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UPSC Mains 2021 PSIR Paper 2

Year-wise PYQ pack · WRAP model answers with canonical links

Official UPSC stems in exam order. Each live answer sits on one WRAP URL; this PDF is the year pack, not a second copy of the article. Open the link under a question for the full page.

<https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains/psir/gs-2/2021/>

Q1(a) · 10 marks

Discuss the political economy approach to the comparative analysis of politics.

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Comparative Politics

Revision summary

Political economy joins the study of power with the study of wealth.

Marx and Wallerstein locate States in production and in a hierarchical world-economy.

Almond's functions describe roles; they do not explain ownership and dependence.

Alavi's overdeveloped State is a comparative PE thesis about post-colonial bureaucracy.

The method compares markets, classes, and external ties, not only constitutions.

Introduction

The political economy approach studies power and wealth together. Comparative politics is not only constitutions and votes. It is how States, classes, and markets shape one another across countries.

Body

What the approach claims

- Politics allocates scarce resources. Economics sets who can organise and who must obey.
- **Karl Marx** treated the mode of production as the deep structure of the State. Later writers kept the link without always keeping revolution.
- Immanuel Wallerstein's world-system places each State in a core, semi-periphery, or periphery. Comparison then starts from position in a capitalist world-economy, not from isolated national cultures.

How it differs from other maps

- Gabriel Almond's structural-functionalism compared roles and political culture. Political economy asks who owns, who taxes, and who is dependent on foreign capital.
- Behavioural surveys can miss class, land, oil, and aid. Dependency writers treated those as the real independent variables.
- **Hamza Alavi's overdeveloped post-colonial State is a political-economy claim:** the colonial bureaucracy and army stand over a weak indigenous bourgeoisie.

What it helps compare

- Why some democracies tax capital lightly, why militaries run industrial policy, and why welfare arrived late in labour-surplus societies.
- Why India, a large home market, and a small commodity exporter do not travel the same path even if both are labelled developing.

Flow diagram

Political economy -> Class and capital
Political economy -> Wallerstein world-system
Political economy -> State tax and force
Class and capital -> Comparative politics
Wallerstein world-system -> Comparative politics
State tax and force -> Comparative politics

Conclusion

The political economy approach compares States as organisers of production, class, and external dependence. Almond's functions still describe institutions. They do not replace class, capital, and world-system position as causes.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-2/2021/discuss-the-political-economy-approach-to-the-comparative-analysis-of-politics/>

Q1(b) · 10 marks

"Political parties and pressure groups are sine qua non of democracy." Comment.

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Politics of Representation and Participation

Revision summary

Schumpeterian democracy is a party contest for the vote.

Almond split aggregation to parties and articulation to groups.

Dahl's polyarchy needs organised opposition, which parties supply.

Groups carry specialised claims between elections.

Mere organisation is not democracy; pluralism and contest are.

Introduction

A sine qua non is a condition without which the thing does not exist. Competitive democracy needs organised choosers and organised claimants. Parties and pressure groups are those organisations.

Body

Why parties are necessary

- Joseph Schumpeter's thin democracy is still a contest of teams for the vote. Without parties, the voter faces names, not programmes.
- **Gabriel Almond treated interest aggregation as a party function:** many demands become a ticket that can govern.
- Robert Dahl's polyarchy needs contestation. Parties supply the opposition that can replace the cabinet.

Why pressure groups are necessary

- **Almond's interest articulation is the group's job:** unions, chambers, caste associations, and professional bodies speak between elections.
- They specialise. A farmers' union can know a subsidy that a catch-all party blurs.
- Without groups, the State hears only officials and patrons.

The limit of the slogan

- One-party States and fascist syndicates also have organisations. The democratic test is pluralism, exit, and a free press, not the mere existence of a party office.
- Money and closed groups can strangle the same democracy they inhabit.

Flow diagram

Parties -> Aggregate programmes
Pressure groups -> Articulate demands
Aggregate programmes -> Competitive democracy
Articulate demands -> Competitive democracy

Conclusion

Parties and pressure groups are necessary to competitive democracy because they aggregate and articulate interests. They are not sufficient. Pluralism and open contest make them democratic rather than ornamental.

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WRAP Exams

Q1(c) · 10 marks

"Marxist approach to the study of international relations has lost its relevance in the post-cold war era." Comment.

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Approaches to the Study of International Relations

Revision summary

The USSR's fall discredited State socialism, not every Marxist question.

Waltzian polarity does not explain core-periphery production.

Wallerstein and Cox remain usable after 1991.

WTO, finance, and a capitalist China keep class and hierarchy on the agenda.

Relevance is critique of order, not a second Soviet Union.

Introduction

The Soviet collapse removed a Marxist-Leninist superpower. It did not remove class, capital, or hierarchy from world politics. The Marxist approach lost a State. It did not lose its questions.

Body

Why the obituaries were written

- Francis Fukuyama's end-of-history mood treated liberal capitalism as the only remaining script.
- Realists such as Kenneth Waltz had never needed class. Bipolarity's end seemed to vindicate States and polarity, not Lenin.
- Official Marxism-as-bloc failed in 1989-91. That failure is real.

Why the approach still travels

- Immanuel Wallerstein's world-system did not depend on the USSR remaining a pole. Core-periphery trade and finance continued.
- Robert Cox asked whose order institutions serve. WTO, IMF, and TRIPS still look like that question, not like a classless market.
- V. I. Lenin's imperialism thesis is crude as a 1916 map. Monopoly, uneven development, and military projection of capital remain research problems.
- 2008, global value chains, and a capitalist China inside the WTO are puzzles Marxism can pose. Liberal IR often treats them as technical.

Judgment

- Relevance is not prediction of a world revolution. It is a critical map of hierarchy that post-Cold War IR still needs.

Flow diagram

Cold War end -> Loss of Soviet Marxism

Marx Wallerstein Cox -> Capital and hierarchy

Capital and hierarchy -> Still relevant Still relevant IR

Loss of Soviet Marxism -.does not erase. -> Capital and hierarchy

Conclusion

Marxist IR lost a geopolitical sponsor after the Cold War. It did not lose relevance as a theory of capital, class, and world hierarchy. Waltz explains poles. Wallerstein and Cox still explain who works for whom.

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WRAP Exams

Q1(d) · 10 marks

What measures have been undertaken by the United Nations for its reforms?

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · United Nations: Envisaged role and actual record; specialized UN agencies

Revision summary

Annan-era packages and the 2005 Summit are the main reform waves.

HRC, **Peacebuilding Commission**, R2P, and SDGs are concrete measures.

Assembly revitalisation and Council working-method notes are process reforms.

Permanent-seat and veto change has not occurred.

Reform is real at the margins and blocked at the Charter's core.

Introduction

The United Nations has tried to reform process, organs, and peace tools without opening a new San Francisco conference. Measures are incremental. The Security Council's core remains the hardest lock.

Body

Secretariat and management

- Kofi Annan's agendas, including In Larger Freedom, pushed coherence, a stronger Secretary-General, and results-based management.
- The **Peacebuilding Commission** (2005) and later peacekeeping reviews tried to link war, politics, and recovery.
- Human Resources, procurement, and whistle-blower rules were recurring administrative reforms.

Intergovernmental measures

- The 2005 World Summit endorsed the Responsibility to Protect as a political commitment, not a Charter amendment.
- **Human Rights Council (2006)** replaced the discredited Commission.
- ECOSOC, UNDS, and the 2030 Agenda (SDGs) recast development coordination.
- **General Assembly revitalisation:** earlier elections of the President, better scheduling, and pressure for Security Council working methods (note S/2017/507 and later notes).

The unfinished core

- G4, Uniting for Consensus, and African Ezulwini claims seek Council expansion. No Charter amendment on permanent seats or the veto has passed.
- Veto restraint initiatives and codes of conduct are political pledges, not law.

Flow diagram

UN reform reform -> Annan management peacebuilding

UN reform -> HRC R2P SDGs

UN reform -> Council expansion stalled

Annan management peacebuilding -> Partial change

HRC R2P SDGs -> Partial change

Council expansion stalled -> Limits

Conclusion

UN reform has produced new bodies, development goals, human-rights machinery, and peacebuilding tools. It has not reconstituted the Security Council. Measures exist. The veto structure still decides war and peace.

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Q1(e) · 10 marks

Discuss the five proposals made by India in the recent COP-26 conference held in Glasgow.

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Recent developments in Indian Foreign policy

Revision summary

Panchamrit is India's five-point Glasgow offer.

500 GW non-fossil capacity and 50 per cent non-fossil installed electricity capacity by 2030 are power-system targets.

They are not a 50 per cent share of total energy use.

Intensity down 45 per cent from 2005, 1 billion tonnes off projected emissions, and net zero 2070 complete the set.

Equity and finance claims sat beside the numbers.

Introduction

At Glasgow in November 2021 India presented five nectar elements, Panchamrit, as its climate offer. They are capacity, intensity, an absolute cut in projected emissions, and a long net-zero date. They are not a pledge that half of all energy use will be renewable overnight.

Body

The five proposals

- Raise non-fossil electricity capacity to 500 GW by 2030.
- Meet 50 per cent of installed electricity capacity from non-fossil sources by 2030. This is a capacity share, not a claim that half of total energy consumption is already green.
- Reduce the emissions intensity of GDP by 45 per cent by 2030 from the 2005 level.
- Reduce projected carbon emissions by 1 billion tonnes in the decade to 2030.
- Achieve net-zero emissions by 2070.

How to read them

- The 50 per cent line is about the power system's installed mix, mainly non-fossil generation capacity. It is not 50 per cent of the entire energy mix of oil, gas, biomass, and heat.
- 2070 is later than many OECD net-zero dates. India argued equity and remaining carbon space.
- The package updated earlier NDCs toward non-fossil capacity and a steeper intensity cut.

Diplomacy

- Panchamrit sat beside calls for climate finance and technology from historical emitters. Ambition was paired with CBDR.

Flow diagram

Panchamrit COP-26 -> 500 GW non-fossil
Panchamrit COP-26 -> 50 percent installed capacity non-fossil
Panchamrit COP-26 -> 45 percent intensity cut
Panchamrit COP-26 -> 1 Gt projected cut
Panchamrit COP-26 -> Net zero 2070

Conclusion

India's COP-26 five points are 500 GW non-fossil, half of installed electricity capacity from non-fossil by 2030, a 45 per cent intensity cut from 2005, a 1 billion tonne reduction in projected emissions, and net zero in 2070. Wording them as "half the energy mix" is a factual error.

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Q2(a) · 20 marks

"The post-colonial state was thought of an entity that stood outside and above society as an autonomous agency." Explain

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Comparative Politics

Revision summary

Colonial rule built a State of force and revenue over a subject society.

Alavi's overdeveloped State stands above a weak indigenous bourgeoisie.

Fanon described the colonial State as racial partition and violence.

Nehruvian planning looked like the same midwife State in India.

Society, capital, and external hierarchy later qualify the autonomy thesis.

Introduction

Independence inherited a colonial State that had ruled society from above. Many theorists treated that State as an autonomous agency: not a simple committee of local landlords or merchants. Hamza Alavi named the pattern. Frantz Fanon described its violence and distance.

Body

The colonial inheritance

- The colonial State extracted revenue, held the monopoly of force, and sat over a society it did not grow from.
- Its civil and military bureaucracies were built to control, not to represent a national bourgeoisie.
- **Fanon saw the colonial world as Manichaeian:** the settler town and the native town, with the State as the armed partition.

Alavi's autonomous agency

- Hamza Alavi argued that in Pakistan and similar post-colonial societies the State was overdeveloped relative to the indigenous capitalist class.
- A military-bureaucratic oligarchy could stand outside and above landlords, the weak bourgeoisie, and the metropolitan neo-colonial tie.
- Relative autonomy here is not Poulantzas's advanced-capitalist State balancing fractions. It is a State that predates a strong national capital.

India and the same family of claims

- The ICS-to-IAS steel frame, **Planning Commission** steering, and a large public sector looked like a State above the market.
- **Jawaharlal Nehru's** developmental State claimed to modernise society from the centre.
- Rajni Kothari and others later showed Congress and caste as society inside the State, which already qualifies pure autonomy.

Why "thought of as"

- Modernisation writers and many nationalists needed a midwife State. Samuel Huntington wanted order-building institutions that were not the plaything of every social force.
- Marxists needed an explanation of why the post-colonial State did not simply enact a local bourgeois will.

Critiques

- Society captures the State through caste, clientelism, and business houses. Autonomy was a moment, not a law.
- The State is also permeable to foreign capital and aid, which Wallerstein's hierarchy would treat as external constraint, not Olympian independence.
- Military oligarchies that "stand above" can still rest on landed and ethnic coalitions.
- Feminist and subaltern work showed that the view from above erased gendered and local power.

What remains useful

- The thesis explains why the first decades looked like administration over politics, and why coups and planning both seemed plausible.
- It is a starting map. It is not a complete sociology of India after mobilisation and liberalisation.

Flow diagram

Colonial apparatus -> Overdeveloped State

Overdeveloped State -> Alavi autonomy above society

Fanon colonial violence -> Alavi autonomy above society

Caste capital movements -.erodes. -> Alavi autonomy above society

Conclusion

The post-colonial State was theorised as autonomous because it inherited an overdeveloped colonial apparatus and faced a weak indigenous bourgeoisie, as Alavi argued, and a divided colonial society, as Fanon described. The image of a State outside and above society fits the founding moment. It thins as parties, capital, and social movements occupy the same State.

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Q2(b) · 15 marks

Discuss the emergence of neo-realism and its basic tenets

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Comparative Politics

Revision summary

Waltz built neo-realism to make realism a systemic theory.

Anarchy, like functions, and unlike capabilities are the core tenets.

Bipolarity was his favoured stability case.

Keohane and Nye's interdependence is the liberal-institutionalist foil.

Domestic politics is deliberately outside the 1979 model.

Introduction

Neo-realism, or structural realism, emerged as Kenneth Waltz's reply to classical realism and to the behavioural search for a theory of International Politics. Its tenets are anarchy, structure, and polarity, not human nature.

Body

Emergence

- Hans Morgenthau's classical realism rested on interest as power and on a tragic human nature. Critics called it unfalsifiable philosophy.
- The 1970s debate with interdependence and with integration theory asked why war persisted among like units.
- **Waltz's Theory of International Politics (1979)** shifted the cause from men and States to the system's structure.
- **The Cold War bipolar map was the empirical home of the argument:** two poles, clear balancing, long peace at the centre.

Tenets

- **Ordering principle is anarchy:** no world government. Units are like in function; they differ in capability.
- Structure is the distribution of capabilities. Polarity - bipolar or multipolar - is the main variable.
- Self-help and security dilemma follow. Balancing is more typical than bandwagoning among great powers.
- Relative gains and survival constrain cooperation even when Robert Keohane's regimes look useful.
- Theory is systemic. Domestic regime type is omitted by design, which later neoclassical realists put back.

What it displaced and what it left

- It disciplined IR into a parsimonious theory. It underplayed transnational actors that Keohane and Joseph Nye stressed.
- Offensive realists such as John Mearsheimer kept the structure and raised the appetite for power.

Flow diagram

Classical realism -> Waltz 1979

Waltz 1979 -> Anarchy like units

Waltz 1979 -> Polarity capabilities

Anarchy like units -> Self-help balancing

Polarity capabilities -> Self-help balancing

Conclusion

Neo-realism emerged when Waltz moved realism from human nature to anarchy and polarity. Its tenets are like units, self-help, and capability distribution as structure. It remains the spare map of great-power politics. It is not a full sociology of world politics.

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Q2(c) · 15 marks

What is complex interdependence? Discuss the role of transnational actors in the international system

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Key concepts in International Relations

Revision summary

Keohane and Nye defined complex interdependence against a military-first hierarchy.

Multiple channels and issue density are the mechanism.

MNCs, IOs, and NGOs are the typical transnational actors.

They set agendas and raise the cost of autarky.

Force still ranks highest when territorial survival is the issue.

Introduction

Complex interdependence is Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye's map of a world in which societies are linked by many channels and military force is not always the last word. Transnational actors are the carriers of those channels.

Body

The concept

- **Power and Interdependence (1977)** set three traits: multiple channels between societies; absence of a fixed hierarchy of issues; and a minor role for military force on many agendas.
- Sensitivity and vulnerability describe how quickly and how costly a disruption travels.
- The model was a reply to Waltzian anarchy as the only structure. It did not claim that force had vanished.

Transnational actors

- Multinational firms move capital, technology, and standards across borders. They bargain with States and with each other.
- International organisations, from the IMF to functional UN agencies, create routines that States cannot ignore cheaply.
- NGOs, churches, scientific networks, and later digital platforms carry norms and information that no foreign ministry monopolises.
- Diasporas and terrorist networks show that transnational is not only liberal peace. It can be violent or communal.

Role in world politics

- **Agenda setting:** climate, human rights, and trade law often start outside cabinets.
- **Coalition making:** a State plus firms plus NGOs can outflank another State on an issue.
- **Limits:** on territorial conquest and nuclear deterrence, Waltz's military hierarchy still bites. Complex interdependence is issue-specific.

India-relevant illustration

- WTO, climate COP processes, and IT services firms are transnational channels. Border wars with China are not.

Flow diagram

Complex interdependence -> Multiple channels
Complex interdependence -> No fixed issue hierarchy
Transnational actors MNCs NGOs IOs -> Multiple channels
Multiple channels -> Outcomes besides force

Conclusion

Complex interdependence is multiple channels, mixed issue hierarchies, and a reduced role for force on many questions. Transnational actors - firms, IOs, NGOs, and networks - make those channels real. They constrain and enable States. They do not abolish anarchy where survival is at stake.

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Q3(a) · 20 marks

Explain the impact of electoral systems and cleavages in shaping party systems with reference to developing countries

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Comparative Politics

Revision summary

Duverger links FPTP to two-party district logic and PR to many parties.

Lipset and Rokkan link parties to social cleavages; the South adds caste, language, and religion.

Regionally concentrated groups make Indian FPTP nationally multi-party.

Huntington flags mobilisation without institutions as a party-system risk.

Clientelism and personalism fill the same rules with weaker organisations.

Introduction

Party systems in developing countries are not copies of nineteenth-century Europe. They are products of electoral rules and of social splits that elections organise. Maurice Duverger and Seymour Martin Lipset still supply the two levers.

Body

Electoral systems as the first shaper

- **Duverger's law:** first-past-the-post in single-member seats tends toward two large parties at the district level. Proportional representation tends toward many parties.
- Mechanical effects discard small vote-shares. Psychological effects teach voters and elites not to waste a ticket.
- Presidential rules, thresholds, and federal chambers add further mechanical pressure.
- In developing countries, poorly drawn seats, incumbency machines, and weak election commissions can warp the same rule.

Social cleavages as the second shaper

- **Lipset and Stein Rokkan mapped European parties onto frozen cleavages:** class, church, centre-periphery, and land-industry.
- Developing countries add caste, tribe, language, religion, and urban-rural splits that colonial rule often froze into law.
- Ethnic census voting, as in many African and South Asian cases, can turn PR into a parliament of communities and FPTP into a coalition of regional notables.
- Samuel Huntington warned that rapid mobilisation of new cleavages without strong institutions produces praetorian politics, not a stable party system.

How the two interact

- FPTP plus many ethnic groups can still yield a multi-party national system, as in India, because groups are regionally concentrated. District two-party logic and national fragmentation sit together.
- The Congress system aggregated cleavages inside one dominant party. After it, social engineering and State parties followed the cleavage map more openly.
- **Giovanni Sartori's distinction between polarised pluralism and moderate pluralism travels:** ideological distance and anti-system parties matter as much as the raw count.

Developing-country specifics

- Parties are often personal and weakly institutionalised. Electoral rules then amplify families, not programmes.
- Military vetoes and one-party independence movements delay the Duverger-Lipset sequence.
- Clientelism uses the ballot to trade goods along cleavage lines rather than to freeze a class cleavage in a social-democratic party.

Net pattern

- Electoral systems set the number and size of viable labels. Cleavages set what the labels mean. Developing party systems are the product, not a European delay.

Flow diagram

Electoral system -> Number of viable parties
Social cleavages -> Identity of parties
Number of viable parties -> Party system
Identity of parties -> Party system
Huntington mobilisation -.strains. -> Party system

Conclusion

Electoral systems mechanically and psychologically ration seats. Social cleavages supply the identities that fill those seats. In developing countries the mix is regionalised ethnicity, weak party organisation, and rules inherited from colonial or independence bargains. Duverger and Lipset still explain the levers. Huntington explains the strain.

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Q3(b) · 15 marks

What is globalisation? Why is there an intense debate about globalisation and its consequences?

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Comparative Politics

Revision summary

Globalisation is denser cross-border economic and social connection.

Wallerstein reads it as world-economy deepening.

Bhagwati and institutionalists stress gains and rules.

Stiglitz and dependency stress crises and unequal rules.

Political backlash and shared sovereignty are part of the consequence set.

Introduction

Globalisation is the thickening of cross-border flows of goods, capital, people, data, and rules. The debate is not whether borders still exist. It is who gains, who is exposed, and whether the State remains the master of the process.

Body

What it is

- Intensity and speed of interconnection, not the first caravan in history.
- Production chains, finance, and digital platforms sit beside older trade.
- Immanuel Wallerstein would say it is the latest deepening of a capitalist world-economy, not a sudden flat world.

Consequences: the optimistic case

- Growth through trade, technology diffusion, and poverty reduction in export platforms, as Jagdish Bhagwati-style liberals argue.
- Absolute gains and regimes, in Robert Keohane's institutionalist language, can make openness self-reinforcing.
- Diasporas and ideas widen choice.

Consequences: the critical case

- Uneven development, footloose capital, and a race on labour and tax.
- Joseph Stiglitz stressed crises from premature financial opening.
- Cultural homogenisation and a democratic deficit in treaty bodies.
- Dependency and world-system writers treat "win-win" as ideology of the core.

Political consequences

- Sovereignty becomes shared with investors and dispute panels.
- Populist backlash is a domestic consequence, not only a Southern complaint.
- Climate and pandemic show that flows carry harm as well as goods.

A working judgment

- Globalisation is structured, not neutral. Consequences depend on position in Wallerstein's hierarchy and on domestic institutions that Huntington would call the capacity to absorb

mobilisation.

Flow diagram

Globalisation -> Flows trade capital data
Flows trade capital data -> Liberal growth regimes
Flows trade capital data -> Critical hierarchy crises
Liberal growth regimes -> Debate on consequences
Critical hierarchy crises -> Debate on consequences

Conclusion

Globalisation is intensified interdependence of markets, rules, and communication. Liberals count growth and regimes. Critics count hierarchy, volatility, and lost policy space. Both describe real slices. The debate is about distribution and control, not about whether ships move.

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Q3(c) · 15 marks

Critically examine the decline of the United States of America as a hegemon and its implications for the changing international political order

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Changing International Political Order

Revision summary

Hegemony meant public goods, the dollar, and allied consent, as Kindleberger and Ikenberry framed it.

Wars, 2008, and China's rise mark relative decline.

Keohane asked whether regimes can outlast hegemony.

Implications are dual-order rivalry, thinner public goods, and hedging by middle powers.

The United States remains first in several capabilities; decline is not disappearance.

Introduction

American hegemony after 1945 combined military reach, the dollar, alliances, and a claim to liberal order. Decline is relative: others rose, wars drained prestige, and consent thinned. Implications are a messier hierarchy, not a neat Chinese succession.

Body

What hegemony was

- **Charles Kindleberger treated a hegemon as the provider of public goods:** open markets, liquidity, and last-resort stability.
- John Ikenberry described a liberal hegemonic order that bound the United States by rules its allies accepted.
- Robert Keohane's *After Hegemony* already asked whether regimes could outlive the peak of US preponderance.

Signs of decline

- Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan damaged the military-political aura.
- 2008 exposed financial fragility. China's manufacturing and Belt and Road offered another centre.
- Allies hedged. The unipolar moment of the 1990s did not freeze.
- Domestic polarisation reduced the reliability of US commitments.

Implications

- Waltzian polarity moves toward bipolar US-China competition inside a still crowded rest.
- Institutions (IMF, World Bank, WTO) face gridlock and rival banks and trade clubs.
- Middle powers, including India, gain bargaining room and also face pressure to choose.
- Public goods - sea lanes, climate, pandemic response - risk under-provision if Kindleberger's logic holds.
- Nuclear and alliance umbrellas become more questioned, which can spur proliferation or minilateral insurance such as the Quad.

Limits of the decline thesis

- The United States still leads in many military and innovation indexes. Decline is not collapse.

Flow diagram

US hegemony -> Relative decline
Relative decline -> China rise
Relative decline -> Institutional gridlock
Relative decline -> Middle-power bargains
China rise -> Messier order
Institutional gridlock -> Messier order
Middle-power bargains -> Messier order

Conclusion

American hegemony has receded from its post-1945 and post-1991 peaks. Implications are contested order, US-China rivalry, and more room and risk for States such as India. Keohane's question remains: can rules survive a weaker hegemon, or does Waltzian balancing take over?

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Q4(a) · 20 marks

The modernization thesis asserts that affluence breeds stable democracy. How do you explain the success of India being the world's largest democracy as an exceptional case?

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Comparative Politics

Revision summary

Lipset tied stable democracy to wealth and a middle class.

Almond and Verba added civic culture; Huntington added institutional order.

India voted before it was rich, which is the exceptional claim.

Kothari and the Rudolphs gave an Indian-path vocabulary.

Emergency and violence show the exception is historical, not magical.

Introduction

Modernisation theory expected stable democracy after wealth, literacy, and a civic culture. India stayed poor, diverse, and electoral. The exceptional-democracy thesis treats that survival as a puzzle that Lipset's correlation does not swallow.

Body

The modernisation thesis

- Seymour Martin Lipset linked economic development with democratic legitimacy and a moderating middle class.
- Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba's civic culture treated participant orientations as the soil of stable democracy.
- Walt W. Rostow's stages made politics a companion of industrial take-off.
- **Samuel Huntington complicated the story:** mobilisation without institutions brings decay. Even so, the West's sequence remained the implicit template.

Why India looked exceptional

- Universal franchise in 1950 preceded mass prosperity. That reverses the Lipset timing.
- Extreme linguistic, religious, and caste diversity should, on many modernisation readings, break a single demos.
- A largely rural, low-income electorate kept choosing governments through the **Election Commission**, courts, and a federal constitution.
- Rajni Kothari's Congress system, the Rudolphs' modernity of tradition, and later Atul Kohli and Ashutosh Varshney treated Indian democracy as a distinct path, not a delayed Europe.

Arguments that dissolve the exception

- India was not the poorest imaginable case in every region; a nationalist elite and the ICS frame were unusual colonial bequests.
- Emergency 1975-77 showed how thin the exception could become.
- State-level authoritarianism, communal violence, and later illiberal talk suggest "exception" was never a guarantee.
- Comparative work on other poor democracies (and on breakdowns) weakens uniqueness.

Arguments that keep a qualified exception

- No other large, poor, federal, multi-religious State has kept competitive national elections for so long.
- Social heterogeneity was organised into parties and reservations rather than into a single racial census State.
- **The puzzle remains for Lipset:** development did not arrive first.

Debate as method

- Exception should mean a challenge to a theory's scope, not a national compliment.
- **Modernisation still explains pressures:** growth, urban middle classes, and media change Indian politics. It does not explain 1952.

Flow diagram

Modernisation Lipset Almond -> Democracy after development

India 1950 franchise -> Exceptional democracy thesis

Exceptional democracy thesis -> Qualifiers Emergency illiberal strain

Democracy after development -> Debate

Exceptional democracy thesis -> Debate

Conclusion

Modernisation theory expected democracy after development and civic culture, in Lipset's and Almond's sense. India's early franchise and survival as a poor, plural federation is the exceptional thesis. The Emergency and later strains qualify pride. The debate is whether India refutes Lipset's timing or only delays his variables.

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Q4(b) · 15 marks

Explain the success of ASEAN as a regional organisation

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Comparative Politics

Revision summary

ASEAN's success is peace, process, and diplomatic centrality.

The ASEAN Way traded speed for inclusion.

AFTA and related economic projects thickened interdependence.

- **SAARC is the usual foil:** ASEAN had no permanent intra-club freeze of that kind.

South China Sea and Myanmar show the ceiling of consensus.

Introduction

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, founded in 1967, is the most successful regional club in the developing world. Success is peace among members, centrality in Asian diplomacy, and thick economic habits. It is not a European Union.

Body

What success looks like

- No interstate war among members after the expansion of the club, despite earlier Konfrontasi-type memories.
- **The ASEAN Way:** consultation, non-interference, and consensus lowered the cost of sitting together.
- Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, ASEAN Regional Forum, and later the East Asia Summit placed ASEAN in the chair of wider tables.
- AFTA and the ASEAN Economic Community built a production and tariff habit even if the single market is incomplete.

Why it worked better than many Souths

- Anti-communist founding core, later inclusion of Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, and Cambodia, turned a sub-region into a diplomatic unit.
- External powers were invited in as partners, not as members that could capture the secretariat.
- Compared with SAARC, there was no enduring dyadic veto equal to India-Pakistan inside the room.

Limits of the success story

- Myanmar, the South China Sea, and great-power split show the ASEAN Way stalling on hard security.
- Consensus can mean lowest-common-denominator statements.
- Inequality among members and weak enforcement are the price of keeping all flags in.

Measure against the mandate

- Success is regional peace and agenda-setting centrality, not a security community in Karl Deutsch's full sense.

Flow diagram

ASEAN 1967 -> ASEAN Way consensus

ASEAN Way consensus -> Peace among members

ASEAN Way consensus -> Centrality ARF EAS

ASEAN Way consensus -> AFTA economic habit

SCS Myanmar -limits. -> Centrality ARF EAS

Conclusion

ASEAN succeeded as a diplomatic and economic process that kept diverse States talking and trading. The ASEAN Way and centrality are the achievements. Hard security and China policy remain the unfinished tests. Against SAARC, the success is clear.

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Q4(c) · 15 marks

Explain India's relations with the European Union in the context of Brexit

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Changing International Political Order

Revision summary

The 2004 strategic partnership was with the EU including the UK.

Brexit split trade law, origin rules, and political access into two files.

An India-UK FTA became a distinct opportunity.

The EU bloc remains the larger market and climate partner.

India's interest is to run both tracks, not to pick a substitute Europe.

Introduction

Brexit took the United Kingdom out of the European Union in 2020. India then faced two Western European partners instead of one legal market. Relations with Brussels and with London had to be re-specified without abandoning the older strategic partnership with the EU.

Body

Before Brexit

- The 2004 India-EU strategic partnership covered trade, climate, and multilateralism.
- A broad-based FTA stayed stuck on movement of professionals, automobiles, wines, and procurement.
- The UK inside the EU was a voice for openness to India in some dossiers and a complication in others.

What Brexit changed

- India must negotiate a Union of 27 and a separate UK. Rules of origin and financial passports split.
- **Opportunity:** a faster India-UK FTA track became thinkable once London could move without the 27.
- **Risk:** a weaker EU political union, or a preoccupied Brussels, could slow the India-EU FTA still further.
- Diaspora, education, and services links with Britain remain thick; they are now bilateral, not Union law.

Continuities

- Climate, data, maritime security, and a shared interest in a rules-based order still point to Brussels.
- The EU remains India's large trading partner as a bloc. That arithmetic did not vanish with the UK's exit.
- Values talk on human rights and Russian energy later sat beside trade. In 2021 the immediate file was still FTA architecture after Brexit.

Strategic reading

- **Multi-alignment:** India can use London as a gateway on some security and mobility issues and Brussels on climate and standards.

- Keohane-style complex interdependence with Europe is now two bargains, not one.

Flow diagram

Brexit -> India-India-EU 27 FTA climate 27 FTA climate

Brexit -> India-India-UK bilateral FTA mobility bilateral FTA mobility

India-EU 27 FTA climate -> Re-wired Europe policy

India-UK bilateral FTA mobility -> Re-wired Europe policy

Conclusion

Brexit doubled India's European negotiation without ending the EU partnership. The prize is two trade and political tracks. The cost is complexity and a possible further delay in the Brussels FTA. Context is re-wiring, not a rupture with Europe.

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Q5(a) · 10 marks

Discuss the strategic implications of India's Look East Policy transforming into Act East Policy.

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · India and South Asia

Revision summary

Look East opened India to ASEAN after 1991.

Act East thickens defence, connectivity, and Indo-Pacific talk.

China and the Himalaya give the policy a balancing edge.

ASEAN centrality is still the diplomatic method.

It is alignment, not a formal eastern NATO.

Introduction

Look East began as a post-1991 economic turn to ASEAN. Act East, named in 2014, keeps that trade core and adds security, connectivity, and the Indo-Pacific. The implication is a more military-diplomatic east, not a renamed brochure.

Body

From Look to Act

- P. V. Narasimha Rao's Look East sought investment, ASEAN dialogue, and a post-Cold War Asian identity.
- **Act East raised the tempo:** summit regularity, north-east and Myanmar connectivity, and defence exercises with Vietnam, Japan, Australia, and the United States.
- The Quad's revival sits in the same theatre even when India refuses NATO language.

Strategic implications

- **China is the unspoken referent:** Himalayan pressure and the South China Sea make the east a second front of balancing.
- ASEAN centrality remains the diplomatic ticket. India must deliver on connectivity or Act East looks like speeches.
- The north-east becomes a land bridge, which ties internal security to foreign policy.
- Indo-Pacific vocabulary links the Bay of Bengal to the wider maritime commons.

What does not follow

- It is not a military alliance. It is issue-based alignment plus economic unfinished business.

Flow diagram

Look East 1990s -> Act East 2014
Act East 2014 -> ASEAN trade
Act East 2014 -> Security Quad Indo-Pacific
Act East 2014 -> Connectivity north-east

Conclusion

Look East was trade and ASEAN belonging. Act East adds deterrence, connectivity, and Indo-Pacific presence. The strategic implication is hedging China while staying inside ASEAN-led process.

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WRAP Exams

Q5(b) · 10 marks

Explain the philosophical foundations of India's foreign policy.

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Recent developments in Indian Foreign policy

Revision summary

Gandhian peace and anti-colonial freedom are the ethical roots.

Nehru made non-alignment the working philosophy of autonomy.

Appadorai systematised peace, the UN, and Asian resurgence as doctrine.

Panchsheel is the named coexistence code.

Kautilya and later tests sit as the realist under-layer.

Introduction

India's foreign policy rests on a mix of civilisational ethics, anti-colonial freedom, and a State's need for autonomy. **Jawaharlal Nehru** and A. Appadorai gave that mix a public vocabulary. Practice later added harder power.

Body

Ethical and civilisational sources

- Ahimsa and peaceful settlement, filtered through **Gandhi** and through Buddhist-Hindu ideas of a moral order, discouraged glory in conquest.
- Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and later Panchsheel translated coexistence into five principles with China in 1954.
- Anti-racialism and anti-colonial solidarity came from the freedom movement, not from a textbook of IR.

Nehru and Appadorai

- **Nehru** treated non-alignment as moral independence and as a way to keep policy space in a bipolar world.
- **Appadorai wrote the doctrine as a systematic public philosophy:** peace, the UN, and Asian resurgence as Indian interests with an ethical face.
- **Kautilya is often recovered as a realist counter-foundation:** mandala, sandhi, and vigraha. Official speech still prefers **Nehru's** grammar.

How the foundations operate

- They justify strategic autonomy, UN multilateralism, and Global South voice.
- 1962, 1971, and 1998 show that survival and capability can override sermon when the State is threatened.

Flow diagram

Freedom movement ethics -> Nehru non-alignment
 Appadorai public philosophy -> Nehru non-alignment
 Nehru non-alignment -> Panchsheel UN autonomy
 Kautilya realist strain -> Panchsheel UN autonomy

Conclusion

The philosophical foundations are peace, anti-colonial autonomy, Panchsheel, and a civilisational claim to moral politics, as **Nehru** and Appadorai framed them. They are real guides. They are not a substitute for the balance of power.

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WRAP Exams

Q5(c) · 10 marks

Explain India's position on the waiver of intellectual property rights on COVID-19 vaccines in WTO.

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Recent developments in Indian Foreign policy

Revision summary

India and South Africa tabled a COVID TRIPS waiver in 2020.

The claim was that patents blocked scaled production of vaccines and treatments.

Doha public-health language was the legal-moral precedent.

Compulsory licensing was judged too cumbersome for a global shock.

Rich-country resistance narrowed the outcome; the Indian position stayed pro-waiver.

Introduction

In October 2020 India and South Africa asked the WTO TRIPS Council to waive certain intellectual-property rules on COVID-19 vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics. India's position was that patents were blocking scale in a pandemic.

Body

The demand

- A time-limited waiver of TRIPS obligations on patents, designs, and undisclosed information for COVID health products.
- Compulsory licensing under existing TRIPS was called too slow and too narrow when many countries needed to produce at once.
- The aim was technology transfer and generic manufacture, not a permanent abolition of IP.

India's argument

- Public health emergency overrides ordinary rent from patents, in the spirit of Doha 2001 on TRIPS and public health.
- Vaccine nationalism and advanced-country buying left the Global South short.
- India as a pharmacy of the South claimed both capacity and a duty to supply.

The politics of the file

- Many developed members resisted a broad waiver. The United States later backed a narrower vaccine-focused discussion.
- A 2022 Ministerial compromise was thinner than the original India-South Africa text. The 2021 question is the demand, not that later deal.

Link to IR

- **The episode is Cox-style:** whose property regime a global institution serves in a crisis.

Flow diagram

India South Africa 2020 -> TRIPS waiver proposal

TRIPS waiver proposal -> Vaccines diagnostics therapeutics

IP holders rich members -> Opposition delay

TRIPS waiver proposal -> Opposition delay

Conclusion

India, with South Africa, sought a TRIPS waiver so that COVID vaccines and related tools could be produced widely. The position treated IP as a barrier in a pandemic, not as an untouchable right. WTO consensus made the original wide waiver hard to land.

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Q5(d) · 10 marks

Write about the growing significance of QUAD.

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Comparative Politics

Revision summary

Quad is Australia, India, Japan, and the United States.

Revival after 2017 and leaders' meetings in 2021 raised its weight.

It aggregates maritime capability without a mutual-defence treaty.

Vaccines and technology are the public-goods face.

India uses it as a hedge, not as an alliance label.

Introduction

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue joins Australia, India, Japan, and the United States. Its significance grew when leaders met in 2021 and when China loomed larger in the Indo-Pacific. It is a consultative minilateral, not a treaty alliance.

Body

Growth of significance

- Shinzo Abe's 2007 idea faded after Australia's pullback. 2017 revived the officials' track after Doklam-era China anxiety.
- The 2021 leaders' summits, including a virtual meeting and a later in-person one, raised the political level.
- Vaccines, climate, critical technology, and maritime domain awareness widened the menu beyond naval signalling.

Why it matters

- It is the most visible balancing coalition India will join without calling it an alliance.
- **It links Act East to US and Japanese capability in Waltzian terms:** capability aggregation under anarchy.
- **For ASEAN it is a test:** will Quad respect centrality or split the region?

Limits

- No **Article 5**. India still buys Russian arms and talks strategic autonomy.
- Significance is political and maritime, not a NATO in Asia.

Flow diagram

Quad AU IN JP US -> Leaders 2021
 Quad AU IN JP US -> Maritime China hedge
 Quad AU IN JP US -> Vaccines tech climate
 Leaders 2021 -> Growing significance
 Maritime China hedge -> Growing significance
 Vaccines tech climate -> Growing significance

Conclusion

The Quad's growing significance is leader-level habit, a China-related Indo-Pacific balance, and a public-goods cover. It matters because India is in it. It is not a military pact.

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WRAP Exams

Q5(e) · 10 marks

How does the recent takeover of Afghanistan by Taliban impact India's strategic interests?

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Recent developments in Indian Foreign policy

Revision summary

August 2021 ended India's two-decade Republic partnership in Kabul.

Terrorism and Pakistan's strategic depth are the sharpest Indian fears.

Chabahar-Central Asia connectivity needs a workable Afghan landmass.

Aid projects became stranded assets of influence.

Policy is a recognition-versus-engagement dilemma, not a restored embassy as before.

Introduction

The Taliban took Kabul in August 2021 as the United States left. India's interests there are terrorism, connectivity, a friendly balance against Pakistan's depth, and the safety of past investments. The takeover damaged all four at once.

Body

Immediate hits

- The Republic that hosted Indian aid, the parliament building, and the Zaranj-Delaram road collapsed.
- Embassy drawdown and the loss of a political partner in Kabul erased twenty years of presence.
- Pakistani influence and the risk of anti-India groups finding space rose in New Delhi's threat perception.

Core interests

- **Terrorism:** Indian concern is Lashkar, Jaish, and other groups using Afghan soil, not only Afghan civil war.
- **Connectivity:** Chabahar and a land path to Central Asia need a usable Afghanistan. The Taliban freeze that bet.
- **Strategic denial:** India does not want a Pakistan-run western neighbour. It also does not want a chaos that exports fighters.
- **People:** minorities, women, and Indian-origin workers affect reputation and consular load.

Policy dilemma

- Engage the Taliban for access and counter-terror pledges, or stay out and lose the board.
- UN sanctions, recognition, and humanitarian aid are the diplomatic tools. None restore the 2001-21 Republic.

Flow diagram

Taliban 2021 -> Republic collapse
Republic collapse -> Terror risk
Republic collapse -> Connectivity Chabahar hit
Republic collapse -> Pakistan depth fear
Terror risk -> Indian interests
Connectivity Chabahar hit -> Indian interests
Pakistan depth fear -> Indian interests

Conclusion

The Taliban takeover set back India's aid footprint, western connectivity, and counter-terror buffer. Implications are a harder Pakistan-facing map and a choice between pragmatic contact and principled distance. Interests did not disappear. The partner did.

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Q6(a) · 20 marks

"Non-alignment was little more than a rational strategy on the part of a materially weak India to maximise its interests with a bipolar distribution of global power." Comment

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · India and the Global Centres of Power

Revision summary

A poor, partitioned India could not set bipolar structure.

Non-alignment was hedging and voice, not a third superpower.

Nehru and Appadorai fused ethics with autonomy.

- **Waltzian logic:** weak units avoid becoming someone else's front.

1971 showed the rational limit when a war for survival arrived.

Introduction

Bipolarity after 1945 forced most States toward one camp. A newly independent, militarily modest India refused both pacts. Non-alignment was a moral language. It was also a rational use of weakness, as **Nehru** argued and as a Waltzian map of poles would expect of a State that could not determine the system.

Body

Why "weak" is the right starting word

- 1947 India had a partitioned army, a food problem, and no nuclear deterrent.
- It could not be a third pole. It could refuse to be a front-line ally that imported other people's wars.
- A. Appadorai presented the choice as independence of judgment. Rationality is that independence when capability is low.

Rationality in bipolarity

- Kenneth Waltz's structure says great powers balance each other. Lesser States hide, hedge, or bandwagon.
- **Non-alignment was hedging:** aid and diplomacy from both sides without a NATO or Warsaw treaty.
- The UN and Afro-Asian platforms multiplied voice cheaply, a weak State's substitute for force.
- Moral anti-colonial leadership created status that tanks could not yet buy.

Evidence that it was strategy, not sermon only

- Food and capital came from several sources. Soviet industry and Western aid both appeared.
- When weakness met a sharp threat in 1971, India signed the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation with the USSR. That is the exception that proves the bipolar constraint.
- 1962 showed the cost of military thinness. Non-alignment did not replace defence. It tried to buy time and friends.

Critiques of the formula

- Critics said it was a luxury of distance from Europe's front. China did not treat India as a peer of peace.

- Dependency writers would say "weak" also meant a place in Wallerstein's order, not only a missing alliance.
- **After 1991 bipolarity ended. The same autonomy needed new tools:** 1998 tests, the United States, and later the Quad.

Judgment

- The statement is largely true for 1947-71. It understates **Nehru's** belief that India would not stay weak. It understates NAM's claim to reshape order, not only to hide.

Flow diagram

Weak India -> Non-alignment
Bipolar US-USSR -> Non-alignment
Non-alignment -> Hedge both camps
Non-alignment -> UN NAM voice NAM voice
1971 USSR treaty -exception under threat. -> Non-alignment

Conclusion

- **Non-alignment was a rational strategy for a weak India under bipolarity:** avoid camp war, harvest both sides, and speak at the UN. **Nehru** and Appadorai gave it philosophy. The 1971 treaty shows what India did when weakness met a system shock. The phrase is right as a starting claim, not as the whole of Indian ambition.

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Q6(b) · 15 marks

Examine the Geo-strategic points of contention in the bilateral relationship between India and China

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · India and the Global Centres of Power

Revision summary

The core file is an unsettled Himalayan boundary.

Doklam 2017 and Galwan 2020 are the named recent crises.

CPEC through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir is a sovereignty and two-front issue.

The Indian Ocean and South Asian projects extend the contest beyond the ridge.

Status in the UN and Asian clubs is the diplomatic layer of the same rivalry.

Introduction

India and China share a long disputed Himalayan frontier and a crowded Asian order. Geostrategic contention is territorial, maritime, and institutional. Doklam and Galwan are named shocks on a deeper map.

Body

The land frontier

- **Unresolved boundary:** Aksai Chin, the McMahon Line, and the status of the so-called LAC.
- 1962 war memory structures military planning.
- **Doklam 2017:** a stand-off at the Bhutan-China-India trijunction, about a road and the Siliguri corridor's depth.
- **Galwan 2020:** lethal clash in eastern Ladakh that ended a long political pretence of managed peace.

The Pakistan and Himalayan wedge

- China-Pakistan strategic tie and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.
- India reads CPEC as a sovereignty and two-front problem, not only a trade road.

The maritime and neighbourhood ring

- Indian Ocean dual-use ports, submarine visits, and a growing PLA Navy.
- Influence in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Bangladesh through finance and projects.
- Tibet and the Dalai Lama remain a political-security residue of 1950s incorporation.

Order and status

- China's rise, as Waltz would count capability, shrinks India's room in Asia.
- UN Security Council permanent membership, NSG, and Asian institutions are status contests.
- The **Quad and Act East** are Indian replies, not the cause of the border file.

What is not the whole story

- Trade remains large. Contention is geostrategic even when shops are full.

Flow diagram

Boundary LAC -> Doklam 2017
Boundary LAC -> Galwan 2020
CPEC PoK PoK -> Two-front fear
Indian Ocean -> Two-front fear
Doklam 2017 -> Geostrategic contention
Galwan 2020 -> Geostrategic contention
Two-front fear -> Geostrategic contention

Conclusion

Points of contention are the boundary (Doklam, Galwan, Aksai Chin, Arunachal), the China-Pakistan corridor, the Indian Ocean, and status in Asian and UN order. Interdependence in trade has not dissolved the security dilemma.

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Q6(c) · 15 marks

Write a brief analysis of the ethnic conflicts and cross-border migrations along India-Myanmar and India-Bangladesh borders

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Comparative Politics

Revision summary

Colonial borders split Naga, Chin, Mizo, and Bengali-speaking worlds.

Myanmar's wars drive Chin and other hill refugees into India's north-east.

Rohingya flight from Rakhine is mainly into Bangladesh, with a smaller Indian presence.

1971 and later labour migration structure the India-Bangladesh people file.

State governments on the frontier are part of the foreign-policy machine.

Introduction

India's east and north-east sit on ethnic maps that colonial borders cut. Conflict on one side becomes movement on the other. Myanmar and Bangladesh are the two main files: Chin and related hill peoples, and Rohingya and older Bengali-speaking flows.

Body

India-Myanmar

- Naga, Chin, Mizo, and related communities straddle the boundary. Kinship does not match the 1937-48 political lines.
- Myanmar's wars, including post-2021 junta violence, pushed Chin and other refugees into Mizoram and neighbouring Indian States.
- Armed groups have used the other country's hills as rear area. Joint operations and the 2015 cross-border raid sit in that security reading.
- Free Movement Regime along the border was a people-to-people device that security agencies also treat as a smuggling and insurgent risk.

India-Bangladesh

- 1971 created a massive refugee wave into India and then a new State. That memory still shapes Delhi and Dhaka.
- Chakma and other hill people moved earlier from the Chittagong Hill Tracts.
- Rohingya, a Muslim minority from Myanmar's Rakhine, transited or stayed in Bangladesh in very large numbers after 2017, with smaller numbers reaching India. India treats many arrivals as illegal migrants and a security-demographic issue; humanitarian and citizenship debates continue in courts and politics.
- Cattle, labour, and undocumented economic migration along a dense, riverine border mix with communal politics in Assam and West Bengal.

What links the two dyads

- Ethnic conflict is the push. Porous hills and rivers are the path. Domestic identity politics is the pull and the bar.
- Neither file is only "foreign." Constituent States - Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Assam, West Bengal, Tripura - shape the federal response.

Flow diagram

Myanmar conflict -> Chin related inflows

Myanmar conflict -> Rohingya to Bangladesh

Rohingya to Bangladesh -> Some onward to India

Bangladesh labour 1971 memory -> Some onward to India

Chin related inflows -> Some onward to India

Conclusion

India-Myanmar migration follows hill ethnic wars, especially Chin and kindred groups. India-Bangladesh migration layers 1971 memory, labour movement, and Rohingya displacement that began in Myanmar. Ethnic conflict and the border are one political field, not two separate humanitarian footnotes.

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Q7(a) · 20 marks

Why South Asia is considered as the world's politically and economically least integrated region? Explain

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · India and South Asia

Revision summary

India-Pakistan conflict is the structural political cause.

SAARC consensus turns that dyad into a regional freeze.

Asymmetry and China-as-hedge weaken a single market bargain.

SAFTA holes and infrastructure gaps keep official trade thin.

ASEAN and BIMSTEC show that geography is not destiny; politics is.

Introduction

South Asia trades little with itself, builds few regional public goods, and lets SAARC stall. Least integrated is a relative claim against ASEAN or the EU. The causes are political first, then economic and geographic.

Body

The political lock

- India-Pakistan conflict, including Kashmir, nuclearisation, and terror incidents, makes consensus in SAARC a veto machine.
- 2016's cancelled Islamabad summit after Uri is a symbol, not the only freeze.
- **Asymmetry:** India is most of the region's GDP and military weight. Neighbours fear a market that is a hegemon. India fears a club that equals a small State with a large one.

Why ASEAN looks different

- ASEAN found a way to sit together after intra-mural war memories. South Asia never buried 1947-71.
- Extra-regional China offers smaller States a hedge, which thins the incentive to build a tight South Asian market.
- BIMSTEC and BBIN grew as work-arounds, which itself proves SAARC's failure as the integration vehicle.

Economic and physical barriers

- Sensitive lists under SAFTA, non-tariff barriers, and poor last-mile rail and road keep official intra-trade thin.
- Energy grids and inland waterways exist in pieces, not as a region-wide system.
- Informal trade and third-country routing (often via Dubai or Singapore) show demand that policy blocks.

Identity and people

- Visas, distrust, and communal politics slow people integration even where language and kinship run across borders.
- Cross-border ethnic conflict, as with Rohingya and north-east insurgencies, securitises mobility.

Theoretical reading

- Karl Deutsch's security community needs trust. South Asia has a security complex, in Barry Buzan's sense, centred on India-Pakistan.
- Functionalists hoped trade would spill over. Politics here blocks the first spill.

What "least" does not mean

- Some pairs - India-Bhutan, a warmer India-Bangladesh trade patch - integrate more. The regional average remains low.

Flow diagram

India-Pakistan veto -> SAARC stall
Indian asymmetry -> SAARC stall
SAARC stall -> Low intra-trade
NTBs visas -> Low intra-trade
Low intra-trade -> Least integrated region
BIMSTEC bypass -.partial. -> Least integrated region

Conclusion

South Asia is least integrated because India-Pakistan rivalry vetoes SAARC, asymmetry breeds fear, and non-tariff and visa walls keep markets apart. ASEAN's process success is the foil. BIMSTEC is the bypass, not a full substitute for a South Asian economy.

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Q7(b) · 15 marks

How do the constituent states influence the foreign policy making process in India?

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Indian Foreign Policy

Revision summary

Diplomacy is a Union power; influence is political.

Tamil Nadu-Sri Lanka and West Bengal-Bangladesh are classic pairs.

North-eastern States shape the Myanmar and refugee files.

Kerala's Gulf link is diaspora diplomacy from below.

Coalitions raise State leverage; a strong Centre can still override.

Introduction

The Constitution puts foreign affairs in the Union List. In practice, border States, diaspora States, and coalition politics push New Delhi. Influence is partisan and geographic. It is not a second External Affairs Ministry in every capital.

Body

Formal design

- Treaty-making, war, and diplomacy are Union subjects. The Centre can still be politically unable to ignore a State.
- Inter-State Council and occasional chief-minister visits are weak formal channels. The real channel is party and protest.

Border and ethnic files

- Tamil Nadu shapes Sri Lanka policy through the Tamil question and fisheries.
- West Bengal affects Bangladesh on Teesta, migration, and border haats.
- Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir sit on the Pakistan and people-to-people file.
- North-eastern States shape Myanmar policy, the Free Movement Regime, and refugee shelter, as in Mizoram's Chin inflows.

Economic and diaspora States

- **Kerala and the Gulf:** remittances and evacuation diplomacy.
- **Gujarat and Maharashtra:** ports, investment, and some neighbourhood commerce.
- IT States lobby on visas to the United States and the UK.

Coalition and federal politics

- When the Centre needs State parties, a regional veto can delay a treaty or a water-sharing signature.
- **Para-diplomacy:** States open trade offices and court NRIs. They cannot recognise States or send ambassadors.

Limits

- Doklam and Galwan were Union military files. States did not set the LAC.
- A determined Centre can override, at a political cost.

Flow diagram

Union List diplomacy -> Foreign policy
Border States -> Identity water migration
Diaspora States -> Remittance visa
Identity water migration -> Foreign policy
Remittance visa -> Foreign policy

Conclusion

Constituent States influence Indian foreign policy where identity, water, migration, and diaspora meet the border or the Gulf. The Union still owns the legal core. Federal politics is the transmission belt, especially under coalitions.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-2/2021/how-do-the-constituent-states-influence-the-foreign-policy-making-process-in-india/>

Q7(c) · 15 marks

Examine the evolution of India's role in the global nuclear order

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Changing International Political Order

Revision summary

India rejected the NPT as a hierarchy of five.

Pokhran 1974 and 1998 marked option then weapons.

Doctrine is minimum deterrence and official no first use.

The 2008 NSG waiver is the civil-nuclear entry ticket without NPT accession.

The role is responsible possessor plus campaigner against a frozen club.

Introduction

India moved from a moral critic of nuclear clubs to a State with nuclear weapons that still sits outside the NPT. The evolution is 1974, 1998, and the 2008 NSG waiver. Role means both capability and the rules India will accept.

Body

From critic to tester

- **Nehru's** India backed disarmament and the idea of a world free of nuclear threat, while keeping a scientific option.
- The NPT (1968) locked a five-weapon-State hierarchy. India refused as discriminatory.
- Pokhran-I in 1974, a "peaceful nuclear explosion," triggered technology denial and showed the option was real.

Open weapon status

- Pokhran-II in 1998 declared weapon tests. Doctrine later stressed credible minimum deterrence and no first use as official grammar.
- Sanctions followed, then a slow return through the United States civil nuclear bargain.

Partial integration without NPT accession

- The 2008 NSG waiver allowed civil nuclear commerce with a non-NPT State, a unique carve-out.
- IAEA safeguards on civilian facilities, a waiver not a membership flip.
- India seeks NSG membership and backs a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty in principle while rejecting the NPT as it stands.

Role in the order

- India is a de facto nuclear-weapon State that defends a rules-based order it did not join on 1968 terms.
- It supports non-proliferation to others, a tension critics call selective.
- China remains the main nuclear neighbour; Pakistan is the paired deterrent problem.

Continuity

- Disarmament rhetoric never fully vanished. Practice is deterrence plus civil nuclear energy.

Flow diagram

NPT 1968 refused 1968 refused -> Pokhran 1974

Pokhran 1974 -> Pokhran 1998

Pokhran 1998 -> NSG waiver 2008 waiver 2008

NSG waiver 2008 -> De facto NW State outside NPT 1968 refused

Conclusion

India's nuclear role evolved from NPT holdout and 1974 tester to 1998 weapon State and 2008 NSG-exception partner. It wants order without accepting a permanent second-class legal status. That is the through-line.

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Q8(a) · 20 marks

Relations between India and Russia are rooted in history, mutual trust and mutually beneficial cooperation. Discuss

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · India and South Asia

Revision summary

Soviet aid and UN positions created early trust inside non-alignment.

The 1971 treaty and Bangladesh war are the political peak.

Defence and dual-use science made cooperation sticky.

1991 preserved the pipeline under a weaker Russia.

Diversification toward the United States and Russia's China tie are the current tests.

Introduction

India and Russia, and earlier the Soviet Union, built an unusually thick partnership for two States that were not formal allies until 1971. Trust grew from arms, industry, and a diplomatic veto when the West tilted the other way. Cooperation outlived the USSR, with more caveats.

Body

Early decades

- **Nehru's non-alignment still found Moscow willing to industrialise the public sector:** steel, energy, and defence licences.
- The UN and Kashmir debates often saw Soviet positions closer to India's than Western ones.
- **Trust was strategic, not sentimental:** each used the other inside bipolarity.

The 1971 hinge

- The Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation was the legal peak of trust.
- In the Bangladesh war the Soviet Union backed India diplomatically, including at the Security Council, against a US-China-Pakistan alignment.
- That episode is the historical capital both sides still spend.

Defence and technology

- MiGs, later Sukhois, a nuclear submarine lease, and BrahMos as a joint venture made Russia the staple of Indian inventories.
- Space and nuclear civil cooperation added scientific trust when Western regimes denied dual-use goods after Pokhran.

After 1991

- The Russian Federation kept the defence pipeline. India paid bills and sought spare parts through a collapsed industry.
- A strategic partnership was declared. Annual summits became habit.
- The relationship had to live with India's United States opening and Russia's China opening.

Trust under strain, cooperation still real

- Delayed platforms, price renegotiations, and CAATSA-type US pressure test the old monopoly.
- On Afghanistan and some UN votes, interests still often rhyme.

- Energy, including later discounted oil, shows commercial cooperation adapting to a harsher order.
- **Trust is path-dependent:** militaries that train on Russian kits cannot switch in a five-year plan.

How to judge the history

- It is one of the few great-power ties India did not have to reset after a war with that power.
- It is cooperation with a declining then returning Russia, not an equal concert forever.

Flow diagram

Soviet industry UN -> Trust
1971 treaty Bangladesh -> Trust
Defence space nuclear -> Cooperation
Trust -> Partnership after 1991
Cooperation -> Partnership after 1991
India-India-US and Russia-China and Russia-China -.strains. -> Partnership after 1991

Conclusion

India-Russia history is trust built on Soviet industrial and 1971 diplomatic backing, then cooperation in defence and space that survived 1991. The bond is real and thinning at the edges as both diversify. The 1971 treaty remains the emblem, not the whole inventory.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-2/2021/relations-between-india-and-russia-are-rooted-in-history-mutual-trust-and-mutually-beneficial-cooperation-discuss/>

Q8(b) · 15 marks

Discuss the Sustainable Development Goals as set by the United Nations

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · United Nations: Envisaged role and actual record; specialized UN agencies

Revision summary

The 2030 Agenda set 17 Sustainable Development Goals in 2015.

They are universal, unlike the more South-focused MDGs.

Review is political and statistical, not judicial.

Finance and COVID shocks are the main delivery problems.

They complement, and do not replace, peace-and-security UN reform.

Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals are the UN's 2015-2030 development agenda. Seventeen goals replace the narrower Millennium Development Goals. They bind poverty, planet, and institutions in one list. They are political commitments, not a new Charter court.

Body

What they are

- **Transforming our world:** the 2030 Agenda, adopted at the UN summit in 2015.
- 17 goals and 169 targets, from no poverty and zero hunger to climate, oceans, gender, and strong institutions (Goal 16).
- **Universal:** unlike MDGs, they apply to rich and poor members. Common but differentiated capacities remain the climate ethic inside them.

How they work

- Voluntary national reviews at the High-level Political Forum.
- Indicators watched by statistical offices and UN agencies.
- **Finance:** Addis Ababa, ODA, tax, and private capital - the weak link.

Political meaning

- They recast development as a UN reform of mandate after 2015, beside peace and rights.
- Critics see a long menu without hard enforcement, a lowest-common-denominator consensus.
- Supporters see a shared language for planning, including India's **NITI Aayog** SDG index practice.

Links to other files

- Climate goals overlap NDCs and, for India, the later COP-26 Panchamrit capacity and intensity pledges.
- Goal 17 (partnerships) is the North-South finance argument in polite form.

Limits

- COVID reversed several indicators. Wars and debt set them back again.
- SDGs do not reform the Security Council. They reform the development story.

Flow diagram

MDGs 2000-2015 -> SDGs 2015-2030
SDGs 2015-2030 -> 17 goals 169 targets
17 goals 169 targets -> Voluntary reviews
Finance gap -limits. -> 17 goals 169 targets

Conclusion

UN SDGs are a universal 17-goal agenda to 2030, broader than the MDGs and softer than a treaty with sanctions. Their power is agenda-setting and national planning language. Their weakness is money and enforcement.

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Q8(c) · 15 marks

Identify the drivers of India's new interest in Africa

PSIR GS 2 · 2021 · Comparative Politics

Revision summary

Old ties were NAM, diaspora, and anti-apartheid.

New drivers are energy, pharma and IT markets, and credit lines.

China's African and Indian Ocean presence is a strategic prod.

UN General Assembly votes support India's order-reform bids.

Summits and vaccines are the diplomatic method; delivery is the constraint.

Introduction

- **India always had an Africa story:** Gandhi, NAM, and anti-apartheid. The new interest is thicker, more commercial, and more strategic. Drivers are energy, markets, China, the Indian Ocean, and votes.

Body

Historical base that is not "new"

- Diaspora on the east coast and in southern Africa, and Nehru's anti-colonial line, are the old capital.
- **The new phase is scale:** lines of credit, summits, and defence visits.

Economic drivers

- **Energy and minerals:** oil, gas, and ores for a growing Indian economy.
- Markets for pharmaceuticals, IT, and consumer goods - the pharmacy-of-the-South brand.
- Lines of credit through EXIM Bank and concessional projects as a reply to slower Western aid and to Chinese packages.

Strategic drivers

- China's Belt and Road and base politics in the Indian Ocean make Africa a maritime and diplomatic field, not a charity map.
- Piracy, sea lanes around the Cape and the western IOR, and African partners in naval exercises.
- Peacekeeping history gives India a security familiarity few Asian peers match.

Institutional and status drivers

- African votes in the UN General Assembly matter for G4 Council reform and for many country-specific files.
- India-Africa Forum Summit process and a claim to speak as a Global South peer, not a donor overlord.

Soft drivers

- Education, ICT, and vaccine diplomacy, including during COVID, as presence-building.
- Shared democracy talk with some partners; with others, only interest.

What "new" means

- From solidarity speeches to a crowded market in which India must deliver or lose the room to Beijing and Gulf capitals.

Flow diagram

Energy markets -> New Africa interest
China IOR -> New Africa interest
UN votes G4 -> New Africa interest
Diaspora NAM memory -> New Africa interest

Conclusion

India's new Africa interest is driven by resources and markets, by China and the Indian Ocean, by UN arithmetic, and by a wish to convert old NAM goodwill into projects. Solidarity is the memory. Capability and delivery are the test.

Open WRAP page —

<https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-2/2021/identify-the-drivers-of-indias-new-interest-in-africa/>

Compiled answer key

Last pages of this pack. Each question links to the WRAP model answer on wrapexams.com.

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Q1(a) 10 marks	Q1(b) 10 marks	Q1(c) 10 marks	Q1(d) 10 marks
Q1(e) 10 marks	Q2(a) 20 marks	Q2(b) 15 marks	Q2(c) 15 marks
Q3(a) 20 marks	Q3(b) 15 marks	Q3(c) 15 marks	Q4(a) 20 marks
Q4(b) 15 marks	Q4(c) 15 marks	Q5(a) 10 marks	Q5(b) 10 marks
Q5(c) 10 marks	Q5(d) 10 marks	Q5(e) 10 marks	Q6(a) 20 marks
Q6(b) 15 marks	Q6(c) 15 marks	Q7(a) 20 marks	Q7(b) 15 marks
Q7(c) 15 marks	Q8(a) 20 marks	Q8(b) 15 marks	Q8(c) 15 marks

Question-wise key

Q1(a) · 10 marks Solution

Q1(b) · 10 marks Solution

Q1(c) · 10 marks Solution

Q1(d) · 10 marks Solution

Q1(e) · 10 marks Solution

Q2(a) · 20 marks Solution

Q2(b) · 15 marks Solution

Q2(c) · 15 marks Solution

Q3(a) · 20 marks Solution

Q3(b) · 15 marks Solution

Q3(c) · 15 marks Solution

Q4(a) · 20 marks Solution

Q4(b) · 15 marks Solution

Q4(c) · 15 marks Solution

Q5(a) · 10 marks Solution

Q5(b) · 10 marks Solution

Q5(c) · 10 marks Solution

Q5(d) · 10 marks Solution

Q5(e) · 10 marks Solution

Q6(a) · 20 marks Solution

Q6(b) · 15 marks Solution

Q6(c) · 15 marks Solution

Q7(a) · 20 marks Solution

Q7(b) · 15 marks Solution

Q7(c) · 15 marks Solution

Q8(a) · 20 marks Solution

Q8(b) · 15 marks Solution

Q8(c) · 15 marks Solution

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