

12th Political Science Lesson 10 Notes in English

10] India and Its Neighbours

Introduction



- India has a long land frontier and coastline.
- It shares boundaries with Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan, China, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, and Sri Lanka.
- India has adopted a **foreign policy** of neutrality and non-involvement. With India being situated in a politically sensitive geography, her relations with the neighbours are always characterized by ups and downs.
- The foreign policy orientations and attitudes of all these countries towards India exercised profound influence on the framers of the India's foreign policy.
- On its part India tried to maintain **cordial and friendly relations** with these countries but has faced considerable difficulties in dealing with some of the neighbouring countries and often they have adopted hostile postures towards India.
- In her relations with the neighbours, India has been following the five principles of the famous **Panchsheel**.

India- Afghanistan Relations

- India has sought to establish its presence in **Afghanistan** from the early days of its **independence in 1947**.
- In 1950, Afghanistan and India signed a **"Friendship Treaty."**



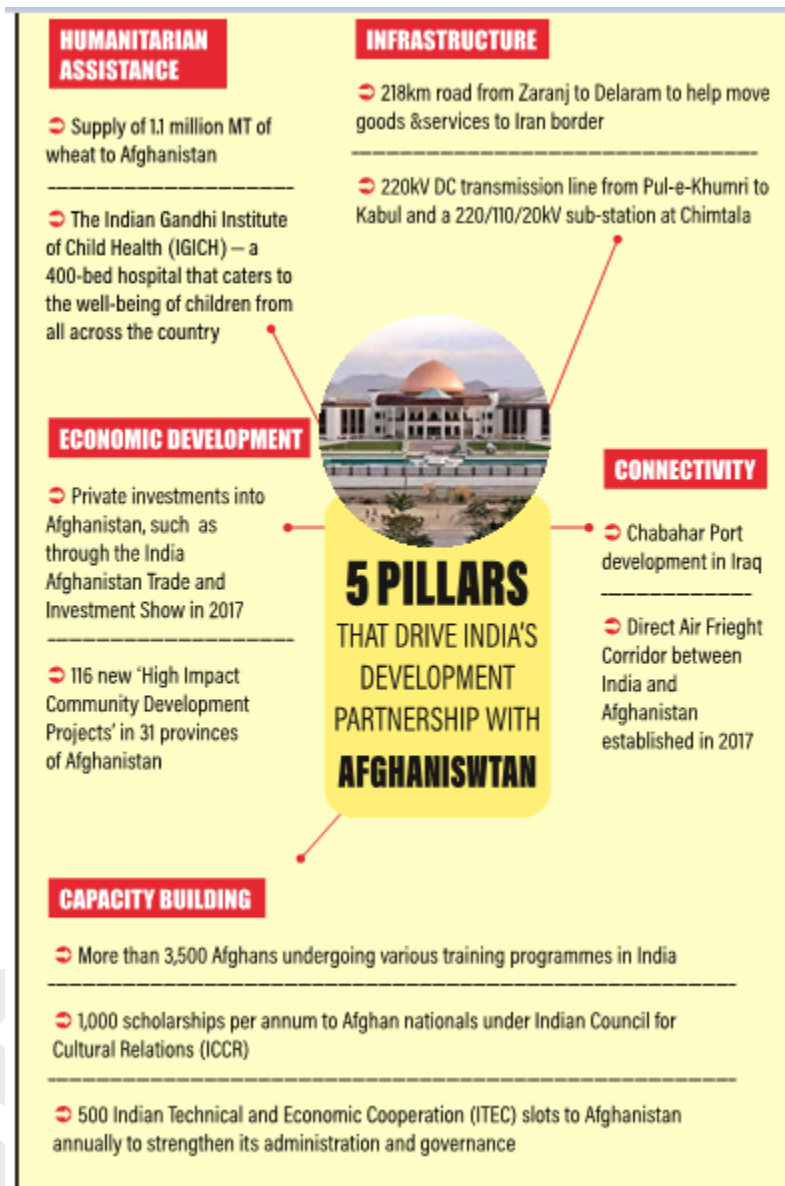
- India had robust ties with Afghanistan during King **Zahir Shah's regime**.



King Zahir Shah

- Prior to the **Soviet invasion in 1979**, India had formalized agreements and protocols with various **pro-Soviet regimes in Kabul**.
- While India's role in Afghanistan was constrained during **the anti-Soviet jihad**, between 1979 and 1989, India expanded its development activities in Afghanistan, focusing upon **industrial, irrigation, and hydroelectric projects**.
- After the **Taliban** consolidated their hold on Afghanistan in the mid-1990s, **King Zahir Shah** India struggled to maintain its presence and to support **anti-Taliban forces**.
- However, Indian objectives in Afghanistan remained modest given the constrained environment.
- India aimed to undermine the ability of the Taliban to consolidate its power in Afghanistan, principally by supporting the Northern Alliance in tandem with other regional actors.
- Working with **Iran, Russia, and Tajikistan**, India provided important resources to the **Northern Alliance**, the only meaningful challenge to the Taliban in Afghanistan.
- Since **2001**, **India** has relied upon **development projects** and other forms of humanitarian assistance.

- Expanding India's presence in Afghanistan through increased Indian training of Afghan civilian and military personnel, development projects, and expanded economic ties.
- Indian and Pakistan competition in Afghanistan is seen as a new **"Great Game"**.



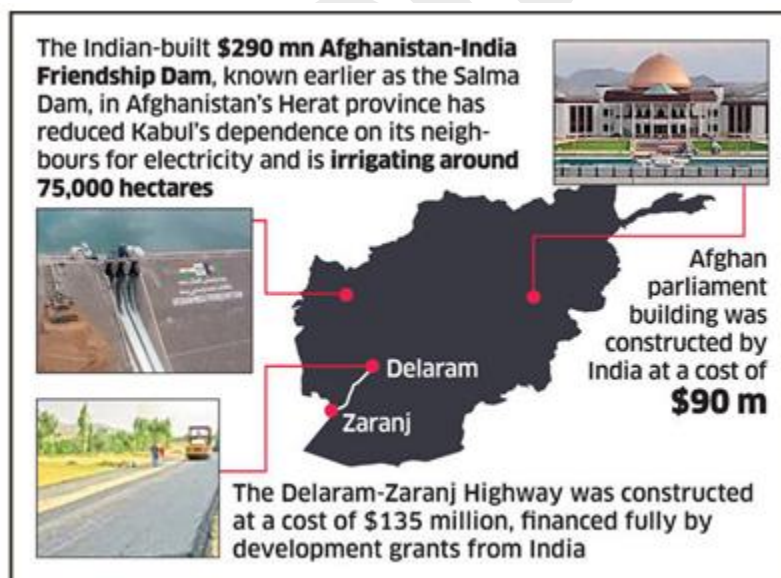
India-Afghanistan: Strategic interests

- Afghan is **India's natural ally**.
- India is interested in retaining **Afghanistan as a friendly state** from which it has the capacity to monitor Pakistan and cultivate assets to influence activities in Pakistan.
- While India is keenly interested in cultivating a significant partnership with Afghanistan, Pakistan is trying to deny India such opportunities.
- India's interest in Afghan is more than just Pakistan-centric and reflects its aspiration to be seen as a regional power.

- **Islamic fundamentalism in Pakistan and Afghanistan** has dangerous effects in the domestic social fabric of India.

India-Afghanistan: Economic interests

- **Afghanistan** has a **mineral wealth** of about US \$1-3 trillion which includes Iron ore, Lithium, Chromium, Natural Gas, Petroleum etc.
- Safeguarding **Indian investments** and **personnel in Afghanistan** is of utmost importance to India as Indian investment in Afghan amounts to about US \$3bn.
- **The top commodities exported by India** were man-made staple fibers, cereals, tobacco, electrical machinery, dairy produce eggs, honey, rubber products, pharmaceuticals, clothing accessories, boilers and machineries whereas the imports mainly comprised of fresh fruits, dried fruits/nuts, raisins, vegetables, oil seeds, precious/semi-precious stones etc.
- To achieve the **possibilities of trade**, India and Afghanistan signed a **Preferential Trade Agreement** in **March 2003** under which India allowed substantial duty concessions ranging from 50% to 100% to certain category (38 items) of Afghan dry fruits.
- In **November 2011**, **India removed basic customs duties** for all products of Afghanistan (except alcohol and tobacco) giving them duty free access to the Indian market.



- India is one of the major export destinations of Afghanistan's goods.
- The operation of **the Chabahar port** in Iran could substantially increase Afghanistan's exports by providing a **new transit route for Afghan to trade with India** and the rest of the world.
- Recently the Indian government has approved USD 85 Million for upgrading the capacity of **Chabahar Port** in Iran for an alternate trade transit route for Afghanistan.



India-Afghanistan: Security interests

- India faced many **security challenges** from **the Taliban in Afghan** during the 1990s.
- **Pakistan** has raised and **supported several militant** groups such as Lashkar- e-Taiba, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen/Harkat- ul-Ansar, and Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami among others, which operate in India.
- All of these groups have trained in Afghanistan, with varying proximity to the Taliban and by extension **al-Qaeda**.
- Thus India is absolutely clear that Afghanistan should not again become a terrorist safe haven.
- Radical ideologies and terrorism spreading in this region are a **security threat for India**.
- With Pakistan increasing its strategic depth in Afghanistan, it can reverse the gain of India.
- Pakistan can incubate and move around various anti-India groups in Afghan especially in **Loya Paktia**.
- The golden crescent comprising of Iran, Afghan, and Pakistan is a worry for India, especially with respect to the issue of drug abuse in Punjab.
- **Islamic State** is using Afghan as an outpost in Asia as it has come under stress in **Iraq** and **Syria**.

Indian policy on Afghanistan

- In 2011, India became the first country that **Afghanistan signed a strategic partnership agreement**.
- Until then, India was following the **US demand** of India's limited cooperation with Afghanistan.
- India has repeatedly stressed that its relationship with Afghanistan is independent of Pakistan.

- India argues that the tripartite relationship between India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan is mutually independent.
- In both the **1965 and 1971 wars**, Afghanistan was non-committal and did not support India.
- On the **Kashmir issue**, Afghanistan has not publicly supported India. India has not entered the debate on **the Durand Line**.
- India also realises that stability can result in Afghanistan only if all the major actors and countries have a stake in its stability, growth and prosperity.
- India has been championing efforts to attract regional and trans-regional investment into Afghanistan that provides a viable alternative to the dominant narrative of extremism and offers job opportunities to its population by pioneering events like the **Delhi Investment Summit on Afghanistan in June 2012**.
- Recognising that the region holds the key to peace in Afghanistan, India is spearheading commercial confidence building measures in the region within the purview of **the Heart of Asia Process**.
- Multilaterally, it helped initiate a dialogue on Afghanistan through various platforms like the **Afghanistan-India-US trilateral** and the **Afghanistan-India-Iran trilateral** that seek to bring together international partners with disparate worldviews in pursuit of the common goal of securing peace and prosperity in Afghanistan.
- India also expressed its support to international cooperation on Afghanistan at the UN and at various international conferences focused on the future of Afghanistan, including the seminal **Tokyo Developmental Conference in July 2012** and **London Conference in December 2014**.
- In 2015, in a first major offensive **military platform to Kabul**, India gifted three Mi 25 attack helicopters.
- The delivery marks the first time India has gifted offensive combat capability to Afghanistan, a sensitive topic in the past due to strong objections by Pakistan.
- Under the agreement, India will also train Afghan defence personnel in operations.

Way Ahead

- India's developmental approach has earned it immense goodwill among the Afghan people.
- However, the "**soft power**" strategy has limitations. There is a domestic consensus in India that boots-on-ground is not an option.
- Thus, India is in the dilemma between continued soft-power or to aggressively push its hard power.
- While India's principled position that it will not directly or publicly talk to the Taliban until it engages the Afghan government, it is necessary that India stays abreast of all negotiations and isn't cut out of the resolution process.
- It is hoped that a robust channel is open between Indian intelligence agencies and all important groups in Afghanistan, including the Taliban, in order to ensure that Indian interests, development projects, and citizens are kept secure.

- India should leverage the goodwill it enjoys among the Afghan people.
- India must intensify its dialogue with regional and global stakeholders, and impress upon them that any dialogue with the Taliban must not come at the cost of the hard-fought victories of the Afghan people in the past two decades; on establishing constitutional democracy and the rule of law, and securing the rights of women and minorities.
- It is time for India to engage the Taliban to secure its interests.
- India also needs to reassess its policy choices in close coordination with Russia and Iran, constantly reminding them that complete surrender to the Taliban's demands will be detrimental to their own security.

India – Pakistan Relations



- History has been uncharitable to India and Pakistan, two close neighbours who, just a little over seven decades, shared geography, culture, religion, language, and the very ethos and philosophy of life that sustained an ancient civilization.
- The bitter partition of India and Pakistan, led mass migration amidst horrendous violence as Muslims fled to Pakistan and Hindus and Sikhs to India in millions.
- The tragedy that began at the time of partition continues to have effect until this day in forms of wars that both countries fought and the menace of terrorism for which both countries are victims.

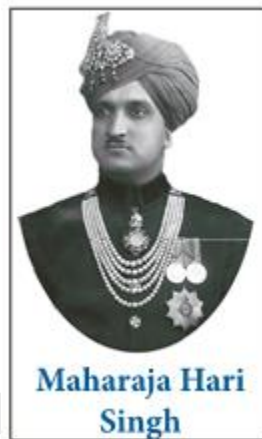
Indian Developmental projects in Afghanistan™

- The restoration of the Stor palace in the same city.™
- Rebuilding of **the Habibia High School**, also in the capital, and providing it with grants-in-aid.
- Financing the establishment of the **Afghan National Agriculture Sciences and Technology University (ANASTU)** in **Kandahar** and assisting it in various ways.
- Constructing **the Chimtala power** substation in **Kabul**.™
- Building the cricket stadium in Kandahar; Lets Afghanistan's national cricket team use an Indian stadium as its home ground.™
- Building a cold storage warehouse in Kandahar.™

- Upgrading telephone exchanges in some provinces. TM
- Expanding the national television network. TM
- Digging tube wells in some of the provinces.
- India has donated buses, helicopters, Ambulance etc., to Afghanistan.

Kashmir Imbroglio

- **The region of Kashmir** is at the heart of hostility between the neighbours and was the cause of two of their three wars since independence from Britain in 1947.
- Under the partition plan provided by **the Indian Independence Act**, **Kashmir** was free to accede to either India or Pakistan.

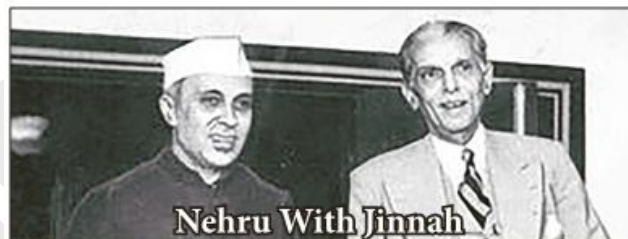


- **The Maharaja of Kashmir, Hari Singh**, initially wanted **Kashmir** to become an independent nation - but in October 1947 chose to join India, in return for its help against an invasion of tribesmen from Pakistan.
- A war erupted and India approached **the United Nations** asking it to intervene.
- The war came to an end on **January 1, 1949**, by a **UN-** mandated ceasefire line, along with the deployment of a UN peace-keeping group at the ceasefire line.
- This was the **first Indo- Pakistani war**.
- This proved to be the longest-running war over Kashmir, but was also the least costly as a result of the limited nature of the firepower employed by both sides.
- As a fallout of end of war in Kashmir a result of the ceasefire agreement, **a Line Of Control (LOC)** was established between the opposing armies, which left Pakistan occupying about a third of the State.



(Lt-Gen. A.A.K. Niazi signs instrument of surrender in the presence of Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Aurora)

- The United Nations recommended holding a **plebiscite** to settle the question of whether the state would join India or Pakistan.
- However the two countries could not agree to a deal to demilitarise the region before the referendum could be held.
- In July 1949, India and Pakistan signed an agreement to establish a ceasefire line as recommended by the UN and the region became divided.
- A second war followed in 1965.



Nehru With Jinnah

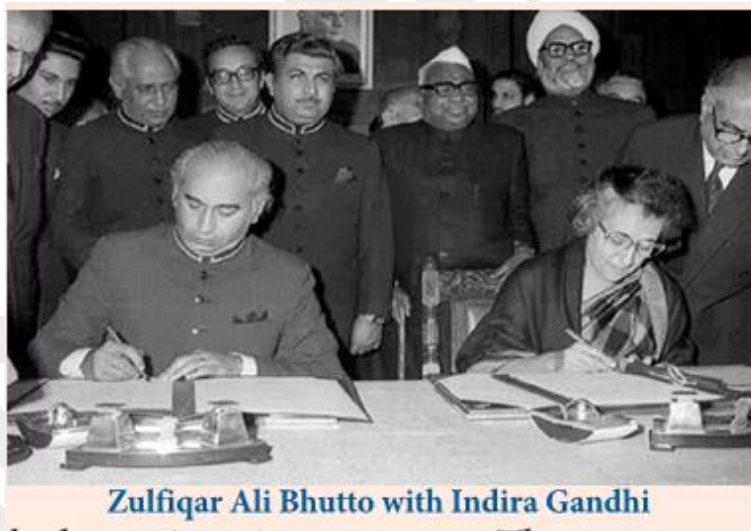


Mass migration from India to Pakistan and Pakistan to India

- The only declared **war** between **Pakistan and India** was in 1971, rest of the wars were more related to the border skirmish and not a declared battle.

- What is more, since the time both nations got their freedom, they have always been assuring each other that both stood for peace and not for war.
- Then in 1999, India fought a brief but bitter conflict with Pakistani-backed forces known as **the Kargil War**.
- By that time, India and Pakistan had both declared themselves to be nuclear powers.
- Separatists began an insurgency against Indian rule in 1989 backed by Pakistan and since then tens of thousands of people have been killed there due to terrorism.
- In a message on August 15, 1947, **Nehru** said "I want to say to all nations of the world including our neighbour country that we stand for peace and friendship with them."
- Today the question of India – Pakistan relations revolves around three major issues; Kashmir, Terrorism and Economic relations.
- While, each of these aspects are interlinked, it is important to understand by itself these issues are a major concern for the peace of South Asia.
- Having not been able to take over **Kashmir**, and also having lost **East Pakistan (now called Bangladesh)** due to India's intervention in 1971, **Pakistan** is keen in destabilising India by supporting **terrorism**.

Simla Agreement (1972)



- **The Simla Agreement** was signed between India and Pakistan on 2 July 1972 in Shimla, the capital city of the Indian state **Himachal Pradesh**.
- It followed the **Bangladesh Liberation** war in 1971 that led to the independence of Bangladesh, which was earlier known as **East Pakistan** and was part of the territory of Pakistan.
- India entered the war as an ally of Bangladesh which transformed the war into an **Indo-Pakistan War of 1971**.
- The agreement was ratified by the Parliaments of both the nations in same year.
- The treaty was signed in **Simla** by **Zulfikar Ali Bhutto**, the President of Pakistan, and Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India.

- The agreement also paved the way for diplomatic recognition of Bangladesh by Pakistan.

Important Provisions

- That the principles and purposes of **the Charter of the United Nations** shall govern the relations between the two countries.
- That the two countries are resolved to settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon between them
- That the prerequisite for reconciliation, good neighbourliness and durable peace between them is a commitment by both the countries to **peaceful coexistence**; respect for each others territorial integrity and sovereignty; and non interference in each others internal affairs, on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.
- That they shall always respect each others **national unity, territorial integrity, political independence and sovereign equality**.
- That in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, they will refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of each other.
- In **Jammu and Kashmir**, the line of control resulting from the ceasefire of December 17, 1971, shall be respected by both sides without prejudice to the recognized position of either side.
- Neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally, irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations.
- Both sides further undertake to refrain from the threat or the use of force in violation of this line.
- The withdrawals shall commence upon entry into force of this agreement and shall be completed within a period of 30 days thereof.

Repealing article 370

- On **August 5, 2019**, the **President of India** gave assent to the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir)
- Order, 2019, issued under Article 370(1) of the **Constitution of India**.
- While exercising power under Article 370 (1), the President has repealed all the **clauses of Article 370**.
- However, **Article 370(1)** has been extended with certain modifications.
- By virtue of those modifications, all the **provisions of the Constitution of India** shall be applicable to **Jammu and Kashmir**.

Major issues-in India-Pakistan relation

1. Siachen Dispute



- **Indian and Pakistani forces** have faced off against each other in mountains above the **Siachen glacier** in the **Karakoram range**, the world's highest battlefield, since 1984.

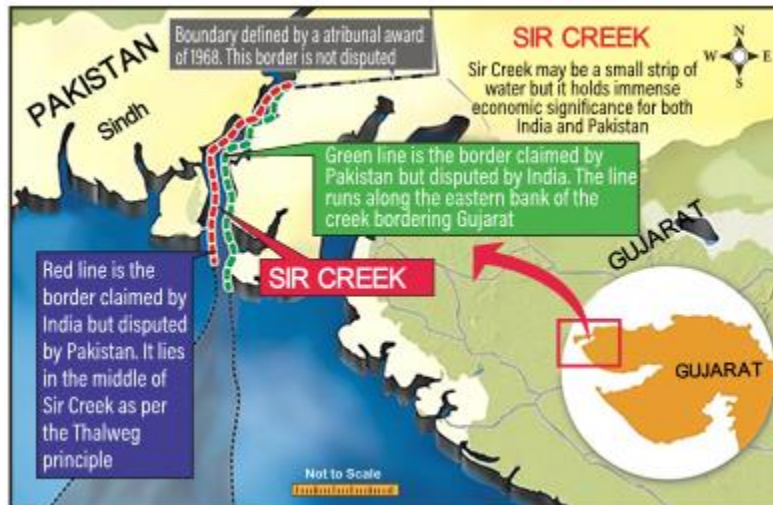


- The two sides have been trying to find a solution that would allow them to withdraw troops, but no solution has been arrived at so far.

2. Water Sharing Issue

- The two countries disagree over use of the **water flowing down rivers** that rise in **Kashmir** and run into the **Indus river basin** which goes to **Pakistan**.
- The use of the water is governed by the **1960 Indus Water Treaty** under which India was granted the use of water from three eastern rivers, and Pakistan the use of three western rivers.
- Pakistan says India is unfairly diverting water with the upstream construction of barrages and dams.
- India denies the charge.

3. Sir Creek Dispute



- **Kashmir and Siachen** aren't the only issues the two nuclear powers of South Asia lock horns.
- Sir Creek is another major issue that's been waiting for a **resolution** for over 70 years.

A CENTURY-OLD DISPUTE

• Dispute arises between the Rao (ruler) of Kutch and the Sindh government over the collection of firewood from the creek area		• Two rounds of joint surveys of Sir Creek carried out by a joint India-Pakistan team.
• Bombay government resolution map places the boundary on the eastern bank of the creek but its para 10 speaks of the mid-channel being the boundary. All these areas were under the jurisdiction of the Bombay province	• India-pakistan tribunal on the Kutch border gives its award, which upholds 90 per cent of India's claim. But it does not cover Sir Creek.	• At the fourth round of the composite dialogue in Islamabad, the two sides agree on a joint map of the area, which had been worked out through the joint survey
• India & Pakistan armies clash in the Rann of Kutch	• India and Pakistan resume composite dialogue and, among the issues, is the resolution of the Sir Creek dispute	• After dialogue resumes on the Sir Creek issue in New Delhi, the two sides "reiterate their desire to find an amicable solution of issue through sustained dialogue"

- Sir Creek is a 96-km strip of water disputed between India and Pakistan in the **Rann of Kutch marshlands**.
- Originally named **Ban Ganga**, Sir Creek is named after a British representative.
- The Creek opens up in **the Arabian Sea** and roughly divides the Kutch region of **Gujarat** from the **Sindh Province of Pakistan**.
- The dispute lies in the interpretation of the maritime boundary line between **Kutch and Sindh**.
- Before India's independence, the provincial region was a part of the **Bombay Presidency of British India**.
- But after India's independence in 1947, Sindh became a part of Pakistan while Kutch remained a part of India.

- Apart from its strategic location, Sir Creek's core importance is fishing resources.
- Sir Creek is considered to be among the locking horns over the presence of great oil and gas concentration under the sea, which are currently unexploited.

List of major insurgent attacks

- **Insurgents attack on Jammu and Kashmir State Assembly:** A car bomb exploded near the Jammu and Kashmir State Assembly on 1 October 2001, killing 27 people.
- It was an attack that was blamed on Kashmiri separatists.
- It was one of the most prominent attacks against India apart from the attack on the **Indian Parliament in December 2001**.
- **Assassination of Abdul Ghani Lone:** Abdul Ghani Lone, a prominent All Party Hurriyat Conference leader, was assassinated by an unidentified gunman during a memorial rally in Srinagar.
- The assassination resulted in wide-scale demonstrations against the Indian forces for failing to provide enough security cover for **Mr. Lone**.
- **The 2008 Mumbai attacks (Also referred to as 26/11) were a series of terrorist attacks that took place in November 2008:**
- 10 members of **Lashkar-e-Taiba**, an Islamic terrorist organisation based in Pakistan, carried out 12 coordinated shooting and bombing attacks lasting four days across Mumbai.
- The attacks, which drew widespread global condemnation, began on Wednesday 26 November and lasted until Saturday 29 November 2008.
- At least 174 people died, including 9 attackers, and more than 300 were wounded.
- **2016 Uri attack:** A terrorist attack by four heavily armed terrorists on 18 September 2016 near the town of Uri in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir killed 18 and left more than 20 people injured.
- It was reported as **"the deadliest attack on security forces in Kashmir in two decades"**.
- **2019 Pulwama attack:** On **14 February 2019**, a convoy of vehicles carrying security personnel on the Jammu Srinagar national highway was attacked by a vehicle-bound suicide bomber in Lethpora near Awantipora, Pulwama district, Jammu and Kashmir.
- The attack resulted in the death of 38 **Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)** personnel.
- The responsibility of the attack was claimed by the Pakistan- based Islamist militant group **Jaish-e- Mohammed**.

TIMELINE: India-Pakistan relations

A timeline of the rocky relationship between the two nuclear-armed South Asian neighbours.

S. No.	Year	Important Events
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1.	1947	Britain, as part of its pullout from the Indian subcontinent, divides it into secular (but mainly Hindu) India and Muslim Pakistan on August 15 and 14 respectively.
2.	1947/48	The first India-Pakistan war over Kashmir is fought, after armed tribesmen (lashkars) from Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province (now called Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa) invade the disputed territory in October 1947.
3.	1954	The accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India is ratified by the state's constituent assembly.
4.	1963	Following the 1962 Sino-Indian war, the foreign ministers of India and Pakistan - Swaran Singh and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto - hold talks under the auspices of the British and Americans regarding the Kashmir dispute.
5.	1964	Following the failure of the 1963 talks, Pakistan refers the Kashmir case to the UN Security Council.
6.	1965	India and Pakistan fight their second war.
7.	1966	On January 10, 1966, Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and Pakistani President Ayub Khan sign an agreement at Tashkent (now in Uzbekistan), agreeing to withdraw to pre-August lines and that economic and diplomatic relations would be restored.
8.	1971	India and Pakistan go to war a third time, this time over East Pakistan.
9.	1972	Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi sign an agreement in the Indian town of Simla.
10.	1974	The Kashmiri state government affirms that the state "is a constituent unit of the Union of India". Pakistan rejects the accord with the Indian government.
11.	1988	The two countries sign an agreement that neither side will attack the other's nuclear installations or facilities.
12.	1989	Armed resistance in the Kashmir valley begins.

13.	1992	A joint declaration prohibiting the use of chemical weapons is signed in New Delhi.
14.	1998	India detonates five nuclear devices at Pokhran. Pakistan responds by detonating six nuclear devices of its own in the Chaghai Hills.
15.	1999	Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee meets with Nawaz Sharif, his Pakistani counterpart, in Lahore. Kargil war was an armed conflict between India and Pakistan later in the same year.
16.	2001	Tensions along the Line of Control remain high, with 38 people killed in an attack on the Kashmiri assembly in Srinagar.
17.	2007	On February 18, the train service between India and Pakistan is bombed near Panipat, north of New Delhi. Sixty- eight people are killed, and dozens injured. (Samjhauta Express)
18.	2012	In November, India executes Pakistani national Kasab, the lone survivor of a fighter squad that killed 166 people in a rampage through the financial capital Mumbai in 2008, hanging him just days before the fourth anniversary of the attack.
19.	2016	India launches what it calls "surgical strikes" on terrorist units in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in September, less than two weeks after an attack on an Indian army base leaves 19 soldiers dead.
20.	2019	In the early hours of February 26, India conducts air attacks against what it calls Pakistan-based rebel group Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM)'s "biggest training camp", killing "a very large number of terrorists".

India – Bangladesh Relations

- **Bangladesh** is one of the **most important neighbours of India**.
- Bangladesh is also a key partner to India in the South Asian region, and is crucial both for stability in the north- eastern region and as a bridge to South-East Asia.
- It is an important **lynchpin** to India's '**Look East**' policy.



- In 1970, the **Bengali Awami League Party** won the Pakistani National Elections. But West Pakistan refused to recognize the election results and used brutal force to suppress the agitation by the Awami League Party.
- This situation led to **near war scenario**, with armed east Bengalis forming the Mukti Bahini (freedom force).



- India's support to the **Mukti Bahini** by training and the supply of arms, became imminent with millions seeking refuge in India.
- Pakistan's pre-emptive strike at India provided the Indian army the much needed excuse to attack East Pakistan.
- By December 1971, Bangladesh emerged as **an independent state**.
- Establishment of a new state provided a chance for India to have a friendly neighbor.
- In **January 1972, Mujibur Rahman** assumed power as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh and his tenure happened to be one of **the best times in India – Bangladesh Relations**.



- His tenure also witnessed the signing of **Indo-Bangladesh Friendship Treaty**.

Major Issues in Indo Bangladesh Relations

1. The Farakka Barrage:

- Of the various issues responsible for deteriorating **Indo- Bangladesh relations**, commissioning **Farakka dam in West Bengal**, about 11 miles from Bangladesh's border, has perhaps attracted the most International attention.
- India maintains that it needs the barrage for the purpose of **flushing the Hooghly River** to make it free from silt and therefore keep **the port of Calcutta** operational and also to meet the demand from **Kolkata** for industrial and domestic use, and for irrigation purposes in other parts of **West Bengal**.
- Despite the negotiations since 1970's at both regional and international levels, both the nations have still not been able to reconcile with a proper solution.

2. Sharing of Teesta Water:

- The Teesta River originates from **Teesta Kangse glacier** about 7,068 metres (23,189 ft.) height and flows southward to **Sikkim, West Bengal and Bangladesh**.
- This river merges with the **Brahmaputra river** when it enters Bangladesh and ends in the Bay of Bengal.
- The dispute was started when West Bengal government began constructing barrages on the river in 1979 mainly for irrigation purposes.
- The Bangladesh Government opposed it and argued that the major rice producing areas of Bangladesh, especially the '**rice bowl**' **Rangpur** region lie in the Teesta and Brahmaputra river basin.
- In 1983, **an adhoc agreement** on water sharing was signed between both counties. Yet, being an upper riparian state, India has not been able to supply the promised amount of water.
- **Politically river water sharing continues** to haunt both the countries.

3. New Moore Island or South Talpatti

- **(Known in Bangladesh):** was a small uninhabited offshore sandbar landform in the Bay of Bengal, off the coast of the **Ganges-Brahmaputra Delta** region.
- It emerged in **the Bay of Bengal** in the aftermath of **the Bhola cyclone in 1970**, and disappeared at some later point.
- For nearly 30 years, India and Bangladesh have argued over control of a tiny rock island in the Bay of Bengal but later in 2010 the rising sea levels have resolved the dispute for them as the island was submerged.
- **New Moore Island**, in the **Sunderbans**, has been completely submerged, Its disappearance has been confirmed by satellite imagery and sea patrols.
- Scientists at **the School of Oceanographic Studies** have noted an alarming increase in the rate at which sea levels have risen over the past decade in the Bay of Bengal.
- Although the island was uninhabited and there were no permanent settlements or stations located on it, both India and Bangladesh claimed sovereignty over it because of speculation over the existence of oil and natural gas in the region.

The Resolution:



- In Permanent Court of Arbitration (PAC) the **dispute was settled** in **July 2014** by a final verdict not open to appeal and in favour of Bangladesh.
- **The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)** verdict awarded Bangladesh with 19,467 km² out of 25,000 km² disputed area with India in the Bay of Bengal.
- However New Moore Island has fallen in India's part of the Bay of Bengal.

4. Chakmas Refugees Issue:

- **The Chakmas and Hajongs** living in the **Chittagong Hill Tracts** fled erstwhile East Pakistan in 1964-65, since they lost their land to the development of **the Kaptai Dam on the Karnaphuli River**.
- In addition, they also faced religious persecution as they were **non-Muslims** and did not speak Bengali.

- They eventually sought asylum in India.
- The Indian government set up relief camps in **Arunachal Pradesh** and a majority of them continue to live there even after five decades.
- According to the 2011 census, 47,471 Chakmas live in Arunachal Pradesh alone.

5. Border Issue:

- Bangladesh and India share a common border of 4096 km running through five states, namely, West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.
- There are **162 enclaves** between Bangladesh and India.
- The border regions have emerged as a major transit point for smugglers of contraband goods, human traffickers and terrorist and insurgent groups living near the border.
- Hence, **border management** has become a major challenge for both countries.
- Through negotiation between India and Bangladesh **50 enclaves** were transferred to **India** and **111 transferred to Bangladesh**.
- While the border issue is sorted to a great extent, through related issues like illegal arms smuggling, human trafficking, drug trafficking and cross border terrorism continue to haunt India and Bangladesh.

Trade and Connectivity

- Trade has been growing steadily between the two countries at about 17% in the last 5 years.
- **A bus service** and a **train service** between **Kolkata and Dhaka** was also launched.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** has been signed on the development of Ashuganj-Zakiganj stretch of Kushiya river and Sirajganj-Daikhawa stretch of the Jamuna river to improve connectivity between the two countries and this will help reduce cost of cargo movement to northeast India and also reduce congestion through the Siliguri's '**Chicken's Neck**' corridor.
- **Connectivity** is an issue of mutual interest as these initiatives on passenger and goods trains will be of benefit to both Bangladesh and northeast India.
- **Dhaka** also has the central role in shaping the future of sub-regional cooperation with Bhutan, Burma, India and Nepal.
- It is also a land bridge to East Asia and the fulcrum of a future Bay of Bengal community.
- However, the most important issue in contemporary **Asian geopolitics** is transit and connectivity.
- In 2016 when **Chinese President Xi Jinping** visited Bangladesh, it agreed to join the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).
- **China** is already investing in a number of infrastructure projects in the country including **the deep sea port at Chittagong**.
- It is likely that these projects will now be subsumed under the BRI project which is the matter of concern for India.

Energy Cooperation

- **Energy cooperation** between the two sides has also shown a lot of positivity with Indian state **Tripura** supplying a **total of 160 MW of power to Bangladesh** in addition to the 500 MW the country is receiving from West Bengal since 2013.
- Bangladesh has sought extra 100 MW electricity from India to solve its power crisis, and will be likely on the negotiating table.

Defence Cooperation

- There are talks that a **defence treaty** is to be signed between India and Bangladesh, it will be a long-term defence deal that will allow for increased defence cooperation, information sharing, joint exercises, training and so on.
- However, India needs to figure out where it can meet Bangladesh's security concerns, considering Bangladesh's largest defence partner is China.
- Expanding security cooperation with India could only enhance **Dhaka's global leverage**.
- For India, a strong partnership with Bangladesh will help boost the prospects of peace and prosperity in the eastern subcontinent.
- Defence deal between the two nations on the basis of sovereign equality and geopolitical realities will take us a long way ahead.

Conclusion

- The India-Bangladesh relations can be summarised as hanging on three 'T's –
 - (1) **Tackling Terrorism,**
 - (2) **Trade + Transit and**
 - (3) **Teesta Treaty.**
- We should hope to resolve the issues and take the relationship forward so that the growing mutual trust and political comfort between **Delhi and Dhaka** will have a long-term consequence.
- It is important for **India's North-East** as well.

India-China Relations

- **The Modern history of India-China** relations starts after 1949, with China becoming a Communist country.
- India was one of the first countries to recognise **the People's Republic of China**.
- However, the initial bonhomie did not last long as India became suspicious of China's intention when **Tibet** was occupied by **the Chinese army in 1950**.



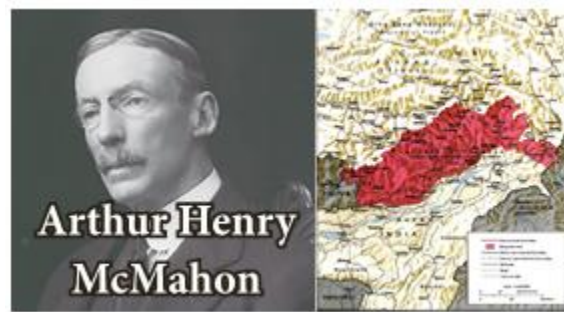
- **The Hindi – Chini – Bhai Bhai** (Indians and Chinese are brothers) enthusiasm in the 1950s did cast off some of India's fears, but all these developments that happened in due course were lost with the **India and China war of 1962**.
- India-China relations can be broadly categorised into three aspects – **border issue**; **economic interests**; and cooperation on **international issues**.
- India and China are **civilizational powers** with long and historical legacies.
- **Buddhism** went from India to China along with texts and culture.
- **Fa Hien and Xuan Zhang** are some of the travellers who came to ancient India to study.
- Add to the cultural relations, the ancient Silk Road allowed closer economic relations.

Border Issue



- India and China share over **4056 km** long border.
- It is divided into three sections; the border to the east of Bhutan, central border across Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh and the border separating Jammu and Kashmir from Chinese territories of Sinkiang and Tibet.
- India – China border is known as **the McMahon Line**, named after **Arthur Henry McMahon** who was **the Secretary of State for India** in the British Cabinet.
- This demarcation was determined in **1914** at **the Conference** of the representatives of British India, Tibet and China held at **Shimla**.
- The boundary line was drawn taking into consideration of the natural boundary as it passes through **Tibetan Plateau** in the north and Indian hills in the South.

- This boundary was accepted by all the representatives, although, China at a later date condemned it as an imperialist line.



- India continues to accept this line as the border with China.
- India China border issue cannot be understood without talking about Tibet's occupation by the Chinese.
- While the roots of the **India-China border issue** can be traced to centuries, its immediate reason relates to China's occupation of **Tibet in 1950**.
- China's reasons for occupation is based on historical linkage and ideological fervour. Ever since the occupation of Tibet, China started claiming many of Indian territory as theirs.
- Despite the talks both the countries had since the 1950s, there was hardly any progress in the clear demarcation of borders.
- Nonetheless, there was information about frequent cross border infiltrations.
- By 1961, India decided to firmly fix the borders and launched '**forward policy**', establishing military posts in the disputed territories.
- This move by India did not go well with China and it launched a massive attack on **Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh** on October 20, 1962.
- The war lasted only for 31 days, yet it made a long lasting humiliating impact on India.

India-China War, 1962

- When China announced that it would be occupying Tibet, India sent a letter of protest proposing negotiations on the Tibet issue.
- China was even more active in deploying troops on the **Aksai Chin border**.
- In **1954**, **China and India** concluded the **Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence**, under which, India acknowledged **Chinese rule in Tibet**.
- In **July 1954**, **Nehru** wrote a memo directing a revision in the maps of India to show definite boundaries on all frontiers; however, Chinese maps showed some 120,000 square kilometres of Indian territory as Chinese.
- On being questioned, **Zhou Enlai**, the first Premier of People's Republic of China, responded that there were errors in the maps.
- The People's Republic of China's leader, **Mao Zedong** felt humiliated by the reception **Dalai Lama** obtained in India when he fled there in March 1959.



India-China War, 1962

- Tensions increased between the two nations when Mao stated that the Lhasa rebellion in Tibet was caused by Indians.
- China's perception of India as a threat to its rule of Tibet became one of the most prominent reasons for **the Sino- Indian War**.
- In October 1959, India realised that it was not ready for war after a clash between the two armies at **Kongka Pass**, in which nine Indian policemen were killed; the country assumed responsibility for the border and pulled back patrols from disputed areas.
- On October 20, 1962, **China's People's Liberation Army** invaded India in **Ladakh**, and crossed the **McMahon Line** in the then **North-East Frontier Agency**.
- Till the start of the war, the Indian side was confident that war would not be started and made little preparations.
- India had deployed only two divisions of troops in the region of the conflict, while the Chinese troops had three regiments positioned.
- In 1962, the world's two most populous countries went to war.
- **The Sino-Indian War** claimed about 2,000 lives and played out in the harsh terrain of **the Karakoram Mountains**, some 4,270 meters (14,000 feet) above sea level.
- After hundreds of more deaths and an American threat to intervene on behalf of the Indians, the two sides declared a formal ceasefire on November 19, 1962.
- The Chinese announced that they would **"withdraw from their present positions to the north of the McMahon Line."**
- Thus, the **India-China War of 1962** ended and Colombo Conference was convened by Non-Aligned activist to resolve the dispute amicably.
- Even until this day, the **1962 Sino-Indian War** is a widely debated topic.
- The end of the war threw a new boundary line between India and China known as **Line of Actual Control (LAC)**.
- In 1993, an Agreement on the **Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility** along the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)** on the India-China border Areas was signed during **Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's** visit to China.
- The LAC continues to be a matter of irritation between both countries.

India-China border conflict?

- **Sovereignty** over two large and various smaller separated pieces of territory have been contested between China and India.
- The western most, **Aksai Chin**, is claimed by India as part of the **Union Territory of Ladakh** but is controlled and administered as part of the Chinese autonomous region of **Xinjiang**.
- It is a virtually uninhabited high altitude wasteland crossed by the **Xinjiang-Tibet Highway**.
- The other large territory, the eastern most, lies south of the **McMahon Line**.
- It was formerly referred to as the **North East Frontier Agency**, and is now called **Arunachal Pradesh** which is claimed by China.
- The McMahon Line was part of the 1914 **Simla Convention** between British India and Tibet, an agreement rejected by China.

Economic Interests

- Since the mid-1980s, India and China started having a closer bilateral economic relations.
- The process of dialogue initiated by the governments of the two countries helped in identifying the common trade interests.
- In 1984, India and China entered into a Trade Agreement, which provided them with the status of **Most Favoured Nation (MFN)**.
- Since 1992, India and China have been involved in a full-fledged bilateral trade relations.
- India-China trade in 2016 stands at US\$ 71.18 billion.
- India's exports to China was US\$ 11.748 billion while India's imports from China were US\$ 59.428 billion.
- The Indian trade deficit with China in 2016 was US\$ 47.68 billion.
- India was the 7th largest export destination for **Chinese products** and the 27th largest exporter to China.
- India's top exports to China included diamonds, cotton yarn, iron ore, copper and organic chemicals.
- China's top exports to India include electrical machinery, equipment, fertilizers, Chinese antibiotics, **Chinese organic chemicals**.
- The cumulative Chinese investment in India till March 2017 stood at US\$ 4.91 billion and the cumulative Indian investment in China till March 2017 reached US\$ 705 million.

Cooperation on International Issues

- In the **international arena**, India and China are competitors for resources.
- **Investments** in many of the developing countries by both these emerging Asian giants are all to meet the **increasing economic demands of India and China**.
- Despite the widespread competition, India and China have also found some real convergence of interests.

- Both the countries support for multi polar world order and **resist interventionist foreign policy doctrines** emanating from **the West**, particularly **the United States**.
- In addition, and India also share wide-ranging concerns on climate change, trade negotiations, energy security, and global financial crisis.
- India and China also play a significant role in the **WTO** and global trade negotiations in the hope for getting better leverage for the **developing world** over developed states.
- In addition to this significant role, China and India are also partners in major international organisations like **BRICS** (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), **ASEAN** (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), **EAS** (East Asian Summit), **SCO** (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation), etc.

India – Sri Lanka Relations



- Since the **Independence of India in 1947** and **Sri Lanka in 1948**, both India and Sri Lanka enjoyed closer relations with each other.
- Despite these closer relations, **domestic developments** in **Sri Lanka** has always had a negative impact on each other relations.
- The main reason for this negative impact is because of the ethnic crises between **the Tamils** and **the Sinhalese** and the Indian response towards this issue.
- Security interests and the shared ethnicity of **Tamils living in southern India** and in **northern** and **eastern Sri Lanka** are the two major factors in **Indo – Sri Lankan relations**.

Major Issues in India and Sri Lanka Relations

- One of the first issues between India and Sri Lanka began with **the Ceylon Citizenship Act of 1948**, where the **Plantation Tamils** or **Malayaha Tamizhar** were deprived of their citizenship.
- Ethnic crisis in Sri Lanka has enormous impact on India- Sri Lanka relations due to large Tamil speaking population in southern India as well as the attempts by Sri Lanka to balance India's influence with the Tamils in Sri Lanka by building geo-strategic pressure by engaging the West or the Chinese selectively.
- Sri Lanka is critical to India's coastal security and its interests in the Indian Ocean Region.

- Any presence of external powers will hence have drastic impact on its **defence** and **security**.
- Since **the end of Eelam War IV**, India – Sri Lanka relations have been more constructive.
- In the recent years the **bilateral trade** has increased manifold.
- Nevertheless there are **few major concerns** both countries need to work out.
- **Return of Sri Lankan Tamil Refugees** continues to be a matter of concern.
- Unless, there is favorable **political situation in Sri Lanka**, refugees will not return to their homeland.
- **The attack on the Indian fishermen** continues and has become a regular occurrence.
- There have been many suggestions to solve this crisis, including deep sea fishing, lease in perpetuity of **Katchatheevu**, alternate day fishing by Indian and Sri Lankan fishermen, etc., but sadly none of these suggestions have seen the light of the day.

Ethnic Composition

- According to the **1921 Census**, there were **nearly 10 principal races**, three pairs being subdivisions of larger groups, in Sri Lanka (then known as Ceylon).
- Of these three were **principal races** namely, the Low Country and Kandyan Sinhalese, the Ceylon and Indian Tamils, and the Ceylon and Indian Moors.
- Four other specified races were the Burghers, Eurasians, Malays and Veddas.
- The predominant community **Sinhalese**, which is about three-quarters of the population, are **Buddhist** and **Speak Sinhalese**.
- The Indian Tamils in Sri Lanka are also largely Hindus.
- The Muslims mainly of Tamil origin speak both Tamil and Sinhala.

Sri Lankan Tamil Refugees

- Issue In 1948, immediately after the country's independence, a controversial law labelled the **Ceylon Citizenship Act** was passed in **the Sri Lankan Parliament** which deliberately discriminated against the **Tamils of South Indian origin**, whose ancestors had settled in the country in the 19th and 20th centuries.
- This Act made it virtually impossible for them to obtain citizenship and over 700,000 Tamils (consisting of up to 11% of the country's total population) were made stateless.
- In 1964, a pact was signed between **Bandaranaike** and the **then Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri** to repatriate much of the population of the stateless Tamils.
- Over the next 30 years, successive Sri Lankan governments were actively engaged in deporting over 300,000 Tamils back to India.
- It wasn't until **2003**, after a state-sponsored programme against Tamils and a full-scale civil war, that Indian Tamils were granted citizenship but by this time, their population had dwindled to just 5% of the country's population.
- Tamils repatriated to India were assimilated with local population after taking **Indian citizenships**.

- Around 62,000 refugees, living in 107 camps across Tamil Nadu, have been receiving various relief measures of **the Central and State governments**.
- In addition, in recent years, the Tamil Nadu government has taken steps for scores of young boys and girls of the refugee community to join professional courses, particularly engineering.
- This has benefitted eligible candidates among 36,800 non-camp refugees in the State too.

Change in status quo

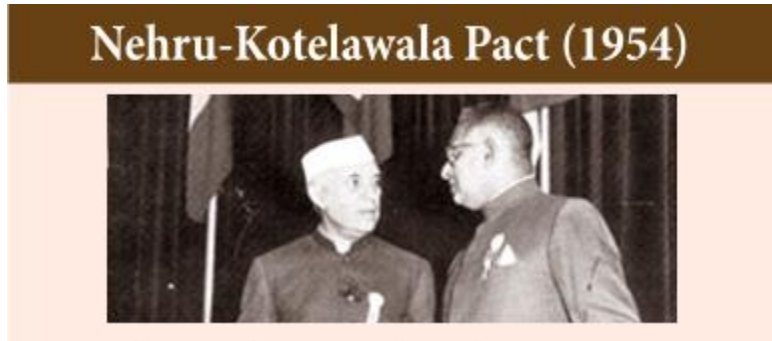
- At present, for both India and Sri Lanka, the repatriation of refugees must be a priority.
- Tamil Nadu hosts the largest number of **Sri Lankan Tamil refugees** in India.
- It would be in the interest of both the countries to find the permanent resolution for this problem.
- While for India a long- standing problem would be resolved, for Sri Lanka it would be a step towards ethnic reconciliation.
- The two governments can come out with a comprehensive package on voluntary repatriation, after involving representatives of the refugee community, **the Tamil Nadu government** and **Sri Lanka's Northern Provincial Council**.
- For refugees who want to stay back, India can consider providing them citizenship, as it did for refugees from **Pakistan** and **Afghanistan**.
- This can be achieved by filtering out any potential anti- social or anti-state elements, leading to the eventual closing down of refugee camps in Tamil Nadu.
- Such a process will bring an end to an episode that has lasted longer than the civil war of Sri Lanka.

Katchatheevu

- **Katchatheevu** originally belonged to **kings of Ramanathapuram**.
- **No maps of Sri Lanka** showed it as its territory.



- However, seeing its strategic location, Sri Lanka started claiming it.
- The issue was discussed some times during the meeting between Indian and Sri Lankan leaders.
- However in 1974 **Indira Gandhi** signed an agreement whereby **Katchatheevu was given to Sri Lanka**.
- Katchatheevu is an uninhabited **285-acre island** situated in between India and Sri Lanka in **the Gulf of Mannar**.
- It has a **Catholic shrine** and has been declared as a sacred area by the government of Sri Lanka.
- The shrine attracts devotees from both the countries.
- This 1974 agreement had secured the rights of Indian fishermen only to dry their nets and use the **Church for religious observance**.
- But then in 1976, delimitation of International **Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL)** was agreed upon as required by the **UNCLOS**.
- With this, Indian fishermen do not have any right to even engage in drying of nets and use of Church because **1976 agreement superseded 1974 agreement**.
- Since then our fishermen are facing innumerable problems.

Nehru-Kotelawala Pact (1954)

- The Nehru-Kotelawala Pact was an agreement that was signed between Jawaharlal Nehru, the **Prime Minister of India**, and **John Kotelawala**, the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, on 18 January 1954.
- It was an agreement regarding to the status and future of people of Indian origin in **Ceylon**.
- They were brought by **British from Madras Presidency** in British India to work in tea, coffee and coconut plantations of British Ceylon.
- In the pact, India accepted in principle the repatriation of Indian population in Ceylon.
- But **Jawaharlal Nehru** only supported voluntary repatriation of those who accepted Indian citizenship.
- India disagreed on Sri Lankan position that suggested granting Indian citizenship to people, who failed to qualify for **Sri Lankan citizenship**.

Fishermen Issue

- According to **Joint Working Group on Fisheries (JWGF)** data, 111 boats of Tamil Nadu fishermen and 51 Indian fishermen were in arrest or detention in **Sri Lanka's Northern Province in 2019**.
- Reasons include on-going disagreement over the territorial rights to the island of Kachchatheevu, and the damaging economic and environmental effects of trawling.
- Due to the dearth of multi-day fishing capability, Indian fishermen cannot shift their fishing effort from **the Palk Bay area** to the offshore areas way beyond the continental shelf.
- Also, due to a **gradual drop in fish count in the Indian waters**, Indian fishermen are forced to wander into Sri Lankan waters as the catch is insufficient here.
- In November 2016, an **inter-ministerial delegation** discussed terms for a joint working group, but the Sri Lankan delegation rejected India's request for a three year grace period so that the government can assist fishermen to move from bottom trawling fishing method to another sustained and effective method.

India's rehabilitation measures for Sri Lankan Tamils

- The construction of 43,000 houses for resettlement and rehabilitation of **IDPs** in Northern and Eastern Provinces is part of the overall commitment to build 50,000 houses announced by **Prime**

Minister Manmohan Singh during the State visit of the President of Sri Lanka **Mahinda Rajapaksa** to India, in June 2010, 47,000 have been completed until 2018.

- USD 350 million grants to build the houses was one of the largest grants by India in any country.
- Indian PM flagged off a train service at **the north-western Sri Lankan town of Talaimannar** - the closest point to India - restored after decades of civil war, completing the reconstruction of the entire **Northern Province Railway Line**.
- Accompanied by Sri Lankan President **Maithripala Sirisena**, **Modi** also unveiled a plaque inaugurating **Talaimannar 1650 Pier Railway station**.
- The newly-constructed 63-km railway track is the last segment of the 265-km long, prestigious **Northern Railway Line Reconstruction Project** which is being executed by **IRCON International Ltd.**, a Government of India owned company.

Shastri – Srimavo Agreement, 1964

Shastri – Srimavo Agreement, 1964



- Mrs Srimavo Bandaranaike visited India in 1964.
- After prolonged negotiations, an agreement was signed between **Bandaranaike** and **Shastri**
- It sought to solve the problem of **9 lakh 75 Thousand stateless persons** in Sri Lanka using the following formula:
- 3 lakh people will get **Sri Lankan citizenship**,
- 5 lakh 25 thousand will get **Indian citizenship**.
- They were to move to India in a period spanning over 15 years.
- Remaining 1.50 lakh stateless persons fate was to be decided later

Rajiv – Jayawardene Agreement (Indo-Sri Lanka Accord), 1987



- Diplomatic agreement between **PM Rajiv Gandhi** and **Srilanka President JR Jayawardane** to solve the ethnic problem
- An autonomous unit comprising northern and eastern provinces (where Tamils are concentrated) would be constituted
- **Elections** to provincial councils were to be completed by **Dec 31, 1987** in the presence of Indian observers
- Emergency was to be lifted from northern and eastern provinces
- **Tamil, Sinhalese** and **English** would be **official languages of Sri Lanka**
- Deployment of **IPKF** to guarantee and enforce cessation of hostilities between **Lankan army and Tamil militants** Agreement was vehemently opposed by Sri Lankans and an attack was attempted on **Rajiv Gandhi** when he was inspecting guard of honour at **Colombo airport**.

Agreement between two Nations

- During **the period of Lal Bahadur Sastri's premiership** an agreement was reached between the two nations in resolving the issues of Indian origin Tamils.
- India agreed to provide citizenship to two thirds of the people of Indian origin;
- But the ethnic conflict between **native Tamils (Eelam Tamils)** and the **Sinhalese** erupted into a protracted civil war, **revolving a massive influx of Tamil refugees** into India.
- The Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi intervened and signed an agreement with the Sri Lanka Government (**Rajiv- Jayawardhene Agreement**) and India sent a peacekeeping force to ensure peace and implementation of the treaty in the island Nation.
- But the peace did not last long.
- After that, India followed a passive role in **Sri Lankan civil war** and avoided another military intervention.
- Sri Lankan force brutally crushed the **Tamils' rebellion**, in that process committing serious **human rights violations**.
- India has contributed a lot in rehabilitating war refugees, and rebuilding the economy of war ravaged Tamil majority provinces.

Way Ahead

- India can try to get back the island of Kachchatheevu atleast on **"lease in perpetuity"** or by negotiations.
- **Permit licensed Indian fishermen to fish** within a designated area of Sri Lankan waters and vice versa.
- There is a glaring need for institutionalisation of fishing in Indian waters by the Government of India so that alternative means of livelihood are provided.
- Government will have to mark up a comprehensive plan to reduce the dependence of Indian fishermen on catch from **Palk Bay**.
- If these social issues can be sorted out. India and Sri Lanka can become prime movers in the regional polity.

India – Nepal Relations



- India and Nepal are geographically close to each other.
- Nepal's lowland areas are a part of **the Gangetic plain** and it occupies the central part of **the Himalayan foothills** and mountains that extends between China and South Asia.
- Nepal and India share a border of over 1850 kms in the East, South and West with five states, Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand sharing their borders.
- Nepal had been earlier the only **Hindu Kingdom** in the world.
- However, **one –eighth of its population** are **Buddhists** and there is a **small population of Muslims and Christians** living in the country.
- While **Nehru** always regarded Nepal as a sovereign state, at the same time it was considered as an **integral part of India's security system**.
- Occupation of **Tibet by China in 1951** affirmed Nepal's importance in India's security umbrella.
- It was never a **"threat from Nepal"** but **"threat to Nepal"**, that India could not afford.
- An important step towards establishing such an order was **the signing of Treaty of Peace and Friendship** between India and Nepal on July 31, 1950.
- India's overtures to Nepal went beyond the security interest.

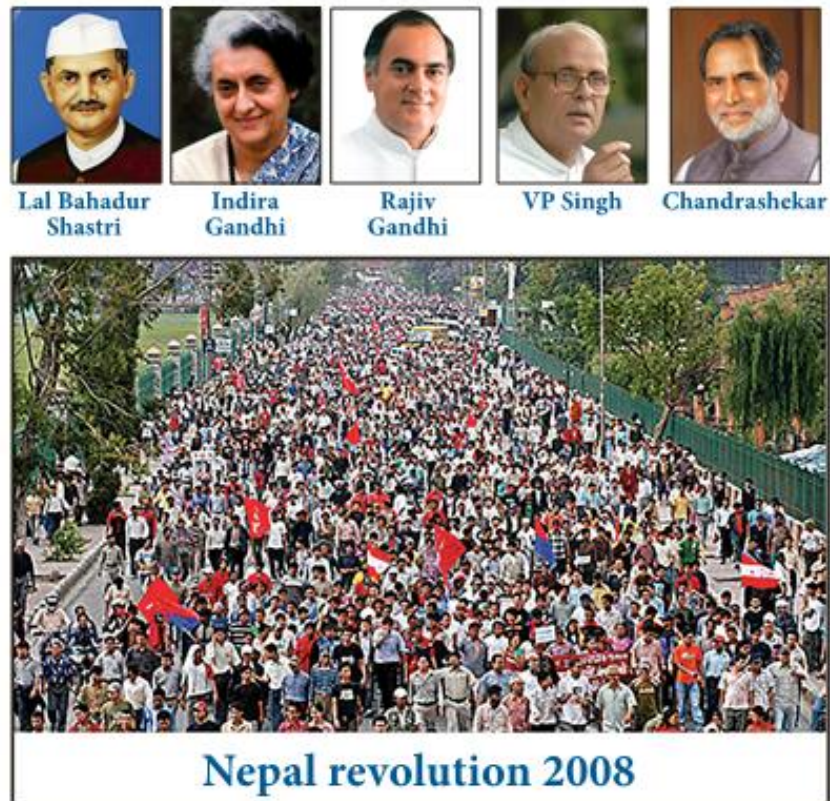
- On the same day of **signing Peace and Friendship Treaty**, both the countries also **signed Treaty of Trade and Commerce**.
- This agreement became a hallmark of close economic relations between both the countries.

Nehru: Parliament Debates 1950

- From time immemorial, **the Himalayas** have provided us with a magnificent frontier...
- We cannot allow that barrier to be penetrated because it is also the principal barrier to India.
- Therefore, such as we appreciate the **independence of Nepal**, we cannot allow anything to go wrong in **Nepal** or permit the barrier to be crossed or weakened as that would also be a risk to our security.
- Frankly, we do not like and shall not brook any foreign interference in Nepal.
- We recognize **Nepal as an independent country** and wish her well, but even a child knows that one cannot go to Nepal without passing through India.
- Therefore, no other country can have an intimate a relationship with Nepal as ours is.

Political Relations

- India's relations with Nepal in the immediate aftermath of independence of both the countries revolved around the political struggle between **the King** and **the Rana's**, (Prime Ministerial clan of Nepal).
- While negotiating **the 1950 Treaty India** was also persuading Nepal's Rana rulers to liberalize their political system to become more democratic and accommodate a section of the population that was fighting to get political rights and freedom.
- However, India's advice did not seem to be making much impact on the Ranas, which forced New Delhi to adapt proactive stance and intervene directly in the Nepali situation.



- India's approach to Nepal remained consistent ever after the death of Nehru.
- The subsequent **Prime Ministers** Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, VP Singh and Chandrashekar followed the same policies for Nepal.
- There were **numerous bilateral visits** taken by **Prime Ministers** of both countries to improve ties.
- Post 1990's India has been following a **twin pillar policy** since restoration of the **multi-party system**.
- The pillars include constitutional monarch and multi-party democracy sustaining together.
- But, this policy started experiencing strains with the beginning of new millennium due to two reasons, namely, the changing character of monarchy and the growing intensity of the **Maoist insurgency**.

Current Issues on India-Nepal Relations

Context

- Nepal and China finalized the protocol of their **Transit and Transport deal**.
- Nepal declined to attend **BIMSTEC** military exercise (**MILEX 2018**) hosted by India.

Brief background of relationship

- India and Nepal share a very special relationship with each other.

- They share a **common culture and terrain south of the Himalaya**.
- Bound by languages and religions, marriage and mythology, the links of their civilizational contacts run through both the countries.
- At the people to people level, relations between India and Nepal are closer and more multifaceted than between India and any other country.
- Republic of India and Nepal began their formal relationship with **the 1950 Indo- Nepal treaty of Peace and Friendship**.
- This treaty is the cornerstone of our current relation with Nepal.

Significance of Nepal Strategic relations

- **Nepal's geographical location is unique** such that it is a natural buffer between India and China.
- Since Nepal is a **landlocked country** it greatly depends on India for its interaction with the outside world..

Political relations

- Nepal shares a **special relationship** with **India historically**.
- India has a **Treaty of peace and friendship** with Nepal since 1950.
- This treaty is instrumental for a close cooperation between the two countries.
- India has always considered South Asia to be its sphere of influence.

India-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship-1950

- **The 1950 India-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship** is a bilateral pact between the **Government of Nepal and Government of India** aimed at establishing a close strategic relationship between **the two South Asian neighbours**.
- The treaty was inked at **Kathmandu** on July 31, 1950 by then **Prime Minister of Nepal Mohan Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana** and the then **Indian ambassador to Nepal, Chadreshwar Narayan Singh**.
- The treaty permits free movement of people and goods between the two countries and a close relationship and collaboration on matters of defence and foreign affairs.

Cultural relations

- India and Nepal share a **common culture** and have a **long history of people to people** relationship.
- Nepali and Indian people visit each other's country for religious pilgrimage.
- **Pashupati** and **Janakpur** are traditional centres in Nepal whereas **Varanasi** and the four **Dhaams** are important pilgrimage destination in India.
- The Buddhist network is interlinked -- **Lumbini is in Nepal**, while **Kushinagar, Gaya** and **Sarnath** are in India.
- It is said that India and Nepal have '**Roti- Beti ka Rishta**' (ties of food and family).

Areas of Cooperation

1. Trade and Economic

- India is Nepal's largest trade partner and the largest source of foreign investments, besides providing transit for almost the entire trade which Nepal has with other countries.

2. Indian Investment in Nepal

- Indian firms are the leading investors in Nepal, accounting for about 40% of the total approved foreign direct investments.

3. Water Resources and energy cooperation

- A three-tier mechanism established in 2008, to discuss all bilateral issues relating to cooperation in **water resources and hydropower**.
- Nepal has many **fast flowing rivers and its terrain** makes it ideal for **hydroelectric power generation**.
- Nepal's installed capacity is less than 700 MW while it has a potential to generate over 80,000 MW.
- A 900 megawatts **hydropower project Arun III** has been launched recently.
- An Agreement on **"Electric Power Trade, Cross-border Transmission Interconnection and Grid Connectivity"** was signed between India and Nepal in 2014.
- A **Joint Technical Team (JTT)** has been formed for preparation of long-term integrated transmission plan covering projects up to 2035.

4. Defense Cooperation

- **The Gorkha Regiments of the Indian Army** are raised partly by recruitment from hill districts of Nepal.
- Since 1950, India and Nepal have been awarding Army Chiefs of each other with the honorary rank of General.
- **Bilateral defense cooperation** includes assistance to Nepal Army in its modernization through provision of equipment and training.
- About **250 training slots** are provided every year for training of Nepal Army personnel in various **Indian Army Training institutions**.
- India and Nepal conducted a joint military exercise, **Surya Kiran XIII** from May 30 to June 12 in **Uttarakhand** this year.

5. Infrastructure and connectivity

- India provides development assistance to Nepal, focusing on creation of infrastructure at the grass-root level.
- Recently a **MoU** was signed on **Raxaul- Kathmandu railway line**.

- A **postal highway project** is also being undertaken.
- Both the countries are also focused on **inland waterways connectivity**.

6. People to People cooperation

- The Governments of India and Nepal have signed three sister-city agreements for twinning of Kathmandu-Varanasi, Lumbini-Bodhgaya and Janakpur- Ayodhya.
- Direct bus service between **Janakpur** and **Ayodhya** under **Ramayan Circuit** under **Swadesh Darshan Scheme** was launched.
- Nepal and India share Hindu and Buddhist heritage.
- **Lumbini**, the birth place of **Lord Buddha** is in Nepal while Bodh Gaya where he attained enlightenment is in India.
- Similarly **the hindu pilgrimage places** are also spread in both countries.

Challenges

1. Border issues:

- The two major areas of dispute at **Susta** and **Kalapani** (India-China-Nepal tri-junction).
- Countries agreed to start talks at **the foreign secretary-level** in order to resolve the problem, however, only a single round of talk has taken place in 2015.

2. Internal Security

- There is an open border between India and Nepal which leads to illegal migration and human trafficking.
- Indo-Nepal border is used as **launch pad** by **maoist, terrorist** and **drug traffickers**.

3. Trade

- Nepal's trade deficit with India has surged in recent years with continuously **rising imports** and **sluggish exports**.
- The current deficit in trade with India is 689.85 billion in Nepali Rupee.
- The country earned Rs 42.46 billion from its exports to India while paying the import bills worth Rs 732.31 billion.
- **Indo-Nepal trade** continues to remain massively in India's favor.

4. Peace and friendship treaty

- **The India-Nepal treaty of 1950** has been criticized by the Nepali political elite as an unequal one.
- Treaty obliged Nepal to inform India and seek its consent for the purchases of military hardware from third countries.
- Nepal wants to change this provision.

- **The Nepal-India Eminent Persons' Group (EPG)** is revisiting all bilateral agreements to submit a comprehensive report to both governments on how to reset bilateral relations.

5. Nepal's growing proximity to China

- Nepal's attempt to balance the overwhelming presence of India next door by reaching out to China is resented by India as such actions heighten India's security concerns.
- Chinese are building a number of highways from the Tibetan side into Nepal, all the way down to East-West highway that traverses Nepal.
- China plans to extend the Tibet railway to Kathmandu across the border in the next few years.
- Nepal signed **the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)** Framework agreement with China last year.
- China is trying to contest Indian interests by cultivating local interest groups that could advance China's interests in Nepal.

Transit and Transport deal

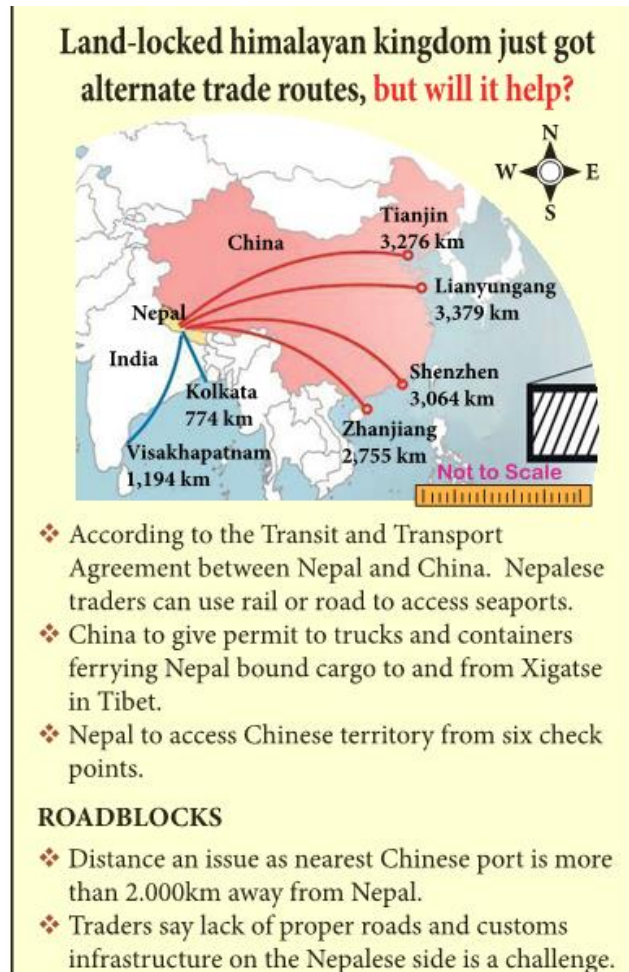
- Nepal and China finalized **the Protocol of Transit and Transport deal**.
- As per the agreement Nepal can access four ports and three dry ports paving way for the use of Chinese ports for trade.
- This will reduce Nepal's dependency on India for its trade.
- These and other **road and railway projects** between China and Nepal will allow China to potentially project power against India on a different section of the Sino-Indian boundary.

Land-locked himalayan kingdom just got alternate trade routes, but will it help?

- According to the **Transit and Transport Agreement** between Nepal and China.
- Nepalese traders can use rail or road to access seaports.
- China to give permit to trucks and containers ferrying Nepal bound cargo to and from **Xigatse in Tibet**.
- Nepal to access Chinese territory from six check points.

ROADBLOCKS

- Distance an issue as nearest **Chinese port** is more than 2.000km away from Nepal.
- **Traders** say lack of proper roads and customs infrastructure on the Nepalese side is a challenge.



Why China cannot replace India vis-à-vis Nepal?

- India has an **advantage of geography** on its side.
- **Chinese rail and port connectivity projects** are not very feasible owing to the difficult terrain.
- The nearest **Chinese ports** will be close to 3000 km away while **Kolkata** and **Visakhapatnam** ports, which Nepal currently uses are much more closer.

India – Bhutan Relations

- India shares a special relation with **Bhutan**.
- Being a land locked country, Bhutan is depended on India for most of its products and financial support and India on its part has been providing all possible support.
- This makes both the countries ideal example for **good neighbourly relations**.



- Diplomatic relations between India and Bhutan was established in 1968 with the appointment of a resident representative of India in **Thimpu**.
- Before this India's relations with Bhutan were looked after by the Political Officer in Sikkim.
- On India's initiative, **Bhutan** has become a member of **the Colombo Plan in 1965**, joined **Universal Postal service in 1969** and finally India sponsored Bhutan's membership in 1971.
- Bhutan's relations with the **NAM**(Non- Aligned Movement) countries is yet another initiative of India.



King Jigme Wangchuck with his father
Ugyen Wangchuck

Timeline of events:

1. Treaty of Punaksha (1910):

- Bhutan become protectorate state of British India. It means Bhutan to have internal autonomy and not external autonomy

2. Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation(1949) :

- India and Bhutan signed the **Treaty of Peace and Friendship on August 8, 1949**, in Darjeeling.
- The treaty is termed as the continuation of **the Anglo-Bhutanese Treaty of 1910**.
- It treats the Himalayas as the sentinel of **India's security** The **Indo-Bhutan Treaty** is dubbed as the corner stone of **Bhutan's foreign policy**.

Prime Minister Nehru, 1958

- “Some may think that since India is a great and powerful country and Bhutan a small one, the former might wish to exercise pressure on Bhutan.
- It is, therefore, essential that I make it clear to you that our only wish is that you should remain an independent country, choosing your own way of life, and taking the path of progress according to your will.
- At the same time, we two should live with mutual goodwill.
- We are members of the same Himalayan family and should live as friendly neighbours helping each other.
- Freedom of both Bhutan and India should be safeguarded so that none from outside can do harm to it.

	Bhutan – 1949
Non interference in internal affairs	Article 2 – foreign policy to be guided on advice from India.
Defence	Article 6 – no restriction on arms imports as long as not aimed against India or exported to India
Foreign Relations	Article 2

Revised treaty (2007)

- On request of Bhutan, **India revised treaty of friendship and cooperation**
- It has been suggested that the revised one modifies India’s role from guiding partner to a **close friend and equal partner**.
- Under the revised norms **Bhutan no longer require India’s approval** over importing arms.
- There are **no limitations for Bhutan** with respect to other countries, but it cannot use its territory for activities against India’s security threat.

3. India-Bhutan trade and transit Agreement (1972):

- It provides for duty- free transit of Bhutanese exports to third countries.

Treaty of Cooperation in Hydropower and Protocol (2006):

- Under this, India has agreed to assist **Royal government of Bhutan** in developing a minimum of 10,000 MW of hydropower and import the surplus electricity from this to India by the year 2020.

Areas of cooperation

Hydropower Cooperation

- India has constructed **three hydroelectric projects** (HEPs) in Bhutan totaling 1416 MW(336 MW Chukha HEP, 60 MW Kurichhu HEP and 1020 MW Tala HEP).
- Hydropower exports provide more than 40% of Bhutan's domestic revenues and constitute 25% of its GDP.
- Presently, there are **three Inter- Government(IG)** model HEPs-1200 MW PanatSangchhu-I, 1020 MW Panat Sangchhu-II, and 720 MW Mangdechhu under construction.

Security Cooperation

- Both the countries have conducted **joint military operation** against insurgents.
- The most notable was in 2004 when **the Royal Bhutanese** army conducted operations against **ULFA** (United Liberation Front of Assam).

Diplomatic Cooperation

- Regular visits between highest level Government functionaries of both the countries have become a tradition.
- For example, in 2014, our **Prime Minister chose Bhutan** as his first country to visit after getting elected.
- India sends **foreign service officers** to Bhutan to maintain good diplomatic relations. [™] Bhutan is a founding member of the **South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)**.
- It is also a member of BIMSTEC, World Bank, **the IMF**, Group of 77 and others.

Economic Cooperation

- Bhutanese currency is **Ngultrum** (Nu.) and is officially pegged to **the Indian Rupee (Rs.)**.



- India remains the single **largest trading partner** of Bhutan.
- In **2016 a new trade agreement** was signed.
- This agreement aims at cutting down the documentation related to trade and establishing additional trading points in Bhutan.
- India also offers duty free transit to Bhutan for trade with third countries.

Educational and Cultural cooperation

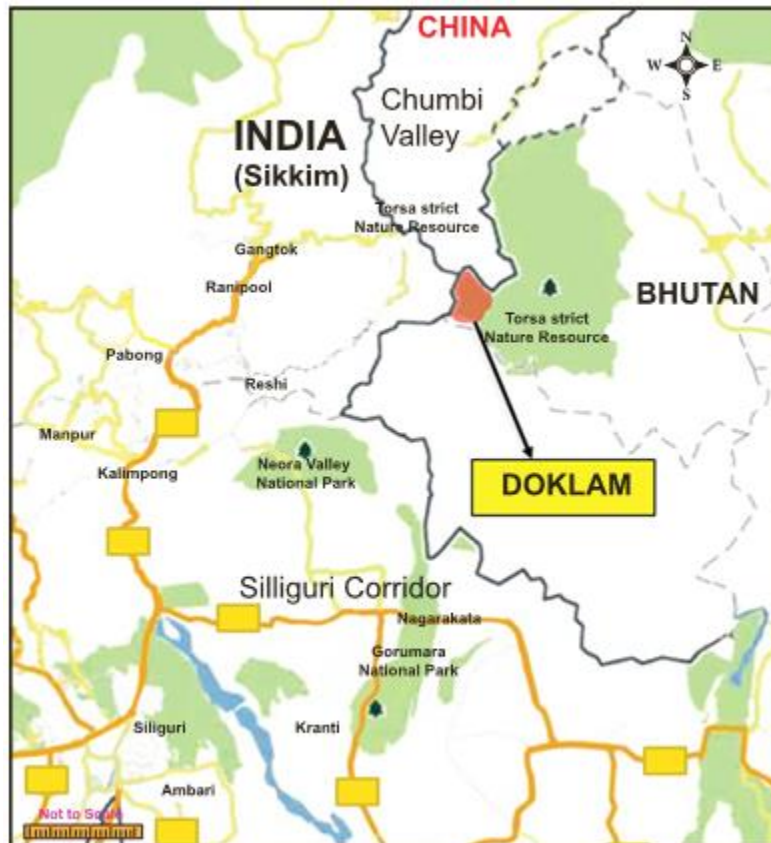
- Many Bhutanese students pursue under- graduate courses in **Indian universities** on self-financing basis.
- **India-Bhutan foundation** was established in 2003 for improving people to people cooperation in the areas of culture, education and environment protection.

Areas of Contentions

- **The Motor Vehicles Agreement** that was signed in 2015 involving Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) was blocked by Bhutan's upper house citing environmental concerns.
- Growing and unsustainable trade imbalance is in favor of India.
- Bhutan's trade deficit is set to worsen as **India's Good and Services Tax (GST)** makes its exports to Bhutan cheaper and imports from Bhutan more expensive
- Bhutan wants to increase its export power tariff to India as it is lesser than the cost of production.
- Bhutan has been taken as safe haven by insurgent elements like **National Democratic Front for Bodoland (NDFB)**, **United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA)** militants and **Kamtapur Liberation Organization (KLO)** that often pose threat to internal peace and security in the northeast region of India.

Doklam Issue

- **Doklam, or Donglang in China**, is an area spread over less than a 100 sq km comprising a plateau and a valley at the **trijunction** between India, Bhutan and China.
- It is surrounded by **the Chumbi Valley of Tibet, Bhutan's Ha Valley** and **Sikkim**.
- Despite several rounds of engagement between China and Bhutan, the dispute between the two over **Doklam** has not been resolved.
- It flared up in 2017 when the Chinese were trying to construct a road in the area, and Indian troops, in aid of their Bhutanese counterparts, objected to it resulting in the stand-off.
- **Doklam** is strategically located close to **the Siliguri corridor**, which connects mainland India with its north-eastern region.
- The corridor, also called **Chicken's Neck**, is a vulnerable point for India. In recent years however, **China** has been beefing up its military presence in **the Chumbi Valley**, where the Chinese are at a great disadvantage militarily.
- Both **Indian and Bhutanese troops** are on a higher ground around the Valley.



Issue with Hydropower projects

- Bhutan **supplies power to India** at very cheap rate.
- Bhutan alleged that India wanted greater role in management on joint venture **Hydro projects in Bhutan**.
- **Cross Border Trade of Electricity (CBTE)** issued by power ministry will establish the monopoly of India being **Bhutan's sole power market**.
- It restricts the **type of hydro power investments** that could be made in Bhutan.
- Hydro power plants are also attached with certain environmental concerns.

Steps taken to boost relations

- There is a frequent visit of state heads to boost the bilateral relations.
- India announced assistance for establishment of **an E-Project** covering all the 20 districts of Bhutan.
- The Prime Minister coined the idea of B2B as '**Bharat to Bhutan**' for building effective and renewed bilateral relationship.
- Bhutan recently become the largest beneficiary of India's foreign aid.
- A 1,000 strong **Indian Military Training Team (IMTRAT)** is permanently based in western Bhutan to train the **Royal Bhutan Army**, while other units regularly cooperate with the Royal Bhutan Army.

Way Ahead

- (1) India-Bhutan relationship is like '**milk and water**'. They cannot be separated. Therefore India should leave no stone unturned to maintain good relations with Bhutan.
- (2) India needs to complete some of the **hydropower projects** that were delayed due to lack of funds.
- (3) India has a very good relationship with Bhutan whereas China has many **border disputes** with Bhutan. This relationship and goodwill must be maintained to counter China's strategic calculations in Bhutan and the region.
- (4) India needs to augment the connectivity of Bhutan and its North Eastern states for the region's **economic development**.
- (5) India needs to combine the **Gross National Happiness of Bhutan** with its own economic development to maintain a shared prosperity and relationship between the two countries.

India – Myanmar Relations



- **India – Myanmar** (formerly known as Burma) **relations goes back to 2500 years**.
- For the Burmese, **Buddhist connections binds** both India and Burma together.
- According to the **legend of Shwedagon Pagoda** – the heart of the temple is on the buried strands of **Lord Buddha's hair** gifted by him to two Burmese merchants.
- It's this belief that made **King Ashoka** to build pagodas in Burma and also for the spread of Buddhism.
- Every **Burmese Buddhist** wish is to come to India at least once in their lifetime and offer prayers in **Bodh Gaya**.
- Long before both nations became independent states, diverse indigenous population living in the border areas, mainly Mizos, Nagas, Kukis, Tangkhul and Paite, enjoyed close familial, linguistic, religious and cultural ties.
- It's only after the arrival of British were the borders demarcated and the emergence of two different nations.

Ethnic Composition

- **The defence of Burma** is in fact the defence of India and it is India's primary concern no less than Burma's to see that its frontiers remain inviolate.
- In fact, no responsibility can be considered too heavy for India when it comes to the question of defending Myanmar. - **K. M Panikkar**



Modern Era

- The Historical close relations between Myanmar and India found it's low point during the British rule when the Indians had to face resentment amongst the Burmese as the Indian soldiers (under **the British Army**) fought against the **BIA** (Burma Independence Army).
- Burma always perceived that Indian officers and staff functioned as tools of **the British colonial regime**.

Introduction

- India shares a **long land border** of over **1600 Km** with **Myanmar** as well as a maritime boundary in **the Bay of Bengal**.
- Four north-eastern states viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram share boundary with Myanmar.
- These geo-strategic realities encompass our broader interests in the Indian Ocean region.
- Both countries share a heritage of religious, linguistic and ethnic ties.
- Further, Myanmar is the only **ASEAN** country adjoining India and, therefore, our gateway to South East Asia with which we are seeking greater economic integration through India's '**Look East**' and now '**Act East**' policy.
- Business opportunities that emerge from a surging economy in Myanmar also provide new vistas for engagement.

Why is Myanmar important for India?

1) Geo-strategic Location

- This is one of **the most important factors in determining diplomatic ties** with other countries.
- Myanmar is located **south of the states** of Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh in Northeast India.
- The India-Myanmar border stretches over **1,600 kilometers**.

- With the expansionist policy of China and growing insurgency in North East states of India, it is very important for India that **neighbors** like **Bangladesh** and **Myanmar** co- operate with India on issues regarding border- infiltration, money laundering, human trafficking and penetrating drug and fake currency through porous land borders shared with them.

2) India's Look East Policy

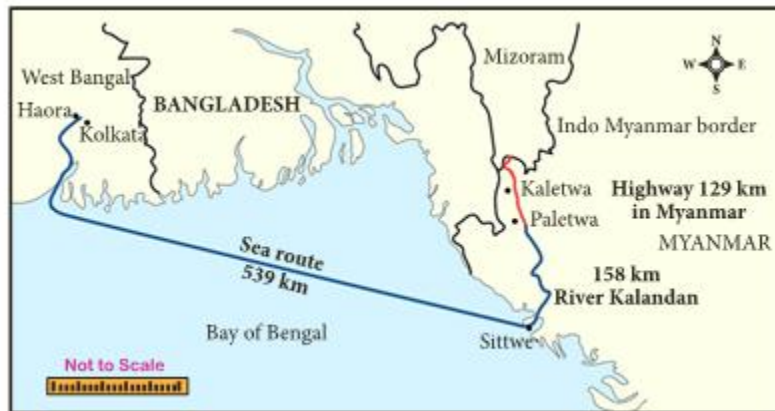
- India's Look East policy represents its efforts to **cultivate extensive economic and strategic relations** with the nations of Southeast Asia in order to bolster its standing as a regional power and a counterweight to the strategic influence of the People's Republic of China.
- Two highways involving Myanmar play a vital role in **improving connectivity** in the South East Asian region.

3) India-Myanmar-Thailand Friendship Highway



- India and Myanmar have agreed to a **4-lane, 3200 km triangular highway connecting** India, Myanmar and Thailand.
- The route will run from India's north eastern states into Myanmar, where over 1,600 km of roads will be built or improved.
- This is expected to be completed by **April 2021**.

4) Access to North-east



- The Kaladan Multi-modal Transit Transport Project will connect the eastern Indian seaport of **Kolkata** with **Sittwe** seaport in Myanmar by sea; it will then link **Sittwe seaport** to **Lashio** in Myanmar via **Kaladan** river boat route and then from Lashio on to **Mizoram** in India by road transport.

Various Aspects of India – Myanmar Relationship

Defence and Security Cooperation

- (1) It has strengthened over the years. Exchange of high-level visits, signing of **MoU** on border cooperation, training army, air force and naval staff are important indicators in this direction.
- (2) Myanmar side has provided assurances at the highest levels that it will cooperate with India in taking necessary action in preventing the use of **Myanmar territory** for **anti-India activity**.

Commercial Cooperation

- (1) A **bilateral Trade Agreement** was signed in 1970. Bilateral trade has been growing steadily to reach US\$2178.44 million (2016-17), of which Indian exports amounted to US\$1111.19 million and Indian's imports to US\$1067.25 million.
- (2) India is the **fifth largest trading partner of Myanmar** but trade remains below potential.
- (3) **India's exports to Myanmar include** sugar (\$ 424 million), pharmaceuticals (\$ 184 million), etc. **Border trade** via **Moreh** and **Zawkhatar** reached to \$ 87.89 million;
- (4) India is presently the **tenth largest investor** with an approved investment of US\$ 740.64 million by 25 Indian companies (as of 30 Jun 2017).
- (5) Most India's **investments have been in oil & gas sector**. 100% FDI is allowed in select sectors. Indian companies have evinced interest in investing in Myanmar and major contracts have been won by Indian companies.
- (6) Besides normal trade, both sides have also taken steps to bolster trade across the land border. Cooperation in the banking sector is crucial for investment and trade. **United Bank**

of India signed **banking agreements** with banks of Myanmar (**MFTB, MICB, MEB**, and 9 private banks) to facilitate bilateral trade

(7) Myanmar is an **important partner in our energy relations** with other countries in the region.

Development Cooperation

- India is committed to provide grant-in- aid amounting to almost **Rs 4000 crore** (of total commitment of approx. US\$ 1726 million).
- Assistance in setting up **institutions for higher learning and research**

Culture relations

- India and Myanmar **share close cultural ties** and a sense of deep kinship given India's Buddhist heritage.
- Building on this **shared heritage India** is undertaking some key initiatives:
 - (1) Restoration of the **Ananda Temple** in Bagan
 - (2) GOI donation of a 16 foot replica of the Sarnath Buddha Statue which has been installed at the premises of Shwedagon pagoda in Yangon.
 - (3) **The 'Samvad-II'** Interfaith dialogue was held on 6-7 August 2017, Yangon.
 - (4) **ICCR and Sitagu** International Buddhist Academy organised an International Conference on Buddhist Cultural Heritage
 - (5) India has responded to Myanmar's interest in restoring and renovating two historic temples in **Bodh Gaya built by Myanmar rulers King Mindon and King Baygyidaw**.
- These temples and inscriptions will now be restored with the assistance of the **Archaeological Survey of India** as a bilateral friendship project.

Indian diaspora

- (1) The origin of the Indian community in Myanmar is traced to the mid-19th century with the advent of **the British rule in Lower Burma in 1852**.
- (2) The two cities **Yangon** and **Mandalay** had a dominating presence of Indians in civil services, education, trade and commerce during the British rule.

Bilateral Cooperation in Regional/Sub- regional context

ASEAN:

- As the only ASEAN country which shares a land border with India, Myanmar is a bridge between India and ASEAN.

BIMSTEC:

- Myanmar is a signatory to the BIMSTEC Free Trade Agreement.

- Myanmar is the lead country for the energy sector.
- Myanmar trades mostly with Thailand and India in the BIMSTEC region.
- Myanmar's major exports to India are agricultural products like beans, pulses and maize and forest products such as teak and hardwoods.
- Its imports from India include chemical products, pharmaceuticals, electrical appliances and transport equipment.

Mekong Ganga Cooperation:

- Myanmar is a member of **the Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC)** since its inception in November 2000.
- MGC is an initiative by six countries – India and five **ASEAN** countries namely, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam – for cooperation in the fields of tourism, education, culture, transport and communication.
- The chairmanship of MGC is assumed by member countries in alphabetical order.

SAARC:

- **Myanmar** was given the status of observer in **SAARC** in **August 2008**.

Conclusion

- (1) In India, we often say Myanmar is our **“gateway”** to the East. Against the rhetoric, the existing connectivity between the two neighbours remains much to be desired. With long land and maritime boundaries, the neighbours are yet to take full advantage of geography.
- (2) Historically, India has been a major player in **Myanmar's socio-economic landscape** till the **1960s**. The advent of military dictatorship and its economic policies reduced India's interactions with Myanmar.
- (3) As the **political transition in Myanmar picks up momentum**, it provides an excellent opportunity to explore new avenues of cooperation.

India – Maldives Relations

- The archipelago of **Maldives consists of 1192 islands** of which roughly 200 islands are inhabited with an estimated population of 430,000 and 80 islands with tourist resorts.
- **The capital Male** is the hot seat of Maldives' power and is also the most populated Island.
- Being a completely **Sunni Muslim country** with a liberal following, Islam is the only state religion and practising of other religions are strictly private affairs within the homes.



- The first state level visit was in 1974 when **Prime Minister Mr Ahmed Zaki** of Maldives made an official visit to India.
- **India - Maldives formal relations** began with the declaration of Maldivian independence in November 1965.
- **India was the third country to recognise Maldives.**
- After which there has been frequent visits by the leaders of both countries.
- Most of these visits have benefited Maldives economically.
- This **cordial relationship** continued even during **President Nasheed tenure**.



- **President Nasheed's maiden** international trip after coming to power was to India in 2008.
- During this visit, India promised a \$100 million loan to **improve the tourism industry in Maldives.**
- Since then there have been frequent visits by officials and President Nasheed to **New Delhi** until 2012 when **President Nasheed** was overthrown in a bloodless coup.

Background

- India and Maldives share ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious and commercial links and enjoy cordial and multi-dimensional relations.
- India was among the first to recognise Maldives after its independence in 1965 and to establish diplomatic relations with the country.

- As per India's "Neighborhood First Policy," India "stands ready to fully support the Government of Maldives in its socio-economic development" and the Maldivian government has reiterated its "India First" policy to work closely with the government of India on all issues.

10 REASONS WHY MALDIVES IS IMPORTANT FOR INDIA

- Strategically located in the Indian Ocean, Maldives archipelago comprising 1,200 coral islands lies next to key shipping lanes which ensure uninterrupted energy supplies to countries like China, Japan and India.
- Since China started to send naval ships to Indian Ocean roughly 10 years ago – and right up to Gulf of Aden for anti-piracy operations – Maldives' significance has steadily grown and now its at the heart of international geopolitics.
- As the pre-eminent South Asian power and a 'net security provider' in the Indian Ocean region, India needs to cooperate with Maldives in security and defence sectors.
- China's massive economic presence in Maldives is a major concern for India. With the country now said to owe 70% of its external aid to China, India had to push back. The current political crisis might just have offered India the right opportunity.
- A large section of population which supports the opposition parties like Nasheed's MDP wants India to act against Yameen.
- Maldives is also a member of SAARC. It is important for India to have Maldives on board to maintain its leadership in the region. Maldives was the only SAARC country which seemed reluctant to follow India's call for boycott of SAARC summit in Pakistan after the Uri attack.
- Under Yameen, radicalization grew rapidly and it was often said that the archipelago accounted for one of the highest numbers of foreign fighters in Syria in terms of per capita. India can ill-afford a neighbor which fails to check Islamic radicalization.
- India and Maldives share ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious and commercial links. India was among the first to recognize Maldives after its independence in 1965 and later established its mission at Male in 1972.
- There are 25,000 Indian nationals living in Maldives (second largest expatriate community). Indian tourists also account for close to 8% of tourists Maldives receives every year.
- India is also preferred destination for Maldivians for education, medical treatment, recreation and business. According to MEA, more and more Maldivians are seeking long term visa for pursuing higher studies/medical treatment in India.

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Operation Cactus:



The Day India Saved the Maldives

- In 1988 a group of 80-200 Sri Lankan militants from the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), backed by **Maldivian businessman Abdulla Luthufi**, mounted a coup in the **Maldives in November 1988**.
- After infiltrating the country's capital of Male, the militants spread out and seized key areas in the city in an attempt to overthrow the then **President Abdul Gayoom**. Gayoom, however, escaped, taking refuge in the Maldives National Security Service headquarters.
- President Abdul Gayoom reached out to a number of nations, including India, Pakistan, the United States, Britain, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and other states.
- The US and Britain, after talks, decided they wouldn't intervene directly, but said they would coordinate a response with India.
- Under the guidance of then **Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi**, India responded with an overwhelming speed and efficiency.
- **Indian Troops** were in the Maldives within hours of receiving the message from **President Gayoom**.
- At 15:30 hours on 3 November 1988, India approved the **dispatch of troops** to the Maldives.

- Troops were deployed in one swift motion.
- Less than 16 hours since President Gayoom's SOS call, Indian paratroopers were en route, leaving from the **Agra Air Force Station** on an **Ilyushin Il-76 aircraft**.
- After a journey covering over 2,500 kilometres, the aircraft of the 44 Squadron of the Indian Air Force landed at **Hulhule Airport**.
- Barely a kilometre from the besieged capital, the troops quickly began their advance into the capital.
- While the **PLOTE militants seized many key points across the city**, the one area they had forgotten to keep an eye on was Hulhule Airport.
- With no one keeping watch over this point of entry, Indian troops landed, and quickly took control of the airport.
- They then made their way into the capital using commandeered boats and rescued President Gayoom, driving out the militants.
- The mission was concluded with no casualties to the Indian side.
- **Operation Cactus was testimony** to the fact that India could play a role in ensuring security in Asia.
- India's swift, decisive action was hailed by the international community, ranging from **US President Ronald Reagan** to **Margaret Thatcher**.

Maldives importance to India:

Security

- **Geostrategic Location:** Maldives is located just 700 km from the strategic Lakshadweep island chain and 1,200 km from the Indian mainland, and the growing Chinese presence in the archipelago could have serious security implications.
- **Indian Ocean Region hegemony:** Chinese heavy presence in Maldives would have given China an opportunity and a base to influence and control the Indian Ocean region.
- Also, the energy supplies coming from Gulf nations to India pass through this area.
- **Regional imbalance:** India enjoys unparalleled access and influence in many of the Indian Ocean island states, including the Maldives, Seychelles, and Mauritius which has been a problem for China.
- China-Maldives bonhomie can act as a counter to Indian influence in the region.

Economic relations

- **Indian expatriates:** There are about 25,000 Indian expatriates in Maldives who are engaged in a number of professional pursuits and their security is also of prime concern for India.
- **Blue economy:** Maldives plays an integral role in realising the potential of Indian Ocean blue economy as a contributor to the security and sustainable development of sea resources.
- **Tourism:** India and Maldives see regular tourist visits between the two and Indian tourists also account for close to 6% of tourists Maldives receives each year.

- **Health:** India is a preferred destination for Maldives citizens seeking health services, which boosts Indian healthcare sector.

Political relations

- **Political chaos:** Uncertainty in Maldives could prove a fertile breeding ground for extremism and religious fundamentalism, smuggling and drug trafficking.
- **Islamic State (IS) and Lashkar-e-Taiba** are also reported to have established bases in Maldives.

SAARC factor

- SAARC has a special importance for India because it includes all of India's neighbors but China.
- Of late, China has been creating inroads into SAARC countries which is reducing India's influence in the bloc, for example **Pakistan's CPEC, China's Hambantota port** etc. and Maldives could be China's next destination.

Recent development in India- Maldives relations:

- India and Maldives relations have seen many ups and downs caused by changing political situations in both countries and some external factors.
- During **Maldivian Presidential elections in 2013 Abdulla Yameen** defeated **Mohamed Nasheed** to become the President.
- During **Yameen's term**, Maldives relations with India deteriorated while its closeness with China increased, which is highlighted by:
- **Cancellation of GMR project, 2012:** Maldives annulled the \$500 million contract with GMR Group to develop a modern International Airport near Male, which was given to a Chinese company.
- **Cancellation of Indian PM's trip, 2015:** Due to turbulent political situation in Maldives, Indian PM cancelled his trip to Maldives.
- **China Maldives FTA, 2017:** China and Maldives signed an FTA, which is China's second FTA with a South Asian country after Pakistan, while there is no FTA between India and Maldives.
- **Joint patrolling with Pakistan, 2018:** During Pakistan's Army Chief's visit, Maldives announced joint patrolling with **Pak Navy to guard Maldivian Exclusive Economic Zone**, with an indirect reference to a perceived threat from India.
- During all these negative developments in Maldives, India responded with patience and composure, trying to revive relations diplomatically.
- However, **the election of Solih, in 2018**, as the **new President of Maldives** has caused a thaw in India- Maldives relations which can be gauged by:
- Despite opposition from **Indian Ocean Rim Association**, India convinced **IORA Committee for Senior Officials in favour of Male**, following which Maldives was inducted as the newest member of **IORA** recently.
- Maldives has asked India for a **Dornier aircraft** and the **MEA** has responded positively to its request.

- Maldives' new government has decided to pull out of **the free trade agreement (FTA)** with China, realizing the one- sided nature of the FTA.

Concerns between India and Maldives

- **Chinese inroads:** Chinese infrastructure projects in Maldives directly compete with Indian infrastructure companies' business prospects.
- **China Maldives FTA:** An FTA with China would have raised the issue of diverting Chinese products into India through Maldives.
- Maldivian government has not cleared its stand on future Chinese investments yet and may continue to engage deeply with China.
- **Low bilateral trade:** Bilateral trade between both, which stands at US \$200 million annually, is quite low.
- India's relations with Maldives began to improve with the Presidential elections in 2018.
- **Ibrahim Solih's electoral victory** has opened a new chapter in the India – Maldives relations.
- **Prime Minister Modi attended the Solih's swearing-in ceremony** and affirmed India's commitment to peace and friendship with Maldives.
- **The President of the Republic of Maldives, H.E. Mr Ibrahim Mohamed Solih,** State Visit to India from 16-18 December 2018, keeping India first policy is yet another opportunity for both countries to come together for a closer relationship.
- As a step towards furthering closer relations between both countries, India promised \$1.4 billion financial assistance package for socio- economic development of the island nation.

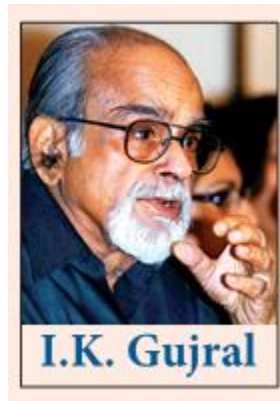
Way forward:

- Recent change in the attitude of **Maldivian government** is an opportune moment for India to redraw bilateral relations between both by helping Maldives to resuscitate its economy.
- Some major area of confidence building are **Investment cooperation** with Maldives should be enhanced by establishing an advisory cell to guide all stake-holders i.e.
- Indian missions overseas and prospective Indian investors, to delineate touchy areas and risky investments, with full knowledge of the local conditions.
- **'Free-purse' policy** of aid to Maldives is needed if India wants to offset Chinese big-ticket investments in Maldives.
- India must enhance **anti-terrorism cooperation** and intensify cooperation in the areas of training and capacity building of the **Maldives National Defense Force** and the **Maldives Police Service**.
- **A regular bilateral security dialogue** amongst the officials of both sides should be instituted to expand **the scope of security cooperation**.
- This should be supplemented by **Track-II and Track-1.5 dialogues**.
- While dealing with smaller neighbors like Maldives, India needs to become a lot more magnanimous, staying true to its own **"Gujral Doctrine,"** thus creating greater confidence.

- **The SAARC and IORA** can provide a platform to work on lingering concerns.
- Moreover, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka can explore ways to strengthen trilateral mechanisms to address these issues.

Recent Innovations in Foreign Policy

Gujral Doctrine of Reciprocity



- **The Gujral Doctrine** is a set of five principles to guide the conduct of foreign relations with India's immediate neighbours as spelt out by **I.K. Gujral**, first as **India's foreign minister** and later as the **Prime Minister**.
- Among other factors, these five principles arise from the belief that India's stature and strength cannot be divorced from the quality of its relations with its neighbours. It, thus, recognises the supreme importance of friendly, cordial relations with neighbours.
- **These principles are:** First, with **neighbours** like Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka, India **does not ask for reciprocity**, but gives and accommodates what it can in good faith and trust;
- Second, **no South Asian country should allow its territory** to be used against the interest of another country in the region;
- Third, **no country should interfere** in the internal affairs of another;
- Fourth, **all South Asian countries must respect each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty**; and,
- Finally, they should **settle all their disputes** through peaceful bilateral negotiations.
- According to Gujral, these five principles, scrupulously observed, will recast South Asia's regional relationship, including the tormented relationship between India and Pakistan, in a friendly, cooperative mould.
- The key differences between **"Look East Policy"** and **"Act East Policy"**
- The focus of the **"Look East Policy"** was to increase economic integration with the South East Asian countries and the area was just confined to South East Asia only.
- On the other hand the focus of the **"Act East Policy"** is economic and security integration and focussed area increased to South East Asia plus East Asia.

The Objective of “Act East Policy” is to;

- 1) Promote economic cooperation, cultural ties and develop strategic relationship with countries in the Asia-Pacific region through continuous engagement at regional, bilateral and multilateral levels.
- 2) To increase the interaction of the North-Eastern Indian states with other neighbouring countries.
- 3) To find out the alternatives of the traditional business partners like; more focus on the Pacific countries in addition to the South East Asian countries.

“Look East Policy” of India

- Look East Policy of India was launched by the **former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao** in 1991.
- The main focus of this policy was to shift **the country's trading focus** from the west and neighbours to the booming South East Asian countries.
- **The NDA government** in the centre upgraded this policy as the “Act East Policy” at the East Asia

Summit held in Myanmar in November 2014.

What is Neighbourhood first policy?

- It is part of **India's foreign policy** that actively focuses on improving ties with India's immediate neighbours which is being termed as **Neighbourhood first policy** in the media.
- It was started well by inviting all heads of state/heads of government of South Asian countries during the inauguration of Prime Minister **Narendra Modi's first term** and later held **bilateral talks** with all of them individually which was dubbed as a mini **SAARC summit**.
- Prime Minister made his **first foreign visit to Bhutan** in **his first term**.

MORE TO KNOW:

Afghanistan's membership in SAARC

- In 2005, India proposed Afghanistan's membership in SAARC and in April 3, 2007 it joined.

Indian Airlines by PAKISTAN

- In 1999, **Pakistan terrorists hijacked Indian Airlines flight IC: 814** and landed it in Kandahar, Afghanistan during Taliban rule.

Surgical Strikes

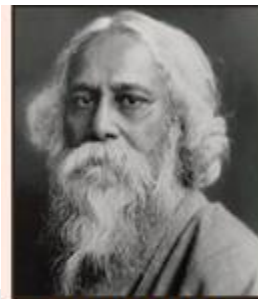
- It was launched as a response to **Pakistan's frequent provocations** along the border and **Line of Control**.

What is a surgical strike?

- Surgical strikes are **attacks on particular opponent targets**.
- They aim at having a **minimum damage** to the **surrounding** structures including civilian buildings.
- They aim at having a **zero or minimum deaths of civilians**.

Historical Relations with Bangladesh

- It can be traced to **the idea of India and Pakistan pre-dating 1947**.
- The population of both the countries share close and multi-faceted socio- cultural,religious and linguistic ties.
- What is more, both countries have a distinct honor of having their national anthem written by the same poet '**Rabindranath Tagore**.'



Rabindranath
Tagore

- The creation of Bangladesh with the support of India, is a significant milestone in the history of South Asia.

India- Bangladesh Border

- India and Bangladesh have a 2,979 km **land border** and 1,116 km of riverine boundary.
- They also share 54 common rivers, including the Brahmaputra. India's West Bengal, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Assam and Tripura share 4,096 km border with Bangladesh.
- Tripura and other northeastern states are surrounded by Bangladesh, Myanmar,Bhutan and China on three sides and the only land route access to these states from within India is through Assam and West Bengal by **Siliguri** or the **Chicken's Neck Corridor**.

Tibetan Plateau



- In 1949, at the end of a protracted civil war, a communist regime was established in China.
- China had always treated Tibet as its Province and used to collect tributes from her.
- The Communist regime also treated it as one of her autonomous Provinces.
- But, a theocratic Tibet could not reconcile with socialist China.
- The Tibetan issue, particularly granting asylum to Tibetan leader Dalai Lama and his people was a cause of rift between these two countries.

Six-Nation Colombo Conference- (10 December 1962)

- Pursuant to growing tension between India and China and the war, **Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike** convened what came to be known as the Colombo Conference, bringing together the leaders of Burma, Cambodia, Egypt, Ghana and Indonesia to mediate and reach a possible solution to the conflict between the two Asian giants.
- India accepted the principles of the Colombo Conference in toto while China accepted them in principle, as the basis to start negotiation.

Internally Displaced Persons

- 3,00,000 **Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)** are living in camps in Northern Sri Lanka.
- According to Government of Sri Lanka figures, as of July 2011 around 2,90,000 IDPs had been resettled and around 10,000 IDPs are still in the camps.

Nepal

- Nepal, the only South Asian country to have never been formally colonized, is situated between India and China, two massive competing economies, each with a unique historical relationship with the Himalayan region.
- **Prime Minister Modi** gave a new “5T” (Tradition, Trade, Tourism, Technology and transport) formula for India-Nepal relation during his visit in May, 2018.

Gross Nations Happiness

- **The fourth King of Bhutan King Jigme Singye Wangchuck** coined the phrase “**Gross Nations Happiness**” in 1972 and declared that is more important than GDP.