

Module - III

Security and Geo-Strategy



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GEO-POLITICS

International relations describe the type of relations a country has with other countries. The relationship between two countries is based on the level of interactions on subjects such as economy, military, law, environment etc. Two or more countries can have 'strategic relation', 'economic relation', 'political relation', 'bilateral (between two countries) multi lateral' (between two or more countries) relation etc.

The type of relation depends upon each others' mutual interests and benefits. In the region called South Asia India is centrally located and geo-politics determines bilateral relations in the region. Land, location, terrain and other geographical factors have influenced political decisions in a big way. You will learn that geographic factors impact the political decision-making. Understanding the location of India's neighbours and the meaning of soft and hard power of a nation will help to understand the need to have good relations with all countries.



Objectives

After studying this lesson you will be able to:

- explain the meaning of geo-politics;
- locate India's neighbours and identify the differences in power potential among nations;
- differentiate between treaties and alliances and derive the inter-se importance;
- describe the strategic areas of relations between India and its neighbours and
- describe the Panchsheel and non-alignment policy of India.

8.1 What is Geo-politics?

Before we proceed to discuss India's relations with neighbouring countries it is important to understand the meaning of the term geo-politics and international relations. You have learnt in the previous lesson about India's vast geographic and natural resources.

The location of a country decides how it has to be prepared militarily to defend itself. For example, Great Britain used its location effectively to control the neighbouring and distant land by colonizing them through control of seas.

In the case of India too, geographical and natural resources have determined its power potential and how its power potential can be utilized to determine its relations with neighbouring and distant countries. In other words, as politics is about study of power, geopolitics refers to influences of geography on the relationships between nations.

8.2 India's Neighbours

India is centrally located in South Asia and is surrounded by smaller countries. We call this region the Indian sub-continent because of the enormous size of the region.

History reveals that the entire region was under the influence of India. For example, what we now call Pakistan and Bangladesh were once part of India. Similarly, the other countries of South Asian region such as Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Maldives have at one point or other been under the influence of India. However, after the colonization by British, changes took place in the political and geographical features of the region.

The independence of India led to separation of Pakistan from India and Bangladesh was born in 1971. Today the South Asian region comprises eight countries. They are: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar Nepal and Pakistan. Sri Lanka and Maldives shares maritime borders with India. China does share a big land boundary with India and hence it is India's northern neighbour but from a geo-political, historical and cultural point of view China is not included as part of South Asia.

India shares largest portion of its border with Bangladesh and shortest of it with Afghanistan. India shares a 699-km long border with Bhutan, 3323 Km (including LoC) with Pakistan. This border runs along the Indian states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir. Located in the north of India, Tibet shares boundary with India's Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarkhand.

8.2.1 India's Power

All countries have resources to be utilized as power. International relations are about how one country can influence the other to do what it wants. A country's power or Power is defined in terms of Hard power and Soft Power. Hard power is military power and soft power is the economy, culture etc.



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8.2.2 Soft Power

India has a wide range of soft power resources. The country is keen to wield its soft power. Soft power includes promotion of Yoga, Indian arts and crafts, music and culture in general. The Bollywood-made cinemas are popular in many continents. India's Cricket and Hockey teams are also famous. Its vast variety from music to football to cuisine and diversity has attracted the west. India's Ministry of External Affairs has a special focus to exercise Soft Power.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) has been a key partner to strengthen external relations in various ways. Ministry of Tourism and other governmental partners are devoted to exercising India's soft power.

Soft power is the use of a country's cultural, social and economic influence over other countries in order to persuade them to do something without the use of hard power.

India has been showcasing its social, political, and cultural assets abroad through various channels- directly and indirectly. In its neighbourhood, it has lent its support on various occasions to build friendly relations.

For example, soon after the massive earthquake in Nepal in 2015, India's Ministry of Home Affairs sent Indian Armed Forces and National Disaster Response Force. The operation was known as "Maitri". The Indian Air Force used Advanced Light Helicopters, Mi-17 and other aircrafts to rescue and distribute relief materials. India is the largest regional provider of humanitarian and reconstruction aid to Afghanistan.

Similarly, be it cyclone-hit Sri Lanka or Bangladesh, the Indian Government has used its soft and hard power to rescue people who were trapped in natural disasters and has sent large amounts of relief materials from time to time. The role of India in Sri Lanka is well known. During the time of Sri Lankan civil war India sent thousands of Peace Keeping Forces and constructed over 50,000 houses to give shelter to refugees.

Besides, the influence of Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism on its neighbours cannot be forgotten. Ethnic ties too strengthen India's Soft Power. The case of Tamil speaking Sri Lanka, Singapore or Bengali speaking Bangladesh is a good example of influence of language and culture. Philosophies of Mahatma Gandhi and other thinkers have also inspired many countries extremely.

In terms of Science and Technology India's achievements are huge as compared to its neighbours. India saw massive success in its Moon Mission. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is globally admired and has hundreds of successful missions to its credit. The Soft Power helps not only to shape Indian foreign policy but also other country's policy towards India.



Intext Questions

8.1

1. What is meant by geo-politics?
2. Name the India's neighbouring countries.
3. Explain the term Soft Power.
4. Why was Operation Maitri carried out?

8.2.2 Hard Power

Hard power is the use of military and economic means to influence the behavior or interests of other nations or political entities.

Hard power is the use of military and economic means to influence and change the behaviour of other countries the way you want it

Hard power is often aggressive and is most effective when imposed by one political body upon a weaker nation. India has successfully won many battles and has launched many military operations. In Operation Vijay in 1961, India freed Goa, Daman and Diu from Portugal. Following the war with Pakistan in 1965, India captured around 740 square miles of territory against Pakistan gaining 210 square miles of territory.

In 1971 India supported Bangladesh's Liberation War. Indian Army took nearly 93,000 Pakistani soldiers as prisoners. India removed the illegal encroachment by Pakistan in the Siachen Glacier following Operation MEGHDOOT. Indian Army successfully brought back near normalcy in Naxalite hit areas in the country. Operation Cactus in 1988 restored the government rule in Maldives.



Intext Questions

8.2

1. Explain the meaning of Hard Power.
2. Write is the full form of DRDO.

8.3 Treaties and Alliances

Treaties and Alliances refer to the International relations between countries. It refers to the Foreign Policy to be followed in order to have good and beneficial relationship. India, as an independent sovereign country, continues to cooperate with its neighbours and distant countries. It is important to develop good neighbourly relations which are strengthened by entering into treaties and alliances. What are these and how important



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are these in bringing lasting peace and development? Let us learn more about treaties and alliances.

Treaties are written agreements entered into between independent states and legally binding on each other. They are referred to by various names such as international agreements, international conventions, international treaty, international pact and international accord etc., Basically there are two broad categories of treaties: bilateral and multilateral. Bilateral treaties are those that are signed between any two independent countries where as multilateral treaties are signed between two or more countries.

All treaties whether bilateral or multilateral are legally binding on the parties that have signed and accepted to be members to the treaty. However, alliances are different. They are formed for mutual benefit or support is for security considerations. Alliances are not legally binding.

Alliances are not for ever, they can change. Why are such bilateral and multilateral treaties entered into and for what reasons? You will learn this in the next section. Some examples of treaties are worth noting.

Examples of bilateral treaties are:

- 1) Indo - Sri Lanka Accord
- 2) Indus Water Treaty between India and Pakistan
- 3) India - Russia Friendship Treaty
- 4) India - U.S. Treaty on Nuclear Cooperation

Examples of Multilateral treaties are:

- 1) South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)
- 2) Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

World Organisations:

- 1) United Nations Organizations (UN)
- 2) World Trade Organizations (WTO)
- 3) World Bank (WB)

8.3.1 SAARC and ASEAN

Multilateral treaties through multilateral cooperation are strategies that countries adopt to co-exist and cooperate with other countries with the aim of development. One such attempt, the first of its kind in South Asian Region, is the formation of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The second was The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN. ASEAN is an association of all 10 countries

of SE Asia. Let us study some important details of these two organisations.

8.3.2 SAARC

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation is an economic and geo-political organization formed on 8 December 1985 in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. It presently comprises 8 countries as members. They are: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and India. Afghanistan became the eighth member of SAARC in 2007.

The basic objective of SAARC is to develop the welfare of the people of South Asian region through cooperation in economic, cultural, technical, scientific and all other common aspects including security. The region is caught in poverty and security problems. Hence the idea of a multilateral cooperation at the regional level was initiated in order to solve such problems. Regular summit level meetings are held in various capital cities of member countries on rotation basis.

India has played a central role in SAARC. As you will learn in the next lesson, all countries of South Asia have been under the religious, cultural, economic, political influence of India. Hence India's role in this organization is important. However, even if these are welcome steps to cooperate to solve problems at the multilateral level you should understand that not all times they are successful. Sometimes political and security issues hinder the cooperation. For example, since partition, the hostility that Pakistan has shown towards India continues to be a hurdle in fully realizing the potential for better economic cooperation and development among member countries.

8.3.3 ASEAN

Southeast Asia is another close neighbourhood of India, which has also seen the religious, cultural and political influence of India for several centuries. Realizing the importance of this region and the need to strengthen economic power, India has now evolved a strategy to build close ties with countries of this region.

The policy originally was called 'look east policy' which, under the present government, has become "Act East Policy". The regional organization called the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formed on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand. The founding members are Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and Philippines. Today it includes all 10 countries of the region: Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam and Brunei.

The aim of this regional organization is to promote economic growth and provide regional peace and stability through cooperation. Although India is not a member of ASEAN, it has been a summit level partner since 2002 and now a strategic partner of ASEAN since 2012. India has also been building political, economic, and security



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cooperation with ASEAN countries and has set up a separate diplomatic mission for ASEAN.



Intext Questions

8.3

1. Explain the term 'treaties'.
2. Provide two examples each of bilateral and multilateral treaties.
3. Name the members of SAARC and ASEAN.

8.4 Issues Between India and its Neighbours

India follows a policy of friendly cooperation with its neighbours. However, this has been difficult to achieve. There have been several hindrances in the past decades that have hampered bilateral ties. Here, in this section, you will learn how this has happened in three broad areas viz: political and diplomatic issues, and defence and economic issues. Political and diplomatic cooperation with neighbouring countries have been generally cordial with most of the neighbouring countries. However, as with the case of any two individuals, differences do crop up between countries. Let us examine each country and understand the issues.

8.4.1 Bangladesh

It was in 1971 that Bangladesh got its independence from West Pakistan with the help of India's military intervention. Thereafter relations have been cordial on all fronts as we share common cultural and language bonds. However, there are certain issues that have also affected their relations. These are:

- **Illegal migration from Bangladesh:** The migrants have become an economic, political and security problem for India. Economically they have to be supported with food, shelter and medicines and security wise there is a possibility of these people turning to anti-India activities.
- **Porous Border:** A porous border means that the border is not fenced or manned. India shares the longest boundary with Bangladesh, most of which are riverine plains. Hence it has been difficult to fence them and easy for illegal smuggling to take place. Moreover, the border between India and Bangladesh is porous leading to smuggling of goods including gold and other goods that affect security.
- **Presence of terrorist** outfits like Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami, Jamat-e-Islam are active in those bordering areas. Drug dealers are increasingly using Bangladesh as a transit point. They smuggle heroin and opium to India from Burma and other countries through Bangladesh.

- Fake Indian currency notes are also transferred in large quantities along the border.
- Sharing of Teesta river water that flows through Sikkim and West Bengal and finally into Bangladesh is still an unresolved issue.

8.4.2 Pakistan

We share common historical, cultural, and linguistic ties with the people of Pakistan. Yet Relations with Pakistan have not been cordial and smooth. Several issues have hindered good neighbourly progress. Some of them are:

- **Kashmir:** This has been the most delicate issue between the two countries. While there was a political agreement with the then ruler of Kashmir Maharaja Hari Singh who signed the instrument of accession with India but was not accepted by Pakistan which sent its invaders to destabilize and take the region by force. The timely intervention of our armed forces prevented the hostile take over. Due to certain political actions at the time, some parts of Kashmir continue to be occupied by Pakistan, and remain under its control till today. Those areas are called Pakistan Occupied Kashmir or POK. Since then India and Pakistan have fought three major wars and one minor war at Kargil in 1999.
- **Terrorism:** This is another major political issue faced between the two countries. Having failed in the hostile take over during 1947-48, Pakistan has used terrorism as a instrument of state policy against India. Terrorists started infiltrating from Pakistan and started terror attacks on armed forces and government organisations. Separatist organisations were formed in Kashmir valley who started helping the terrorists. Such an action by a country against another is called proxy war. This is a major issue of concern affecting bilateral, political and economic relationships between the two countries.
- **Proxy wars:** Pakistan has been waging proxy war with India trying to destabilize India by way of supporting anti-Indian outfits in the country particularly in Kashmir region. This has led to strained relationship both politically and militarily.



DO YOU KNOW

Proxy Wars means war instigated by a country without directly involving its military and supporting hostile mercenaries, terrorists with weapons, training and money.



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8.4.3 Myanmar

India shares 1643 km of its land boundary and maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal. A large number of Indians have been living in the country even before British colonial rule in Myanmar, which was earlier called Burma. The presence of Indians in Myanmar has helped strengthen bilateral relations. Trade between the two countries has flourished. Myanmar is the gateway to South East Asia. Myanmar is also important because its help is needed to fight insurgency in Northeast India. Issues affecting ties are:

- The borders are not fenced and hence insurgents in both Myanmar and in Northeast India have become serious security issue. Within India, armed groups based in Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram use Myanmar as safe haven to operate.
- The problem of illegal migration - Muslim Rohingyas in Myanmar have illegally migrated to India to escape the violence against them in their country.

8.4.4 Nepal

With Nepal too, India shares a common land boundary and has signed a friendship treaty in 1950. Nepal is a Hindu Kingdom and has seen a steady growth in bilateral relations in all spheres. Nepal is located in a strategically important area in the Himalayan region bordering Tibet and hence demanded closer attention and ties for India. However, there are some issues that have affected progress.

- Nepal is a land locked country and the access to sea ports are through India. This some times creates frictions.
- Issue of Madeshi population is again a cause of discord between the two countries.
- Issue of human trafficking. Thousands of Nepalese in India are believed to have been trafficked to India illegally.



DO YOU KNOW

Human Trafficking means the practice of illegally transporting people from one country to another for forced labor or exploitation

8.4.5 Sri Lanka

India is the only maritime neighbour for Sri Lanka and so generally speaking, there have been good neighbourly relations with the country. India helped Sri Lanka in solving the internal security problem from LTTE. It sent its peacekeeping force to maintain stability and peace in the country. India has also been an economic partner

for Sri Lanka supplying goods and services. It has signed economic and free trade agreements and bilateral trade ties have increased. In the area of security and defence too India has helped Sri Lanka in supplying some military equipment and provided training. However, there are issues that have also affected progress. These are:

- The issue of Tamil Nadu fishermen crossing Palk straits and entering waters of Sri Lanka for fishing is a daily problem.
- Kachchativu island located between India and Sri Lanka was given to Sri Lanka by India. It has become an area of dispute.
- Chinese naval base in Sri Lanka and construction of port facilities by China. This has strategic and security concerns because Chinese war ships can freely come to the port.

8.4.6 Maldives

Maldives is located in a geo-strategically important area in the Indian Ocean. It is the smallest country in South Asian region. Similar to other neighbouring countries, India-Maldives relations have also been generally cordial. India has been a development partner for Maldives and has assisted the country in all major areas particularly in capacity building, trade and commerce, etc. India has also helped with the security needs of Maldives and has signed defence cooperation agreements. However, the relations deteriorated in view of its close ties with China at the cost of India's security concerns. Maldives had signed its first ever Free Trade Area agreement with China. But with the change in government in Maldives, its 'India First Policy' is back on trade.



Intext Questions

8.4

1. What is meant by porous border?
2. Name the ruler of Kashmir during the time of independence.
3. Explain a Proxy War.
4. Where is Maldives located.
5. Mention any two problems that India faces with Sri Lanka.
6. What is meant by human trafficking? Explain.

8.5 Panchsheel and Non-alignment Policy of India: An Overview

Panchsheel is also called as the five virtues or what is popularly known as the "Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence". This became the guiding principle in India's international relations as well as in the relations between other countries. In fact, this was independent India's very first foreign policy initiative towards China when both



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countries signed an agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet Autonomous region and India on 29th April 1954.

The preamble of the agreement stated the five principles as follows:

1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty
2. Mutual non-aggression
3. Mutual non-interference
4. Equality and mutual benefit and
5. Peaceful Co-existence

8.5.1 Effect of five principles (Panchsheel)

The five principles not only served as a policy between India - China relations but subsequently extended as a policy framework in the relations with other countries also. In due course of time, the principles were incorporated into the movement that came to be called "Non-aligned Movement" or NAM, which came into existence in 1961 when colonial rule collapsed and several Asian and African countries gained independence. The movement was spearheaded by India along with Egypt, Ghana, Yugoslavia and Indonesia who became the founding fathers of NAM. The five principles served as an important policy for the movement aiming to bring about world peace and security.



What You Have Learnt

- Geopolitics refers to influences of Geography on the relationships between nations. India is centrally located and is surrounded by countries - Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Myanmar.
- Hard power is military power and soft power is the economy and culture etc. India has a wide range of soft power resources - like yoga, music, classical dances, cricket, hockey and different dishes. In case of hard power our army, airforce and navy has no match in the surrounding countries.
- Treaties and Alliances refer to the international relations between countries. India is also under obligation of many treaties - Indo-Sri Lanka accord, India-Russia friendship treaty, India-US treaty on Nuclear cooperation. Although India gives priority to its good relations with the neighbouring countries but different problems do affect these relations. Pakistan is a headache for India with problems of Kashmir, terrorism and different wars. Even in Sri Lanka the problems of Indian Tamils have affected the good relations.
- India has following the principles of Panchsheel and Non-alignment.

- Each of them is different and needed to be addressed with different political, diplomatic and military strategy.



Terminal Exercises

1. How does geo-politics influence decision making?
2. What is meant by the term soft and hard power?
3. Name the neighbouring countries of India.
4. State the principles of Panchsheel.

Answers to Intext Questions

8.1

1. Geopolitics is nothing but influences of geography on relationships between nations
2. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Maldives
3. Soft power is promotion of India's cultural values and tradition and includes promotion of Yoga, Indian arts and crafts, music and culture in general.
4. As a friendly gesture by India it provided massive humanitarian assistance during massive earthquake in Nepal in 2015.

8.2

1. Use of military and economic means to influence the behavior or interests of other nations or political entities.
2. Defence Research and Development Organization

8.3

1. Treaties are written agreements entered into between independent states and legally binding on each other.
2. Bilateral treaty examples are Indo - Sri Lanka Accord and Indus Water Treaty between India and Pakistan and example of multilateral treaty are South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
3. SAARC Members are: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India and Afghanistan. ASEAN members are: Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam and Brunei.



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8.4

1. Borders between countries that are not fenced or manned are called porous borders.
2. Maharaja Hari Singh.
3. War instigated by a country without directly involving its military and supporting hostile mercenaries, terrorists with weapons, training and money.
4. Geo-strategically important area in the Indian Ocean.
5. Issue of Tamil Nadu fishermen crossing Palk straits and ownership of Kachativu islands.
6. Practice of illegally transporting people from one country to another for forced labor or exploitation