu for Evacuation from Iran

Recent Context:

India launched *Operation Sindhu* to evacuate nationals from Iran via Armenia amid fears of Israeli-American strikes. Armenia emerged as the safest evacuation route due to geography and strong bilateral ties.

About:

1. **Purpose:** Safely evacuate Indians from Iran through Armenia's territory amid rising regional tensions.

2. **Geostrategic Advantage:** Armenia shares a 44 km border with Iran at the Nurduz–Agarak crossing, connected to Tehran by a 730 km highway.
3. **Alternative Routes Unviable:**
 - Pakistan: Closed due to strained ties after Operation Sindoor.
 - Turkey & Azerbaijan: Support Pakistan.
 - Afghanistan: No formal ties with Taliban regime.
 - Iraq: Active conflict, airports shut.
 - Turkmenistan: Remote, underdeveloped crossing.
4. **Diplomatic Support:** Armenia backs India on issues like Kashmir and UNSC reforms.
5. **Defence Links:** India became Armenia's top arms supplier in 2022 (USD 250 million deal for PINAKA, Akash-1S, etc.).
6. **Connectivity Role:** Armenia is part of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), aiding India's evacuation and trade plans in the Caucasus.
7. **Regional Significance:** Serves as a politically friendly, logistically viable, and secure land bridge between Iran and India.

SOURCE – INSIGHTS

India-Japan Maritime Relations – Strategic Collaboration

Recent Context:

India and Japan held high-level talks to boost maritime cooperation, focusing on **port digitisation, shipbuilding, smart islands, seafarer employment, and technology transfer.**

About India-Japan Maritime Relations – Key Points for Prelims:

1. **Investment & Infrastructure:** Japan plans to invest in **Indian shipyards** and port infrastructure, including **Imabari Shipbuilding's greenfield project in Andhra Pradesh.**
2. **Port Digitisation:** Agreement to **enhance digital technologies** in port operations for efficiency and **carbon emission reduction.**

3. **Smart Islands Development:** Collaboration to make **Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep** green, renewable-energy powered, and **disaster-resilient.**
4. **Employment & Training:** Japan to employ **skilled Indian seafarers**; India has over **1.54 lakh trained maritime personnel.**
5. **R&D & Technology Transfer:** Cooperation in **next-gen ship design, sustainable maritime tech,** and research via **Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL).**
6. **Strategic Partnership:** Shared **Indo-Pacific vision,** participation in **Quadrilateral Security Dialogue** and **Supply Chain Resilience Initiative** to counter regional dominance.
7. **Green Shipping & Innovation:** Supports **Maritime India Vision 2030** and **Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047,** promoting **carbon-neutral logistics** and sustainable maritime innovation.

4th India-Central Asia Dialogue – Strengthening Regional Cooperation

Recent Context:

India hosted the **4th India-Central Asia Dialogue** in New Delhi, focusing on **regional security, critical minerals, connectivity, counter-terrorism, and economic integration** with five Central Asian nations.

About 4th India-Central Asia Dialogue – Key Points for Prelims:

1. **Multilateral Platform:** Forum for foreign ministers of **India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan** to engage in structured dialogue.
2. **Launch & Objective:** Launched in **2019 (Samarkand)** to deepen **strategic, political, and economic cooperation** in Central Asia.
3. **Counter-Terrorism Cooperation:** Condemned **Pahalgam attack** and urged early adoption of **UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.**
4. **Critical Minerals:** Joint interest in **rare earth exploration and investment**; Second India-Central Asia Rare Earth Forum planned.

5. **Connectivity & Trade:** Emphasis on **INSTC** and **Chabahar Port**, supporting Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan's inclusion in INSTC.
6. **Financial & Digital Integration:** Focus on **digital payment systems, interbank cooperation, and trade in national currencies.**
7. **Energy, Health & Global Role:** Cooperation on **India Stack, solar alliance, biofuels, universal health coverage,** and support for **India's permanent UNSC membership.**

Bangkok Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS)

Recent Context:

At the **Third Ministerial Conference in Bangkok**, Asia-Pacific governments, including India, adopted a resolution to achieve **universal birth and death registration by 2030.**

Key Points for Prelims – CRVS:

1. **Definition & Purpose:** CRVS is the **continuous, universal, and compulsory recording** of key life events (births, deaths, marriages, divorces) under legal frameworks.
2. **Lead Organization:** **UN ESCAP** (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) spearheads regional CRVS initiatives.
3. **Legal Identity:** Birth and death registration provides **official ID documents**, enabling access to education, healthcare, pensions, and inheritance.
4. **Vital Statistics:** CRVS generates **data for policymaking, public health surveillance,** and **SDG tracking** (e.g., maternal mortality, child health).
5. **Challenges:** Include **geographical isolation, digital divide, inter-agency fragmentation, death certification gaps,** and **cultural stigma** affecting registration.
6. **Key Outcomes 2025:** Commitment to **100% birth/death registration,** adoption of **digital tools & AI,** and focus on **equity, privacy, and gender inclusion.**
7. **Way Ahead:** Strengthen **cross-border interoperability, last-mile infrastructure,**

inclusive legal reforms, and verbal autopsy mechanisms for accurate mortality data.

India's Refusal to Sign SCO Draft Statement

Recent Context:

At the **SCO Defence Ministers' Meet in Qingdao**, India **refused to endorse the draft joint statement,** objecting to the omission of **India-specific terror incidents.**

Key Points for Prelims – SCO & India's Stance:

1. **About SCO:** A **Eurasian intergovernmental organisation** focused on political, economic, security, and defence cooperation in Central & South Asia; founded in **2001.**
2. **Members (2025):** 10 countries – **India, China, Russia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, Belarus.**
3. **Objectives:** Promote **regional security, counter-terrorism, resolve border issues, economic cooperation, and multipolarity in global governance.**
4. **Governing Bodies:** **Heads of State Council (HSC)** and **Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)** handle decision-making and security cooperation.
5. **Reason for India's Refusal:** Draft statement ignored the **Pahalgam terror attack** while highlighting incidents in Pakistan; India demanded **balanced recognition of terrorism** across all members.
6. **India's Diplomatic Signal:** Demonstrates **zero tolerance for terrorism,** asserts **strategic autonomy,** and challenges **China-Pakistan influence** within SCO.
7. **Strategic Implication:** Strengthens India's position ahead of the **SCO Heads of State Summit in Tianjin,** pushing for **terrorism-centric reforms in RATS.**

SOURCE – THE HINDU

Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF)

Recent Context:

Established in **2025,** the American-based **Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF)** is actively distributing humanitarian aid amid the ongoing **Gaza**

crisis, backed by Israel and the US, but not part of the UN.

Key Points for Prelims:

1. **Founded:** 2025, headquartered in **Delaware, USA**.
2. **Purpose:** Provides **humanitarian aid** during crises, especially in Gaza.
3. **Support:** Operates with backing from **Israeli and American governments**.
4. **Independence:** **Not affiliated with the United Nations** or its agencies.
5. **Scope of Aid:** Includes **food, medical supplies, shelter, and emergency relief**.
6. **Operational Model:** Works through **government partnerships** for logistics and funding.
7. **Significance:** Enhances **US-Israeli cooperation in humanitarian assistance** while addressing immediate civilian needs in conflict zones.

West Bank

Recent Context:

The **West Bank** remains a focal point in the Israel-Palestine conflict, with ongoing discussions on settlements, administration, and Palestinian statehood.

Key Points for Prelims:

1. **Location:** Landlocked territory in **Western Asia**, between **Israel and Jordan**.
2. **Significance:** Forms the main part of the **Palestinian territories**.
3. **Borders:** **Jordan** (east), **Dead Sea** (east), **Israel** (south, west, north), **Mediterranean coast**.
4. **Historical Control:** Captured by **Jordan (1948)** after the Arab-Israeli War; **Israel occupied it in 1967** during the Six-Day War.



5. **Administrative Capital:** **Ramallah**, major city and de facto capital of Palestine.
6. **Current Status:** Under **Israeli occupation**, with restricted Palestinian autonomy in parts of the territory.
7. **Strategic Importance:** Central to negotiations on peace, settlements, and Palestinian sovereignty.

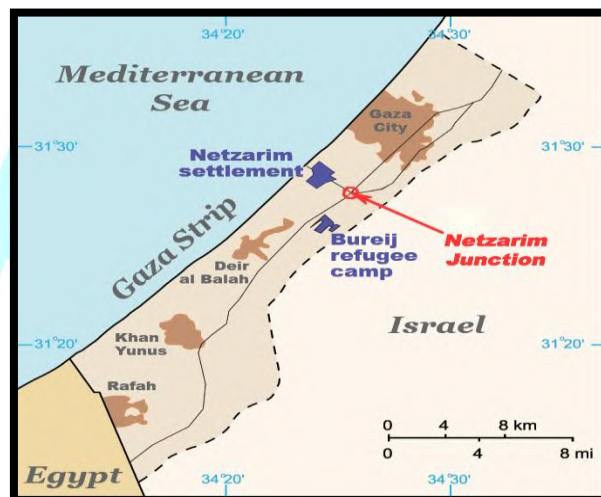
Netzarim Corridor

Recent Context:

Created during the **2023–2025 Gaza War**, the corridor is a militarized zone established by **Israel** to control movement within the Gaza Strip.

Key Points for Prelims:

1. **Length:** Approximately **6 kilometers**.
2. **Location:** Divides **northern Gaza** from **southern Gaza**, stretching from the Israeli



border (east) to the Mediterranean Sea (west).

3. **Purpose:** Established as a **militarized monitoring zone** for controlling Palestinian movement.
4. **Philadelphi Corridor:** A separate **14 km demilitarized zone** along **Gaza-Egypt border**.
5. **Rafah Corridor:** Covers the **entire Gaza-Egypt border (14 km)**, includes the **Rafah crossing**, from the Mediterranean Sea to the **Kerem Shalom crossing** with Israel.

- Strategic Importance:** Facilitates **security control**, monitoring, and military operations within Gaza.
- Conflict Relevance:** Highlights **territorial fragmentation and mobility restrictions** during Israel-Gaza conflicts.

Operation ATALANTA | EU NAVFOR

Recent Context:

The **Indian Navy** and **EUNAVFOR** are set to conduct a **joint naval exercise in the Indian Ocean Region**, marking the first operational engagement of EUNAVFOR warships in Indian waters.

Key Points for Prelims:

- Launch Year: 2008**, the **EU's first-ever naval operation**.
- Purpose:** Counter-piracy mission in the **Western Indian Ocean and Red Sea**.
- UN Backing:** Initiated under **UNSC resolutions passed in 2008**.
- Legal Framework:** Operates under the **EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)**.
- Key Objectives:**
 - Protect **World Food Programme (WFP) shipments**.
 - Ensure the **safety of vulnerable vessels**.
 - Deter piracy** and armed robbery at sea.
 - Monitor illegal fishing** and maritime threats.
- Participants:** Core **EU member states** (Spain, Italy, Germany, France, etc.) with **associated partners** like Norway and Serbia.
- Strategic Importance:** Strengthens **maritime security**, safeguards **international shipping lanes**, and enhances **India-EU naval cooperation**.

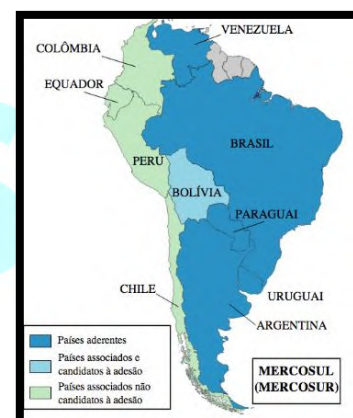
MERCOSUR (Southern Common Market)

Recent Context:

In **2024**, **Bolivia** became a **full-time member** of MERCOSUR, expanding the South American trading bloc.

Key Points for Prelims:

- Full Form: Southern Common Market** (Spanish: **Mercado Común del Sur – MERCOSUR**).
- Establishment: 1991**, via the **Treaty of Asunción**.
- Founding Members: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay**.
- Later Members: Bolivia and Venezuela** (Venezuela suspended since **December 1, 2016**).
- Objective:** Promote **free movement of goods, services, capital, and people** among member states.
- Size & Significance:** 4th-largest integrated market globally after **EU, NAFTA, and ASEAN**.
- Headquarters & Language: Montevideo, Uruguay; Spanish and Portuguese** are official languages.
- Decision-making Body: Common Market Council –** coordinates foreign and economic policy.
- India Connection: Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) signed in 2004.**



India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) & Related Strategic Transport Corridors

Recent Context:

Launched during the **G20 Summit 2023 in New Delhi**, IMEC is a strategic multi-modal connectivity initiative under the **Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII)**. It aims to enhance trade efficiency between **India, the Middle East, and Europe** while reducing dependency on the Suez Canal route.

Key Points for Prelims:

1. India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)

- Signatories:** India, US, Saudi Arabia, UAE, European Union, Italy, France, Germany.



2. Corridors:

- **East Corridor:** India → Gulf
- **Northern Corridor:** Gulf → Europe

3. Mode: Multi-modal – railroad, ship-to-rail, and road networks.

4. Key Ports Connected:

- **India:** Mundra, Kandla, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT)
- **Middle East:** Fujairah, Jebel Ali, Abu Dhabi (UAE); Dammam, Ras Al Khair (Saudi Arabia)
- **Israel:** Haifa port
- **Europe:** Piraeus (Greece), Messina (Italy), Marseille (France)

5. Strategic Benefits: Reduces logistics costs by ~30% and transport time by ~40% versus the Suez Canal route.

6. Rail Link: Connects Fujairah (UAE) to Haifa (Israel) via Saudi Arabia (Ghuwaifat, Haradh) and Jordan.

Northern Sea Route (NSR)

1. **Definition:** Shortest maritime route between Europe and Asia-Pacific via the Arctic Ocean.
2. **Length & Route:** ~5,600 km through Barents, Kara, Laptev, East Siberian Seas; Kara Strait → Bering Strait (Provideniya Bay).
3. **Strategic Importance:**
 - Reduces transit distance by up to 50% vs Suez Canal.
 - Growing relevance due to melting Arctic ice and search for alternative trade corridors.
4. **India's Involvement:** Proposed joint feasibility study with Norway for operationalizing NSR.

Prelims-Relevant Takeaways:

- IMEC = G20 2023, multi-modal corridor India ↔ Middle East ↔ Europe
- INSTC = India-Russia-Iran 2000, bypasses Red Sea, 13 members
- NSR = Shortest Europe-Asia route via Arctic, ~50% faster than Suez
- Multi-modal connectivity and alternative routes = strategic, economic, and energy access significance



BRICS Parliamentary Forum

Recent Context:

The 11th BRICS Parliamentary Forum was recently held in Brasilia, Brazil. India is set to chair the 12th edition in 2026.

Key Points for Prelims:

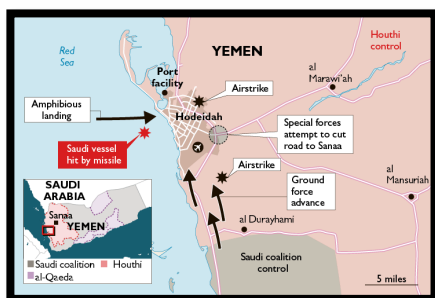
1. **Purpose:** Platform for dialogue among parliaments of BRICS member countries to strengthen legislative cooperation.
2. **Inception:** First Forum held in 2015, Moscow, during Russia's chairmanship.
3. **Membership:** Involves parliamentarians from all BRICS countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa.
4. **Chairmanship:** Rotates annually among BRICS nations.
5. **India's Role:** Officially taking over the 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum chairmanship in 2026.
6. **Significance:**
 - Promotes legislative collaboration and mutual understanding.

- Strengthens **BRICS cohesion and policy coordination**.
7. **Link to BRICS Summit:** Serves as a **preparatory forum** influencing discussions at **BRICS heads of state summits**.

Hodeidah Port & IALA

Recent Context:

Hodeidah Port in **western Yemen** on the **Red Sea coast** remains a critical entry point, with **about 70% of imports** and **80% of humanitarian aid** to Yemen passing through **Hodeidah, Salif, and Ras Issa**.



Key Points for UPSC Prelims:

Hodeidah Port

1. **Location:** Western Yemen, Red Sea coast.
2. **Significance:** Major entry point for **humanitarian aid** and commercial imports.
3. **Strategic Importance:** Plays a key role in **Yemen's ongoing humanitarian crisis**.

International Association of Marine Aids to

Navigation (IALA)

1. **Established:** 1957 as an NGO; became **intergovernmental in 2021**.
2. **Purpose:** Standardizes and enhances **marine aids to navigation (AtoN)** to ensure **global maritime safety and efficiency**.
3. **Headquarters:** Saint-Germain-en-Laye, near Paris, France.
4. **India's Role:** Council member since 1980; **Vice President (2023–2027)**.
5. **Recent Participation:** India attended the **2nd IALA Council Session in Nice, France (2023)**.
6. **Upcoming Events Hosted by India:**
 - **3rd General Assembly (2025)** in Mumbai
 - **21st IALA Conference (2027)** in Mumbai

7. **Global Maritime Significance:** Enhances India's role in **international maritime safety governance**.

Congo Fever (Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever - CCHF)

Recent Context:

CCHF continues to be a viral hemorrhagic fever of concern, transmitted by ticks and infected livestock, with **human-to-human transmission possible through body fluids**.

Key Points for Prelims:

1. **Other Name:** Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF).
2. **Cause:** Caused by the **CCHF virus**, a member of the **Nairovirus** genus.
3. **Transmission:**
 - **Primary:** Tick bites (**Hyalomma** species).
 - **Secondary:** Contact with blood or body fluids of infected animals or humans.
4. **Symptoms:** High fever, bleeding, muscle aches, headache, and in severe cases, multi-organ failure.
5. **Treatment:** No FDA- or WHO-approved therapeutics; supportive care is the mainstay.
6. **History:** First identified in Crimea (1940s); later linked to Congo Hemorrhagic Fever.
7. **Significance:** Listed among high-risk viral hemorrhagic fevers, requiring strict infection control in healthcare and livestock management

Operation Midnight Hammer

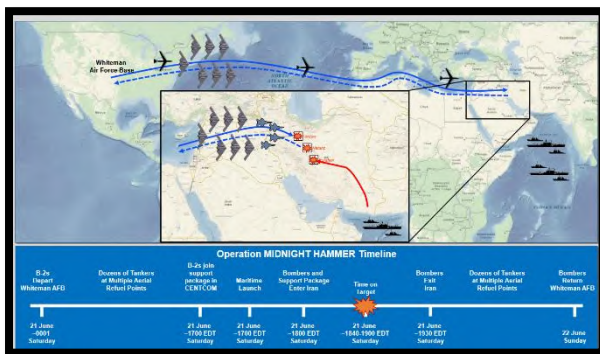
Recent Context:

- **Launched by the United States targeting Iran's nuclear infrastructure.**
- **Focused on key nuclear facilities: Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan.**
- Utilized B-2 Spirit stealth bombers equipped with GBU-57A/B Massive Ordnance Penetrator (MOP) for precision strikes.

Key Points for Prelims:

1. **Nature:** A military operation aimed at disabling nuclear facilities.

2. **Country of Initiation:** United States of America.
3. **Targeted Facilities in Iran:**
 - Fordow Nuclear Facility
 - Natanz Nuclear Facility
 - Isfahan Nuclear Facility
4. **Weapon System Used:** GBU-57A/B Massive Ordnance Penetrator (MOP) – a bunker-busting precision bomb.
5. Aircraft Deployed: B-2 Spirit stealth bombers.
6. **Strategic Purpose:** Disrupt Iran's nuclear weapons development capabilities.





TOPICS COVERED-

- **India Must Rethink Neutrality Amid Rising Global Tensions** – Evaluating India’s stance in conflicts to protect strategic interests.
- **India Rethinks Global South Aid Amid Financial Challenges** – Adjusting foreign aid priorities due to fiscal constraints.
- **Growing U.S. Imperialism Challenges India and Global Order** – Assessing implications of US global policies on India and multilateralism.
- **India Restricts Jute & Flax Imports to One Seaport** – Trade policy for better regulation and monitoring.
- **India Balances Global Roles through BRICS and G7** – Leveraging multilateral forums for strategic and economic positioning.
- **Middle East Conflicts and Global Oil Markets** – Regional instability affecting energy security and global trade.
- **India’s Emerging Role in Global Manufacturing** – Strengthening manufacturing competitiveness and global supply chains.
- **BRICS, De-dollarisation, and Global Economic Strategy** – Strategic engagement to reduce dependence on the US dollar.
- **Military Expenditure, Global Security, and Implications for India** – Analyzing global arms trends and India’s defense priorities.
- **India Must Confront Reality in Foreign Policy** – Adapting strategies to changing global power dynamics.
- **United States Accelerates Deep Seabed Mining Ambitions** – Geo-economic and environmental implications for India.
- **China’s Green Energy Revolution and Global Leadership** – Examining renewable energy advancements and influence in global climate policy.
- **India-Brazil Relations – Strategic Partnership & Bilateral Ties** – Expanding trade, climate, and multilateral cooperation.
- **India-Namibia Relations & India-Africa Engagement** – Strengthening diplomatic and development partnerships.
- **India-Argentina Relations – Strategic & Economic Cooperation** – Bilateral trade, technology, and energy collaboration.
- **India-Ghana Relations – Historic Visit and Bilateral MoUs** – Deepening economic and cultural ties.
- **17th BRICS Summit – Global South Cooperation & Governance** – Promoting development, trade, and shared governance principles.
- **India-Trinidad and Tobago Relations – Diaspora & Development** – Engaging diaspora and advancing development projects.
- **India & the Global South – Strategic Leadership and Development** – Leadership role in South-South cooperation.
- **India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)** – Trade liberalization, investment, and market access.
- **India-Taliban 2.0 Engagement – Strategic & Humanitarian** – Diplomacy balancing security concerns and humanitarian aid.
- **India-Maldives Relations – SAGAR & Neighbourhood First Initiatives** – Maritime cooperation and regional stability.
- **China’s Hydropower Project on the Brahmaputra River – Water Security Concerns** – Impact on India’s downstream water resources.

- **India–Latin American & Caribbean Countries Ties – Trade, Energy, Minerals** – Strengthening economic and strategic partnerships.
- **BRICS Rio de Janeiro Declaration – Global South, Climate Finance, AI Governance** – Commitment to collective development and technology governance.
- **Geelong Treaty under AUKUS – Nuclear Submarine Collaboration & Indo-Pacific Security** – Strategic defense partnership impacting regional security.
- **US Pulls Out of UNESCO – Multilateralism and Soft Power Implications** – Effects on global cultural and educational cooperation.
- **Group of Friends (GOF) – UN Peacekeeper Accountability Initiative** – Ensuring transparency and accountability in UN missions.
- **Pact for Future – Sustainable Development, Digital Cooperation, Youth & Governance** – Global initiatives for inclusive and sustainable development.
- **India Distances from SCO Statement on Israel-Iran – Strategic Autonomy** – Asserting independent foreign policy amid conflicting positions.



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SOURCE – THE HINDU

Topic: India Must Rethink Neutrality Amid Rising Global Tensions

Context: India's neutral foreign policy faces crisis due to China-Pakistan nexus, West Asia tensions, and U.S. unpredictability, demanding strategic reassessment in diplomacy, defense, and regional alignments.

About -

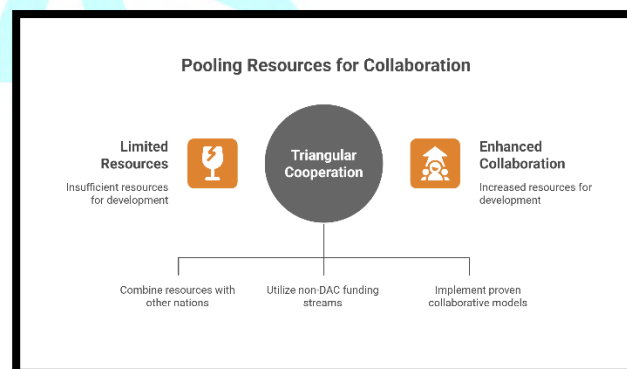
1. **Israel-Iran Conflict:** India's neutral stance ineffective; nuclear threat rises after U.S. use of GBU-57 bombs on Iran.
2. **Nuclear Neighbors:** India faces Pakistan and China as hostile nuclear powers; neutrality limits strategic leverage.
3. **U.S. Policy Shifts:** Trump's MAGA agenda strains India-U.S. ties; diplomatic gestures embolden pro-Pakistan lobbies.
4. **Hard Power Emphasis:** Global discourse favors military strength over dialogue; U.S.-China tensions escalate, impacting Indo-Pacific stability.
5. **China-Pakistan Military Integration:** Pakistani forces now use Chinese J-10C and JF-17 jets, creating regional strategic imbalance.
6. **Defense Modernization Needs:** India must focus on long-term war preparedness, electronic warfare, AI capabilities, and drone/munitions systems.
7. **Strategic Imperative:** Neutrality is unsustainable; India must counter regional encirclement, nuclear imbalance, and rising hard power conflicts with proactive defense and diplomacy.

Topic: India Rethinks Global South Aid Amid Financial Challenges

Context: India's development cooperation with the Global South faces budget constraints, declining traditional aid, and rising debt crises, prompting a strategic shift toward sustainable and resilient engagement.

About -

1. **Rising Assistance:** India's development aid grew from \$3B (2010–11) to \$7B (2023–24), strengthening ties with Global South nations.
2. **Engagement Modalities:** Five tools—capacity building, technology transfer, market access, grants, concessional finance (LoCs under IDEAS)—form India's cooperation framework.
3. **Balanced Framework: Global Development Compact** promotes harmony among modalities; third-country partnerships can enhance reach and impact.
4. **Limits of Lines of Credit:** Rising global liquidity crisis and partner countries' repayment issues reduce LoC effectiveness.
5. **Declining Traditional Aid:** USAID, FCDO, and OECD DAC influence wanes; global ODA projected to fall 45% (2023–27).
6. **SDG Financing Gap:** Investment needed for SDGs grew from \$2.5T (2015) to \$4T (2024); borrowing costs and unpredictability rise.
7. **Triangular Cooperation:** India can pool resources with like-minded nations; non-DAC flows and successful models from Indonesia-Brazil-Japan highlight collaborative pathways.



Topic: Growing U.S. Imperialism Challenges India and Global Order

Context: Rising U.S. unilateralism under Trump, global power rivalry, and weakening multilateralism challenge India's strategic autonomy and the Global South's cohesion, demanding an independent, multipolar approach.

About -

1. **Unilateral Military Actions:** U.S. attacks on Iranian nuclear sites violate international law, continuing patterns seen in Iraq and Afghanistan.

2. **Trump's Assertive Agenda: 'America First'** seeks U.S. hegemony revival amid **declining dominance**, often ignoring alliances.
3. **Strategic Rivalry with China:** China's **economic, technological, and global influence** challenges U.S. power; **Asia-Pacific focus** likely to dominate global affairs.
4. **India's Strategic Dilemma:** Deepening ties with **U.S. and Quad** risk **erosion of autonomy**; dependence may limit **multipolar opportunities**.
5. **Weak Regional Forums: SCO dominated by China, BRICS incoherent;** India's neutrality weakens **Global South solidarity**.

Topic: India Restricts Jute & Flax Imports to One Seaport

Context: India limits **Bangladesh jute and flax imports** to **Nhava Sheva Seaport**, aiming for **quality control, compliance, and traceability**, but risking **trade disruption** and **bilateral trust** with a key neighbour.

About -

1. **Seaport Restriction:** Imports now allowed only via **Nhava Sheva (JNPT)**; traditional land ports like **Petrapole and Gede** are excluded.
2. **Rationale:** Ensures **uniform inspection, traceability**, and better **quality control** using seaport facilities.
3. **Trade Disruption:** Bangladeshi exporters face **higher costs, delays**, and operational challenges due to **land-route restriction**.
4. **Economic Significance:** Raw **jute imports** rose from \$3.26M (2020) → \$9.43M (2022); **flax yarn** imports fluctuated, prompting regulatory scrutiny.
5. **Policy Realignment:** Shift from **liberalisation to managed trade**, focusing on **valuation accuracy** and **domestic interest protection**.
6. **Withdrawal of Concessions:** **Transshipment benefits revoked, Akhaura–Agartala rail project delayed**, signaling tighter **logistics control**.

Topic: India Balances Global Roles through BRICS and G7

Context: India navigates **dual global platforms—G7 and BRICS**—balancing strategic influence, promoting **multipolarity**, advancing **Global South interests**, and managing pressures from the **U.S. and Western powers**.

About -

1. **Contrasting Roles:** G7 sees India on **periphery**, while BRICS is a **founder-insider**, highlighting India's **differential global acceptance**.
2. **Diplomatic Atmosphere:** Brazil visit relaxed, no **protests or mediation**, unlike **Canada**, reflecting India's comfort in **BRICS**.
3. **Symbolic Recognition:** Brazil confers **highest civilian honour** to Modi; Canada's reception more formal.
4. **US Resistance:** Trump calls BRICS "dead" and threatens **tariffs**, seeing BRICS as **challenging dollar dominance**.
5. **BRICS Expansion:** 11 members, 13 partners, 30+ aspirants, many **US-allied**, showing a push for **strategic balance**.
6. **India's Strategic Role:** Attended all summits since 2009; raises **Global South issues**, promotes **climate justice, terrorism solutions, and UN reforms**.



Topic: Middle East Conflicts and Global Oil Markets

Context: Five decades of Middle East wars have shaped **global oil prices**, exposed vulnerabilities in the **Strait of Hormuz**, and highlighted the **limitations of conflict resolution** driven by diplomacy without addressing root causes.

About -

1. **Oil Price Shocks:** 1973 Yom Kippur War & 1979 Iranian Revolution caused **quadruple and double oil price rises**, triggering global stagflation.

2. **US-Iran Involvement:** Iran-Iraq War & Operation Praying Mantis showed vulnerability of **Strait of Hormuz**, transporting **20% global crude**.
3. **Gulf War Experiences:** Evacuations in 1990 highlighted **chaos, panic, and fear** in oil-rich regions affecting supply.
4. **2003 Iraq Invasion:** Oil crossed **\$100/barrel**, forcing India to reintroduce **fuel price controls**, affecting industrial operations.
5. **Recurring Conflict Patterns:** Wars ended via **diplomacy or stalemate**, but core issues (territorial, ideological, humanitarian) **remained unresolved**.
6. **Nuclear Focus vs Humanitarian Neglect:** Western focus on **proliferation risks** often ignores **humanitarian crises**, fueling future instability.

Topic: India's Emerging Role in Global Manufacturing

Context: China's coercive moves to block Foxconn's shift to India reveal its **strategic weakness**, while India's **growing manufacturing credibility** attracts global firms.

About -

1. **China's Coercion:** Blocking Foxconn & Apple shipments reflects **insecurity over India's rise** in high-skill manufacturing.
2. **Shrinking Chinese Lead:** US imports from China dropped from **15x India (2009)** to **5x (2025)**, alarming Chinese elite.
3. **Short-Term Disruption:** China slows India's manufacturing temporarily but damages **China's credibility**, enhancing India's **long-term appeal**.
4. **US Trade Shifts:** India's share in US imports has steadily increased, reflecting **growing global trust** and supply chain diversification.
5. **Limits of Chinese Statecraft:** Alliances with **Russia, North Korea, Iran** lack coordination; no **intellectual edge** in high-end manufacturing.
6. **Policy Lessons:** Effective policy needs **rule-based governance, predictability, and**

strategic thinking, contrasting China's coercion approach.

Topic: BRICS, De-dollarisation, and Global Economic Strategy

Context: The 2025 BRICS summit highlighted a **gradual move away from dollar dependence** through local currency trade and BRICS Pay, while carefully avoiding direct confrontation with the US.

About -

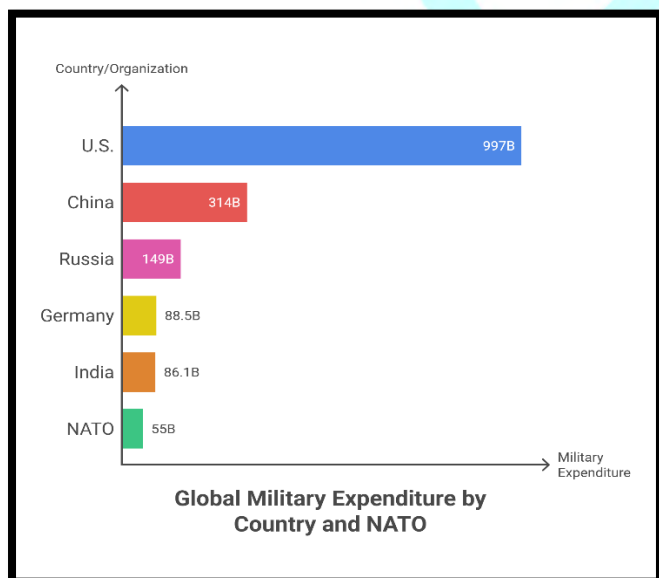
1. **India's Clarification:** India stressed that BRICS is **not challenging the US dollar**, aiming only to reduce **geopolitical exposure** via national currency trade.
2. **US Pressure:** Trump warned in January 2025 that launching a rival currency could invite **100% tariffs**, prompting India to balance its position vis-à-vis China and Russia.
3. **Quiet De-dollarisation:** Early measures like **bilateral trade in local currencies** and **BRICS Pay** indicate gradual transition without overtly replacing the dollar.
4. **Expanding BRICS Influence:** Inclusion of six new members (Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, UAE) and growing global presence **enhances economic and political weight**.
5. **Economic and Resource Clout:** BRICS accounts for **29% of global GDP (PPP)**, 48.5% of the world population, **36% of landmass**, 72% of rare earth minerals, 43.6% oil, and 36% natural gas production.
6. **BRICS Pay Platform:** Launched by China and Russia, covers **23 currencies**, linked to 75 countries, and offers an alternative to **SWIFT** for faster settlements.

Topic: Military Expenditure, Global Security, and Implications for India

Context: The June 2025 NATO summit's pledge to raise defence spending to **5% of GDP by 2035** highlights rising global militarisation. Increased military budgets threaten public goods, including health, development, and climate mitigation, while undermining global peace.

About -

1. **Surge in Global Spending:** In 2024, global military expenditure reached **\$2,718 billion**, a 9.4% YoY increase—the highest since 1988. Conflicts like Russia–Ukraine, Israel–Gaza, and new wars in 2025 (India–Pakistan, Israel–Iran) are driving further rises.
2. **Historical Trend:** Cold War peak was **6.1% of world GDP in 1960**, dropping to 2.1% by 1998; by 2024 it rose again to 2.5%, reversing post-Cold War demilitarisation.
3. **Top Spenders:** The U.S. leads (\$997B), followed by China (\$314B), Russia (\$149B), Germany (\$88.5B), and India (\$86.1B). NATO's 32 members contribute **55% of global military expenditure**.
4. **Crowding-Out Public Welfare:** High military spending often **reduces health and social budgets**, hitting low- and middle-income countries hardest. Spain resisted NATO's 5% target citing welfare trade-offs.

**India Must Confront Reality in Foreign Policy**

Topic: GS Paper 3 – Bilateral, regional & global groupings affecting India

Context: India's foreign policy faces a **credibility and realism crisis**, driven by hyper-nationalist rhetoric, self-praise, and failure to objectively assess global perceptions.

About -

1. **Erosion of Diplomatic Standing:** Operation Sindoor showed a gap between India's expectations and global responses; overestimating moral high ground isolates India.
2. **Moral Credibility Crisis:** Involvement in Balochistan, domestic religious issues, selective global advocacy (e.g., Gaza) undermines India's ethical influence.
3. **Flawed Realism:** Misconceptions of strength and overreliance on the US hinder strategic autonomy and neighbourhood relations.
4. **Institutional Weaknesses:** MEA diplomacy constrained by political priorities; public propaganda is prioritized over objective self-assessment.
5. **Global South Outreach Failure:** Poor handling of international operations and selective advocacy erodes credibility in developing nations.
6. **Perception vs Reality:** India's self-image often conflicts with external perceptions, limiting its soft power and influence.

United States Accelerates Deep Seabed Mining Ambitions

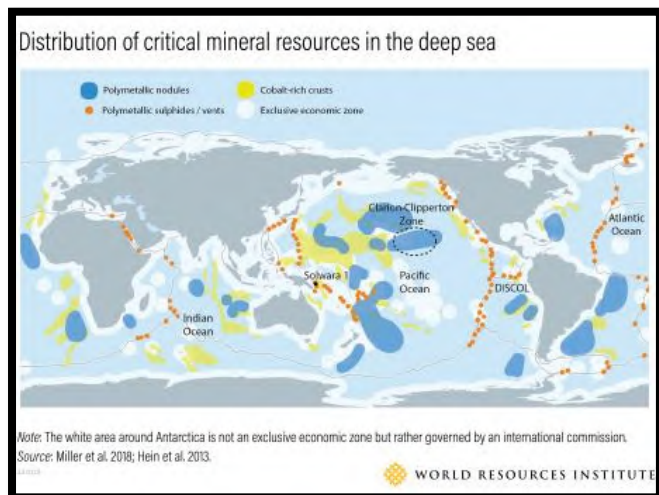
Context: The US pushes seabed mining to secure **critical minerals** for green tech and defense, raising legal, environmental, and strategic concerns.

About -

1. **Strategic Importance:** Deep-sea nodules provide nickel, cobalt, rare earths essential for EVs, wind turbines, and energy transition.
2. **Clarion-Clipperton Zone:** Pacific region between Mexico & Hawaii has vast mineral potential exceeding terrestrial reserves.
3. **US Executive Push:** Trump's order accelerates domestic mining and allied collaborations to lead global seabed extraction.
4. **Legal Challenges:** UNCLOS classifies seabed as "common heritage"; ISA regulates mining. US bypass risks undermining international norms.
5. **Geopolitical Motivation:** Reduces dependence on China-controlled minerals,

strengthens national security, and domestic supply chains.

6. **WTO Contradictions:** Restricting mineral exports domestically may conflict with previous US positions in global trade disputes.



China's Green Energy Revolution and Global Leadership

Topic: GS Paper 3 – Environment & GS Paper 2 – Global policies affecting India

Context: China leads renewable energy globally through **state-backed planning, massive investments, and SOE execution**, reshaping energy geopolitics.

About -

1. **Planned Transition:** Policy support from early 2000s, Renewable Energy Law (2005), and Five-Year Plans drove capacity expansion.
2. **Massive Investment:** \$10.7B (2006) → \$940B (2024); India attracted only \$3.4B, showing China's commitment to scale.
3. **State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs):** SOEs like State Grid, Huaneng, and Genertec implement infrastructure, manufacture at scale, and export technology.
4. **Pollution & Energy Security:** Crisis-driven urgency accelerated adoption and infrastructure deployment.
5. **Challenges:** Grid curtailment, overbuilding due to subsidies; addressed by ultra-high voltage lines and efficiency-focused planning.
6. **Global Influence:** SOEs operate in 61 countries, embedding Chinese tech and investments globally.

7. **Future Technologies:** China pursues AI smart grids, green hydrogen, thorium reactors, and shapes global rules for energy transition.

SOURCE – DRISHTI

Topic: India-Brazil Relations – Strategic Partnership & Bilateral Ties

Recent Context: India's Prime Minister visited Brazil in July 2025 after attending the 17th BRICS Summit; conferred Brazil's highest state honour (*Grand Collar of the National Order of the Southern Cross*).

About -

1. **Strategic Partnership:** Established in 2006; strengthened during PM's 2025 visit with focus on 5 priority pillars.
2. **Defense & Security:** Agreements signed on classified info exchange, combating terrorism & transnational crime; launched Cybersecurity Dialogue.
3. **Food & Agriculture:** Joint R&D in agriculture, biotech, and animal genetics; opposition to trade barriers affecting food security.
4. **Energy & Climate:** Focus on sustainable biofuels, flex-fuel vehicles; support for Global Biofuels Alliance and Brazil's COP30 Presidency (Nov 2025).
5. **Industrial Partnerships:** Collaboration in pharmaceuticals, mining, oil & gas; launch of Brazil-India Business Council; treaty enforcement on investment & double taxation.
6. **Trade & Diaspora:** Bilateral trade USD 12.2 Bn (2024–25); Indian investments USD 6 Bn, Brazilian USD 1 Bn; Indian diaspora ~4,000.

Topic: India-Namibia Relations & India-Africa Engagement

Recent Context: India's PM visited Namibia in July 2025—the first by an Indian PM in 27 years; conferred Namibia's highest civilian award (*Order of the Most Ancient Welwitschia Mirabilis*); Namibia joined CDRI and Global Biofuels Alliance and signed a UPI licensing agreement.

About -

1. **Historical & Diplomatic Ties:** India supported Namibia's independence at the UN (1946) and SWAPO; full diplomatic relations established in 1990; Namibia opened mission in New Delhi in 1994.
2. **Awards & Recognition:** PM received Namibia's top civilian honour named after *Welwitschia mirabilis*—a rare desert plant and "living fossil" native to Namibia.
3. **Strategic Cooperation:** Defence and capacity building via ITEC scholarships, Air Force pilot training, and provision of Chetak/Cheetah helicopters.
4. **Cheetah Translocation Project:** In 2022, 8 cheetahs moved from Namibia to India—the first intercontinental translocation of a major carnivore species.
5. **Economic & Tech Ties:** Bilateral trade USD 568.4 million (2024–25); Namibia became first country to adopt UPI technology; PTA under negotiation with SACU.

Topic: India-Argentina Relations

Recent Context:

- PM of India visited Argentina after 57 years, marking **75 years of diplomatic ties** and **5 years of Strategic Partnership**.
- Awarded the "**Key to the City of Buenos Aires**" for strengthening bilateral relations.

About -

1. **Capital & Geography:** Buenos Aires; borders **Chile, Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil, Uruguay**; 8th largest country globally.
2. **Strategic Partnership:** Elevated in **2019**; first PM visit in 57 years; strong **democratic & people-to-people ties**.
3. **Trade & Economy:** India-Argentina trade **USD 5.2B (2024)**; India's exports: **petroleum, textiles, pharmaceuticals**; imports: **soybean oil, leather, cereals**.
4. **MERCOSUR PTA:** Operational since **2009**; aims to **boost trade** and **diversify economic ties**; potential **FTA** in future.

5. **Energy & Minerals:** Argentina has **2nd largest shale gas, 4th largest shale oil**, part of **Lithium Triangle**; India's **KABIL** involved in lithium mining.
6. **Defence & Tech Cooperation:** **Co-development & tech transfer** in defence; adoption of India's **Digital Public Infrastructure** (UPI, telemedicine).
7. **Cultural & Historical Links:** Tagore visited Buenos Aires **1924**, met **Victoria Ocampo**; PM Indira Gandhi visited **1968**; strong **soft power** through Yoga, Ayurveda, Tagore@160 events.



INDIA-GHANA

Recent Context (30 words)

PM Narendra Modi's historic state visit to Ghana, first in over 30 years, strengthened India-Ghana ties, elevated the partnership, and resulted in key MoUs on culture, standards, and traditional medicine.

7 Prelims-Specific Pointers

1. Ghana's capital: **Accra**; bordered by Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Togo, Gulf of Guinea.
2. Gained independence: **1957**; first Black African country south of Sahara.
3. Formerly called **Gold Coast**; major exports: **gold, cocoa, cashew nuts**.
4. PM Modi received **Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana**.
5. Bilateral trade (2024–25): **USD 3+ billion**; India exports **pharma, machinery, textiles**.
6. Key MoUs: **Cultural Exchange, BIS-GSA, Traditional Medicine, Joint Commission**.
7. India-Ghana Joint Commission established in **1995** for high-level dialogue.

17th BRICS Summit

Recent Context -

PM Narendra Modi attended the 17th BRICS Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where Indonesia joined BRICS, partner countries were welcomed, and India will host the 18th Summit in 2026.

About -

1. **Theme & Declaration:** Summit theme – “Strengthening Global South Cooperation for More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance”; Rio de Janeiro Declaration adopted.
2. **New Members & Partners:** Indonesia joined BRICS; Belarus, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Nigeria, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Uganda, Uzbekistan recognized as partner countries.
3. **Global Governance Reform:** BRICS supports UN Security Council expansion, IMF & World Bank reforms, and a rules-based WTO reflecting Emerging Markets & Developing Countries (EMDCs).
4. **Sustainable Development & Climate:** Leaders endorsed BRICS Carbon Markets Partnership and Climate Finance Framework Declaration to mobilize resources for developing nations.
5. **Strategic Significance:** BRICS accounts for 45% of world population, 37.3% of global GDP; energy security enhanced with Middle Eastern members; serves as neutral diplomatic platform and multilateral reform instrument.

India – Trinidad and Tobago Relations

Recent Context -

PM Narendra Modi’s visit marked the first Indian PM visit since 1999; he received The Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, strengthening diaspora ties, development, and strategic cooperation.

About -

1. **Geography & Capital:** Trinidad and Tobago, Caribbean nation, northeast of Venezuela, capital Port of Spain; comprises Trinidad, Tobago, and smaller islands.

2. **Economic Profile:** Key resources: oil, gas, asphalt, sugarcane; major activities: petroleum refining, LNG exports, tourism, agriculture.
3. **Bilateral Agreements:** Cooperation in CDRI, Global Biofuel Alliance, pharmaceutical collaboration, digital payments (UPI, DigiLocker, e-Sign), and diplomatic training.
4. **Diaspora & Cultural Ties:** OCI cards extended to 6th generation; ICCR chairs in Hindi & Indian studies; support for Pandit training, cultural exchange promoted.
5. **Development Support:** India provides Quick Impact Projects (≤ USD 50,000 each), agro-machinery (USD 1 million), millet cultivation, seaweed-based fertilizers, and natural farming assistance.
6. **Historical & Demographic Links:** Indian indentured workers (Bhojpuri Girmitiyas) arrived in 1845; their descendants form 40–45% of population; formal relations established in 1962.

SOURCE – INSIGHTS

Topic: India & the Global South

Recent Context -

PM Modi’s five-nation tour to Ghana, Trinidad & Tobago, Argentina, Brazil, and Namibia strengthened India’s leadership in the Global South, advancing diplomacy, strategic partnerships, and development cooperation.

About -

1. **Global South** – Developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America; shared developmental challenges; demand greater global representation.
2. **Origin** – Term from 1960s (Carl Oglesby), Brandt Line (1980); post-COVID, Ukraine war, climate crisis relevance.
3. **Key Challenges** – Climate vulnerability, debt distress, resource monopolisation, digital inequality, geopolitical marginalisation.

4. **Institutional Platforms** – G77 (134 nations), NAM (120 nations), Voice of the Global South summits.
5. **India's Role** – Diplomatic voice, strategic partnerships (Ghana, Argentina, Namibia, Brazil), technology & infrastructure export (UPI, telemedicine).
6. **Balanced Foreign Policy** – Maintains strategic autonomy while retaining Global South trust (Gaza, Iran, BRICS).

Topic: India–UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)

Recent Context -

India and the UK signed CETA and India–UK Vision 2035, enhancing zero-duty trade, technology collaboration, defence partnerships, climate action, education, and strategic bilateral ties for long-term growth.

About -

1. **CETA** – Free Trade Agreement; zero-duty access on 99% tariff lines for Indian exports; includes goods, services, mobility, investment, social security exemptions.
2. **Key Provisions** – Goods: textiles, gems, leather, marine products; Services: IT, legal, financial; DCC: 3-year social security exemption for professionals.
3. **Inclusive Growth** – Focus on **MSMEs, women entrepreneurs, youth**, artisans; access to UK \$63.4B agricultural market (excluding sensitive items).
4. **Vision 2035 Pillars** – **Growth, Technology, Defence, Climate, Education**; roadmap for bilateral trade, investments, innovation, and skill development.
5. **Technology & Innovation** – AI, 6G, semiconductors, biotech, cybersecurity; India–UK Critical Minerals Guild; startup incubators, catapults, biofoundries.
6. **Defence & Security** – 10-Year Defence Industrial Roadmap; joint R&D in electric propulsion, directed energy; expanded 2+2 dialogue, military exercises, counter-terror cooperation.

India–Taliban 2.0 Engagement

Recent Context -

India held high-level talks with the Taliban, including EAM Jaishankar's call with Amir Khan Muttaqi, leveraging Taliban–Pakistan tensions and Russia's recognition to cautiously deepen strategic engagement.

About -

1. **Historical Context** – First Taliban regime (1996–2001) hostile; post-2021 Taliban more open, offering India diplomatic opportunity.
2. **Humanitarian Aid** – India provided \$3B+ in development projects: dams, hospitals, Parliament, education; first responder post-U.S. withdrawal.
3. **Pakistan–Taliban Breakdown** – Taliban-TTP rift weakens Islamabad leverage; strategic window for India.
4. **Multi-Ring Strategy** – Afghanistan in India's '**first ring**'; aim for strategic primacy, block Pakistan/China influence.
5. **Counter-Terrorism** – Taliban commitment to prevent anti-India activities strengthens border security.
6. **Central Asia Access** – Afghanistan as bridge via Chabahar port and Afghan corridor; bypassing Pakistan for trade and connectivity.
7. **Energy Security** – Afghanistan/Central Asia hold untapped reserves; engagement ensures energy and strategic corridors for India.

Topic: India–Maldives Relations

Recent Context -

During PM Modi's visit, India and Maldives signed 8 agreements including UPI integration, debt relief, infrastructure Line of Credit, fisheries, and security cooperation, strengthening strategic and developmental ties.

About -

1. **Neighbourhood First & SAGAR** – Maldives key partner in India's Indian Ocean strategy; critical for security and growth in the region.
2. **8 Key Agreements** – Debt relief (40%), ₹4,850 Cr LoC, UPI & RuPay integration, fisheries,

3,300 housing units, security assistance, climate & disaster partnership, FTA/investment talks.

3. **Defence & Security** – Joint exercises: **Ekuverin, Ekatha, Dosti**; training 1,500+ MNDF officers; coastal radar, harbours, MEDEVAC & HADR support.
4. **Development Assistance** – Greater Malé Connectivity, Hanimaadhoo Airport, IGMH hospital, 47 HICDPs; India first responder during crises (Tsunami, water crisis, COVID-19).
5. **Trade & Investment** – Largest trading partner (\$548M, 2023); key exports: food, medicine; imports: scrap metal, seafood; UPI/RuPay digital integration.
6. **Tourism & Culture** – India top tourist source; open skies agreement; education & HRD: ICCR scholarships, ITEC training, teacher exchange, new police/technical institutes.

SOURCE – VISION MONTHLY

Topic: India–United Kingdom Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)

Recent Context -

India and the UK signed CETA, eliminating over 99% of tariffs and enhancing trade, services, and professional mobility. India-UK Vision 2035 and Defence Industrial Roadmap were also adopted.

About -

1. **Tariff Elimination:** 99% of India-UK trade lines duty-free; sensitive sectors like dairy protected.
2. **Services Access:** IT, finance, education, healthcare gain deeper UK market entry.
3. **Professional Mobility:** Mutual recognition of qualifications; 90 days–3 years temporary stay.
4. **Double Contribution Convention:** Exempts Indian professionals from UK social security for 3 years.
5. **Rules of Origin:** Self-certification; consignments <£1,000 exempt; PSRs align with key sectors.

6. **MSME & Inclusive Growth:** Supports SMEs, women entrepreneurs, and youth employment.
7. **Strategic Significance:** Boosts trade, innovation, and India's global economic presence.

Topic: China's Hydropower Project on the Brahmaputra River

Recent Context -

China began constructing the Medog mega dam on the Yarlung Zangbo (Brahmaputra) in Tibet, raising concerns over water security, environmental impact, and regional geopolitics affecting India and downstream nations.

About -

1. **Location:** Great Bend of Yarlung Zangbo River in Tibet, near Arunachal Pradesh border.
2. **Scale:** Will surpass Three Gorges Dam; five cascade hydropower plants divert up to 50% of river flow.
3. **Environmental Risk:** Threat to 218 fish species and sediment flow crucial for Ganga-Brahmaputra delta.
4. **Disaster Vulnerability:** Seismic Zone V; landslides and earthquakes (e.g., Dec 2024, 7.5 magnitude) pose dam failure risk.
5. **Geopolitical Concerns:** Potential “water bomb” and disruption to agriculture, hydro projects, and food security in Northeast India.
6. **India-China Cooperation:** Brahmaputra data-sharing MoUs (2006, 2013) expired; renewal under discussion.

Topic: India–Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) Countries Ties

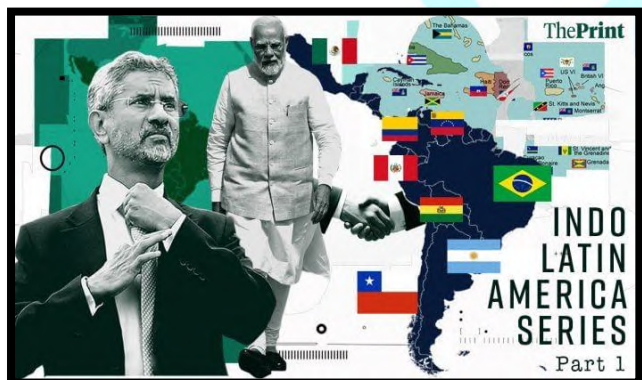
Recent Context -

Prime Minister visited **Trinidad & Tobago, Argentina, Brazil**, participated in the **17th BRICS Summit**, received highest civilian honours, and announced **OCI extension** for sixth-generation diaspora.

About -

1. **Defense Cooperation:** India–Brazil 2+2 Political-Military dialogue; Joint Defence Committee meetings strengthen strategic ties.

2. **Critical Minerals:** KABIL–CAMYEN agreement for five **lithium blocks** in Argentina; first Indian state-owned mining in the Lithium Triangle (Chile, Argentina, Bolivia).
3. **Food Security:** LAC supplies **edible oils and pulses**; Argentina is key supplier of **soybean oil**.
4. **Trade & Investment:** Total trade USD **35.73 billion (2023-24)**; Indian investment USD **12 billion** in IT, pharma, energy, mining, manufacturing, agro-chemicals.
5. **Energy Security:** Crude oil imports from **Venezuela, Mexico, Brazil** = 30% of India's LAC imports; biofuel cooperation with Brazil via **Biofuture Platform**.
6. **Climate & Renewable Energy:** USD **140 million Line of Credit** to CARICOM for **solar and climate projects**.
7. **Multilateral Cooperation:** Active participation in **BRICS, IBSA, G4, G20**, and regional groupings **CELAC, CARICOM, SICA**.



Topic: BRICS Rio de Janeiro Declaration

Recent Context -

At the **17th BRICS Summit**, leaders signed the **Rio de Janeiro Declaration**, emphasizing **Global South cooperation**, inclusive governance, climate finance, AI governance, and tropical forest conservation, with expanded membership and partner countries.

About -

1. **Membership Expansion:** Indonesia joined as BRICS member; **Belarus, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Nigeria, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Uganda, Uzbekistan** recognized as partner countries.

2. **Socially Determined Diseases (SDDs):** Launched **Partnership to eliminate SDDs**, linking poverty, inequality, and living conditions with sustainable development challenges.
3. **Climate Finance:** Developed countries urged to mobilize **USD 300 billion/year by 2035**; supports **blended finance, guarantees, bonds, and Tropical Forest Forever Fund (TFFF)**.
4. **Tropical Forest Forever Fund (TFFF):** Innovative mechanism to generate **~USD 4 billion annually** for tropical forest conservation through public-private investments and performance-based payments.
5. **Economic & Trade Cooperation:** Strategy for **BRICS Economic Partnership 2030**, launch of **BRICS Multilateral Guarantees (BMG) pilot** under NDB to derisk investments, support **WTO-based multilateral trade system**.

Topic: Geelong Treaty under AUKUS

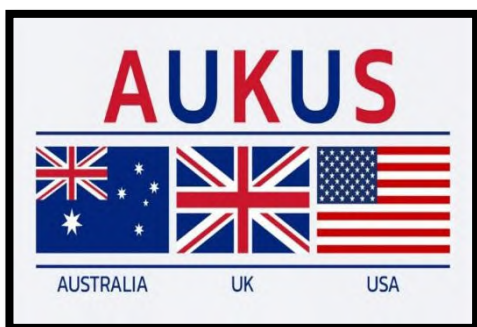
Recent Context -

Australia and the UK signed the **Geelong Treaty** under **AUKUS Pillar I**, enabling **nuclear-powered submarine collaboration**, resilient supply chains, and Indo-Pacific security, aligned with non-proliferation norms for the next 50 years.

About -

1. **Objective:** Covers **design, build, operation, sustainment, and disposal** of SSN-AUKUS submarines; supports **trilateral supply chains**.
2. **AUKUS Overview:** Security pact (2021) between **Australia, UK, USA**; Pillar I (submarine development), Pillar II (advanced military tech: AI, autonomy, EW, modeling/simulation).
3. **Strategic Significance:** Strengthens **US-led Indo-Pacific alliance**, counters **China**, enhances **US presence**, and boosts **defence industry cooperation**.
4. **Timeline:** US to sell submarines to Australia **2030s**, UK-Australia joint production enters service **early 2040s**.

5. **Opportunities:** Complements **QUAD**, high trust via **Five Eyes**, enhances **hard power capabilities**, aligns with UK & Australian defence strategies.
6. **Operational Edge:** Nuclear submarines (~20 knots) faster than conventional (~6.5 knots), can remain on station longer, ensuring rapid response.



US Pulls Out of UNESCO

Recent Context: The US exited UNESCO citing anti-Israel bias and “woke” agendas, reducing its global UN engagement and potentially boosting China’s influence in multilateral cultural and educational spaces.

About -

1. UNESCO = UN specialized agency for **education, science, culture**.
2. HQ: **Paris, France**; Members: **194 + 12 associates**.
3. US contribution ≈ **8% of UNESCO budget**.
4. Withdrawal = **3rd US exit**, 2nd under current leadership.
5. Key initiatives: **World Heritage Sites, MAB Programme, Global Education Monitoring Report**.
6. Implication: Weakens **multilateralism and US soft power**.
7. Related UN exits: **WHO, UNRWA funding cuts**.

Group of Friends (GOF)

Recent Context: India reaffirmed commitment to **justice for UN peacekeepers** at GOF, highlighting accountability for crimes against peacekeeping personnel.

About -

1. Indian-led initiative promoting **accountability for violence against UN peacekeepers**.
2. Launched in **2022**.
3. Linked to **UNAOC (United Nations Alliance of Civilizations)**.
4. Drives **strategic planning and implementation** in UNAOC.
5. Focus: **Protection of UN peacekeepers**.
6. Platform for **multilateral cooperation and diplomacy**.
7. Strengthens India’s **global leadership in peacekeeping advocacy**.



Pact for Future

Recent Context: India reaffirmed commitment to **Pact for Future** at UN dialogue, focusing on sustainable development, digital cooperation, youth, and governance reforms for future generations.

About -

1. Adopted at **Summit of the Future, 2024**.
2. Includes **Global Digital Compact** and **Declaration on Future Generations**.
3. Focuses on **digital cooperation, human rights, sustainable development**.
4. Promotes **concrete commitments with measurable deliverables**.
5. Key areas: **peace, security, science, tech, youth, governance**.
6. Strengthens **multilateral engagement and global policy frameworks**.
7. Encourages **future-oriented governance and international collaboration**.

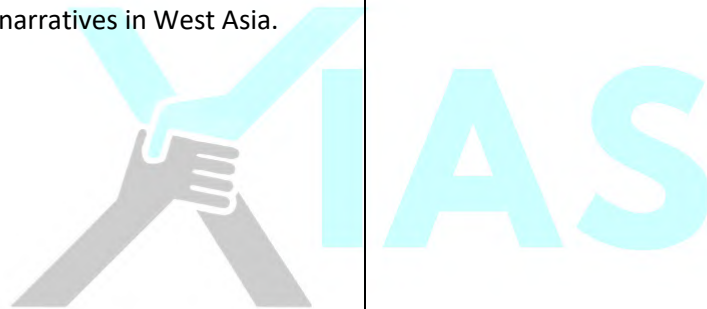
SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS

India Distances from SCO Statement on Israel-Iran

Recent Context - India dissociated from SCO's condemnation of Israel's strikes on Iran, signaling strategic autonomy and refusal to follow bloc politics, reflecting a new realism in its global diplomacy.

About -

1. **SCO = Shanghai Cooperation Organisation**, regional intergovernmental organization founded 2001.
2. **India** is a full member since 2017; current SCO chair: **China**.
3. Issue: **SCO statement condemned Israel**, India did **not participate or endorse**.
4. Shows India's **sovereignty and non-alignment** in bloc politics.
5. China's approach: uses SCO to **project bloc-based legitimacy** and moral authority.
6. India signals **strategic autonomy and multipolar realism**, avoiding ideological alignment.
7. Reflects **emerging power dynamics** and contest over global narratives in West Asia.





TOPICS COVERED-

1. **India–Canada Ties – Strategic Reset** – PM Carney’s 2025 visit revived trade talks, ministerial dialogue, and cooperation in AI, energy transition, and counterterrorism.
2. **India’s Five-Nation Global South Outreach** – PM toured Ghana, Trinidad & Tobago, Argentina, Brazil, Namibia to deepen trade, diaspora engagement, and counter China’s influence.
3. **BRICS Summit 2025** – Rio Summit focused on Global South solidarity, UNSC reforms, AI governance, investment guarantees, and de-dollarisation.
4. **2nd BIMSTEC Ports Conclave** – Operationalised AMTC to boost blue economy, connectivity, and skill development; hosted in Visakhapatnam.
5. **India–UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)** – 2025 FTA provides 99% duty-free lines, aims to double trade to \$112 billion by 2030.
6. **India–EU FTA – Food Safety Disagreements** – Stalled over SPS standards; EU aflatoxin limits stricter than Codex, impacting India’s agri-exports.
7. **Border Dispute between Thailand and Cambodia** – 2025 airstrikes near Preah Vihear temple; ICJ rulings affirmed Cambodian sovereignty; tensions persist.
8. **ICC Issues Arrest Warrant Against Taliban Leaders** – Warrants against Hibatullah Akhunzada & Abdul Hakim Haqqani for gender-based persecution in Afghanistan.
9. **US Designates The Resistance Front (TRF) as Global Terror Outfit** – TRF, LeT proxy, declared FTO & SDGT; enables sanctions and supports India’s UNSC listing efforts.
10. **US to Withdraw from UNESCO** – Citing bias against Israel; impacts funding of heritage and educational projects; US withdrawal by 2026.
11. **African Kingdom of Eswatini** – Absolute monarchy; high HIV prevalence; receives US deportees under third-country agreements.
12. **India–France Army Exercise: SHAKTI 2025** – Focus on sub-conventional operations, EW, C-UAS training; enhances interoperability with France.
13. **Fair and Representative Global Order** – India advocates reforms in UNSC, IMF, climate, and AI governance to address Global South inequities.
14. **India’s Strategy in the Indian Ocean** – MAHASAGAR doctrine; India as net security provider; anti-piracy, EEZ surveillance, disaster relief, countering China’s footprint.
15. **ASEAN Centrality** – Amid US–China rivalry, India supports ASEAN-led forums (ARF, ADMM-Plus, EAS) and strengthens Indo-Pacific cooperation.
16. **India–Philippines Strategic Partnership** – Elevated to Strategic Partnership (2025–2029); deepens defense, cyber, maritime, and economic cooperation.
17. **UN–India Global Capacity-Building Initiative** – Launched 2023; shares India’s development best practices with Asia, Africa, and Caribbean for SDG implementation.
18. **India–Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) FTA Negotiations** – 2025 ToR signed; aims to boost trade, MSMEs, energy, and multi-alignment strategy.

19. **Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty** – Russia exits 2025; escalates nuclear arms race; first treaty removing entire class of ground-launched missiles.
20. **Armenia–Azerbaijan Peace Agreement (US-brokered)** – Ceasefire, diplomatic ties, TRIPP transit corridor; resolves Nagorno-Karabakh conflict; US strategic role.
21. **Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD)** – India elected Chairman of Executive Board (2025); promotes media cooperation and soft power.
22. **Areas in Conflict (2025)** – Gaza famine, Sudan civil war, Ukraine strikes, Congo insurgency; humanitarian crises and global attention.
23. **India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)** – India leads 2025 talks; links Asia–Middle East–Europe via rail, sea, digital infrastructure; bypasses Suez Canal.
24. **India–U.S. Tariffs 2025** – 25% tariff on Indian imports due to Russia ties; impacts textiles, pharma, telecom, MSMEs; tests strategic partnership.
25. **WTO and the Future of Multilateral Trade** – Rising US unilateral tariffs challenge WTO efficacy; India advocates Global South interests and SDG-aligned trade.
26. **India–China Relations 2025** – Ministerial talks post-LAC disengagement; focus on border de-escalation, trade, strategic cooperation, cultural ties, and South-South initiatives.
27. **India–EFTA TEPA** – Effective Oct 2025; strengthens trade & investment with Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland; leverages regulatory alignment.
28. **India–Maldives Relations (Reset 2025)** – Reaffirm Neighbourhood First; debt relief, UPI/RuPay trade, maritime security; strategic Indian Ocean ally.
29. **India–Oman CEPA** – Enhances trade, investment, services, and government procurement; Oman vital for maritime and energy strategy.
30. **India–ASEAN Relations** – Promotes free, rules-based Indo-Pacific; trade, FDI, defence, connectivity, culture, tourism, and digital governance.
31. **India–Japan Relations – 15th Annual Summit 2025** – Special Strategic Global Partnership; Quad, FOIP, clean energy, space, mobility, people-to-people exchanges.
32. **Russia Recognises Taliban** – 2025; focuses on counterterrorism, Central Asia influence, Trans-Afghan corridor; India maintains humanitarian engagement without recognition.
33. **India–Australia Relations – Strategic Dialogue 2025** – Enhances defence, trade, critical minerals, green energy, supply chain resilience, Indo-Pacific maritime cooperation.
34. **India–Brazil Defence Cooperation** – Bilateral framework for exercises, aerospace R&D, counterterrorism intelligence, BRICS collaboration, and strategic autonomy.
35. **India–Saudi Arabia CEPA Negotiations** – Advance 2025; covers trade, investment, energy security, clean tech, AI, multilateral alignment with IORA & G20.
36. **India–Morocco Relations – MLAT & MoU** – Legal cooperation in civil, commercial, and judicial matters; strategic access to Atlantic & Mediterranean.
37. **India–Fiji Relations – August 2025 Visit** – Defence, healthcare, agriculture, energy, education, IPOI collaboration; people-to-people and cultural ties strengthened.
38. **India–US Trade Tensions 2025** – 25% tariffs; affects pharma, textiles, gems; pushes India to diversify exports and strengthen domestic competitiveness.
39. **BIMSTEC Traditional Music Festival 2025** – India hosts inaugural festival; enhances regional cultural integration; Bangkok Vision 2030 adopted.
40. **India–UN Global Capacity-Building Initiative 2025** – First phase of four projects; focuses on SDGs (food security, health, vocational training, census) in nine Global South countries.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SOURCE – THE HINDU

India–Canada Ties – Strategic Reset

Recent Context :

PM Mark Carney's leadership in 2025 reset **India–Canada ties** after two years of diplomatic freeze, reviving **trade talks, ministerial dialogue**, and cooperation on **AI, energy transition**, and **counterterrorism**.

ABOUT-

1. **Bilateral trade (2024): \$12.4 billion.**
2. **Canadian investment in India: ~CA\$100 billion.**
3. **India = largest source of foreign students in Canada.**
4. **India's exports: pharma, textiles, gems & jewelry.**
5. **Canada's exports: potash, timber, paper, mining products.**
6. **Major irritant: Khalistan issue & pending extradition cases.**
7. **Trade agreements under revival: CEPA/EPTA.**

India's Five-Nation Global South Outreach

Recent Context :

In **July 2025**, India's PM toured **Ghana, Trinidad & Tobago, Argentina, Brazil, Namibia** to deepen **bilateral ties**, promote **trade, diaspora engagement**, share **digital expertise**, and counter **China's influence**.

ABOUT-

1. **Ghana:** India = largest destination for Ghana's **gold exports**.
2. **Trinidad & Tobago:** First Caribbean nation to adopt **UPI**.
3. **Argentina:** Cooperation in **lithium, copper, rare earths**.
4. **Brazil:** India's **largest trading partner** in South America.
5. **Namibia:** **Cheetah translocation** to India in 2022.
6. **Diaspora:** 40–45% of Caribbean Indians live in **Trinidad & Tobago**.

7. Key platforms: **BRICS, AU, ECOWAS, CARICOM**.

BRICS Summit 2025

Recent Context :

The **Rio BRICS Summit (July 6–7, 2025)** focused on **Global South solidarity, UNSC reforms, AI governance, investment guarantees**, and **de-dollarisation**, while condemning **terrorism, Gaza conflict**, and attacks on **Russia and Iran**.

ABOUT-

1. **Members: 10** (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, UAE, **Indonesia**).
2. **First BRIC Summit: 2009, Yekaterinburg, Russia.**
3. **HQ of New Development Bank (NDB): Shanghai, China.**
4. **NDB authorised capital: \$100 billion.**
5. **BRICS share: 55% population, ~40% global GDP (PPP).**
6. **Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA): \$100 billion pool.**
7. **Example of local currency trade: India–UAE (Rupee–Dirham).**



2nd BIMSTEC Ports Conclave

Recent Context :

India hosted the **2nd BIMSTEC Ports Conclave at Visakhapatnam (July 14–15, 2025)** to operationalise the **BIMSTEC Maritime Transport Cooperation Agreement (AMTC)** and enhance **blue economy, connectivity, and skill development**.

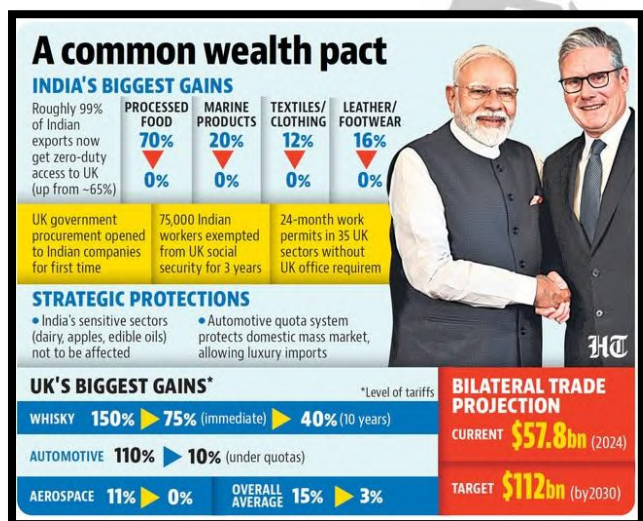
ABOUT-

1. Host: **Visakhapatnam Port Authority (VPA), Andhra Pradesh.**
2. Theme: **“Navigating the Future – Blue Economy, Innovation and Sustainable Partnerships.”**
3. AMTC signed at **6th BIMSTEC Summit, Bangkok (April 2025).**
4. **Intra-BIMSTEC trade = only 7%, vs 25% in ASEAN.**
5. Key initiatives: **Kaladan corridor, cruise tourism circuit, real-time maritime dashboard.**
6. BIMSTEC established in **1997 (Bangkok Declaration); Secretariat: Dhaka.**
7. Members: **7** (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand).

India–UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)

Recent Context :

India and the **UK** signed the **CETA (2025)** aiming to double **bilateral trade to \$112 billion by 2030**, secure duty-free access for Indian goods, and enhance **services, mobility, and investments.**



ABOUT-

1. **99% tariff lines** duty-free for Indian exports.
2. Duty-free access: **textiles, agriculture, marine products, pharmaceuticals, engineering, chemicals.**
3. **Social security exemption:** Indian professionals up to **3 years.**

4. **UK gains:** tariff cuts on **whisky (150% → 40% in 10 yrs)**, aerospace, automobiles.
5. India's sensitive sectors protected: **dairy, apples, oats, edible oils.**
6. Bilateral trade in **FY25: \$56 billion.**
7. Secretariat not needed; it is a **bilateral FTA** distinct from multilateral agreements.

India–EU FTA – Disagreements over Food Safety Rules

Recent Context :

Negotiations on **India–EU Trade and Investment Agreement** stalled due to disputes over **Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) standards**, with EU enforcing stricter norms than **WHO Codex**, affecting India's **agri-exports.**

ABOUT-

1. SPS Agreement: **WTO, 1995.**
2. EU aflatoxin limits: **2 µg/kg (B1), 4 µg/kg (total) vs Codex: 15 µg/kg.**
3. India's agri exports hit: **coffee, tea, spices, rice.**
4. India's exports to EU: **\$3.02 bn (FY19) → \$4.54 bn (FY25).**
5. EU = **India's largest premium agri export market.**
6. Fungus producing aflatoxins: **Aspergillus species.**
7. Health impact: **carcinogenic, liver cancer, immune suppression.**

Border Dispute between Thailand and Cambodia

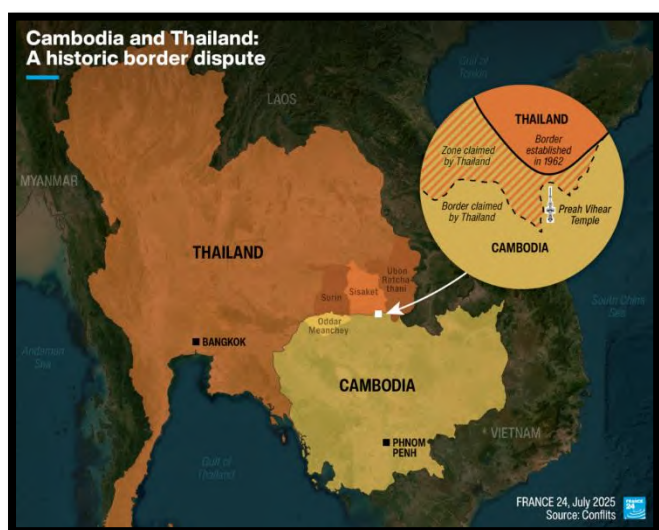
Recent Context :

In July 2025, Thailand launched **airstrikes** against Cambodian military targets over their **long-disputed border**, intensifying tensions around the **Preah Vihear temple** area despite previous **ICJ rulings** and ceasefire efforts.

ABOUT-

1. **Length of Border:** Thailand and Cambodia share around **800 km land border** with overlapping **maritime claims** of about **26,600 sq. km.**

- Historical Root:** Dispute arises from the **1907 French colonial map**, used by Cambodia to claim territory; Thailand disputes its **accuracy**.
- Preah Vihear Temple Case:** In **1962**, the **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** awarded sovereignty of the temple to **Cambodia**.
- ICJ Reaffirmation:** Cambodia approached the **ICJ again in 2011**, and in **2013**, ICJ reaffirmed Cambodia's sovereignty—Thailand contested it.
- Thailand's Position:** Thailand **rejects ICJ jurisdiction**, prefers resolving border claims through **bilateral mechanisms**.
- Cambodia's Position:** Cambodia refuses bilateral talks, insists the issue is **ICJ-settled**, strengthening its claim.
- Ceasefire:** A recent **ceasefire halted five days of combat** over the disputed area, but tensions remain unresolved.



ICC Issues Arrest Warrant Against Taliban Leaders

Recent Context :

In 2025, the **International Criminal Court (ICC)** issued arrest warrants against **Taliban leaders Hibatullah Akhunzada and Abdul Hakim Haqqani** for **systematic persecution of women and girls** in Afghanistan.

ABOUT-

- ICC Jurisdiction:** Afghanistan acceded to the **Rome Statute** in **2003**, giving ICC jurisdiction over crimes committed on Afghan soil.
- Accused Leaders:** Warrants issued against **Taliban Supreme Leader Hibatullah**

Akhunzada and Chief Justice Abdul Hakim Haqqani.

- Charges:** Systematic **persecution of women and girls** under **Article 7(1)(h) of the Rome Statute** (crimes against humanity).
- Taliban Restrictions:** Bans on **secondary education, work, public movement without guardian**, and **144-page Morality Law (2024)** restricting women's freedoms.
- ICC's First Action:** First time ICC targeted **Taliban leadership** for **gender-based persecution**.
- Taliban's Response:** Taliban rejects **ICC jurisdiction**, making warrants unenforceable inside Afghanistan.
- Global Significance:** Raises questions on **international justice enforcement** and women's rights in conflict zones.

US Designates The Resistance Front (TRF) as Global Terror Outfit

Recent Context :

In 2025, the **United States** designated **The Resistance Front (TRF)**, a proxy of **Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)**, as a **Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO)** and **Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT)** group.

ABOUT-

- Origin:** TRF founded in **2019** after the abrogation of **Article 370**, by **Muhammad Abbas Sheikh** (deceased).
- Affiliation:** TRF is a proxy of **Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)**, already a **UN-designated terrorist organisation**.
- Current Leader:** Headed by **Sheikh Sajjad Gul**, an already designated terrorist.
- Operations:** Active in **Jammu & Kashmir** with attacks in **Keran, Handwara, Sopore, Shopian, Anantnag, Reasi, Pahalgam (2025)**.
- India's Action:** Declared TRF a terror organisation under the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 2023**.
- US Sanctions:** Designation enables **asset freezes, travel bans, and sanctions** under **FTO & SDGT** status.

- UNSC Angle:** Helps India's case for TRF listing under the **UNSC 1267 Sanctions Committee** (ISIS-Al Qaeda sanctions regime).

SOURCE – INDIAN EXPRESS

US to Withdraw from UNESCO

Recent Context :

In 2025, the **US announced withdrawal from UNESCO** by 2026, citing **bias against Israel** and promotion of **divisive agendas**, marking another retreat from **multilateral UN institutions** under Trump administration.

ABOUT-

- UNESCO:** A specialised UN agency, founded in **1945**, headquartered in **Paris**.
- Membership:** 194 member states; UN members are automatically eligible.
- US History with UNESCO:** Pulled out in **1984, 2017, 2025**; rejoined in **2003 & 2023**.
- Funding Role:** US contributed around **8% of UNESCO's budget**; withdrawal will impact **cultural heritage projects**.
- Famous Work:** Maintains **World Heritage Sites list** (1,200+), **Intangible Cultural Heritage list**.
- Key Reports:** **Global Education Monitoring Report, World Water Development Report, UNESCO Science Report**.
- Recent Contribution:** First global standard on **AI ethics (2021)** adopted by UNESCO.

African Kingdom of Eswatini

Recent Context :

In 2025, the **US deported foreign nationals** convicted of crimes to **Eswatini**, one of the world's last **absolute monarchies**, ruled by **King Mswati III** since 1986.

ABOUT-

- Geography:** Landlocked country in **Southern Africa**, bordered by **South Africa** and **Mozambique**.
- Political System:** Africa's last **absolute monarchy**, political parties **banned** from elections.

- Social Issues: 26% HIV prevalence** (world's highest); half the population lives under **\$4/day**.



- US Deportation Policy:** Eswatini among countries receiving deportees as part of **third-country deportations**.
- Similar Deals:** US also approached **Rwanda, Benin, Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Moldova** for deportations.
- Rationale:** To remove individuals who **"terrorised American communities"** when their home nations refuse them.
- Former Name:** Known as **Swaziland** until 2018, when renamed **Eswatini**.

India–France Army Exercise: SHAKTI 2025

Recent Context :

The **eighth edition of Exercise SHAKTI** concluded in France in 2025, focusing on **joint sub-conventional operations, Electronic Warfare (EW), and Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems (C-UAS)** training for better interoperability.

ABOUT-

- SHAKTI:** A biennial joint army exercise between India and France, started in **2011**.
- Focus (2025):** **Sub-conventional operations** under **Chapter VII of UN Charter**, training in **semi-urban terrain**.
- Specialist Training:** **Signal interception, spectrum control, drone-neutralisation, jamming** included.
- Varuna Exercise:** Annual **naval exercise** between India & France, held in **Indian Ocean/Mediterranean Sea**.

5. **Garuda Exercise:** Air Force exercise between India & France.
6. **FRINJEX (2023):** First joint humanitarian assistance & disaster relief army drill.
7. **Significance:** Enhances interoperability & operational coordination with a key European strategic partner.

Fair and Representative Global Order

Recent Context :

At the **first BIMSTEC Traditional Music Festival (2025)**, India's **External Affairs Minister** stressed the need for a **fairer global order**, citing **inequities in representation, finance, climate, and technology**.

ABOUT-

1. **UNSC Inequality:** P5 nations hold **permanent seats & veto power**, sidelining Global South aspirations.
2. **IMF Voting Power:** Global North has **9× voting power** vs Global South; US holds **16.49% votes**, but only **4.22% population share**.
3. **Ineffective Multilateralism:** Powerful nations bypass forums—e.g., **US exits Paris Agreement, WHO**.
4. **Trade Asymmetry:** **25% US tariff** on Indian goods; **EU carbon tax** adds barriers for developing nations.
5. **Climate Inequity:** US accounts for **20% historic emissions**; **Philippines heatwave (2024)** showed Global South's vulnerability.
6. **Tech Divide:** **100 firms (mostly US, China)** control **40% global private R&D** (UNCTAD Tech & Innovation Report 2025).
7. **Reform Push:** **G4 (India, Brazil, Germany, Japan)** demand **UNSC expansion**; **BRICS Rio Declaration** urges **IMF quota reforms**, inclusive AI governance.

Topic: India's Strategy in the Indian Ocean

Recent Context :

In **2025**, a **Parliamentary Committee report** assessed India's **Indian Ocean strategy**, highlighting the **MAHASAGAR doctrine**, India's **net security provider**

role, and challenges from **China's growing footprint** in the region.

ABOUT-

1. **Indian Ocean Importance:** 3rd largest ocean; **⅓ world's oil shipments**; **90% of India's trade by volume** passes through it.
2. **India's EEZ:** **2.4 million sq. km** in the IOR.
3. **Doctrines:** **SAGAR (2015) → MAHASAGAR (2025)** = Mutual & Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions.
4. **Security Role:** India conducts **anti-piracy ops, IUU fishing patrols, EEZ surveillance**, shares data via **IFC-IOR** (Gurugram).
5. **Disaster Relief:** First responder role—**Operation Sadbhav (2025)** for Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam floods.
6. **IOR Multilateral Forums:** **IORA (1997), IONS (2008), IPOI (2019), Quad (2007/2017), BIMSTEC (1997), IOC (observer status)**.
7. **Challenges:** **China's port diplomacy**, piracy, **IUU fishing**, weak infrastructure in littoral states; India promoting **Sagarmala 2.0** for maritime competitiveness.

Topic: ASEAN Centrality

Recent Context :

Amid **US–China rivalry** and **new minilateral groupings** (QUAD, AUKUS), **ASEAN Centrality** faces strain; reforms and **India-ASEAN synergies** are crucial for a stable **Indo-Pacific order**.

ABOUT-

1. **Establishment:** ASEAN formed in **1967 (Bangkok Declaration)**; HQ in **Jakarta, Indonesia**.
2. **Members:** **10 countries**—founders: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand.
3. **Principle:** **Article 1.15 of ASEAN Charter** upholds **centrality** in Indo-Pacific affairs.
4. **Security Forums:** **ARF, ADMM-Plus, East Asia Summit** enable ASEAN-led dialogues on defence & maritime issues.
5. **Economic Role:** ASEAN drove **RCEP (2020)**—largest free trade pact.
6. **Threats:** **US–China rivalry, BRI vs Indo-Pacific Strategy, internal divisions** (Cambodia & Laos)

tilt to China), **Myanmar crisis** undermining unity.

7. **India's Role:** Align IPOI with ASEAN's AOIP, review AITIGA, strengthen **tourism cooperation (2023–27 plan)**, promote Blue Economy ties.

India–Philippines Strategic Partnership

Recent Context :

In **2025**, India and the **Philippines** elevated ties to a **Strategic Partnership**, guided by a **Plan of Action (2025–2029)**, deepening defense, cyber, maritime, and economic cooperation amid **China's assertiveness**.

ABOUT-

1. **Diplomatic Relations:** Established in **1949**, now marking **75 years**.
2. **Policy Link:** Ties strengthened under India's **Look East Policy (1992)** and **Act East Policy (2014)**.
3. **Defense:** First foreign buyer of **BrahMos missiles (\$375m deal, 2022)**.
4. **Maritime Security:** India supports **UNCLOS-based 2016 arbitration ruling** favoring the Philippines in the **South China Sea**.
5. **Indo-Pacific Vision:** Philippines is a **key partner** in India's **Act East & Indo-Pacific outreach**.
6. **China Factor:** Shared concerns over **SCS militarisation** and threats to **maritime trade routes**.
7. **Future Areas:** Cooperation in **cybersecurity, trade, AI, space, maritime connectivity**.



SOURCE – VISION IAS MONTHLY

Topic: UN–India Global Capacity-Building Initiative

Recent Context :

Launched in **Sept 2023**, India and the **UN** began a

Global Capacity-Building Initiative for Asia, Africa, and Caribbean nations, sharing India's **development best practices** to accelerate **SDG implementation**.

ABOUT-

1. **Genesis:** Jointly launched by **India–UN** in **2023**.
2. **Objective:** Share India's **development experiences, expertise, capacity building**.
3. **Focus Regions:** **Asia, Africa, Caribbean** (Global South).
4. **Implementation:** Through **UN India SDG Country Fund & ITEC programme (1964)**.
5. **Priority Areas:** **Digital public goods, health, renewable energy, governance models**.
6. **Significance:** Promotes **South–South Cooperation**, aligns with **India's Global South outreach (2023 Summit)**.

Topic: Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) FTA Negotiations

Recent Context :

In **2025**, India and the **EAEU** signed **Terms of Reference** to launch **FTA talks**, aiming for a **long-term economic framework** amid rising **India–Russia energy and trade ties**.

ABOUT-

1. **Genesis:** **Treaty on EAEU (2014)**; came into effect in **2015**.
2. **Members:** **Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan**.
3. **Trade Turnover:** **\$69 billion in 2024** (7% increase from 2023).
4. **Energy Link:** Russia supplies **35–40% of India's crude oil imports**.
5. **Benefits:** **Free movement of goods, services, capital, labour**.
6. **FTA Potential:** Boost **MSMEs, exports diversification**, hedge against **Western tariffs**.
7. **Strategic Value:** Strengthens **India–Russia partnership & supports multi-alignment policy**.

Topic: Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty

Recent Context :

In **2025**, Russia formally ended its commitment to the **INF Treaty (1987)**, citing **US submarine deployments & Typhon missiles in the Philippines**, escalating nuclear arms race risks.

ABOUT-

1. **Signed: 1987**, between **US & USSR**.
2. **Scope:** Eliminated **ground-launched ballistic & cruise missiles (500–5,500 km range)**.
3. **Unique Feature:** First to remove an **entire class of nuclear weapons**.
4. **Verification:** Allowed **on-site inspections**.
5. **US Withdrawal: 2019**, citing Russian violations.
6. **Russia Exit: 2025**, citing US actions in Asia-Pacific.
7. **Impact:** Weakens **arms control regimes**, risks a **Cold War-style missile crisis**.

Armenia–Azerbaijan Peace Agreement (Brokered by USA)

Recent Context :

In **2025**, the **US brokered a peace deal** between **Armenia and Azerbaijan**, ending decades of hostility over **Nagorno-Karabakh**, including the creation of the **TRIPP transit corridor**.

ABOUT-

1. **Conflict Root:** Dispute over **Nagorno-Karabakh**, inside Azerbaijan but with **ethnic Armenian majority**.
2. **Background:** Breakaway in **1980s**, wars post **1991 independence**, Azerbaijan regained full control in **2023**.
3. **Peace Deal:** **Ceasefire, diplomatic relations, US-backed TRIPP corridor** via Armenia to **Nakhchivan**.
4. **US Role:** Secured **exclusive development rights** over the new corridor.
5. **India's Interest:** Treaty of **Friendship & Cooperation (1995)** with **Armenia**.
6. **Geostrategy:** **Azerbaijan** lies on the **International North–South Transport Corridor**.

Topic: Alaska Summit (US–Russia Talks on Ukraine Ceasefire)

Recent Context :

In **2025**, US and Russian Presidents met at the **Alaska Summit** to discuss a **Ukraine ceasefire**, reflecting cautious engagement despite tensions over **NATO expansion & Arctic geopolitics**.

ABOUT-

1. **Alaska:** Non-contiguous US state, purchased from **Russia in 1867 Treaty**.
2. **Geography:** Bounded by **Beaufort Sea, Arctic Ocean, Bering Sea, Pacific Ocean**.
3. **Unique Features:** **Aurora Borealis, permafrost (85%)**, one-third lies in **Arctic Circle**.
4. **Strategic Value:** Rich in **oil, gas, fisheries, Arctic sea routes**.
5. **Military Role:** Key to **US Arctic Command & ballistic missile defense**.
6. **Ukraine Link:** Summit aimed at exploring a **ceasefire framework**.
7. **Geopolitical Symbolism:** Location underscores **US–Russia Arctic rivalry**.

Topic: Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD)

Recent Context :

In **2025**, India was elected **Chairman of the Executive Board of AIBD** at its **23rd General Conference in Thailand**, enhancing India's soft power in the **media sector**.

ABOUT-

1. **Founded: 1977**, under **UNESCO auspices**.
2. **Mandate:** Promote **vibrant, cohesive electronic media** in Asia-Pacific.
3. **Headquarters:** **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**.
4. **Membership:** **92 organisations, 45 countries**.
5. **India's Role:** **Founding member**, represented by **Prasar Bharati**.
6. **Activities:** Training, capacity building, fostering **media cooperation**.
7. **Significance:** Boosts India's **regional leadership in communication & broadcasting**.

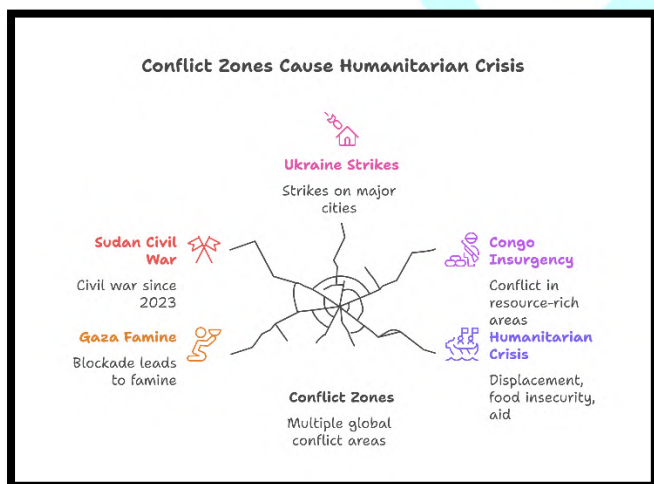
Topic: Areas in Conflict (2025)

Recent Context :

Multiple **conflict zones** dominated global headlines in 2025, including **Gaza famine, Sudan civil war, Ukraine strikes, and Congo insurgency**, reflecting rising humanitarian and geopolitical crises.

ABOUT-

1. **Gaza:** Blockade → **famine (Aug 2025)**; borders **Israel, Egypt, Mediterranean**. Pop: **2.2m**.
2. **Sudan:** Civil war since **2023**; regions include **Darfur, Khartoum, South Kordofan**. Key rivers: **White Nile, Blue Nile**.
3. **Ukraine:** Strikes on **Kyiv, Donetsk, Kharkiv**; borders **Russia, Black Sea, Sea of Azov**. Rivers: **Dnieper**.
4. **Congo (DRC):** Conflict in **North Kivu, Ituri**; rich in **cobalt, copper, gold**. Basin: **Congo River**.
5. **Geographical Richness:** Congo hosts **2nd largest rainforest**.
6. **Humanitarian Crisis:** Displacement, food insecurity, **global aid interventions**.



India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) & Gaza War

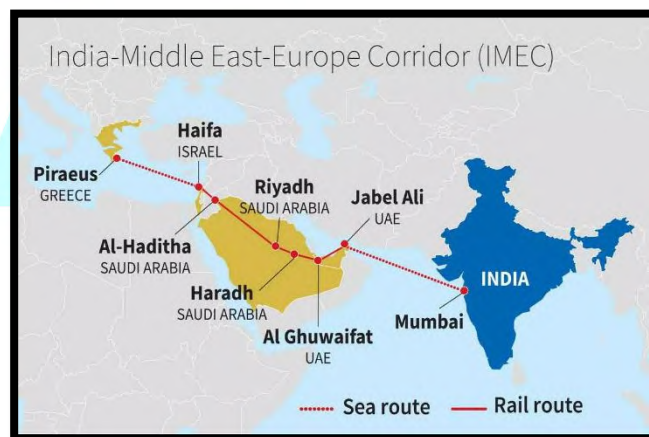
Recent Context :

India hosted partner envoys in 2025 to discuss progress on **IMEC**, aiming to strengthen **trade, energy, and digital connectivity** despite delays caused by the **Gaza conflict**.

ABOUT-

1. **Genesis & Partners:**
 - Launched at **G20 Summit, New Delhi (2023)**.

- Partners: **India, Saudi Arabia, UAE, EU, France, Italy, Germany, US, Israel, Jordan**.
2. **Corridor Structure:**
 - **Eastern Leg:** India's western ports → UAE (sea) → Saudi Arabia/Jordan (rail) → Haifa, Israel (port).
 - **Western Leg:** Haifa → Greece/Italy (sea) → Europe (rail).
3. **Key Components:**
 - **High-speed freight rail, green hydrogen pipelines, digital infrastructure** (e.g., Blue Raman subsea cable).
 - Trade facilitation to reduce costs and enhance efficiency.
4. **Strategic Significance:**
 - Diversifies trade routes away from **Suez Canal**.
 - Positions India as **central actor linking Asia, Middle East, Europe**.



Topic: India–U.S. Tariffs 2025

Recent Context :

In 2025, **U.S. President Trump** imposed **25% tariffs** on Indian imports citing defence and energy ties with **Russia**, testing the resilience of India–U.S. strategic partnership.

ABOUT-

1. **Strategic Ties:**
 - Comprehensive **global strategic partnership** based on democracy, trade, defence, and people-to-people links.
2. **Key Divergences:**

- **Russia & strategic autonomy:** India continues defence/energy ties; US penalizes under tariffs.
 - **BRICS & Global South alignment** challenges U.S. interests.
3. **U.S. Tariff Impact:**
 - 25% import duty on **textiles, telecom, autos, gems.**
 - Hinders India's **export competitiveness** and affects MSMEs.
 4. **Economic Consequences:**
 - Disruption of **global value chains**, reduced **bilateral trade surplus**, potential dip in **FDI and investor confidence.**
 5. **Energy Sovereignty:**
 - Tariffs linked to India's **defence and oil imports from Russia**, signaling U.S. attempt to influence **strategic autonomy.**

SOURCE – INSIGHTS MONTHLY

WTO and the Future of Multilateral Trade

Recent Context :

Rising **unilateral US tariffs** have raised global concerns about the **WTO's efficacy**, questioning the **multilateral trading system** and its ability to ensure fair competition and resolve trade disputes.

ABOUT-

1. **Role of WTO:**
 - Facilitates **multilateral trade agreements** (e.g., Trade Facilitation Agreement, 2013), promotes **tariff reduction** and **MFN principle**, ensures rules-based global trade.
2. **Trade Monitoring:**
 - Conducts **Trade Policy Reviews**, mandates notifications of **subsidies, tariffs, regulations**, aligns trade with **SDGs** (e.g., fisheries subsidies – SDG 14).
3. **India's Role – Global South Voice:**
 - Advocate **food security**, protect **developing country subsidies**, resist

unilateral tariffs, promote **calibrated liberalisation.**

4. **Sustainable Trade Leadership:**
 - Integrate **trade with SDGs**, oppose **green protectionism** (e.g., EU CBAM), showcase **PLI schemes, digital infrastructure** (UPI), and service sector growth.
5. **Balancing Development & Integration:**
 - India exemplifies **development-sensitive liberalisation**, combining **economic growth** with **multilateral trade integration.**

Topic: India–China Relations

Recent Context :

In 2025, India and China held **ministerial-level talks** in Delhi, focusing on **border de-escalation, economic cooperation, trade resumption, and strategic challenges**, post-LAC disengagement (Nov 2024).

ABOUT-

1. **Border & Security** – Undefined **LAC**, disputes in **Aksai Chin & Arunachal**; India's **3Ds: disengagement, de-escalation, de-induction.**
2. **Economic & Trade** – China supplies **fertilisers, rare earths, machinery**; border trade via **Lipulekh, Shipki La, Nathu La**; **visa facilitation.**
3. **Cultural Ties** – **Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, tourism, exchanges**; civilisational links: **Xuanzang, Bodhidharma, Ayurveda, Yoga.**
4. **Strategic Cooperation** – Collaboration in **BRICS, SCO, G20, AIIB, NDB**; focus on **South-South solidarity, climate diplomacy.**
5. **Environment & Regional** – Joint on **climate justice**, oppose **EU Carbon Tax, maritime competition** via **Silk Road ports.**

Topic: India–EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA)

Recent Context :

From **1 October 2025**, India–EFTA **TEPA** takes effect, boosting trade, investment, and jobs, ensuring fair, transparent **market access** with **Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland.**

ABOUT-

1. **TEPA Genesis** – Signed **10 March 2024**; **21 negotiation rounds** since 2008; reduce **tariffs & NTBs**.
2. **EFTA Members** – **Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland**; **Stockholm Convention 1960**; **non-EU**.
3. **Trade Relations** – India **5th-largest partner**; **bilateral trade USD 24.4 bn (2024–25)**; **Switzerland largest**, others limited.
4. **Investment Facilitation** – **India-EFTA Desk**, **single-window** for EFTA investments.
5. **Strategic Linkages** – Leverage **India–EU FTA**, enhance **regulatory alignment**, address **NTBs**, strengthen **supply chains**.

Topic: US Tariff on Indian Imports

Recent Context :

In 2025, the US imposed **additional tariffs** on Indian imports, citing **Russian oil purchases** and **high tariffs on pharma, electronics, and agriculture**, impacting exports and GDP growth.

ABOUT-

1. **Key Causes:**
 - India's **high tariffs**, continued **Russian oil and defense purchases**, **US trade deficit (\$45 bn)**, stalled negotiations on **sensitive sectors**.
2. **Trade Volume:**
 - US is India's **largest trading partner**; **bilateral trade \$131.84 bn (2024–25)**; **agricultural imports up 49.1%** in 2025.
3. **FDI & Cooperation:**
 - US FDI inflows: **\$4.99 bn (FY 2023–24)**; **MoU on SMEs signed 2024**.
4. **Sectoral Impact:**
 - Tariffs affect **electronics, pharma, textiles, gems, auto components**, **10% of exports**; reduces **competitiveness vs Vietnam**.
5. **Economic Implications:**
 - Potential **GDP slowdown (6.5% forecast FY 2025–26)**, **job losses**, **disruption to export-oriented MSMEs**.

Topic: India–Maldives Relations (Reset 2025)

Recent Context :

India reset relations with Maldives during **60th Independence Day celebrations**, reaffirming **Neighbourhood First**, strategic partnerships, economic cooperation, UPI/RuPay trade, debt relief, and disaster/health assistance.

ABOUT-

1. **Strategic Partnership:**
 - Reviewed **2024 Economic & Maritime Partnership**, reaffirmed **MAHASAGAR** and maritime security collaboration.
2. **Economic & Digital Cooperation:**
 - Push for **FTA**, bilateral treaty, integration of **UPI, RuPay**, and **local currency trade**.
3. **Financial Assistance:**
 - Extended **USD 550 mn credit**, cut **Maldives' debt by 40%**.
4. **Infrastructure & Social Projects:**
 - Inaugurated **roads, housing, community projects**, and deployed **Aarogya Maitri Health Cubes**.
5. **Reasons for Reset:**
 - Maldives' **economic crisis**, reliance on **Indian tourism, food, medicines**, geopolitical balancing, political realism.
6. **Strategic Importance:**
 - Controls **shipping lanes (50% trade, 80% energy imports)**, regional ally against **China**, supports **maritime stability** in Indian Ocean.

Topic: India–Oman CEPA

Recent Context :

India concluded **CEPA negotiations** with Oman to enhance trade, investment, and regulatory cooperation; CEPA is **broader than an FTA**, covering services, investment, government procurement, and dispute resolution.

ABOUT-

1. **CEPA vs FTA:**
 - CEPA more **comprehensive**, includes **services, investment, competition**,

government procurement, deeper regulatory cooperation than FTA.

2. Strategic Partnership:

- Diplomatic ties since **1955**, upgraded to **strategic partnership in 2008**, key for **GCC, Arab League, IORA**.

3. Trade Relations:

- Oman is **3rd largest GCC export destination** for India after UAE and Saudi Arabia.

4. Exports & Imports:

- India exports: **light oils, rice, machinery, metals**; imports: **crude oil, LNG, fertilizers, chemicals**.

5. Strategic Importance:

- Oman acts as a **maritime and energy partner**, facilitating India's **Indian Ocean strategy**.

SOURCE – DRISHTI MONTHLY

India–ASEAN Relations

Recent Context :

Amid **China's assertiveness** and **US strategic shifts**, ASEAN is central to India's **Act East Policy** and **Indo-Pacific vision**, promoting a **free, rules-based, and resilient Indo-Pacific**.

ABOUT-

1. Economic & Trade:

- ASEAN: **650 million people, \$3.2 trillion GDP, 11% of India's global trade**.
- India withdrew from **RCEP (2019)**; trade deficit **\$45.2B (2024-25)**.

2. FDI & Connectivity:

- Singapore: **largest ASEAN FDI source**.
- Key projects: **IMT Trilateral Highway, Kaladan Multi-Modal Transport (KMMT)**.

3. Defense & Security:

- Cooperation via **BrahMos sale to Philippines, ADMM-Plus, EAS, and ARF**.
- Support for **rules-based regional order**, aligned with **SAGAR doctrine**.

4. Energy & Technology:

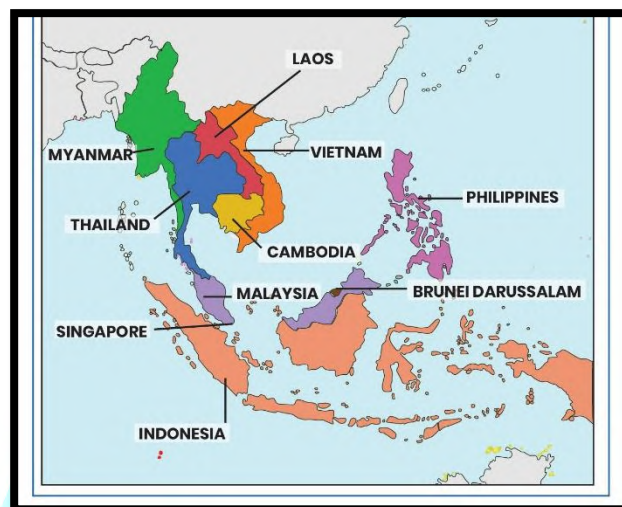
- Collaboration in **solar, clean tech, semiconductors, and green energy corridors**.

5. Cultural & People-to-People:

- Shared heritage: **Ramayana Ballet (Indonesia), Ayutthaya (Thailand)**.
- **2025 declared ASEAN-India Year of Tourism**.

6. Digital & Data Governance:

- Expand **India-Singapore UPI linkage**; develop **regional digital payment network**.



India–Japan Relations – 15th Annual Summit, 2025

Recent Context : Indian PM Modi and Japanese PM Ishiba held the 15th India–Japan Summit in Tokyo, advancing strategic, economic, defence, AI, green energy, space, and people-to-people cooperation under a Joint Vision for Next Decade.

ABOUT-

- Strategic Partnership:** India–Japan elevated to Special Strategic Global Partnership; Quad cooperation and FOIP reaffirmed.
- Economic Security Initiative:** Focus on semiconductors, critical minerals, telecom, clean energy, pharmaceuticals.
- Investment Commitment:** Japan pledges **¥10 trillion (~USD 68 billion)** in private-sector investments over 10 years.
- Science & Space Cooperation:** ISRO–JAXA joint lunar polar exploration (Chandrayaan-5); technology transfer and research collaborations.

5. **Mobility & Infrastructure:** High-speed rail, Next-Gen Mobility Partnership (ports, railways, aviation, logistics).
6. **People-to-People & HR Exchange:** Action Plan targets 500,000 exchanges in five years, including 50,000 skilled Indians in Japan.

Russia Recognises Taliban

Recent Context : Russia officially recognized Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, prioritizing counterterrorism, strategic influence in Central Asia, geoeconomic corridors, and competition with China, while India continues humanitarian aid and backchannel engagement without formal recognition.

ABOUT-

1. **Security Interests:** Taliban seen as counterbalance to ISKP (Islamic State Khorasan Province).
2. **Central Asia Influence:** Ensures Russian dominance in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and surrounding regions.
3. **Geoeconomic Corridor:** Supports Trans-Afghan Railway connecting Central Asia to South Asia.
4. **Great Power Competition:** Competes with China's early Taliban engagement and economic investments.
5. **Western Messaging:** Undermines Western efforts to isolate Taliban internationally.
6. **India's Backchannel Diplomacy:** Maintains informal contacts via Doha since 2021; ensures safety of Indian assets.
7. **Humanitarian Aid Focus:** Over 47,000 tonnes wheat, 500,000 vaccines, medicines through UN agencies; engagement avoids formal recognition.

India–Australia Relations – 2025 Strategic Dialogue

Recent Context : India and Australia held the 6th Annual Strategic Dialogue, enhancing defence, trade, critical minerals, clean energy, and Indo-Pacific maritime cooperation, with a focus on supply chain resilience and Quad alignment.

ABOUT-

1. **Strategic Partnership:** Strengthening Quad ties; joint focus on FOIP (Free, Open Indo-Pacific).
2. **Defence Cooperation:** Malabar exercises participation, technology sharing, maritime security, anti-submarine warfare.
3. **Trade & Investment:** Critical minerals, EV battery supply chains, and semiconductor raw materials diversification.
4. **Climate & Green Tech:** Collaboration in solar, hydrogen, and offshore wind projects.
5. **Supply Chain Resilience Initiative:** Reducing dependency on China for critical minerals and electronics.
6. **People-to-People Ties:** Student exchange programs and skill development in IT and clean energy sectors.
7. **Multilateral Engagement:** Joint coordination in IORA, G20, Quad, and regional climate forums.

India–Brazil Defence Cooperation

Recent Context : India and Brazil signed a Defence Cooperation Framework in August 2025, focusing on joint military exercises, defence R&D, aerospace technology, and counter-terrorism intelligence sharing under BRICS collaboration.

ABOUT-

1. **BRICS Collaboration:** Defence coordination strengthens South-South strategic ties.
2. **Military Exercises:** Bilateral exercises for land, air, and naval interoperability.
3. **Aerospace & Technology Sharing:** Collaboration on satellite and aerospace R&D projects.
4. **Counter-terrorism Intelligence:** Sharing of data on transnational terrorism and organized crime.
5. **Joint R&D Initiatives:** Focus on drones, cyber defence, and communication systems.
6. **Regional Security Cooperation:** Latin America–India linkages for global maritime and airspace stability.

7. **Strategic Autonomy:** Reinforces India's independent foreign policy and diversified defence partnerships.

India–Saudi Arabia CEPA Negotiations Progress

Recent Context : India and Saudi Arabia advanced negotiations on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), focusing on trade liberalization, energy security, investment facilitation, and collaboration in renewable energy and technology sectors.

ABOUT-

1. **CEPA Scope:** Covers goods, services, investment, government procurement, and dispute resolution; broader than FTA.
2. **Energy Security:** Strengthening oil, LNG imports, and renewable energy collaboration.
3. **Investment Facilitation:** Encourages FDI in infrastructure, technology, and manufacturing sectors.
4. **Trade Liberalization:** Reduction of tariffs and non-tariff barriers for key sectors.
5. **Technology & Innovation:** Focus on AI, smart cities, clean tech, and digital services.
6. **Strategic Bilateral Ties:** Reinforces India-GCC relations and global energy partnerships.
7. **Multilateral Alignment:** Supports IORA, G20, and climate initiatives cooperation.

India–Morocco Relations – MLAT & MoU

Recent Context : India and Morocco signed a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) and MoU in August 2025 to enhance judicial, civil, and commercial legal cooperation, including evidence sharing and enforcement of judgments.

ABOUT-

1. **MLAT Objective:** Promotes judicial and legal cooperation in civil and commercial matters.
2. **Scope of Assistance:** Service of summons, evidence collection, execution of judgments/arbitral awards.
3. **Nodal Ministry (India):** Ministry of Home Affairs handles criminal law matters.

4. **Geography of Morocco:** North Africa, borders Western Sahara & Algeria, Atlantic & Mediterranean coastlines.
5. **Capital & Major City:** Rabat (capital), Casablanca (commercial hub & port).
6. **Key Features:** Atlas Mountains, Jebel Toubkal (highest peak 4,167 m), Sahara Desert in south.
7. **Strategic Significance:** Access to both Atlantic and Mediterranean, North Africa gateway.

India–Fiji Relations – August 2025 Visit

Recent Context : Fiji PM Sitiveni Rabuka visited India in August 2025; discussions focused on defence cooperation, healthcare, agriculture, energy, IT training, and bilateral capacity building initiatives under Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.



ABOUT-

1. **Defence Cooperation:** Defence Attaché post, Indian Naval port call, ambulance gifting, Cyber Security Training Cell.
2. **Healthcare Collaboration:** MoU for super-specialty hospital, Heal in India program, Jaipur Foot camps.
3. **Agriculture & Rural Development:** Mobile soil labs, agricultural drones, ITEC expert deputation.
4. **Energy & Climate:** Fiji joins Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI).

5. **Education & Capacity Building:** MoU between NIELIT & Pacific Polytech, Hindi-Sanskrit teacher deputation.
6. **Cultural & Sports Ties:** Indian cricket coach deputed to Fiji.
7. **Geography of Fiji:** South Pacific island nation, volcanic origin, tropical marine climate, highest peak Mount Tomanivi.

India–US Trade Tensions

Recent Context : The US imposed a 25% tariff on Indian exports in August 2025 due to India's Russian energy ties and high tariffs, affecting labour-intensive sectors like pharma, textiles, and gems.

ABOUT-

1. **Bilateral Trade:** \$186 billion in 2024–25; India exports \$86.5B, imports \$45.3B.
2. **Affected Sectors:** Pharmaceuticals, textiles, leather, footwear, gems & jewellery, auto components.
3. **Reason for Tariff:** High Indian tariffs, US trade deficit, geopolitical pressure due to Russia ties.
4. **Competitor Advantage:** Vietnam, Bangladesh, Thailand face lower tariffs (20–36%).
5. **Services Trade:** India maintains \$3.2B surplus in services.
6. **Strategic Significance:** Tariffs challenge India-US trade relations and export competitiveness.
7. **Policy Response:** Diversify export markets, negotiate tariff reductions, enhance domestic competitiveness.

BIMSTEC Traditional Music Festival

Recent Context : India hosted the first BIMSTEC Traditional Music Festival in New Delhi on August 4, 2025, celebrating cultural unity and adopting Bangkok Vision 2030 for youth, regional integration, and cultural collaboration.

ABOUT-

1. **Organiser:** Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).
2. **Theme:** 'SaptaSur: Seven Nations, One Melody' – unity in diversity through music.

3. **Member Countries:** India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand.
4. **Established:** 1997 (Bangkok Declaration).
5. **Focus Areas:** Regional connectivity, economic cooperation, cultural exchange.
6. **Significance:** Enhances India's soft power in South & Southeast Asia.
7. **Bangkok Vision 2030:** Emphasizes cultural collaboration, youth exchange, regional integration.

India–UN Global Capacity Building Initiative – August 2025

Recent Context : India launched the first phase of four projects under the India-UN Global Capacity Building Initiative in nine countries, focusing on SDGs including food security, health, vocational training, and census preparedness.

ABOUT-

1. **Objective:** Strengthen capacities of Global South countries using India's development experience.
2. **Implementation:** Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) institutes identified.
3. **Focus Areas:** Food security, health, vocational training, census preparedness.
4. **Partner Countries (First Phase):** Nepal, Zambia, Lao PDR, Belize, Barbados, St Kitts & Nevis, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, South Sudan.
5. **UN Collaboration:** WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNESCO.
6. **G20 Legacy:** Aligns with SDG action plan and Global South inclusion.
7. **Capacity-Building Nature:** Human-resource focused, demand-driven, leveraging India's technical expertise.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SOURCE: VISION MONTHLY

SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANISATION (SCO)

Recent Update: The 25th SCO Summit 2025 was held in Tianjin, China.

Member states



About:

- Security & Counter-Terrorism:** Condemned the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir — a diplomatic win for India as China often shields Pakistan in multilateral forums.
- CCIT Adoption:** Emphasized adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT), proposed by India at the UN in 1996.
- New Centres:** Agreement to establish an SCO Anti-Drug Centre and a Universal Center for Countering Security Threats.
- Global Governance:** Endorsed China's Global Governance Initiative (GGI) promoting "true multilateralism" and sovereign equality.
- Financial Mechanisms:** Steps taken toward forming an SCO Export Credit and Investment Mechanism and a Development Bank to fund Eurasian infrastructure projects and provide a non-dollar alternative to Western financing.

INDIA–CHINA RELATIONS

Recent Update: Indian Prime Minister met Chinese President on the sidelines of the SCO Summit 2025 in Tianjin.

About:

- Unsettled Borders:** 3,488 km Line of Actual Control (LAC) remains disputed; flashpoints include Doklam (2017) and Galwan (2020).
- Trade Imbalance:** India's trade deficit with China rose to USD 99 billion in 2024–25; China is now India's largest trading partner.
- Trilateral Nexus:** China's new trilateral initiatives with Bangladesh–Pakistan and Pakistan–Afghanistan, plus CPEC through PoK, threaten India's sovereignty.
- Assertiveness in Region:** China's "String of Pearls" strategy heightens India's Indo-Pacific concerns. India counters via Quad (India–US–Japan–Australia).
- Waterpower:** China's dam projects on Brahmaputra (Yarlung Zangbo) pose hydrological and strategic threats.

INDIA–JAPAN PARTNERSHIP

Recent Update: Indian Prime Minister's visit to Japan strengthened the bilateral strategic partnership through new agreements.

About:

- Joint Vision 2035:** 10-year roadmap for cooperation across eight areas — economy, sustainability, mobility, and regional engagement.
- Economic Cooperation:** CEPA (2011) governs trade; bilateral trade stood at USD 22.85 billion (2023–24). IJICP (2021) boosts India's industrial competitiveness.
- Security Ties:** 2+2 dialogues, 2025 Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation, and defence equipment sharing. Exercises include JIMEX, Dharma Guardian, and Malabar.

4. **Development Projects:** Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR); Act East Forum for India’s Northeast development under the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” vision.

NEW STRATEGIC EU–INDIA AGENDA

Recent Update: European Commission adopted a Joint Communication outlining a new strategic EU–India Agenda.

About:

- 1) **Foundation:** Built on 2004 Strategic Partnership.
- 2) **Goal:** Boost prosperity, security, and sustainability.
- 3) **Five Core Pillars:**
 - a) *Prosperity & Sustainability:* FTA and IPA by 2025; supply chain resilience; clean energy transition (EU–India Task Force on Green Hydrogen).
 - b) *Technology & Innovation:* Joint innovation hubs, collaboration on Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI).
 - c) *Security & Defence:* Indo-Pacific cooperation, maritime rules-based order.
 - d) *Connectivity & Global Issues:* Partnership via EU’s Global Gateway and India’s MAHASAGAR initiative.
 - e) *Enablers:* Skills mobility, education, institutional collaboration.

INDIA–SINGAPORE RELATIONS

Recent Update: Singapore’s PM visited India to mark 60 years of diplomatic relations.

About:

- 1) **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP):** Roadmap covering eight critical areas.

- 2) **Economic:** Review of CECA and AITIGA; cooperation in semiconductors, space (IN-SPACE partnerships).
- 3) **Defence:** Expansion into AI, quantum, and unmanned systems; counterterrorism collaboration.
- 4) **Digitalisation:** Strengthening fintech and cybersecurity; UPI–PayNow linkage expansion.
- 5) **Skills:** Establishing National Centre of Excellence in Advanced Manufacturing (Chennai).

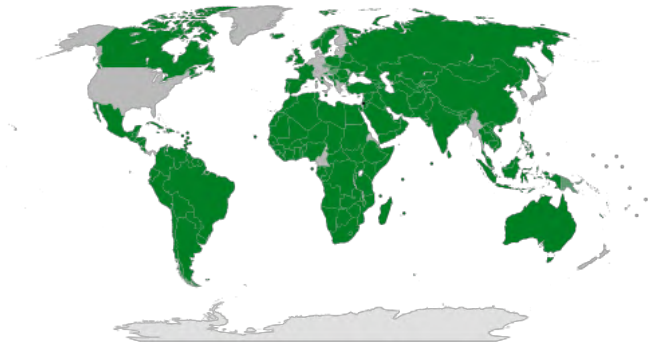
PAKISTAN–SAUDI ARABIA STRATEGIC DEFENCE AGREEMENT

Recent Update: Both nations signed a mutual defence pact declaring that aggression against one is aggression against both.

About:

- 1) **Nuclear Concerns:** Raises fears of Saudi access to Pakistan’s nuclear deterrence.
- 2) **Regional Impact:** Shifts power balance in West Asia amid US retrenchment; potential for greater Chinese influence.
- 3) **Implications for India:** May embolden Pakistan in future hostilities.
- 4) **India–Saudi Ties:**
 - a) Strategic partnership via Riyadh Declaration (2010).
 - b) Trade: USD 42.98 billion (2023).
 - c) Energy: 3rd largest oil supplier to India; 6.7% of remittances in 2024.

PALESTINIAN STATE RECOGNISED BY MULTIPLE NATIONS



Recent Update: UK, Canada, Portugal, and Australia joined over 140 UN members in recognising Palestine.

About:

- 1) **India’s Position:** Recognised Palestine in 1988; voted for the ‘New York Declaration’ supporting a Two-State Solution.
- 2) **State Recognition:** Defined under 1933 Montevideo Convention (population, territory, government, external relations).
- 3) **Effects:** Enables diplomatic relations, treaty-making, UN membership rights.
- 4) **Status:** Palestine is a UN “Permanent Observer State,” not a full member.

NEW INITIATIVES FOR GLOBAL AI GOVERNANCE

Recent Update: UNGA announced two new global AI governance mechanisms under the “Pact for the Future.”

About:

- 1) **Independent Scientific Panel on AI:** To provide evidence-based assessments of AI’s risks and benefits.
- 2) **Global Dialogue on AI Governance:** To enable cooperation and sharing of best practices among countries.
- 3) **Supporting Frameworks:**
 - a) *Pact for the Future (2024)* – Aligns AI with SDGs.
 - b) *Global Digital Compact* – Establishes ethical and inclusive AI standards.

- c) *AI for Good Summit (ITU, 2017)* – Uses AI for SDG advancement.
- d) *UNESCO AI Ethics (2021)* – First global standard on AI ethics.

CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION AND PUNISHMENT OF GENOCIDE

Recent Update: UN Commission report analysed Israel’s actions in Gaza under the Genocide Convention.

About:

- 1) **Definition:** Genocide = intent to destroy, in whole or part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group.
- 2) **Applicability:** Can occur in war or peace.
- 3) **Membership:** 153 Parties; India signed in 1949, ratified in 1959.
- 4) **Adjudication:** International Court of Justice (ICJ) interprets and enforces the Convention.

SOURCE: THE HINDU
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT (ICC)



Recent Update: Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger withdrew from the ICC accusing it of “neo-colonial bias.”

About:

- 1) **Established:** Rome Statute (1998; in force 2002).
- 2) **Headquarters:** The Hague, Netherlands.

- 3) **Jurisdiction:** Tries individuals for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and aggression.
- 4) **Members:** 125 countries (India, US, Russia, China not members).
- 5) **Enforcement:** Decisions are binding; funded by member states.

CENTRAL AMERICAN INTEGRATION SYSTEM (SICA)

RECENT UPDATE: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar addressed the India-SICA Foreign Ministers' Meeting

ABOUT:

1. The Central American Integration System (**SICA**) is an institutional framework designed to govern and facilitate **regional integration** in Central America.
2. Its **Secretariat** is located in **El Salvador**.
3. SICA was created by the **Tegucigalpa Protocol** on December 13, 1991, updating the older ODECA Charter.
4. It became fully operational on **February 1, 1993**.
5. The system is recognized internationally by the **UN General Assembly** (Resolution A/48 L, 1993).
6. The founding member states are **Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama**.
7. Later members include **Belize and the Dominican Republic**, and extra-regional observers include **EU, UK, Spain, Germany, Japan, South Korea, and India**.

THE U.K. INDIA INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING BRIDGE (UKIIFB)

RECENT UPDATE: UKIIFB completed its **first anniversary**, releasing recommendations to de-

risk investments in India's infrastructure sector.

ABOUT:

1. The UKIIFB is a bilateral initiative between **India and the UK** to mobilise global private capital for **sustainable infrastructure projects** in India.
2. It was launched in **September 2024** during the India-UK Economic and Financial Dialogue.
3. The lead institutions involved are **NITI Aayog** and the **City of London Corporation**.
4. Its objectives include accelerating international private sector investments, aligning procurement with global best practices, ensuring **ESG compliance**, and addressing challenges such as revenue risks, taxation, and repatriation issues.
5. The initiative provides **policy recommendations**, develops knowledge and best practices, facilitates joint planning for infrastructure projects like highways, rapid transport, and renewable energy, and focuses on **climate-resilient and green finance models**.
6. For India, UKIIFB helps mobilise part of the **\$2 trillion infrastructure investment** needed by 2030, boosts **mid-sized firms' participation**, and attracts **long-term capital**. For the UK, it



expands **financial services and green finance leadership**.

INDIA AND ISRAEL SIGN BILATERAL INVESTMENT AGREEMENT (BIA)

RECENT UPDATE: India and Israel signed a **BIA** in New Delhi, witnessed by the Finance Ministers of

both countries.

ABOUT:

1. The Bilateral Investment Agreement (**BIA**) is a landmark treaty providing **investment protection and promotion** between India and Israel.
2. It ensures a minimum standard of treatment and a framework for **transparent, secure, and fair investment flows**.
3. The agreement establishes a neutral dispute resolution mechanism through **arbitration** to protect investors.
4. Its aim is to facilitate certainty, transparency, and security for investors while safeguarding investments against **expropriation, arbitrary restrictions, or policy shocks**.
5. The BIA encourages mutual trade and capital flows, balancing **investor protection** with the **sovereign regulatory rights** of the two governments.
6. Key provisions include protection from **expropriation, transparency measures, independent arbitration, and free transfer & compensation** for capital and profits.

L-1 VISA



RECENT UPDATE: Following a fee hike on H-1B visas, the **L-1 visa** is being considered as an alternative for Indian professionals.

ABOUT:

1. The L-1 visa is a **non-immigrant work visa** for intra-company transfers, with L-1A for executives/managers and L-1B for employees with specialized knowledge.

2. It allows multinational companies to transfer employees from overseas branches to **U.S. offices**.
3. It was created under the **Immigration and Nationality Act (1965)** to support global operations of multinationals.
4. Its aim is to facilitate the transfer of talent within the same company across borders and strengthen **U.S. business operations** without relying on external labor markets.

ONE-IN, ONE-OUT SCHEME



RECENT UPDATE: The first deportation under the UK–France **one-in, one-out scheme** has been carried out.

ABOUT:

1. The scheme is a bilateral **migration and deportation arrangement** between the **UK and France**.
2. It allows the UK to return illegal migrants arriving via the **English Channel** to France.
3. The aim is to deter illegal small-boat crossings, break **human smuggling networks**, and ensure safe, legal, and managed migration routes.



crossings, break **human smuggling networks**, and ensure safe, legal, and managed migration routes.

4. A key feature is its reciprocal mechanism: for every migrant France takes back, the UK accepts a **legal asylum seeker**.

POWER OF SIBERIA 2 PIPELINE

RECENT UPDATE: Gazprom signed a deal with **CNPC** to build the **Power of Siberia 2** pipeline.



ABOUT:

1. The pipeline runs from Russia through **Mongolia to China**, covering approximately **6,700 km**.
2. Its aim is to replace lost **European gas revenue** following EU sanctions and strengthen **Russia–China energy cooperation**.
3. The pipeline has a capacity of around **50 billion cubic metres per year**, smaller than Europe’s previous demand of 180 bcm/year.
4. It passes through Russia’s Yamal Peninsula, near Lake Baikal, through Mongolia, and reaches China.
5. Power of Siberia 2 complements Power of Siberia 1, which carries 38 bcm/year.

INDIA’S ROLE IN THE GLOBAL BIOFUEL ALLIANCE (GBA)

RECENT UPDATE:

India, as a founding member, hosted the **GBA Ministerial Meet 2025 (New Delhi)**, expanding membership to **35 nations** and focusing on **Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF)**.

ABOUT:

1. **Launch Context:** Announced during **G20 Summit 2023** to promote **biofuel adoption** globally.
2. **Core Objective:** Facilitate **knowledge exchange, technology transfer, and biofuel standardization**.
3. **Indian Leadership:** India aims to achieve **20% ethanol blending by 2025** and **30% by 2030**.
4. **Institutional Anchors:** **MNRE, MoP&NG, and NITI Aayog** spearhead the alliance domestically.
5. **Environmental Impact:** Reduces **carbon footprint** and strengthens **energy security**.
6. **International Cooperation:** Supported by **Brazil and the US**, aligning with **Global South energy transitions**.
7. **Economic Benefits:** Boosts **farm income** via **agro-waste utilization**.
8. **Way Forward:** Develop **biofuel corridors**, standardize **SAF certification**, and enhance **private investment incentives**.

INDIA–GULF RELATIONS AND ENERGY DIPLOMACY

RECENT UPDATE:

In **2025**, India signed a **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** with **Saudi Arabia**, strengthening **energy cooperation, critical minerals trade, and joint renewable ventures**.

ABOUT:

1. **Strategic Importance:** Gulf provides **65% of India’s crude oil** and houses **8.8 million Indian expatriates**.
2. **Economic Engagement:** Bilateral trade with the **GCC crossed USD 240 billion (2024–25)**.
3. **Diversification Efforts:** India investing in **renewables, green hydrogen, and critical minerals** in Gulf economies.

- Institutional Framework:** India–UAE CEPA (2022) expanded into digital trade and AI innovation.
- Security Dimension:** Joint anti-piracy patrols and defence dialogues under the IOR framework.
- Remittance Role:** Gulf remittances contribute over 55% of India’s USD 90 billion inflow.
- Geopolitical Context:** Balancing Iran–Saudi–Israel dynamics while ensuring energy



security.

8. Way Forward:

Expand energy corridors, institutionalize GCC–India FTA, and deepen diaspora diplomacy.

INDIA’S AFRICA POLICY – FROM AID TO PARTNERSHIP

RECENT UPDATE:

At the India–Africa Forum Summit (IAFS IV, Addis Ababa, 2025), India announced a USD 12 billion credit line for infrastructure, digital, and health projects across Africa.

ABOUT:

- Historical Ties:** Rooted in Pan-African solidarity, NAM, and anti-colonial cooperation.
- Economic Expansion:** India–Africa trade reached USD 103 billion (2025) with 70% focused on energy and minerals.



- Developmental Focus:** Projects in IT, agriculture, solar, and education under Lines of Credit (LOCs).
- Institutional Mechanism:** Managed by MEA & EXIM Bank under the Development Partnership Administration (DPA).
- Strategic Role:** Counterbalance to China’s BRI, emphasizing capacity building and local ownership.
- Digital Outreach:** Pan-African e-Network connects 52 nations through telemedicine and education.
- Security Cooperation:** Joint training through UN Peacekeeping and defence pacts with East African states.
- Way Forward:** Strengthen India–Africa Blue Economy, ensure local job creation, and promote triangular cooperation with Japan/EU.

INDIA–CENTRAL ASIA CONNECTIVITY POLICY

RECENT UPDATE:

In 2025, India operationalized the Chabahar–INSTC–Eurasia Corridor, cutting freight time to Central Asia by 40%, strengthening regional connectivity.



ABOUT:

- Objective:** Access to energy, trade, and security cooperation with landlocked Central Asia.
- Institutional Platform:** India–Central Asia Summit (2022) institutionalized annual dialogue.
- Transport Corridors:** Chabahar Port, INSTC, and Ashgabat Agreement form India’s core connectivity triad.
- Energy Engagement:** Interest in Kazakhstan’s uranium, Turkmenistan’s TAPI pipeline, and Uzbek gas projects.
- Security Cooperation:** Collaboration through SCO and anti-terrorism training exercises.
- Soft Power Tools:** Scholarships, ICCR programs, and Indian cultural centers.
- Challenges:** Afghan instability, sanctions on Iran, and China’s BRI dominance.
- Way Forward:** Promote multi-modal corridors, ensure logistics digitalization, and expand energy investments.

SOURCE: INSIGHTS MONTHLY
INDIA–UNESCO CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AND SOFT POWER

RECENT UPDATE:

In 2025, India’s ‘Sacred Ensembles of Hampi and

UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

India’s Cultural Diplomacy and Global Recognition



‘Sringeri’ were nominated for inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List, reaffirming India’s global cultural leadership.

ABOUT:

- Cultural Outreach:** India currently has 42 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, 6th highest globally.
- Institutional Anchor:** Ministry of Culture and ASI coordinate heritage nominations and conservation.
- Flagship Initiatives:** “Dekho Apna Desh,” “Adopt a Heritage,” and National Mission on Monuments boost preservation.
- UNESCO Conventions:** India is party to 1972 (World Heritage), 2003 (Intangible Heritage), and 2005 (Cultural Diversity) conventions.
- Cultural Diplomacy:** Promotes Buddhist circuit, Yoga diplomacy, and Ayurveda heritage globally.
- Educational Linkages:** UNESCO MGIEP (Delhi) drives peace education and SDG 4.
- Digital Conservation:** Use of 3D scanning and AI for site mapping and restoration.
- Way Forward:** Expand heritage cities network, link culture with tourism economy, and strengthen cultural diplomacy in G20/BRICS.

INDIA’S SPACE DIPLOMACY AND GLOBAL COLLABORATIONS

RECENT UPDATE:

India signed Artemis Accords (2025), joining the global coalition for peaceful lunar exploration

while deepening **ISRO–NASA cooperation** for the **NISAR mission (2026)**.

ABOUT:

1. **Strategic Vision:** Space as a tool for **development, diplomacy, and global leadership**.
2. **Flagship Missions:** **Chandrayaan-3 (2023)**, **Aditya-L1 (2024)**, and upcoming **Gaganyaan (2026)**.
3. **Institutional Framework:** **ISRO, IN-SPACe**, and **NSIL** anchor global collaborations.
4. **Diplomatic Cooperation:** MoUs with **France (CNES)**, **Japan (JAXA)**, and **US (NASA)** for tech sharing.
5. **South–South Support:** Assisted **Bhutan, Maldives, and Mauritius** in launching communication satellites.
6. **Commercial Space Links:** **Antrix and NSIL** export satellite services to **over 30 countries**.
7. **Policy Integration:** Guided by **Indian Space Policy 2023** encouraging private and global partnerships.
8. **Way Forward:** Establish **Space Situational Awareness Centre**, develop **AI-based satellite systems**, and ensure **space security cooperation**.

INDIA'S CLIMATE DIPLOMACY AND GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

RECENT UPDATE:

At **COP29 (Baku, 2025)**, India led a coalition of **26 developing nations** pushing for a **Loss and Damage Financing Mechanism**, expanding its **LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment)** initiative.

ABOUT:

1. **Policy Framework:** Anchored in **Paris Agreement (2015)** and **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**.
2. **Climate Targets:** Achieve **50% renewable capacity** and **Net Zero by 2070**.
3. **Diplomatic Platforms:** Leadership in **ISA, CDRI, and Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA)**.

4. **Finance Leadership:** Advocating **climate justice and equity** in global negotiations.
5. **Green Energy Expansion:** Installed **44% non-fossil capacity (2025)**; 4th globally in renewables.
6. **Global Partnerships:** MoUs with **EU, UAE, and Japan** on green hydrogen and carbon capture.
7. **Soft Power Role:** Projected **climate ethics** rooted in **Gandhian sustainability** principles.
8. **Way Forward:** Expand **South–South funding**, push **climate-resilient tech**, and integrate **climate diplomacy into foreign policy**.

INDIA'S DIGITAL FOREIGN POLICY AND TECH DIPLOMACY

RECENT UPDATE:

India's **Global Digital Public Infrastructure Forum (GDPIF, 2025)** launched under **G20 framework**, promoting export of **India Stack solutions** to **Africa and Latin America**.

ABOUT:

1. **Definition:** Using **digital tools and governance standards** to enhance **international cooperation**.
2. **Core Pillars:** **Data protection, cyber security, AI governance, and cross-border fintech cooperation**.
3. **Institutional Framework:** **MeitY and MEA** jointly lead global DPI diplomacy.
4. **Key Initiatives:** **India Stack Global, ONDC International, and Digital India Partnership with ASEAN**.
5. **Cyber Diplomacy:** Engages with **UN OEWG, ITU, and QUAD Tech Network** on **AI ethics and cyber norms**.
6. **Economic Impact:** Digital exports estimated at **USD 250 billion (2025)**.
7. **Strategic Value:** Strengthens India's role as **tech standard-setter** in Global South.

- Way Forward:** Develop **Digital Partnerships Fund**, promote **data localization diplomacy**, and align **AI governance globally**.

INDIA'S ROLE IN GLOBAL SOUTH LEADERSHIP

RECENT UPDATE:

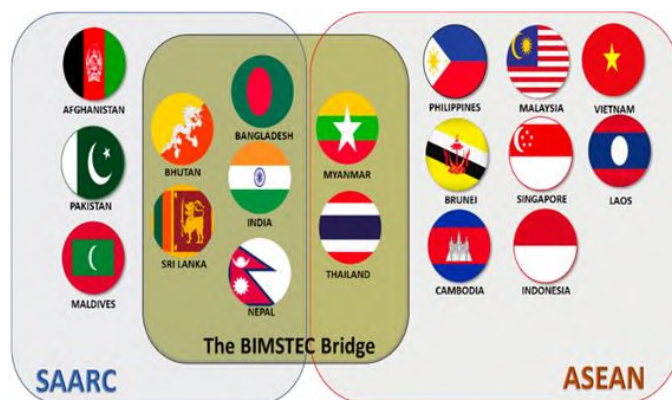
In **2025**, India hosted the **2nd Voice of Global South Summit**, announcing a **South Cooperation Fund (USD 3 billion)** to promote **digital, health, and green initiatives**.



ABOUT:

- Strategic Vision:** Reviving **NAM ethos** with focus on **developmental equity** and **collective resilience**.
- Institutional Platform:** Voice of Global South Summit initiated in **2023** as part of India's G20 presidency.
- Economic Focus:** Enhancing **trade, technology, and climate finance** partnerships.
- Digital Solidarity:** Promotion of **India Stack, UPI, and Aadhaar** as public goods.
- Health Diplomacy:** Expansion of **Vaccine Maitri 2.0** and **telemedicine network** for developing countries.
- Finance Role:** Push for **reformed MDBs** and **debt restructuring** for low-income nations.
- Soft Power Identity:** India positioned as a **"Voice and Bridge of the Global South."**
- Way Forward:** Institutionalize **South-South platform**, promote **technology transfer**, and link **climate justice with digital inclusion**.

INDIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST POLICY AND SAARC-BIMSTEC DYNAMICS



RECENT UPDATE:

In **2025**, India proposed a **BIMSTEC Energy Grid and Connectivity Charter**, reaffirming its focus on **regional cooperation** after **SAARC's functional stagnation**.

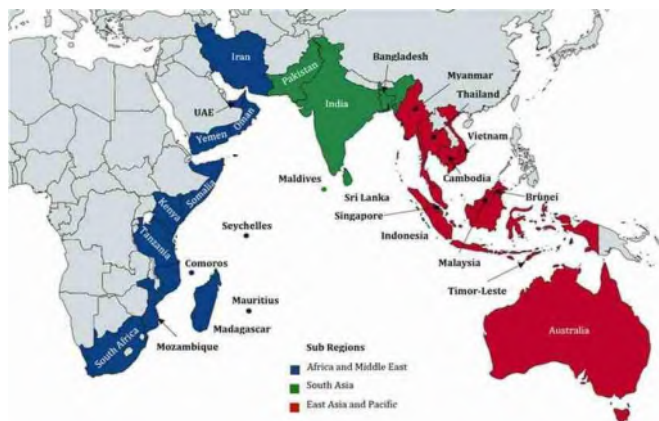
ABOUT:

- Strategic Principle:** Prioritises **peace, connectivity, and prosperity** in South Asia.
- SAARC Paralysis:** Political friction, especially **India-Pakistan tensions**, stalled regional integration since 2016.
- BIMSTEC Revival:** Acts as **alternative to SAARC**, linking **South and Southeast Asia** via the **Bay of Bengal**.
- Infrastructure Cooperation:** **BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement** and **Kaladan Project** enhance regional connectivity.
- Humanitarian Support:** India provided **COVID vaccines and disaster relief** under **Neighbourhood First**.
- Energy Diplomacy:** BIMSTEC Energy Centre (Bangalore) advancing **renewable grid connectivity**.
- Security Coordination:** Collaboration through **SAARC Disaster Management Centre** and **BIMSTEC Coastal Security Initiatives**.
- Way Forward:** Institutionalise **BIMSTEC Charter**, revive **SAARC social sectors**, and enhance **cross-border digital infrastructure**.

INDIA'S POLICY TOWARD THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION (IOR)

RECENT UPDATE:

In **2025**, India launched the **SAGAR Maritime Security Initiative** with **Mauritius, Maldives, and Seychelles** to counter piracy and illegal fishing.



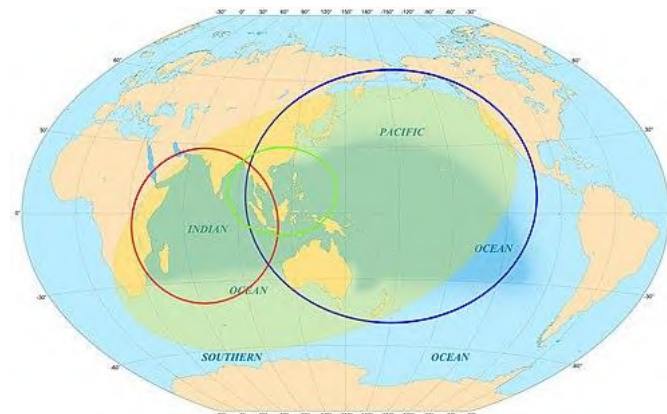
ABOUT:

1. **Vision Statement:** Guided by **SAGAR – Security and Growth for All in the Region (2015)**.
2. **Strategic Geography:** IOR handles **80% of global oil trade**, vital for **India's maritime strategy**.
3. **Institutional Platforms:** Engagement through **IORA, IONS, and Colombo Security Conclave**.
4. **Defence Outreach:** Coastal radar networks and joint naval patrols with **Sri Lanka, Maldives, Seychelles**.
5. **Economic Agenda:** Promotion of **Blue Economy, port connectivity, and submarine cable projects**.
6. **Diplomatic Role:** Strengthened presence via **Mission SAGAR humanitarian outreach**.
7. **Geo-Strategic Balance:** Counters **China's Maritime Silk Route** through **Quad and Indo-Pacific cooperation**.
8. **Way Forward:** Develop **Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)** systems, expand **coastal capacity building**, and promote **Green Shipping corridors**.

INDIA'S ROLE IN QUAD AND INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY

RECENT UPDATE:

At the **Quad Summit 2025 (Tokyo)**, members launched the **Quad Critical Minerals Partnership (QCMP)** to secure global supply chains for green technologies.



ABOUT:

1. **Strategic Framework:** Informal grouping of **India, USA, Japan, and Australia** focused on **Indo-Pacific security**.
2. **Core Vision:** Promotion of a **Free, Open, Inclusive Indo-Pacific (FOIP)**.
3. **Defence Cooperation:** Regular **Malabar Exercises** and **Quad Maritime Security Dialogue**.
4. **Economic Agenda:** Joint efforts on **semiconductors, 5G, AI, and critical minerals supply chains**.
5. **Health & Climate:** Initiatives like **Vaccine Partnership** and **Climate Working Group**.
6. **Technology Collaboration:** Launch of **Quad Fellowship** for STEM education and innovation.
7. **China Factor:** Serves as a **counterbalance to Chinese assertiveness** in Indo-Pacific waters.
8. **Way Forward:** Institutionalize **Quad secretariat**, promote **Blue Economy cooperation**, and ensure **regional inclusivity**.

SOURCE: INDIAN EXPRESS

NEPAL'S POLITICAL TURMOIL

RECENT UPDATE: Nepal's ongoing political instability after PM K.P. Sharma Oli's resignation and protests has tested India's ability to balance influence while maintaining non-interference.



ABOUT:

1. **Geostrategic Proximity:** India shares a **1,770–2,000 km open border** with Nepal, making political turmoil a **direct security concern**.
2. **Cultural Affinity:** Shared **Hindu-Buddhist heritage** and **Gorkha regiments** highlight strong socio-cultural ties.
3. **China's Entry:** Through **BRI investments** (roads, airports, Tibet–Kathmandu rail), China deepens presence, challenging India's primacy.
4. **Political Instability:** **14 governments in 17 years** disrupt policy continuity and India-backed development projects.
5. **Anti-India Sentiment:** Rooted in the **2015 blockade**; sections of Nepali youth view India as an interfering actor.
6. **Security Concerns:** **Open border** leads to risks of **illegal trade, migration, and arms movement**.
7. **Policy Implication:** India must follow a **'Neighbourhood First 2.0'** model—cooperative, non-intrusive, and development-driven.

INDIA–MAURITIUS SPECIAL ECONOMIC PACKAGE

RECENT UPDATE: India announced a **USD 680 million Special Economic Package** covering health, infrastructure, maritime, and education projects during the Mauritius PM's visit.

ABOUT:

1. **Developmental Focus:** Grants + LoC for hospital, **motorway M4, SSR airport tower, and port upgrades**.
2. **Healthcare Support:** Building of **New SSR National Hospital** and **first overseas Jan Aushadhi Kendra**.
3. **Education Cooperation:** Partnerships among **IIT-Madras, IIPM, and University of Mauritius**.
4. **Maritime Security:** **Port Louis redevelopment** enhances India's presence in the **Indian Ocean**.
5. **Geostrategic Role:** Mauritius lies near crucial **SLOCs**, key to India's **maritime domain awareness** and **Africa outreach**.
6. **Economic Gateway:** Major **FDI conduit** due to bilateral taxation treaties; supports **Sagarmala connectivity**.
7. **Soft Power:** Shared diaspora and **AYUSH diplomacy** strengthen India's cultural and goodwill presence.

INDIA–CHINA RELATIONS AND THE PANCHSHEEL DOCTRINE

RECENT UPDATE: At the **SCO Summit 2025 (Tianjin)**, India and China reaffirmed commitment to **border peace** and **Panchsheel principles**.

ABOUT:

1. **Origin:** Established in **1954 Agreement on Tibet trade**, forms the foundation of bilateral relations.
2. **Five Principles:** **Mutual respect, non-aggression, non-interference, equality, and peaceful coexistence**.



3. **For India:** Symbolises **strategic autonomy** and moral diplomacy rooted in **non-alignment**.
4. **For China:** Helps **project a peaceful image** while countering Western narratives on assertiveness.
5. **Diplomatic Significance:** Promotes **sovereignty and equality** in international dealings.
6. **Practical Strain:** Border disputes in **Ladakh and Arunachal** test Panchsheel's endurance.
7. **Way Ahead:** Need for **revised Panchsheel 2.0** incorporating **trust-building and conflict management**.

SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION (SSTC)

RECENT UPDATE: On **UN SSTC Day (12 Sept 2025)**, nations called for strengthening **South-South and Triangular Cooperation** to achieve **SDGs 2030**.



ABOUT:

1. **South-South Cooperation (SSC):** Mutual exchange of **knowledge, technology, and resources** among developing nations.

2. **Triangular Cooperation (TrC):** SSC assisted by **developed countries or multilateral agencies**.
3. **Purpose:** To promote **mutual growth, self-reliance, and innovation** without aid conditionalities.
4. **Functions:** **Capacity-building, tech transfer, and policy sharing** for inclusive development.
5. **Global Governance Role:** Strengthens **collective bargaining power** of the Global South in multilateral forums.
6. **Regional Integration:** Facilitates **cross-regional solutions** to challenges like **climate change and pandemics**.
7. **Complementary Role:** Acts as a **bridge** between **North-South aid** and **Global South solidarity**.

INDIA'S STRATEGIC AUTONOMY IN A MULTIPOLEAR WORLD

RECENT UPDATE: India's **strategic autonomy** gains renewed importance amid **US-China rivalry** and **Russia's resurgence**.

ABOUT:

1. **Definition:** Ability to pursue **independent foreign policy** decisions aligned with **national interest**.
2. **Historical Foundation:** Rooted in **anti-colonial ethos** and **Nehru's Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)**.
3. **Evolution:** Shifted from **non-alignment** to **multi-alignment** post-1991 liberalisation.
4. **Current Strategy:** Simultaneous engagement with **QUAD, BRICS, SCO, and Global South leadership**.
5. **Security Posture:** Maintains **defence partnerships** with the US while **buying arms from Russia**.
6. **Diplomatic Balance:** Promotes **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**—balancing power blocs through moral legitimacy.

7. **Relevance:** Ensures **policy flexibility** in a fragmented global order while safeguarding **sovereignty and autonomy**.

TRUMP'S GAZA PEACE PLAN

RECENT UPDATE: Proposed by **former US President Donald Trump (2025)** to end the **Israel– Hamas conflict**, the plan envisions a **“New Gaza” economic zone**.

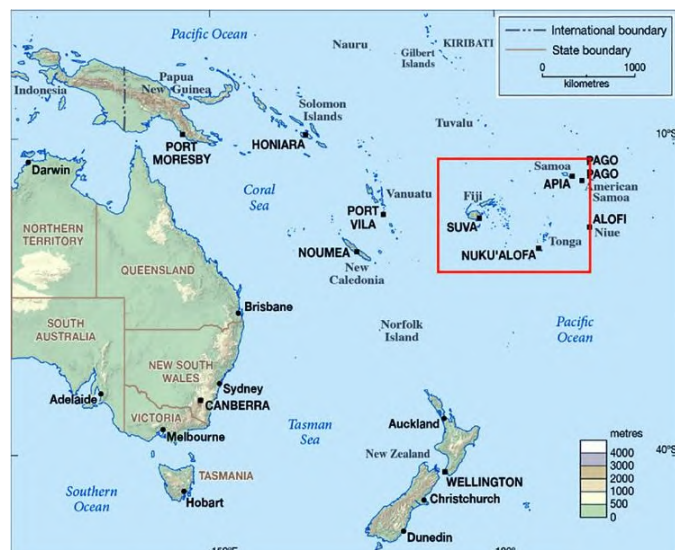
ABOUT:

1. **Goal:** Achieve **ceasefire, disarmament, and reconstruction** through an internationally supervised peace process.
2. **Ceasefire Mechanism:** Israel halts military action upon Hamas acceptance.
3. **Hostage Exchange: 72-hour swap** — Hamas releases hostages; Israel frees 2,000+ Palestinian detainees.
4. **Human Rights Safeguard:** Prohibits **forced displacement** of Palestinians.
5. **Governance Reform:** Hamas excluded; **international oversight** ensures accountable administration.
6. **Peace Oversight:** **“Board of Peace”** led by **Trump & Tony Blair** to monitor progress.
7. **Economic Reconstruction:** Gaza to become a **special economic zone**, backed by **Arab aid and investment**.

SOURCE: DRISHTI MONTHLY

INDIA- FIJI RELATIONS

Recent Update: The Prime Minister of Fiji visited India and held high-level talks with the Indian Prime Minister to **strengthen bilateral cooperation** across multiple sectors.



About:

1. India agreed to provide **training, equipment, and capacity building** for Fiji's military.
2. The nations will collaborate on UN Peacekeeping Operations, White Shipping Information Exchange, and **cybersecurity**.
3. Health agreements include a **100-bedded Super-Specialty Hospital**, Jan Aushadhi, and telemedicine under **e-Sanjeevani**.
4. A focus was placed on Hindi-Sanskrit studies and the recognition of **Girmitiyas** (Indian indentured laborers).
5. They announced a joint vision for **Indo-Pacific peace**, reinforcing India's **Act East Policy** and IPOI.
6. The cooperation is seen as a move to **counterbalance Chinese influence** in the Pacific Island Countries (PICs).
7. Fiji supports India's bid for **UNSC membership** and collaboration on **counter-terrorism** and climate action.
8. The Fijian PM was lauded for championing the **'Ocean of Peace' initiative** for a stable and sustainable Indo-Pacific.

HARNESSING BRICS FOR INDIA'S STRATEGIC AMBITIONS

Recent Update: India's External Affairs Minister cautioned against **linking trade measures with political or non-trade issues** at the virtual BRICS Leaders' Summit.

About:

1. BRICS offers India access to financial resources **outside Western-dominated institutions** like IMF and World Bank.
2. The **New Development Bank (NDB)** has approved nearly **USD 10 billion in loans** for 28 major infrastructure projects in India.
3. It serves as a platform for **energy cooperation**, which helped India manage inflation through access to **discounted Russian oil** after the Ukraine crisis.
4. The grouping promotes settlement in **local currencies** (rupee, ruble) to cushion India against **dollar volatility and sanctions risk**.
5. The expanded BRICS market acts as a **buffer against demand shocks** when traditional Western economies slow down or impose trade barriers.
6. In 2024, BRICS accounted for **40% of the global economy** when measured by Purchasing Power Parity.
7. It fosters cooperation in **AI, fintech, 5G, and space technologies** to create alternative ecosystems against technology sanctions.
8. BRICS offers a safety net for **food and fertilizer security**, with Russia being a major global supplier of agri-inputs.

SOURCE: DOWN TO EARTH

GENEVA PLASTIC TREATY TALKS



RECENT UPDATE: The **fifth UN plastic treaty session in Geneva** ended in deadlock amid **deep disagreements**.

ABOUT:

1. Originates from **UNEA Resolution 5/14 (2022)** to address plastics' full life cycle.
2. Split over **production caps and binding targets**.
3. Some nations oppose **majority voting**.
4. Disagreement on including **toxic additives and microplastics**.
5. **Funding and compensation** issues remain unresolved.
6. US proposes **public-private finance** instead of binding funds.
7. Highlights limits of **global environmental diplomacy**.

US TARIFFS AND TRADE DEALS

RECENT UPDATE: The US imposed **10% blanket tariffs** and **25–50% duties** on select goods, shifting global trade flows.

ABOUT:

1. Disrupts **supply chains** for solar and EV components.
2. Deals like **USMCA** and **LNG pacts** expand US energy dominance.
3. Partners pledge **\$860–865 billion** in US fuel imports.
4. Could delay **renewable transitions** in developing nations.
5. Sparks **green protectionism**



TOPICS COVERED-

- 1. Rise of Anti-Immigration Policies — global trend, populism, misinformation**
- 2. India–Afghanistan Relations — embassy upgrade, air corridor, counterterror assurances**
- 3. India–Russia Relations — strategic partnership, defence ties, energy cooperation**
- 4. Gaza Peace Summit — Trump Declaration, disarmament, no displacement**
- 5. India–EFTA TEPA — \$100B investment, MRAs, services mobility**
- 6. India–ASEAN Relationship — Timor-Leste, maritime cooperation, sustainable tourism**
- 7. India–UK Relations — AI & tech, critical minerals, defence, migration**
- 8. New Strategic EU–India Agenda — prosperity, tech, security, IMEC**
- 9. India–Mongolia Relations — refinery project, Buddhist manuscripts, minerals**
- 10. Sevilla Forum on Debt — SDG finance gap, debt burden, innovative solutions**
- 11. Plutonium Management & Disposition Agreement (PMDA) — US–Russia plutonium reduction, withdrawal**
- 12. UN Human Rights Council — membership rules, UPR, India’s role**
- 13. Convention on Suppression of Terrorism Financing — criminalisation, cooperation, obligations**
- 14. EU–India Strategic Agenda 2025 — carbon market link, tech, defence**
- 15. India & the Multipolar West — Europe’s autonomy, US nationalism, implications for India**
- 16. New Arc of India–Australia Collaboration — defence logistics, Indo-Pacific, interoperability**
- 17. Reversing the Brain Drain — STEM returnees, R&D spending, incentives**
- 18. India’s Evolving Role in UN Peacekeeping — tech-enabled peacekeeping, BlueSky Commons**
- 19. Wassenaar Arrangement — export controls, dual-use tech, cyber tools**
- 20. India–US Corn Conundrum — GM restrictions, high tariffs, ethanol policy**
- 21. India & Global South Leadership — UNSC reform, climate justice, DPI diplomacy**
- 22. India–EFTA TEPA (Reiteration) — market access, services, MSME boost**
- 23. India–Qatar Cooperation — LNG supply, UPI, defence, trade diversification**
- 24. Resetting India–Canada Ties — students, nuclear cooperation, counterterror issues**
- 25. India–Australia Clean Energy Partnership — hydrogen, critical minerals, climate targets**
- 26. IMEC Corridor — India–Gulf–Europe link, BRI alternative, challenges**
- 27. India–MERCOSUR PTA — tariff expansion, South–South cooperation, Brazil trade**
- 28. India Opposes WTO Investment Pact — plurilateral concerns, regulatory autonomy**
- 29. South–South & Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) — BAPA, development fund, capacity building**
- 30. Suriname — geography, diaspora ties, ISA membership**
- 31. Diella: World’s First AI Minister — procurement transparency, digital governance**
- 32. Palestine as a State — recognition criteria, observer status, diplomacy**
- 33. Baltic Sea — semi-enclosed sea, gulfs, eutrophication**

34. Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) — free movement, single market, India link
35. International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) — global standards, Geneva HQ
36. India International Tea Convention — Tea Board role, sustainability, exports
37. India–Mauritius Relations — CECPA, Agaléga, diaspora ties
38. Malacca Strait — chokepoint, piracy, Indo-Pacific security
39. Purple Notice (INTERPOL) — criminal modus operandi, early-warning tool
40. Tirah Valley — tribal region, insurgent route, Afghan-Pak border
41. EU Misses Climate Targets Deadline — 2035–40 targets, credibility concerns
42. EU Court on Green Label for Gas & Nuclear — taxonomy, energy transition
43. ‘Ghost’ Flood Control Projects (Philippines) — corruption, missing infrastructure
44. Sheep Pox Outbreak (Greece) — Capripoxvirus, culling, WOAH concerns
45. Clean Tech Landscape of Global South (China Investments) — \$220B, batteries, solar, hydrogen
46. WHO Report on Tobacco Reduction — regions off-track, e-cigarette rise
47. World Para Athletics Championship — India’s 22 medals, IPC governance

SOURCE: VISION MONTHLY

RISE OF ANTI-IMMIGRATION POLICIES

Recent Update

Multiple countries have recently witnessed a surge in **anti-immigration rhetoric, protests, and restrictive visa policies**, reflecting a global shift driven by populism.

About

1. **Global Trend** – Countries across **Western democracies and Asia** show rising anti-immigrant sentiment, influencing public discourse.
2. **Recent Examples** – **US H-1B fee hike**, Japan's **Sanseito Party** calling immigration a "silent invasion," and protests in Australia such as **March for Australia**.
3. **Populist Politics** – Populist leaders leverage **economic insecurity and cultural fears** to justify curbing immigration.
4. **Economic Concerns** – Immigrants perceived as reducing jobs or wages and straining welfare systems; e.g., **BREXIT** driven partly by job-loss fears.
5. **Cultural Anxiety** – Migrants viewed as threatening **national identity, language, and religion**, especially in demographically shifting societies.
6. **Security Fears** – Post-9/11, immigration linked to **terrorism, illegal border crossings**, and organized crime, leading to stricter laws.
7. **Political Incentives** – Leaders use anti-immigrant rhetoric to **mobilize electoral support** by amplifying fear.
8. **Misinformation** – Social media spreads **false narratives** (e.g., fake crime news in Germany), fuelling xenophobia.

INDIA–AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS: STRATEGIC RESETTling OF TIES

Recent Update

Afghanistan's Foreign Minister visited New Delhi after receiving a **UN travel exemption**, marking the first ministerial-level India visit since the Taliban takeover.

About

1. **Restored Diplomatic Status** – India upgraded its **Technical Mission** in Kabul back to a full **Embassy of India**.
2. **Connectivity Boost** – Launch of the **India–Afghanistan Air Freight Corridor** to enhance trade links.



3. **Infrastructure Cooperation** – Renewed collaboration on **hydropower projects** including the **Salma (Friendship) Dam**.
4. **Counterterrorism Priority** – India seeks assurances that Afghan territory will not host **anti-India terror groups** (e.g., IS-KP, LeT, JeM).
5. **Assurances from Kabul** – Afghan FM pledged that Afghan soil will not be used for **activities hostile to India**.
6. **Geopolitical Balancing** – India aims to reduce **Pakistan's influence** by utilizing current Pakistan–Afghanistan tensions.
7. **China Factor** – India seeks to limit **China's strategic footprint** in Afghanistan under Taliban rule.
8. **Long-Term Interest** – Stability in Afghanistan is crucial for India's **security, connectivity, and regional diplomacy**.

INDIA–RUSSIA RELATIONS

Recent Update

India and Russia celebrated **25 years of their Declaration of Strategic Partnership**, originally signed in 2000.

About

1. **Institutionalised Partnership** – Over 22 annual summits and multiple **ministerial dialogues** deepen ties across sectors.
2. **Political Convergence** – Coordination in **UN, G20, BRICS, SCO**; Russia supports India's bid for a **UNSC permanent seat**.
3. **Defence Ties** – Russia remains India's top military supplier (**36% of imports, SIPRI 2020–24**) including **S-400** and **MiG-29K**.
4. **Joint Production** – Defence ties now include **joint R&D and manufacturing**, e.g., **BrahMos missile system**.
5. **Military Exercises** – Regular bilateral drills like **INDRA** and **Avia Indra**.

6. **Energy Security** – Russia is India’s **largest crude oil supplier**, offering discounted oil that helped control inflation.
7. **Far East Investments** – Indian companies (e.g., **ONGC**) invested in the **Russian Far East** energy sector.
8. **Nuclear Cooperation** – Russia assists in India’s **civil nuclear** expansion, including **Kudankulam Nuclear Plant**.

GAZA PEACE SUMMIT

Recent Update

The **USA and Egypt** co-hosted the Gaza Peace Summit in Sharm El-Sheikh to push a **20-point peace plan** for lasting stability.



About

1. **Peace Declaration** – Mediators (US, Egypt, Qatar, Turkey) signed the **Trump Declaration** for long-term peace and reconstruction.
2. **Non-Military Resolution** – Calls for resolving disputes through **diplomacy**, not force.
3. **Hamis Disarmament** – Plan demands **disarmament** and internationally supervised reconstruction of Gaza.
4. **No Forced Displacement** – Ensures Palestinians will not be **forcibly removed** from Gaza.
5. **Israel’s Commitments** – Israel will not **occupy or annex** the Gaza Strip.
6. **Two-State Issue** – The plan notably **does not guarantee** a two-state solution.
7. **India’s Role** – India appreciated efforts and called for sustainable peace.
8. **Regional Importance** – Stability could expand **Abraham Accords**, enhance trade, and reduce great-power competition in the region.

INDIA–EFTA TRADE AND ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (TEPA)

Recent Update

The **India–EFTA TEPA**, signed in March 2024, officially came into force on **1 October 2025**.

About

1. **Investment Commitments** – EFTA pledges **USD 100 billion investments** in India over 15 years, creating **1 million direct jobs**.
2. **Market Access** – EFTA offers concessions on **92.2% tariff lines**, covering **99.6% of India’s exports**.
3. **Services & Mobility** – First Indian FTA with **Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs)** for regulated professions like **nursing and CA**.
4. **Modes of Services Access** – Enhanced access through **Mode 1 (digital)**, **Mode 3 (commercial presence)**, **Mode 4 (temporary stay)**.
5. **IPR Framework** – TRIPS-level commitments, protecting India’s interests in **generic medicines** and preventing **evergreening**.
6. **Sustainability Focus** – Promotes **transparent, efficient, and harmonised trade procedures**.
7. **Technology Cooperation** – Access to **precision engineering, renewable energy, health tech, R&D**.
8. **India’s Global Positioning** – Strengthens India’s image as a **credible, equal partner** for advanced economies.

INDIA–ASEAN RELATIONSHIP

Recent Update

The **47th ASEAN Summit** was held in Kuala Lumpur, where India also participated in the **22nd ASEAN–India Summit**.



About

1. **11th Member Added** – **Timor-Leste** formally admitted as ASEAN’s newest member.
2. **Theme** – **Inclusivity and Sustainability** guided the summit's agenda.
3. **Kuala Lumpur Accord** – Ceasefire agreement between **Thailand and Cambodia**.
4. **Maritime Cooperation** – 2026 designated as **ASEAN–India Year of Maritime Cooperation**.

5. **Indo-Pacific Support** – India reaffirmed ASEAN’s **centrality** in the Indo-Pacific architecture.
6. **Sustainable Tourism** – Adoption of the **ASEAN–India Joint Leaders’ Statement on Sustainable Tourism**.
7. **Plan of Action** – Support for ASEAN–India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership **2026–2030**.
8. **Broader Engagement** – India deepened ties in **connectivity, trade, and security partnerships**.

INDIA–UNITED KINGDOM RELATIONS

Recent Update

India and the UK released a **Joint Statement** during the visit of the British Prime Minister to India.

About

1. **Technology Cooperation** – Progress on **critical and emerging technologies**, including AI, telecom, critical minerals, and health tech.
2. **TSI Outcomes** – Launch of **AI-native 6G network centre, NTN cybersecurity**, and £24m funding.
3. **Joint AI Centre** – Collaboration on **responsible AI** in healthcare, climate, finance, and biotech.
4. **Critical Minerals** – Phase-2 of the **UK–India Critical Minerals Observatory**, including a satellite campus at **IIT-ISM Dhanbad**.
5. **Trade Mechanisms** – Resetting of **JETCO** to support the **CETA** framework.
6. **Defence Cooperation** – Commitment to maritime security, including a **Regional Maritime Security Centre of Excellence**.
7. **Migration Partnership** – Reaffirmed agreement enabling **legal migration** and deterring irregular movement.
8. **Strategic Vision** – Both nations aim to enhance ties across **technology, trade, defence, and mobility**.

NEW STRATEGIC EU–INDIA AGENDA

Recent Update

The **European Council** approved a new **EU–India Strategic Agenda** outlining five priority pillars of cooperation.

About

1. **Prosperity & Sustainability** – Focus on **economic growth, jobs, decarbonisation**, resilient supply chains; includes aims to finalise **FTA** and **IPA**.
2. **Technology & Innovation** – Collaboration on **digital infrastructure**, emerging tech, via **TTC** and **Horizon Europe**.

3. **Security & Defence** – Coordination on **Indo-Pacific security**, maritime order, and geopolitical challenges.
4. **Connectivity & Global Issues** – Coordination on **IMEC, Global Gateway**, and third-country partnerships.
5. **Enablers** – Enhance **skills mobility, business partnerships, institutional cooperation**.
6. **Shared Values** – Commitment to **rule-based order**, democracy, and sustainable development.
7. **Climate Cooperation** – Joint efforts toward **energy transition and green growth**.
8. **Strategic Alignment** – Positions EU and India as **long-term partners** amid global power shifts.

SOURCE: THE HINDU

INDIA–MONGOLIA RELATIONS

Recent Update

India and Mongolia marked **10 years of their Strategic Partnership** with several key MoUs during the Mongolian President’s visit.

About

1. **Mongol Refinery Project** – Continued cooperation on the **US\$1.7 billion refinery** funded through Indian LoC.
2. **Cultural Exchange** – MoU between **Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council** and Mongolia’s **Arkhangai Province**.
3. **Spiritual Linkages** – India to share holy relics and digitise **1 million ancient Buddhist manuscripts**.
4. **Trade Facilitation** – Explore use of **third-country ports** and enhance supply-chain cooperation.
5. **Critical Minerals** – Strengthening collaboration in **uranium** and other minerals.
6. **Tourism & Connectivity** – Free **e-visas** extended to Mongolian citizens.
7. **Strategic Value** – Mongolia’s location helps India’s **geopolitical balance** in East and Central Asia.
8. **Energy Cooperation** – Mongolia’s large **coking coal reserves** support India’s steel industry.

SEVILLA FORUM ON DEBT

Recent Update

The **Sevilla Forum on Debt** was launched at **UNCTAD-16** to address the deepening debt crisis in developing nations.

About

1. **Leadership** – Led by **Spain**, supported by **UNCTAD** and **UN DESA**.

2. **Purpose** – Platform for **creditors, borrowers, IFIs, and academia** to discuss debt sustainability.
3. **Part of Sevilla Platform** – One of four outcomes, along with **Debt Swaps Hub, Debt-for-Development Programme, and Pause Clause Alliance**.
4. **Sevilla Commitment** – Supports global effort to bridge the **\$4 trillion annual SDG financing gap**.
5. **Debt Reality** – Global public debt reached **\$102 trillion** in 2024; developing countries face **\$31 trillion** burden.
6. **Debt Servicing Burden** – Developing nations spend **\$1.4 trillion annually** on debt service.
7. **Human Impact** – **3.4 billion people** live in countries spending more on debt than on health or education.
8. **Goal** – Promote **innovative debt solutions** that free fiscal space for social spending.

PLUTONIUM MANAGEMENT AND DISPOSITION AGREEMENT (PMDA)

Recent Update

Russia's Parliament approved formal **withdrawal from the PMDA**, after previously suspending it in 2016.

About

1. **Agreement Overview** – Signed in **2000** between the US and Russia to dispose of **34 metric tons** each of weapons-grade plutonium.
2. **Purpose** – Ensure irreversible reduction of **weapons-usable nuclear material**.
3. **Disposition Methods** – Conversion into **MOX fuel** or irradiation in reactors.
4. **Past Suspension** – Russia suspended participation in **2016** citing US sanctions.
5. **Material Characteristics** – Plutonium is a **radioactive element** (atomic number 94) with a **high melting point**.
6. **Security Implications** – Withdrawal raises concerns about **nuclear arms control**.
7. **Global Context** – Occurs amid rising geopolitical tensions.
8. **Non-Proliferation Impact** – Weakens bilateral mechanisms to reduce **nuclear weapons stockpiles**.

UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Recent Update

India was elected **unopposed** to the **UNHRC** for the **2026–2028** term.



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

About

1. **What It Is** – An intergovernmental UN body promoting **global human rights protection**.
2. **Establishment** – Created in **2006**, replacing the UN Commission on Human Rights.
3. **Membership** – Comprises **47 members**, elected for **three-year terms**.
4. **Election Rules** – Members can serve a maximum of **two consecutive terms**.
5. **Functions** – Adopts resolutions, conducts **Universal Periodic Review**, and mandates investigations.
6. **Special Procedures** – Appoints **rapporteurs, experts, and working groups**.
7. **India's Role** – Advocates global equality, development-linked rights, and multilateralism.
8. **Significance** – Membership elevates India's voice on global human-rights issues.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF THE FINANCING OF TERRORISM

Recent Update

Iran ratified the Convention, strengthening global efforts to combat terrorism financing.

About

1. **Adoption** – Adopted by the **UN General Assembly in 1999**, in force since 2002.
2. **Purpose** – Criminalises **financing of terrorism**, holding funders accountable.
3. **Scope** – Applies to direct or indirect provision of **funds, assets, or support** for terrorist acts.
4. **International Cooperation** – Enhances **extradition, mutual legal assistance, and information sharing**.
5. **State Obligations** – States must enact domestic laws to prosecute terrorism financing.
6. **UN Counter-Terrorism Architecture** – Forms core part of global anti-terrorism legal framework.
7. **India's Status** – India is a **ratifying member** of the Convention.
8. **Impact** – Strengthens global efforts to disrupt **terror financial networks**.

EU–INDIA NEW STRATEGIC AGENDA 2025

Recent Update

India and the EU agreed to **link the Indian Carbon Market (ICM)** with the EU's **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)** under the newly adopted 2025 strategic agenda.

About

1. **Definition** – A future-oriented framework to strengthen India–EU cooperation across **green transition, digital governance, defence, and connectivity**.
2. **Foundation** – Builds on the **2020 EU–India Strategic Partnership: Roadmap to 2025**, expanding into new-age sectors.
3. **Aim** – Transform the partnership into a **global, multidimensional collaboration** for the next decade.
4. **Climate Leadership** – Promotes joint **clean energy transitions**, sustainability, and climate action.
5. **Security Cooperation** – Enhances collaboration in **Indo-Pacific security**, strategic autonomy, and crisis-response mechanisms.
6. **Technology Partnership** – Deepens cooperation in **AI, digital public infrastructure, cybersecurity, and ethical innovation**.
7. **People-to-People Ties** – Strengthens **education, research mobility, and cultural cooperation**.
8. **Carbon Market Link** – A landmark decision to integrate **ICM with CBAM**, enabling carbon price deductions at EU borders.

INDIA AND THE MULTIPOLAR WEST: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Recent Update

India's foreign policy is adapting to an increasingly **fragmented, multipolar West**, shaped by Europe's strategic autonomy and US domestic shifts.

About

1. **Strategic Autonomy in Europe** – EU countries pursue **defence and technological independence** from US dominance.
2. **Pluralisation of Power** – Western unity is giving way to multiple centres: **US, EU, UK, Japan**, each acting individually.
3. **Rise of Middle Powers** – States like **India, Australia, South Korea** deepen cooperation with Europe on trade and technology.

4. **US Nationalism Impact** – “**America First**” policies weakened traditional alliances and global commitments.
5. **Divergent Threat Perceptions** – Europe prioritises **Russia**, while US/Asia focus on **China**.
6. **Tech & Economic Rivalries** – Disputes over **data sovereignty, subsidies, AI rules** fuel trans-Atlantic tensions.
7. **Cultural Polarisation** – Ideological divides and culture-war politics reduce Western coherence.
8. **Implications for India** – Creates opportunities for **diversified partnerships**, but requires **diplomatic agility and economic reform**.

THE NEW ARC OF INDIA–AUSTRALIA COLLABORATION

Recent Update

India and Australia held the **first Defence Ministers' Dialogue (2025)** in Canberra, signing agreements on **maritime security, air-refuelling, and submarine rescue**.

About

1. **Strategic Convergence** – Shared democratic values and Indo-Pacific goals underpin cooperation through **Quad** and ministerial dialogues.
2. **Operational Deepening** – Joint exercises like **Talisman Sabre** and logistics agreements enhance interoperability.
3. **Industrial Integration** – Moves toward **joint ship repair, maintenance, and defence manufacturing**.
4. **China Factor** – Growing **Chinese assertiveness** pushes both toward deeper military coordination.
5. **Crisis Preparedness** – Both aim to reduce external dependence and build **bilateral crisis-management capacity**.
6. **Industrial Synergy** – India's **cost-efficient manufacturing** complements Australia's advanced defence technologies.
7. **Maritime Roles** – India anchors the **Indian Ocean**, while Australia secures the **Pacific**, creating complementary security arcs.
8. **Outcome** – A maturing defence partnership critical for **regional stability**.

SOURCE: INDIAN EXPRESS

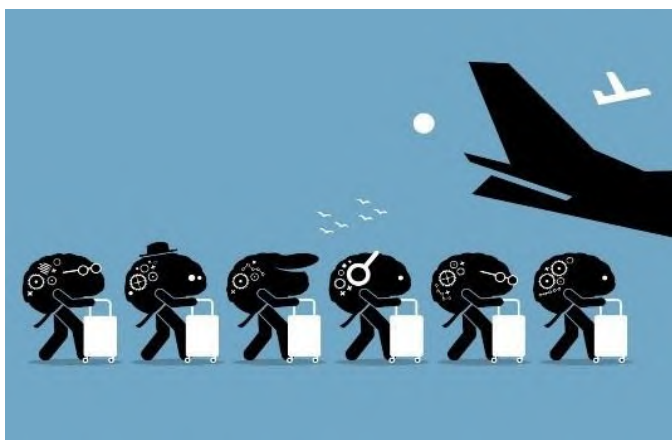
REVERSING THE BRAIN DRAIN

Recent Update

India is planning a new scheme to attract **Indian-origin STEM researchers** back from the US amid tightening policies under the Trump administration.

About

1. **Definition** – Brain drain is the outmigration of **skilled professionals and researchers** seeking better opportunities.
2. **Scale of Outflow** – Over **13 lakh Indians renounced citizenship (2015–2024)**; 1.6 lakh Indian researchers study in the US.
3. **Low R&D Spending** – India invests only **0.65% of GDP in R&D**, far below China (2.7%) and US (3.5%).



4. **Push Factors Abroad** – **Funding cuts, immigration uncertainty, and anti-science policies** drive Indians away from the US.
5. **Growing Indian Ecosystem** – Expansion of **AI Centres, PARAM Siddhi supercomputer, and digital research networks.**
6. **Governmental Incentives** – India offering **research grants, repatriation packages, and startup support.**
7. **National Motivation** – Stronger desire among scientists to **contribute to India's development.**
8. **Outcome Goal** – Transform India into a **global innovation hub** by reversing talent outflow.

INDIA'S EVOLVING ROLE IN UN PEACEKEEPING

Recent Update

India hosted the **2025 UN Troop Contributing Countries (UNTCC) Chiefs' Conclave**, the first time the Indian Army led such a global forum.

About

1. **UNPKF Overview** – Established in **1948**, UN Peacekeeping supports conflict-torn nations through **ceasefire monitoring, civilian protection, and institution building.**



2. **India's Contribution** – Over **3,00,000 personnel** deployed across **50 missions**, including Congo, Lebanon, and South Sudan.
3. **Women's Leadership** – India deployed the **first all-women police contingent** in Liberia (2007).
4. **Technology as Moral Multiplier** – India pushes for use of **AI, drones, sensors, and data analytics** in peacekeeping.
5. **UAS/C-UAS Doctrine** – Introduced **layered drone systems** for surveillance, convoy safety, and evacuations.
6. **Aatmanirbhar Capabilities** – Defence Expo 2025 showcased **41 indigenous systems** for peacekeeping.
7. **BlueSky Commons Proposal** – India proposed a shared platform for **telemetry data, drone feeds, and interoperability standards.**
8. **Strategic Role** – India positions itself as a leader in **ethical, tech-enabled peacekeeping.**

WASSENAAR ARRANGEMENT

Recent Update

Protests erupted after allegations that **Microsoft Azure services** were used in Israeli military operations, exposing loopholes in the **Wassenaar Arrangement's export controls.**



About

1. **Definition** – A multilateral export-control regime focused on **conventional arms and dual-use technologies.**
2. **Establishment** – Created in **1996** in Wassenaar, Netherlands, replacing **CoCom** and operating by **consensus.**

- Objective** – To enhance **regional and global security** by preventing sensitive technologies from reaching hostile actors.
- Governance** – The **Plenary** is the decision-making body; India chaired it in **2023**, supported by a Vienna-based Secretariat.
- Membership** – Includes **42 countries**; India became a member in **2017**.
- Control Lists** – Includes the **Munitions List** (tanks, aircraft, small arms) and the **Dual-Use List** (civilian + military application tech).
- National Discretion** – States share info on export denials but retain **full sovereignty** over licensing and enforcement.
- Expanded Scope** – Since **2013**, includes **intrusion software**, cyber-surveillance tools, and exploitation technologies.

INDIA-US CORN CONUNDRUM

Recent Update

The US is pushing India to import American corn, but India remains cautious due to **GM restrictions**, high tariffs, and domestic farmer protection.

About

- GM Import Ban** – India prohibits **GM corn imports**, while **94%** of US corn is genetically modified.
- High Tariffs** – Imports face **15% duty** within quota and **50% duty** beyond, making US corn uncompetitive.
- Farmer Protection** – Cheap imports could harm India's **maize-ethanol ecosystem**, threatening farmer incomes.
- Dumping Risk** – US corn is **~70% the price** of Indian maize, enabling **dumping** concerns.
- Ethanol Policy** – Importing corn contradicts India's **import-substitution strategy** under its ethanol blending mission.
- Forex Savings** – Achieving **20% ethanol blending** could save **USD 10 billion** annually in foreign exchange.
- Crop Features** – Maize is the **"queen of cereals"**, sensitive to frost, optimal above **15°C**, and grows in well-drained soils.
- India's Status** – India is the **5th-largest producer** but only **14th-largest exporter**, with yields below the global average.

INDIA'S ROLE IN AMPLIFYING THE VOICE OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Recent Update

India hosted a **High-Level Global South meeting** at the UNGA to strengthen collective bargaining and demand UN reforms.



About

- Bridge Between North and South** – India mediates on **climate justice**, trade, and security issues as a **Vishwa Bandhu**.
- G20 Achievements** – India ensured **African Union's permanent membership** in G20.
- Coalition Building** – Uses platforms like **BRICS**, **Voice of Global South Summit**, and **Quad** to elevate Southern concerns.
- UN Reform Advocacy** – Strong push for **UNSC reform**, IMF quota reforms, and democratization of global governance.
- Climate Leadership** – Promotes **Mission LiFE**, **ISA**, and **Green Hydrogen Mission**, supporting vulnerable nations.
- Digital Public Infrastructure Diplomacy** – **Aadhaar/UPI** models exported to **12+ countries**, fostering digital inclusion.
- Strategic Autonomy** – India positions itself as a **neutral, development-focused power** among major blocs.
- Outcome Goal** – Build a **fairer global governance system** reflecting the priorities of developing nations.

INDIA-EFTA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (TEPA)

Recent Update

The **India-EFTA TEPA** came into force on **1 October 2025**, enhancing market access and investment flows.



India-EFTA
Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement

About

1. **Definition** – A trade pact between India and **EFTA (Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein)** finalised in **2024**.
2. **Market Access** – Provides **100% access** for India's industrial and non-agricultural goods; concessions for processed foods.
3. **Investment Commitment** – EFTA to invest **USD 100 billion** over 15 years, creating **1 million direct jobs**.
4. **EFTA Desk** – A **one-stop facilitation mechanism** operational since 2025 to support investors.
5. **Global Integration** – Boosts India's presence in **European value chains** and complements FTAs with UAE, UK, and Australia.
6. **MSME Boost** – Lower compliance costs enable small exporters to integrate into European markets.
7. **Services Mobility** – Enhances movement of **professionals, startups, and skilled labour**.
8. **Strategic Impact** – Strengthens India's role in global supply chains and diversifies export destinations.

INDIA–QATAR TRADE AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Recent Update

India and Qatar held the **Joint Commission Meeting** to boost trade, explore CEPA, and expand energy and digital cooperation.

About

1. **Trade Volume** – Bilateral trade reached **USD 14.15 billion**, dominated by petroleum imports.
2. **Energy Security** – Qatar to supply **7.5 MT LNG annually from 2028**, covering India's long-term energy needs.
3. **UPI Integration** – Launch of **UPI in Qatar** enhances payment ease for expatriates and businesses.
4. **Sectoral Opportunities** – Growth expected in **pharma, IT, electronics, automobiles, and solar energy**.
5. **Investment Relations** – Over **20,000 Indian companies** operate in Qatar; Qatar's FDI in India at **USD 1.5 billion**.
6. **Defence Cooperation** – Includes **Za'ir-Al-Bahr naval exercise**, DIMDEX participation, and training exchanges.
7. **Trade Target** – Both aim to **double bilateral trade by 2030**.

8. **Cultural Bonds** – Strong ties via diaspora and annual cultural festivals.

RESETTING INDIA–CANADA TIES

Recent Update

India and Canada issued a joint statement **"Renewing Momentum"** to restore diplomatic engagement.

About

1. **Trade & Investment** – Canadian pension funds have invested **CAD 75 billion**; over **600 Canadian firms** active in India.
2. **Nuclear Cooperation** – Canada supplies uranium under the **2010 Nuclear Cooperation Agreement**.
3. **Security Frameworks** – Includes **JWG on Counter-terrorism (1997)** and **2018 cooperation framework**.
4. **Legal Instruments** – Backed by **Extradition Treaty (1987)** and **MLAT (1994)**.
5. **S&T Collaboration** – ISRO and CSA cooperate; ANTRIX launched several Canadian satellites.
6. **Education Links** – Over **427,000 Indian students** study in Canada; diaspora of **1.8 million**.
7. **Clean Energy Dialogue** – Reviving cooperation on **green hydrogen, biofuels, and clean tech**.
8. **CEO Forum Revival** – India–Canada CEO Forum to reconvene in **2026**.

SOURCE: INSIGHTS MONTHLY

INDIA–AUSTRALIA CLEAN ENERGY PARTNERSHIP

Recent Update

India and Australia expanded their **Renewable Energy Partnership (REP)** amid rising global supply-chain vulnerabilities.

About

1. **Energy Interdependence** – Australia holds critical minerals; India provides **scale, workforce, and market demand**.
2. **REP (2024)** – Cooperation in **solar PV, green hydrogen, energy storage, circular economy, and supply chains**.
3. **Track-1.5 Dialogue** – Connects policymakers, researchers, and industry for joint innovation.
4. **Critical Minerals** – Joint work to reduce reliance on **China**, which refines **90% of rare earths**.
5. **Climate Vulnerability** – Indo-Pacific faces **10 climate disasters per month**; up to **89 million displaced by 2050**.
6. **India's Targets** – **500 GW non-fossil** capacity by 2030; **280 GW solar**.

- Australia's Targets – 62–70% emissions reduction** by 2035.
- Outcome – Building a resilient, regionally**

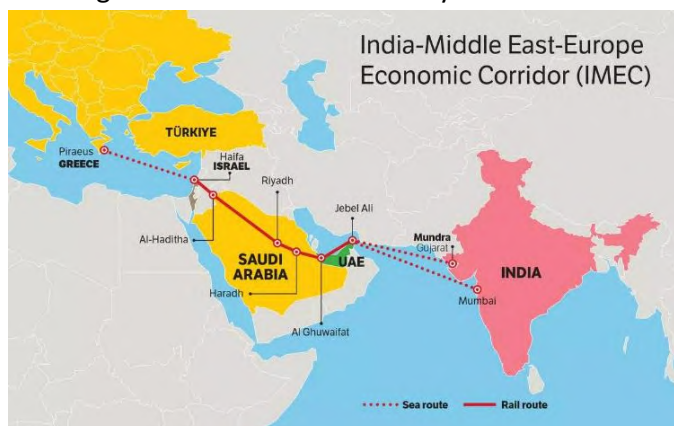


anchored clean-energy ecosystem.

INDIA–MIDDLE EAST–EUROPE ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (IMEC)

Recent Update

Conflicts in West Asia and emerging Arctic routes have challenged the timeline and viability of IMEC.



About

- Definition – A multi-modal connectivity corridor** unveiled at **G20 Summit 2023**.
- Two Segments – Eastern Corridor (India–Gulf)** and **Northern Corridor (Gulf–Europe)**.
- Signatories – India, US, Saudi Arabia, UAE, France, Germany, Italy, and EU.**
- Geopolitical Context – Strengthened by Abraham Accords** and India's ties with Gulf states.
- Infrastructure Plan – Ports, railways, roads, energy pipelines, and digital undersea cables.**
- Strategic Purpose – A transparent, debt-free alternative** to China's BRI.
- Trade Benefits – Reduces transport costs** and enhances India's access to European markets.
- Security Challenges – Regional conflicts threaten implementation pace.**

INDIA–MERCOSUR PREFERENTIAL TRADE AGREEMENT

Recent Update

India and Brazil agreed to **expand the India–MERCOSUR PTA**, aiming for USD 20 billion trade by 2030.

About

- Joint Declaration – A technical dialogue** will broaden tariff coverage beyond the current **450 tariff lines**.
- PTA Background – Framework Agreement (2003), PTA (2004), implemented in 2009** under WTO norms.
- Scope – Provides limited duty concessions** unlike FTAs; rules of origin and dispute mechanisms included.
- Trade Goal – Raise bilateral trade from USD 12.2 billion to USD 20 billion** by 2030.
- South–South Cooperation – Enhances ties** between BRICS, G20, IBSA partners.
- Market Access – Enhances competitiveness** of Indian exports in Latin America.
- Trade Composition – India's exports were USD 8.12 billion, imports USD 9.36 billion**, mainly from Brazil.
- Strategic Impact – Reduces reliance** on European/Chinese markets and diversifies export footprints.

INDIA OPPOSES CHINA-LED WTO INVESTMENT PACT

Recent Update

India raised objections to the **Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement** at the WTO.

About

- Definition – A plurilateral pact** to streamline investment rules and increase **FDI transparency**.
- Aim – Create legally binding commitments** to ease investment flows for developing countries.
- Membership – Supported by 127 WTO members**, including 90 developing states and 27 LDCs.
- MFN Clause – Benefits to one must extend to all signatories.**
- Accession – Open to all WTO members**; to be placed under **Annex 4** of the Marrakesh Agreement.
- India's Objection – Not WTO-mandated**; undermines **consensus-based decision-making**.
- Systemic Concern – Risks fragmenting** WTO norms and allowing powerful blocs to bypass full membership.
- Strategic Implication – India aims to prevent erosion** of multilateral discipline and protect regulatory autonomy.

SOUTH–SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION (SSTC)

Recent Update: UN declared “**New Opportunities and Innovation through SSTC**” as the theme for the 2025 UN Day.



About:

1. Formalised under the **Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), 1978**.
2. **South–South Cooperation** involves collaboration among **developing countries**.
3. **Triangular Cooperation** includes developing countries supported by **developed nations or multilateral bodies**.
4. India established the **India-UN Development Partnership Fund (2017)** for SSTC projects.
5. Recognised globally as a **complement**, not a substitute, to North–South cooperation.
6. Promotes exchange of **knowledge, skills, technology, and resources**.
7. UN observes **12 September** as the International Day for SSTC.
8. Supports capacity building in areas like health, education, agriculture, and governance.

SURINAME

Recent Update: Suriname pledged to **permanently protect 90%** of its tropical forests.

About:

1. Located on the **northern coast of South America**; formerly **Dutch Guiana**.
2. Capital **Paramaribo** (UNESCO World Heritage Site).
3. Borders: **Atlantic Ocean (N), French Guiana (E), Brazil (S), Guyana (W)**.
4. Major rivers include **Suriname, Maroni, Courantyne**.
5. Highest point: **Juliana Top** in the Wilhelmina Mountains.
6. Indian diaspora forms **27%** of the population.
7. Recently inaugurated its **embassy in New Delhi (2024)**.

8. Signed the **International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement**.

DIELLA – WORLD’S FIRST AI MINISTER

Recent Update: Albania appointed **Diella**, an AI-generated bot, as world’s first AI minister.



About:

1. Handles **public tender management**.
2. Ensures **transparency & corruption-free procurement**.
3. Operates using **AI algorithms & audit trails**.
4. Reduces human bias in **government contracting**.
5. First instance of **AI holding a ministerial role** globally.
6. Part of Albania’s **digital governance modernization**.
7. Enhances efficiency in **public financial management**.
8. Sets precedent for **AI-enabled administrative roles**.

PALESTINE AS A STATE

Recent Update: **UK, Canada, Portugal & Australia** recently recognised Palestine as a State.

About:

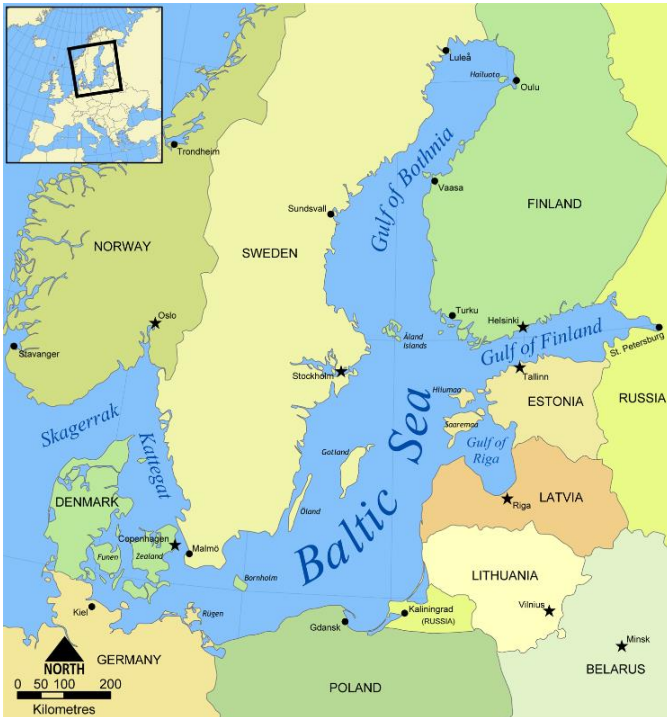
1. Over **140 UN member states** recognise Palestine (India since 1988).
2. Recognition based on **Montevideo Convention (1933)** criteria.
3. Criteria: **Permanent population, territory, government, foreign relations capacity**.
4. Palestine is a **UN Permanent Observer State**, not a full member.
5. UN cannot “recognise” states; only **member nations** can.
6. Recognition enables **treaty-making, diplomacy & UN membership eligibility**.
7. Recently supported the **New York Declaration** on the **Two-State Solution**.

- Enhances international backing for **peaceful settlement with Israel**.

SOURCE: DRISHTI MONTHLY

BALTIC SEA

Recent Update: Featured due to increasing **geopolitical tensions & environmental monitoring**.



About:

- Semi-enclosed **brackish sea** of Northern Europe.
- Borders **Sweden, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Finland, Estonia, Germany, Denmark, Russia**.
- Youngest sea on Earth; coastline **~8000 km**.
- Linked to the Atlantic via **Danish Straits**.
- Major gulfs: **Gulf of Bothnia, Gulf of Finland, Gulf of Riga**.
- Major inflow from **Neva River**.
- Known for large archipelagos like **Gotland**.
- Vulnerable to **eutrophication & low salinity ecosystems**.

EURASIAN ECONOMIC UNION (EAEU)

Recent Update: Discussions progressed on India–EAEU trade cooperation.



About:

- Established in **2014** as successor to Eurasian Economic Community.
- Members: **Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia**.
- Enables free movement of **goods, services, capital, labour**.
- Governed by **Eurasian Economic Council** at heads-of-state level.
- Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC)** is its regulatory body (Moscow).
- Focus on creating a **single Eurasian market**.
- Unlike EU, **no common currency**.
- Important partner for India in **energy, defence, trade**.

INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION (IEC)

Recent Update: India hosted the **89th IEC General Meeting** in New Delhi.



About:

- IEC is a **non-profit international standards body** established in **1906**.
- Develops standards for **electrical, electronic, and related technologies**.
- Headquarters located in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- Standards adopted in **150+ countries**.
- Its **Standardization Management Board (SMB)** is the apex governance body.
- Works closely with **ISO and ITU**.
- Ensures **global interoperability and safety** in electrical systems.
- India previously hosted IEC meetings in **1960, 1997, and 2013**.

INDIA INTERNATIONAL TEA CONVENTION (IITC)

Recent Update: 8th IITC held in **Kochi**, theme **“Innovating the Tea Ecosystem for Tomorrow”**.

About:

- Organized by **Tea Board of India & UPASI**.
- Focuses on global tea trade, quality, and sustainability.
- Tea Board: Statutory body under **Ministry of Commerce**.

4. Board has **31 members**, reconstituted every 3 years.
5. HQ: **Kolkata**; overseas offices in **Moscow, Dubai, Hamburg, London, New York**.
6. Regulates production, export, auctions, and quality.
7. India among top producers of **black tea and orthodox tea**.

INDIA–MAURITIUS RELATIONS

Recent Update: India opened first overseas **Jan Aushadhi Kendra** in Mauritius (2024).

About:

1. Mauritius: Indian Ocean island nation; **70% population of Indian origin**.
2. National Day (12 March) commemorates **Gandhi's Dandi March**.
3. **CECPA (2021)** governs trade relations.
4. Mauritius is India's **2nd-largest FDI source** (after Singapore).
5. Strategic coordination via **Colombo Security Conclave**.
6. India developed **Agaléga Island** for maritime surveillance.
7. Mauritius linked to **IFC-IOR, ISA, and AfCFTA** access.

MALACCA STRAIT

Recent Update: Increased piracy concerns have renewed India's maritime monitoring in the Strait.



About:

1. **Strategic waterway** linking the **Andaman Sea (Indian Ocean)** and **South China Sea (Pacific Ocean)**.
2. Located between **Sumatra (Indonesia)** and **Peninsular Malaysia**.
3. One of the **busiest shipping lanes** — over **60% of India's trade** passes through it.
4. A major chokepoint for **China's energy and trade routes**.

5. Narrow width makes it vulnerable to **blockades, piracy, accidents, and congestion**.
6. Critical for India's **energy security**, especially **LNG imports**.
7. Central to **Indo-Pacific strategy**, QUAD cooperation, and maritime security.

PURPLE NOTICE (INTERPOL)

Recent Update: India's Enforcement Directorate issued its first-ever Purple Notice (Aug 2025).



About:

1. One of **8 Interpol notices**, focused on **modus operandi & criminal concealment methods**.
2. Unlike Red Notices, it does **not target individuals** but criminal techniques.
3. Supports global law enforcement in understanding emerging threats.
4. Helps track tools used in smuggling, cybercrime, and trafficking.
5. Used frequently for sharing forensic and security alerts.
6. Other notices: **Red, Yellow, Blue, Black, Green, Orange, Silver**.
7. Strengthens preventive policing and early-warning intelligence.

TIRAH VALLEY

Recent Update: Gained attention due to rising **militant movement and tribal conflict**.

About:

1. Located in **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan**.
2. Lies between **Khyber Pass & Khanki Valley**.
3. Mountainous region along **Afghanistan–Pakistan border**.
4. Inhabited mainly by **Afridi & Orakzai Pashtun tribes**.
5. Historically used as a **tribal stronghold**.

6. Rugged terrain favours **insurgent hideouts**.
7. Climatically harsh with cold winters & steep valleys.
8. Strategic for **cross-border movement**.



SOURCE: PIB

EU MISSES UN DEADLINE FOR NEW CLIMATE TARGETS

Recent Update: The EU failed to finalize 2035 and 2040 targets before the UNGA deadline in 2025.

About:

1. Germany, France, and Poland requested more time due to internal disagreements on burden-sharing.
2. EU submitted a provisional “statement of intent” outlining **66.25–72.5% reduction** by 2035.
3. Final targets are expected before COP30 in Brazil.
4. UN urged updated targets to revive global climate momentum post geopolitical disruptions.
5. Fewer than 40 countries submitted new NDC-aligned targets for 2035–40 by the deadline.
6. China reportedly plans to submit targets by September-end.
7. EU’s delay raises concerns about credibility in global leadership roles.
8. The uncertainty may affect global carbon markets and investment confidence.

EU COURT UPHOLDS GREEN LABEL FOR GAS AND NUCLEAR

Recent Update: CJEU (2025) upheld the inclusion of gas and nuclear as “sustainable” under EU Green Taxonomy.

About:

1. EU Taxonomy (2020) classifies sustainable economic activities to guide green investments.
2. The 2022 Delegated Act labeled **gas and nuclear** as transitional activities supporting clean-energy shift.
3. Critics argue this dilutes climate integrity; supporters cite post-Ukraine energy security needs.

4. Court ruled the Commission acted within mandate in balancing emissions goals with energy needs.
5. Nuclear qualifies under strict waste management and safety criteria; gas under methane-reduction benchmarks.
6. The ruling may influence global sustainable-finance taxonomies.
7. Member states remain divided—Austria and Luxembourg opposed inclusion.
8. Investors may now channel more funds into EU gas and nuclear assets.

‘GHOST’ FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Recent Update: Philippines established an independent commission to investigate large-scale fraud in flood control projects.

About:

1. Country faces frequent typhoons and monsoon floods, prompting major investments in flood infrastructure.
2. “Ghost projects” refer to budgeted but nonexistent or poorly executed structures.
3. Investigations uncovered **false completion reports**, missing drainage systems, and substandard materials.
4. Corruption and fragmented governance weaken planning and oversight.
5. Rapid urbanization without proper drainage amplifies urban flooding.
6. Climate-resilience criteria are often ignored in project design.
7. Government proposes stricter audits, community monitoring, and climate-responsive designs.
8. Stronger penalties are recommended for contractors and officials involved.

SHEEP POX OUTBREAK IN GREECE

Recent Update: Greece culled nearly **260,000 sheep** after a major sheep pox outbreak in 2025.

About:

1. Sheep pox is a highly contagious **Capripoxvirus** infection affecting sheep and goats.
2. Causes fever, nodular skin lesions, respiratory distress, and high mortality in naïve populations.
3. WOAHP classifies it as a **notifiable transboundary disease** due to severe economic impacts.
4. Outbreaks disrupt meat, milk, and wool supply chains.
5. Transmission occurs through direct contact, vectors, and contaminated materials.

6. Control measures include stamping-out, vaccination in surrounding zones, and movement restrictions.
7. The outbreak raises biosecurity and surveillance concerns across Europe.
8. India monitors closely due to rising livestock movement under trade agreements.

REDEFINING THE GLOBAL SOUTH'S CLEAN TECH LANDSCAPE

Recent Update: A 2025 NZIPL report reveals over **\$220 billion** of Chinese clean-tech investments across 54 countries, reshaping the Global South's energy transition.

About:

1. China has emerged as the **largest global investor in clean technology**, with investments surpassing the inflation-adjusted **US Marshall Plan (\$200 billion)**.
2. Nearly **75% of investments** occur in **emerging markets**, signalling a shift of clean-tech industrialisation toward the Global South.
3. Battery material manufacturing leads with **\$62 billion**, particularly in **Indonesia and Latin America**, securing upstream minerals.
4. **Battery production** worth **\$49 billion** targets Europe, with **Hungary** becoming a major EV-component hub.
5. Solar manufacturing investments of **\$57 billion** reinforce China's dominance across **135 global projects**.
6. Green hydrogen projects worth **\$27 billion** concentrate in **MENA**, averaging **\$2 billion** per project.
7. Motivations include securing **raw materials**, accessing **regional markets**, and establishing **third-country re-export hubs** (e.g., Morocco, Southeast Asia).
8. 2025 indicates a shift toward **"light-asset" strategies**—licensing, OEM partnerships—due to rising trade barriers and geopolitical risks.

WHO REPORT ON GLOBAL TOBACCO REDUCTION PROGRESS

Recent Update: WHO's latest analysis warns that most regions are **not on track** to achieve a 30% tobacco-use reduction by 2025.

About:

1. Only **three WHO regions**—Africa, Americas, South-East Asia—are on track to meet global targets.

2. Success regions benefit from **higher taxation, advertising bans**, and strong **FCTC compliance**.
3. Europe, Eastern Mediterranean, and Western Pacific lag due to **policy delays** and **industry interference**.
4. Rising use of **e-cigarettes and nicotine alternatives** threatens progress.
5. WHO highlights tobacco as a key driver of **NCD mortality**, responsible for millions of deaths annually.
6. Uneven progress may worsen global **health inequities**.
7. Accelerated **public-health campaigns** and regulatory reforms remain essential.
8. WHO urges stronger **international cooperation** for tobacco control.

WORLD PARA ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIP

Recent Update: India won a **record 22 medals**, including **6 Gold**, in the 2025 Championships it hosted.

About:

1. Para athletics is the **largest Paralympic sport**, inclusive of running, throwing, and jumping events.
2. First para athletics competition held in **1952** for war veterans.
3. Governed by the **International Paralympic Committee (IPC)**.
4. Key events include **Paralympic Games (every 4 years)** and **World Para Athletics Championships (biennial)**.
5. India became the **4th Asian nation** to host the Championships.
6. Grand Prix events are held annually worldwide since **2013**.
7. Enhances opportunities for **athletes with disabilities** through structured global competitions.
8. India's best-ever performance reflects strengthening **para-sport infrastructure & support systems**.



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- 1. India–Africa Bilateral Relations**
- 2. Revisiting Restraint: India and the New Nuclear Order**
- 3. BRICS Challenging SWIFT**
- 4. UN at 80: Decline of Global Governance**
- 5. Strengthening India–Germany Partnership**
- 6. 22nd ASEAN–India Summit**
- 7. United Nations Convention against Cybercrime**
- 8. US Resumption of Nuclear Testing**
- 9. India’s Stance on Nuclear Policy**
- 10. India–Chabahar Port Partnership**
- 11. APEC Summit 2025**
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- 13. India–Bahrain Bilateral Engagement**
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- 17. G2 and Global Power Realignment**
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- 19. India–Bhutan Relations**
- 20. East Asia Summit**
- 21. APEC 2025 (Gyeongju Declaration)**
- 22. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)**
- 23. Wassenaar Arrangement**
- 24. Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO)**
- 25. Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT)**
- 26. Sir Creek Dispute**
- 27. International Social Security Association (ISSA)**
- 28. NATO Pipeline System**
- 29. New START Treaty**
- 30. International Solar Alliance (ISA)**

INDIA–AFRICA BILATERAL RELATIONS

Recent Update: India is recalibrating its Africa policy ahead of the upcoming India–Africa Forum Summit to revitalise strategic engagement.



About:

1. India and Africa share deep civilisational ties rooted in ancient Indian Ocean trade networks and cultural exchanges.
2. Anti-colonial solidarity and cooperation during the Non-Aligned Movement strengthened political bonds in the post-independence era.
3. Economic engagement expanded after the 1990s through investments, ITEC training, and development partnerships.
4. India has opened new diplomatic missions and elevated political outreach across Africa in the last decade.
5. Bilateral trade crossed USD 100 billion, positioning India among Africa’s top trading partners.
6. Development cooperation focuses on capacity building, digital infrastructure, health, and education.
7. India’s Africa policy now emphasises mutual growth, strategic autonomy, and South–South cooperation.

REVISITING RESTRAINT: INDIA AND THE NEW NUCLEAR ORDER

Recent Update: Renewed global debate on nuclear testing has revived discussions on India’s long-standing voluntary moratorium.

About:

1. The erosion of global arms control regimes has weakened confidence in existing nuclear restraint mechanisms.
2. Major powers have resumed weapons modernisation and nuclear testing preparations.
3. India’s 1974 and 1998 nuclear tests established credible deterrence and strategic autonomy.
4. Technological advancements necessitate confidence in warhead reliability and delivery systems.
5. India’s doctrine balances credible minimum deterrence with strategic restraint.
6. Evolving regional security dynamics demand constant reassessment of deterrence credibility.
7. The debate reflects tensions between global non-proliferation norms and national security imperatives.

BRICS CHALLENGING SWIFT

Recent Update: BRICS nations launched initiatives to reduce dependence on Western-dominated financial systems.

BRICS
Members



About:

1. The SWIFT network has historically dominated cross-border financial messaging systems.
2. Sanctions on Russia highlighted vulnerabilities of dollar-dependent financial infrastructures.
3. BRICS initiated alternative payment systems to enhance financial sovereignty.
4. The New Development Bank supports non-Western financial cooperation.

- BRICS Pay enables cross-border transactions in local currencies.
- The initiative aims to reduce exposure to currency volatility and sanctions.
- It represents a move toward multipolar global financial governance.

UN AT 80: DECLINE OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Recent Update: The UN's 80th anniversary has revived debate on institutional reform and global legitimacy.



About:

- The UN's post-war architecture reflects power imbalances of 1945.
- Veto power of permanent members undermines democratic decision-making.
- Multipolar geopolitics has strained collective security mechanisms.
- The organisation has delivered significant humanitarian and peacekeeping outcomes.
- Emerging challenges demand reforms in representation and decision-making.
- Developing countries seek greater voice in global governance structures.
- The future of multilateralism depends on inclusive institutional reform.

INDIA'S STANCE ON NUCLEAR POLICY

Recent Update: India reiterated its commitment to credible minimum deterrence and nuclear restraint.

About:

- India maintains a voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing despite evolving threats.
- The country adheres to a No First Use nuclear doctrine.

- Strategic autonomy remains central to India's nuclear policy.
- India supports global non-proliferation while remaining outside the NPT.
- Civilian nuclear energy forms a key pillar of India's low-carbon strategy.
- Indigenous technological development ensures strategic independence.
- Nuclear policy balances deterrence, responsibility, and global stability.

INDIA-CHABAHAR PORT PARTNERSHIP

Recent Update: India secured a temporary U.S. sanctions waiver to continue operations at Iran's Chabahar Port.

About:

- Chabahar provides India strategic access to Afghanistan and Central Asia bypassing Pakistan.
- It enhances regional connectivity through the International North-South Transport Corridor.
- The port supports India's energy security and trade diversification.
- It counters regional influence from competing



port developments.

- The project strengthens India's engagement with Iran and Central Asia.
- Chabahar contributes to humanitarian assistance and regional stability.
- The initiative aligns with India's broader connectivity and neighbourhood strategies.

STRENGTHENING INDIA–GERMANY PARTNERSHIP

Recent Update: India and Germany commemorated 25 years of their Strategic Partnership with high-level engagements focusing on trade, technology, and green growth.

About:

1. The India–Germany partnership, institutionalised in 2000, has evolved into a comprehensive framework covering economic, technological, and strategic cooperation.
2. Bilateral trade reached USD 33.33 billion, making Germany India’s largest trading partner in Europe.
3. Germany ranks among the top ten investors in India, with cumulative FDI exceeding USD 14.5 billion.
4. Both countries collaborate on advanced technologies such as semiconductors, artificial intelligence, and green hydrogen.
5. Cooperation extends to climate action through joint initiatives on renewable energy and circular economy models.
6. Defence and security ties include military exercises, maritime cooperation, and counter-terrorism dialogue.
7. The partnership aligns with shared support for multilateralism, rules-based order, and UN Security Council reforms.

22ND ASEAN–INDIA SUMMIT

Recent Update: The 22nd ASEAN–India Summit in Kuala Lumpur adopted the ASEAN–India Plan of Action (2026–2030) under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

About:

1. India reaffirmed support for ASEAN centrality and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.
2. The summit strengthened cooperation in maritime security, connectivity, and economic integration.
3. India endorsed ASEAN’s unity and welcomed Timor-Leste as a new full member.

4. Enhanced defence engagement included maritime exercises and security dialogues.
5. Cooperation expanded in digital connectivity, emerging technologies, and clean energy.
6. India reiterated commitment to ASEAN-led mechanisms like EAS and ARF.
7. The partnership reinforces India’s Act East Policy and regional stability objectives.

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CYBERCRIME

Recent Update: The UN adopted the Convention on Cybercrime to address rising global cyber threats.



About:

1. The convention establishes the first comprehensive global legal framework to combat cybercrime.
2. It facilitates cross-border cooperation in investigating cyber-enabled offences.
3. The treaty strengthens mechanisms to counter online fraud, hacking, and digital exploitation.
4. It promotes technical assistance and capacity-building for developing countries.
5. Safeguards are included to protect human rights and digital freedoms.
6. The convention creates a Conference of Parties to monitor implementation.
7. India participated actively in negotiations but has not yet formally acceded.

US RESUMPTION OF NUCLEAR TESTING

Recent Update: The United States announced plans to resume nuclear testing after a three-decade pause.



About:

1. The announcement marks a major shift in global nuclear restraint norms.
2. The move raises concerns about renewed arms races and strategic instability.
3. Historical nuclear testing caused severe humanitarian and environmental damage.
4. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty remains unratified by key nuclear powers.
5. Renewed testing may weaken global non-proliferation regimes.
6. India continues to uphold its voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing.
7. The development underscores the need for renewed global arms control dialogue.

APEC SUMMIT 2025

Recent Update: The APEC Summit 2025 adopted the Gyeongju Declaration to strengthen regional cooperation.

About:

1. Leaders committed to inclusive economic growth and digital transformation.
2. The summit emphasised AI governance, innovation, and sustainable development.
3. Measures were adopted to support ageing populations and workforce transitions.
4. Economic resilience and supply-chain diversification were key priorities.
5. Multilateral cooperation was reinforced through consensus-based mechanisms.
6. The summit reaffirmed commitment to open and rules-based trade.

7. APEC strengthened regional economic integration and shared prosperity.

INDO-PACIFIC REGIONAL DIALOGUE 2025

Recent Update: India hosted the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue to enhance maritime cooperation.



About:

1. The dialogue focused on maritime security and regional stability.
2. It promoted cooperation in disaster response and humanitarian assistance.
3. India highlighted the SAGAR vision for inclusive maritime growth.
4. Strategic dialogues addressed supply chains and blue economy challenges.
5. The forum reinforced India's leadership in the Indo-Pacific.
6. Regional partners reaffirmed commitment to rules-based maritime order.
7. Capacity building emerged as a core pillar of cooperation.

INDIA-BAHRAIN BILATERAL ENGAGEMENT

Recent Update: India and Bahrain strengthened strategic cooperation during the 5th High Joint Commission meeting.

About:

1. Both sides reaffirmed commitment to counter-terrorism cooperation.
2. Trade relations expanded with growing bilateral investment flows.
3. Defence and security collaboration deepened through institutional dialogue.

4. India supported Bahrain's development priorities and economic diversification.
5. The large Indian diaspora continues to strengthen people-to-people ties.
6. The partnership supports India's Act West policy.
7. Cooperation contributes to regional stability in the Gulf.

SOURCE: VISION MONTHLY

INDIA-LATIN AMERICA ENGAGEMENT

Recent Update: India expanded trade and strategic engagement with Latin American partners.



About:

1. India-Peru trade negotiations advanced toward a comprehensive trade agreement.
2. Bilateral trade expanded significantly in minerals, energy, and pharmaceuticals.
3. India strengthened development cooperation through capacity building initiatives.
4. Chile emerged as a key partner under India's Act Latin America policy.
5. Economic engagement supports diversification of global supply chains.
6. Cultural and educational exchanges enhance people-to-people ties.
7. Engagement aligns with India's South-South cooperation strategy.

INDIA-BHUTAN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Recent Update: India and Bhutan reinforced strategic ties during high-level bilateral engagements.

About:

1. India reaffirmed support for Bhutan's development and economic stability.
2. Hydropower cooperation remains central to bilateral relations.
3. Infrastructure connectivity projects enhance cross-border integration.
4. India continues to support Bhutan's renewable energy expansion.
5. Trade facilitation strengthens Bhutan's economic resilience.
6. Cultural and people-centric ties underpin the partnership.
7. The relationship reflects shared values and mutual strategic trust.

RISING GLOBAL NUCLEAR RISK AND INDIA'S APPROACH TO DISARMAMENT

Recent Update: The renewed debate on nuclear risks intensified after the US announced resumption of nuclear weapons testing, raising concerns over global non-proliferation.

About:

1. Rising geopolitical tensions have increased reliance on nuclear deterrence, raising escalation risks.
2. The weakening of arms control frameworks has reduced transparency and mutual trust among nuclear powers.
3. Technological advances like hypersonic weapons have shortened decision-making windows.
4. Breakdown of treaties such as INF and uncertainty around CTBT weaken global restraint mechanisms.
5. The use of AI in military command systems increases risks of miscalculation and accidental escalation.
6. India maintains a voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing while upholding credible minimum deterrence.

7. India supports global disarmament but insists on equal, verifiable, and non-discriminatory frameworks.

G2 AND GLOBAL POWER REALIGNMENT

Recent Update: Statements by US leadership revived debate on a possible US–China “G2” world order.

About:

1. The G2 concept envisions shared global leadership by the United States and China.
2. It reflects shifting power dynamics driven by China’s economic and technological rise.
3. Strategic rivalry and ideological divergence limit prospects for genuine cooperation.
4. Smaller powers fear marginalization under a bipolar global framework.
5. India views G2 narratives as undermining multipolarity and strategic autonomy.
6. New Delhi prefers issue-based coalitions over rigid power blocs.
7. The evolving order underscores the importance of strategic diversification.

INDIA–US DEFENCE COOPERATION

Recent Update: India and the US reaffirmed defence ties through expanded military cooperation frameworks.

About:

1. Defence cooperation dates back to the 1960s and has deepened significantly in recent decades.
2. Foundational agreements enable interoperability and information sharing.
3. Joint exercises enhance operational coordination across domains.
4. Defence trade includes advanced platforms and technology transfers.
5. The partnership supports Indo-Pacific security architecture.
6. India retains strategic autonomy despite growing defence collaboration.
7. Cooperation strengthens deterrence and regional stability.

INDIA–BHUTAN RELATIONS

Recent Update: High-level visits reaffirmed India–Bhutan’s unique partnership.

About:

1. The relationship is rooted in historical, cultural, and strategic ties.
2. India remains Bhutan’s principal development partner.
3. Hydropower cooperation underpins Bhutan’s economy and India’s energy security.
4. Cross-border connectivity projects enhance economic integration.
5. India supports Bhutan’s socio-economic and institutional development.
6. People-to-people ties reinforce long-term friendship.
7. The partnership exemplifies mutual trust and non-reciprocal cooperation.

EAST ASIA SUMMIT (EAS)

Recent Update: The 20th East Asia Summit adopted the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on peace and stability.

East Asia Summit

Leaders’ summit in Naypyidaw, Myanmar on November 12-13



About:

1. The EAS serves as a premier forum for strategic dialogue in the Indo-Pacific.
2. It brings together ASEAN and major regional powers.
3. The summit emphasized maritime security and freedom of navigation.
4. Economic integration and connectivity featured prominently.
5. Climate resilience and digital cooperation were prioritized.

- The forum reinforces ASEAN centrality in regional architecture.
- It supports a rules-based and inclusive regional order.

SOURCE: INDIAN EXPRESS

APEC 2025

Recent Update: The APEC 2025 Summit in Gyeongju focused on inclusive growth and technological transformation.



About:

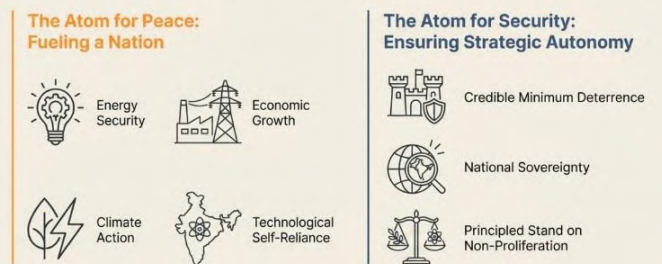
- Leaders endorsed the Gyeongju Declaration on economic resilience.
- The summit promoted digital transformation and AI governance.
- Inclusive growth and labour market adaptation were key themes.
- Emphasis was placed on sustainable and green growth pathways.
- Economic cooperation aimed at reducing trade barriers.
- APEC reinforced commitment to open and rules-based trade.
- The forum strengthened regional economic integration.

RISING GLOBAL NUCLEAR RISK AND INDIA'S APPROACH TO DISARMAMENT

Recent Update: Renewed concerns over nuclear escalation have emerged after the United States announced resumption of nuclear testing, challenging decades of arms control efforts.

The Two Faces of the Atom: A Dual Mandate for a Rising Power

India's nuclear program has always served two distinct, often conflicting, national imperatives. Understanding this duality is key to understanding its past isolation, its recent diplomatic triumphs, and its future ambitions.



About:

- Rising geopolitical rivalries have increased reliance on nuclear deterrence, heightening global insecurity.
- Breakdown of arms control treaties like the INF and stagnation of the CTBT have weakened global safeguards.
- Advancements in hypersonic weapons and missile technology reduce response time and increase escalation risks.
- Militarisation of space and cyber domains adds complexity to nuclear command-and-control systems.
- Artificial intelligence in military decision-making increases risks of miscalculation and unintended escalation.
- India maintains a voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing while advocating credible minimum deterrence.
- India continues to support universal, non-discriminatory disarmament and responsible nuclear governance.

INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION (ICAO)

Recent Update: India has been re-elected to Part II of the ICAO Council, reflecting its growing role in global civil aviation governance.

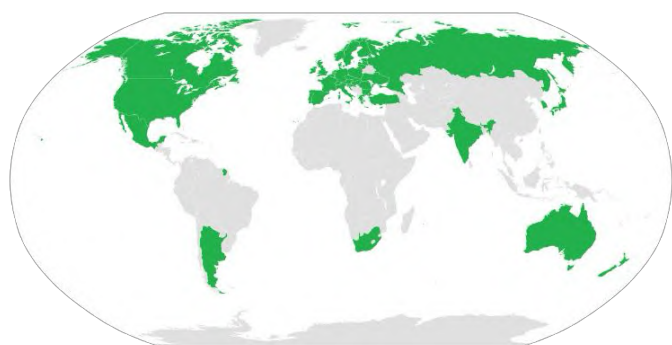


About:

1. **International Civil Aviation Organization** is a specialised agency of the **United Nations**, established under the Chicago Convention, 1944, to promote safe, secure and efficient international civil aviation.
2. It has 193 Member States, making it one of the most representative technical bodies in the UN system.
3. The organisation is headquartered in Montreal, Canada, which functions as the global hub for civil aviation standard-setting.
4. Its governance includes the triennial ICAO Assembly, which is the sovereign body comprising all member states.
5. The 36-member ICAO Council serves as the permanent executive organ and is elected for three-year terms.
6. India's election to Part II of the Council represents states with the largest interest in international air transport.
7. ICAO sets global standards and recommended practices covering safety, security, air navigation and environmental protection.
8. It facilitates cooperation among states, harmonises aviation procedures and supports orderly growth of global air transport.

WASSENAAR ARRANGEMENT

Recent Update: The Arrangement is reviewing its control mechanisms to address emerging challenges from cloud computing and virtual technology transfers.



About:

1. The Wassenaar Arrangement is a multilateral export-control regime established in 1996 to promote transparency in transfers of conventional arms and dual-use technologies.

2. It replaced the Cold War-era COCOM system, shifting towards cooperative non-proliferation.
3. Headquartered in Vienna, it comprises 42 participating states, including India since 2017.
4. The Arrangement maintains control lists of sensitive chemicals, materials, equipment and technologies.
5. Member states exchange information on export approvals and denials to enable coordinated restraint.
6. India aligns these commitments through its SCOMET export-control framework.
7. Cloud computing poses new challenges as virtual infrastructure blurs geographic boundaries.
8. This requires updating control lists and strengthening enforcement mechanisms.

COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY ORGANIZATION (CTBTO)

Recent Update: The CTBT remains unenforced due to non-ratification by key Annex-2 states.

About:

1. **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization** was created to implement the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and is headquartered in Vienna.
2. The CTBT seeks to prohibit all nuclear explosions for military or civilian purposes.



3. The treaty was opened for signature in 1996 and establishes a global verification regime.
4. It has been signed by 183 states and ratified by 164.
5. The treaty is not in force as eight Annex-2 states, including India, have not ratified it.

6. CTBTO operates a Global Monitoring System using seismic, hydroacoustic and radionuclide technologies.
7. It also provides for on-site inspections to verify compliance once in force.
8. The organisation strengthens global norms against nuclear testing through technical readiness.

MUTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE TREATY (MLAT)

Recent Update: India is expanding MLAT cooperation to counter transnational crime and financial offences.

About:

1. MLATs are formal mechanisms enabling countries to seek and provide legal assistance in criminal matters.
2. They prevent offenders from evading justice due to evidence or proceeds being located abroad.
3. India engages through bilateral treaties, multilateral conventions and reciprocity arrangements.
4. The **Ministry of Home Affairs** is the nodal authority for MLAT implementation.
5. India has signed MLATs with over 45 countries.
6. Assistance includes locating persons, recording evidence and serving judicial documents.
7. It also covers search, seizure, freezing and confiscation of criminal assets.
8. MLATs strengthen international cooperation in investigation and prosecution.

SIR CREEK DISPUTE

Recent Update: The dispute remains unresolved, impacting maritime boundary determination with Pakistan.

About:

1. Sir Creek is a 96-km tidal estuary in the Rann of Kutch separating Gujarat from Sindh.
2. It opens into the Arabian Sea, making it strategically significant.



3. The area affects security, fishing rights, offshore energy prospects and EEZ delimitation.
4. The dispute arises from differing interpretations of the 1914 Bombay Government Resolution.
5. Pakistan claims the boundary lies along the eastern bank of the creek.
6. India asserts the boundary should follow the thalweg or mid-channel principle.
7. Pakistan argues the creek is non-navigable, while India maintains it is navigable during high tide.
8. International maritime norms support the mid-channel principle where navigability exists.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SECURITY ASSOCIATION (ISSA)

Recent Update: India highlighted expansion of social protection coverage at the ISSA conclave in Kuala Lumpur.

About:

1. **International Social Security Association** was founded in 1927 under the auspices of the **International Labour Organization**.
2. It serves as the principal global body for social security institutions and governments.
3. ISSA promotes excellence in social security administration through professional guidelines.

4. India is a member, reflecting engagement in global social protection frameworks.
5. Its headquarters is located in Geneva, Switzerland.
6. The General Assembly is the highest statutory body meeting every three years.
7. The Council, Bureau and Control Commission ensure governance and financial oversight.
8. ISSA supports development of inclusive and resilient social security systems.

SOURCE: PIB

NATO PIPELINE SYSTEM (NPS)

Recent Update: Poland has announced its decision to join the NATO Pipeline System.

About:

1. The NATO Pipeline System was created during the Cold War to ensure fuel supply to NATO forces.
2. It spans around 10,000 km across 12 NATO countries.
3. The system has a storage capacity of 4.1 million cubic metres.
4. It connects refineries, depots, airbases, airports and transport nodes.
5. Bulk distribution is funded through the NATO Security Investment Programme.
6. Most networks are nationally controlled except the Central Europe Pipeline System.
7. CEPS is managed by the NATO Support and Procurement Agency.
8. Overall, the NPS consists of eight national and two multinational systems.

NEW START TREATY

Recent Update: Renewed global focus has emerged on the future of New START beyond 2026.

About:

1. The New START Treaty is the last remaining nuclear arms-control agreement between the US and Russia.
2. It was signed in 2010 at Prague and entered into force in 2011.

3. The treaty was extended in 2021 and remains valid until February 4, 2026.
4. It caps deployed strategic nuclear warheads and delivery systems.
5. These limits are well below Cold War levels.
6. It applies to long-range strategic weapons targeting command centres and infrastructure.
7. It replaced START-I and superseded the SORT treaty.
8. Both countries declared full compliance by 2018.

INTERNATIONAL SOLAR ALLIANCE (ISA)

Recent Update: ISA continues expanding partnerships to accelerate solar deployment in developing countries.

About:

1. **International Solar Alliance** was launched in 2015 by India and France at COP21.
2. It is a treaty-based intergovernmental organisation promoting solar energy for climate action.
3. ISA is headquartered at NISE, Gurugram, making it the first international organisation based in India.
4. It aims to reduce solar costs through aggregated demand and innovation.
5. The 'Towards 1000' strategy targets USD 1000 billion in solar investments by 2030.
6. It seeks to provide clean energy access to 1000 million people.
7. It supports installation of 1000 GW of solar capacity.
8. Membership is open to solar-rich UN states between the Tropics.



TOPICS COVERED

- 1. Colombo Security Conclave (CSC)**
- 2. IBSA Forum**
- 3. BRICS in Geopolitical Shifts**
- 4. India's BRICS Presidency 2026**
- 5. Three Seas Initiative (3SI)**
- 6. G20 Summit 2025**
- 7. Johannesburg Declaration**
- 8. SCO – Tianjin Declaration**
- 9. India–Bangladesh Relations**
- 10. India–Russia Annual Summit**
- 11. India–Russia Bilateral Relations**
- 12. India's Strategic Turn to FTAs**
- 13. India–Jordan Relations**
- 14. India–Oman CEPA**
- 15. India–Oman Bilateral Relations**
- 16. India–New Zealand FTA**
- 17. India–Ethiopia Relations**
- 18. India–Qatar Relations**
- 19. India–Africa Relations**
- 20. UN Secretary-General**
- 21. UN Peacekeepers**
- 22. UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)**
- 23. UN Convention Against Cybercrime (Hanoi Convention)**
- 24. UN High Seas Treaty (BBNJ)**
- 25. UN Convention on Negotiable Cargo Documents (Accra Convention)**
- 26. Justice Mission 2025 (China–Taiwan Drills)**
- 27. Blue Line (Lebanon–Israel)**
- 28. Gaza Peace Plan**
- 29. National Security Strategy 2025 (USA)**

30. Washington Accords (DRC–Rwanda)
31. Republic of Somaliland
32. Kordofan Region (Sudan)
33. New Development Bank (BRICS context)
34. India–ADB \$2.2 Billion Loan Agreements
35. GAVI Alliance
36. The Unit – Gold-Backed Digital Trade Currency
37. BRICS Pay
38. FTAs as Geopolitical Tools
39. WSIS (World Summit on Information Society)
40. Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port (BRI)
41. International Maritime Organization (IMO)
42. India re-elected to IMO Council
43. Kimberley Process
44. APDIM (Disaster Information Management)
45. Deepavali – UNESCO Intangible Heritage List
46. UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for ICH (India Host)
47. India re-elected to UNESCO Executive Board
48. Indian Diaspora
49. WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine
50. Global Declaration on NCDs & Mental Health
51. WHO Guideline on GLP-1 Medicines
52. Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)
53. Elections in Bangladesh & July National Charter
54. International IDEA
55. India Re-elected to UNESCO Executive Board (Governance Role)
56. International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
57. International Astronomical Union (IAU)
58. Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) – 50 Years

SEYCHELLES JOINS COLOMBO SECURITY CONCLAVE

Recent Update: Seychelles inducted as **6th full member** at the 7th NSA-level CSC meeting in New Delhi

About

1. **Colombo Security Conclave (CSC)** is a regional security grouping of India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius and Seychelles focusing on Indian Ocean stability.
2. It originated in **2011 as Trilateral Maritime Security Cooperation** among India–Maldives–Sri Lanka and was **revived and rebranded in 2020**.
3. The grouping addresses **transnational threats** like **terrorism, trafficking, organised crime and cyber attacks** through coordinated NSA-level consultations.
4. Five **pillars of cooperation** include **maritime safety, counter-terrorism, cyber security, organised crime control and HADR**.
5. It has a **permanent secretariat in Colombo**, ensuring institutional continuity and regular coordination.
6. For India, CSC strengthens **maritime dominance and influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)** and supports the **SAGAR vision**.
7. **Seychelles’ strategic location** near key sea lanes makes it crucial for **anti-piracy, Blue Economy and maritime surveillance cooperation**.
8. The conclave institutionalises **neighbourhood-first diplomacy**, reinforcing a **rules-based regional order**.

INDIA–BRAZIL–SOUTH AFRICA (IBSA) FORUM

Recent Update: Leaders met on G20 sidelines to expand cooperation in **climate, digital public infrastructure and security dialogue**



About

1. **IBSA Forum** is a **South–South trilateral platform of three large democracies** from Asia, Latin America and Africa.

2. It was **formalised in 2003 via the Brasilia Declaration**, promoting **political consultation and development cooperation**.
3. The forum has **no permanent secretariat**, functioning through **summits, working groups and ministerial meetings**.
4. Cooperation operates on **political coordination, trilateral projects and assistance to developing countries**.
5. The **IBSA Trust Fund (2004)** supports **poverty alleviation projects** in LDCs, enhancing India’s **soft power diplomacy**.
6. **IBSAMAR naval exercises** strengthen **maritime interoperability and defence cooperation** among the three navies.
7. India uses IBSA to promote **UPI, CoWIN and Digital Public Infrastructure models**, showcasing **technology diplomacy**.
8. The platform enhances India’s image as a **“democratic anchor” of the Global South**, counterbalancing China’s influence.

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL

Recent Update: UN launched process to select next **Secretary-General for term starting January 2027**



About

1. The **Secretary-General (SG)** is the **chief administrative officer of the UN under Article 97** of the UN Charter.
2. The role combines **diplomat, mediator, administrator and global advocate** for peace and vulnerable populations.
3. Selection begins with **UNGA–UNSC nominations**, followed by **Security Council straw polls and veto screening**.

4. A candidate needs **9 votes and no P5 veto** before formal recommendation to the General Assembly.
5. The tenure is **five years, usually renewable once**, ensuring continuity and accountability.
6. SG heads the **UN Secretariat**, manages **budgets, staff and global missions**, and chairs the **Chief Executives Board**.
7. Under **Article 99**, SG can bring threats to **international peace and security** directly to the Security Council.
8. Through **“good offices diplomacy”**, the SG mediates conflicts and serves as the **moral voice of multilateralism**.

REVITALIZING INDIA–BANGLADESH RELATIONS

Recent Update: Political realignment and anti-India protests create **new strategic challenges since 1971**

About

1. The fall of the **pro-India Awami League government** led to **political instability and rising nationalist sentiment**.
2. Growing **Chinese infrastructure presence and Pakistani outreach** intensify **geopolitical competition** near India’s borders.
3. Issues like **Ganga Water Treaty renewal (2026)** remain pending, risking future **river-sharing disputes**.
4. Anti-India protests and **diplomatic vandalism incidents** reveal **societal distrust and communal tensions**.
5. India’s shelter to **Sheikh Hasina** is viewed as political interference, complicating **bilateral diplomacy**.
6. India should establish **institutional crisis mechanisms and dedicated diplomatic channels** for rapid conflict management.
7. Broader outreach to **civil society, youth, media and opposition parties** can avoid over-dependence on any one regime.
8. Strengthened **border security, water diplomacy and economic partnerships** can stabilise long-term relations.

23RD INDIA–RUSSIA ANNUAL SUMMIT

Recent Update: Both sides set **USD 100 billion trade target by 2030** and expanded defence-technology cooperation

About

1. India and Russia reaffirmed their **Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership**, signing **16 agreements** across sectors.
2. Focus areas include **energy security, defence co-production, healthcare, education and cultural exchanges**.
3. Connectivity projects like **INSTC, Chennai–Vladivostok route and Northern Sea Route** enhance **Eurasian access**.
4. Cooperation extends to **Arctic and Russian Far East**, especially in **mining, agriculture and maritime transport**.
5. In **civil nuclear energy**, Russia supports **Kudankulam and future reactors** aligned with India’s 100 GW target.
6. Defence ties now stress **joint R&D, Make-in-India manufacturing and technology transfer**, reducing import dependence.
7. Russia supports India’s **permanent UNSC seat and BRICS leadership**, strengthening diplomatic alignment.
8. Trade is driven by **oil, fertilizers and coal imports**, while India exports **pharmaceuticals, chemicals and steel**.

INDIA’S STRATEGIC TURN TO FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

Recent Update: India accelerating FTAs with **Oman, Russia, New Zealand and others** for strategic gains

About

1. FTAs are increasingly used as **geopolitical tools** rather than merely **trade-boosting instruments**.
2. The shift reflects **multipolar geopolitics and weakening WTO multilateralism**, necessitating bilateral arrangements.
3. Agreements like **UAE CEPA and Australia ECTA** act as **political safety nets** strengthening strategic partnerships.
4. FTAs diversify markets and reduce **overdependence on US, EU and China**, enhancing **supply-chain resilience**.
5. New-age deals emphasise **services, digital trade, fintech and investment flows**, leveraging India’s strengths.
6. They support **China-Plus-One strategy** and secure **critical minerals and energy resources**.

7. FTAs complement **Make in India and PLI schemes**, attracting **FDI and technology transfer**.
8. Thus, trade policy now merges with **foreign policy and strategic autonomy goals**.

INDIA–JORDAN RELATIONS

Recent Update: Five MoUs signed and **USD 5 billion trade target** set during PM's first full bilateral visit

About

1. India and Jordan share **diplomatic ties since 1950**, marked by regular high-level political engagement.
2. Cooperation covers **renewable energy, water management, digital transformation and cultural exchanges**.
3. Jordan's **strategic location in West Asia** offers access to **Red Sea trade routes and IMEC corridor logistics**.
4. It plays a key role in **counter-terrorism forums like Aqaba Process and SOFEX**, aligning security interests.
5. India depends on Jordan for **phosphates and potash**, critical for **fertilizer and agricultural security**.
6. Jordan's standing in the **OIC helps moderate narratives on Kashmir**, supporting India diplomatically.
7. Large **Indian diaspora and business ventures** strengthen **people-to-people and economic ties**.
8. Overall relations combine **energy security, trade, connectivity and regional stability objectives**.

INDIA–OMAN COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (CEPA)

Recent Update: Oman grants **98% tariff-free access**, marking its first bilateral trade pact since 2006

About

1. CEPA ensures **near-universal duty-free access** for Indian exports, giving a major boost to Gulf market entry.
2. **Labour-intensive sectors** like textiles, leather, gems, pharma and MSMEs gain **full tariff elimination benefits**.

3. India offered **calibrated concessions**, protecting sensitive sectors via **exclusion lists and TRQs**.
4. Oman liberalised **127 services sub-sectors**, unlocking opportunities in **IT, education, healthcare and R&D**.
5. Enhanced **Mode 4 mobility provisions** allow easier movement of **Indian professionals and service suppliers**.
6. The pact permits **100% FDI by Indian firms in services**, enabling long-term commercial presence.
7. A landmark clause recognises **Traditional Medicine (AYUSH)**, boosting **medical value travel and wellness exports**.
8. CEPA strengthens India's **Gulf economic diplomacy and energy-trade integration**.

BRICS IN THE ERA OF GEOPOLITICAL SHIFTS

Recent Update: Brazil handed over **BRICS presidency to India**, highlighting rising Global South coordination

About

1. **BRICS** is an intergovernmental grouping of **major emerging economies** promoting **multipolar global governance**.
2. Members account for **~45% population and ~37% global GDP (PPP)**, surpassing the G7's share.
3. Key institutions include **New Development Bank (NDB), Contingent Reserve Arrangement and Grain Exchange**.
4. It offers alternatives to **IMF-World Bank dominance**, supporting **climate finance and infrastructure funding**.
5. The platform amplifies **Global South voices**, advocating reforms in **UNSC and WTO structures**.
6. Challenges include **India–China rivalry, economic asymmetry and weak institutionalisation**, limiting cohesion.
7. Proposed reforms include **BRICS Pay, local-currency trade, permanent secretariat and common market frameworks**.
8. Stronger coordination can enhance **strategic autonomy and sanctions resilience**.

INDIA–ETHIOPIA RELATIONS

Recent Update: Bilateral ties elevated to **Strategic Partnership** during PM's Ethiopia visit

About

1. Relations date back to **ancient Axumite trade links**, reflecting centuries-old **civilisational contacts**.
2. India is Ethiopia's **second-largest trading partner**, with strong exports in **pharma, machinery and manufactured goods**.
3. Indian firms have invested **USD 5 billion+**, creating **75,000 local jobs**, especially in manufacturing.
4. Eight MoUs cover **data centres, debt restructuring, trade cooperation and institutional mechanisms**.
5. Ethiopia supports India on **counter-terrorism and multilateral issues**, strengthening diplomatic alignment.
6. India offers benefits under **Duty-Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) scheme for LDCs**, aiding Ethiopian exports.
7. Engagement spans **education, capacity building and global initiatives like ISA, CDRI and GBA**.
8. The partnership enhances India's footprint in the **Horn of Africa and Red Sea strategic corridor**.

SOURCE: DRISHT MONTHLY

INDIA-NEW ZEALAND FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Recent Update: Negotiations concluded rapidly in nine months with formal signing expected in **2026**

About

1. A **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** is a bilateral trade pact under which countries **reduce or eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers** to enhance trade flows, investments and deeper economic cooperation.
2. India will grant **duty concessions on nearly 95% of New Zealand exports**, while New Zealand has offered **100% duty-free access** to all Indian tariff lines, ensuring broader market entry for Indian goods.
3. India has **excluded sensitive agricultural sectors** such as dairy, rice, wheat, sugar, onions, edible oils and rubber to **protect farmers' incomes and food security**.

4. Preferential access is expected to significantly boost **labour-intensive industries** like textiles, leather, footwear, engineering goods and pharmaceuticals, thereby **generating employment and MSME growth**.
5. The agreement faces **domestic political resistance in New Zealand**, particularly from dairy producers and groups concerned about immigration pressures.
6. Since the **existing bilateral trade base is small**, the overall economic gains are likely to **materialise gradually rather than immediately**.
7. Provisions addressing **rules of origin, customs cooperation, SPS and TBT norms** aim to reduce procedural delays and ensure smoother regulatory compliance.
8. The inclusion of **5,000 temporary employment visas annually** strengthens **services trade, professional mobility and people-to-people ties** between both countries.

INDIA-OMAN CEPA

Recent Update: India signed a major **West Asia economic partnership pact**, strengthening Gulf trade integration

About

1. The **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** is a broad trade framework covering **goods, services, investment and mobility**, going beyond traditional tariff reductions.
2. Oman has provided **zero customs duty on over 98% of tariff lines**, covering almost all Indian exports, thereby making Indian products **more price-competitive** in the Omani market.
3. The pact supports **labour-intensive sectors** such as textiles, leather, gems & jewellery, engineering goods and pharmaceuticals, which are crucial for **employment creation and MSME exports**.
4. Oman has opened **127 services sub-sectors**, including IT, education, healthcare and professional services, creating **high-value opportunities for Indian knowledge workers**.
5. Enhanced **Mode 4 provisions** allow easier movement of professionals, increasing quotas for intra-corporate transferees and permitting longer stays for contractual workers.

6. Indian firms can now establish **100% foreign-owned service enterprises**, enabling sustained presence and deeper regional expansion in West Asia.
7. Strategically, Oman acts as a **gateway economy near the Strait of Hormuz**, connecting Indian exports to West Asia, Africa and global re-export hubs.
8. The CEPA helps India **diversify export destinations**, reducing overdependence on the US and EU markets that face rising carbon and regulatory barriers.

INDIA–OMAN BILATERAL RELATIONS

Recent Update: India–Oman ties mark **70 years of diplomatic partnership** with growing strategic cooperation

About

1. Relations are rooted in a **civilisational maritime bridge**, where centuries of Indian Ocean trade fostered enduring cultural, commercial and navigational links.
2. A strong **diaspora presence and people-to-people exchanges** have built mutual trust that sustains relations even during geopolitical uncertainties.
3. The relationship is supported by **over 6,000 joint ventures**, with significant investments that anchor long-term business cooperation.
4. Indian companies actively invest in **Sohar and Salalah Free Zones**, integrating manufacturing and logistics with Gulf–Africa supply chains.
5. Growing collaboration in **ports, shipping and logistics infrastructure** enhances connectivity and trade efficiency.
6. **Fintech partnerships and digital public infrastructure** reduce transaction costs and facilitate smoother remittances for the large Indian community.
7. The **NPCI–Central Bank of Oman linkage**, including RuPay acceptance, strengthens digital payments and tourism flows.
8. Overall, the partnership spans **trade, energy, investment and strategic security**, making Oman a key pillar of India’s West Asia policy.

INDIA–RUSSIA BILATERAL RELATIONS

Recent Update: 23rd India–Russia Annual Summit reaffirmed long-standing strategic cooperation

About

1. India and Russia share a **“Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership”**, reflecting high levels of trust, defence interdependence and geopolitical alignment.
2. Relations are institutionalised through **annual summits, IRIGC mechanisms, 2+2 dialogues and working groups**, ensuring structured engagement across sectors.
3. Russia remains India’s **largest defence supplier**, providing platforms such as Su-30MKI aircraft, T-90 tanks, submarines and the S-400 air defence system.
4. Several projects involve **joint R&D and co-production**, including BrahMos missiles and AK-203 rifles under the **Make in India** initiative.
5. Russia is India’s only **foreign partner in operational civil nuclear power**, notably the Kudankulam plant, and supports space missions like Gaganyaan.
6. Energy cooperation has expanded with **discounted crude oil, gas and coal supplies**, ensuring India’s energy security during global disruptions.
7. Bilateral trade has surged to **\$68.7 billion**, dominated by energy and fertilisers, while India exports pharmaceuticals and agri-products.
8. Both countries advocate **multipolarity and reform of global institutions**, coordinating closely through BRICS, SCO and the UN.

2ND WHO GLOBAL SUMMIT ON TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

Recent Update: India will host the summit at **Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi** in collaboration with WHO

About

1. The summit is **co-hosted by WHO and the Ministry of Ayush**, signalling India’s leadership in mainstreaming **traditional medicine systems** globally.
2. It is supported by the **WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre (GTMC), Jamnagar**, established to promote research, policy support and innovation.
3. The theme emphasises **“restoring balance” through scientific validation**, encouraging

evidence-based integration of traditional therapies.

4. Delegations from **100+ countries**, including ministers, scientists and indigenous healers, ensure wide **global participation and knowledge exchange**.
5. Focus on **clinical trials, regulatory frameworks and quality benchmarks** to standardise safety and effectiveness.
6. Uses **digital tools and AI repositories** to document medicinal plants and traditional knowledge systems.
7. Promotes **biodiversity conservation and sustainable harvesting** of herbal resources.
8. Enhances India's **soft power diplomacy** by globalising Ayurveda, Yoga, Siddha and other indigenous practices.

THE BLUE LINE

Recent Update: UNIFIL peacekeeper injured amid renewed tensions along Lebanon–Israel frontier



About

1. The **Blue Line** is a UN-demarcated **withdrawal line**, created to verify military disengagement rather than serve as an official international border.
2. It was established in **2000** after Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon under **UNSC Resolution 425**.
3. The line was further reinforced after the **2006 Israel–Hezbollah conflict** through Resolution 1701.
4. It is monitored by the **United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)** to prevent ceasefire violations.
5. A **weapons-free buffer zone** is mandated between the Blue Line and the Litani River.

6. Frequent **construction disputes, firing incidents and violations** make it a volatile flashpoint.
7. The line acts as a **conflict-management mechanism** rather than a political settlement.
8. It remains one of the **most sensitive security zones in West Asia**, affecting regional stability.

UN PEACEKEEPERS

Recent Update: Drone attacks in Sudan targeted peacekeepers, raising global safety concerns

About

1. **UN Peacekeeping** is a mechanism deployed to **stabilise conflict zones and assist countries in transitioning from war to peace**.
2. It began in **1948 with observer missions**, primarily focused on monitoring ceasefires without enforcement powers.
3. After the Cold War, missions became **multidimensional**, combining military, political, humanitarian and developmental roles.
4. Key functions include **ceasefire monitoring and protection of civilians**, often with limited use-of-force mandates.
5. Peacekeepers conduct **Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR)** to integrate ex-combatants into civilian life.
6. They support **elections, governance reforms and rule of law institutions** to strengthen state capacity.
7. India remains a **leading troop contributor**, with over **2.9 lakh personnel** serving globally.
8. Nearly **180 Indian soldiers have sacrificed their lives**, reflecting India's deep commitment to global peace.

INDIA'S BRICS PRESIDENCY 2026

Recent Update: Brazil formally handed over the rotating presidency to India

About

1. India will act as **rotational Chair**, setting priorities, hosting meetings and steering the annual summit agenda.
2. BRICS originated as **BRIC in 2006**, later expanding to include South Africa and additional emerging economies.

3. It operates as an **informal coordination platform**, without a permanent headquarters, relying on annual leadership rotation.
4. Promotes **political cooperation and multipolarity**, challenging dominance of traditional Western institutions.
5. Encourages **trade, investment and financial collaboration** among emerging markets.
6. The **New Development Bank (NDB)** funds infrastructure and sustainable development projects in member states.
7. Strengthens **Global South representation** in global governance and decision-making.
8. India can prioritise **development finance, digital public goods, health and technology equity** during its tenure.

SOURCE: PIB

GLOBAL DECLARATION ON NCDs AND MENTAL HEALTH

Recent Update: Adopted at the **80th UNGA**, marking first joint global focus on NCDs and mental health

About

1. The declaration provides a **political roadmap** to accelerate prevention, control and care of **non-communicable diseases and mental health conditions** together.
2. It recognises **shared risk factors** such as tobacco use, unhealthy diets, alcohol, pollution and sedentary lifestyles.
3. Introduces **fast-track 2030 targets**, including fewer tobacco users and wider mental health coverage.
4. Promotes an **integrated health systems approach**, linking primary care with long-term disease management.
5. Expands NCD scope to include **oral health, lung diseases, kidney disorders and childhood cancers**.
6. Addresses **environmental determinants** like air pollution and clean cooking fuels.
7. Calls for **regulation of e-cigarettes and unhealthy food marketing**, especially targeting children.
8. Emphasises **universal access and equity**, ensuring vulnerable groups are not excluded.

THE TIANJIN DECLARATION

Recent Update: Adopted at **2025 SCO Summit**, emphasising AI governance cooperation

About

1. The **Tianjin Declaration** is the official outcome document adopted by SCO leaders outlining collective policy positions.
2. It covers **security, development, technology and institutional reforms** for regional stability.
3. Strong focus on **Artificial Intelligence cooperation**, recognising equal rights of all nations in AI development.
4. Aligns with **UN principles on ethical and inclusive AI capacity building**.
5. Encourages **digital economy and cybersecurity collaboration** among member states.
6. Reinforces commitment to **counter-terrorism and extremism** through the RATS mechanism.
7. Supports **economic connectivity, trade and energy partnerships** across Eurasia.
8. Strengthens the SCO's role as a **major non-Western multilateral platform**.

INDIA-ADB \$2.2 BILLION LOAN AGREEMENTS

Recent Update: India and ADB signed loans to finance five major development projects

About

1. The package provides **multi-sector financing** to accelerate human capital, clean energy and urban infrastructure.
2. **\$846 million allocated to skilling**, modernising 650 ITIs and improving employability of 1.3 million youth.
3. **\$650 million supports rooftop solar expansion** under PM Surya Ghar Yojana, promoting energy transition.
4. **\$398.8 million for healthcare**, upgrading tertiary medical colleges as centres of excellence.
5. Focus on **urban mobility and sustainable livelihoods** in multiple states.
6. ADB provides not just loans but **policy advice and technical assistance**.

7. India is the **largest recipient of ADB assistance**, reflecting strong development partnership.
8. Aligns with **SDGs and inclusive growth objectives**.

UNITED NATIONS ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

Recent Update: 11th edition held in Riyadh with strong focus on intercultural harmony

About

1. **UNAOC** is a UN initiative promoting **dialogue and cooperation across cultures and religions**.
2. Aims to **counter extremism and polarisation** through partnership-based engagement.
3. Brings together **governments, civil society, youth and faith leaders** for peacebuilding efforts.
4. Encourages **education, media literacy and intercultural dialogue**.
5. Addresses **hate speech and misinformation**, which threaten social cohesion.
6. Marks **20 years of dialogue diplomacy**, strengthening multilateral trust.
7. Supports **people-to-people diplomacy** beyond state actors.
8. Reinforces India's values of **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and Sarva Dharma Samabhav**.

DEEPAVALI ON UNESCO'S INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE LIST

Recent Update: Deepavali inscribed on **UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage**

About

1. Deepavali symbolises **light over darkness, hope and renewal**, celebrated across religions and regions.
2. Rooted in **Itihasas, Puranas and regional traditions**, reflecting India's cultural pluralism.
3. Includes **rituals like lighting diyas, rangoli, prayers and community feasts**.
4. Sustains a **livelihood ecosystem of artisans, potters, florists and sweet-makers**.
5. Celebrated widely by the **Indian diaspora worldwide**, strengthening cultural diplomacy.

6. Represents values of **unity, generosity and social harmony**.
7. UNESCO recognition highlights it as **living heritage passed across generations**.
8. Requires **safeguarding measures and documentation** to preserve traditions.

THE UNIT – A PILOT GOLD-BACKED DIGITAL TRADE CURRENCY

Recent Update: Reports suggest BRICS may test a **gold-backed digital settlement currency**

About

1. The **Unit** is proposed as a **blockchain-based digital currency** for cross-border trade settlements within BRICS.
2. Backed by **physical gold and national currencies**, providing intrinsic stability.
3. Designed to **reduce dependence on the US dollar** in international trade.
4. Blockchain ensures **transparent, immutable and auditable transactions**.
5. Aims to create a **neutral and trusted settlement mechanism** for emerging economies.
6. Uses **AI-led governance systems** to minimise political interference.
7. Supports building an **alternative financial architecture for the Global South**.
8. Still at **pilot and exploratory stage**, with no official launch yet.

INDIA HOSTS 20TH UNESCO INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR ICH

Recent Update: India hosting session at **Red Fort, New Delhi**

About

1. The Committee oversees **implementation of the 2003 Convention** on safeguarding intangible heritage.
2. Comprises **24 Member States** elected with equitable regional representation.
3. Members serve **four-year staggered terms** to ensure continuity and fresh perspectives.
4. Guides **best safeguarding practices** for cultural traditions worldwide.

5. Reviews **inscriptions to UNESCO lists** and monitors state compliance.
6. Provides **technical and financial assistance** for preservation.
7. Encourages **community participation and documentation** of living heritage.
8. Hosting enhances India's **cultural leadership and global visibility**.

WHO'S GLOBAL GUIDELINE ON GLP-1 MEDICINES

Recent Update: WHO issued first global guideline on **GLP-1 drugs for long-term obesity treatment**

About

1. Provides **evidence-based recommendations** for using GLP-1 receptor agonists in obesity management.
2. Drugs like **semaglutide, liraglutide and tirzepatide** reduce appetite and calorie intake.
3. Improve **insulin control and metabolic health**, reducing cardiovascular risks.
4. Recommended for **long-term use with medical supervision**, excluding pregnancy.
5. Must be combined with **diet, exercise and behavioural counselling**.
6. Can result in **10–20% sustained body weight reduction** in many patients.
7. WHO warns about **affordability and equity gaps**, as access may remain limited.
8. Encourages **health system preparedness and price regulation** for wider coverage.

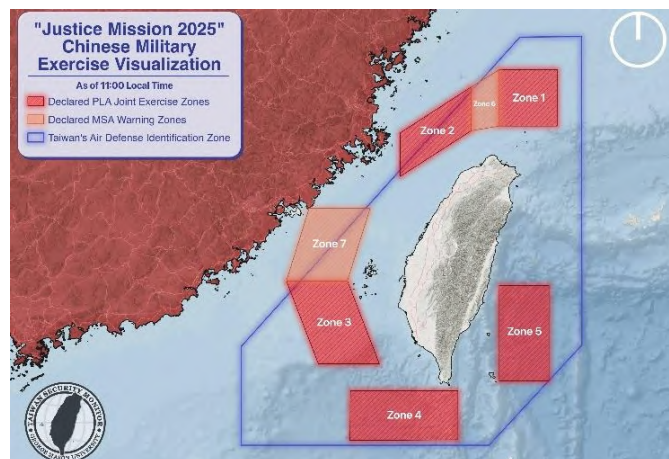
SOURCE: INDIAN EXPRESS

JUSTICE MISSION 2025

Recent Update: China conducted large-scale **live-fire military drills** around Taiwan amid rising Strait tensions

About

1. **Justice Mission 2025** is a high-intensity military exercise conducted by the **People's Liberation Army (PLA)** involving coordinated air, naval and missile operations.
2. The drills included **live-fire missile launches, fighter jet sorties and naval manoeuvres**,



demonstrating China's rapid strike and blockade capabilities.

3. Operations were designed to **simulate maritime blockades and precision strikes** targeting Taiwan's ports, logistics hubs and strategic installations.
4. Conducted in **waters to the north and south of Taiwan**, with missile launches observed from **Pingtian Island**, the closest Chinese territory to Taiwan.
5. Involved **joint-force integration** of air, sea, missile and ground forces, reflecting modern **multi-domain warfare strategy**.
6. It is among the **largest military exercises near Taiwan in recent years**, signalling escalation in cross-strait military pressure.
7. The drills heighten **regional tensions and risks of miscalculation**, increasing chances of accidental conflict in the Taiwan Strait.
8. Reinforces the broader **US–China strategic rivalry**, with implications for Japan, ASEAN states and critical global trade routes passing through East Asia.

ELECTIONS IN BANGLADESH & JULY NATIONAL CHARTER

Recent Update: Bangladesh announced its **13th general election and referendum** on the July National Charter for February 2026

About

1. The **July National Charter** is a political declaration and reform blueprint drafted after the **July 2024 pro-democracy uprising** seeking systemic governance changes.
2. It proposes **constitutional, administrative and judicial reforms** to modernise Bangladesh's political structure and strengthen democratic accountability.

3. Prepared through **national consensus**, involving the interim government under **Muhammad Yunus** and around 30 political parties.
4. The document contains a **28-point reform agenda**, aiming to institutionalise democratic safeguards and prevent authoritarian drift.
5. Calls for reforms through **constitutional amendments, legal revisions and new laws**, ensuring legal enforceability.
6. Mandates **completion of reforms within two years** of the new government assuming office, ensuring time-bound implementation.
7. Seeks to establish **electoral integrity, judicial independence and anti-corruption mechanisms**, rebuilding public trust in institutions.
8. Represents a **new democratic trajectory for Bangladesh**, potentially reshaping governance architecture after Sheikh Hasina's political exit.

INDIA RE-ELECTED TO UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD (2025–29)

Recent Update: India re-elected for another term, reaffirming **global trust in its multilateral leadership**

About

1. The **UNESCO Executive Board** is one of UNESCO's core governing organs responsible for **supervising programme implementation and strategic direction**.
2. It examines the **programme of work and budget proposals** submitted by the Director-General.
3. Prepares and recommends the **agenda for the General Conference**, shaping global education, science and cultural policies.
4. Advises on **admission of new Member States** and the **appointment of the Director-General**.
5. Monitors and supervises **execution of approved UNESCO projects and initiatives** worldwide.
6. The Board consists of **58 Member States elected for four-year terms**, ensuring equitable regional representation.
7. UNESCO operates from **Paris, France**, serving as the global hub for cultural and knowledge cooperation.

8. India's re-election enhances its **soft power influence** and role in shaping global education, heritage and science governance.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (BWC)

Recent Update: India hosted an international conference marking **50 years of BWC's entry into force**

About

1. The **Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)** is the world's first multilateral disarmament treaty banning an entire class of **weapons of mass destruction**.
2. It prohibits the **development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, transfer and use** of biological and toxin weapons.
3. Opened for signature in **1972** and entered into force in **1975**, with India as a founding State Party.
4. Core provisions mandate **destruction of existing stockpiles** and non-transfer of biological weapons to any actor.
5. A major limitation is the **absence of a formal verification mechanism**, making compliance checks difficult.
6. **Review Conferences every five years** update norms to address technological advances and biosecurity challenges.
7. Promotes **peaceful biological research and capacity building** for developing countries under Article X.
8. With emerging risks from **AI, synthetic biology and gene editing**, the BWC remains crucial for global biosecurity and Global South protection.

INDIA RE-ELECTED TO IMO COUNCIL

Recent Update: India secured the **highest votes (154/169)** for Category B membership for 2026–27

About

1. The **IMO Council** is the executive body of the **International Maritime Organization**, overseeing its work between Assembly sessions.
2. It formulates **policy decisions and supervises global maritime governance**, ensuring smooth functioning of international shipping.

3. Constituted under the **IMO Convention (1958)** and elected biennially by member states.
4. IMO itself was established in **1948**, with headquarters in **London, UK**.
5. Its core objective is to ensure **safe, secure, efficient and environmentally sustainable shipping** worldwide.
6. Develops and updates major conventions like **SOLAS, MARPOL and STCW**, forming the backbone of maritime law.
7. India's re-election reflects its **growing maritime trade, naval capability and port infrastructure strength**.
8. Strengthens India's voice in shaping **global shipping standards, marine safety and environmental protection policies**.

SOURCE: VISION MONTHLY

NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY 2025 OF THE USA

Recent Update: Trump administration released **National Security Strategy (NSS 2025)** outlining new foreign policy priorities

About

1. NSS 2025 is a **statutory document** defining **US foreign policy priorities, principles and strategic focus areas**.
2. Reasserts **Monroe Doctrine**, declaring the **Western Hemisphere as top priority** and limiting external interference.
3. Links **national security with economic strength**, emphasising **reindustrialisation, critical minerals and energy dominance**.
4. Uses **tariffs, trade reciprocity and market access** as strategic tools of geopolitical leverage.
5. Shows **ideological shift from democracy promotion to "civilizational pluralism"**, reducing interventionism.
6. Highlights **Indo-Pacific and Asia** as central for ensuring a **free and open regional order**.
7. Avoids labelling **China and Russia as existential threats**, signalling pragmatic great-power realism.
8. Proposes **"Golden Dome" missile shield** prioritising **homeland defence over collective**

alliances, reshaping global security architecture.

INDIAN DIASPORA

Recent Update: Parliamentary panel reviewed **welfare and engagement of overseas Indians**

About

1. Refers to **NRIs, PIOs, OCIs and migrant workers** forming one of the **largest global diasporas**.
2. Acts as **cultural soft power**, spreading **Indian languages, festivals and traditions** worldwide.
3. India remains **top global remittance recipient**, receiving **\$135+ billion in FY 2024–25**.
4. Remittances contribute nearly **3–3.5% of GDP**, strengthening **external financing stability**.
5. Over **260 people of Indian origin hold public offices abroad**, boosting **political influence**.
6. Gulf economies rely heavily on **Indian labour force**, deepening **strategic interdependence**.
7. Strong presence in **STEM and Silicon Valley**, with nearly **25% startups led by Indians**.
8. Enhances **knowledge transfer, investment flows and diplomatic goodwill** for India.

INDIA–AFRICA RELATIONS

Recent Update: PM visits to **Namibia, Ghana and Ethiopia** strengthened strategic engagement

About

1. Ties date back to **ancient maritime trade**, recorded in **Periplus of the Erythraean Sea**.
2. Historical **cultural exchanges**, including **Siddi communities** in India, strengthened people-to-people bonds.
3. Gandhi's **Satyagraha in South Africa** shaped shared anti-racism and anti-colonial struggles.
4. Nehru called Africa a **"sister continent"**, supporting liberation through **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)**.
5. Post-1991 shift towards **economic diplomacy and development partnerships**.
6. **India–Africa Forum Summits (since 2008)** institutionalised structured cooperation.

- Recent MoUs include **data centres, digital infrastructure and debt restructuring**.
- Focus areas include **capacity building, energy, healthcare, defence and South–South cooperation**.

WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY (WSIS)

Recent Update: **WSIS+20 review** marked two decades of global digital governance process

About

- A **two-phase UN summit** addressing **ICTs for development and digital cooperation**.
- Geneva 2003** adopted **Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action**.
- Tunis 2005** adopted **Tunis Agenda for Information Society governance**.
- Promotes **people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented digital ecosystem**.
- Aims to ensure **universal ICT access and reduction of digital divide**.
- Supports **sustainable development through digital technologies**.
- Co-organised annually by **ITU, UNESCO, UNDP and UNCTAD**.
- Periodic reviews like **WSIS+10 and WSIS+20** evaluate global digital progress.

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION (IMO)

Recent Update: India re-elected to **IMO Council (2026–27)** with highest votes



About

- IMO is the **UN specialised agency for maritime safety and pollution prevention**.
- Council comprises **40 elected members across Categories A, B and C**.
- MARPOL Convention** regulates pollution from ships including oil and garbage.

- Ballast Water Convention** prevents spread of invasive marine species.
- SOLAS Convention** sets minimum safety standards for ships and navigation.
- STCW Convention** standardises seafarer training and certification globally.
- 2023 Strategy targets **net-zero GHG emissions from shipping by 2050**.
- Strengthens **global maritime security, safety and environmental sustainability**.

INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION (ITU)

Recent Update: **WTDC-25 conference in Baku** reviewed global telecom development

About

- ITU is a **UN specialised agency for digital technologies and ICT governance**.
- Headquarters located in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- Comprises **194 member states and 1000+ private sector/academic entities**.
- Originated in **1865 International Telegraph Convention**, one of the oldest global bodies.
- Allocates **radio spectrum and satellite orbital slots** to avoid interference.
- Develops **technical standards for seamless global connectivity**.
- Supports **digital inclusion and telecom infrastructure development worldwide**.
- Facilitates **global cooperation on emerging technologies like 5G, IoT and AI networks**.

THREE SEAS INITIATIVE (3SI)

Recent Update: Initiative marked **10 years since inception (2015–2025)**

About

- A regional **intergovernmental forum of 13 Central and Eastern European states**.
- Situated between **Baltic, Adriatic and Black Seas**, enhancing North–South connectivity.
- Complements **EU policies** while strengthening regional strategic autonomy.
- Focuses on **energy, transport and digital infrastructure projects**.
- 3SI Investment Fund (2019)** mobilises private capital for infrastructure.

6. Seeks **energy diversification**, reducing dependence on Russian supplies.
7. Promotes **connectivity rebalancing beyond Soviet-era East–West routes**.
8. Links with **India–Middle East–Europe Corridor (IMEC)** as northern extension.

WASHINGTON ACCORDS FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY

Recent Update: US-facilitated accord signed between **DRC and Rwanda** to stabilise conflict zones

About

1. Agreement seeks **peace and trust restoration** in mineral-rich eastern DRC.
2. Triggered by **Rwanda-backed M23 rebel violence** causing displacement and instability.
3. Targets stability in regions like **Katanga, Kivu and Ituri**.
4. DRC holds vast reserves of **copper, cobalt, tin, tungsten, gold and diamonds**.
5. Accounts for nearly **70% of global cobalt production**, critical for EV batteries.
6. Emphasises **security cooperation and cross-border peace mechanisms**.
7. Supports **economic recovery through mineral governance reforms**.
8. Aims to integrate **resource wealth with regional prosperity rather than conflict**.

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON NEGOTIABLE CARGO DOCUMENTS (ACCRA CONVENTION), 2025

Recent Update: UNGA adopted **resolution supporting uniform legal framework for digital cargo documents**

About

1. Establishes **standardised rules for Negotiable Cargo Documents (NCDs)**.
2. Covers both **paper and digital trade documents** representing goods in transit.
3. Extends negotiability beyond maritime to **multimodal transport (road, rail, air)**.
4. Allows goods to be **sold, rerouted or pledged as collateral mid-journey**.
5. Provides **same legal validity as physical delivery of goods**.
6. Reduces **transaction costs and trade delays**.

7. Promotes **digitalisation of global supply chains and trade finance**.
8. Enhances **legal certainty and international trade facilitation**.

REPUBLIC OF SOMALILAND

Recent Update: Israel became first country to **formally recognise Somaliland's independence**



About

1. Located in **Horn of Africa**, bordering **Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia and Gulf of Aden**.
2. Declared independence in **1991 after Somali state collapse**.
3. Functions as a **de facto state with its own government and institutions**.
4. Capital city is **Hargeisa**.
5. Maintains **relative stability compared to Somalia's conflict zones**.
6. Lacks **widespread international recognition**, limiting diplomatic legitimacy.
7. Strategic location near **Red Sea and major maritime routes**.
8. Recognition may reshape **regional geopolitics and Horn of Africa security dynamics**.

MUBARAK AL-KABEER PORT

Recent Update: Kuwait signed **agreement with China for port development under BRI**

About

1. Located on **Boubyan Island, Kuwait**, near northern Persian Gulf.
2. Designed to enhance **regional trade and logistics connectivity**.

- Supports Kuwait's goal of **economic diversification beyond oil dependence**.



- Integrated into **China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)**.
- Links **Maritime Silk Road shipping networks across Asia and Middle East**.
- Expected to boost **transshipment, warehousing and industrial growth**.
- Strengthens **China–Gulf strategic and economic partnership**.
- Could alter **regional port competition and trade flows**.

KIMBERLEY PROCESS

Recent Update: India to assume **Chairpersonship of Kimberley Process from 2026**

About

- A **tripartite initiative of governments, industry and civil society**.
- Prevents trade in **"conflict diamonds" financing armed rebellions**.
- Covers **99% of global rough diamond trade** with 60 participants.
- Mandates **certification scheme for origin verification of diamonds**.
- Ensures **transparency and accountability in diamond supply chains**.
- Discourages **illegal mining and insurgency financing**.
- Strengthens **ethical sourcing and responsible trade practices**.
- India's leadership enhances its **global governance role in gemstone trade**.

SOURCE: THE HINDU

APDIM (ASIAN AND PACIFIC CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF DISASTER INFORMATION MANAGEMENT)

Recent Update: The **10th APDIM Session on Inclusive Disaster Risk Data Governance** was held in **New Delhi**.

About

- APDIM was established in **2015** as a regional institution under **UN-ESCAP**.
- It assists Asia-Pacific countries in strengthening **disaster risk reduction using reliable data systems**.
- The Governing Council consists of **eight ESCAP members plus Iran**, elected for fixed terms.
- The Council meets **annually** to review institutional progress and future strategies.
- India is a **founding member** and served as an elected Council member from **2022 to 2025**.
- APDIM headquarters is located in **Tehran, Iran**.
- The centre promotes **evidence-based policymaking for disaster resilience and climate adaptation**.

GAZA PEACE PLAN

Recent Update: The **UN Security Council approved a US-backed Gaza Peace Plan**, signalling renewed diplomatic efforts.



About

- The resolution was adopted with **13 UNSC members voting in favour**.
- Russia and China abstained**, allowing the resolution to pass without veto.
- The plan supports deployment of an **International Stabilisation Force (ISF)** in Gaza.
- It outlines steps toward an **immediate ceasefire and phased de-escalation**.

5. The proposal includes **disarmament of Hamas** as a long-term security objective.
6. A **transitional Palestinian technocratic committee** will manage interim governance.
7. The plan aims to create conditions for **long-term political stability and reconstruction**.

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (CAC)

Recent Update: India was re-elected to the Codex Executive Committee for the Asia region at CAC48.



About

1. CAC was established in **1963** by the **World Health Organization and FAO**.
2. It is an **intergovernmental body** responsible for global food safety and quality standards.
3. Codex Alimentarius refers to a **collection of food standards, guidelines, and codes of practice**.
4. Codex standards are **voluntary**, but widely used as international benchmarks.
5. The Commission has **189 members**, including India and the European Union.
6. CAC sessions are held annually, alternating between **Rome and Geneva**.
7. The headquarters of CAC is located in **Rome, Italy**.

INTERNATIONAL IDEA

Recent Update: India's **Chief Election Commissioner assumed chairship of International IDEA for 2026**, enhancing India's global democratic role.

About

1. **International IDEA** stands for **International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance**.
2. It is an **intergovernmental organisation established in 1995** to strengthen democratic institutions worldwide.

3. The



organisation supports **free and fair elections, constitution-building, political participation, and governance reforms**.

4. International IDEA has **35 member countries**, with India as a **full member**, while the USA and Japan are observers.
5. It enjoys **UN observer status**, strengthening its global legitimacy.
6. The Secretariat of International IDEA is located in **Stockholm, Sweden**.
7. India's leadership role reflects its **institutional democratic experience and electoral management capacity**.

INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION (IAU)

Recent Update: The IAU approved naming **craters and Martian features after Indian geographical and scientific contributors**.



About

1. The **International Astronomical Union** was established in **1919** as the global authority for astronomy.
2. It promotes and safeguards **astronomical research, education, communication, and international cooperation**.
3. The IAU is the **only internationally recognised body for naming celestial objects**.
4. It holds a **General Assembly every three years**, attended by astronomers worldwide.

5. The headquarters of the IAU is located in **Paris, France**.
6. Recently, a **3.5-billion-year-old crater** was named after geologist **M.S. Krishnan**.
7. Kerala-based names like **Valiamala, Thumba, Bekal, Varkala, and Periyar** were approved for extraterrestrial features.

GAVI ALLIANCE

Recent Update: GAVI and UNICEF announced expanded access to the **R21/Matrix-M malaria vaccine**.



About

1. GAVI was founded in **2000** as a **public-private global vaccine alliance**.
2. Its goal is to ensure **equitable access to life-saving vaccines in low-income countries**.
3. Members include **WHO, UNICEF, World Bank, vaccine manufacturers, and philanthropic foundations**.
4. GAVI has **observer status at the World Health Assembly**.
5. India began receiving GAVI support in **2002**.
6. India is the **largest supplier of vaccines to GAVI**.
7. The headquarters of GAVI is located in **Geneva, Switzerland**.

G20 SUMMIT 2025

Recent Update: The **20th G20 Summit 2025** was held in **Johannesburg, South Africa**, under the theme **"Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainability"**.

About

1. The **G20** was formed in **1999** after the **Asian Financial Crisis**, initially as a forum of **Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors**.
2. It was elevated to the **Leaders' Summit level in 2008** to address the **global financial crisis**.
3. The G20 comprises **19 countries plus the European Union and the African Union**.



4. India has been a **founding member since 1999**, actively shaping G20 agendas.
5. The grouping has **no permanent secretariat or headquarters**, functioning through rotating presidencies.
6. G20 members account for **67% of global population, 85% of global GDP, and 75% of world trade**.
7. The **Troika system** manages continuity, with **South Africa (2025), Brazil (past), and USA (incoming 2026)**.
8. The 2025 summit was the **first G20 hosted on African soil**, guided by the philosophy of **Ubuntu**.

JOHANNESBURG DECLARATION (2025)

Recent Update: The **Johannesburg Declaration** was adopted **at the beginning of the G20 Summit 2025**, not at its conclusion.

About

1. The declaration adopted the **Nelson Mandela Bay Target**, aiming to cut **NEET youth share by 5% by 2030**.
2. It endorsed the revised **Brisbane–eThekweni Goal**, reducing **gender labour force gaps by 25% by 2030**.
3. Leaders welcomed a **voluntary G20 Critical Minerals Framework** for secure and diversified supply chains.
4. It pledged **universal coverage of early warning systems by 2027** under the **UN Early Warnings for All Initiative**.
5. The declaration reaffirmed commitment to **inclusive growth, climate action, and development finance**.
6. Notably, the **United States did not participate** and attempted to block adoption.
7. Adoption at the start symbolised **urgency-driven consensus rather than symbolic closure**.

UN CONVENTION AGAINST CYBERCRIME (HANOI CONVENTION)

Recent Update: In 2025, 72 countries signed the UN Convention against Cybercrime in Hanoi, Vietnam, while India has not signed yet.



About

1. The **UN Convention against Cybercrime** was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2024 as the first legally binding global cybercrime treaty.
2. It is also known as the **Hanoi Convention**, named after the city where it was opened for signatures.
3. The treaty criminalises **cyber-dependent crimes, online fraud, and online child sexual abuse and exploitation material (CSAM)**.
4. It establishes the **first global framework for collection, sharing, and use of electronic evidence** across borders.
5. The convention creates a **24x7 International Cooperation Network** for rapid information exchange among countries.
6. It recognises **non-consensual dissemination of intimate images** as a criminal offence.
7. The **UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)** acts as the **secretariat** of the convention.

INDIA–QATAR RELATIONS (2025)

Recent Update: In 2025, India and Qatar elevated ties to a Strategic Partnership, and Qatar adopted UPI.

About

1. India–Qatar diplomatic relations completed **50 years in 2023**.
2. Bilateral trade stands at **USD 14.08 billion**, making Qatar one of India's key Gulf partners.
3. Qatar is **India's largest supplier of LNG and LPG**, ensuring India's **energy security**.

4. India is among **Qatar's top three export destinations**, along with **China and Japan**.
5. Both countries have signed a **Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA)**.
6. **Defence cooperation agreement (2008)** underpins naval exercises like **Zair-Al-Bahr**.
7. Qatar became the **5th GCC country** with which India has a **strategic partnership**.

KORDOFAN REGION

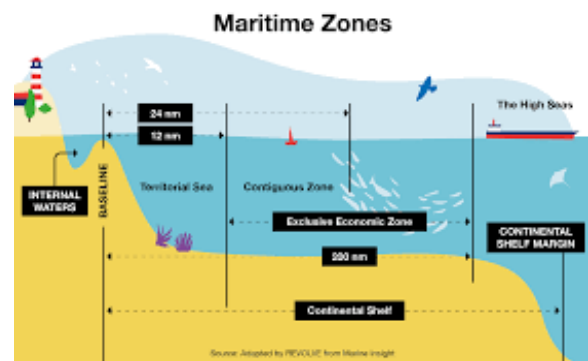
Recent Update: The **Kordofan region** has gained attention due to its strategic and humanitarian relevance in Sudan.

About

1. **Kordofan** is a major geographical region located in **central Sudan**.
2. It lies between **Darfur in the west** and the **White Nile Valley in the east**.
3. The region acts as a **transitional zone** between desert and savannah ecosystems.
4. Kordofan is historically important for **trade routes and livestock grazing**.
5. It has been affected by **conflict, drought, and food insecurity**.
6. Stability in Kordofan is crucial for **Sudan's internal security and economic recovery**.

UN HIGH SEAS TREATY (BBNJ)

Recent Update: Morocco became the 60th country to ratify the **UN High Seas Treaty**, enabling enforcement from **January 2026**.



About

1. The treaty is officially called the **Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Treaty (BBNJ)**.
2. It was adopted in **2023** under the framework of **UNCLOS**.
3. The treaty aims to protect **marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction**.

4. It is often referred to as the “**Paris Agreement for the Ocean**”.
5. It mandates **Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)** for harmful ocean activities.
6. The treaty targets protection of **30% of global oceans by 2030**.
7. It ensures **equitable sharing of benefits from marine genetic resources**.

BRICS PAY

Recent Update: BRICS Pay gained attention as an alternative **cross-border payment system** among BRICS nations.



About

1. **BRICS Pay** is a **decentralised digital payment platform** developed under the **BRICS Business Council**.
2. It enables **fast, secure, and low-cost cross-border transactions**.
3. The platform integrates national systems like **UPI, CIPS, SPFS, and Pix**.
4. It offers a **decentralised alternative to SWIFT's centralised structure**.
5. Transactions are settled in **local currencies**, reducing dollar dependency.
6. It strengthens **financial sovereignty and payment resilience** among BRICS nations.
7. BRICS Pay supports the goal of **de-dollarisation of global trade settlements**.



TOPICS COVERED-

1. India–EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA)
2. India’s Minerals Diplomacy
3. Operation Hawkeye
4. Line of Control (LoC)
5. Monroe Doctrine
6. Pax Silica Initiative
7. India–Bangladesh Ganga Water Sharing Treaty (1996)
8. BRICS Plus Naval Exercise
9. Spain Joins Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)
10. India–UAE Engagement Amid Regional Flux
11. India–Germany Relations
12. UN Report on Sri Lanka Civil War Abuses
13. US Retreat from Multilateralism
14. India’s Foreign Policy Recalibration (2025)
15. India–New Zealand FTA
16. UNSC Resolution 2803
17. United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)
18. United Nations Convention on Negotiable Cargo Documents (Accra Convention, 2025)
19. UNESCO
20. UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
21. International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
22. IMO Council
23. WHO Pharmacovigilance
24. United States Withdrawal from WHO
25. 80 Years of ECOSOC
26. UNESCO Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Alliance
27. Global Environment Facility (GEF)
28. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)
29. Global Future Councils (GFCs)
30. International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)
31. Havana Syndrome
32. Responsible Nations Index (RNI)
33. Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)
34. USA Strikes on Venezuela
35. US Claim on Greenland
36. US Withdrawal from International Organizations
37. Third Path Framework for Multilateralism
38. Global Risk Report 2026

INDIA–EU FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (FTA)

Recent Update: India and the **European Union** are in the final stage of negotiating a long-pending **Free Trade Agreement**, expected to boost exports amid global protectionism.



About

1. The **India–EU FTA** is a comprehensive trade pact covering tariffs, services, investment, and regulatory alignment.
2. Negotiations began in 2007, stalled in 2013, and were relaunched in **June 2022**.
3. The European Union is India's largest goods trading partner, with bilateral trade worth **USD 136.53 billion**.
4. India exported **USD 75.85 billion** and imported USD 60.68 billion, maintaining a favourable trade balance.
5. The EU accounts for nearly **17% of India's total exports**, making it the largest export market bloc.
6. The agreement includes parallel talks on **Investment Protection and Geographical Indications (GIs)**.
7. Opportunities include tariff removal for textiles, pharmaceuticals, and expanded **services mobility**.
8. Challenges include **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, digital trade differences, and IPR concerns**.

INDIA'S MINERALS DIPLOMACY

Recent Update: India recalibrated its mineral strategy after launching the **National Critical Mineral Mission (2025)** and tightening Chinese export controls.

About

1. **Minerals diplomacy** involves strategic partnerships to secure supplies of critical minerals like lithium and cobalt.
2. It covers the entire value chain from **mining and refining to downstream manufacturing**.
3. India remains **100% import-dependent** for ten critical minerals, including lithium and cobalt.
4. The **National Critical Mineral Mission (2025)** allocates ₹34,300 crore for supply-chain security.
5. The **Mines and Minerals (Amendment) Act, 2025** enables centralised auctioning of 24 strategic minerals.
6. **Khanij Bidesh India Limited** pursues overseas mineral assets in Chile and Argentina.
7. India participates in the **Mineral Security Partnership** with 14 nations to diversify supply chains.
8. The strategy supports energy transition goals, including **500 GW non-fossil capacity and net-zero by 2070**.

OPERATION HAWKEYE

Recent Update: The **United States launched Operation Hawkeye in December 2025** after an ISIS ambush in Palmyra killed American personnel.

About

1. Operation Hawkeye is a **US-led counter-terrorism air campaign** targeting ISIS positions across Syria.
2. The operation was executed by **US Central Command (CENTCOM)** under President Donald Trump's directive.
3. It aimed to respond directly to the **Palmyra ambush** that killed US soldiers and a civilian interpreter.
4. The strikes focused on degrading **ISIS leadership, logistics hubs, and regrouping networks**.
5. It reinforced deterrence by signalling that **attacks on US forces invite immediate retaliation**.
6. The campaign sought to protect **US and coalition forces stationed in Syria**.
7. Precision air and intelligence-led strikes minimised collateral damage while targeting militant infrastructure.

- The operation reflects continued US engagement in **counter-ISIS stabilisation efforts in West Asia**.

LINE OF CONTROL (LoC)

Recent Update: The LoC continues to witness periodic ceasefire violations despite renewed confidence-building measures between India and Pakistan.



About

- The Line of Control is the **de facto military boundary** dividing Jammu and Kashmir between India and Pakistan.
- It originated as the **Ceasefire Line in 1949** under the Karachi Agreement after the first Indo-Pak war.
- It was renamed the **Line of Control in 1972** following the Simla Agreement.
- The LoC stretches approximately **740 km from Jammu to the Siachen Glacier**.
- It is heavily militarised with fencing, surveillance systems, and frequent patrols.
- India has constructed fencing along nearly **550 km to prevent infiltration and smuggling**.
- The LoC is distinct from the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)** with China.
- It remains a sensitive flashpoint influencing India–Pakistan security dynamics.

MONROE DOCTRINE

Recent Update: The US invoked the **Monroe Doctrine** to justify intervention in Venezuela amid renewed geopolitical tensions.

About

- The Monroe Doctrine is a **US foreign policy principle** asserting exclusive influence over the Western Hemisphere.

- It was proclaimed on **December 2, 1823** by **President James Monroe**.
- It warned against **new European colonisation** in the Americas.
- It declared that external interference in the Americas would be viewed as **hostile to US security**.
- The doctrine promised reciprocal US non-interference in European internal affairs.
- The **Roosevelt Corollary (1904)** expanded it to justify US intervention in Latin America.
- During the Cold War, it was invoked to counter **Soviet influence in Cuba and Central America**.
- Its modern revival signals a return to assertive US regional dominance policies.

PAX SILICA INITIATIVE

Recent Update: India is set to join the **US-led Pax Silica Initiative** to secure semiconductor and AI supply chains.

About

- Pax Silica is a US-led partnership to build **secure silicon, semiconductor, and AI supply chains**.
- The first summit was held in **Washington D.C. in December 2025**.
- It includes partners such as Japan, South Korea, UAE, Australia, and the Netherlands.
- The initiative covers the entire technology chain from **critical minerals to advanced chip fabrication**.
- It promotes trusted technology ecosystems to prevent **data theft and supply-chain coercion**.
- The framework supports investment in **fabs, processing units, and AI infrastructure**.
- It links economic security with national security in the era of **AI and digital geopolitics**.
- India's participation aligns with its **Semiconductor Mission and Critical Mineral initiatives**.

INDIA–BANGLADESH GANGA WATER SHARING TREATY (1996)

Recent Update: The 1996 Treaty is set to expire in **December 2026**, prompting renewal discussions between India and Bangladesh.



About

1. The treaty governs sharing of **Ganga waters at Farakka Barrage** during the dry season.
2. It was signed on **12 December 1996** for a 30-year renewable period.
3. Water allocation follows a **ten-day formula-based schedule from January to May**.
4. The formula uses historical average flows recorded between **1949 and 1988**.
5. Emergency consultations are triggered if flows fall below **50,000 cusecs**.
6. A **Joint Committee mechanism** monitors daily water releases at Farakka and Hardinge Bridge.
7. The treaty allows periodic review every five years or earlier by mutual consent.
8. It significantly improved bilateral cooperation after decades of water-sharing disputes.

BRICS PLUS NAVAL EXERCISE

Recent Update: India opted out of the **“Will for Peace 2026” BRICS Plus naval exercise**, clarifying it is not a formal BRICS activity.

About

1. The BRICS Plus naval exercise is a **host-led, non-institutionalised maritime drill**.
2. It was conducted off **Simon’s Town near Cape Town, South Africa**.
3. Participating navies included China, Russia, Iran, UAE, and South Africa.
4. The theme focused on ensuring safety of **key shipping lanes and maritime trade routes**.
5. Operations included maritime security, counter-terrorism, and search-and-rescue drills.
6. The exercise involved countries beyond core BRICS under a **“BRICS Plus” outreach format**.

7. India and Brazil chose not to participate actively in the exercise.
8. The development reflects evolving geopolitical sensitivities within BRICS engagement.

SPAIN JOINS INDO-PACIFIC OCEANS INITIATIVE (IPOI)

Recent Update: Spain formally joined the **Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)** by submitting its Declaration of Accession to India.

About

1. IPOI is a **non-treaty, voluntary maritime cooperation framework** in the Indo-Pacific region.
2. It was launched by India in **2019 at the East Asia Summit in Bangkok**.
3. The initiative builds on India’s **SAGAR doctrine (Security and Growth for All in the Region)**.
4. It promotes a free, open, inclusive, and **rules-based Indo-Pacific order**.
5. IPOI operates through **seven thematic pillars**, including maritime security and ecology.
6. It emphasises Maritime Domain Awareness, sustainability, and infrastructure resilience.
7. Countries can voluntarily lead or contribute to specific pillars.
8. Spain’s accession reflects Europe’s growing engagement in Indo-Pacific maritime cooperation.

SOURCE: DRISHTI MONTHLY

INDIA–UAE ENGAGEMENT AMID REGIONAL FLUX

Recent Update: The **UAE President’s official visit to India** resulted in wide-ranging agreements on trade, defence, energy, space, and digital cooperation.

About

1. Bilateral trade reached **USD 100 billion in FY 2024–25**, with a target of USD 200 billion by 2032.
2. Both sides advanced economic initiatives like **Bharat Mart, Virtual Trade Corridor, and Bharat–Africa Setu**.
3. The UAE was invited to invest through its sovereign funds in India’s **National Investment & Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)**.

4. A 10-year **LNG supply agreement from 2028** and cooperation in **Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)** were agreed.
5. Technology cooperation includes AI collaboration, **supercomputing clusters, data centres, and Data Embassies**.
6. Defence ties strengthened through joint exercises like **Exercise Desert Cyclone** and interest in Indian defence platforms.
7. Financial integration deepened via **UPI, RuPay, and Local Currency Settlement (INR–AED)** mechanisms.
8. The Indian diaspora of **3.5 million people** remains a key pillar of cultural and economic ties.

INDIA–GERMANY RELATIONS

Recent Update: The German Chancellor’s visit marked **25 years of strategic partnership** and expanded cooperation in defence and digital sectors.

About

1. A joint roadmap was agreed for **defence co-development and technology partnerships**.
2. Germany committed to faster export clearances and participation in Indian military exercises.
3. A **Track 1.5 Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue** was established for strategic coordination.
4. Indian passport holders will receive **visa-free airport transit** through German airports.
5. A higher education roadmap includes German campuses and a **Renewable Energy skilling centre**.
6. Cooperation was agreed in **critical minerals and semiconductor ecosystems**.
7. The Indo-German Digital Dialogue (2026–27) covers **AI, data governance, and Industry 4.0**.
8. Both reaffirmed commitment to a **free and open Indo-Pacific** and support for IMEC.

UN REPORT ON SRI LANKA CIVIL WAR ABUSES

Recent Update: The UN Human Rights Office released a report alleging **systematic sexual violence** during Sri Lanka’s civil war.

About

1. The report highlights use of **systematic sexual violence by security forces** against Tamil civilians.
2. Post-2009, survivors reportedly faced denial of justice and lack of accountability.
3. Victims continue to suffer **physical trauma, infertility, and psychological distress**.
4. Under-reporting persists due to stigma, surveillance, and intimidation.
5. The UN recommends recognising abuses as **war crimes or crimes against humanity**.
6. It urges independent prosecutions and survivor-centred reforms.
7. The Sri Lankan Civil War lasted from **1983 to 2009**.
8. The conflict ended militarily in 2009 but reconciliation remains incomplete.

US RETREAT FROM MULTILATERALISM

Recent Update: Under the “**America First**” policy, the US withdrew from 66 international organisations, including 31 UN bodies.

About

1. Withdrawal from bodies like **UNFCCC and UNESCO** creates funding and governance gaps.
2. It weakens global climate leadership despite US being the largest historical emitter.
3. Climate finance gaps remain at **USD 310–365 billion annually**.
4. China’s expanding role in UN agencies increases geopolitical vacuum concerns.
5. Exits undermine peacebuilding, health, and migration cooperation mechanisms.
6. US exporters risk facing climate-linked trade barriers like **Carbon Border Taxes**.
7. Aid reductions affect reproductive health and development support in the Global South.
8. The shift signals a return to unilateralism over multilateral engagement.

INDIA’S FOREIGN POLICY RECALIBRATION (2025)

Recent Update: 2025 witnessed major geopolitical shocks and diplomatic recalibrations for India.

About

1. India faced strained ties with the US over tariffs and sanctions-linked pressures.
2. Regional instability intensified in Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh.
3. West Asian tensions affected India's connectivity projects like **IMEC**.
4. Global rise of right-wing politics increased transactional diplomacy challenges.
5. India achieved a reset in relations with **Canada** after earlier diplomatic tensions.
6. Engagement with the **Taliban regime** created strategic leverage in Afghanistan.
7. India cautiously re-engaged with **China**, restoring pilgrimages and data sharing.
8. Neighbourhood diplomacy strengthened through aid and disaster response to Sri Lanka.

INDIA-NEW ZEALAND FTA

Recent Update: India and New Zealand concluded negotiations on an ambitious **Free Trade Agreement**.



India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement

About

1. New Zealand will grant **zero-duty access on 100% of Indian exports**.
2. India liberalised duties across **70% of tariff lines**, covering 95% of NZ exports.
3. Nearly 30% of tariff lines were excluded to protect India's **dairy sector**.
4. NZ committed to facilitate **USD 20 billion FDI over 15 years**.
5. Mobility provisions include extended post-study work visas and 20-hour student work rights.
6. A new visa pathway allows **5,000 Indian professionals** temporary entry.

7. Services liberalisation covers **118 sectors**, boosting IT and healthcare exports.
8. The FTA aims to double bilateral trade from **USD 2.4 billion to USD 5 billion** within five years.

SOURCE: THE HINDU

UNSC RESOLUTION 2803

Recent Update: The **UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2803**, endorsing a US-backed plan to end the Gaza conflict.

About

1. The resolution endorses a **Comprehensive Plan** aimed at ending hostilities and stabilising Gaza.
2. It establishes a **Board of Peace (BoP)** as a transitional authority for Gaza's redevelopment.
3. The BoP will function until the **Palestinian Authority completes governance reforms**.
4. It mandates resumption of **humanitarian aid with strict safeguards** to ensure peaceful usage.
5. An **International Stabilization Force (ISF)** is authorised to provide temporary security support.
6. The ISF will assist in **demilitarisation, civilian protection, and coordination** with regional stakeholders.
7. The resolution calls for cooperation between **Israel, Egypt, and Palestinian authorities**.
8. It represents a renewed attempt at multilateral conflict resolution under UN supervision.

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION (UNCAC)

Recent Update: The 11th Conference of States Parties adopted the **Doha Declaration 2025**, promoting AI-enabled anti-corruption cooperation.

About

1. **UNCAC**, signed in 2003 and effective since 2005, is the only legally binding universal anti-corruption treaty.
2. As of 2025, it has **140 signatories and 192 parties**, including India.

3. It covers offences such as **bribery, abuse of functions, trading in influence, and private-sector corruption**.
4. The **UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)** serves as its custodian and secretariat.
5. The **Conference of States Parties (COSP)** meets biennially to adopt resolutions and review implementation.
6. India's **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013** aligns with obligations under UNCAC.
7. The Doha Declaration 2025 encourages leveraging **digital technologies and AI** for cross-border enforcement.
8. The Convention promotes international cooperation in **asset recovery and mutual legal assistance**.

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON NEGOTIABLE CARGO DOCUMENTS (ACCRA CONVENTION, 2025)

Recent Update: The UN General Assembly adopted the **Accra Convention (2025)** to regulate negotiable cargo documents globally.

About

1. The Convention creates a **uniform legal framework for negotiable cargo documents**.
2. These documents represent goods in transit and transfer **ownership rights to the holder**.
3. It extends legal recognition beyond maritime transport to **multimodal transport systems**.
4. The framework covers rail, road, air, and sea-based cargo documentation.
5. It allows goods to be **sold, rerouted, or used as collateral** while in transit.
6. Negotiable cargo documents are given the **same legal effect as physical delivery**.
7. The Convention enhances trade finance through secure electronic documentation systems.
8. It supports global supply-chain efficiency and harmonised commercial law practices.

UNESCO (UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION)

Recent Update: India was re-elected to the **UNESCO Executive Board for 2025–29**, while the United States announced exit again.

About

1. UNESCO was established in **1945** as a specialised UN agency for education, science, and culture.
2. It has **194 member states and 12 associate members**, including India as a founding member.
3. The organisation is governed by the **General Conference, Executive Board, and Secretariat**.
4. Headquarters is located in **Paris, France**.
5. Key programmes include the **World Heritage Convention and Man and the Biosphere (MAB)**.
6. UNESCO publishes flagship reports like the **Global Education Monitoring Report**.
7. India has been continuously re-elected to the **Executive Board since 1946**.
8. It functions under the broader coordination of the **UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**.

UN OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS (OCHA)

Recent Update: The United States announced a **USD 2 billion pledge** toward UN humanitarian assistance.

About

1. OCHA was established in **1991 by the UN General Assembly** to coordinate humanitarian responses.
2. It replaced the earlier **United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO)** mechanism.
3. OCHA manages pooled funding tools like the **Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)**.
4. It also oversees **Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs)** for targeted humanitarian needs.
5. Field coordination is conducted through **On-Site Operations Coordination Centres (OSOCC)**.
6. OCHA supports rapid response during natural disasters and conflict emergencies.
7. It enhances coordination among UN agencies, NGOs, and donor governments.
8. The office plays a central role in global crisis preparedness and response planning.

INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION (ITU)

Recent Update: The **World Telecommunication Development Conference 2025** concluded in Baku, Azerbaijan.



About

1. ITU was established in **1865** as the International Telegraph Union.
2. It is the UN specialised agency for **information and communication technologies (ICTs)**.
3. ITU coordinates global standards for telecommunication and digital infrastructure.
4. It has **193 member states and over 1000 sector members**, including private entities.
5. Headquarters is located in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
6. ITU publishes the **Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI)** assessing national cyber commitments.
7. India has been a regular member of the **ITU Council since 1952**.
8. The organisation shapes global spectrum allocation and digital development policies.

IMO COUNCIL

Recent Update: India was re-elected to the **IMO Council (Category B)** for the 2026–27 term with the highest votes.

About

1. The IMO Council is the executive body of the **International Maritime Organization (IMO)**.
2. It functions between Assembly sessions to oversee maritime governance decisions.
3. The Council is constituted under the **IMO Convention, 1958**.
4. Members are elected every two years by the Assembly.
5. Category B includes major maritime nations like **India, France, and Germany**.

6. The Council supervises budgetary and administrative matters of IMO.
7. It shapes policies on maritime safety, pollution prevention, and navigation standards.
8. India's re-election strengthens its influence in global shipping governance.

SOURCE: THE HINDU

WHO PHARMACOVIGILANCE

Recent Update: India rose to **8th position globally** in contributions to the WHO pharmacovigilance database, from 123rd a decade ago.

About

1. WHO pharmacovigilance is a **global drug safety monitoring system** coordinated by the World Health Organization.
2. It focuses on detecting and preventing **adverse drug reactions (ADRs) and vaccine-related risks**.
3. The system supports **evidence-based regulatory decision-making** using real-world safety data.
4. It collects ADR reports from hospitals, manufacturers, and regulators worldwide.
5. Advanced analytics enable **signal detection of rare or unexpected side effects**.
6. Continuous **risk–benefit assessment** ensures medicines remain safe for long-term and vulnerable populations.
7. WHO provides technical guidance for **label changes, safety warnings, or product withdrawal**.
8. The framework strengthens global data-sharing and capacity-building among member countries.

UNITED STATES WITHDRAWAL FROM WHO

Recent Update: The United States formally withdrew from the **World Health Organization** after serving a one-year notice period.

About

1. The WHO is the **specialised UN health agency** responsible for coordinating global public health.

2. It was established on **7 April 1948**, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
3. WHO has **194 Member States** and leads international health emergency responses.
4. It played a key role in **smallpox eradication and COVID-19 coordination**.
5. Core functions include setting standards like the **International Classification of Diseases (ICD)**.
6. WHO promotes **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** and equitable access to healthcare.
7. Withdrawal requires **one-year notice and payment of outstanding dues** under US law.
8. The move raises concerns over global health governance and funding gaps.

80 YEARS OF ECOSOC

Recent Update: The United Nations marked **80 years of ECOSOC**, highlighting its role in SDG coordination.

About

1. ECOSOC is one of the **six principal organs of the United Nations**, established in 1945.
2. It serves as the central forum for **economic, social, and environmental policy coordination**.
3. It reviews Sustainable Development Goals progress through the **High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)**.
4. ECOSOC oversees specialised agencies and UN development programmes.
5. It grants consultative status to over **6,500 NGOs worldwide**.
6. It elects executive boards of agencies like **UNICEF and UNDP**.
7. The first ECOSOC meeting was held on **23 January 1946 in London**.
8. It promotes inclusive development under the principle of **“leaving no one behind.”**

UNESCO MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY (MIL) ALLIANCE

Recent Update: The MIL Alliance was relaunched in 2025 during **Global MIL Week with the Cartagena Declaration**.

About

1. The MIL Alliance is a **UNESCO-coordinated global network** promoting media and information literacy.
2. It was launched in **2013 in Abuja, Nigeria**, during the Global Forum on MIL.
3. The Alliance brings together over **300 organisations and 180 experts** worldwide.
4. It aims to counter **disinformation, misinformation, and hate speech**.
5. The Global Board ensures inclusive governance and strategic coordination.
6. It contributes expert inputs to global policy discussions on media literacy norms.
7. The Alliance facilitates sharing of research, tools, and best practices globally.
8. It strengthens institutional and community resilience in digital information ecosystems.

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF)

Recent Update: The GEF continues supporting implementation of multilateral environmental conventions including the **BBNJ Agreement**.

About

1. The GEF is a **multilateral environmental financing mechanism** established in 1991.
2. It provides grants and blended finance to developing countries for global environmental benefits.
3. It serves as the financial mechanism for **CBD, UNFCCC, and UNCCD**.
4. It also supports the **Stockholm Convention and Minamata Convention**.
5. The GEF mobilises large-scale co-financing from public and private sectors.
6. It supports capacity building and **technology transfer for climate and biodiversity action**.
7. The facility funds transparency mechanisms under the **Paris Agreement**.
8. It operates through structured governance bodies including Assembly and Council.

UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (UNDESA)

Recent Update: UNDESA projected **India’s GDP growth at 7.4% for 2025–26** in its WESP 2026 report.

About

1. UNDESA is a core department of the **UN Secretariat** supporting sustainable development.
2. It was established in 1948 and restructured into its present form in 1997.
3. Headquarters is located in **New York City, United States**.
4. It produces flagship reports like the **World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP)**.
5. UNDESA monitors implementation of the **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
6. It provides policy advice on poverty reduction, inequality, and climate action.
7. It supports intergovernmental processes under the **UN General Assembly and ECOSOC**.
8. The department maintains global development databases for policymaking.

GLOBAL FUTURE COUNCILS (GFCS)

Recent Update: The UAE signed an MoU with the **World Economic Forum** to host Global Future Councils meetings until 2030.

About

1. Global Future Councils are **WEF's flagship multistakeholder think tanks** on emerging global challenges.
2. Established in 2013, they function as invitation-only, time-bound knowledge networks.
3. Members serve two-year terms focusing on forward-looking policy insights.
4. Councils identify emerging risks, technologies, and transformative global trends.
5. Outputs feed directly into the **Davos agenda and WEF initiatives**.
6. They adopt interdisciplinary collaboration and systems-thinking approaches.
7. The UAE will host annual meetings from **2026 to 2030**.
8. The platform promotes evidence-based policymaking for resilient development.

INTERNATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY AGENCY (IRENA)

Recent Update: The 16th IRENA Assembly in Abu Dhabi called for accelerating the **global renewable energy transition**.

About

1. IRENA is the only intergovernmental organisation dedicated exclusively to **renewable energy**.
2. It was founded on **26 January 2009 in Bonn, Germany**.
3. Headquarters is located in **Masdar City, Abu Dhabi (UAE)**.
4. India is a founding member of the agency.
5. IRENA provides policy guidance on solar, wind, hydro, and bioenergy transitions.
6. It offers global datasets on renewable costs and investment trends.
7. The agency supports capacity-building and green finance mobilisation.
8. It serves as the primary multilateral platform for **renewable energy diplomacy**.

HAVANA SYNDROME

Recent Update: The US Pentagon began testing a **radio-frequency emitting device** linked to suspected Havana Syndrome cases.

About

1. Havana Syndrome refers to unexplained neurological symptoms reported by US diplomats since 2016.
2. It is officially termed **Anomalous Health Incidents (AHIs)**.
3. Symptoms include headaches, dizziness, tinnitus, and cognitive difficulties.
4. Cases have been reported across **Cuba, China, Europe, and the US**.
5. Some investigations suggest exposure to **pulsed microwave or radio-frequency energy**.
6. Many victims showed brain-trauma-like symptoms without visible injuries.

SOURCE: VISION MONTHLY

RESPONSIBLE NATIONS INDEX (RNI)

Recent Update: The **Responsible Nations Index (RNI)** was recently launched in **New Delhi by the World Intellectual Foundation (WIF)** to measure how responsibly countries act toward society, environment, and the global community.

About

1. **Responsible Nations Index (RNI)** is a global framework that evaluates countries based on **responsible governance, social welfare, environmental sustainability, and global cooperation** rather than only economic or military power.
2. The index is developed collaboratively by the **World Intellectual Foundation (WIF), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), and IIM Mumbai**.
3. It evaluates the performance of **154 countries** across multiple indicators measuring their responsibility toward people, planet, and international systems.
4. The framework aggregates **58 indicators into 13 sub-themes and 7 themes**, which are further grouped into **three core dimensions of responsibility**.
5. **Singapore ranked first globally**, followed by **Switzerland and Denmark**, with European countries dominating the top ten due to strong social welfare and environmental frameworks.
6. **India ranked 16th globally**, emerging as the **highest-ranked major Asian nation after Singapore**, reflecting improvements in inclusive governance and development programs.
7. India's performance was driven by **healthcare expansion, social equity initiatives, environmental diplomacy such as the International Solar Alliance, and people-centric governance models**.
8. The index highlights a **disconnect between economic power and responsibility**, with **USA ranked 66th and China ranked 68th**, showing that economic size alone does not ensure ethical leadership.

FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS (FTAs)

Recent Update: With the **India–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement**, India now has trade agreements with **all RCEP countries except China**.

About

1. **Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)** are trade arrangements between countries or regional blocs aimed at **reducing or eliminating tariffs, quotas, and other trade barriers to promote economic integration**.
2. FTAs may extend beyond goods trade and include **services, investments, intellectual**

property rights, government procurement, and competition policies.

3. **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)** is a mega trade pact involving **10 ASEAN countries and partners such as Australia, China, Japan, South Korea, and New Zealand**.
4. India has pursued **bilateral FTAs strategically to integrate with global supply chains while avoiding excessive dependence on Chinese markets**.
5. The **India–UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** implemented in 2022 significantly expanded cooperation in **trade, services, and digital commerce**.
6. The **India–Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA)** effective from December 2022 enhanced access to **critical minerals and strategic resources**.
7. India also signed the **India–EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) in 2024**, strengthening economic ties with European economies outside the EU.
8. Recent agreements including **India–Oman CEPA, India–UK CETA, and India–EU FTA negotiations** aim to expand market access and strengthen India's global trade integration.

USA STRIKES ON VENEZUELA

Recent Update: The **United States conducted military strikes under “Operation Absolute Resolve” in Venezuela**, leading to the capture of the Venezuelan President and triggering global reactions.

About

1. The strikes triggered widespread debate regarding **international law, sovereignty, and the legitimacy of unilateral military interventions**.
2. The **United Nations Secretary-General expressed concern**, stating that the operation failed to fully respect **rules governing the use of force under the UN Charter**.
3. The **UN Human Rights Office rejected the justification that military action was necessary to address human rights violations**, emphasizing that accountability must follow legal processes.
4. Several countries including **Russia, China, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, and Cuba criticized**

the action, citing violation of sovereignty and regional stability concerns.

5. Some nations such as **Argentina, Paraguay, and Israel supported the operation**, arguing that it targeted narcotics trafficking and terrorism networks.
6. One justification cited by the US was the **disputed legitimacy of the Venezuelan government following the 2024 elections**.
7. Venezuela possesses **one of the world's largest oil reserves, particularly in the Orinoco Belt**, making it strategically significant in global energy geopolitics.
8. Analysts interpret the action as part of a broader strategy to **counter Chinese and Russian influence in Latin America and reassert US regional dominance**.

US CLAIM ON GREENLAND

Recent Update: The **United States withdrew tariff threats related to Greenland after discussions with NATO partners regarding future strategic arrangements**.

About

1. **Greenland holds immense geopolitical importance** due to its location between **North America, Europe, and the Arctic**, forming part of the strategic **GIUK Gap maritime corridor**.
2. The island hosts the **Pituffik Space Base**, which is integrated into the **US early warning radar system and missile defense infrastructure**.
3. Greenland is strategically relevant for **monitoring submarine movements in the North Atlantic and countering Russian and Chinese military activities in the Arctic region**.
4. The region contains **large reserves of rare earth elements (REEs)** such as deposits at **Kvanefjeld and Kringlerne**, which are critical for modern technologies.
5. Control over these resources could help **reduce global dependence on Chinese rare-earth supply chains**.
6. Greenland is also believed to possess **significant oil and natural gas reserves**, which may become more accessible due to melting Arctic ice.
7. Environmentally, Greenland's ice sheet contributes to the **Albedo Effect**, reflecting

solar radiation and helping regulate global climate systems.

8. Complete melting of Greenland's ice could **raise global sea levels by over seven meters**, posing severe risks to coastal infrastructure and global economic stability.

US WITHDRAWAL FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Recent Update: The **US administration announced withdrawal from several international organizations and cessation of funding for many UN and non-UN institutions**.

About

1. The move reflects a shift toward the **"America First" foreign policy doctrine prioritizing national interests over multilateral commitments**.
2. The US administration argues that many international organizations **impose disproportionate financial burdens without delivering adequate benefits to the United States**.
3. Concerns were also raised about **external interference in domestic policy and erosion of national sovereignty through international regulatory frameworks**.
4. The withdrawal may create **significant funding gaps in institutions such as the UNFCCC and IPCC**, affecting global climate governance mechanisms.
5. Several organizations related to **climate and environmental governance** such as **UNFCCC, IPCC, IRENA, and IUCN** are affected by this policy shift.
6. Health and social organizations such as **WHO, UNFPA, UN Women, and Gavi Alliance** are also impacted by the withdrawal decision.
7. Peace and development bodies including **UN Human Rights Council, UNCTAD, Peacebuilding Commission, and UNRWA** are among those facing reduced US participation.
8. The policy reflects broader ideological concerns regarding **global governance institutions perceived as promoting agendas misaligned with US strategic priorities**.

THIRD PATH FRAMEWORK FOR MULTILATERALISM

Recent Update: At the **World Economic Forum 2026**, the Canadian Prime Minister proposed a **"Third Path" framework for inclusive and networked**

multilateralism amid rising US–China rivalry.

About

1. The **Third Path framework**, also called the **Carney Doctrine**, advocates a balanced approach between great-power rivalry and traditional multilateral institutions.
2. It promotes “**value-based realism**”, combining commitment to principles such as sovereignty and human rights with pragmatic cooperation among nations.
3. The framework emphasizes **coalitions of middle powers** to strengthen global governance and prevent dominance by major hegemonic states.
4. It introduces the concept of “**variable geometry diplomacy**”, where countries form flexible alliances depending on specific issues and interests.
5. Examples of such flexible coalitions include **Schengen cooperation in Europe, the G7 grouping, and the Quad partnership in the Indo-Pacific.**
6. The doctrine stresses the importance of **strong domestic institutions and economic resilience as the foundation of global influence.**
7. **Middle powers** are defined as countries that possess **significant diplomatic, economic or technological influence without dominating the global system.**
8. Countries such as **India, Canada, Australia, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and Brazil** are considered important middle powers capable of shaping global governance.



SOURCE: INSIGHTS MONTHLY

FROM STRATEGIC AUTONOMY TO VIKSIT BHARAT: INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY SHIFT

Recent Update: PM highlighted shift towards interest-based foreign policy under Vksit Bharat 2047

About

1. India is transitioning from **strategic autonomy** (Cold War non-alignment legacy) to a more **proactive, interest-driven foreign policy framework**.
2. The traditional model is becoming obsolete due to **technology-driven geopolitics**, where neutrality risks **exclusion from defence and innovation ecosystems**.
3. **Economic vulnerability** due to dependence on imports (e.g., semiconductors) limits India's ability to take **independent global positions**.
4. India is increasingly viewed as a **"swing state"**, where major powers seek to influence its strategic choices rather than accept neutrality.
5. The **Global South is fragmented**, making it difficult for India to act as a unified leader in multilateral platforms.
6. Rising **asymmetric power politics ("might is right")** forces countries into unequal trade and strategic arrangements.
7. **Technological dominance (AI, cyber, space)** is redefining sovereignty beyond territorial control.
8. The shift aligns with **Vksit Bharat 2047 vision**, focusing on **economic strength, technological leadership, and global influence**.

NEW STRATEGIC REALITY FOR INDIA

Recent Update: India adapting to changing global power and technology dynamics

About

1. Global order is increasingly **power-centric**, where economic and military strength determines influence.

2. India faces pressure in balancing relations between **major powers like the US and Russia** in defence and trade.
3. **Technology has become core to sovereignty**, with focus on AI, cyber capabilities, and satellite systems like **NavIC**.
4. **Supply chain disruptions** highlight need for domestic manufacturing and reduced import dependence.
5. India is leveraging **China Plus One strategy**, boosting exports but facing competition from countries like Vietnam.
6. **Neighbourhood instability** and rising extremism create complex regional security challenges.
7. Expanding **Chinese influence in South Asia** complicates India's diplomatic and strategic space.
8. India must balance **economic growth with strategic security concerns** in a volatile global environment.

REFRAMING INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

Recent Update: India adopting diversified trade and tech alliances strategy

About

1. India is focusing on **"build internally first" approach**, strengthening domestic capacity through schemes like **PLI**.
2. Emphasis on **trade diversification** through Free Trade Agreements to reduce overdependence on specific partners.
3. Expansion of **tech-centric alliances** in areas like **space, quantum computing, and digital currencies**.
4. Engagement with **BRICS and emerging economies** to build alternative global economic frameworks.
5. Adoption of a **balanced regional approach**, avoiding escalation while maintaining strategic interests.
6. Focus on **energy diplomacy and investment partnerships** with West Asian countries.
7. Strengthening **supply chain resilience** through initiatives like Rare Earth Corridors.
8. Overall aim is to position India as an **independent global pole in a multipolar world**.

INDIA–FRANCE SPECIAL GLOBAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Recent Update: India and France elevated ties to Special Global Strategic Partnership (2026)

About

1. The partnership marks a shift from **sectoral cooperation to comprehensive long-term strategic alliance till 2047**.
2. Focuses on **strategic autonomy**, enabling both nations to maintain **independent decision-making**.
3. Aims to strengthen **global governance cooperation** on issues like climate change and economic stability.
4. Enhances collaboration in **advanced technologies such as AI, space, and nuclear energy**.
5. Promotes **secure and resilient supply chains** in critical sectors.
6. Strengthens **defence cooperation and co-development of technologies**.
7. Supports **multipolar global order and democratic stability**.
8. Reinforces **India's role as a key global partner beyond traditional alliances**.

CHALLENGES IN INDIA–FRANCE PARTNERSHIP

Recent Update: Strategic and economic issues affecting deeper cooperation

About

1. Differences in **global conflict positions (e.g., Ukraine issue)** create diplomatic complexities.
2. **Trade negotiations face hurdles** due to regulatory differences in labour, environment, and data policies.
3. Delays in projects like **Jaitapur Nuclear Power Plant** highlight implementation challenges.
4. **Technology transfer restrictions** limit deeper defence cooperation.
5. Rising **geopolitical instability in West Asia** threatens connectivity initiatives.
6. Supply chain disruptions impact **joint economic projects and investments**.
7. Differences in **policy priorities between EU and India** slow progress of agreements.

8. Balancing **strategic autonomy with partnership commitments** remains a challenge.

INDIA–ISRAEL BILATERAL RELATIONS

Recent Update: India and Israel elevated ties to Special Strategic Partnership

About

1. India–Israel relations are **multi-dimensional**, covering defence, technology, agriculture, and innovation.
2. Strong cooperation in **security and defence**, including intelligence sharing and counter-terrorism.
3. Israel acts as a **technology partner**, especially in **agriculture, water management, and startups**.
4. Relationship is based on **mutual strategic interests and shared geopolitical concerns**.
5. Growing focus on **innovation ecosystems and knowledge-sharing partnerships**.
6. Cooperation in **space, AI, and digital technologies** is expanding rapidly.
7. Trade and economic ties are strengthening with **prospects of a Free Trade Agreement**.
8. The partnership reflects India's shift towards **open and interest-based diplomacy**.

CHALLENGES IN INDIA–ISRAEL RELATIONS

Recent Update: Regional instability and diplomatic balancing remain key concerns

About

1. **West Asian conflicts** create risks for energy security and Indian diaspora.
2. India must balance ties with Israel while supporting **Palestine and two-state solution**.
3. **Cross-border terrorism** requires stronger intelligence cooperation.
4. Increasing **cybersecurity threats** due to digital integration between nations.
5. Trade barriers and tariff issues delay **FTA negotiations**.
6. Regional geopolitical tensions impact **connectivity and trade corridors**.
7. Need for alignment in **global counter-terror frameworks**.

8. Balancing **strategic autonomy with deeper engagement** remains critical.

SOURCE: DRISHTI MONTHLY

INDIA–BANGLADESH RELATIONS (2026 CONTEXT)

Recent Update: BNP led by Tarique Rahman won Bangladesh elections; India signals engagement

About

1. India–Bangladesh relations have entered a **new phase after BNP’s electoral victory**, replacing the Awami League-led regime.
2. Historically, **BNP regimes (2001–06)** saw **deterioration in ties**, including allegations of support to **Northeast insurgent groups**.
3. The **2009–2024 period under Sheikh Hasina** marked a “**golden phase**” with improved connectivity, trade, and security cooperation.
4. Bilateral trade reached around **USD 13 billion**, making Bangladesh India’s **largest subcontinental trade partner**.
5. The interim period (2024–26) witnessed **anti-India sentiment** and political instability.
6. Key challenges include **security concerns in Northeast India** and risks to the **Siliguri Corridor (“Chicken’s Neck”)**.
7. Rise of **Islamist politics and minority safety concerns** may impact regional stability and migration patterns.
8. India must adopt **pragmatic engagement, economic interdependence, and clear red lines on security issues**.

US–BANGLADESH COTTON DEAL: IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA

Recent Update: US–Bangladesh “Cotton for Zero-Tariff” deal impacts Indian textile exports

About

1. The deal allows **Bangladesh textile exports to enter US markets at reduced or zero tariffs**, improving competitiveness.
2. It reduces Bangladesh’s tariff disadvantage vis-à-vis India, narrowing the gap from **20% to 19%**, with zero-duty quotas.
3. The agreement is conditional on **use of US cotton and textile inputs**, shifting sourcing from India.

4. India faces **erosion of tariff advantage**, putting exporters at up to **18% disadvantage in zero-duty segments**.
5. Bangladesh, already a **top global apparel exporter**, gains further edge over India in US markets.
6. Indian textile hubs like **Tiruppur and Surat** may lose large export orders to Bangladesh.
7. Bangladesh’s shift to **US cotton imports** may reduce demand for Indian cotton exports, impacting farmers.
8. India must respond through **MMF expansion, ESG branding, market diversification, and trade negotiations**.

INDIA–GREECE STRATEGIC RELATIONS

Recent Update: India and Greece signed Joint Declaration of Intent for defence cooperation

About

1. India and Greece elevated ties to a **Strategic Partnership (2023)** and signed a **Joint Declaration of Intent (2026)**.
2. The partnership focuses on **defence industrial cooperation and long-term military collaboration frameworks**.
3. Greece serves as a **gateway to Europe**, especially through ports like **Piraeus**, aiding India’s trade access.
4. Both nations aim to strengthen **maritime security cooperation** and enhance **Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)**.
5. The relationship supports **India’s Indo-Pacific strategy and Mediterranean outreach**.
6. Greece supports India’s **UNSC permanent membership bid**, while India backs Greece on Cyprus issue.
7. The partnership acts as a **counterbalance to Turkey–Pakistan axis** in regional geopolitics.
8. It reflects India’s strategy of **diversifying defence partnerships beyond traditional allies**.

CHALLENGES IN INDIA–GREECE RELATIONS

Recent Update: Structural and economic issues limit full potential of partnership

About

1. Bilateral trade remains low at around **USD 2 billion**, indicating **economic underperformance**.
2. Trade is concentrated in **primary goods**, lacking diversification into **high-value sectors**.
3. Absence of **direct connectivity and shipping routes** increases logistics cost and time.
4. Strategic concern arises due to **Chinese control of Piraeus port**, affecting supply chain security.
5. Lack of institutional mechanisms like **2+2 dialogue** limits policy continuity.
6. Limited **high-level engagement frameworks** affect long-term cooperation depth.
7. Economic engagement has not matched **strategic and diplomatic potential**.
8. Need for stronger **policy coordination and implementation mechanisms**.

INDIA-US INTERIM TRADE AGREEMENT (AGRICULTURAL SAFEGUARDS)

Recent Update: India-US interim trade agreement provides zero-duty access with safeguards

About

1. The agreement provides **preferential access to US market**, acting as precursor to a **full Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA)**.
2. US reduced tariffs on Indian goods from **50% to near zero for selected products**, boosting exports.
3. Key agricultural exports benefiting include **spices, tea, coffee, fruits, and processed foods**.
4. India maintained a **negative list** protecting sensitive sectors like **dairy, grains, oilseeds, and sugar**.
5. **Genetically Modified (GM) crops remain restricted**, ensuring domestic agricultural safeguards.
6. Introduces **Tariff Rate Quotas (TRQs)** and **Minimum Import Prices (MIP)** to protect domestic producers.
7. Allows limited imports like **non-GM sorghum and processed feed inputs (DDGS)** to support livestock sector.

8. Ensures a **balanced approach between trade liberalisation and farmer protection**, maintaining food security concerns.

INDIA AS CHAIR OF KIMBERLEY PROCESS (2026)

Recent Update: India assumed chairmanship of Kimberley Process in 2026

About

1. The **Kimberley Process (KP)** is a global initiative to **prevent trade in conflict diamonds** and ensure ethical sourcing.
2. India, a **founding member**, now chairs KP, strengthening its role as a **global diamond value chain hub**.
3. The **Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS)** mandates **tamper-proof certificates** for all rough diamond shipments.
4. KP includes **60 participants covering ~99.8% of global rough diamond production**.
5. India processes nearly **90% of the world's diamonds**, with hubs in **Surat and Mumbai**.
6. KP operates through **national laws and voluntary cooperation**, lacking a formal institutional structure.
7. India's leadership offers an opportunity to push for **reforms, transparency, and technological modernization**.
8. It enhances India's position as a **Global South leader in ethical trade governance**.

CHALLENGES IN KIMBERLEY PROCESS

Recent Update: Criticism of KP's effectiveness and scope continues

About

1. KP has a **narrow definition of conflict diamonds**, excluding those linked to **state violence or human rights abuses**.
2. The **"mixed origin" loophole** allows diamonds to be re-certified, reducing traceability.
3. Decision-making is **consensus-based**, enabling a single country to **block reforms (veto effect)**.
4. Lack of a **permanent secretariat** weakens monitoring and institutional continuity.
5. Enforcement remains **weak and uneven across countries**, leading to smuggling and violations.

6. KP covers only **rough diamonds**, allowing processed diamonds to bypass scrutiny.
7. Rise of **lab-grown diamonds (LGDs)** is shifting demand away from natural diamonds.
8. Overall, KP faces **credibility challenges and need for institutional reforms**.

INDIA–US TRADE DEAL 2026

Recent Update: US reduced tariffs on Indian goods to 18%, easing trade tensions

About

1. The deal reduces US tariffs from **~50% to 18%**, restoring competitiveness for Indian exports.
2. It marks a shift towards **strategic economic partnership** and positions India as a **counterweight to China**.
3. India committed to **reducing Russian oil dependence** and increasing imports from US and others.
4. The agreement includes **greater market access for US goods**, including agriculture and energy.
5. It strengthens collaboration under **iCET (critical and emerging technologies)** framework.
6. Boosts sectors like **textiles, pharmaceuticals, and manufacturing exports**.
7. Encourages **FDI inflows and economic stability**, reducing uncertainty of trade conflict.
8. Reflects India's move towards **transactional and interest-based diplomacy**.

CHALLENGES IN INDIA–US TRADE DEAL

Recent Update: Concerns over strategic autonomy and economic risks

About

1. The deal creates a **strategic autonomy dilemma**, especially regarding **reduction of Russian oil imports**.
2. US approach reflects **transactional diplomacy**, demanding reciprocal concessions.
3. Risk of **Chinese retaliation**, especially in critical supply chains like rare earths and APIs.
4. Opening markets to US agriculture may harm **Indian farmers and rural economy**.

5. Higher cost of US energy imports could worsen **Current Account Deficit (CAD)**.
6. Regulatory barriers like **SPS standards and IPR issues** remain unresolved.
7. Digital trade disagreements over **data localisation and privacy laws** persist.
8. Raises concerns about **overdependence on a single strategic partner**.

INDIA–RUSSIA RELATIONS IN CURRENT CONTEXT

Recent Update: US pressure on India to reduce Russian oil imports

About

1. India–Russia relations evolved from **Cold War strategic partnership to diversified cooperation**.
2. Russia remains India's **largest defence supplier**, contributing **~60%** of military hardware.
3. Trade reached **USD ~68 billion**, dominated by **energy imports from Russia**.
4. India increased imports of **discounted Russian oil** during Ukraine conflict.
5. US trade deal pressures India to **shift energy sourcing**, affecting traditional ties.
6. Russia's growing alignment with **China reduces its strategic value for India**.
7. Defence dependence creates risks in **spares, maintenance, and technology access**.
8. India must balance **multi-alignment strategy between US, Russia, and China**.

END OF NEW START TREATY

Recent Update: New START Treaty expired on 5 February 2026, ending last US–Russia nuclear arms control pact

About

1. **New START Treaty (2010)** was the **last legally binding agreement** limiting **strategic nuclear arsenals of the US and Russia**.
2. It capped deployments at **700 delivery systems, 1,550 nuclear warheads, and 800 launchers**, ensuring **verifiable arms reductions**.
3. The treaty was extended in **2021 till 2026**, but **Russia suspended participation in 2023** amid Ukraine conflict tensions.

4. Expiry ends **all legally binding nuclear arms limits since 1972**, increasing risks of **arms race and escalation**.
5. The US and Russia together hold **~87% of global nuclear warheads**, making bilateral control crucial.
6. Key issues included disputes over **missile defence systems and advanced weapons like hypersonic missiles**.
7. Collapse weakens **global non-proliferation frameworks** and complicates inclusion of countries like China.
8. It raises concerns of **miscalculation, reduced transparency, and strategic instability globally**.

GLOBAL NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION FRAMEWORK

Recent Update: New START expiry highlights importance of global nuclear treaties

About

1. **NPT (1968)** aims to **prevent nuclear proliferation, promote disarmament, and ensure peaceful nuclear use**.
2. It recognises **five Nuclear Weapon States (US, Russia, UK, France, China)** under international law.
3. **CTBT (1996)** bans **all nuclear test explosions**, though it has **not yet entered into force**.
4. **TPNW (2017)** prohibits **use, possession, and transfer of nuclear weapons**, promoting total disarmament.
5. These frameworks collectively form the **global nuclear governance architecture**.
6. Weak enforcement and geopolitical rivalry limit **effectiveness of these treaties**.
7. Absence of major powers in some agreements reduces **global consensus on disarmament**.
8. Current developments highlight need for **revival of multilateral arms control mechanisms**.

INDIA–BRAZIL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Recent Update: Brazilian President visited India; cooperation expanded across sectors

About

1. India and Brazil reaffirmed their **Strategic Partnership (2006)** focusing on **defence, energy, digital, and industrial cooperation**.
2. Bilateral trade grew by **25.5% in 2025**, with a target of **USD 30 billion by 2030**.
3. Cooperation includes **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and AI governance initiatives**.
4. Both countries collaborate on **climate change and energy transition**, including biofuels and COP commitments.
5. Agreements signed in **critical minerals and mining sectors** to strengthen supply chains.
6. India and Brazil coordinate in **BRICS, G20, and G4** for global governance reforms.
7. Defence cooperation includes **joint committees, dialogues, and naval collaboration**.
8. The partnership reflects **Global South leadership and multipolar world vision**.

KEY PILLARS OF INDIA–BRAZIL COOPERATION

Recent Update: Expanded cooperation across trade, defence, digital and climate sectors

About

1. **Trade and Investment:** Brazil is India's **largest trading partner in Latin America**, with diversified exports and imports.
2. **Defence Cooperation:** Includes **Joint Defence Committee and military dialogues** for strategic collaboration.
3. **Energy Transition:** Both are leaders in **biofuels and renewable energy initiatives**.
4. **Digital & AI Collaboration:** Focus on **DPI, AI ethics, and digital governance frameworks**.
5. **Critical Minerals:** Cooperation in **rare earths and mining supply chains** for industrial growth.
6. **Multilateral Coordination:** Joint efforts in **UN reforms and BRICS cooperation**.
7. **Scientific Collaboration:** Enhanced cooperation in **research, IP, and innovation ecosystems**.
8. **Global South Leadership:** Both advocate **inclusive and equitable global governance structures**.

CHALLENGES IN INDIA–BRAZIL RELATIONS

Recent Update: Structural and geopolitical constraints limit partnership potential

About

1. **Geographical distance (14,000+ km)** increases logistics costs and reduces trade efficiency.
2. Trade composition is dominated by **primary commodities**, limiting value-added cooperation.
3. Defence cooperation remains **limited compared to India's traditional partners**.
4. Lack of **direct connectivity (air and maritime)** hampers business and tourism growth.
5. Brazil's strong economic ties with **China create competitive and strategic imbalance**.
6. Institutional gaps limit **policy coordination and implementation effectiveness**.
7. Limited private sector engagement restricts **investment diversification**.
8. Need for deeper integration in **technology and industrial sectors**.

US EXIT FROM INTERNATIONAL SOLAR ALLIANCE (ISA)

Recent Update: US withdrew from ISA in January 2026

About

1. **International Solar Alliance (ISA)** is a **global initiative launched by India and France in 2015** to promote solar energy.
2. Headquarters located in **Gurugram**, making it the **first intergovernmental organisation based in India**.
3. Aims to make **solar energy affordable and accessible in developing countries**.
4. US exit signals **declining commitment to Global South climate initiatives**.
5. It may reduce **investor confidence and technical collaboration in solar projects**.
6. ISA initiatives include **OSOWOG, SUNRISE network, and solar capacity building programs**.
7. India can leverage ISA to **expand leadership in renewable energy diplomacy**.
8. Opportunity for India to partner with **EU, Japan, and multilateral banks for funding and technology**.

INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY IN A CHANGING GLOBAL ORDER

Recent Update: PM highlighted erosion of multilateralism and rise of power politics

About

1. Global order is shifting towards **unilateralism and great power rivalry**, weakening multilateral institutions.
2. Institutions like **UNSC and WTO face paralysis** due to veto politics and disputes.
3. Rise of **China-led alternative frameworks (BRI, RCEP)** challenges Western-led systems.
4. Shift towards **minilateralism (QUAD, I2U2, AUKUS)** for flexible cooperation.
5. Increasing **weaponisation of trade, technology, and supply chains** in geopolitics.
6. India's foreign policy evolved from **non-alignment to multi-alignment and strategic autonomy**.
7. Current approach emphasizes **technology sovereignty, economic diplomacy, and Global South leadership**.
8. India aims to position itself as a **"third pole" balancing global power blocs**.

SOURCE: INDIAN EXPRESS

PROJECT VAULT (USA)

Recent Update: US launched Project Vault to secure critical mineral supply chains

About

1. **Project Vault** is a **public-private stockpiling initiative** designed to store **critical minerals and rare earth elements**.
2. It is similar to the **Strategic Petroleum Reserve**, but focused on **minerals essential for defence and clean energy sectors**.
3. Launched by the **US Government with private sector participation and Export-Import Bank funding**.
4. Aims to **reduce dependence on China**, which dominates global mineral processing.
5. Covers minerals like **cobalt, gallium, and rare earth elements** used in advanced technologies.

6. Uses **advance purchase commitments**, where firms secure future supply at fixed prices.
7. Provides **controlled stockpile access**, ensuring availability during global supply disruptions.
8. Strengthens **national security, manufacturing resilience, and supply chain stability**.

BLUE LINE (LEBANON–ISRAEL FRONTIER)

Recent Update: UNIFIL suspended patrols after tensions along Blue Line

About

1. The **Blue Line** is a **UN-demarcated withdrawal line** marking Israel's exit from southern Lebanon.
2. It is **not an international border**, but a **temporary technical boundary** for monitoring compliance.
3. Established in **2000 by the United Nations** after Israel withdrew from Lebanon.
4. Runs about **120 km from Mediterranean coast to Shebaa Farms region**.
5. Monitored by **UNIFIL in coordination with Lebanese Armed Forces**.
6. Includes disputed areas like **Shebaa Farms, Ghajar village, and Kfarchouba hills**.
7. Frequent violations include **aerial incursions, firing incidents, and construction activities**.
8. Acts as a **sensitive conflict zone in West Asian geopolitics**.

RAFAH BORDER CROSSING

Recent Update: Rafah crossing reopened under Gaza ceasefire arrangement

About

1. The **Rafah Border Crossing** connects the **Gaza Strip with Egypt**, serving as Gaza's **only non-Israel-controlled exit point**.
2. It is a **critical humanitarian corridor** for movement of civilians, aid, and medical evacuations.
3. Located along the **Salah al-Din corridor in southern Gaza**.
4. Historically controlled by **Israel (pre-2005)** and later by **Palestinian Authority with EU monitoring**.

5. After **Hamas takeover (2007)**, the crossing remained largely closed due to blockade.
6. Reopened in **2026 under international monitoring and Israeli security oversight**.
7. Functions as a **lifeline for humanitarian aid and civilian evacuation** during conflicts.
8. Plays a key role in **regional security and Middle East geopolitics**.

CHABAHAH PORT

Recent Update: Iran reaffirmed support for Chabahar despite US sanctions concerns

About

1. **Chabahar Port** is Iran's **only deep-sea port with direct access to the Indian Ocean**.
2. Located in **Sistan–Baluchestan province**, near **Gulf of Oman**, about 170 km from Gwadar port.
3. Developed with **India–Iran–Afghanistan cooperation** to enhance regional connectivity.
4. India took over operations in **2018**, with a **10-year agreement signed in 2024**.
5. Comprises **Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti terminals** handling multiple cargo types.
6. Forms part of **International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC)**.
7. Enables India to **bypass Pakistan and access Afghanistan and Central Asia**.
8. Acts as a **strategic counter to China's Gwadar Port under CPEC**.

INDIA–MALAYSIA IMPACT FRAMEWORK

Recent Update: India and Malaysia operationalised IMPACT partnership

About

1. **IMPACT (India–Malaysia Partnership for Advancing Collective Transformation)** is a **strategic bilateral framework**.
2. Aims to **enhance economic growth, digital integration, and people-centric development**.
3. Strong presence of **Indian IT companies in Malaysia**, boosting digital economy cooperation.

4. Integration of **UPI and digital payment systems** enhances fintech connectivity.
5. Promotes **diaspora engagement and cultural linkages**, including OCI expansion.
6. Builds on **shared maritime heritage and historical ties**.
7. Aligns with **ASEAN centrality and Indo-Pacific stability goals**.
8. Strengthens **regional cooperation and inclusive development in Asia**.

PAX SILICA INITIATIVE

Recent Update: India joined US-led Pax Silica initiative for supply chain resilience

About

1. **Pax Silica** is a **US-led initiative to build secure supply chains for semiconductors and critical minerals**.
2. It focuses on **AI, electronics, and advanced manufacturing ecosystems**.
3. Includes countries like **India, Japan, Australia, UK, UAE, and South Korea**.
4. Aims to reduce **dependence on monopolistic suppliers and coercive trade practices**.
5. Promotes **technology collaboration and trusted innovation ecosystems**.
6. Supports **investment and infrastructure cooperation in high-tech sectors**.
7. Encourages **private sector participation and industrial partnerships**.
8. Strengthens **economic security and global technology governance alignment**.

INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY ECONOMIC POWERS ACT (IEEPA), 1977

Recent Update: US Supreme Court struck down tariffs imposed under IEEPA

About

1. **IEEPA (1977)** is a US law allowing the President to **regulate international commerce during national emergencies**.
2. It replaced provisions of the **Trading with the Enemy Act (1917)**.
3. Enables actions like **asset freezes, sanctions, and transaction restrictions**.

4. Requires a **formal emergency declaration under National Emergencies Act**.
5. Primarily designed for **sanctions, not long-term tariff imposition**.
6. Subject to **judicial review and constitutional checks**.
7. Widely used in cases of **terrorism, geopolitical conflicts, and external threats**.
8. Highlights **limits of executive power in trade policy decisions**.

VILLAGES OF EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE

Recent Update: India–Israel expanded agricultural cooperation through village-level model

About

1. The initiative is an extension of the **Indo-Israel Agriculture Project (IIAP)**.
2. Aims to transform villages into **technology-driven agricultural clusters**.
3. Focuses on **precision farming, satellite irrigation, and advanced pest management**.
4. Expands **Centres of Excellence (CoEs)** to 100 across India.
5. Supported by **India-Israel Innovation Centre for Agriculture (IINCA)**.
6. Provides **on-ground training and capacity building for farmers**.
7. Introduces **joint research fellowships and knowledge transfer programs**.
8. Aims to **increase farmer income and promote sustainable agriculture**.

INDIA–BHUTAN TRANSBOUNDARY RIVER COOPERATION

Recent Update: India and Bhutan strengthening hydro-diplomacy and flood management cooperation

About

1. India–Bhutan cooperation focuses on **hydropower, flood management, and river data sharing**.
2. Major rivers include **Manas, Sankosh, Wang Chhu, Amo Chhu, and Punatsangchhu**.
3. Key projects include **Chukha, Tala, Mangdechhu, and Punatsangchhu hydropower projects**.

4. Hydropower exports form a major part of **Bhutan's revenue and India's energy supply**.
5. Joint **hydro-meteorological networks** provide real-time flood data.
6. Collaboration includes **Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) monitoring**.
7. India provides **technical expertise and capacity building through agencies like WAPCOS**.
8. Represents a model of **successful water diplomacy and regional cooperation**.

INDIA JOINS BRICS CENTRE FOR INDUSTRIAL COMPETENCIES (BCIC)

Recent Update: India joined BCIC with National Productivity Council as nodal agency

About

1. The **BRICS Centre for Industrial Competencies (BCIC)** is a **multilateral platform** supporting **manufacturing firms and MSMEs** across BRICS nations.
2. It was established in **2024–25 at UNIDO headquarters** under the **BRICS Partnership on New Industrial Revolution (PartNIR)**.
3. India's participation is led by the **National Productivity Council (NPC)** as the **nodal centre**.
4. The initiative promotes adoption of **Industry 4.0 technologies and digital transformation** in manufacturing.
5. It facilitates **partnerships between firms, research institutions, and technology providers** across BRICS countries.
6. Provides **market intelligence, advisory services, and access to finance** for scaling businesses.
7. Focuses on **capacity building, skill development, and productivity enhancement**.
8. Aims to strengthen **industrial competitiveness and sustainable manufacturing ecosystems**.

UN FELLOWSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMME ON SALW CONTROL

Recent Update: India hosted first-ever Asia-Pacific UN SALW training programme

About

1. The programme focuses on **Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) control** to curb illicit arms trade.
2. Organised by **UNODA and UNRCPD**, hosted by the **Indian Army in Jabalpur**.
3. It is a **three-week capacity-building initiative** for government officials from Asia-Pacific countries.
4. Supports implementation of **UN Programme of Action (PoA) and International Tracing Instrument (ITI)**.
5. Enhances **tracing systems, record-keeping, and stockpile security mechanisms**.
6. Aims to reduce **terrorism, insurgency, and organized crime linked to illicit weapons**.
7. Strengthens **regional cooperation and coordination among participating nations**.
8. Reflects **global recognition of India's expertise in arms management and disarmament**.

MARITIME LABOUR CONVENTION (MLC), 2006

Recent Update: ILO and IMO marked 20 years of MLC, 2006

About

1. The **MLC, 2006** is known as the **"Seafarers' Bill of Rights"**, ensuring decent working conditions.
2. Adopted by the **International Labour Conference in Geneva (2006)**.
3. It consolidates multiple conventions into a **single comprehensive maritime labour framework**.
4. Sets standards for **minimum age, medical fitness, and training of seafarers**.
5. Regulates **wages, working hours, leave, and repatriation rights**.
6. Ensures proper **accommodation, food, and recreational facilities onboard ships**.
7. Mandates **healthcare access and social security protection for seafarers**.
8. Enforced through **flag state and port state inspections for compliance**.

G7 SUMMIT 2026

Recent Update: G7 Summit 2026 hosted by France at Évian

About

1. The **G7** is an **informal grouping of major advanced economies** formed in **1975**.
2. Members include **US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Canada**, with EU participation.
3. Initially formed to address **global economic crises like the 1973 oil shock**.
4. Focus areas include **economic stability, security, climate change, and global governance**.
5. Provides a platform for **macroeconomic coordination and policy alignment**.
6. Plays a key role in **sanctions, geopolitical strategy, and crisis management**.
7. Addresses issues like **climate action, clean energy transition, and development finance**.
8. Functions through **ministerial tracks and annual leaders' summit discussions**.

AI-FOR-ENERGY MISSION

Recent Update: ISA launched AI-for-Energy Mission to modernise power systems

About

1. The **AI-for-Energy Mission** integrates **Artificial Intelligence into clean energy infrastructure**.
2. Launched by the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)** with Indian ministries and REC Limited.
3. Utilises the **India Energy Stack**, a digital infrastructure model for energy systems.
4. Aims to create **smart, bidirectional power grids for renewable energy integration**.
5. Uses **Digital Twin technology** for real-time monitoring and predictive maintenance.
6. Promotes **citizen-centric tools like One Solar App for transparency**.
7. Employs **GIS-based mapping for efficient energy infrastructure planning**.
8. Focuses on **capacity building, innovation, and sustainable energy financing**.

INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY (IEA)

Recent Update: India pushing for full membership in IEA

About

1. The **International Energy Agency (IEA)** is an **intergovernmental body ensuring global energy security**.
2. Established in **1974 after the oil crisis**, headquartered in **Paris**.
3. Works on **energy data analysis, policy guidance, and emergency response coordination**.
4. Requires members to maintain **oil reserves equal to 90 days of imports**.
5. Publishes key reports like **World Energy Outlook and Oil Market Report**.
6. Leads efforts in **energy transition, climate change, and net-zero strategies**.
7. India is an **Associate Member (since 2017)** seeking full membership.
8. Membership requires **OECD status**, posing a challenge for India's inclusion.

SOURCE: THE HINDU

UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (UN-DESA)

Recent Update: UN-DESA projected India's GDP growth at 7.2% for 2025–26

About

1. **UN-DESA** is a **core department of the UN Secretariat** responsible for advancing the **development pillar of the United Nations**.
2. It was established in **1948** to support **global economic and social development policies**.
3. It assists countries in implementing the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDGs**.
4. Headed by an **Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs**, appointed by the UN Secretary-General.
5. Headquarters located in **New York, USA**, functioning as a key policy coordination body.
6. Publishes major reports like **World Economic Situation and Prospects, World Social Report, and SDG Report**.
7. Provides **policy advice, capacity building, and data support** to member states.

8. Plays a crucial role in **global economic forecasting and sustainable development governance**.

UN PALERMO PROTOCOL

Recent Update: Continued global efforts to combat human trafficking under Palermo Protocol

About

1. The **UN Palermo Protocol (2000)** is a **legally binding treaty to combat human trafficking**, especially women and children.
2. It supplements the **UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC)**.
3. Came into force in **2003**, establishing international legal standards.
4. Focuses on **prevention, protection of victims, and prosecution of offenders**.
5. Ratified by **185 countries**, including India, showing widespread global acceptance.
6. In India, the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** acts as the **nodal agency for implementation**.
7. Encourages **international cooperation, victim rehabilitation, and awareness measures**.
8. Plays a vital role in addressing **modern slavery and organized crime networks**.

US WITHDRAWAL FROM MULTILATERAL ORGANISATIONS

Recent Update: US exited multiple UN and global institutions including climate frameworks

About

1. The US has withdrawn from key organisations like **WHO, UNHRC, UNESCO, UNFCCC, and IPCC**.
2. It also exited the **Paris Agreement (effective January 2026)**, impacting global climate efforts.
3. Withdrawals reflect a shift towards **unilateralism and reduced multilateral engagement**.
4. Weakens **global cooperation on climate change, health, and development issues**.
5. Impacts **funding, technical expertise, and leadership in international institutions**.
6. Creates uncertainty in **global governance and policy coordination mechanisms**.

7. Opens space for **emerging powers like China and India to play larger roles**.
8. Highlights challenges in sustaining **rules-based international order**.

ADVISORY BOARD ON DISARMAMENT MATTERS

Recent Update: Indian diplomat D.B. Venkatesh Varma appointed as Chair (2026–27)

About

1. Established in **1978** to advise the **UN Secretary-General on disarmament and arms control issues**.
2. Comprises **15 members selected globally for expertise in international security**.
3. Serves as the **Board of Trustees of UNIDIR (United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research)**.
4. Secretariat is based in **New York**, supporting global disarmament initiatives.
5. Provides **policy recommendations on arms limitation and global security challenges**.
6. Enhances **international cooperation in non-proliferation and disarmament efforts**.
7. India's leadership reflects **growing global recognition in strategic and security matters**.
8. Plays a key role in shaping **global arms control policies and frameworks**.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PETROLEUM EXPORTING COUNTRIES (OPEC)

Recent Update: OPEC continues to influence global oil pricing and supply dynamics

About

1. **OPEC is an intergovernmental organisation formed in 1960 (Baghdad Conference)**.
2. Founding members include **Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela**.
3. Headquarters located in **Vienna, Austria**.
4. Aims to **coordinate petroleum policies and stabilize global oil markets**.
5. Controls a significant share of **global oil production and reserves**.
6. Current membership includes **13 countries across Africa, Middle East, and Latin America**.
7. Membership is open to **major oil-exporting countries sharing common interests**.

8. Plays a critical role in **global energy security and price stability**.

EU COUNCIL AND EU COMMISSION

Recent Update: EU leaders invited as Chief Guests for India's 77th Republic Day

About

1. The **EU Council (1958)** represents **member state governments and coordinates EU policies**.
2. Each country holds the **presidency on a 6-month rotational basis (Cyprus – 2026)**.
3. Members include **government ministers based on policy domain discussions**.
4. The **EU Commission (1958)** acts as the **executive body proposing and enforcing EU laws**.
5. Commission consists of **one Commissioner from each EU country**.
6. Both institutions are headquartered in **Brussels, Belgium**.
7. They ensure **policy coordination, legislative functioning, and budget implementation**.
8. Together, they drive **European integration and governance framework**.

EURATOM (EUROPEAN ATOMIC ENERGY COMMUNITY)

Recent Update: India–EU strengthened cooperation under Euratom agreement

About

1. **EURATOM** was established under the **Treaty of Rome (1957)** to promote peaceful nuclear energy.
2. Focuses on **research cooperation and nuclear energy development**.
3. Ensures **safeguards to prevent diversion of nuclear materials for military use**.
4. Works closely with **EU institutions for energy security and regulation**.
5. India signed an agreement with Euratom in **2020 for nuclear R&D cooperation**.
6. Enhances collaboration in **safe nuclear technology and innovation**.
7. Supports **clean energy transition and energy diversification strategies**.

8. Plays a key role in **global nuclear governance and safety standards**.

INTERNATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY AGENCY (IRENA)

Recent Update: 16th IRENA Assembly concluded in Abu Dhabi

About

1. **IRENA** is an **intergovernmental organisation promoting renewable energy adoption globally**.
2. Established in **2009 (Bonn)**, statute effective in **2010**.
3. Headquarters located in **Abu Dhabi, UAE**.
4. Has **170+ members including India as a founding member**.
5. Supports countries in **transitioning to sustainable energy systems**.
6. Publishes reports like **World Energy Transitions Outlook**.
7. Acts as **custodian of global renewable energy targets under climate agreements**.
8. Plays a crucial role in **energy transition, climate mitigation, and policy guidance**.

INDO-PACIFIC OCEANS INITIATIVE (IPOI)

Recent Update: Spain joined IPOI expanding Indo-Pacific cooperation

About

1. **IPOI** is a **voluntary initiative launched by India in 2019 at the East Asia Summit**.
2. Based on the vision of a **free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region**.
3. Focuses on areas like **maritime security, ecology, disaster management, and resource sharing**.
4. Builds on India's **SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) doctrine**.
5. Does not create new institutions, relying on **existing ASEAN-led mechanisms**.
6. Encourages **practical cooperation among regional stakeholders**.
7. Promotes adherence to **international maritime laws (UNCLOS)**.
8. Strengthens India's role as a **key Indo-Pacific maritime power**.

DAVOS MEETING (WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM 2026)

Recent Update: 56th WEF Annual Meeting held in Davos with theme “A Spirit of Dialogue”

About

1. The **Davos Meeting** is the annual gathering of the **World Economic Forum (WEF)**.
2. Held in **Davos, Switzerland**, bringing together global leaders and stakeholders.
3. Focuses on **global economic trends, geopolitics, and development challenges**.
4. Provides a platform for **public-private cooperation and policy dialogue**.
5. Addresses issues like **climate change, digital economy, and global governance**.
6. Facilitates **networking among governments, businesses, and civil society**.
7. Influences **global policy agenda and economic decision-making**.
8. Acts as a key forum for **strategic global discussions and collaboration**.

AUSTRALIA GROUP

Recent Update: Australia Group marked its 40th anniversary

About

1. The **Australia Group** is a **multilateral export control regime formed in 1985**.
2. Established after use of **chemical weapons in the Iran–Iraq War**.
3. Aims to prevent **proliferation of chemical and biological weapons**.
4. Comprises **43 member countries including India (joined in 2018)**.
5. Works through **harmonised export controls and guidelines**.
6. Ensures exports do not contribute to **weapons of mass destruction (WMD)**.
7. Functions as an **informal, voluntary cooperation mechanism**.
8. Strengthens global **non-proliferation and security frameworks**.

ARAB LEAGUE (LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES)

Recent Update: India hosted 2nd India–Arab Foreign Ministers’ Meeting after a decade

About

1. The **Arab League (League of Arab States)** is a **voluntary intergovernmental organisation established in 1945 (Cairo)**.
2. It comprises **22 member states from the Middle East and North Africa region**.
3. Founding members include **Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan, and Yemen**.
4. The **Council of the Arab League** is the highest decision-making body representing all member states.
5. Headquarters located in **Cairo, Egypt**, acting as the central coordination hub.
6. India holds **observer status** and engages through institutional mechanisms like **India–Arab Foreign Ministers’ Meeting**.
7. The **Arab–India Cooperation Forum (AICF)** established in 2008 strengthens bilateral cooperation.
8. The organisation promotes **political coordination, economic cooperation, and regional integration among Arab states**.

DELHI DECLARATION (ARAB LEAGUE) 2026

Recent Update: Delhi Declaration signed to boost India–Arab economic cooperation

About

1. The **Delhi Declaration 2026** was adopted during the **India–Arab League ministerial meeting**.
2. It focuses on strengthening **economic, political, and strategic cooperation between India and Arab nations**.
3. Highlights the **STREAM initiative (Suez Canal–Red Sea Economic and Maritime Development)** for regional integration.
4. Emphasizes **connectivity, trade expansion, and maritime cooperation**.
5. Supports **energy security and investment partnerships** between India and Arab countries.
6. Encourages **multilateral cooperation in global forums**.
7. Reinforces India’s role in **West Asia diplomacy and Global South engagement**.

8. Marks a significant step in **institutionalising India–Arab strategic relations**.

GROUP OF FOUR (G4)

Recent Update: G4 proposed UNSC reform model for early restructuring

About

1. The **G4 group consists of India, Brazil, Germany, and Japan** advocating for **permanent UNSC membership**.
2. It aims to **reform the United Nations Security Council to reflect contemporary global realities**.
3. Members support **each other’s candidature for permanent seats**.
4. Meetings are usually held on the sidelines of the **UN General Assembly sessions**.
5. Faces opposition from **Uniting for Consensus (Coffee Club) group**.
6. Advocates for **expanded representation of developing countries and Global South**.
7. Works with **L.69 group** for broader UNSC reform consensus.
8. Reflects demand for **democratisation of global governance institutions**.

ASEAN–INDIA DIGITAL MINISTERS’ MEETING (ADGMIN) 2026

Recent Update: 6th ADGMIN approved ASEAN–India Digital Work Plan 2026

About

1. **ADGMIN** is an annual forum of **ASEAN digital ministers and dialogue partners including India**.
2. The **6th meeting was co-chaired by India and Vietnam (2026)**.
3. Theme: **“Adaptive ASEAN: From Connectivity to Connected Intelligence”**.
4. Focuses on **ICT development, AI cooperation, and digital connectivity**.
5. Approved **ASEAN–India Digital Work Plan 2026** for future collaboration.
6. Includes initiatives like **AI capacity building and regulatory cooperation**.
7. Strengthens India’s role in **Indo-Pacific digital economy and ASEAN engagement**.

8. Enhances **regional digital integration and technological partnerships**.

INDIA–GERMANY RELATIONS

Recent Update: Celebrated 75 years of diplomatic relations in 2026

About

1. India and Germany share a **Strategic Partnership (since 2000)** with strong economic ties.
2. Germany is **India’s largest trading partner in the EU**, accounting for significant trade share.
3. Bilateral trade reached around **\$50 billion within EU trade framework**.
4. Germany is a major **FDI investor in India (9th largest)**.
5. Cooperation includes **Green and Sustainable Development Partnership (GSDP)** aligned with Paris Agreement.
6. Includes **Track 1.5 dialogue on foreign policy and security cooperation**.
7. Expanding defence ties through **naval exercises and security cooperation**.
8. Strengthens collaboration in **technology, climate, and industrial sectors**.

INDIA–UAE RELATIONS

Recent Update: India–UAE ties deepened with digital and economic integration

About

1. India–UAE relations elevated to **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2017)**.
2. **CEPA (2022)** significantly boosted trade, crossing **USD 100 billion in 2024–25**.
3. UAE is India’s **third-largest trading partner and second-largest export destination**.
4. Digital integration includes **UPI–AANI linkage and RuPay–JAYWAN connectivity**.
5. UAE is a major supplier of **crude oil, LNG, and LPG to India**.
6. Both countries are part of **IMEC corridor and I2U2 grouping**.
7. Defence cooperation includes exercises like **Desert Cyclone and Zayed Talwar**.
8. New initiatives include **Digital/Data Embassies for secure data storage**.

INDIA–JAPAN STRATEGIC DIALOGUE

Recent Update: 18th India–Japan Strategic Dialogue held in New Delhi

About

1. India–Japan ties upgraded to **Special Strategic and Global Partnership (2014)**.
2. Focus areas include **semiconductors, AI, clean energy, and critical minerals**.
3. Launch of **Japan–India AI Strategic Dialogue (JAI)** enhances tech cooperation.
4. Economic ties supported by **CEPA (2011)** with growing trade relations.
5. Defence cooperation includes **2+2 dialogue and joint military exercises**.
6. Major infrastructure projects include **Mumbai–Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail**.
7. Collaboration under **Act East Policy and Indo-Pacific strategy**.
8. Strengthens partnership in **economic security and strategic cooperation**.

INDIA–PAKISTAN NON-ATTACK AGREEMENT

Recent Update: India and Pakistan exchanged nuclear installation lists (2026)

About

1. The agreement is formally called **Agreement on Prohibition of Attacks against Nuclear Installations (1988)**.
2. Came into force in **1991**, ensuring mutual restraint.
3. Requires annual exchange of **nuclear installation lists on January 1st**.
4. Prohibits **direct or indirect attacks on nuclear facilities**.
5. Enhances **confidence-building measures (CBMs) between two nuclear states**.
6. Reduces risk of **nuclear escalation during conflicts**.
7. Reflects commitment to **strategic stability despite tensions**.
8. Continues as one of the **most enduring bilateral agreements** between India and Pakistan.

INDIA–EU FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (BTIA)

Recent Update: India–EU FTA concluded with extensive market access provisions

About

1. The **India–EU FTA (BTIA)** negotiations began in **2007 and recently concluded**.
2. EU is India's **largest goods trading partner (~USD 135 billion trade)**.
3. India gains access to **97% of EU tariff lines covering 99.5% trade value**.
4. Labour-intensive sectors like **textiles, leather, and gems** get zero-duty access.
5. Sensitive sectors like **dairy and agriculture protected through phased liberalisation**.
6. Includes **services access across 144 EU sectors including IT and R&D**.
7. Provides **mobility for professionals and business entities**.
8. Strengthens India's **integration into global trade networks**.

WINGS INDIA 2026

Recent Update: Wings India 2026 scheduled at Begumpet Airport, Hyderabad

About

1. **Wings India** is Asia's **largest civil aviation exhibition and conference**.
2. Originally launched as **India Aviation (2008)** and later rebranded.
3. Organised by the **Ministry of Civil Aviation**.
4. Held biennially with **Hyderabad as permanent venue**.
5. Brings together **global aviation stakeholders, investors, and policymakers**.
6. Focuses on **aviation growth, connectivity, and innovation**.
7. Promotes India as a **global aviation hub**.
8. Supports development of **civil aviation ecosystem and infrastructure**.

CSPOC (COMMONWEALTH SPEAKERS AND PRESIDING OFFICERS CONFERENCE)

Recent Update: 28th CSPOC held in New Delhi after 16 years

About

1. **CSPOC** was established in **1969** for parliamentary cooperation among Commonwealth countries.
2. It brings together **Speakers and Presiding Officers of national parliaments**.
3. Held **biennially with intervening Standing Committee meetings**.
4. Functions as an **independent body without formal Commonwealth institutional link**.
5. Secretariat support is provided by **Canada**.
6. Promotes **democratic governance and parliamentary best practices**.
7. Facilitates **exchange of ideas on legislative functioning**.
8. Strengthens **global parliamentary diplomacy and cooperation**.

IICDEM 2026 & IIIDEM

Recent Update: India hosted IICDEM 2026 and launched ECINET platform

About

1. **IICDEM 2026** is an international conference on **democracy and election management**.
2. Hosted by the **Election Commission of India (ECI)** at Bharat Mandapam.
3. Participated by **100+ delegates from over 70 countries**.
4. Focuses on **free, fair, and transparent election systems globally**.
5. **IIIDEM** is the training and research arm of ECI established in **2011**.
6. Provides **capacity building for election officials worldwide**.
7. Delhi Declaration 2026 outlines **five pillars of electoral integrity**.
8. Strengthens India's position as a **global leader in democratic governance**.

SOURCE: PIB

INDIA'S RARE EARTH STRATEGY

Recent Update: Budget 2026–27 announced Rare Earth Corridors and ₹7,280 crore REPM scheme

About

1. India's strategy focuses on **building an integrated rare earth value chain** covering mining, processing, R&D, and manufacturing.
2. Rare Earth Elements (REEs) include **17 elements (lanthanides + scandium + yttrium)** critical for advanced technologies.
3. **Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPMs)** are essential for **EVs, wind turbines, aerospace, and defence systems**.
4. India has **13.15 million tonnes monazite reserves with 7.23 million tonnes REO**, mainly in coastal sands.
5. The **MMDR Amendment Act 2023** and **National Critical Minerals Mission (2025)** support policy reforms.
6. The **₹7,280 crore REPM scheme** aims to create **6000 MTPA domestic magnet capacity**.
7. India currently imports **85–90% of magnets**, mainly from China, highlighting supply vulnerability.
8. Strategy strengthens **energy transition, defence autonomy, and Atmanirbhar Bharat goals**.

INDIA'S TRADE PARTNERSHIPS & FTA STRATEGY

Recent Update: India concluded multiple FTAs including EU, UK, Oman, and New Zealand

About

1. India is expanding its **trade diplomacy to diversify markets and reduce dependence on single regions**.
2. Major FTAs include **India–EU FTA, UK CETA, Oman CEPA, and New Zealand FTA**.
3. These agreements provide **duty-free access across large tariff lines**, boosting exports.
4. Labour-intensive sectors like **textiles, leather, and gems** gain major benefits.
5. Services trade expands with **market access in IT, education, and professional sectors**.
6. FTAs improve **integration into Global Value Chains (GVCs)** and enhance competitiveness.
7. Supported by initiatives like **Export Promotion Mission and Trade Connect platform**.
8. Strengthens India's role as a **key player in multipolar global trade architecture**.

INDIA–BRAZIL STEEL SUPPLY CHAIN MoU

Recent Update: India and Brazil signed MoU to secure steel supply chain

About

1. The MoU focuses on **mining cooperation, mineral processing, and AI-based exploration.**
2. It ensures **secure supply of iron ore, manganese, nickel, and niobium** for steel production.
3. Supports India's target of **300 MT steel capacity by 2030 under National Steel Policy 2017.**
4. Brazil is a leading producer of **high-grade iron ore and alloy minerals.**
5. Promotes **sustainable mining, recycling technologies, and automation.**
6. Enhances **supply chain resilience and reduces geopolitical risks.**
7. Strengthens **BRICS cooperation and Global South industrial partnerships.**
8. Contributes to **industrial growth, infrastructure expansion, and strategic autonomy.**

INDIA-EU FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (BTIA)

Recent Update: India-EU FTA concluded with extensive tariff liberalisation

About

1. The **India-EU FTA (BTIA)** provides access to **97% of tariff lines covering 99.5% trade value.**
2. EU is India's **largest trading partner with trade around USD 135 billion.**
3. Labour-intensive exports receive **zero-duty access**, boosting competitiveness.
4. Sensitive sectors like **agriculture and dairy are protected via phased liberalisation.**
5. Covers **144 service sectors including IT, R&D, and professional services.**
6. Enhances **mobility for professionals and business entities.**
7. Promotes **investment flows and regulatory cooperation.**
8. Strengthens India's **integration with European value chains and global trade system.**