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## UPSC Mains 2025 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-2/2025/>

Q1(a) · 10 marks

### Discuss the psychological approach to the study of comparative politics.

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Approaches to the Study of International Relations

#### Revision summary

The psychological approach studies personality, attitudes, civic culture and cognition in comparative politics.

Lasswell, Adorno, Almond and Verba, Easton and later political psychology are the main lineage.

It explains voting, protest, obedience and leadership better than a constitution or a class map alone.

Surveys, experiments and psychobiography are typical methods.

It is a layer, not a substitute for institutions and political economy.

#### Introduction

- **The psychological approach to comparative politics studies** political man: personality, attitude, cognition and learning. It asks how inner life becomes public power. Constitutions and classes still matter, but they do not vote, fear, or follow a leader. Minds do.

#### Body

##### Core claims

**Harold Lasswell treated politics as the displacement of private motives onto public objects: who gets what, when, how. Theodor Adorno** and colleagues, in *The Authoritarian Personality*, linked rigid child-rearing and prejudice to a potential for fascist followership. **Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba**, in *The Civic Culture*, compared participant, subject and parochial orientations and argued that stable democracy needs a mix, not only a perfect constitution. **David Easton placed those orientations inside a systems model: demands and supports are psychological inputs. Later Fred Greenstein**, the Michigan voting school, and experimental political psychology added heuristics, motivated reasoning and leader images.

The approach is comparative because it treats **civic culture**, trust, efficacy and threat perception as variables that travel. Weimar's subject culture, Britain's allegiant mix, and

high-threat polarisation in several democracies after 2016 are the same family of questions. Open societies socialise through plural media and parties; closed ones through fear and a single script - a point taken up in the short note on socialisation.

### Method and payoff

Surveys, experiments, psychobiography (**Alexander and Juliette George** on Woodrow Wilson) and, now, digital trace data are the tools. The payoff is explanation of **turnout, protest, obedience and charismatic followership** that a legal text cannot supply. **Robert Putnam**'s later social-capital work and **Ronald Inglehart**'s post-materialism sit in the same neighbourhood: values and feelings, not only GDP, sort regimes.

### Limits

Psychology can slide into **reductionism**. A "national character" story once excused empire. Samples are often WEIRD. **Dependency** and **new institutionalism** remind us that credit, oil, electoral rules and courts structure the menu of feelings. **Kenneth Waltz** would say that structure, not the leader's childhood, is the first cut in international politics; the same caution applies when comparing states. The approach is a necessary layer, not a complete map.

### Flow diagram

Psychological approach -> Attitudes and civic culture  
Psychological approach -> Leader personality  
Psychological approach -> Cognition and voting  
Attitudes and civic culture -> Regime stability  
Institutions and class -.constrain. -> Psychological approach

### Conclusion

Comparative politics needs minds as well as machines of state. Personality, civic culture and cognition explain why similar rules produce unlike regimes. They do not replace political economy or institutions; they sit beside them.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-2/2025/discuss-the-psychological-approach-to-the-study-of-comparative-politics/>

Q1(b) · 10 marks

## Neo-liberalism lightened neo-realism's dark view of international politics. Comment.

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Comparative Politics

### Revision summary

Waltzian neorealism pictures anarchy, self-help and relative gains as a dark constant.

Keohane and Nye's neoliberalism keeps anarchy but adds complex interdependence, regimes and absolute gains.

Institutions reduce cheating and transaction costs; they do not create a world state.

Ukraine, tariffs and health-governance shocks show both residual darkness and institutional repair.

The 'lightening' is cooperation under anarchy, not the end of power politics.

### Introduction

Neorealism, in **Kenneth Waltz's** Theory of International Politics, is a dark science of anarchy: self-help, relative gains, and the constant possibility of war. **Neoliberal institutionalism** - **Robert Keohane, Joseph Nye**, regime theory - does not deny anarchy. It argues that information, iteration and institutions can make cooperation rational. That is the lightening.

### Body

#### The dark view

Waltz stripped classical realism of human nature and kept **structure**. The international system is anarchic. Units are like units. Security is scarce. States watch **relative gains** because today's partner can be tomorrow's threat. **John Mearsheimer later pushed this toward offensive realism: great powers maximise power. The 2022 full-scale war on Ukraine, Pahalgam 2025** and the return of tariff weapons in 2025 all feed the dark reading: force and fear still organise the board.

#### The neoliberal reply

**Keohane's** After Hegemony and **Keohane and Nye's** Power and Interdependence argued that under **complex interdependence** military force is not always the last word, multiple channels connect societies, and issue-areas have their own politics. **Regimes** - principles, norms, rules and decision procedures - reduce cheating and transaction costs. **Absolute gains** can suffice when defection is monitored. The WTO, the IAEA, ASEAN's convening, and even a bruised WHO are illustrations that states lock themselves into rules they could, in theory, smash.

Neoliberalism is not Wilsonian idealism. It is rational-choice institutionalism. **Hedley Bull's anarchical society sits nearby: order without world government. Alexander Wendt** later said anarchy is what states make of it; neoliberalism is more cautious, staying with interests and information.

#### Lightening, not abolition

- **The lightening is this:** anarchy remains, but it is not a jungle at every hour. Institutions do not replace power; they **shape** how power is used. When the United States threatens **reciprocal tariffs** in 2025, neorealists say "I told you so." Neoliberals reply that the same shock sends India

and the EU back to a **free-trade agreement** table, and that WHO reform talk after a U.S. withdrawal debate is still institutional politics, not a return to 1914. Both can be true. The dark view is the baseline risk. The light view is the daily work of diplomacy.

### Flow diagram

Waltz neorealism -> Anarchy relative gains  
Keohane Nye -> Regimes absolute gains  
Anarchy relative gains -> War and defection  
Regimes absolute gains -> Cooperation under anarchy  
War and defection -.baseline. -> Cooperation under anarchy

### Conclusion

Neoliberalism lightens neorealism by showing that iterated games, information and regimes make cooperation possible under anarchy. It does not abolish self-help. It makes self-help less lonely.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-2/2025/neo-liberalism-lightened-neo-realisms-dark-view-of-international-politics-comment/>

Q1(c) · 10 marks

## Explain the non-traditional security threats in the context of food and environmental crises.

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Comparative Politics

### Revision summary

- **Non-traditional security covers harms beyond organised military attack:** food, environment, health, cyber and crime.

Food security is availability, access, utilisation and stability; war, climate and export bans can all break it.

Environmental crisis is a threat multiplier through climate, water, disaster and migration.

UNDP 1994 human security and Buzan's sectors supply the theory.

These shocks overload the state and also force cooperation through FAO, WHO, Paris and regional reserves.

### Introduction

Traditional security is the state's survival against organised violence. **Non-traditional security is survival against harms that do not wear a uniform: hunger, pathogens, climate, water, cyber and crime.** Barry Buzan and the Copenhagen school widened the sectors. The **UNDP Human Development Report 1994** named human security. Food and environment are two of its sharpest tests.

### Body

#### Food as security

A food crisis is not only a harvest failure. It is a break in **availability, access, utilisation and stability** (FAO). War on Ukraine disrupted Black Sea grain and fertiliser; drought and El Niño have cut output in parts of Africa and South Asia; export bans travel as political weapons. For importing states, bread prices become regime risk - a lesson from 2007-08 and from several Arab uprisings. India's own buffer stocks, MSP politics and the WTO public-stockholding fight show that food is both a domestic bargain and an IR dossier. **Amartya Sen's** entitlement approach still bites: famine can occur without a fall in aggregate food if access collapses.

#### Environment as security

Climate change is a **threat multiplier**. Sea-level rise, glacial melt in the Himalaya, heat, floods and crop-zone shifts produce disaster, fiscal stress and movement of people. Water contests on shared rivers, from the Nile to the Indus and the Brahmaputra, sit at the edge of classical geopolitics. The **Paris Agreement**, loss-and-damage finance, and arguments over a Global South-sensitive climate regime are security talks in another vocabulary. Pandemics, as COVID-19 showed, are environmental-biological shocks that shut borders faster than tanks.

#### Why the state still matters

Non-traditional threats do not abolish the state; they **overload** it. Weak public health and empty granaries can undo a military that looks strong on paper. They also create cooperation: FAO, UNEP, WHO, the Sendai disaster framework, and regional rice reserves in ASEAN. They create conflict when powerful states treat climate or food as someone else's problem - as in fights over WHO funding and vaccine nationalism. Food and environment now sit on the same agenda as alliances, because they can kill, displace and topple.

## Flow diagram

Non-traditional security -> Food crisis  
Non-traditional security -> Environment climate water  
Food crisis -> Human security  
Environment climate water -> Human security  
Human security -> State stability

## Conclusion

- **Food and environmental crises are non-traditional in origin and traditional in effect:** they can starve, move and unseat. Human security and state security meet in the granary and the floodplain.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-2/2025/explain-the-non-traditional-security-threats-in-the-context-of-food-and-environmental-crises/>

Q1(d) · 10 marks

## Discuss the political socialization of open and closed societies.

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Politics of Representation and Participation

### Revision summary

Political socialisation is the learning of political attitudes, skills and identities.

Open societies use competing agents - family, school, parties, plural media - and allow doubt.

Closed societies monopolise the story through party, clergy or police and punish dissent.

Almond, Verba, Easton, Hyman and Popper supply the vocabulary; Iran, China and backsliding democracies are living cases.

No regime is perfectly open or closed; smartphones and migration leak closed systems.

### Introduction

Political socialisation is the learning of political attitudes, skills and identities across a life.

**Herbert Hyman, Almond and Verba**, and **Easton and Dennis** made it a comparative variable. The contrast between **open** and **closed** societies is about who may teach, what may be doubted, and whether exit and voice exist.

### Body

#### Open societies

In an open society - **Karl Popper's** phrase, used here as a political type - family, school, party, union, temple or mosque, and a plural press compete. Children meet disagreement. Adult socialisation continues through elections, courts and social media. The civic culture can be participant without being unanimous. Mistakes are public. **Democratic backsliding** in the 2020s shows the type is fragile: capturing the public broadcaster, punishing campuses, or flooding the net with a single story is how an open order begins to close.

#### Closed societies

A closed society monopolises the story of the state. The party, leader, clergy or secret police is the authorised teacher. Family and school repeat the line. Dissent is treated as disease or treason. **Hannah Arendt** on total ideology, and later studies of the Soviet Union, Maoist campaigns, North Korea and theocratic police, describe intense closed socialisation. Contemporary **Iran** after Woman, Life, Freedom shows both the monopoly (morality police, compulsory hijab) and its leak: private satellite, Instagram, and the **red lipstick** of protest. China combines market opening with tight control of history, Xinjiang and the internet - a hybrid, not a pure type.

#### Agents and outcomes

Agents are the same nouns - family, school, media, peer group, workplace - with unlike verbs. Open systems produce **cross-pressured** citizens and peaceful turnover, but also polarisation and conspiracy. Closed systems produce conformity, fear, and sudden breaks when the script fails (1989, Arab Spring, 2022 Iran). Migration and smartphones make perfectly closed socialisation harder. Perfectly open socialisation is a myth too: every democracy has official history, a flag, and a security taboo.

Comparative politics therefore treats openness as a **spectrum**. Electoral autocracies socialise for applause, not for alternation. Liberal democracies socialise for contest, and then argue

about whether universities and platforms still allow it.

### Flow diagram

Open society -> Competing agents  
Closed society -> Monopoly script  
Competing agents -> Doubt and turnover  
Monopoly script -> Fear and rupture

### Conclusion

Open societies socialise through competing teachers and the right to doubt. Closed societies socialise through monopoly and fear. Most living regimes sit between, and move.

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Q1(e) · 10 marks

## Comment on the Red Lipstick Movement in the context of feminist rights.

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Comparative Politics

### Revision summary

The Red Lipstick Movement uses visible makeup as dissent against compulsory hijab and morality police, especially in Iran after 2022.

The act claims the face and street as women's civic space, not as fashion advertising.

It sits with Woman, Life, Freedom and with feminist arguments that the personal and the bodily are political.

Lipstick feminism in Western theory reclaimed makeup; the Iranian use is a harder human-rights refusal.

Closed regimes leak through small, repeatable gestures when parties and press are blocked.

### Introduction

The **Red Lipstick Movement** is a feminist practice of dissent in which women paint a visible, 'immodest' mouth as a claim on the street. In **Iran**, after the death of **Mahsa (Jina) Amini** in 2022 and through the Woman, Life, Freedom rising, red lipstick became a small, repeatable refusal of the morality police. The point is not cosmetics. It is the body as a rights-bearing public fact.

### Body

#### What the act does

Compulsory hijab and the Guidance Patrol try to write women's faces out of civic space. Lipstick, uncovered hair, and dancing in the street reverse the instruction. A red mouth is cheap, mobile and photographable. It says: this face is not the state's property. Similar gestures appear in other autocratic settings where dress codes police gender - but the UPSC stem is read most clearly through Iran's 2020s protests, not as a Western advertising slogan.

#### Feminist rights, not fashion

**First-wave** rights were the vote and the law. **Second-wave** rights named the personal as political. **Lipstick feminism** (a late-wave, often Western, strand) reclaimed makeup from the charge that it is only patriarchal display. The Iranian street use is harder. It is closer to **Nawal El Saadawi** and to bodily autonomy under theocracy than to a mall. **Carole Pateman's** sexual contract, **Nancy Fraser** on public spheres, and **Cynthia Enloe's 'where are the women?' all help: the international is made in households and on pavements. When a regime beats women for a lock of hair, lipstick is a human-rights claim - expression, equality, freedom from cruel treatment - not a lifestyle brand.**

#### Comparative politics

The movement shows how **closed socialisation** leaks. It also shows transnational feminist networks: diaspora video, #MahsaAmini, and UN Human Rights Council scrutiny. States reply with arrests, internet cuts and 'hijab law' amendments. Success is mixed: the Islamic Republic has not fallen; everyday non-compliance has widened. For PSIR, the lesson is that feminist rights are fought in the grammar of appearance when speech and parties are blocked. Say

that clearly, without treating Iranian women as a metaphor for someone else's culture war.

### Flow diagram

Red lipstick -> Body as public claim  
Body as public claim -> Feminist rights  
Iran morality police -> Red lipstick  
Woman Life Freedom -> Red lipstick

### Conclusion

- **Red lipstick in this movement is a feminist rights-claim:** the face in public against compulsory modesty. It is dissent you can wear when the podium is banned. Theory names it; Iranian women enacted it.

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Q2(a) · 20 marks

**The world currently has been in the throes of a twin process of 'democratic backsliding' and 'democratic backlash'. How would you explain this paradox?**

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Comparative Politics

### Revision summary

Democratic backsliding is incremental erosion of referees by elected executives, not always a coup.

Democratic backlash is resistance by courts, streets, media and opposition victories.

The paradox is that both run together in a polarised decade, on different clocks.

Hungary, the United States, Brazil, Poland and Iran illustrate different mixes of erosion and resistance.

Not every backlash is liberal; the task is to distinguish civic repair from counter-populism.

### Introduction

The 2020s are not a simple story of democracy's death or of democracy's revenge. **Nancy Bermeo, Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt**, and the V-Dem project describe **democratic backsliding**: erosion from inside, often by elected executives. At the same time, **democratic backlash** - courts, streets, journalists, and opposition wins - has returned in several places. The paradox is that both processes now run as twins, not as chapters in sequence.

### Body

#### Backsliding

Backsliding is rarely a colonels' coup. It is executive aggrandisement, packed courts, captured regulators, tilted electoral law, harassment of the press, and the treatment of opponents as enemies of the nation. **Hungary** under Viktor Orbán, **Turkey** after successive shocks to the opposition, **Venezuela's** long hollow, and fights over certification and the rule of law in the **United States** are standard illustrations. Culture war, migration panics, and inequality supply the fuel. Centre-right and radical-right coalitions have been the usual vehicles, which is why the next question on left setbacks belongs in the same decade.

#### Backlash

Backlash is not automatic sunshine. It is costly mobilisation. Poland's 2023 opposition coalition ended eight years of Law and Justice rule. Brazil's 2022 vote removed Jair Bolsonaro, then had to survive a 8 January 2023 assault on the plazas of power. Israel's 2023 judicial-overhaul crisis filled the streets. Women's movements, including Iranian and other West Asian protests, are backlash against patriarchal closure, not only against a left-right scorecard. In India, a noisy opposition, a still-independent strand of the higher judiciary, and a competitive if strained federal map are part of backlash capacity even when critics allege backsliding on other metrics.

#### Why the twin process

The paradox dissolves once time-scales are separated. Backsliding is often **incremental and legalistic**. Backlash is **episodic and public**. **Polarisation produces both: the same identity heat that lets a leader dismantle referees also produces counter-identity.**

**International demonstration effects work both ways - Orbánism travels, so do protest repertoires. Digital platforms organise rallies and also drown them in disinformation. Robert Dahl's** polyarchy always rested on contestation plus inclusion; when contestation is attacked, inclusion fights back, unevenly.

- **A further twist:** backlash can itself be illiberal (majoritarian street against minorities). Not every crowd is a civic culture. The analyst's job is to sort **liberal-democratic repair** from **counter-populism**. The world is in the throes of both, which is why a single headline - "the end of democracy" or "the people have won" - is bad comparative politics.

### Flow diagram

Polarisation -> Backsliding  
Polarisation -> Backlash  
Backsliding -> Captured referees  
Backlash -> Courts streets votes  
Captured referees -.meets. -> Courts streets votes

### Conclusion

Backsliding erodes referees from above. Backlash tries to restore or reinvent them from below and beside. They coexist because polarised societies produce both strongmen and their antibodies. The outcome is unsettled, country by country.

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Q2(b) · 15 marks

## **The withdrawal of the United States of America from the World Health Organization is set to have far-reaching impacts on global health. Reimagining the existing WHO is vital for the global health agenda. Discuss**

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · India and the Global South

### **Revision summary**

A U.S. exit from WHO cuts funds, programmes and legitimacy and pushes health into unilateral and philanthropic patches.

COVID-19 already showed weak IHR compliance, earmarked budgets and vaccine inequity.

Reimagining means unearmarked dues, a fairer pandemic accord, One Health and regional manufacturing.

China-filling-the-gap politics and anti-UN populism are part of the shock, not a side issue.

India needs both sovereignty over health data and a standing rules forum for the next pathogen.

### **Introduction**

- **The World Health Organization is the UN system's health steering wheel:** norms, International Health Regulations, naming of emergencies, and a thin budget that still shapes what poorer states can do. A **United States withdrawal** - threatened in the first Trump term, reversed under Biden, and reopened as high politics in **2025** - is therefore not a clerical notice. It is a shock to global health as a public good.

### **Body**

#### **Far-reaching impacts**

The United States has been among WHO's largest funders, especially through **voluntary** earmarked money. Exit shrinks outbreak surveillance, polio and HIV programmes, and the political cover for **COVAX**-style equity. It also invites a **China**-centred narrative of filling the chair, which Washington itself fears. During COVID-19, vaccine nationalism and fights over origin-tracing already damaged trust. A second American walkout, even if legally staggered, tells others that health multilateralism is optional. States then hedge with unilateral deals, philanthropic vertical funds, and national stockpiles - a patchwork that fails at the next novel pathogen.

Withdrawal also hits **legitimacy**. WHO's power is mostly expert and convening, not coercive. If the largest Western democracy treats it as an enemy of sovereignty, anti-vaccine and anti-UN politics elsewhere gain a script. Developing countries that used WHO as a shield in TRIPS-waiver and pandemic-treaty talks lose a forum.

#### **Why reimagine, not only mourn**

COVID-19 exposed late alerts, a weak **IHR (2005)** compliance machinery, chronic underfunding of assessed contributions, and a governance board that mixes science with P5 geopolitics. Africa's vaccine-manufacturing gap and India's later vaccine diplomacy both showed that WHO cannot be a charity window for the North. **Reimagining means: higher unearmarked dues so the Director-General is not a grant-chaser; a functioning pandemic accord with real benefit-sharing of pathogens and products; One Health**

links to FAO and UNEP on spillover; regional manufacturing hubs; and a dispute path that does not collapse when great powers sulk.

- **India's interest is dual:** protect sovereignty over data and traditional medicine claims, and keep a rules forum so that the next lockdown is not a rich-state cartel. A Global South-sensitive WHO is part of the same argument as a Global South-sensitive globalisation. Salvage is possible without pretending Geneva can replace national public health. The organisation must become harder to exit and fairer to stay in.

### Flow diagram

US withdrawal -> Money and legitimacy

US withdrawal -> Geopolitical vacuum

Reimagine WHO -> Assessed finance

Reimagine WHO -> Equity and IHR

Reimagine WHO -> One Health

### Conclusion

U.S. withdrawal punches WHO's purse and prestige. Reimagining - finance, equity, IHR teeth, One Health - is how the rest of the membership keeps a global health agenda from becoming a great-power leftover.

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Q2(c) · 15 marks

## **Transnational actors have qualitatively transformed the world by the way of their fresh insights and actions. Illustrate your answer with suitable examples**

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Key concepts in International Relations

### **Revision summary**

Transnational actors are organised non-state forces that operate across borders.

MNCs, epistemic communities, NGOs, terrorist and criminal networks, diasporas and platforms are the main types.

They changed agenda-setting, norms and sometimes the use of force - a qualitative, not only quantitative, shift.

Keohane, Nye, Rosenau, Haas and Strange supply theory.

The state still licenses, bans and fights; world politics is a mesh, not a replacement of Westphalia.

### **Introduction**

**Transnational actors are organised forces that work across borders without being sovereign states: firms, churches, scientific networks, terror groups, diasporas and platforms. Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, James Rosenau, and later constructivists argued that they changed not only the quantity of international contacts but the **quality** of world politics - who sets agendas, who writes norms, who can hurt.**

### **Body**

#### **Market and expert actors**

**Multinational corporations** allocate investment, set labour and data standards, and lobby trade rounds. Apple, Aramco, and semiconductor alliances shape the Indo-Pacific as surely as destroyers. **Epistemic communities - Peter Haas** - wrote the ozone regime and still staff climate IPCC summaries. Philanthropic verticals (Gavi, Global Fund, large foundations) bankroll vaccines when WHO's assessed budget cannot. These actors bring fresh insight: they see supply chains and pathogens that foreign ministries meet late.

#### **Norm and protest actors**

**Amnesty, ICRC**, climate NGOs, and feminist transnational networks (from CEDAW lobbying to **Woman, Life, Freedom** amplification) name shame and draft soft law. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines showed that a coalition of NGOs and middle powers can produce a treaty great powers dislike. Such actors do not replace the UN; they **crowd** it.

#### **Dark and hybrid actors**

Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and Lashkar-type groups are transnational too. They forced states into extra-territorial war and surveillance. Criminal markets in fentanyl, arms and wildlife fold into **non-traditional security**. Digital platforms - X, Meta, TikTok - are a new class: they socialise open and closed societies, host both democratic backlash and disinformation. Diasporas fund parties, temples, and sometimes militancy.

### **Qualitative transformation**

The transformation is **polycentric authority**. Issues are no longer only inter-state. Human rights, climate, health and tech standards are made in a mesh. Yet the state is not obsolete. It licenses firms, bans apps, kills terrorists, and still monopolises legitimate nuclear arms. **Susan Strange**'s structural power of finance and knowledge sits beside Waltz's military structure. A 2025 world of Trump tariffs, WHO fights and Pahalgam terrorism is unintelligible if one counts only foreign offices. It is equally unintelligible if one pretends Google can sign a peace treaty.

### Flow diagram

Transnational actors -> MNCs and platforms  
Transnational actors -> NGOs and epistemes  
Transnational actors -> Violent and criminal nets  
Transnational actors -> Diasporas  
State -.licenses and fights. -> Transnational actors

### Conclusion

- **Transnational actors added new authors to world politics:** capital, science, conscience, crime and code. They transformed agendas and sometimes force. They did not abolish the state; they made it share the stage.

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Q3(a) · 20 marks

## Of late, centrist and centre-left political parties have been facing setbacks while centre-right parties have been in ascendancy the world over. Comment

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Politics of Representation and Participation

### Revision summary

Many democracies since the late 2010s show centre-left and centrist losses and centre-right or radical-right gains.

Drivers include migration, post-COVID inflation, culture war, housing and the split of the old working-class vote.

Inglehart's counter-revolution and Piketty's Brahmin-left sketch help; they do not travel unchanged to India or Latin America.

UK Labour 2024 and other cases are exceptions; not every right victory is fascism.

- **The wave still shapes IR:** tariffs, NATO, WHO and China policy.

### Introduction

- **Since the late 2010s, a comparative pattern has been hard to miss: centrist and centre-left** parties have lost vote share or office in many industrial and some developing democracies, while **centre-right and radical-right** lists have risen. The pattern is not a law of history. It is a cluster of elections that asks for political-economy and cultural explanation together.

### Body

#### The map

Italy's **Giorgia Meloni**, the French right's strength around **Marine Le Pen** even when the Élysée is held by a centrist, Germany's **AfD** surge in the east, the Netherlands' anti-migration turns, **Javier Milei** in Argentina, and **Donald Trump**'s return to the White House in 2025 are the headline cases. Social democrats who once owned the industrial working class now split that class with nativist lists. Third Way centrism after Clinton-Blair looks exhausted: it is blamed both for austerity and for cultural liberalism.

#### Drivers

**Migration and identity** became first-order after 2015 in Europe and remain so. **Inflation** after COVID and the Ukraine war punished incumbents, many of them centre-left or technocratic. Housing and energy costs hurt median voters more than GDP charts. **Culture-war** issues - gender, religion, universities - let the right speak a moral language the professional left often concedes. Social media rewards anger. **Democratic backsliding** literature warns that some right victories then attack referees; not all do on day one.

Political science should not flatten this into "the masses failed the Enlightenment." **Ronald Inglehart**'s silent revolution produced a silent counter-revolution. **Thomas Piketty**'s Brahmin-left versus merchant-right split in Western electorates is a useful sketch: educated professionals stayed left-liberal; many non-graduates moved right. In the Global South the same words map poorly: India's BJP is a civilisational right with welfare delivery; Latin America's pendulum still swings (Chile, Brazil, Mexico) rather than locking.

## Exceptions and caution

The **United Kingdom's** 2024 Labour landslide, periodic Nordic social-democratic holds, and urban-liberal majorities in several U.S. states are exceptions. Centre-left can still win when it owns competence on wages and public services and does not treat voters as a seminar. Centre-right ascent is also not identical to fascism: Christian democrats, Gaullists and India's broad right are unlike interwar blackshirts. The danger is coalition gravity - mainstream right adopting radical-right frames on migration and press freedom.

For IR, the trend matters because it produces **tariff nationalism**, NATO burden-shifting, WHO scepticism and a harder line on China - the Trump shock to the EU in Q4(c). Comparative politics and international politics here are one story.

## Flow diagram

Drivers -> Migration identity  
Drivers -> Inflation housing  
Drivers -> Culture and media  
Drivers -> Left-professional split  
Left-professional split -> Centre-right ascent

## Conclusion

Centre-left setbacks and centre-right ascent are a real, incomplete wave driven by migration, prices, culture and distrust of elites. Exceptions exist. The task is to explain the wave without baptising every conservative win as the end of democracy, and without ignoring the referees some of those wins then threaten.

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Q3(b) · 15 marks

## Collective security and responsibility to protect (R2P) are uniform neither in scope, goals and methods. Explain

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Key concepts in International Relations

### Revision summary

Collective security is all-against-the-aggressor under League and UN Chapter VII logic.

R2P (ICISS 2001, World Summit 2005) treats sovereignty as responsibility to prevent mass atrocity.

- **Goals differ:** interstate peace versus protection of populations; methods differ: central war versus a ladder to last-resort force.

NATO **Article 5** is collective defence, not UN collective security.

Libya, Syria and P5 vetoes show neither doctrine is uniform in practice.

### Introduction

**Collective security is the old hope that peace is indivisible: aggression against one is aggression against all. Responsibility to Protect (R2P)** is a post-1990s claim that sovereignty includes a duty to protect populations from mass atrocity, and that the international community may act if the state fails. They rhyme. They are not the same instrument, and neither is uniform in scope, goals or methods.

### Body

#### Collective security

The League of Nations failed the test in Manchuria and Abyssinia. The **UN Charter tried again: Article 2(4) bans force; Chapter VII lets the Security Council name threats and authorise measures, including force. Korea (1950) and the 1991 Gulf War are the textbook 'successes', each with a Cold War or post-Cold War asterisk. Collective security's goal** is interstate peace and the defeat of a named aggressor. Its **method** is centralised authorisation, ideally universal. Its **scope** is legally the whole membership, politically whatever the **P5** will allow. NATO **Article 5** is **collective defence**, a club guarantee, not UN collective security - a distinction examiners mark.

#### R2P

After Rwanda and Srebrenica, the **ICISS (2001)** and the **2005 World Summit paragraphs 138-139 named three pillars: the state's responsibility, international assistance, and timely response including, in last resort, Chapter VII force. The goal** is protection of populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity - not regime change as a stated end, and not every human-rights violation. The **method is a ladder: diplomacy, sanctions, arms embargoes, then force. The scope** is narrower than 'all aggression' and wider than interstate war: it looks inside borders.

#### Not uniform

Libya 2011 used R2P language and a no-fly resolution; the campaign's drift toward removing Gaddafi poisoned the well. Syria showed vetoes and corpse counts. Myanmar, Gaza, Sudan and Ukraine display four different mixes of law, interest and paralysis. Collective security against Russia in 2022 was a General Assembly majority and Western sanctions, not a Chapter VII army - because a P5 member was the aggressor. R2P is **selectively invoked** when it fits a

coalition; Global South states remember Kosovo, Iraq and Libya as warnings. **Hedley Bull** would say order and justice collide. **Mohammed Ayoob's** subaltern realism says weak states fear R2P as a door for the strong.

Uniformity would need a disinterested council and equal sovereignty in practice. Neither exists. The doctrines remain useful as **standards of criticism**. They are poor as predictions.

### Flow diagram

Collective security -> Defeat aggressor  
R2P -> Stop atrocity  
Collective security -> UNSC / UNSC / P5  
R2P -> UNSC / P5  
UNSC / P5 -> Selective practice

### Conclusion

Collective security targets the aggressor state for the sake of interstate peace. R2P targets atrocity inside a state for the sake of people. Goals, scope and methods differ, and P5 politics make both uneven. That unevenness is the doctrine's living history, not an accident.

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Q3(c) · 15 marks

## Global South-sensitive model of globalization would prevent the danger emanating from overcentralized globalization. Discuss

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · India and the Global South

### Revision summary

Overcentralised globalisation concentrates rules, capital and the dollar in Northern centres and exports risk south.

A Global South-sensitive model shares voice, WTO policy space, climate finance and digital/food buffers.

G20, Voice of Global South, AU membership of G20 and BRICS are incomplete pluralising moves.

Trump tariffs show the core can revolt against its own system; Southern grievance is not the only crack.

The aim is embedded liberalism with a wider membership, not autarky.

### Introduction

Overcentralised globalisation is a system in which rules, capital and reserve-currency privilege sit in a few Northern centres, while risk is exported south. A **Global South-sensitive** model would keep openness but spread **voice, policy space and buffers**. The claim of the question is preventive: without that shift, globalisation dies of its own political reaction - tariffs, WHO walkouts, and democratic backsliding fuelled by left-behind regions.

### Body

#### The danger of overcentralisation

**John Williamson's** Washington Consensus, IMF conditionality, and TRIPS-era intellectual property produced growth for some and crises for others (**Stiglitz**, UNCTAD). Dollar dominance means U.S. interest-rate turns become emerging-market shocks. Standard-setting in tech, green tariffs (**CBAM**), and health rules can look like regulation without representation. COVID vaccine hoarding was overcentralisation in a moral key. **Trump's 2025 reciprocal tariffs** are the core's own revolt against the system it wrote - proof that the danger is not only Southern grievance.

#### What 'sensitive' would mean

It would mean **special and differential treatment** at the WTO that is real, not rhetorical; a repaired dispute system that the strong cannot ignore; climate finance and technology transfer that match Paris promises; reform of IMF quotas; and digital public infrastructure that is not only Silicon Valley's. **G20** under India's 2023 presidency, the **Voice of Global South** summits, **African Union** in the G20, and **BRICS** expansion are incomplete attempts to pluralise the table. **UNCTAD**, South-South trade, and regional value chains (ASEAN, African Continental FTA) are the economic geography.

Sensitivity is not autarky. It is **embedded liberalism** with more than North Atlantic members. Food public stockholding, energy transition pathways, and data localisation debates are where India actually fights. A model that tells Lagos and Lucknow to wait for trickle-down will feed both Southern populists and Northern protectionists.

## Prevention, not poetry

• **Overcentralised globalisation produces the twin of Q2(a):** elite-driven openness without domestic buffers, then nationalist backlash. A Southern-sensitive order would still have conflict - China is not a charity - but it would reduce the sense that multilateralism is a club. WHO reimagining, WTO salvage, and India-EU talks after tariff threats are all tests of whether rules can be recentred without a 1930s smash. The alternative is blocs, weaponised interdependence (**Farrell and Newman**), and a smaller world.

## Flow diagram

Overcentralised globalisation -> Dollar rules TRIPS

Overcentralised globalisation -> Backlash and tariffs

Global South-sensitive -> Voice finance Sustainable openness&DT

Voice finance Sustainable openness&DT -> Sustainable openness

## Conclusion

A Global South-sensitive globalisation keeps trade and science but shares rule-making, finance and policy space. That is the practical answer to overcentralisation. Without it, openness collapses into tariffs and clubs.

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Q4(a) · 20 marks

## Latin America has made moderate success in countering US-led global economic order by framing various organizations emphasizing regional sovereignty, economic integration and alternative development. Discuss

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · India and the Global South

### Revision summary

Latin America answered U.S. economic primacy with Mercosur, ALBA, UNASUR, CELAC, Banco del Sur and Brazil's BRICS role.

- **The intellectual root is ECLAC, Prebisch and dependency:** unequal exchange and the need for regional policy space.
- **Success is moderate:** some intra-trade, a diplomacy without Washington in CELAC, and diversified China markets.

The dollar, IMF programmes and U.S. financial cycles still dominate crises.

Cyclical politics and a reluctant Brazilian paymaster explain the ceiling.

### Introduction

Latin America has long tried to write an economic geography that is not only a backyard of the United States. **ECLAC, Raúl Prebisch and dependency writers supplied the diagnosis: unequal exchange and a commodity trap. The organisations of the last three decades - Mercosur, ALBA, UNASUR, CELAC, Banco del Sur, and Brazil's seat in BRICS - are the institutional reply. Success has been moderate, which is both a fair grade and a warning against romance.**

### Body

#### The organisational map

**Mercosur** (1991) is a customs-union project around Brazil and Argentina; it deepened some intra-trade and then stalled on protection and political swings. **ALBA**, pushed by Chávez's Venezuela with Cuba, was a petro-ideological alternative to the U.S.-led FTAA; it redistributed some oil rents and did not build a durable production structure. **UNASUR** tried a South American political roof, including a defence council, and then emptied as governments changed colour. **CELAC** (2010) convenes the hemisphere without the United States and Canada - a sovereignty signal, useful for China summits, thin as a market. **Banco del Sur** was proposed as a regional lender against IMF conditionality; capitalisation and operations lagged. Brazil in **BRICS** and the New Development Bank is the extra-regional hedge: a seat beside China, India, Russia and South Africa, not a Latin union.

#### Against the U.S. order

The U.S. order here means dollar invoicing, IMF programmes after debt spikes, Wall Street cycles, and bilateral trade deals that survived the death of FTAA. Washington still sanctions, still defines much of the Caribbean security map, and still absorbs migrants and remittances. **Moderate success is real: a language of autonomy, some intra-regional value chains, Chinese commodity demand that diversified export markets, and CELAC as a diplomatic fact. It is moderate because macro shocks still arrive in English: taper tantrums, Fed hikes, and 2025 tariff politics. Venezuela's collapse, Argentina's repeated IMF returns, and dollarisation debates show the ceiling.**

## Why only moderate

Regionalism needs a paymaster and a legal core. Brazil is a reluctant, cyclical paymaster. Left and right **pink tides** reverse each other, so organisations are personalised. Extra-regional China is a partner and a new dependency. For PSIR, the lesson matches Q3(c): alternative development needs finance and rules, not only communiqués. Latin America's experiments remain the most sustained Southern attempt to pluralise the Americas. They have not dethroned the dollar. That is moderate success, honestly graded.

## Flow diagram

Latin American regionalism -> Mercosur

Latin American regionalism -> CELAC

Latin American regionalism -> ALBA UNASUR

Latin American regionalism -> Banco del Sur / NDB

US dollar IMF FTAs dollar IMF FTAs -.still structures. -> Latin American regionalism

## Conclusion

CELAC, Mercosur, ALBA, Banco del Sur and BRICS overlap are Latin America's toolkit for sovereignty and alternative development. They shifted language and some trade. They did not replace the U.S.-centred monetary and financial order. Moderate is the right word.

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Q4(b) · 15 marks

## How successful has the 'ASEAN Plus Three' been in addressing regional problems? Support your answer with specific examples

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Comparative Politics

### Revision summary

ASEAN Plus Three is ASEAN plus China, Japan and South Korea, institutionalised after the 1997 financial crisis.

- **Chiang Mai / CMIM and AMRO are the clearest successes:** a regional liquidity net and surveillance.

Functional cooperation on rice, health and convening of a bitter Northeast Asian triangle also count.

Limits are the South China Sea, Myanmar, the ASEAN way, and modest money next to the IMF.

APT is a functional regime, not a NATO or a court of last resort for force.

### Introduction

**ASEAN Plus Three (APT)** joins the ten ASEAN states with **China, Japan and South Korea**. It was institutionalised after the **1997-98 Asian financial crisis**, when the region learned that the IMF could be both rescuer and political shock. The question is not whether APT is a NATO. It is whether it has addressed **regional problems** - money, food, health, and some diplomacy - with a success that can be named and limited.

### Body

#### Successes

The **Chiang Mai Initiative**, later **multilateralised (CMIM)**, is a swap network against liquidity crises, watched by **AMRO (ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office) in Singapore**. **That is a specific answer to 1997: a regional safety net, still small next to IMF resources, but real.** APT also hosts **functional cooperation on rice reserves**, pandemic information, and connectivity talk. It keeps **China-Japan-Korea** in the same room as ASEAN, which matters when bilateral history is poisonous. During COVID-19, APT statements and medical supply coordination were more usable than a frozen Northeast Asian political triangle. **ASEAN centrality** is the diplomatic method: the weaker ten convene the stronger three.

- **Compared with SAARC, APT looks successful:** it meets, it has a fund, it survived great-power weather. **ASEAN Plus Three** is also a building block toward the **East Asia Summit** and RCEP's political climate, even when membership lists differ.

#### Limits

APT does not settle the **South China Sea**. Code of Conduct talks crawl; Chinese coast-guard and militia pressure on the Philippines and Vietnam continues. **Myanmar** after the 2021 coup exposed the **ASEAN way** - consensus, non-interference - as paralysis; the Plus Three cannot impose what ASEAN will not. North Korea is a Plus Three neighbourhood problem that APT does not command. U.S. alliance structures (Japan, Korea, Philippines) and the **Quad** handle deterrence that APT will not. Financial firepower remains modest; in a true crash, Washington and the IMF still matter, as does the dollar.

Success is therefore **functional and financial**, not strategic. APT addresses regional problems that can be framed as technical. It ducks problems that require naming a revisionist or a junta. That is both the secret of its survival and the ceiling of its achievement.

### Flow diagram

ASEAN centrality Plus Three -> Chiang Mai / AMRO  
ASEAN centrality Plus Three -> Food health connectivity  
ASEAN centrality Plus Three -> Does not settle SCS or Myanmar  
ASEAN centrality centrality -> ASEAN centrality Plus Three

### Conclusion

- **ASEAN Plus Three succeeded as a post-1997 money-and-meeting machine:** CMIM, AMRO, and convening of Northeast Asia through ASEAN. It has not become a security community. Regional problems of force and regime violence remain largely outside its usable toolkit.

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Q4(c) · 15 marks

## "Trump's return to the White House is a jolt to push the European Union to invest in its own defence and economic and technological revival." Comment

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Comparative Politics

### Revision summary

Trump's 2025 return prices NATO, Ukraine aid, tariffs and WHO/WTO scepticism as bargaining tools.

The jolt pushes the EU toward defence spending, ammunition, and a European pillar inside or beside NATO.

Economic and tech revival means chips, green industry and less naive China trade, plus faster India-EU talks.

U.S. enablers remain; Hungary-style vetoes and pro-Trump parties can fragment the response.

The incentive is real; a finished strategic autonomy is still a project, not a fact.

### Introduction

**Donald Trump's** return to the White House in **2025** is a jolt, not a mystery. The first term already priced NATO as a bill, tariffs as a tool, and Brussels as a rival regulator. The second term arrives with **reciprocal tariffs**, a harder bargain over **Ukraine**, and scepticism toward WHO and WTO. The European Union is being told, in deeds, to pay for its own defence and to revive its economic and technological base.

### Body

#### Defence

NATO's European members have lived under a U.S. nuclear and conventional umbrella since 1949. Trump's language of conditionality - pay or perish - forces **ReArm** debates, ammunition production, and talk of a European pillar. France's **strategic autonomy**, Poland's hard spending, and Germany's slow turning from the post-1945 reflex are the internal map. Ukraine is the exam: if Washington shortens the cheque, Europe must fund artillery and air defence or watch a revisionist war on its border. That is a jolt. It is also incomplete: the U.S. still holds enablers - lift, intelligence, nuclear sharing - that the EU cannot mint in a year.

#### Economy and technology

Tariffs on European steel, cars and possibly digital services collide with the **single market's** export model. The jolt pushes **industrial policy**: chips, green tech, critical minerals, and a less naive China commercial stance. The EU already had **GDPR**, the **Digital Markets Act** and CBAM as regulatory power (**Anu Bradford's** Brussels effect). Trumpism says regulation without a foundry is not sovereignty. Hence subsidies, champion firms, and closer **India-EU** trade talks as Europe seeks markets that are not only the U.S. and China. Energy after 2022 already broke the Russian cheap-gas model; 2025 adds transatlantic trade risk.

### Comment, not cheer

The statement in the question is largely right as **incentive**. It is too neat as **outcome**. Hungary and Slovakia can still veto. Populist parties inside the EU admire Trump more than they admire von der Leyen. Defence procurement remains national. A jolt can produce either

integration or fragmentation. **Macron** may get a hearing; a two-speed EU may be the real result. For India, a Europe that spends and makes is a better FOIP and FTA partner; a Europe that splits is a weaker pole in a claimed multipolar world.

- **So:** Trump's return is a jolt to invest. Whether the EU becomes a defence-industrial pole, or only a market with better press releases, will be decided in budgets, not in communiqués.

### Flow diagram

Trump 2025 -> NATO Ukraine bargain  
Trump 2025 -> Reciprocal tariffs  
Trump 2025 -> Tech and regulation clash and regulation clash  
NATO Ukraine bargain -> EU defence spend  
Reciprocal tariffs -> Industrial policy  
Tech and regulation clash -> Industrial policy

### Conclusion

The 2025 White House is a shock to NATO burden-sharing, to tariff-free Atlantic commerce, and to Europe's tech complacency. The EU is pushed to invest in defence, industry and digital capacity. The push is real; the landing is not guaranteed.

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Q5(a) · 10 marks

## China's growing footprint and a tangible shift in power dynamics in Bangladesh has weakened India's leverage in Dhaka.

### Comment.

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Recent developments in Indian Foreign policy

### Revision summary

India's Bangladesh leverage after 2009 was tied to Sheikh Hasina; her 2024 exit opened space for China.

Beijing's BRI projects, credit and defence courtship give Dhaka an omni-enmeshment option.

Indian delays on Teesta, a trade surplus and political optics of patronage stored grievances.

The shift weakens Delhi's privileged access but does not erase geography, power trade or transit.

A less personality-based Neighbourhood First is the repair, not a hyper-realist sulk.

### Introduction

- **India's Bangladesh policy after 2009 rested on a close bet on Sheikh Hasina:** security cooperation against northeast insurgents, transit, power trade, and a managed border. That bet was jolted when Hasina left office in **August 2024** and an interim order under **Muhammad Yunus** began to reopen the external field. **China's growing footprint** is both cause and beneficiary of that shift. India's leverage in Dhaka has weakened. It has not vanished.

### Body

#### The tangible shift

- **Beijing already sat in Bangladesh's infrastructure:** bridges, power plants, and **Belt and Road** credit. After 2024, political permission for a more visible China - defence conversation, extra projects, and a less embarrassed equidistance - increased. For a smaller state, **omni-enmeshment is rational: play India and China, as Nepal and Sri Lanka have.** **Reports of Chinese interest in dual-use facilities and of Dhaka's wish to diversify arms away from a single neighbour are the security reading.** The **Teesta** water file, long stalled, became a symbol of Indian delay that China offered, rhetorically, to fill with projects.

#### Why Indian leverage thinned

Leverage was personalised around Awami League networks and around India's role as the 1971 midwife. It under-priced **domestic anger:** jobless youth, alleged electoral closure, and the optics of Delhi as a patron. A large bilateral **trade surplus** in India's favour, occasional border killings, and CAA-NRC sensitivities among Bangladeshi Muslims were stored grievances. When the regime broke, those grievances became foreign policy. China does not carry 1971's emotional debt; it carries cash and a UN veto.

### Comment

The statement is **largely right as a trend**, overstated as a verdict. India remains the market, the electricity grid partner, the transit geography to the northeast, and the cultural neighbour. Delhi still holds visas, river data, and the capacity to spoil. A hyper-realist over-reaction would push Dhaka further east. A smarter line is Neighbourhood First with less regime-personality: water-sharing, trade access, and quiet security coordination that does not look like tutelage. China's rise in the Bay is real. India's loss is **political capital**, not the map.

## Flow diagram

Hasina-era bet -> Shock 2024  
Shock 2024 -> China footprint  
Shock 2024 -> Thinner Indian leverage  
Geography grids rivers -> Residual Indian cards

## Conclusion

China's opening in a post-Hasina Bangladesh has cut India's privileged access. Geography, grids and markets still give Delhi cards. Leverage is weaker because it was too personal and too slow on water and trade dignity. It is not yet a lost neighbourhood.

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Q5(b) · 10 marks

**Would you agree with the contention that India's inclination to lean on a 'more aggressive hyper-realist posture' has gained a new momentum in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terrorist strike? Comment.**

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Comparative Politics

### Revision summary

The 2025 Pahalgam attack on tourists in Kashmir invited a harder Indian security response.

Hyper-realism here means more public force, isolation of Pakistan-based terror, and refusal of U.S. Kashmir mediation.

- **The contention is partly right:** the groove since Balakot already ran that way and Pahalgam accelerated it.
- **It is not total:** Russia, the Quad, the EU and economic diplomacy remain other registers.

Agree partially - acceleration, not a new religion of offensive realism.

### Introduction

The **Pahalgam terrorist strike of 2025** - tourists killed in the Baisaran meadows of Kashmir - was designed to smear India's security claim in the Valley and to invite a spectacle of revenge. The contention that India then leaned harder into a **hyper-realist posture** is plausible. It is not the whole of Indian foreign policy. A 10-mark comment should **agree in part**.

### Body

#### What hyper-realism means here

In theory, **realism** already expects self-help. **Hyper-realism**, in the Indian debate, means a thicker willingness to use **cross-border force**, public military signalling, and a lower patience for third-party sermons - **Kautilya's** danda as first language, **Mearsheimer's** offensive logic in a nuclear neighbourhood. After Pulwama-Balakot (2019) and the 2020s pattern of naming Pakistan-based groups without the old composite-dialogue theatre, Pahalgam fitted an existing groove: punish, isolate, and refuse U.S. **mediation on Kashmir** as a favour.

#### Where the contention is right

Domestic politics after mass-casualty terror rewards visible toughness. Forces, intelligence, and diplomatic demarches harden together. India can tighten the Indus conversation, the FATF spotlight, and visa and sporting isolation while keeping kinetic options on the table. That is a more aggressive mix than the 1990s 'strategic restraint' **Stephen Cohen** described. **Jaishankar's** energetic diplomacy is not pacifism; it is activity in the service of a harder core.

#### Where it is only partial

India did not become a one-note offensive realist. It still buys oil and arms logic from **Russia** while courting the **United States** in the Quad; it still talks **Indo-Pacific** public goods; it still wants EU capital. Hyper-realism toward one adversary can sit beside institutionalism toward others. Permanent crisis also has costs: tourism in Kashmir, investment, and the risk of two-front stress with China on the LAC. Delhi has not emptied the toolbox of talks, covert quiet, and multilateral lawfare.

Pahalgam **accelerated** a posture already in motion since 2016-19. It did not found a new school. Agreement should be **partial**, not a conversion story.

### Flow diagram

Pahalgam 2025 -> Harder signalling  
Harder signalling -> Kinetic and isolate  
Harder signalling -> Still multi-aligned  
Still multi-aligned -> Partial not total hyper-realism

### Conclusion

After Pahalgam, India looked more hyper-realist because terror politics punishes hesitation. The lean is real toward Pakistan-facing force and refusal of mediation. It is not the sum of a foreign policy that still needs markets, Russia, the U.S. and a usable Valley.

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Q5(c) · 10 marks

## For India, a multipolar world order would also mean a multipolar Asia. Comment.

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Recent developments in Indian Foreign policy

### Revision summary

A multipolar world is several great-power centres; it is hollow for India if Asia is Sino-centric.

India's threats, trade and waters are Asian, so Asian power-sharing is the real test of the slogan.

Japan, ASEAN centrality, Korea, Australia and India beside China and the U.S. are the intended map.

Quad and FOIP are instruments of pluralism, not a finished concert.

The claim is right as strategy and still aspirational as fact.

### Introduction

- A multipolar world **means more than two centres of relevant power:** military, economic and institutional. For **India**, that slogan is empty if **Asia** itself is a Chinese unipolar system with everyone else as spokes. **S. Jaishankar has put the point bluntly in public: a multipolar world requires a multipolar Asia.** The comment is a demand, not a description already achieved.

### Body

#### Why the link is logical

If the United States, China, the EU, Russia and India are named as world poles, but East, South and Southeast Asia take their security orders from Beijing, then India is a pole only on paper. Geography is Asian. Trade is Asian. The LAC, the Indian Ocean and the Himalayan water tower are Asian. A Sino-centric Asia would squeeze India's strategic autonomy into a continental corner while the 'world' applauded multipolarity. **Kissinger's** old triangular diplomacy assumed more than one Asian heavy. So did **Nehru's** Asian Relations imagination, in a different moral key.

#### What multipolar Asia looks like

It looks like **Japan** as a normal security actor, **ASEAN centrality** that is not a Chinese waiting room, a **Korea** that is more than a U.S. base or a Chinese market, **Australia** in the Indian Ocean, and **India** able to refuse both tributary status and a formal U.S. alliance. The **Quad**, **FOIP**, Malabar, and supply-chain hedges on semiconductors are instruments. They are not a NATO. Multipolarity here is **balanced pluralism**, not anti-China theology: China remains a pole. It must not be the only Asian pole.

### Obstacles

The Belt and Road, the South China Sea, and Bangladesh-Sri Lanka-Nepal courtship (Q5(a), Q8(c)) are how unipolarity is attempted by chequebook. The U.S. hub-and-spokes alliance system is another hierarchy, friendlier to Delhi than Beijing's but still not Indian-designed. India's own capacity - navy, manufacturing, neighbourhood delivery - is the binding constraint. A slogan without a shipyard is a toast.

- **The comment is** right as strategy: use world-multipolarity language to legitimise Asian power-sharing, including India's. It is **aspirational as fact**. The 2020s contest which Asia the world will get.

### Flow diagram

Multipolar world -> Needs multipolar Asia  
Needs multipolar Asia -> India  
Needs multipolar Asia -> Japan  
Needs multipolar Asia -> ASEAN  
Needs multipolar Asia -> China as one pole not the only

### Conclusion

For India, a multipolar world that rested on a unipolar Asia would be a trap. Multipolar Asia - Japan, ASEAN, India, middle powers beside China and the U.S. - is the only version of the slogan that matches the map.

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Q5(d) · 10 marks

## Does the Non-Aligned Movement have any future in the wake of India's growing indifference towards it?

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Changing International Political Order

### Revision summary

- **NAM was India's bipolar-era instrument:** Belgrade 1961, refuse camps, keep voice.

Delhi now practises multi-alignment and invests in G20, Quad and 2+2s more than in NAM theatre.

Indifference is real because India was NAM's engine; without it the Movement thins.

A future remains as a Global South UN-and-development caucus, not as Cold War neutrality.

- **Verdict:** damaged as Indian doctrine, not automatically dead as a membership habit.

### Introduction

The **Non-Aligned Movement**, born at **Belgrade 1961** after **Bandung's moral rehearsal**, was **India's gift to a bipolar world: refuse camp membership, keep voice**. India's **present practice is multi-alignment** - Quad one week, BRICS and Moscow the next - with **NAM** often treated as a museum. The question is whether the Movement has a future **despite** that indifference, not whether Delhi will lead a revival parade.

### Body

#### Indifference is real

Summit photography has shifted to **G20, SCO, Quad** and bilateral 2+2s. **NonAlignment 2.0** (2012) already spoke India's language more than NAM communiqués. **Jaishankar's** energetic diplomacy uses issue-based coalitions. Younger officials read NAM as a speech, not a security system. That indifference matters because India was NAM's intellectual engine. Without a willing engine, a 120-odd member body becomes a caucus of the willing-to-attend.

#### Why NAM can still live

The **Global South** still needs a room that is not the OECD, not NATO, and not a Chinese classroom. On Gaza, on climate finance, on WHO equity, and on tariff shocks from a returning Trump, many NAM members want a **universality that is not Western by default** - the theme of Q7(c). Africa and Southeast Asia did not join the Quad. They still vote at the UN in clusters NAM helped socialise. The Movement's future is as a **normative and voting caucus**, not as a military non-doctrine for a world without two camps.

### Verdict

- **NAM has a future if it becomes a** South-South consultative platform **with modest aims:** coordinate UN positions, defend policy space, and talk development. It has no future as **Nehru's** moral bipolarity, because bipolarity is gone and India will not sacrifice the Quad for a Havana paragraph. India's indifference is therefore **damaging but not fatal**. Others - Indonesia, South Africa, a returning Egypt - can convene. If they do not, NAM will linger as an annual adjective. The honest 10-mark line: the Movement survives as a **Global South habit**; it does not survive as India's master doctrine.

### Flow diagram

NAM 1961 1961 -> Cold War neutrality

NAM 1961 -> Possible Global South caucus

Indian indifference -> Multi-alignment

Multi-alignment -.does not kill. -> Possible Global South caucus

## Conclusion

India's indifference has retired NAM as Delhi's organising idea. It has not erased a large membership that still needs a non-alliance roof. NAM's future is a South caucus, or it is folklore.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-2/2025/does-the-non-aligned-movement-have-any-future-in-the-wake-of-indias-growing-indifference-towards-it/>

Q5(e) · 10 marks

## Historical ties between India and Japan grew into a 'special strategic and global partnership'. Comment.

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · India and the Global Centres of Power

### Revision summary

India-Japan moved from post-war distance and aid to a Special Strategic and Global Partnership (2014 upgrade).

Drivers are China's rise, FOIP, quality infrastructure and technology.

Pillars include the Quad, 2+2, a civil nuclear deal, the bullet-train project and semiconductor talk.

Japan finances and manufactures without a U.S.-style treaty bill; India gives FOIP continental scale.

- **Limits:** trade deficit, Russia residue, and still-thin military integration.

### Introduction

India and Japan did not begin as brothers-in-arms. Post-1945 Japan was a U.S. ally with a peace constitution; India was a NAM republic that recognised the PRC early and tested nuclear weapons Japan hated. The climb to a **Special Strategic and Global Partnership** is therefore a historical achievement, not a cliché. It grew because **China's rise** and a **free and open Indo-Pacific** gave both capitals the same map.

### Body

#### Historical ties, then a turn

Buddhist and civilisational memory, the **IJN's** wartime Indian links, and post-war Japanese aid (steel, autos, Metro) were the soft base. The political turn is twenty-first century: **2006** strategic partnership language, **2014** upgrade to special strategic and global partnership under Abe and Modi, a **civil nuclear** understanding, and annual summits. **Shinzo Abe's** confluence of the two seas and later FOIP gave India a maritime vocabulary Japan already lived.

#### Why 'special'

- **Japan is India's most serious** quality infrastructure **partner:** Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed rail, metro systems, northeast roads. Defence has moved from taboo to **2+2**, exercises, and talks on engines and electronics. Both sit in the **Quad**. Both want semiconductor and supply-chain hedges. Both distrust a Sino-centric Asia (Q5(c)). For India, Japan is the partner that can finance and manufacture without the political bill of a U.S. treaty. For Japan, India is the scale that makes FOIP more than a Japanese-American lake.

#### Limits

A large **trade deficit**, slow FTA ambition, India's Russia oil and defence residue, and Japan's still-tight export controls on some dual-use items keep the partnership below its press. Domestic politics in Tokyo can return to a China-market first instinct. The partnership is special in **strategy and trust**, not yet in the density of U.S.-Japan or even Australia-Japan military integration. That honesty keeps the 10-mark note from becoming a brochure.

#### Flow diagram

Historical and aid ties -> Special strategic global partnership  
China / FOIP -> Special strategic global partnership  
Special strategic global partnership -> Quad 2+2 nuclear HSR  
Special strategic global partnership -> Trade and Russia limits

## Conclusion

Historical regard became a special strategic and global partnership when China and the Indo-Pacific forced both states to need each other. The title is earned in infrastructure, Quad and nuclear trust. It is still being earned in trade and hard defence.

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Q6(a) · 20 marks

**Critically analyze the different phases of India's foreign policy since independence. How justified, do you think, is S. Jaishankar's classification of the current phase as the phase of 'energetic diplomacy'? 15+5=**

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · India's Contribution to the Non-Alignment Movement

### Revision summary

- **Phases:** Nehruvian NAM, post-1962/1971 realism, 1991 economic opening, 1998 nuclear break, U.S. civil nuclear bargain, then Modi-era multi-alignment.

The core across phases is strategic autonomy, not a simple **Nehru**-to-neoliberal conversion.

- **Jaishankar's energetic diplomacy fairly describes tempo:** G20, minilaterals, argumentative Global South voice.
- **It is weaker as a claim of structural success:** LAC, Bangladesh and industrial depth still bind.

Treat 'energetic' as method, not as a new telos.

### Introduction

Indian foreign policy since independence is best read as **phases of autonomy**, not as a conversion from innocence to cunning. Each phase kept a core - strategic space for a poor, then rising, civilisational state - and changed the **mix** of moral language, force, and markets. **S. Jaishankar's** claim that the present phase is **energetic diplomacy** is a 5-mark rider on that history, not a replacement for it.

### Body

#### Phases since 1947

**Nehruvian** years combined NAM, Panchsheel, Commonwealth membership and UN activism with a weak hard-power base. 1962 was the crash. **Shastri and Indira Gandhi** moved toward a harder realism: 1965, the 1971 treaty with the Soviet Union, the Bangladesh war, and the 1974 PNE. The 1980s mixed regional assertion (Sri Lanka, Maldives) with a still-closed economy.

**1991 is the true hinge: Look East, a search for capital and technology, and the slow death of autoarkic diplomacy. 1998 Pokhran-II** ended the multilateral-default nuclear path (Q8(a)) and forced a new bargain with the United States. The **2005-08 civil nuclear** path under Singh, and economic globalisation, made Washington a partner without a treaty. **Neighbourhood First, Act East**, and the Quad's revival after 2017 mark the Modi years: more public alignment with FOIP, more religious-civilisational language, and a still-careful Russia account.

#### Energetic diplomacy (the +5)

- **Jaishankar, in The India Way and in office, means** tempo and theatre: G20 presidency, Voice of Global South, IMEC, I2U2, a flood of 2+2s, vaccine and diaspora diplomacy, and an argumentative refusal of lectures on Ukraine and Kashmir. Energy is measurable in miles flown and in coalitions assembled. It is **justified as a label for style and for coalition-craft** in a fluid 2020s.

It is **less justified as a miracle phase**. The LAC after Galwan is not a diplomatic triumph. Bangladesh 2024 showed neighbourhood leakage. Energy does not erase dependency on

Russian platforms or on imported energy. Hyper-activity can be a substitute for manufacturing depth. Compared with **Nehru's** doctrinal clarity or 1991's structural break, 'energetic' describes **method** more than a new end. The end remains autonomy in a multipolar Asia. The method is busier, more minilateral, and more unapologetic. That, fairly, is a phase. It is not the end of history.

### Flow diagram

Nehru NAM -> Indira 1971  
Indira 1971 -> 1991 Look East  
1991 Look East -> 1998 nuclear  
1998 nuclear -> US nuclear deal  
US nuclear deal -> Energetic multi-alignment

### Conclusion

India moved from NAM moralism through Indira's Soviet-leaning realism and the 1991-98 market-and-nuclear turn to a multi-aligned present. Jaishankar's energetic diplomacy names the tempo of that present with justice. It should not be mistaken for unbounded power.

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Q6(b) · 15 marks

## India maintains strong ties with countries that will assure a free and open Indo-Pacific and guarantee greater connectivity with rest of the world. Analyze

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Indian Foreign Policy

### Revision summary

FOIP for India is an open maritime order, not a Chinese lake or a U.S. private canal.

- **Core partners:** Japan, the United States, Australia, France and ASEAN; Quad is the sharpest minilateral.

Connectivity - SAGAR, IPOI, IMEC, Chabahar, INSTC, digital public goods - is the other half of 'assurance'.

The strategy is sound; neighbourhood leakage and thin shipyard capacity make it incomplete.

A portfolio of partners, not one ally, is the actual policy.

### Introduction

A **free and open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)** is, for India, a maritime order in which sea lanes, data and rules are not a Chinese lake or an American private canal. The question's wording is accurate: Delhi keeps strongest ties with partners who **assure** that order and who **connect** India to the rest of the world. Analysis must name the partners and test the assurance.

### Body

#### Partners who assure FOIP

**Japan** authored much of the FOIP language and funds quality infrastructure. The **United States** brings navy, intelligence and deterrence that India will not duplicate soon. **Australia** is an Indian Ocean resident power in the Quad. **France** is the extra-Quad European with Reunion, a jet and submarine relationship, and a dislike of spheres. **ASEAN is the legitimacy core: without it, FOIP looks like containment cosplay.** **United Kingdom, South Korea** and **Vietnam** sit in the second ring. These ties are not identical: the U.S. wants more alignment; ASEAN wants less naming of China; France wants European strategic autonomy that still sells Rafales.

#### Connectivity as the other half

Assurance without connectivity is a patrol. India's **SAGAR** (Security and Growth for All in the Region), **IPOI**, **Chabahar** into Afghanistan-Central Asia, **IMEC** after the G20, and the older **INSTC** are attempts to guarantee greater access than the Malacca-and-China route. Digital public infrastructure exports, ITEC training, and semiconductor friendships with Japan and the U.S. are connectivity of another kind. The EU talks (Q6(c)) belong here once tariffs push Europe to find non-U.S. markets.

### Analysis

The strategy is **sound and incomplete**. It is sound because India's trade and energy move on water, and because a unipolar Asia is a trap. It is incomplete because the neighbourhood - Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka - can still host Chinese logistics; because IMEC is a drawing until rails and politics exist; and because India still under-builds ships and ports relative to the rhetoric. Partners assure FOIP only if India is a **capable hinge**, not a speech. Quad exercises are real. So is ASEAN's refusal to be a member of anyone's diamond.

- **Thus India maintains strong ties with FOIP partners** as a portfolio: America for deterrence, Japan for capital, ASEAN for political cover, Europe for technology and hedge against Trump tariffs. No single partner guarantees the ocean. The portfolio is the policy.

### Flow diagram

Free and open Indo-Pacific -> Quad US JP AU  
Free and open Indo-Pacific -> France ASEAN  
Free and open Indo-Pacific -> SAGAR IPOI IMEC Chabahar  
SAGAR IPOI IMEC Chabahar -> World connectivity

### Conclusion

FOIP partners are those who keep the Indo-Pacific from becoming a closed sphere and who thicken India's routes to the world. The portfolio is right. Delivery still depends on Indian capacity and on ASEAN's consent.

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Q6(c) · 15 marks

## The tariff threats have pushed India and the European Union closer. Evaluate the India-EU partnership

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Comparative Politics

### Revision summary

U.S. reciprocal tariffs in 2025 threatened both Indian and EU exports and compressed FTA timelines.

The partnership already includes TTC, climate talk, student mobility and a values vocabulary.

Friction remains on agriculture, data, CBAM, Russia and human-rights politics.

Directionally closer is true; a finished trade-and-tech pole is not yet true.

India-EU is the best Western hedge if Washington stays protectionist, not a substitute for U.S. defence enablers.

### Introduction

**Trump-era reciprocal tariffs in 2025** threatened both Indian exports and the European Union's Atlantic market. Shared pain is a diplomat's opportunity. India and the EU were already negotiating a **trade and investment** package that had stalled since the late 2000s. The tariff shock did push them **closer**. Evaluation must ask: closer to what - a deal, a technology club, or a press conference?

### Body

#### The push

When the United States prices market access as a political favour, second-largest relationships gain value. The EU needs buyers for cars, machinery and green tech. India needs capital, chips, and a hedge against a protectionist Washington. The **Trade and Technology Council (TTC)**, resumed FTA/BIT/GIs talks, and cooperation on **CBAM** explanations are the bureaucratic face of the jolt. Q4(c)'s European defence-industrial awakening and Q6(b)'s FOIP connectivity meet here: Europe looking east, India looking for rules that are not only American.

#### What the partnership already is

- **It is a values-adjacent relationship:** democracy, a talk of rules, climate diplomacy, and student mobility. It is a **market** relationship still below potential - cars, spirits, dairy, data and procurement are the usual fight. It is a **strategic relationship in infancy: maritime exercises with France more than with 'Brussels'; Germany's times-turn is national. On Russia,** Brussels wanted condemnation India would not give; the partnership survived by compartmentalisation. Human rights and agri-standards will remain European domestic politics, not a footnote.

### Grade

The statement is **fair as direction**. Tariff threats compressed timelines and created a shared narrative of 'we are not vassals of the White House'. It is **too strong as achievement** until a FTA text is signed and until European capital shows up in Indian manufacturing at China-replacing scale. Carbon border taxes can still look, from Delhi, like green protectionism. From Brussels, Indian tariffs and quality control can look like the old Licence Raj in a new badge.

- **A realistic evaluation:** India-EU is the **most plausible Western hedge** if the U.S. stays tariff-nationalist. It will not replace the U.S. in defence enablers or the Gulf in energy. Closer, yes. A finished pole, not yet.

### Flow diagram

US tariff threats 2025 -> India-EU talks  
India-EU talks -> Trade and Technology Council  
India-EU talks -> FTA / BIT / BIT  
FTA / BIT -> Hedge not replacement of US

### Conclusion

Tariff threats pushed India and the EU into each other's arms as markets and as rule-seekers. The partnership is real in talks and in TTC. It becomes historic only when a trade deal and technology transfer survive the next domestic veto on both sides.

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Q7(a) · 20 marks

**India continues to invoke its time-tested policy of strategic autonomy vis-à-vis both the United States of America and Russia by rejecting US' offer of mediation on Kashmir issue and by refusing to criticize Russia in its ongoing war against Ukraine.**

### Comment

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Indian Foreign Policy

### Revision summary

Strategic autonomy means India will not outsource core security choices to a patron.

Kashmir is treated as bilateral; U.S. mediation offers are refused, especially after terror shocks such as Pahalgam.

On Ukraine, India avoids Western condemnation blocs while buying oil and keeping Russian platforms, without endorsing conquest.

The two refusals share a doctrine but not the same moral file.

- **This is NonAlignment 2.0 practice:** partners, not instructors.

### Introduction

**Strategic autonomy** is India's long habit of refusing to outsource core security choices. It is not isolation. It is not a treaty alliance. In the 2020s it is tested on two loud files: **U.S. offers to mediate on Kashmir**, and **Western pressure to denounce Russia** over Ukraine. Delhi's double refusal is the question's fact. The comment is that this is autonomy as **issue-based stubbornness**, not a claim that the two wars are the same.

### Body

#### Kashmir and mediation

India holds that Jammu and Kashmir is a **bilateral** matter with Pakistan, framed by **Simla (1972)** and **Lahore (1999)**, not a trusteeship of Washington. After **Pahalgam 2025**, any U.S. presidential offer of good offices would look, in Indian politics, like a reward to terror's sponsors. Autonomy here is **domestic legitimacy plus legal position**. The United States is a Quad partner; it is not a Kashmir referee. Accepting mediation would reopen internationalisation that Delhi has spent decades closing. Hyper-realist signalling and autonomy meet on this point.

#### Russia and Ukraine

India abstained in several UN votes, raised **dialogue and diplomacy**, increased **discounted oil**, and kept defence-spare logic alive because the Indian arsenal is still partly Russian. History - 1971, the Cold War veto - still counts in the bureaucracy. Autonomy here is **material**: you cannot condemn your mechanic in the middle of a two-front problem with China. It is also **diplomatic**: a Global South that remembers Iraq and Libya will not be lectured into a NATO morality play. This is not approval of the invasion. Jaishankar has said territory should not be changed by force. It is a refusal to let Brussels or Washington write India's communiqué.

### Comment

The two refusals sit in one doctrine and **differ in ethics**. Kashmir mediation is a sovereignty red line about India's own territory and a terror context. Ukraine is someone else's war in which India is a customer and a fence-sitter with a China problem. Treating them as identical 'plague on both houses' would be cynical. Treating autonomy as a blank cheque for any great-power violence would be worse. The mature line: India will take U.S. technology and Russian hydrocarbons, and will not take instruction on either file. That is energetic, sometimes cold, strategic autonomy. It is consistent with NonAlignment 2.0 more than with NAM theatre.

### Flow diagram

Strategic autonomy -> No US Kashmir mediation  
Strategic autonomy -> No Russia-condemnation camp  
No US Kashmir mediation -> Bilateral Simla  
No Russia-condemnation camp -> Oil platforms China problem

### Conclusion

Rejecting U.S. Kashmir mediation and refusing to join a Russia-condemnation bloc are one autonomy, two tests. The first is a territorial red line. The second is a material and Global South hedge. Neither makes India a U.S. ally or a Russian client.

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Q7(b) · 15 marks

## Trump's unilateral imposition of reciprocal tariffs on scores of countries poses impending threat to the future of the rule-based multilateral global trading system under the WTO. What options do the WTO members have to salvage the organization?

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Comparative Politics

### Revision summary

Trump's 2025 reciprocal tariffs, on top of a blocked Appellate Body, treat MFN as optional and threaten WTO as policeman.

- **Salvage options:** restore appeals or widen MPIA, plurilaterals, a subsidy-for-S&DT reform bargain, G20 politics, and FTA hedges.

India's stake is public stockholding, digital rules and a forum in which power is not the only law.

A variable-geometry WTO is more likely than a 1995 restoration.

Letting the organisation die would leave only tariff nationalism.

### Introduction

The **WTO** was the legal roof of a rule-based trading order after 1995. **Trump's reciprocal tariffs in 2025**, layered on an **Appellate Body** that the United States had already starved, threaten that roof in the open. Members cannot pretend the organisation is fine. They can try to **salvage** it. Options exist. A full restoration of 1995 is not one of them in the near term.

### Body

#### The threat

Unilateral 'reciprocal' tariffs treat MFN as optional. If the largest economy prices every bilateral deficit as a sin, **GATT Article I** is a sermon. The dispute system cannot discipline what it cannot hear. Other members then copy: industrial policy, export controls, green tariffs. Weaponised interdependence becomes the operating system. Developing countries lose the one forum where a small state could, in theory, win a panel.

#### Salvage options

First, **restore a functioning appellate tier** - either by ending the U.S. blockade or by widening the **MPIA** (multi-party interim appeal) so that a critical mass trades under law even if Washington stays out. Second, **plurilateral** deals among the willing (e-commerce, investment facilitation) that do not wait for consensus, with opt-ins for the South. Third, a **reform bargain**: more transparency on industrial subsidies (including China's), in exchange for real **special and differential treatment** and a peace clause that India can live with on **public stockholding**. Fourth, **G20 and UNCTAD** political steering so that trade is not only a Geneva technician's file. Fifth, **hedge** with FTAs (India-EU, RCEP-adjacent supply chains) without abandoning the WTO brand - salvage is dual-track.

#### Power and India

Options fail if they require the U.S. to become 1995 again. Salvage may mean a **WTO of variable geometry**: a core of members who sue and comply, a periphery of tariff nationalists. India should not be the periphery. It needs the legal roof for food security, for resisting

punitive digital rules, and for suing when its goods are hit. It should not, however, treat every reform as a Northern trick. A salvage coalition with the EU, ASEAN, Brazil and African exporters is more serious than a solo veto identity.

The organisation is salvageable as a **rule-language and notification machine** even if it is weak as a policeman. Letting it die would leave only power. That is the 1930s lesson the syllabus still wants.

### Flow diagram

Trump reciprocal tariffs -> WTO stress  
Dead Appellate Body -> WTO stress  
Salvage -> MPIA / restore Dead Appellate Body  
Salvage -> Plurilaterals  
Salvage -> Reform Salvage&DT stocks

### Conclusion

Reciprocal tariffs plus a dead appeals bench are an existential stress test. Members can salvage WTO through MPIA, plurilaterals, a subsidy-S&DT bargain and FTA hedges. They cannot wait for Washington to repent.

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Q7(c) · 15 marks

## NonAlignment 2.0 underscores India's unique aspiration to emerge as a site for an alternative universality. Comment

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Comparative Politics

### Revision summary

- **NonAlignment 2.0 (2012)** restated strategic autonomy for a China-first, post-NAM world: partner the U.S., do not join it.

Alternative universality means rules others can inhabit without becoming Western or Chinese tributaries.

India's civilisational pluralism, Global South voice, and issue-based coalitions are the claimed site.

The aspiration is coherent; capacity in the neighbourhood and in manufacturing is the constraint.

The risk is exceptionalism dressed as universality.

### Introduction

**NonAlignment 2.0**, the 2012 document associated with **Sunil Khilnani, Shivshankar Menon, Nandan Nilekani, Srinath Raghavan** and others, was an attempt to write strategic autonomy for a world after NAM's bipolar script. The claim that it underscored India's wish to be a **site of alternative universality** is a theoretical reading: India as a place where a different, still-universal language of order can be spoken - not a satellite of Washington's liberal internationalism, not a pupil of Beijing's hierarchy.

### Body

#### What 2.0 said

The text put **China** as the principal strategic challenge, asked for a harder state and a more capable economy, kept the U.S. as a partner not a patron, and treated the neighbourhood as the first circle. It was realism with an Indian accent: borders, capabilities, and a refusal to subcontract foreign policy. It was not a call to revive the NAM secretariat. It was a call to keep **autonomy** when alliances were back in fashion.

#### Alternative universality

**Universality in the post-1945 order often meant a North Atlantic story: markets, human rights, and alliances, later sold as global. Alternative universality** means India offering principles that others can inhabit without becoming Western - pluralism, sovereignty, development as a right, and a civilisational self that is not Westphalia's orphan. **Ashis Nandy** and **K. M. Panikkar** are older cousins of this thought; **Jaishankar's** Voice of Global South is the official dialect. The UN, WTO salvage, and a reformed WHO are institutions where that claim is tested. So is the refusal to treat Ukraine's morality as the only morality while Gaza and vaccine apartheid sit on the same planet.

This is not 'anything goes'. Alternative universality still needs **rules against conquest, terror and famine**. It rejects the idea that those rules are copyrighted in Washington. It also rejects a Chinese universality of hierarchical peace.

### Comment

As **aspiration**, the phrase is fair to NonAlignment 2.0 and to the 2020s desk. As **achievement**, India is a messy democracy with a China problem, a Pakistan terror problem, and incomplete manufacturing. A site of universality needs public goods: vaccines were a glimpse; neighbourhood delivery is a counter-glimpse. The danger is that 'alternative' becomes an alibi for exceptionalism. The promise is that a civilisational state can still speak a language the Global South recognises. Energetic diplomacy is the performance. Capacity is the review.

### Flow diagram

NonAlignment 2.0 -> Strategic autonomy  
NonAlignment 2.0 -> Alternative universality  
Alternative universality -> Not only Western liberal order  
Alternative universality -> Not Chinese hierarchy  
Alternative universality -> Global South inhabitable rules

### Conclusion

NonAlignment 2.0 kept autonomy and named China. Read generously, it sketched India as a workshop of another universalism - plural, developmental, non-satellite. The sketch is live. The building is not finished.

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Q8(a) · 20 marks

**India's reluctance to perceive any 'existential threat' inevitably made the multilateral path to nuclear security a 'default option' until it decided to cross nuclear Rubicon in 1998. Identify and analyze some of the major reasons behind this shift in India's position on the nuclear question**

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · Changing International Political Order

### Revision summary

India's early nuclear path mixed scientific capacity with moral multilateralism and a recessed 1974 PNE.

NPT hierarchy, NSG sanctions and CTBT's closing window turned the default into a cage.

China's arsenal and Pakistan's weapons-plus-proxy mix supplied the security case for 1998.

Vajpayee's government supplied the political will; status mixed with deterrence.

1998 was admission that survival could no longer be outsourced to a disarming great-power club.

### Introduction

- **India's nuclear story is unusual among great-power candidates:** a long **reluctance to treat the bomb as existential**, a **1974 PNE** that was not a doctrine, and a default faith that **multilateral disarmament** would eventually equalise the field. **May 1998** ended that default. The shift was not a mood. It was a reading that the multilateral path had become a **cage**.

### Body

#### The default

**Nehru** backed both a nuclear science estate and a moral campaign against big-power weapons. India stayed out of the **NPT (1968)** as a nuclear apartheid treaty, not because it was racing to test. The **1974** Pokhran explosion was called peaceful. Successive governments kept a **recessed capability: neither weaponisation at pace nor signature of the NPT**. **NAM and UN speeches treated general and complete disarmament as the real security. That stance was possible because, in Delhi's self-picture, no existential threat required a deployed arsenal - China 1962 was a humiliation, not a nuclear lesson fully taken, and Pakistan was not yet a nuclear peer.**

#### Why the multilateral path failed India

The NPT locked a hierarchy. The **CTBT (1996)** threatened to close the test window without touching existing arsenals. The **NSG** after 1974 punished India's fuel cycle. Great powers preached non-proliferation and modernised their own warheads. After the Cold War, the promised disarmament dividend did not arrive. A default that depended on others' virtue became, in **K. Subrahmanyam's** realist school, a **strategic liability**.

#### Why 1998

**China** was a nuclear weapon state with a rising conventional punch. **Pakistan** had a weapons programme, A. Q. Khan's network, and a doctrine of covering jihad with a nuclear shield. The CTBT timeline said: test now or live forever as a threshold state under legal fire. The **BJP** government of Vajpayee had fewer inhibitions than Congress about breaking the sermon.

Status - entry to a de facto nuclear club - mixed with security. The tests were followed by a doctrine of **credible minimum deterrence** and, later, the U.S. civil nuclear bargain that partially laundered 1998 into the order.

The 'existential' word in the question is the key. Until the 1990s India could tell itself that survival did not require a public bomb. China-Pakistan nuclear and missile coupling, and a closing test ban, made that self-talk look like **unilateral abstinence**. Crossing the Rubicon was the admission that multilateral default had failed the security test, not the moral one alone.

### Flow diagram

Multilateral default -> NPT apartheid apartheid

Multilateral default -> CTBT window window

China-Pakistan -> 1998 tests

CTBT window -> 1998 tests

1998 tests -> Credible minimum deterrence

### Conclusion

India delayed the bomb because it did not, for decades, read its threats as existential and because it bet on a disarming world. NPT, CTBT and the China-Pakistan pair killed that bet. 1998 was the security state catching up with a closed multilateral door.

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Q8(b) · 15 marks

## Discuss some of the key drivers of India's new interests in Africa which might help in developing long-term comparative advantage over China

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · State in comparative perspective

### Revision summary

India's Africa push is driven by diaspora, ITEC, peacekeeping, pharma, digital public goods, minerals and Global South diplomacy.

China competes on BRI-scale infrastructure and credit; India cannot win that race on money.

Long-term advantage is plausible in skills, affordable tech, political comfort and a less threatening profile.

Delivery failures and domestic racism can still waste the advantage.

Pick trust and human capital, not a stadium-for-stadium contest.

### Introduction

India's **new** African interests are not a discovery of the continent. They are a **thicker, more strategic return: votes, minerals, markets, energy, and a Global South story that cannot be only Asian. China** is the scale competitor - Belt and Road, contractors, and credit. The question asks for drivers that might yield a **long-term comparative advantage**, not a fantasy of out-spending Beijing next year.

### Body

#### Drivers

**Diaspora and history** - from **Gandhi's** Natal to traders in East Africa - give a human network China must buy. **ITEC** and education still train officers and doctors who later sit in cabinets. **UN peacekeeping** is an Indian comparative practice. **Generic pharma** and vaccine manufacturing (including the COVID years) hit a need China does not own. **Digital public infrastructure** - identity, payments, open networks - is a 2020s export that fits African leapfrogging better than some heavy BRI monuments. **Critical minerals** and energy (oil, solar partnerships) are the hard-economy driver. **African Union in the G20** and India-Africa Forum Summits are the diplomatic driver: voice, not only projects. Defence training and maritime awareness in the western Indian Ocean complete the security ring.

#### Versus China

- **China wins** speed and steel: ports, rails, stadiums, and a willingness to ignore governance sermons. It also accumulates **debt-and-image** problems that African publics now debate. India cannot copy the chequebook. It can copy **presence of people**: students, SMEs, English-language professional classes, and a democracy that, however noisy, is intelligible to African plural societies. Advantage, if it comes, will be in **human capital, affordable tech, pharma, and political comfort**, plus a less threatening naval profile than either China or old extra-regional powers.

#### Long-term, not brochure

Comparative advantage is **not automatic**. Indian delivery is slow; projects stall; racism toward Africans in Indian cities wrecks the brand; and some African states want Chinese speed anyway. A serious policy would finish lines of credit, stay in mining with environmental

care, and keep peacekeeping. The G20 AU seat is a joint win, not an Indian trophy. Advantage over China is plausible in **trust and skill intensity**. It is implausible in **bulk infrastructure**. Honesty is part of the 15-mark answer: do not claim a race India is not funding.

### Flow diagram

Drivers -> People ITEC pharma DPI

Drivers -> Minerals energy G20

China BRI -> Steel and speed

People ITEC pharma DPI -> Long-term trust advantage

Steel and speed -> Scale not India's race

### Conclusion

India's African drivers are people, training, pharma, digital public goods, minerals and a South-South voice. Those can beat China in trust over a generation. They will not beat China in concrete next quarter. Policy should pick the race it can win.

Open WRAP page — <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-2/2025/discuss-some-of-the-key-driver-s-of-indias-new-interests-in-africa-which-might-help-in-developing-long-term-comparative-advantage-over-china/>

Q8(c) · 15 marks

## Discuss the potential role India can play in initiating a possible phase of trilateral economic engagement among India, China and Nepal

PSIR GS 2 · 2025 · India's Contribution to the Non-Alignment Movement

### Revision summary

Map-logic supports India-China-Nepal talks on hydropower, trade, tourism and Himalayan disasters.

- **The trust deficit is structural:** LAC after Galwan, BRI in Nepal, and Kalapani-Lipulekh map fights.

Nepal will omni-enmesh; Delhi cannot veto that without pushing Kathmandu further toward Beijing.

India's realistic role is initiator of thin technical engagement, not chair of a Himalayan concert.

Grade potential as moderate and politically capped - the same honesty used for Latin American regionalism.

### Introduction

A **trilateral economic** conversation among **India, China and Nepal** looks, on a map, like **common sense: a landlocked Himalayan state, two giant neighbours, shared rivers, tourism, and a need for roads that do not stop at ideology. In politics it is one of the hardest triangles in Asia. Potential exists. It is narrow and conditional.** An honest answer must say so.

### Body

#### The potential

Nepal needs hydropower markets, posts, and investment without a single-patron trap. India needs a stable Himalaya, fewer Chinese-only corridors on its flank, and electricity that is not only domestic coal. China wants western-province outlets and BRI completion. **Issue-based trilateralism could mean: disaster-warning on earthquakes and floods; limited power trade protocols; tourism circuits; and customs data on a few crossing points. Track-II** already whispers this. A full political triangle would be a Himalayan **functional regime**, in the APT spirit of Q4(b): money and meetings where force is too hard.

#### The trust deficit

**Galwan 2020** and a live **LAC** mean India will not underwrite Chinese economic depth in the central Himalaya as if it were ASEAN. **BRI** projects in Nepal - airports, roads, debt talk - are read in Delhi as strategic. Nepal's maps on **Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura** collide with India's. Lipulekh trade with China, when announced without Kathmandu's comfort, inflames Nepali nationalism that then leans Beijing. India-Nepal is a civilisational intimacy that turns toxic fast; China-Nepal is a cheque intimacy that turns strategic fast. Trilateral **institutions** cannot outrun that.

#### What India can still do

India can **offer** trilateral functional talks on ecology and power while keeping BRI connectivity that is dual-use off the table. It can improve its own delivery - roads, petroleum, a less heavy

political hand - so that Nepal does not need a triangle to escape Delhi. It can accept that Kathmandu will practise **omni-enmeshment**, as Dhaka now does. Pretending a concert of Himalayan harmony is a seminar luxury. The potential role is as **initiator of thin, technical engagement**, not as chair of a new UNASUR of the mountains.

If the LAC calms and BRI is ring-fenced, the triangle could thicken. Until then, the honest grade is the Latin American one: **moderate potential, political ceiling**.

### Flow diagram

Trilateral potential -> Hydropower tourism disaster

Trust deficit -> LAC / Galwan / Galwan

Trust deficit -> BRI in Nepal in Nepal

Trust deficit -> Kalapani Lipulekh

Trilateral potential -.capped by. -> Trust deficit

### Conclusion

India can initiate thin trilateral economics with China and Nepal on water, power and disaster. It cannot, while the LAC and BRI cut the same mountains, lead a trust-based Himalayan community. Potential is real. Romance is not.

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## Compiled answer key

Last pages of this pack. Each question links to the WRAP model answer on [wrapexams.com](https://wrapexams.com).

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Q1(a)</b><br>10 marks | <b>Q1(b)</b><br>10 marks | <b>Q1(c)</b><br>10 marks | <b>Q1(d)</b><br>10 marks |
| <b>Q1(e)</b><br>10 marks | <b>Q2(a)</b><br>20 marks | <b>Q2(b)</b><br>15 marks | <b>Q2(c)</b><br>15 marks |
| <b>Q3(a)</b><br>20 marks | <b>Q3(b)</b><br>15 marks | <b>Q3(c)</b><br>15 marks | <b>Q4(a)</b><br>20 marks |
| <b>Q4(b)</b><br>15 marks | <b>Q4(c)</b><br>15 marks | <b>Q5(a)</b><br>10 marks | <b>Q5(b)</b><br>10 marks |
| <b>Q5(c)</b><br>10 marks | <b>Q5(d)</b><br>10 marks | <b>Q5(e)</b><br>10 marks | <b>Q6(a)</b><br>20 marks |
| <b>Q6(b)</b><br>15 marks | <b>Q6(c)</b><br>15 marks | <b>Q7(a)</b><br>20 marks | <b>Q7(b)</b><br>15 marks |
| <b>Q7(c)</b><br>15 marks | <b>Q8(a)</b><br>20 marks | <b>Q8(b)</b><br>15 marks | <b>Q8(c)</b><br>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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