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Q4

Has the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) lost its relevance in a multipolar world?

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2017 · Essay · 125 marks · Philosophical and ethical quotes

Philosophical and ethical quotes

Core demand of the question

- **Stake:** NAM was a Cold War method; the world is many poles - has the method died?
- **One stand:** the label is tired; the need for strategic autonomy is not. NAM as a club can fade; non-alignment as a habit of not becoming a camp-follower remains
- Move through history, multipolar fact, India's practice, Global South. Keep one honest counter
- Close on autonomy with a spine, not a NAM museum

Revision summary

Not a full essay - a map.

- **Open with an old handshake and a mixed present. Stand:** club may fade; autonomy stays.
- **Headings:** history, now, South, counter.

Peg Bandung / a present minilateral. Close on a spine.

Note

This is a map, not the full 1,000-1,200 word essay.

Anecdote

- **A summit photograph from another decade:** a handshake that was neither Washington nor Moscow. Today the same capital buys oil, does a quad talk, and votes a UN line that pleases nobody fully. The question is whether NAM is a relic or a renamed habit.

One stand

- **Lost relevance:** the bipolar stage is gone. Multipolar: US, China, EU, a restless South. Write NAM as history, then India's present mix. Keep the counter: fence-sitting as alibi.

Heading map

What the line is asking

- **NAM:** 1955-61 birth, a method of not joining a military camp.
- **Lost?** institutions vs idea.
- **Multipolar:** more than two bosses.

History

- **Nehru**, a Bandung. Usefulness against a bloc veto on our development.

Now

- Multi-alignment, a Quad, a BRICS, a Russia oil. The method is hedging.
- NAM's formal rooms often look empty. The habit of autonomy does not.

South / UN

- A Palestine vote, a climate finance. NAM's moral language still has a constituency.

The counter

A slogan of non-alignment that cannot name a red line (a border, a terror camp) is vanity. Multipolarity can also mean everyone is a camp. Relevance is a practice: issue-based, not a museum of 1961.

Last paragraph

- **Close:** keep the autonomy; retire the empty hall if it is empty. Expand - this is only the map.

Facts & figures

Nehru

Non-alignment as a method - not a sulk.

Bandung / NAM

The birth file - then today's empty-or-not hall.

Panchsheel

A cousin principle - test it on a ridge.

Quad / BRICS

The present mix - not a purity test.

UNGA votes

Issue-based autonomy made visible.

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