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# GEOPOLITICS AT GLANCE

## INDIA-QATAR: A HOLISTIC OVERVIEW OF RELATIONSHIP

### RELEVANCE

#### □ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** Recent developments in Indian Foreign Policy
- **GS2-** Effect of Policies and Politics of Developed and Developing Countries on India's interests, Indian Diaspora

**Context:** Qatar has announced a death sentence to 8 retired Indian naval personnel which has raised questions on India-Qatar relationship.

### INTRODUCTION

India-Qatar relations are currently undergoing a significant diplomatic challenge following Qatar's decision to sentence eight retired Indian Naval personnel to death on charges of espionage, specifically related to Qatar's submarine program for Israel. The case unfolded over several months, with arrests made in August 2022 and culminating in the death penalty ruling by a local court on October 26, 2023.

### TIMELINE OF THE ESPIONAGE CASE

- **August 2022:** Eight Indian Naval personnel were arrested by Qatari Authorities on charges of espionage related to Qatar's submarine program for Israel.
- **September 2022:** The first bail plea was rejected.
- **March 2023:** The first trial was conducted.
- **June 2023:** The second trial took place.
- **October 1, 2023:** India was granted consular access, allowing the Indian Ambassador to meet the prisoners in person.
- **October 26, 2023:** The local court handed the death penalty to the eight Indian Navy personnel.

### INDIA'S OPTIONS FOR SECURING PERSONNEL'S RELEASE

- **Transfer of Sentenced Persons Agreement:** India could invoke the 2015 agreement with

Qatar, allowing Indian prisoners convicted in Qatar to serve the remaining part of their sentence in India.

- **Leveraging Defence Ties:** India can use its strong defense cooperation agreement with Qatar to seek relief for the personnel.
- **Legal Appeals:** Pursuing legal appeals through international courts, similar to the Kulbhushan Jadhav case, could be an option.
- **Deft Diplomacy:** A diplomatic resolution involving political intervention, potentially at the level of the Prime Minister, could be pursued.
- **Campaign Diplomacy:** Building an international campaign appealing for clemency might also be explored.

### HISTORY OF INDIA-QATAR DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

- **1971:** India was among the early nations to recognize Qatar's independence.
- **1973:** Full diplomatic relations were established between India and Qatar in 1973. The year 2023 marks the 50th anniversary of this bilateral relationship.
- **2008:** A significant turning point occurred when PM Manmohan Singh visited Qatar.
- **2015:** Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani of Qatar visited India.
- **2016:** PM Narendra Modi reciprocated the visit by traveling to Qatar in 2016.

# India Qatar Relations

## In-depth Analysis



by Rahul Saigaonker

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA-QATAR RELATIONS

- ❑ **Political Significance:** Qatar's membership in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) holds political importance for India, especially concerning issues like Kashmir. India also seeks Qatar's support for its permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).
- ❑ **Energy Security:** Qatar is India's largest supplier of LNG, constituting almost 50% of India's LNG imports.
- ❑ **Economic and Trade Ties:** India is one of the top four export destinations for Qatar, with significant trade in LNG, LPG, chemicals, petrochemicals, fertilizers, and plastics. Indian exports to Qatar include cereals, copper articles, iron, steel articles, vegetables, and fruits.
- ❑ **Business Presence:** Indian companies such as L&T, Wipro, TCS, and TechMahindra operate in Qatar, indicating a robust business relationship.
- ❑ **Expatriate Community and Remittances:** Approximately 800,000 Indian expatriates reside and work in Qatar. The flow of remittances, totaling around 750 million dollars, underscores the importance of Qatar for India's economic interests and the safety of its expatriate community.

- ❑ **Defence and Strategic Cooperation:** India and Qatar have signed a Defence Cooperation Agreement, enhancing their defense collaboration. Maritime relations are bolstered by Exercise Zair-Al-Bahr.
- ❑ **Cultural Exchanges:** Vibrant cultural events organized by Indian community organizations affiliated with the Indian Cultural Centre (ICC) foster cultural ties between the two nations. Qatar's co-sponsorship of India's resolution for International Yoga Day demonstrates shared cultural interests.

### CHALLENGES IN THE INDIA-QATAR RELATIONS

- ❑ **Legal Issues:** The secretive trial and harsh punishment of Indian Navy personnel have caused concerns within the expatriate Indian community.
- ❑ **Cultural Sensitivities:** Qatar's strong reaction to remarks made by Indian political figures about the Prophet Mohammed reflects cultural sensitivities that need careful handling.
- ❑ **Terrorism Concerns:** Qatar's alleged support for groups like the Taliban and the Muslim Brotherhood raises concerns about terrorism and regional stability.
- ❑ **Media Influence:** Qatar-financed media outlets like Al-Jazeera have sometimes run aggressive campaigns against India, such as during the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019.

### CONCLUSION

The complexities of the conflict in West Asia have added challenges to India's relationship with Qatar. India must navigate these complexities diligently, using diplomatic channels to protect its citizens in Qatar and leveraging its 'West Asia' policy to strengthen its engagement with the country.

# INDIA-BHUTAN: HISTORY, SIGNIFICANCE AND CHALLENGES

## RELEVANCE

### □ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** India and South Asia
- **GS2:** India and its Neighborhood Relations

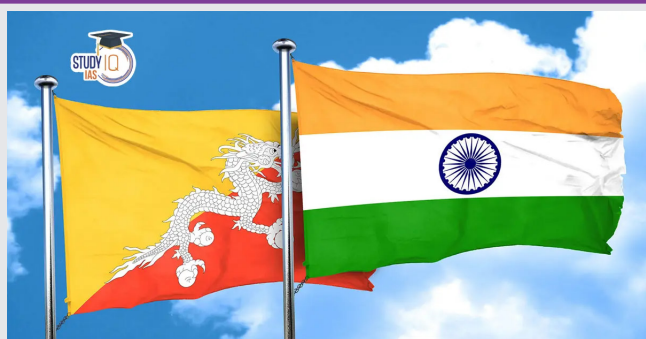
### INTRODUCTION

India and Bhutan have maintained a longstanding and friendly relationship, but recent developments in China-Bhutan relations, especially concerning border disputes, have raised concerns. China's push for diplomatic ties and economic cooperation with Bhutan carries significant implications for India.

### HISTORICAL INDIA-BHUTAN RELATIONS

India and Bhutan's close ties date back to Bhutan's independence in 1947. India has been Bhutan's major trading partner, offering economic, technical, and military support. The relationship encompasses cultural, economic, security, diplomatic, and socio-economic cooperation, emphasizing mutual benefits.

### IMPORTANCE OF BHUTAN TO INDIA



### INDIA-BHUTAN RELATIONS

- **Strategic Significance:** Bhutan acts as a buffer state between India and China, crucial for India's security, especially concerning the Siliguri Corridor.

- **Cultural Ties:** Deep-rooted cultural connections strengthen the bond between India and Bhutan, promoting cultural diplomacy.
- **Hydropower Cooperation:** Bilateral hydropower projects provide clean energy for India and contribute to Bhutan's economic prosperity.

### IMPORTANCE OF INDIA TO BHUTAN

- **Economic Support:** India is Bhutan's largest trading partner, offering significant economic assistance and trade relations.
- **Security:** India aids in securing Bhutan's borders and countering insurgent threats, ensuring Bhutan's safety.
- **Diplomatic Support:** India supports Bhutan diplomatically, enhancing Bhutan's international engagements and sovereignty.
- **Socio-Economic Development:** India contributes to Bhutan's development through various projects, fostering socio-economic progress.

### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CHINA-BHUTAN RELATIONS

- **Border Dispute Resolution:** China has asserted claims on Bhutanese territories, leading to border disputes.
- **Diplomatic Initiatives:** China urges Bhutan to establish formal diplomatic relations, fostering economic cooperation and endorsing President Xi Jinping's initiatives.

- ❑ **People-to-People Ties:** Increasing interactions, tourism cooperation, and medical aid amid the COVID-19 pandemic strengthen China-Bhutan relations.

### IMPLICATIONS ON INDIA

- ❑ **Strategic Challenges:** Bhutan conceding to China's claims could pose security threats for India, especially concerning the Siliguri Corridor.
- ❑ **Economic Impact:** China's economic influence might impact India's trade and energy security, posing challenges to India's regional interests.
- ❑ **Diplomatic Concerns:** Bhutan's alignment with China could alter its pro-India stance, impacting India's diplomatic standing in the region.

### INDIAN RESPONSE STRATEGIES

- ❑ **Economic Strengthening:** Enhance economic ties, offer financial support, and promote energy cooperation to counter China's economic influence.
- ❑ **Long-term Bilateral Arrangements:** Develop stable supply chains for critical commodities and strengthen energy sector relations.
- ❑ **Resolution of Boundary Issues:** Work towards peaceful resolution of border disputes, fostering trust and peaceful coexistence.

- ❑ **Address China's Concerns:** Promote transparent engagement, dialogue, and multilateral cooperation to address China's regional concerns.

- ❑ **Improving Connectivity:** Enhance infrastructure, road, and rail links, boosting trade and cultural exchanges.

- ❑ **Enhancing Defense Cooperation:** Increase joint military exercises and training programs, enhancing Bhutan's defense capabilities.

- ❑ **Addressing Environmental Concerns:** Collaborate on sustainable development and climate change issues to strengthen bilateral ties.

- ❑ **Promoting People-to-People Contact:** Facilitate student exchanges, cultural programs, and academic collaborations, fostering mutual understanding.

### CONCLUSION

India must approach Bhutan's border negotiations with understanding, ensuring Bhutan's interests align with India's national security concerns. Cooperation, trust, and cultural exchange will bolster India-Bhutan ties and counterbalance growing Chinese influence.

## BEIJING-THIMPHU BORDER TALKS

### RELEVANCE

#### ❑ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** India and South Asia.
- **GS2:** India-Bhutan relations.

**Context:** Bhutan has reported that its border negotiations with China are advancing positively, and it expresses its desire to establish diplomatic ties with Beijing.

### INTRODUCTION

Last month, Bhutan and China convened their 25th round of bilateral border discussions in Beijing. Tandi Dorji, the Bhutanese Foreign

Minister, created a surprise for India by making two significant announcements during his visit: Bhutan's sincere desire for a swift resolution of the border dispute and the intention to establish



diplomatic relations with China as soon as possible. Many experts have noted that India was taken off guard by these declarations.

Prior to Dorji's visit to Beijing, Bhutan and China had faced persistent challenges in resolving their border disputes. This 25th round of talks marked a seven-year gap since the previous round and had been interrupted by the Doklam standoff in the summer of 2017. During that incident, Indian and Chinese troops became embroiled in a tense Himalayan region where Bhutan, India (Sikkim), and China (the Tibet Autonomous Region) converge at a tri-junction. The severity of this border conflict led to a suspension of talks between Thimphu and Beijing, and further disruptions occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic.

### CHINA'S CALCULATIONS

- ❑ Beijing's response to the 73-day Doklam standoff was characterized as "shocked" and "alarmed" by most experts in China.
- ❑ The Galwan clash in 2020 was seen as an attempt to avenge the Donglang crisis and establish a permanent Chinese presence in the sensitive Himalayan region along the Line of Actual Control.
- ❑ China places blame on New Delhi for the failure of its border negotiations with Bhutan.
- ❑ Out of the 14 neighboring countries China shares a land border with, only Bhutan and India have unresolved border disputes.
- ❑ Chinese scholars claim that India not only obstructs progress in resolving border issues but also hinders diplomatic relations between Bhutan and China.
- ❑ Thimphu and Beijing maintained active engagement over the seven-year period.
- ❑ In 2021, a "three-step roadmap" was signed, which involved agreeing on the border "on the table," visiting the actual sites on the ground,

and formally demarcating the boundary to advance the border talks.



### BHUTAN'S GAINS

- ❑ Bhutan is seeking to normalize relations with China to achieve diplomatic, economic, and political benefits.
- ❑ One of the primary gains for Bhutan is the potential to establish diplomatic ties with a P5 country, referring to the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.
- ❑ Bhutan is a UN member-country with diplomatic relations with only 54 nations, primarily smaller regional countries.
- ❑ Notably, Bhutan does not have diplomatic relations with all five permanent members of the UN Security Council.
- ❑ Bhutan currently maintains diplomatic missions in New York (UN), Brussels (EU), and Geneva, along with embassies in India, Bangladesh, Belgium, Australia, Kuwait, and Thailand.
- ❑ Chinese analysts view Bhutan's unique international status as a form of "self-isolation."
- ❑ Bhutan is signaling its desire for a more dynamic foreign policy, which has implications for its relationship with India.

### INDIA'S CONCERNS

- ❑ India is deeply concerned about Bhutan normalizing relations with China, primarily due to strategic reasons.

- ❑ The main worry for India is the potential pressure from Beijing on Bhutan to give away access or control over the Doklam plateau.
- ❑ The border settlement talks between China and Bhutan have progressed rapidly, as highlighted in the joint statement from the mid-January talks in Kunming.
- ❑ The success of the talks has raised alarms in New Delhi, leading to a statement indicating India's intention to closely monitor developments in China-Bhutan relations.

- ❑ India sees Chinese presence near Doklam as a significant security concern, particularly in proximity to the strategic Siliguri corridor.
- ❑ Chinese scholars and analysts are celebrating Beijing's success with Bhutan, considering it a major diplomatic breakthrough in South Asia.
- ❑ There is a growing awareness in New Delhi that China aims to establish a foothold in the Himalayan Kingdom to gain leverage and potentially corner India.

## ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR:RUSSIA'S STAND ON IT

### RELEVANCE

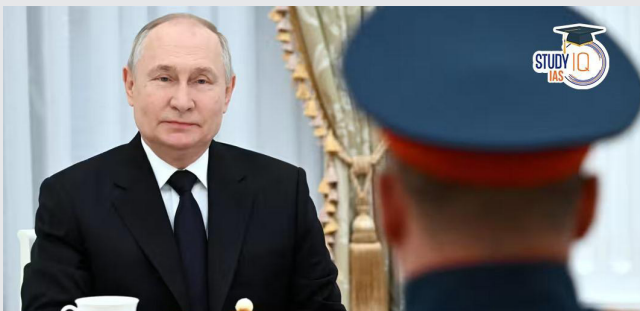
#### ❑ Syllabus:

- PSIR: Contemporary Global Concerns: Human Rights

**Context:** Moscow blames the West for the war, asserting it's actively working to end the conflict. Yet, some experts argue that Russia may benefit geopolitically from its continuation.

### INTRODUCTION

Russia officially blames the US for the conflict between Hamas and Israel, attributing broader Middle East tensions to American actions. However, experts suggest that Russia's true interests differ from its official stance. They argue that Russia benefits from the Israel-Hamas conflict and may prefer its continuation, potentially welcoming the spillover to harm the US. Russian experts believe that Russia and China are pleased with the unfolding Middle East situation, diverting global attention away from Ukraine.



### HOW RUSSIA STANDS TO BENEFIT FROM MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT?

#### 1. Russian Propaganda Strategy:

- ❑ Russian propaganda could exploit the Israel-Hamas conflict.
- ❑ The aim is to use the conflict to create fear among the Russian population.
- ❑ Propaganda will highlight Israel's behavior, portraying it as worse than Russia's actions in Ukraine.
- ❑ The narrative will imply a looming major conflict in the Middle East, shifting blame to the West.

#### 2. Deflecting Blame for Ukraine:

- ❑ The propaganda aims to deflect blame from Russia's actions in Ukraine by pointing to the Israel-Hamas conflict.

- ❑ The argument presented is that Russia is unfairly accused, emphasizing a supposed moral high ground.

### 3. Demonstrating Close Ties to the Islamic World:

- ❑ Despite lacking tangible influence in the Middle East (Syria, Egypt, Iran), Russia seeks to showcase strong ties to the Islamic world.
- ❑ Pachalyuk mentions Russia wanting to highlight its Muslim population's support for Palestinians.
- ❑ The goal is to portray Russia as an ally to the Arab world, even if actual influence in the region is limited.

### RUSSIA'S DOMESTIC DYNAMICS

1. Russian political scientist and economist Mikhail Krutikhin, residing in Norway, disagrees with the idea that the war in the Middle East will benefit Russia.
2. He highlights recent antisemitic attacks in Russian regions with Muslim majorities, particularly citing the incident in Dagestan where angry men stormed Makhachkala airport after a plane from Tel Aviv landed.
3. Krutikhin argues that these incidents signal increasing difficulty for the Kremlin in ensuring security across Russia's regions, potentially leading to negative impacts on political stability.
4. He suggests that Moscow needs to be more cautious and scale back antisemitic rhetoric to avoid destabilizing its regions.

5. Krutikhin asserts that Russia will not benefit either politically or economically from the Middle East war, as a significant rise in oil prices, which could have boosted earnings for Russia, is not occurring.
6. He explains that oil prices are temporarily falling because none of the oil-producing countries are willing to go to war in support of the Palestinians.

### CAN RUSSIA BE A POTENTIAL MEDIATOR?

- ❑ A recent controversial visit by a Hamas delegation to Moscow sparked criticism from Israel.
- ❑ The main objective of the meeting was to secure the release of Russian hostages held by unknown actors.
- ❑ Doubts exist about Russia's ability to influence the hostage situation without negotiating with other involved parties.
- ❑ Analyst Suleymanov suggests that Russia's engagement with Hamas serves different purposes, unrelated to the hostage issue.
- ❑ According to Suleymanov, Putin may feel personally offended by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who did not support Russia in its conflict with Ukraine.
- ❑ Putin seems to be sending a message through Russian state propaganda by deepening relations with Iran and its Middle East proxy, Hamas, as a response to perceived betrayal by Israel.

# APEC SUMMIT AND FIRST IN PERSON MEET OF BIDEN AND XI JINPING

## RELEVANCE

### □ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** Regionalisation of world politics:APEC
- **GS2-**Efect of policies of developed and developing countries on India’s interests.

**Context:** The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is currently holding its Leaders’ Week in San Francisco, United States, commencing on November 11 and scheduled to culminate with the Economic Leaders’ Retreat on Friday, November 17.

### INTRODUCTION

November 15, US President Joe Biden and China’s President Xi Jinping hold their first face-to-face meeting in a year, taking place on the sidelines of the APEC summit. Notably, India, although not a member of APEC, is represented by Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, at the forum.



The meeting between Biden and Xi occurs against the backdrop of strained US-China relations, with trade disputes standing out as significant points of contention. Other prominent leaders attending the summit in San Francisco this week include Japan’s Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, Canada’s Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and Indonesia’s President Joko Widodo. It is noteworthy that Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has not participated in major international summits since the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022,

is represented by Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk, not subject to US sanctions.

### WHAT IS APEC?

#### 1. Formation and Purpose:

- APEC established in 1989 as a regional economic forum.
- Aim: Leverage the growing interdependence of the Asia-Pacific for greater prosperity through regional economic integration.

#### 2. Focus on Trade and Economics:

- APEC primarily concentrates on trade and economic issues.
- Refers to member countries as “economies.”

#### 3. Operational Approach:

- Operates on non-binding commitments.
- Decisions made through commitments and consensus on a voluntary basis.

#### 4. Membership Criteria:

- Membership criterion: Each member must be an independent economic entity, not necessarily a sovereign state.
- Currently, 21 member economies.

#### 5. Member Countries:

- Australia ,Brunei ,Hong Kong,New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, The Philippines, Indonesia, China Japan, South Korea, Russia, Canada,

United States, Mexico, Peru, Chile, Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan

### SIGNIFICANCE OF APEC

#### 1. APEC's Focus Since Formation:

- ❑ Championed the lowering of trade tariffs.
- ❑ Advocated for free trade and economic liberalization.

#### 2. Core Objectives in First Five Years (as per US State Department):

- ❑ Established key objectives during the initial five years of operation.

#### 3. Seoul Declaration (1991):

- ❑ APEC member economies declared the principal objective: creation of a liberalized free trade area around the Pacific Rim.

#### 4. Economic Significance:

- ❑ APEC accounts for nearly 62% of global GDP.
- ❑ Represents almost half of global trade.

### INDIA'S WILLINGNESS TO JOIN APEC AND WAY FORWARD

#### Why India Wants to Join APEC:

##### 1. Economic Significance:

- ❑ India, presently holding 'observer' status, expresses a keen interest in becoming a full member of APEC.
- ❑ The request to join in 1991 is based on India's geographical location, substantial economic potential, and significant trade interactions within the Asia-Pacific region.

##### 2. Strength of APEC:

- ❑ APEC represents over a third of the world population, 47% of global trade, and 60% of the world's GDP.
- ❑ India sees APEC as a crucial platform for economic collaboration and growth.

##### 3. Economic Aspirations of India:

- ❑ India aspires to become a \$5 trillion economy, necessitating \$1 trillion in infrastructure investment.

- ❑ The Asia-Pacific region, being capital surplus, can potentially fulfill India's investment needs.

#### 4. Alignment with "Act East" Policy:

- ❑ Joining APEC aligns with India's "Act East" Policy, complementing its membership in the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation).

- ❑ APEC membership is seen as a natural progression in India's engagement with the Asia-Pacific region.

#### Challenges Preventing India's APEC Membership:

##### 1. Opposition Based on Economic Reforms:

- ❑ Some APEC members oppose India's inclusion, citing the country's economic reforms and alleging 'protectionist instincts.'

- ❑ APEC's original motive was to resist protectionism, and India's economic policies seemed incompatible.

##### 2. Perceived Unsatisfactory Record:

- ❑ Opponents argue that India's record on economic reforms and engagement with the WTO is unsatisfactory, hindering its merit for APEC membership.

- ❑ Previous concerns about India's economic policies have impeded its inclusion.

##### 3. Membership Freeze and Renewed Push:

- ❑ A membership freeze in 1997 was a hindrance, but it was not extended in 2012.

- ❑ Despite past opposition, there is now a renewed push for India's inclusion, with a majority recognizing India's progress in economic reforms.

##### 4. Catalyst for Trade Reform:

- ❑ Many APEC members now believe that India's inclusion could act as a catalyst for trade reform among emerging economies.

❑ India's evolving economic landscape is seen as a positive influence on the region.

#### 5. Strategic Importance:

❑ India's maritime strength and strategic relations with major powers in the Asia-Pacific region are emphasized by proponents as factors that could bring strategic balance to the grouping.

India's desire to join APEC is driven by economic aspirations, regional alignment, and the perceived benefits of APEC membership. However, challenges include opposition based on economic policies, a historical freeze, and differing opinions among member states. Recent developments indicate a renewed push and recognition of India's progress, making APEC membership a subject of ongoing discussion.

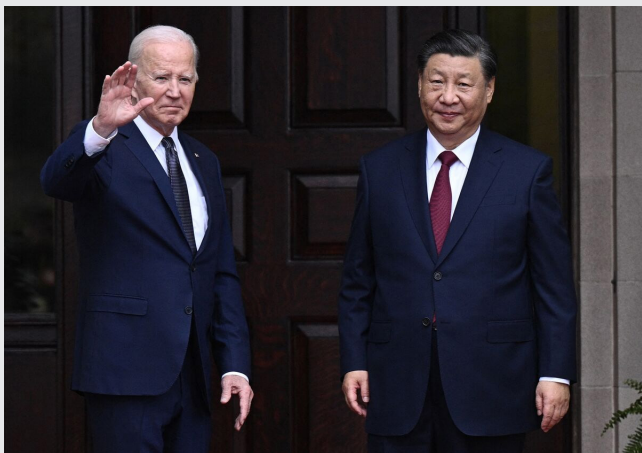
## NAVIGATING THE GEOPOLITICAL SEAS: IMPLICATIONS OF THE US-CHINA SUMMIT ON INDIA'S STRATEGY

### RELEVANCE

#### ❑ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** India and the Global Centres of Power: USA, EU, Japan, China and Russia.
- **GS2:** Effect of Policies and Politics of Developed and Developing Countries on India's interests.

### INTRODUCTION



The recent meeting between US President Biden and Chinese leader Xi Jinping took place on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit. Key topics of discussion included the regulation of artificial intelligence (AI) and regional security. However, the summit did not yield major breakthroughs, emphasizing the management of US-China competition rather than forming a strategic partnership. The discussions also touched on crises in the Middle East and the Ukraine war.

### IMPACT ON INDIA

#### Indo-Pacific Strategy:

**Significance:** The summit involved two major players in the Indo-Pacific region— the US and China. India's Indo-Pacific strategy could be influenced by the outcomes, affecting the balance of power and alliances in the region.

#### Economic Implications:

**Xi Jinping's Push:** Xi Jinping's efforts to re-engage US businesses might pose a challenge to India's endeavors to attract Western investment. India needs to enhance its economic appeal to remain a competitive alternative to China for Western businesses.

#### Strategic and Security Concerns:

**Regional Security Talks:** Discussions between Biden and Xi about regional security, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, are of great importance for India. The outcomes could impact India's own security strategies and geopolitical positioning.

### Balancing Act:

Improved Ties: An improvement in US-China relations could create a conducive environment for India to navigate a balancing act. India may find opportunities to enhance ties with both nations while maintaining its strategic autonomy.

### WAY FORWARD FOR INDIA

#### Vigilance in Indo-Pacific Affairs:

Monitor Developments: India should closely monitor developments in the Indo-Pacific region, considering the influence of US-China dynamics on the strategic landscape.

#### Economic Reforms:

Enhance Appeal: To counter China's economic attractiveness, India should focus on economic reforms, creating a more investor-friendly environment for Western businesses.

### Strategic Autonomy:

Maintain Independence: India should continue to pursue a foreign policy that ensures strategic autonomy. This involves making decisions in its national interest while engaging with both the US and China.

#### Diplomatic Engagement:

Strengthen Ties: India should work towards strengthening diplomatic ties with both the US and China. Building constructive relationships will allow India to navigate global dynamics more effectively.

### CONCLUSION

India needs to be proactive in adapting to the evolving US-China relationship. By staying vigilant, enhancing economic appeal, and maintaining diplomatic dexterity, India can navigate the complex geopolitical landscape and safeguard its national interests.

## FIFTH INDIA USA 2+2 MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE

### RELEVANCE

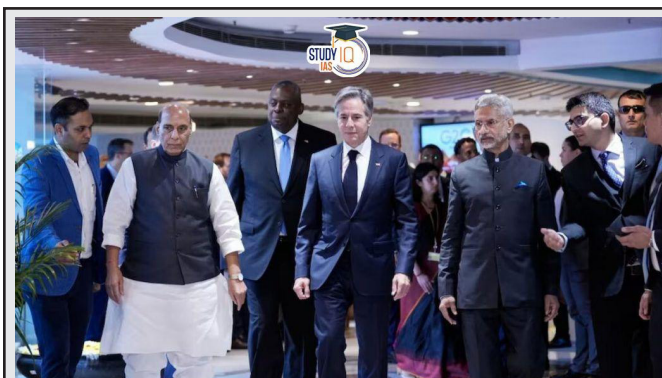
#### ❑ Syllabus:

- PSIR: India and global centres of power.

**Context:** The Defense Minister and External Affairs Minister of India engaged in the fifth installment of the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue with their counterparts from the United States government.

### INTRODUCTION

Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar engaged in the fifth 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue with their US counterparts, Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin and Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in New Delhi on Friday, November 11. These 2+2 meetings with US leaders have been a regular occurrence since 2018.



## WHAT ARE 2+2 MEETINGS AND WHAT IS THE RATIONALE BEHIND THEM?

### 1. Purpose of 2+2 Meetings:

- ❑ Involves high-level representatives, namely Foreign and Defence Ministers, from two participating countries.
- ❑ Aims to expand the scope of dialogue and understanding between the nations.
- ❑ Focuses on addressing strategic concerns and sensitivities, considering political factors for a more integrated strategic relationship.

### 2. India's 2+2 Partners:

#### ❑ United States:

- ❑ India's oldest and most significant 2+2 partner.
- ❑ Inaugural dialogue took place during the Trump Administration in September 2018.
- ❑ Viewed as a replacement for the Strategic and Commercial Dialogue held during the Obama administration.

#### ❑ Other Partners:

- ❑ Australia, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Russia are additional 2+2 partners.
- ❑ Reflects India's commitment to fostering positive, forward-looking relations with these countries.

### 3. Significance of India-US Relations:

- ❑ The US-India 2+2 dialogue reinforces a shared commitment to a positive vision for their strategic partnership.
- ❑ Reiterates the promotion of a free and open Indo-Pacific, in collaboration with allies like Japan and Australia through the QUAD.

### 4. QUAD and Other Partnerships:

- ❑ The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) involves informal security cooperation with Japan, Australia, and the United States.
- ❑ Aims to strengthen the Indo-Pacific region's security and resilience.

- ❑ Talks with Japan via QUAD started in 2019 to enhance bilateral security and defense cooperation.

### 5. Relations with Russia:

- ❑ The 2+2 dialogue with Russia, initiated in 2021, is seen as a platform for in-depth discussions on regional and international issues.
- ❑ Emphasizes a shared worldview and similar positions on political and military matters.

### 6. Relations with Australia and the UK:

- ❑ In 2021, India initiated 2+2 talks with Australia, reinforcing the importance of bilateral relations.
- ❑ The UK joined the list of 2+2 partners in October 2023, marking the inaugural meeting and expanding India's diplomatic engagements.

### 7. Evolution of 2+2 Dialogues:

- ❑ The 2+2 mechanism evolves as a diplomatic tool, replacing previous dialogues and serving as a comprehensive platform for strategic discussions.

## OVERVIEW OF INDIA AND US BILATERAL RELATIONS

### 1. Bilateral Trade:

- ❑ The bilateral trade between India and the United States has surged by 72% from 2017-18 to 2022-23.
- ❑ The U.S. stands as a significant player, accounting for 18% of the gross Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows into India during 2021-22, securing the second position after Singapore.

### 2. Defense and Security:

- ❑ A series of foundational pacts has strengthened military cooperation between India and the U.S.
- ❑ The Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) was initiated in 2016, followed by the Communications Compatibility



and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018, and the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) in 2020.

- ❑ In 2016, the U.S. accorded India the status of a major defense partner, an exclusive recognition among nations.

### 3. Space:

- ❑ India and the U.S. are aligned in the Artemis Accords, outlining a shared vision for the future of space exploration for the collective benefit of humanity.
- ❑ Collaboration is actively pursued through the Civil Space Joint Working Group, fostering joint efforts in space exploration.

### 4. Multilateral Cooperation:

- ❑ Close collaboration extends to various international organizations and forums, including the United Nations, G20, ASEAN-related fora, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization.
- ❑ The Quad, comprising the U.S., India, Australia, and Japan, serves as a diplomatic network advocating for a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

### 5. Nuclear Cooperation:

- ❑ The Civil Nuclear Deal, inked in 2005, delineates a path for cooperation between the U.S. and India in the nuclear domain.
- ❑ Under this agreement, India commits to segregating its civil and military nuclear facilities, subjecting all civil resources to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, while the U.S. pledges to work towards comprehensive civil nuclear cooperation with India.

## CHALLENGES IN INDIA US RELATIONS

India, while strengthening its ties with the United States, remains committed to preserving its strategic autonomy. The deepening and comprehensive nature of its relationship with the U.S. are evident. However, India is also mindful of the imperative to maintain its independence in strategic decision-making.

The divergence in positions became apparent when India offered muted criticism of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. This stance, expectedly, caused frustration in the West and raised concerns about India's credibility as a reliable security partner.

The United States, in particular, has expressed apprehension regarding India's defense relations with Russia. The acquisition of new arms, such as the S-400 air defense system, is a source of concern. The U.S. is worried that such acquisitions bolster Russian influence, impede the potential for interoperability and secure communication between U.S. and Indian forces, and hinder the sharing of sensitive weapons technologies that already exist.

## CONCLUSION

The dynamic and evolving alliance between India and the United States carries substantial weight in shaping the global order of the 21st century. To fully capitalize on the potential of this partnership, it is imperative for both governments to prioritize the alleviation of bilateral and multilateral hindrances while concurrently charting a path towards forging a comprehensive and strategically significant global alliance. Particularly in the face of a progressively assertive China, enhancing the mechanisms of cooperation between the two militaries becomes a pivotal aspect of this collaboration.

# SOFT POWER DYNAMICS: SHAPING GLOBAL INFLUENCE AND NATIONAL STRATEGIES

## RELEVANCE

### □ Syllabus:

- **PSIR:** Key Concepts in International Relations: Power
- **GS2-** International Relations

**Context:** Nations export culture, ideology, and people to create soft power. They export because they have a competitive edge, superior education system, rich culture, superior political system, and military might.

### INTRODUCTION

Soft power, a facet of foreign policy, is a blend of cultural, policy, and political influences, noted for its power of attraction. Coined by political scientist Joseph Nye, it represents the ability to persuade through non-coercive means.

Soft power encompasses foreign policy, cultural, and political influence. Foreign policy influence hinges on the legitimacy and morality of dealings with other nations. Cultural sway is rooted in the respect for one's culture, while political influence measures how much others are inspired by one's political values. Though challenging to measure, the Lowy Institute in Australia has developed metrics based on foreign policy, cultural influence, and political sway.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SOFT POWER?

- Competitive edge for the "exporter" nation: Since people retain cultural ties and residual loyalties to the land of origin,
- Create a feedback loop and reinforce hard power: For example, South Korean movies, music, games and dress codes are influencing millennials everywhere.

### ABOUT INDIA'S SOFT POWER DURING ANCIENT TIMES

India has soft power in Southeast Asia and the Far East. Buddhist missionaries won hearts and minds.

Naval conquests established Indophile cultures in Indonesia and Cambodia.

### ABOUT THE SOFT POWER OF THE UK DURING COLONIAL TIMES

The soft power of the UK was accumulated during the time when the sun never set on the British Empire. That soft power still has its impacts. For instance,

1. The EU's business language is English (though the UK is no longer a member),
2. Pop music everywhere has English lyrics
3. English is America's official language and is widely spoken in many countries like India.

### DOES SOFT POWER ALWAYS BENEFIT EXPORTER NATIONS?

No, if the soft power is being exported for the wrong reasons, then the soft power exported can rebound horribly wrong on the exporter. The lessons of Germany, Italy and Japan in the 1930s is a classic example.

### HOW DID THE SOFT POWER OF GERMANY, JAPAN LEAD TO THE DEMISE OF THEIR OWN?

- In the 1930s, Japan started dreaming of a "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" created by annexing chunks of mainland Asia. Similarly, Germany's Third Reich started fantasizing about a Greater Germany (Gross

Deutschland) and the enslavement and extermination of inferior races.

- ❑ For achieving that purpose, Jews, Gypsies, Catholics, etc., were herded into extermination camps in Germany. Citizens left Japan in search of greater political stability. The Italians left as Mussolini tried to grab chunks of Africa, and spoke about a New Roman Empire through the “Right of Blood”. This resulted in
- ❑ Emigrant scientists and engineers (including Italians like Enrico Fermi, non-Jewish Germans, and many Jews) invented nuclear weapons and gathered information about the Axis war efforts.
- ❑ General Dwight David Eisenhower, who oversaw the Allied invasion of Europe was born into a German immigrant family.
- ❑ The US Army’s 442nd Infantry Regiment, which won more gallantry awards than any other US formation, was entirely composed of volunteers of Japanese descent.
- ❑ The advocates of GrossDeutschland and the Greater East Asia thing mostly ended up dead, after killing millions of their own countrymen. So, Soft power can rebound horribly to the exporter, if exported for the wrong reasons.

### WHY DOES CHINA CONSISTENTLY BEAT INDIA ON SOFT POWER?

- ❑ China’s soft power appears more attractive than India’s, contrary to subjective perceptions. In diplomatic influence, China leads overall among 25 Asian powers. While India’s diplomatic networks closely match China regionally, it lags globally.
- ❑ In terms of multilateral power, India aligns with China in regional memberships but contributes

less to the UN capital budget. Surveys on foreign policy leadership place China at the forefront, leaving India between fourth and sixth place in Asia.



- ❑ Culturally, China claims the second spot in Asia, surpassing India in various indicators. Although India excels in projecting its culture through Google searches and cultural exports, China leads in global brands, UNESCO World Heritage sites, and passport freedom.
- ❑ China’s dominance extends to education and tourism, hosting significantly more students and tourists compared to India.
- ❑ On the political front, China ranks higher than India, securing the 10th position. India’s standing in political stability and the absence of violence is lower, contributing to a lack of confidence in its regional ambitions, economic prowess, and military capabilities, particularly in Southeast Asia, as revealed by the State of Southeast Asia Survey Reports.

# INDIAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS (IGP)

## DEMOCRACY AND CHALLENGES IN A DEVELOPING NATION

### RELEVANCE

#### Syllabus:

- ❑ **PSIR:** Salient Features of the Indian Constitution
- ❑ **GS2:** Structure, Organization and Functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary

#### Introduction

Recent Delhi Police raids on the news portal NewsClick and invoking of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act to arrest people have brought the issue of undermining democracy to the fore.

### RECENT CHALLENGES TO DEMOCRACY IN INDIA

The recent Delhi Police raids on the media houses, the use of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act against individuals, the vulnerable state of religious minorities due to violence, and changes in political financing through opaque electoral bonds have raised concerns about the erosion of democratic values in India.

### ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS OF DEMOCRACY



- ❑ **Decision-making under Democratic Conditions:** Decision-making should occur under democratic conditions, treating all

members with equal respect and concern, beyond mere majority rule.

- ❑ **Guarantee of Basic Values:** Fundamental values like freedom of speech, expression, and association are crucial for a robust democracy. These values are enshrined in the Indian Constitution and have been upheld by the Supreme Court.

### UNDERMINING DEMOCRACY WITHOUT REWRITING THE CONSTITUTION

- ❑ **Misuse of Terrorism Laws:** Invoking terrorism laws against journalists undermines freedom of speech and expression in practice, even if not in text.
- ❑ **Unchecked Hate Speech:** Hate speeches against minorities, when not addressed, erode secularism in practical terms despite constitutional safeguards.
- ❑ **Opaque Electoral Funding:** Lack of transparency in electoral funding undermines the democratic process, making it a theoretical concept rather than a practical reality.

### ROLE OF THE JUDICIARY IN SAFEGUARDING DEMOCRACY

- ❑ **Ensuring Integrity of the Democratic Process:** The judiciary, as an unelected body, plays a vital

role in protecting the integrity of the democratic process. While decisions on societal rules are generally made by elected representatives, the courts ensure the process's fairness.

- ❑ **Powers of the Supreme Court:** The Supreme Court of India has the power to strike down laws and constitutional amendments. It has also established the basic structure doctrine, limiting Parliament's authority to amend the Constitution in ways that violate its core principles.

### THE WAY FORWARD

- ❑ **Addressing Violations:** Ignoring violations of democratic principles outside constitutional

texts renders both the Constitution and the Court ineffectual. The Court must respond to these challenges to maintain its identity and uphold democratic values.

- ❑ **Protecting Democratic Process:** The Court's role in protecting the democratic process remains fundamental. By upholding the core principles of democracy and ensuring their practical application, the judiciary can secure the future not only for the people but also for its own legitimacy and relevance in safeguarding democracy in India.

## ELECTORAL BONDS

### RELEVANCE

**Syllabus:**

- ❑ **GS2-Salient features of the Representation of People's Act.**
- ❑ **PSIR-Party System.**

**Context:** The Electoral Bond scheme is challenged in Supreme Court for its opacity.

### INTRODUCTION

On Tuesday, a five-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud is set to deliberate on a series of petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the Centre's electoral bonds scheme. The scheme, initiated on January

2, 2018, established a means for individuals across the nation to contribute funds to political parties without revealing their identity. This marks another instance where the scheme has come under scrutiny in the Supreme Court since its introduction in 2017.



## WHAT IS ELECTORAL BOND SCHEME?

- ❑ Electoral bonds were first introduced in 2017 during the Union Budget session.
- ❑ These bonds are interest-free and function as “bearer instruments,” similar to promissory notes.
- ❑ They enable anonymous donations to political parties in India.
- ❑ Citizens or Indian-incorporated bodies can purchase these bonds in denominations ranging from Rs1,000 to Rs1 crore.
- ❑ Bonds can be acquired from authorized SBI branches through accounts complying with KYC norms.
- ❑ Political parties can encash the bonds within 15 days of receiving them to fund electoral expenses.
- ❑ Electoral bonds are not available for purchase year-round; they can only be bought in 10-day windows in January, April, July, and October.
- ❑ Bonds can only be used to donate to political parties registered under Section 29A of the Representation of the Peoples Act, 1951.
- ❑ Registered parties must have secured at least 1% of the votes polled in the last election to the House of the People or a Legislative Assembly.
- ❑ Section 29A of the RPA deals with the registration of associations and bodies as political parties with the Election Commission.

## WHY WERE ELECTORAL BONDS INTRODUCED?

- 1. Introduction of Electoral Bonds:**
  - ❑ The government’s aim was to clean up political funding and enhance transparency in India’s electoral funding system.
  - ❑ Finance Minister Arun Jaitley highlighted the lack of a transparent method for funding political parties even after 70 years of Independence.

## 2. Issues with Current System:

- ❑ Political parties were receiving a significant portion of funds through anonymous cash donations.
- ❑ Jaitley proposed reducing the acceptance of cash from anonymous sources to Rs 2,000 from the existing Rs 20,000.

## 3. Legislative Changes:

- ❑ Amendments in 2016 and 2017 through the Finance Acts modified key legislations, including the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 2010; RPA, 1951; Income Tax Act, 1961; and Companies Act, 2013.

## 4. Challenges to Electoral Bonds:

- ❑ NGOs Common Cause and Association for Democratic Reforms filed petitions in 2017.
- ❑ Challenges included the legitimization of unlimited political donations, even from foreign companies, and the alleged non-transparency in political funding.

## 5. Legal Basis and Money Bills:

- ❑ Petitioners argued that amendments were introduced illegally as money bills, bypassing Rajya Sabha approval.
- ❑ The plea sought a stay on the electoral bonds scheme, asserting that it shouldn’t have been introduced without proper parliamentary scrutiny.

## JUDICIARY’S PREVIOUS RULING ON ELECTORAL BONDS

- ❑ April 12, 2019: Three-judge SC bench issues interim order directing political parties using electoral bonds to submit bond details to the Election Commission of India (ECI).
- ❑ March 2021: Three-judge SC Bench, led by CJI SA Bobde, dismisses plea to halt the sale of new bonds, disputing claims of “complete anonymity” for bond purchasers.

- ❑ Court states that operations under the scheme are not impenetrable, rejecting the stay on fresh bond sale petitions before Assembly elections in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Assam, and Puducherry.
- ❑ SC mentions bonds issued between 2018 and 2020 without impediment and cites “safeguards” ordered in April 2019, requiring parties to submit bond details to ECI, including donor particulars, bond amounts, and credit details.
- ❑ Despite denying a stay on current sale, the larger constitutional challenge to the electoral bonds scheme, filed in 2017, remains pending.
- ❑ April 2022: CJI NV Ramana assures petitioners of a hearing when advocate Prashant Bhushan raises concerns about a Kolkata-based news company allegedly paying Rs 40 crore to evade a raid, stating it distorts democracy.

#### ISSUE BEHIND THE COURT NOW

- ❑ On October 16, CJI Chandrachud presided over a three-judge bench.
- ❑ He referred the case to a five-judge bench, including Justices Sanjeev Khanna, BR Gavai, JB Pardiwala, and Manoj Misra.
- ❑ Earlier, petitioners urged the court to refer it to a Constitution Bench, but the SC didn’t show inclination until October 16.
- ❑ On October 10, the CJI-led bench listed the case for final hearing on October 31 without referring it to a larger bench.
- ❑ The case involves four petitions from ADR, CPI(M), Congress leader Jaya Thakur, and a PIL by Spandan Biswal.
- ❑ Petitioners challenge the constitutionality of the electoral bonds scheme.
- ❑ They seek to declare all political parties as public offices under the Right to Information Act.

- ❑ Petitioners want political parties to disclose their income and expenditure.

#### STAND OF ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

1. In May 2017, the Election Commission of India (ECI) expressed objection to amendments in the RPA (Representation of the People Act). These changes exempted political parties from disclosing donations received through electoral bonds.
2. The ECI characterized this amendment as a “retrograde step” in its submission to the Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law, and Justice.
3. In the same month, the ECI wrote a letter to the Law Ministry, urging the government to “reconsider” and “modify” the mentioned amendment.
4. On March 25, 2019, amid the legal challenge to electoral bonds in the Supreme Court, the ECI filed an affidavit highlighting concerns. It specifically addressed the alteration of laws allowing political parties to accept contributions from foreign companies.
5. The ECI raised the alarm about the potential consequences, warning against “unchecked foreign funding of political parties.” This, they argued, could result in the undue influence of foreign companies on Indian policies.

#### STAND OF UNION GOVERNMENT

1. Attorney General R Venkataramani informed the Supreme Court on Sunday through written submissions that the citizens’ right to know has reasonable restrictions.
2. He argued against a general right to know everything without limitations, in response to a petitioner seeking a declaration of citizens’ right to know as part of freedom of expression, specifically regarding access to political party contributions.

3. The AG defended the Centre's scheme, emphasizing its confidentiality benefits for contributors and its promotion of clean money.

4. He highlighted that the scheme complies with tax obligations and does not violate any existing rights.

## NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY (NSS)

### RELEVANCE

#### Syllabus:

❑ **GS 2: Government Policies and Interventions for development of various sectors.**

❑ **PSIR: Key Concepts of IR**

**Context: India has recently started to formulate NSS.**

### INTRODUCTION

After years of thoughtful discussions within the military and strategic circles, India has initiated the development of its inaugural 'National Security Strategy.' The National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) is actively working on formulating a comprehensive strategy in collaboration with various Central ministries and departments. Following this, the finalized strategy will be presented for Cabinet approval.

### WHAT IS NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY ?

A National Security Strategy document serves as a blueprint for a country's security goals and the strategies to attain them. This comprehensive document identifies both conventional and unconventional threats while emphasizing the accountability of agencies tasked with addressing these challenges.

### NEED FOR NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

(1) In response to escalating geopolitical tensions such as the Israel-Hamas and Russia-Ukraine conflicts, a comprehensive security strategy is imperative. This document aims to navigate the uncertainties arising from these global events.

(2) To safeguard India's security, addressing modern non-traditional threats is crucial. This includes financial and economic security, food and energy security, critical information infrastructure security, and securing supply chains and the environment.

(3) The porous international borders, terrorism threats, domestic insurgency (naxalism), and challenges from neighboring countries like China and Pakistan necessitate the formulation of a National Security Doctrine for India.

(4) Providing a guide for military reforms and modernization, the security strategy is essential. Examples from the US, UK, and China highlight how such strategies drive military transformation.

(5) The outdated Raksha Mantri's operational Directive of 2009 currently serves as the sole document offering political direction to the Armed Forces. It is imperative to revise and update this document in line with a comprehensive security strategy.

(6) The security strategy will define the precise operational and advisory roles of national security-related institutions, including the National Security Council (NSC), the National Security Advisor (NSA), Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), and the Chiefs of Staff Committee.



(7) Active cooperation between security establishments at the Union and state levels is vital. The security doctrine will facilitate inter-ministerial coordination to effectively tackle any threat to national security.

(8) The formulation of a national security strategy will enhance political accountability in managing defense forces and national security, fostering a more robust and responsible political class.

### CHALLENGES IN FORMULATING NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY FOR INDIA

(1) Crafting a doctrine that addresses the constantly evolving landscape of national security threats, such as cyberattacks and crypto-terrorism, is a highly intricate task.

(2) There's a reluctance among political parties to embrace a national security strategy due to increased accountability in handling security issues.

(3) Achieving consensus among stakeholders, including government officials, policymakers, and security agencies, poses a significant challenge in balancing competing interests and ideologies.

(4) The efficient allocation of dedicated resources for implementing this comprehensive security doctrine is a pressing concern.

(5) Public awareness and support for the need of a comprehensive national security strategy are lacking, allowing governments to operate without enacting essential security measures for too long.

### WAY FORWARD

(1) Leveraging insights from past national security reports: Valuable lessons can be drawn from previous initiatives such as the Kargil Review Committee report (2000) and the Naresh Chandra Task Force on Security report (2012) to inform the development of the National Security Strategy.

(2) Diverse expertise in the drafting committee: Ensure the inclusion of accomplished individuals from various fields in the drafting committee to provide a well-rounded perspective on India's national security.

(3) Putting citizens at the core of national security strategy: The strategy should resonate with the values and principles of the people, actively engaging the public to enhance awareness and shape their perceptions on national security matters.

## BROADCASTING SERVICES (REGULATION) BILL, 2023

### RELEVANCE

#### Syllabus:

❑ **GS2-Salient features of the Representation of People's Act.**

**Context:** Information & Broadcasting Ministry on Friday (November 10) released the draft Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill, 2023

### INTRODUCTION

On Friday, November 10, the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting unveiled the draft Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill, 2023. The bill is designed to establish a comprehensive legal framework for the broadcasting sector,

encompassing OTT content, digital news, and current affairs.

The I&B ministry stated, "This groundbreaking legislation modernizes the regulatory framework of our broadcasting sector, replacing outdated Acts, Rules, and Guidelines with a unified and

forward-looking approach. It effectively adapts to the dynamic landscape of OTT, Digital Media, DTH, IPTV, and more, fostering technological advancement and the evolution of services.”

### FEATUTES OF THE BILL

#### 1. Modernization of Regulatory Framework:

- ❑ The draft bill aims to update and modernize the regulatory framework by replacing outdated Acts, Rules, and Guidelines.
- ❑ This modernization process involves adapting regulations to keep pace with emerging technologies and evolving consumer preferences.

#### 2. Innovations in Self-Regulation:

- ❑ The proposed bill suggests the establishment of ‘Content Evaluation Committees’ to enhance self-regulation within the industry.

- ❑ It also recommends transforming the existing Inter-Departmental Committee into a more comprehensive ‘Broadcast Advisory Council’ to foster inclusive decision-making processes.

#### 3. Accessibility Guidelines:

- ❑ The draft bill incorporates “comprehensive accessibility guidelines” to cater to the needs of differently-abled users.
- ❑ This signifies a commitment to ensuring that broadcasting services are accessible to a diverse audience, aligning with principles of inclusivity and equal access.

### CONCLUSION

The legislation is in harmony with the government’s goal of fostering a business-friendly atmosphere. This indicates a commitment to establishing a regulatory framework that fosters expansion and creativity within the broadcasting industry.

## SPEEDY DISPOSAL OF CASES AGAINST LAWMAKERS

### RELEVANCE

#### Syllabus:

- ❑ **GS 2: Salient features of Representation of People’s Act**

**Context:** The Supreme Court has issued guidelines to monitor the speedy disposal of criminal cases against Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of Legislative Assemblies (MLAs).

### INTRODUCTION

On Thursday, November 9, the Supreme Court issued guidelines aimed at ensuring the prompt resolution of criminal cases involving Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of Legislative Assemblies (MLAs).

To facilitate the speedy disposal of these cases, the court urged the chief justices of high courts nationwide to establish a designated “special bench.” This special bench is tasked with reviewing and monitoring the advancements in criminal cases against elected lawmakers.



## REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1951

The RP Act of 1951, enacted prior to India's inaugural general elections, delineates essential provisions governing the conduct of elections in the country. It comprehensively addresses various facets of the electoral process, including the actual execution of elections, the establishment of administrative machinery for their conduct, the conduct of polls, regulation of election offenses, resolution of election disputes, the management of by-elections, and the registration of political parties.

### PROVISIONS THAT DEAL WITH DISQUALIFICATION UNDER THE RPA

#### Section 8: Disqualification for Conviction of Offences

- 8(1A):** Specific Offences
- Promoting enmity between two groups
- Bribery
- Undue influence or personation at an election

- 8(2A):** Offences Related to
  - Hoarding or profiteering
  - Adulteration of food or drugs
  - Conviction and sentence of at least six months under the Dowry Prohibition Act
- 8(3A):** Disqualification Criteria
  - Imprisonment for not less than two years
  - Disqualified from the date of conviction
  - Continued disqualification for a further six years from release

#### Section 9: Disqualification for Corruption or Disloyalty

- 9(A):** Disqualification for Government Contracts, etc.

Section 10: Disqualification for Office under Government Company

Section 10(A): Disqualification for Failure to Lodge Account of Election Expenses

Section 11: Removal or Reduction of Period of Disqualification

Section 11(A): Disqualification Arising out of Conviction and Corrupt Practices

### BACKGROUND OF THE CASE

In August 2016, advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay submitted a plea, urging the prompt resolution of cases concerning lawmakers. The plea also advocated for a permanent prohibition on convicted politicians, including those currently holding legislative positions, from participating in elections. This proposal aimed to replace the existing six-year ban stipulated in Section 8(3) of the Representation of People Act, 1951, which imposes restrictions on individuals convicted of offenses carrying a minimum two-year sentence.

### OBSERVATIONS MADE BY THE SUPREME COURT

#### 1. Suo Motu Registration by Chief Justices:

❑ Chief justices of various high courts nationwide are authorized to initiate suo motu cases, ensuring vigilant oversight for the expeditious resolution of pending criminal cases involving legislators.

#### 2. Special Bench Formation:

❑ Cases may be adjudicated by a special bench led by the Chief Justice or a bench designated by them, ensuring focused attention and efficient handling.

#### 3. Scheduled Hearings:

❑ To maintain a consistent pace, these cases can be systematically listed at regular intervals as deemed necessary by the overseeing authority.

#### 4. Legal Assistance:

❑ The special bench is empowered to engage the services of the advocate general or prosecutor to provide expert assistance, contributing to a more informed and accelerated legal process.

#### 5. Priority Criteria:

- ❑ The highest priority is to be accorded to cases against lawmakers carrying penalties of death or life imprisonment.
- ❑ Additionally, cases with potential sentences of 5 years or more are to be prioritized for swift resolution.

#### 6. High Court's Monitoring Measures:

❑ Recognizing the diversity of legal systems, the Supreme Court acknowledges the challenge of laying down uniform guidelines for trial courts and entrusts High Courts with the responsibility of formulating effective monitoring measures.

#### 7. Flexibility for High Courts:

❑ High Courts are granted the flexibility to tailor measures that suit their specific jurisdiction, allowing for localized adaptations to enhance efficiency.

#### 8. Additional Roles of High Courts:

- ❑ High Courts are empowered to issue similar orders and directions to ensure the effective and timely disposal of cases involving lawmakers.
- ❑ The Principal District and Sessions Judge can be called upon by High Courts to allocate relevant cases, streamlining the distribution of "subject cases" to appropriate courts.

#### 9. Lifetime Ban Consideration:

❑ The Supreme Court has deliberately left open the issue of replacing the existing 6-year ban with a lifetime ban, as specified in Section 8(3) of the RP Act, for further deliberation.

### CONCLUSION

These comprehensive guidelines aim to streamline and accelerate the resolution of cases involving lawmakers, acknowledging the need for a nuanced and flexible approach to address the diverse legal landscape across the country.

# FUNDING DEMOCRACY: STATE FUNDING FOR ELECTIONS IN INDIA

## RELEVANCE

### Syllabus:

- ❑ **PSIR:** Statutory Institutions/Commissions: Election Commission
- ❑ **GS2:** Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and Issues arising out of their Design and Implementation.

### INTRODUCTION

State funding of elections is proposed as a solution to the pervasive issue of lack of transparency in election funding, a problem underscored by the controversial electoral bond scheme in India. This article delves into the concept of state funding of elections, examining various committee recommendations, the need for such funding, potential advantages, and the challenges associated with its implementation.

### STATE FUNDING OF ELECTIONS

State funding of elections is a mechanism where the government provides funds to political parties or candidates participating in elections. Several committees, such as the Indrajit Gupta Committee (1998) and the Law Commission (1999), have explored this idea, suggesting partial state funding with specific conditions.

### COMMITTEES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ **Indrajit Gupta Committee (1998):** Recommended partial state funding but with conditions. Limited it to national and regional parties with symbols and suggested funding in kind, not cash.
- ❑ **Law Commission (1999):** Advocated for state funding, emphasizing the importance of preventing political parties from accepting money from sources other than the government. Supported the Indrajit Gupta Committee's recommendation for partial state

funding and proposed a robust regulatory procedure.

- ❑ **Second Administrative Reforms Commission (2008):** Proposed partial state funding to curb illegitimate and unnecessary funding, aiming to reduce the undue influence of money in elections.
- ❑ **National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (2001):** Did not endorse state funding but agreed with the Law Commission's stance, emphasizing the necessity of a regulatory framework for political parties before considering state funding.

### NEED FOR STATE FUNDING OF ELECTION

- ❑ **Transparency:** The primary need arises from the lack of transparency in electoral funding, with a significant portion coming from undisclosed sources, including the controversial electoral bonds.
- ❑ **Corruption and Crony Capitalism:** The existing system, relying on contributions from unknown donors, has led to corporate lobbying, crony capitalism, and entrenched political corruption.
- ❑ **Lack of Fairness:** Access to substantial financial resources gives certain candidates and parties an electoral advantage, creating an uneven playing field, as highlighted by the Supreme Court in the Kanwar Lal Gupta v Amar Nath Chawla case.

- ❑ **Contravention of Laws and Guidelines:** Non-disclosure of funding sources contradicts guidelines from the Election Commission of India, Central Information Commission, and Supreme Court rulings.

### ADVANTAGES OF STATE FUNDING OF ELECTION

- ❑ **Transparency:** State funding ensures transparency in election funding and expenditure, meeting the citizens' right to know about the financial aspects of elections.
- ❑ **Fairness:** State-sponsored elections create an equal footing for all political parties and candidates, promoting fairness in the electoral process.
- ❑ **Reduced Criminalization:** State funding reduces the influence of criminal proceeds in politics, curbing the criminalization of the political landscape.
- ❑ **Citizen-Centric Decisions:** Breaking the corporate-political nexus, state funding encourages the government to make decisions focused on citizen welfare and good governance.
- ❑ **Increased Accountability:** The use of public money enhances the accountability of political parties to the public, fostering better party-public relations and diminishing the politico-corporate nexus.

### CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION

- ❑ **Fiscal Challenge:** State-sponsored electoral funding may strain the government's fiscal health, exacerbating the rising fiscal deficit.

- ❑ **Funds Diversion:** Allocating funds for elections could divert resources from critical sectors like health, education, and skill development.
- ❑ **Operational Challenges:** Establishing criteria for fund distribution among political parties and candidates poses significant operational challenges.
- ❑ **Risk of Misuse:** State-funded electoral funding might be misused, with frivolous political parties emerging solely to receive subsidies.
- ❑ **Regulatory Hurdles:** The Election Commission of India has opposed state funding, citing difficulties in regulating candidates' expenditures beyond what the state provides.
- ❑ **Limited Benefits due to Intra-Party Democracy:** The impact of state funding may be limited by the lack of intra-party democracy within political parties.
- ❑ **Potential Extremism:** State funding, using methods like 'democracy vouchers,' may lead to the election of more extremist candidates, as observed in a study of a similar system in Seattle.

### CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

While state funding of elections is a desirable goal for enhancing transparency, a proper procedure for fund distribution must be devised through consensus among major political parties. In the meantime, alternative reforms like exploring a National Electoral Fund, strict auditing of political party accounts, and imposing expenditure limits and donation caps can be implemented. These measures will contribute to transparency in electoral funding until a consensus is reached on the broader concept of state funding.

# CENTER-STATE RELATIONS IN INDIA: ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

## RELEVANCE

### Syllabus:

- ❑ **GS2:** Issues and Challenges Pertaining to the Federal Structure
- ❑ **PSIR:** Inter-state disputes

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the frequency and intensity of disputes between the Union government and the States have increased, posing long-lasting economic costs.



### SEVERAL EMERGING CHALLENGES IN CENTER-STATE RELATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THIS STRAINED DYNAMIC

#### Lack of Autonomy in Public Expenditure:

**Issue:** State governments heavily depend on the Centre for revenue receipts, limiting their autonomy in managing public expenditure.

#### Homogenisation of Social Sector Policies:

**Issue:** Diverse socio-economic conditions and cultural differences among states require tailored social sector policies. However, centralization tends to homogenize policies, overlooking state-specific needs.

#### Functioning of Regulatory Institutions:

**Issue:** Regulatory institutions, often under central control, can impact power dynamics between the center and states, affecting decision-making processes.

#### Powers of Central Agencies:

**Issue:** Some central agencies' extensive powers may be perceived as encroaching on state autonomy. Striking a balance is essential to maintain national interests while respecting state sovereignty.

### IMPACT OF CENTER-STATE FRICTIONS ON THE ECONOMY

#### Crowding Out of States:

**Consequence:** The expanding role of the Centre, exemplified by initiatives like PM Gati Shakti, limits the flexibility of states in planning and implementing their projects. This can lead to underinvestment, hindering regional economic growth.

#### Unhealthy Fiscal Competition:

**Consequence:** States engage in unhealthy fiscal competition with each other and the Centre, especially in areas like welfare provisioning. This can result in flat state revenues and hinder their ability to raise funds independently.

#### Inefficiencies from Parallel Policies:

**Consequence:** Federal friction may lead to the duplication of policies by the Centre and states, resulting in inefficiencies. An example is the divergence in pension schemes, with some states reverting to the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) despite initially joining the National Pension Scheme (NPS).

### WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

#### Preserving Interdependence:

**Solution:** Acknowledge and preserve the inherent interdependence between the Centre and states in a large, diverse, and developing society.

#### Enhancing Autonomy:

**Solution:** Grant states greater autonomy, particularly in managing public expenditure, to address their unique socio-economic needs.

#### Tailoring Policies:

**Solution:** Encourage the formulation of state-specific policies, respecting the diversity and varying developmental levels among states.

#### Balancing Centralization:

**Solution:** Find a delicate balance between centralized authority for national interests and safeguarding the autonomy of states in decision-making.

#### Addressing Fiscal Competition:

**Solution:** Promote healthy fiscal competition among states, avoiding excessive rivalry that hampers overall economic development.

#### Streamlining Regulatory Processes:

**Solution:** Ensure that regulatory institutions operate transparently and efficiently, considering the unique needs of each state.

#### Coordinated Policy Implementation:

**Solution:** Foster coordination between the Centre and states to prevent duplication of policies, promoting efficiency and effective resource utilization.

Addressing these issues requires a collaborative approach that recognizes the diverse nature of the country and ensures that center-state relations contribute positively to economic growth and development.

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# MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

**Q) India's special relations with Bhutan are not just political, but are based on a holistic partnership. Elaborate.**

Diplomatic ties between India and Bhutan were established in 1968, with the foundation of their bilateral relations laid out in the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation of 1949. This treaty emphasizes perpetual peace, friendship, free trade, commerce, and equal justice for citizens of both nations.

Bhutan's cultural connection with India dates back to the 8th century BC when Buddhism reached the region through the revered Indian saint, Swami Padmasambhava. He is recognized as the founder of Tibetan Buddhism and is credited with spreading the message of Buddha throughout the Himalayan region, including Bhutan.

Apart from its cultural significance, Bhutan holds strategic importance due to its unique geographical location between India and China, the two major powers in Asia. Situated in the Eastern Himalayas, Bhutan shares borders with the Tibetan Autonomous Region to the north, Sikkim state and the Chumbi valley to the west, Arunachal Pradesh to the east, and the states of Assam and West Bengal to the south.

The Indian government, including the Modi administration, has consistently prioritized the India-Bhutan relationship. Prime Minister Modi's first state visit was to Bhutan, emphasizing the "natural choice" and the "unique and special relationship" between the two countries.

Bhutan's significance in India's neighborhood policy was evident during the Doklam standoff when India responded to Bhutan's request for assistance against China's construction attempts in the Doklam Plateau.

However, challenges persist in India's relationship with Bhutan, as noted by Harsh V. Pant. Regional security dynamics, particularly China's assertiveness in the region and India's efforts to counterbalance it, present ongoing challenges. Suhasini Haider highlights that China's renewed involvement in the eastern region has placed Bhutan in a precarious position, akin to being caught between two powerful forces.

**Q) Elaborate on feminist critique on traditional view of National Security.**

Feminists have been vocal critics of the traditional concept of national security, arguing against discriminatory practices towards women. They contend that the prevailing model of national security reflects a dominance of masculine ideals. Additionally, feminists scrutinize the male-centric structure of government and global politics, asserting that it often sidelines feminist perspectives, leaving the voices of women unheard. Scholars like R.W. Connel label this phenomenon as "hegemonic masculinity," shaping the conventional notion of security.

Despite women's crucial roles in global politics, they remain on the peripheries of power, as highlighted by J. Ann Tickner. This marginalization is evident not only at the state level but also within the broader international system. Women are often relegated to a complementary status, both in their societal standing and how they perceive the world.

In contrast to conventional security studies, feminists adopt a bottom-up approach, examining the micro-level impact of conflict. They are particularly concerned with the effects of war on women and civilians, challenging the stereotype that wars aim to protect the "vulnerable." Feminist perspectives shed new

light on ethno-national wars, bringing issues like wartime rape and military prostitution into the security discourse. They question the state's role as a security provider, suggesting that in many contemporary conflicts, states may pose threats to their own populations through direct violence or trade-offs between warfare and welfare.

A notable development since the end of the Cold War is the increasing recognition of feminist perspectives in world politics and security. This recognition is exemplified by key UN resolutions, such as Security Council Resolution 1325, which advocates for the integration of gender perspectives across all fields. Member states are urged to enhance women's participation in peace processes and security decision-making. While only partially successful, these efforts contribute to a crucial discourse challenging the notion that security is exclusively a male domain.

**Q) Make a comparative assessment of Greek perspective of Justice with the Rawlsian concept of Justice.**

The concept of justice has evolved over time, as evident from the perspectives of various philosophers across history. In Plato's "Republic," justice was one of the four cardinal virtues alongside temperance, wisdom, and courage. Plato envisioned an ideal state where individuals fulfilled their roles based on their inherent nature. Justice was a fundamental principle, and each person's duty was to be diligently carried out.

Aristotle, building on this foundation, introduced additional dimensions to justice, including considerations of equality, proportionality, and maintaining societal balance. The Greek understanding of justice often included hierarchical elements, drawing from divinity, natural principles, or established traditions.

Moving forward in history, John Rawls introduced a modern perspective on justice. He emphasized that justice was achieved when deviations from equality could be reasonably justified. Rawls' theory of justice revolved around the idea of fairness, where societal and economic conditions played a crucial role. His works, "A Theory of Justice" and "Justice as Fairness," delved into the economic and social realities of contemporary societies.

Rawls' assertion that "justice is the first virtue of social institutions" and the emphasis on the "basic structure of society" being the primary focus of justice continues the classical legacy. This echoes Aristotle's observation that people pursue what they consider good and prefer more to less. While Rawls' approach is less abstract than Plato's and more attuned to the current social context, the evolution of justice is evident as it incorporates both historical ideas and contemporary considerations.

In essence, justice remains a moral virtue throughout this evolution. Like Plato, Aristotle, and Rawls, the concept of justice is still tied to a "public conception of justice." As societies evolve, so does the notion of justice, yet it continues to draw from its early philosophical roots while adapting to the changing dynamics of the world.

**Q) What are the key issues plaguing the Election Commission of India, and what are some of the suggested reforms, as recommended by committees and commissions, to address these issues?**

Introduction

The Election Commission of India has recently come under scrutiny due to controversies surrounding the composition of the Committee responsible for appointing the Chief Election Commissioner. While the elitist theory of state gives highest importance to elections, such controversies highlight the various challenges and concerns surrounding the functioning of the Election Commission.

### Lack of Independence and Impartiality in Appointment Process:

Critics argue that the current system of appointing the Chief Election Commissioner lacks independence and impartiality, as it allows for political influence in the selection process. This compromises the neutrality and integrity of the Election Commission.

### Challenges in Conducting Fair and Free Elections:

The Election Commission faces numerous logistical and operational challenges in conducting elections in a diverse and populous country like India. Managing voter registration, ensuring fair polling booth operations, and addressing instances of voter suppression, electoral fraud, and violence pose significant hurdles for the Election Commission.

### Debates on the Effectiveness of Election Commission's Enforcement:

There is ongoing debate about the effectiveness of the Election Commission in enforcing election rules and regulations. Critics argue that the Commission's powers to curb electoral malpractices and enforce campaign finance regulations need to be strengthened. Timely resolution of electoral disputes is also crucial to uphold the credibility of the electoral process.

### Transparency and Accountability of Political Party Funding:

Concerns have been raised regarding the transparency and accountability of political parties in disclosing their funding sources. The Election Commission plays a crucial role in monitoring and regulating campaign financing, but there have been calls for stricter regulations to prevent the influence of money power in elections.

### Other Issues with the Election Commission:

- Disparity in stature and dismissal mechanism between Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other Election Commissioners (ECs).
- Lack of specifications regarding the number, qualifications, terms, and conditions of service for regional Commissioners.
- Inadequate authority over recruitment and regulation of secretariat staff.
- Dependence on cooperation and faith of both opposition and ruling parties for unbiased functioning.
- Failures in curbing criminalization, money, and muscle power in elections.
- Issues with election funding, including controversies surrounding electoral bonds.
- Accusations of partisanship and political interference, as seen in the Ashok Lavasa controversy.
- Inadequate responses to violations of the Model Code of Conduct.

Several reforms have been suggested to address the issues plaguing the working of the Election Commission of India. These reforms aim to enhance the independence, transparency, and effectiveness of the Commission. Some of the **suggested reforms** include:

- Transparent Appointment Process:** Implementing a more transparent and non-partisan process for the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners. This could involve the involvement of a diverse and independent selection committee, as recommended by the **Law Commission of India in its 255th Report**.

- ❑ **Strengthening Election Laws:** Enacting stronger legislation to curb electoral malpractices, ensure campaign finance regulations, and increase the penalties for violations. This would help in maintaining a level playing field for all political parties and candidates, as proposed by the Election Commission itself and various civil society organizations.
- ❑ **Electoral Reforms:** Introducing electoral reforms to address issues such as voter suppression, electoral violence, and fraud. This could include measures to streamline voter registration processes, improve the security of electronic voting machines, and enhance the efficiency of the electoral dispute resolution mechanism, as recommended by the Committee on Electoral Reforms (**Dinesh Goswami Committee**).
- ❑ **Enhanced Powers and Resources:** Granting the Election Commission greater powers and resources to enforce election rules and regulations effectively. This could involve strengthening the Commission's authority to take action against violators, ensuring the timely resolution of electoral disputes, and providing adequate funding and logistical support for conducting elections, as recommended by various expert committees and commissions.
- ❑ **Transparent Campaign Financing:** Introducing stricter regulations on campaign financing and ensuring greater transparency in political party funding. This could include mandatory disclosure of funding sources, auditing of campaign expenses, and effective monitoring mechanisms to prevent the influence of money power in elections, as suggested by the Law Commission of India and the Committee on Electoral Reforms.
- ❑ **Voter Education and Awareness:** Promoting voter education and awareness programs to empower citizens with knowledge about their rights and responsibilities. This would help in increasing voter turnout and fostering a more informed electorate, as recommended by the Election Commission and various civil society organizations.
- ❑ **Technological Advancements:** Embracing technological advancements to improve the efficiency and transparency of the electoral process. This could include the use of advanced voter registration systems, secure electronic voting machines, and online voter information portals, as suggested by the Election Commission and the Committee on Electoral Reforms.

These suggested reforms, recommended by various committees and commissions, aim to strengthen the Election Commission of India and enhance its ability to conduct free, fair, and transparent elections. Implementing these reforms would contribute to maintaining the integrity and credibility of the electoral process in the country.

# SCHOLARS DIGEST:KNOW YOUR SCHOLAR

## KAUTILYA: MASTERMIND BEHIND ANCIENT INDIAN POLITICAL WISDOM



### INTRODUCTION

Kautilya, also known as Chanakya, was an ancient Indian philosopher, teacher, economist, and political strategist who played a key role in the establishment of the Maurya Empire. His seminal work, the “Arthashastra,” is a comprehensive treatise on statecraft, politics, economics, and military strategy. Written around the 4th century BCE, this ancient text remains a cornerstone of Indian political thought and provides timeless insights into governance and diplomacy.

### LIFE AND BACKGROUND

Little is known about Kautilya’s early life, but he gained prominence as the chief advisor to Chandragupta Maurya, the founder of the Maurya Empire. Kautilya’s astuteness in statecraft helped Chandragupta overthrow the Nanda dynasty and establish one of the most powerful empires in ancient India.

### THE ARTHASHASTRA: A BLUEPRINT FOR GOVERNANCE

The “Arthashastra” is divided into 15 books, each focusing on different aspects of governance. It covers topics ranging from economics and law to international relations and military strategy. Kautilya’s work emphasizes the importance of a strong and efficient administration, economic prosperity, and the welfare of the people.

### KEY PRINCIPLES

- ❑ **Rajamandala Theory:** Kautilya proposed the concept of the “circle of states” or “rajamandala,” which explains the dynamic relationships between neighboring kingdoms. He advocated alliances based on mutual interests and the strategic use of diplomacy to maintain regional stability.
- ❑ **Danda-Niti (The Science of Punishment):** Kautilya believed in the judicious use of power.

He outlined principles for punishment and deterrence, emphasizing the need for a ruler to balance coercion with rewards to maintain order and control.

- ❑ **Economic Policies:** The “Arthashastra” discusses economic policies, trade, taxation, and agriculture. Kautilya stressed the importance of a flourishing economy to support the state and advocated fair taxation to prevent public discontent.
- ❑ **Espionage and Information Gathering:** Kautilya highlighted the significance of intelligence gathering for effective decision-making. He recognized the value of spies and espionage in understanding the intentions of allies and enemies alike.

### LEGACY AND INFLUENCE

Kautilya’s ideas, as presented in the “Arthashastra,” have left an indelible mark on Indian political

thought. His emphasis on ethical governance, economic stability, and diplomatic acumen has influenced leaders and scholars throughout history. In modern times, his work continues to be studied and respected, not only in India but also globally, as a source of profound political wisdom.

### CONCLUSION

Kautilya’s “Arthashastra” stands as a testament to the depth of ancient Indian political knowledge. His insights into governance, diplomacy, and statecraft remain relevant, offering valuable lessons for contemporary leaders and scholars. As we delve into the pages of this ancient text, we unearth timeless principles that continue to shape the understanding of politics and power in the modern world.

## JOSEPH NYE



### INTRODUCTION

Joseph Nye Jr., born on January 19, 1937, is an influential American political scientist known for co-founding the international relations theory of neoliberalism with Robert Keohane. This groundbreaking theory was articulated in their 1977 book, “Power and Interdependence.” In

collaboration, they introduced the concepts of asymmetrical and complex interdependence, shedding light on the intricacies of global relations. During the 1970s, Nye and Keohane delved into transnational relations and world politics, contributing significantly to the field through an edited volume. More recently, Nye has been a

trailblazer in the realm of soft power, pioneering this concept and exploring its implications in contemporary geopolitics. His work has left a lasting impact on the understanding of international relations, shaping the way we perceive power dynamics and cooperation on the global stage.

### CONCEPT OF SOFT POWER

In his book “Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power,” Joseph Nye introduced the concept of Soft Power. Nye’s framework identified three key dimensions of power. First, there’s the traditional approach of coercion through military force. Second, there’s influence achieved by offering economic incentives. The third dimension, and the one Nye emphasized, is the ability to co-opt other states by projecting a nation’s appeal based on its culture and values. This involves shaping a positive perception that leads other states to modify their preferences in alignment with your interests. Despite the relative decline in the United States’ military dominance since World War II, Nye argued that the country possessed a unique source of power. In addition to using military force for control, the U.S. could leverage its soft power—its ability to attract and persuade without coercion—to solidify its leadership position in the global arena. It’s about getting others to willingly do what they might not otherwise do, drawn in by the compelling narrative of the nation’s culture and values.

### ISSUES AND RELEVANCE OF SOFT POWER

In the realm of democracy promotion and the spread of liberal ideals, the journey has been far from smooth. From the third wave democracies of the 1970s and 1980s to the eager Eastern European states joining the EU and NATO post-Cold War, and more recently, the nations navigating the

complexities of the Arab Spring—liberal democracy has struggled to establish a lasting presence. In fact, in many instances, attempts at instilling it led to catastrophic consequences for those involved.

The United States, along with Europe, grew overly confident in the persuasive power of their soft influence, especially during the era when President George W. Bush boldly declared the U.S. as “a moral nation” with universal moral truths. This confidence, however, bred an illusion that soft power could stand alone, detached from hard power. This notion, even though not endorsed by soft power theorist Joseph Nye, became a driving force in global diplomacy.

In reality, soft power has always been intertwined with hard power. The European project, in particular, built on a foundation of misconceptions about soft power, benefited for years as a free rider in the global arena. The U.S. ensured its security, and economic prosperity relied on the U.S.-led global economic order. As the United States shifted focus to a more assertive hard power approach, Europe finds itself grappling with substantial challenges.

Soft power, once seemingly unstoppable, has proven to be fragile and susceptible to manipulation. Facilitated by the internet and social media, it played a role in numerous uprisings and regime changes, from the color revolutions to the upheavals in Cairo’s Tahrir Square and Kiev’s Maidan. The West celebrated when platforms like Facebook and Google fueled revolutions, but the tune changed when Russia employed the same tactics to undermine Western politics. The lesson learned is that the dynamics of soft power are nuanced and demand a more realistic understanding, recognizing its inherent connection to hard power and its vulnerability in the face of evolving geopolitical landscapes.

# IMMANUEL WALLERSTEIN



## INTRODUCTION

Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein (September 28, 1930 – August 31, 2019) was an American sociologist and economic historian, renowned for pioneering the world-systems approach within sociology.

## WORLD SYSTEM THEORY

World-systems theory, developed by American sociologist and historian Immanuel Wallerstein (1930–2019) in his 1974 work “The Modern World System,” presents a contrasting perspective to modernization theory. While modernization theory posits that economic development will eventually spread globally, Wallerstein’s theory argues that economically powerful regions primarily benefit themselves at the expense of peripheral areas. This concept can be traced back to a notion proposed by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870–1924), the leader of the Bolshevik Revolution (1917), who suggested that class struggles in capitalist Europe had, to some extent, shifted into the international economic arena, with Russia and China representing proletarian countries. Wallerstein’s focus was on the period when European capitalism first expanded into Africa and the Americas, but he

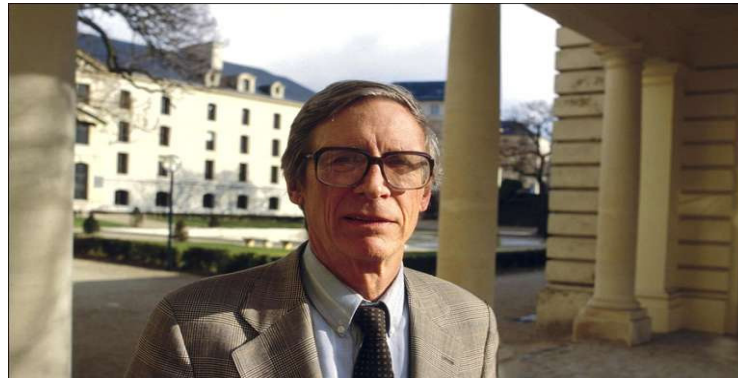
also emphasized that world-systems theory could be applied to earlier systems where Europeans did not hold dominance.

In line with Wallerstein’s perspective, German-born American economist André Gunder Frank (1929–2005) argued for the existence of an ancient world system, indicating an early tension between core and periphery. He further extended the application of world-systems theory to the 20th century, asserting that “underdevelopment” wasn’t just a matter of falling behind but resulted from the exploitative economic power wielded by industrialized nations. This idea, often referred to as the “development of underdevelopment” or “dependency theory,” offered an alternative narrative for world history, one that lacked a positive outcome for the majority of humanity.

Similar to modernization theory, world-systems theory has faced criticism for its Eurocentric perspective. Additionally, many economists have questioned the empirical evidence supporting it. While the theory has been productive in raising important questions, its proposed answers have generated significant controversy.



# JOHN RAWLS: A VISIONARY IN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY



## INTRODUCTION

John Rawls, an American philosopher, made significant contributions to political philosophy, particularly in the realms of justice and fairness. Born in 1921 in Baltimore, Maryland, Rawls grew up witnessing the socio-political turbulence of the 20th century, which significantly shaped his intellectual pursuits.

Rawls's magnum opus, "A Theory of Justice," published in 1971, revolutionized political philosophy by introducing a fresh perspective on justice and equality. His ideas have influenced scholars, policymakers, and activists worldwide.

## THE VEIL OF IGNORANCE

At the core of Rawls's philosophy is the concept of the "original position" and the "veil of ignorance." He asks us to imagine a hypothetical scenario where individuals are about to create a new society but are unaware of their personal attributes, such as wealth, talents, or social status. This "veil of ignorance" ensures that the decision-makers are unbiased and rational, as they are oblivious to their own positions in the forthcoming society.

## PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE

From behind the veil of ignorance, Rawls argues that rational individuals would agree upon two fundamental principles of justice:

**The Principle of Equal Basic Liberties:** Each person is entitled to the most extensive basic liberties compatible with similar liberties for others.

**The Difference Principle:** Social and economic inequalities should be arranged so that they benefit the least advantaged members of society. Any inequality must be to everyone's advantage and, notably, attached to positions and offices open to all.

These principles are foundational to Rawls's vision of a just society. They prioritize individual rights, especially those of the most vulnerable, and propose a fair distribution of resources and opportunities.

## REFLECTIVE EQUILIBRIUM

Rawls introduced the concept of "reflective equilibrium" to address criticisms and refine his theory continuously. It suggests that moral judgments should align coherently with our considered beliefs. Rawls encourages an ongoing dialogue between our fundamental principles and our intuitive judgments, seeking a state of reflective equilibrium where they mutually reinforce each other.

## POLITICAL LIBERALISM

In his later works, particularly in "Political Liberalism" (1993), Rawls adapted his theory to be more inclusive, recognizing the diversity of

comprehensive doctrines in a pluralistic society. He aimed to provide a framework for political cooperation that people from different moral, religious, and philosophical backgrounds could accept.

### CRITIQUES AND LEGACY

While Rawls's theory has been influential, it has faced criticism. Some argue that the veil of ignorance is an unrealistic abstraction, while others question the feasibility of achieving the principles of justice in a complex, real-world society. Critics also argue that Rawls's focus on

justice can sideline other important values, such as efficiency or economic growth.

Despite these critiques, Rawls's ideas have left an enduring legacy in political philosophy. His emphasis on justice as fairness, the original position, and the veil of ignorance has shaped debates on distributive justice, societal fairness, and the role of institutions in creating an equitable social order. Rawls's work continues to inspire scholars, policymakers, and activists seeking to create a more just and egalitarian world.



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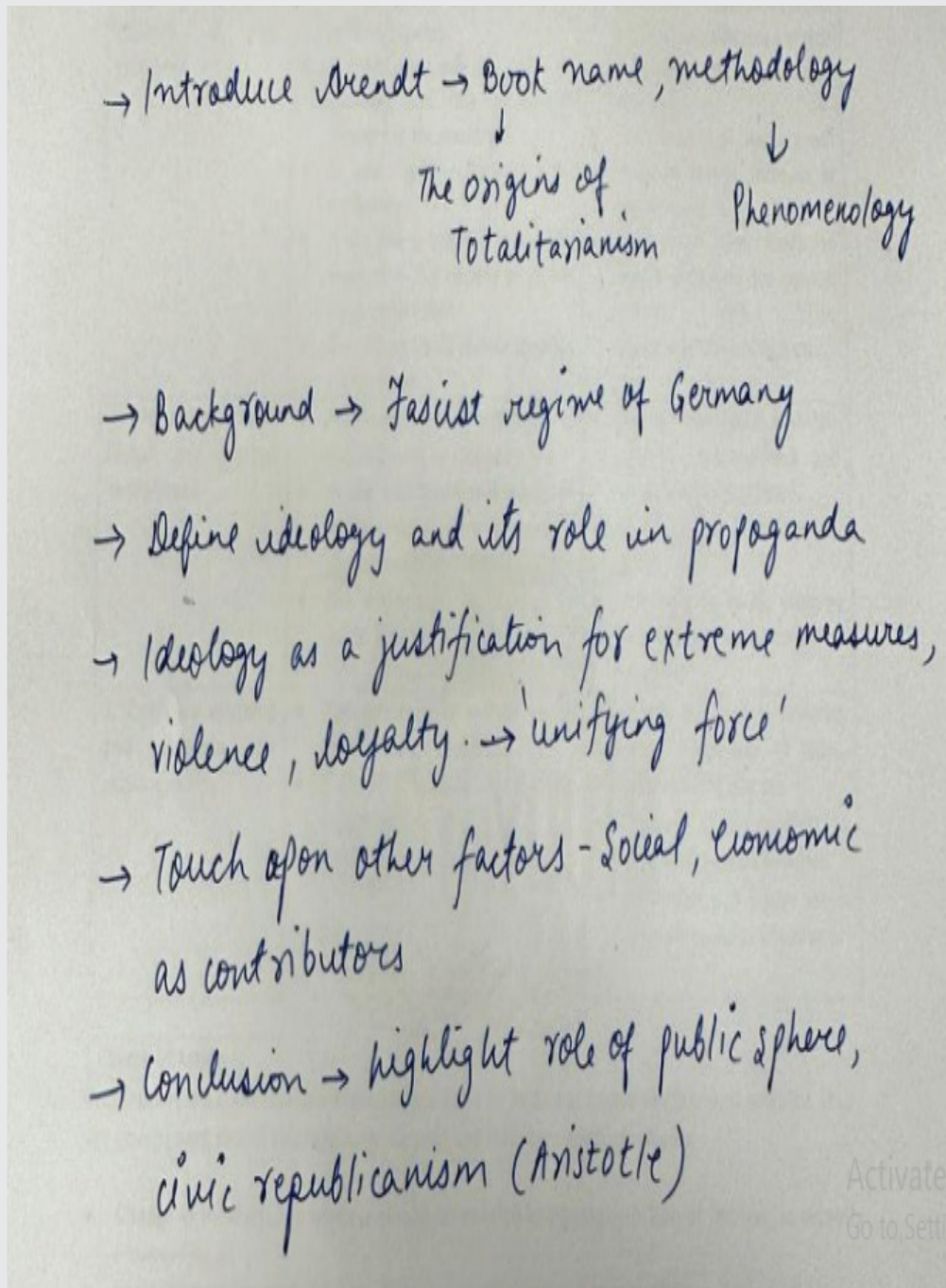


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# ENRICH YOUR ANSWER

Q) Discuss Hannah Arendt's analysis of the role of ideology in modern totalitarian regimes. (2017)



Q) Discuss the challenges that India faces in harnessing its soft power potential.

### Approach to Answer

Intro: Define soft power  
ie ability of a country to persuade others to do what it wants through persuasion and attraction.

### Body

→ Discuss India's soft power potential  
ie spiritualism, yoga, movies, television soaps, principles of Non-violence, democratic institutions, plural society etc.

→ Mention challenges to India's soft power:

eg \* Lack of diversification in diaspora engagement.

\* India's negative perception for widespread corruption, violence against women & minorities etc

\* Lack of state's efforts to harness soft power etc

### Conclusion

Give way forward for harnessing India's soft power potential.

Q) Circulation of elites. Comment in 150 words.

Approach to Answer

Intro: Start by explaining the concept of Power

Body

1. Explain the elitist theory of Power including Pareto's Circulation of Elites theory.

→ Elitist theory accepts broad division of society into dominant and dependent group.

→ Pareto's theory of Power divides society into 'governing elite' and 'non governing elite'.

→ Explain the 'governing elites' and 'non governing elites'.

→ Can give criticism of his theory

Conclusion

Show the significance of Pareto's theory in understanding the concept of Power

Q) Comment: Hobbesian idea of Political Obligation.

## Introduction

Explain the concept of political obligation using various thinkers

- Plato
- Aristotle
- Marx etc.

body → Background of Hobbes  
↳ reasoning for absolute obligation

→ Explain Hobbesian concept of state absolutism

→ Give criticism → Subjugates individual  
→ totalitarian state

Conclusion → Give defence → concern for life

→ Give relevance → COVID (China)

# PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- Which of the following initiatives has been undertaken by India to promote the international use of the Indian Rupee (INR)?
  - Establishment of the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC).
  - Adoption of a fixed exchange rate regime for the INR.
  - Imposing strict capital controls to limit INR flows across borders.
  - Encouraging the use of foreign currencies for trade transactions.
- The Cauvery River dispute primarily involves which Indian states, each vying for a fair share of its waters?
  - Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka
  - Karnataka and Tamil Nadu
  - Tamil Nadu and Kerala
  - Kerala and Karnataka
- The Election Commission of India consists of how many members, including the Chief Election Commissioner?
  - One
  - Two
  - Three
  - Four
- Which article of the Indian Constitution outlines the provisions for the Election Commission of India?
  - Article 320
  - Article 340
  - Article 324
  - Article 330
- 'Economic Justice' as one of the objectives of the Indian Constitution has been provided in
  - the Preamble and the Fundamental Rights
  - the Preamble and the Directive Principles of State Policy
  - the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of State Policy
  - None of the above
- A parliamentary system of government is one in which
  - All political parties in the parliament are represented in the government
  - The government is responsible to the parliament and can be removed by it
  - The government is elected by the people and can be removed by them
  - The government is chosen by the parliament but cannot be removed by it before completion of a fixed term
- Which part of the Constitution of India declares the ideal of Welfare state?
  - Directive principles of state policy
  - Fundamental rights
  - Preamble
  - Seventh schedule
- Consider the following statements:
  - The Constitution of India defines its 'basic structure' in terms of federalism, secularism, fundamental rights and democracy.
  - The Constitution of India provides for 'judicial review' to safeguard the 'citizens' liberties and to preserve the ideals on which the constitution is based.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
  - 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
- One common agreement between Gandhism and Marxism is:
  - The final goal of a stateless society
  - Class struggle
  - Abolition of private property
  - Economic determinism

**10.** The Preamble to the Constitution of India is

- (a) A part of the Constitution but has no legal effect
- (b) Not a part of the Constitution and has no legal effect either
- (c) A part of the Constitution and has the same legal effect as any other part
- (d) A part of the Constitution but has no legal effect independently of other parts

**11.** With reference to the provisions contained in part IV of the constitution of India, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. They shall be enforceable by courts
- 2. They shall not be enforceable by any court
- 3. The principles laid down in this part are to influence the making of laws by the state

Select the correct answer using the code given below

- (a) 1 only                      (b) 2 only                      (c) 1 and 3 only                      (d) 2 and 3 only

**12.** Other than the Fundamental Rights, which of the following parts of the Constitution of India reflect/reflects the principles and provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)?

- 1. Preamble
- 2. Directive Principles of State Policy
- 3. Fundamental Duties

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only                      (b) 2 only                      (c) 1 and 3 only                      (d) 1, 2 and 3

**13.** Which one of the following is correct in respect of the commencement of the election process in India?

- (a) The recommendation for election is made by the government and the notification for election is issued by the Election Commission
- (b) The recommendation for election is made by the Election Commission and the notification for election is issued by the Home Ministry at the Centre and Home Departments in the States
- (c) The recommendation for election is made by the Election Commission and the notification for election is issued by the President and Governors of the States concerned
- (d) Both the exercises of making a recommendation for election and that of issuing a notification in respect of it are done by the Election Commission

**Q14.** The purpose of the inclusion of Directive Principles of the State Policy in the Indian Constitution is to establish:

- (a) political democracy                      (b) social democracy
- (c) Gandhian democracy                      (d) social and economic democracy

**Q15.** Which one of the following Articles of the Directive Principles of the State Policy deals with the promotion of international peace and security?

- (a) 51                      (b) 48 A                      (c) 43 A                      (d) 41

**Q16.** The Ninth Schedule to the Indian Constitution was added by:

- (a) First Amendment                      (b) Eighth Amendment                      (c) Ninth Amendment                      (d) Forty Second Amendment

**Q17.** Under which Article of the Indian Constitution did the President give his asset to the ordinance on electoral reforms when it was sent back to him by the Union Cabinet without making any changes (in the year 2002) ?

- (a) Article 121                      (b) Article 122                      (c) Article 123                      (d) Article 124



## ANSWERS

1. (a) Establishment of the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC)
2. (b) Karnataka and Tamil Nadu
3. (c) Three
4. (c) Article 324
5. (b) The Preamble to the Constitution of India in its introductory statement says- "Justice- Social, Economic and Political" and the Directive Principles of state policies aim to create social and economic condition under which the citizens can lead a good life. They also aim to establish social and economic democracy through a welfare state.
6. (b)
7. (a)
8. (b)
9. (a)
10. (d)
11. (d)
12. (d)
13. (c)
14. (d) The purpose of Directive Principles of State Policy is to establish social and economic democracy. Political democracy is established by the Fundamental Rights.
15. (a) This comes under Directive Principles of State Policy under part IV of the Constitution. Article 51 states that the state shall endeavour to promote international peace and security.
16. (a) Ninth Schedule was added by First Amendment Act of 1951, which relates to Land Reforms.
17. (c) The President can issue Ordinance under Article 123.

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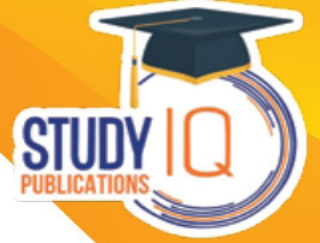


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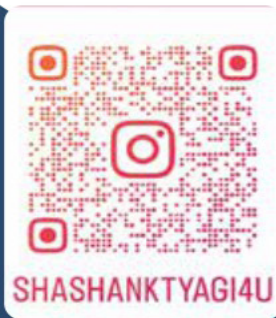
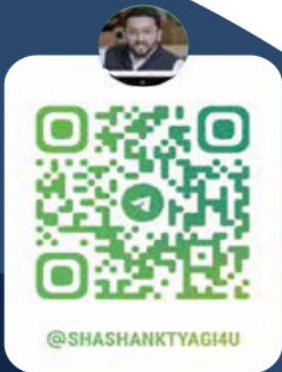
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