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SIMPLIFYING IAS EXAM PREPARATION

INSIGHTSIAS PSIR

(News 2 Notes)

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Faculty - Nikhil K Gowda

Director's Desk

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Best Regards,

VINAY KUMAR G B

Testimony by Netra Meti – Rank AIR 326



“Nikhil Sir is the perfect choice for PSIR preparation. Sir has vast knowledge in the subject and experience in exams, which he never hesitates to share with students. He approaches every topic with clarity and is always open to discussions which help in building content. Sir has mentored many students and his mains answer writing review both GS and PSIR are really helpful. He gives tailor made comments to improve on one’s weak points in answer writing. He is humble and very approachable, and clarifies your any doubt regarding prelims mains or interview. So yes go for it.”

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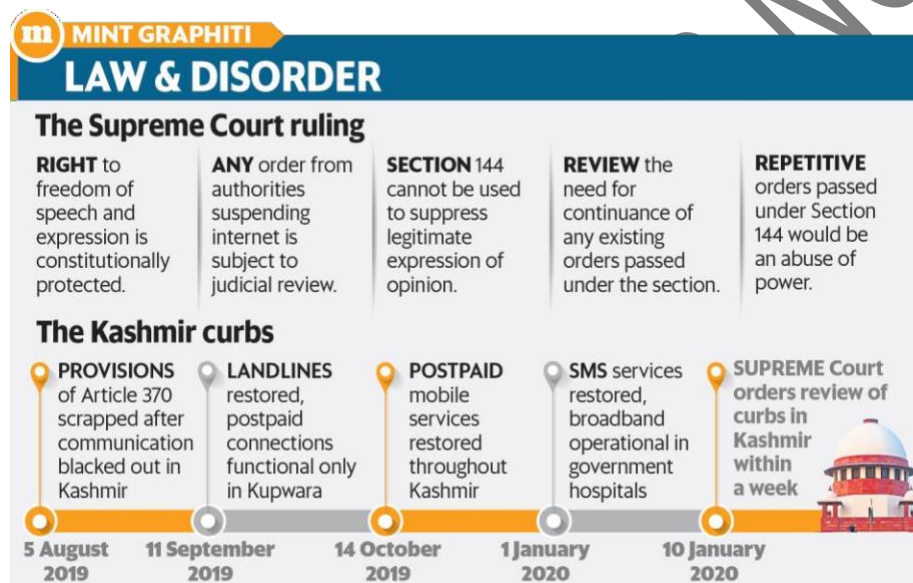
Right to Access Internet

Syllabus: PSIR- Paper 1B- Fundamental rights

Context: Suspension of 4G internet in Jammu and Kashmir after revocation of Article 370.

Dilemma of Fundamental rights vs. National security

- Jammu and Kashmir government had argued in Supreme Court that **Right to access the Internet is not a fundamental right**. Free speech and expression, including the fundamental right to trade, business and occupation over the Internet, can **be curtailed by the State in general public interest**.
- It further argued that reduction of Internet speed was **“not only least restrictive but also most appropriate and has reasonable nexus with object/purpose sought to be achieved by the order, i.e. protecting the sovereignty, integrity, security of State.**



However The Supreme Court has declared access to internet a fundamental right. In its judgment Supreme Court said **“A government cannot deprive the citizens of fundamental rights except under certain conditions explicitly mentioned in the Constitution”**.

Indian constitution makes the right to freedom of speech and expression a fundamental right for all citizens. It has been listed in Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution. The Supreme Court has on many occasions expanded the scope of the right to freedom of speech and expression. For instance, The Supreme Court ad deduced freedom of the press from freedom of speech and expression and asserted that it is a guarantee.

- **Supreme Court** latest expansion makes the constitutional provision keep pace with innovation of technology. Internet is the primary source of information to millions of Indian citizens.

Following the judgment of Supreme Court there are debates and discussions in the academic circles to make Right to access internet as an independent right.

Sumeesh Srivastava a researcher at Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy has discussed how **Right to access internet can be independent fundamental right.**

- He argues, In *Faheema Shirin v. State of Kerala*, where the right to internet access was recognized as a fundamental right forming a part of the right to privacy and the right to education under Article 21 of the constitution.
- Though government is reluctant to declare Right to access internet as fundamental rights, its flagship Digital India Program, has nine pillars, of which six are directly related to internet access. There are also programs run by the central government for infrastructure creation, like Bharat Net, and for digital literacy, like PMGDISHA which gives a lot of importance to internet.
- Internet today is part and parcel of life. For instance, Internet access means access to actionable information, innovation best practices, access to finance and credit facilities, facilitation of entrepreneurship and an enhanced employment market.
- Internet access can prove a useful accelerator in all social development objectives and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. These involve elements as diverse as poverty and hunger, education, gender equality, child welfare, maternal care, the environment and partnerships between governments and service providers.

Thus he argues, instead of Right to access internet being implicit right, he argues for explicit right similar to Right to education in Article 21A. He proposes two methods to do so:

- Map the various directive principles can be linked to internet access and see this would warrant recognizing it as an independent component of the right to life. For instance, the court has relied on specific directive principles, such as Articles 38, 39, 41 and 45 to conclude that the fundamental rights guaranteed to citizens, under Article 21 and 19, cannot be realized without ensuring the right to education.
- Judicial practice that directive principles have been used to broaden, and give depth to some fundamental rights

Another approach would be to conceptualize the right to internet access as a derived right.

- According to rights theorist Carl Wellman: “Derived rights may be either more specific forms of some generic right, as the right to freedom of the press is a special case of the right to free speech, or auxiliary rights that serve to protect some primary right.
- A derived right is a secondary right with all of the protection and limitations of the primary right that it enables. What makes it a secondary right is not its significance or authority, but simply that it is borne out of its connection with a primary right.
- Articles 21 and 19 have become entirely intertwined with internet access, and that in the absence of internet access these rights would lose substance and value and citizens will not be able to enjoy these rights.

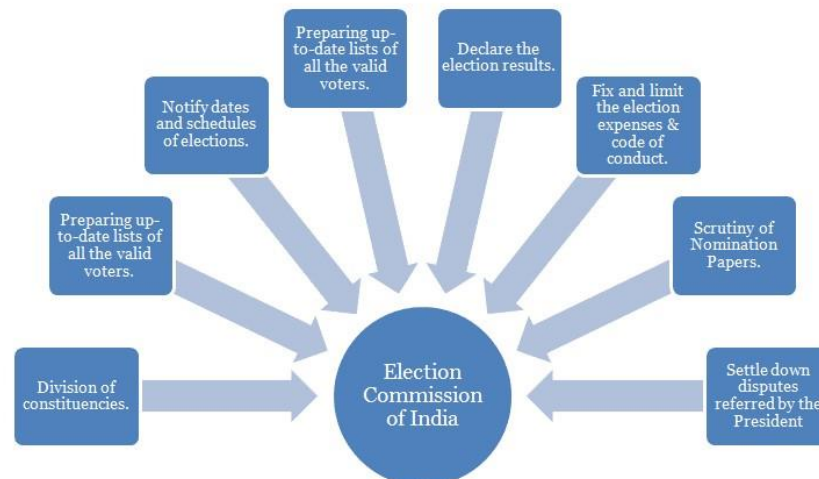
- This approach was used by **Supreme Court in *Maneka Gandhi vs. Union of India***, while discussing the test for unenumerated rights within Article 19, the test given by the court was whether the right claimed is an integral part or of the same nature as the named right.

With internet access affecting each and every aspect of an individual's life, as well as becoming a condition precedent for the application of numerous directive principles related to social and economic welfare, it can be postulated that the right to internet access can be recognized as a human right within the Indian constitutional system.

Election commission

Syllabus: PSIR Paper 1B Statutory institutions, GS 2: Appointment of various Constitutional posts

Context: CEC and Election commissioners attending the informal meeting b Principal Secretary to the Prime minister.



Electoral reforms in the selection of Election commissioners

- Election commission of India (ECI) is the institutional keystone holding up the edifice of Indian democracy. Changes in the appointment process for the elections commissioners can strengthen the ECI's independence, neutrality and transparency.
- Appointment of Election Commissioners falls under the purview of Article 324(2) of the constitution. The tenure and number of election commissioners are subject to law made by the parliament. Though the law was enacted in 1991, the appointment process has remained more or less same.

Many committees in the past have recommended change in the appointment system of Election commission. For instance,

- **Tarkunde committee** recommended that the **Election commissioners be appointed on the advice off committee comprising of Prime minister, the Lok Sabha Opposition Leader and the Chief Justice of India.**
- Same was reiterated by **Dinesh Goswami committee and Law commission in 2015**
- 2nd ARC commission additionally recommended Law minister and Deputy Chairman of Rajya sabha to include in the collegium.

What Judiciary have to say regarding appointment of Election commissioners

Former Chief Justice of India, J.S.Khehar and Justice D.Y. Chandrachud had also noted in 2017 that **“The Election Commissioners supervise and hold elections across the Country, and this is the significance of their office, and their selection has to be made in the most transparent manner.”**

Quasi-judicial function of Election Commission:

- ***In Rojer Mathew vs South Indian Bank Ltd.***, it was argued that **“Election Commission is not only responsible for conducting free and fair elections but it also renders a quasi-judicial function between the various political parties including the ruling government and other parties.**
- Accordingly, the **Executive cannot be a sole participant in the appointment of members of Election Commission** as it gives unfettered **discretion to the ruling party to choose someone whose loyalty to it is ensured and thereby renders the selection process vulnerable to manipulation”.**

Violation of Constitution:

- Three writ petitions, with one pending since 2015, are urging the Supreme Court to declare that the current practice of appointment of Election Commissioners by the **Centre violates Articles 14, 324(2), and democracy as a basic feature of the Constitution.** These petitions argue for an independent system for appointment of Election Commissioners,

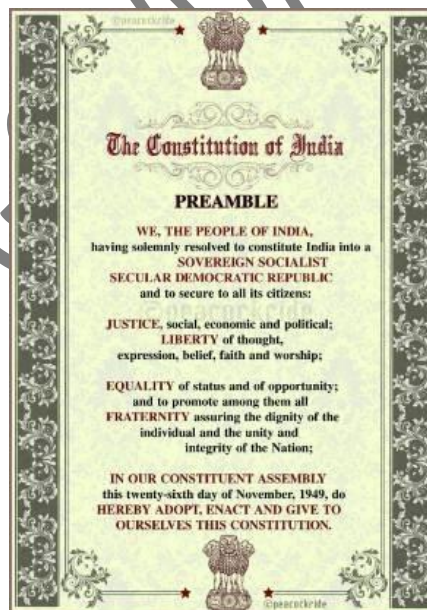
With multi-institutional bipartisan committee already followed regarding appointment of Lokpal, Chief Information commissioner, Central Bureau of Investigation etc. Election commission should also follow the same in order to make election process more transparent and neutral.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/act-now-recast-the-selection-process-of-the-ecs/article38261210.ece>

The Indian Constitution, in numbers

Indian Constitution first came into effect on 26 January 1950. Indian Constitution's endurance to its design and the care with which it was crafted. Starting before independence in 1946, an elected constituent assembly of nearly 300 members spent four years debating and defining every aspect of the Constitution. **India's Constitution is a 146,385-word tome, longer than most novels and comfortably longer than any other Constitution in the world.**

- The longevity of India's Constitution is remarkable, especially when compared with the global experience of national Constitutions. **According to 2009 book, *The Endurance of National Constitutions*, American scholars Zachary Elkins, Tom Ginsburg and James Melton show that, on an average, Constitutions have lasted only 17 years since 1789.**
- **Constitutions in the post-colonial countries, which gained independence after World War II, have been particularly fragile. Pakistan, for example, has had three different Constitutions and large periods of rule without any Constitution. It is worth to note that only 12 Asian countries that gained independence soon after World War II and drafted Constitutions, only three Constitutions have survived—India's, Taiwan's and South Korea's.**
- According to Comparative Constitutions Project (CCP), there are 70 major topics that Constitutions around the world typically cover. No Constitution covers all 70 topics, but some Constitutions come close. **India's Constitution is sparser (covering 60% of topics), but in line with the global average in coverage (58%).**



Central function of the Constitutions

- **Form of Government:**
 - Constitution adopts the form of government that would govern the country. The popular forms of government can be Parliamentary, Presidential and Semi-presidential. India adopted Parliamentary system of government. India, the choice between a parliamentary system and presidential system was debated by the constituent assembly.

- In his book, *India After Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy*, historian Ramachandra Guha suggests that the framers believed that given its diversity, the country needed a strong government. Thus in order to accommodate the diversity of the nation India opted for parliamentary form of government.
- **Separation of Power:**
 - **Constitution is to separate and delegate between the three branches of governance: legislature, executive and judiciary.** Countries share similar systems, but the amount of power held in each branch can vary significantly.
 - For instance, according to this analysis, India's legislature, has less power than Pakistan's and the US's, but more power than the UK's. However its executive has more power and judiciary has greater independence than global averages.
- **Constitutional rights:**
 - Indian constitution is inspired by American and French constitutions to grant rights to its citizens. The American Constitution grants 35 rights, the Indian Constitution grants 44, However it is still less than the global average of 50 rights.
- **Flexibility of Constitution.**
 - This flexibility in amending the Constitution is considered to be one of the biggest factors for the Indian Constitution's endurance. **For instance, Indian Constitution has been amended 103 times in contrast with American constitution which was amended way back in 1992 only for 27th time.**
 - **Flexibility of the constitution of India seems natural given the vastness and diversity of the nation** and progress from nascent democracy to a better democracy. **Flexibility of the constitution has fulfilled the regional aspirations.** For instance, Article 371 provides special status to various north-eastern states to preserve their culture and language along with modernizing with democratic values.

To sum it up **Indian constitution is a living document.** The **Indian Constitution's resilience** could be explained by its **ability to embody a principle of accommodation.** As Elkins, Ginsburg and Melton of *The Endurance of National Constitutions*. "It is Constitutional alchemy when groups with conflicting agendas believe they are better off with existing rules than in overturning them, and therein lies the key to India's Constitutional endurance".

Quotes for your notes:

Indian constitution is a living document

It is Constitutional alchemy when groups with conflicting agendas believe they are better off with existing rules than in overturning them, and therein lies the key to India's Constitutional endurance

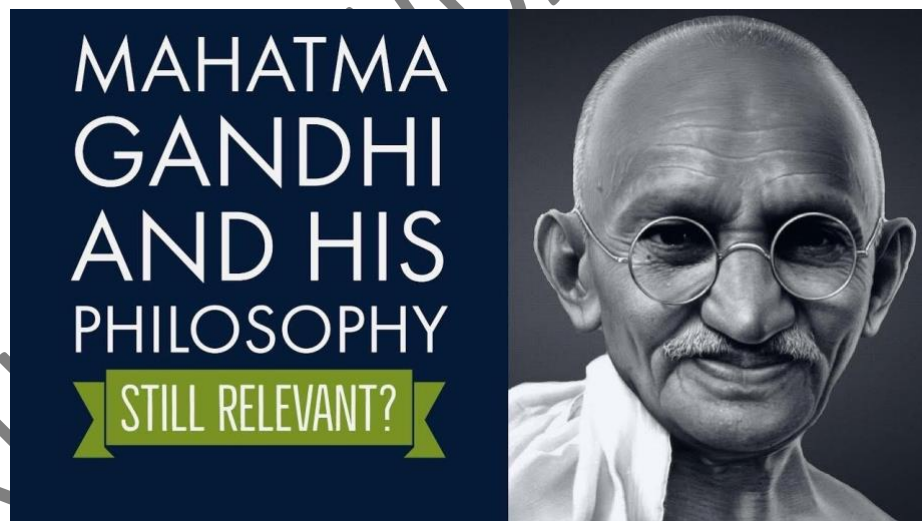
Beta Know The Data.

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Why Gandhi remains globally relevant

Syllabus: PSIR- Paper 1A-Political Ideologies (Gandhism)

According to Ramachandra Guha, Gandhi in South Africa changed the "earnest naive lawyer" to a "smart, sagacious and focused thinker-activist". He was surprised to encounters mahatma Gandhi complicated legacy . In spite of his staunch principles, Gandhiji was vulnerable to conflicts and contradiction resulted in misleading of his philosophy



Gandhi and west:

- Gandhi was hardly a foe of the West. He counted three white men - Henry Salt, John Ruskin and Leo Tolstoy - as his mentors. He also spent nearly two decades - 1893 to 1914 - of his formative years in a foreign land - South Africa - where much of his time was spent as a lawyer and an activist.

- He arrived in a deeply divided and inequitable South Africa, carved up into separate colonies, ruled by British expatriates and Afrikaners of Dutch descent. It was populated also by native Africans and Indian indentured labourers and professionals.
- In this "strange scenario", Gandhi acquired, honed and practised his four major callings - freedom fighter, social reformer, religious pluralist and prophet. He led protests against racial laws, reached out to different communities, forged friendships with dissident Jews and Christians and mobilised expatriate traders.

Gandhi's ideas with current examples

- In India, the most important and influential of Gandhi's ideas is one we affirm every day without recognising it comes from him - our constitutional commitment to linguistic pluralism and diversity.
- It is true that in their practice many politicians repudiate Gandhi. Yet outside politics, in the sphere of social activism for example, he remains an inspiration.
 - The work of social activists like Ela Bhatt and Sewa or of Abhay and Rani Bang, is moderately well known. There are hundreds of such individuals and groups, who work away from the public gaze, in the fields of rural health care, women's empowerment, environmental restoration, all inspired in lesser or greater degree by Gandhi.

Gandhi's ideas and its current relevance

- According to him, four aspects of Gandhi's legacy remain relevant, not just to India, but to the world.
 - Non-violent resistance to unjust laws and/or authoritarian governments: He always said ,if any dispute to be settled within a country –nonviolence is always more effective in long run
 - The promotion of inter-faith understanding and religious tolerance: Gandhi was in between a radical atheist and a fundamentalist. He didn't say all religion are wrong, nor did he claim his religion was totally right but tried to negotiate a way in which people of different faith could see their imperfection mirrored in others, practise that enables tolerance and understanding
 - An economic model that does not rape or pillage nature: He warned early that if India industrializes like west ,it will strip the world like locust
 - Courtesy in public debate and transparency in one's public dealings.
- The interest he evoked in countries he never visited nor probably never knew in pre internet world. French thinker Romain Rolland and Peruvian left wing radical Jose Carlos Mariategui also wrote about Gandhi. German priest , Dietrich Bonhoeffer (executed by Hitler) wanted to come to India and apprentice to learn about nonviolence resistance

Diasporic nationalism

His clients faced social discrimination from the white racist regime in south Africa resulted in a parallel career as an activist. Ironically, it was only in the diaspora that he came to appreciate the linguistic and religious heterogeneity of his own homeland. Gandhi became a thinker and leader rather than a mere professional in South Africa and it was here that he became more truly Indian as well. The Indians in South Africa came from a variety of class backgrounds and struggles led a hundred years ago first drew support from merchants, but later it was workers and hawkers who sustained it.

Gandhi appropriated by both the Left and the Right

- Gandhi is impossible to classify in terms of conventional political categories, He was a true original. The left came to a belated recognition of the moral greatness of Gandhi, especially because of what he did for Hindu-Muslim harmony.
- For a long time, the left claimed that non-violence was a devious way to wean the masses away from the revolutionary path, but its attitude changed after what Gandhi did in 1947 for communal harmony. The right essentially dislikes Gandhi.
- It is profoundly ambivalent about him but instrumentally knows it cannot reject him outright. So it tries to make him more of a Hindu, assimilate him into a line of Hindu saints, but anyone on social media would know the Hindu right detests Gandhi.

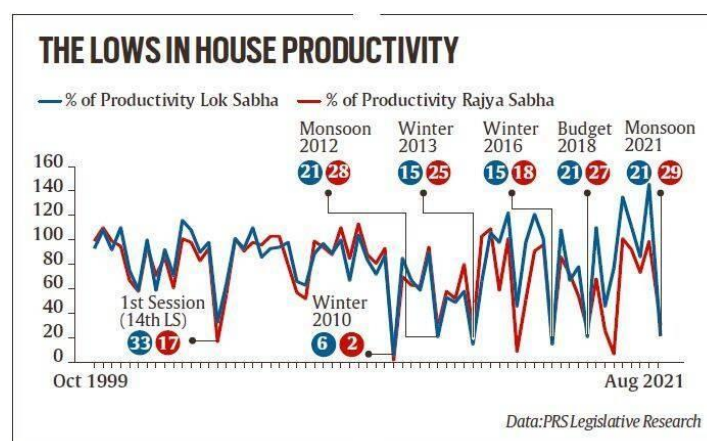
Gandhi—a cosmopolitan thinker, a Hindu, a shrewd politician?

- According to Guha , he was all of them. He was a heterodox Hindu, a freedom-loving Indian, a citizen of this country, but with an interest in the whole wide world, a patriot who was not a jingoist and willing to learn from other nations.
- He often changed his mind if he found criticism just. The two great examples of this are his exchanges with (B.R.) Ambedkar and Tagore. While Tagore turned him into a true cosmopolitan, 20 years of debate with Ambedkar made him more critical of the caste system. He nurtured disciples, made leaders out of followers—Nehru, Patel, Rajaji, J.B. Kripalani. Whereas Tagore, Nehru and Ambedkar had either disciples and acolytes or critics and adversaries, Gandhi left behind able successors. He was an astute team-builder.

Decline in productivity of Rajya Sabha

Syllabus: PSIR- Paper 1B- Parliamentary System

Rajya Sabha reported the second lowest annual productivity at 59% in 2021 since its inception. The silver lining in the otherwise bleak picture is above average performance by the Parliamentary Standing Committees under the upper house. According to the Rajya Sabha secretariat, 2021 with 59% of annual productivity was second lowest for the upper house. The lowest was reported in 2018 with 36% productivity.



Reasons for lowest productivity:

- With ruling party not enjoying a clear majority in Rajya Sabha it remains an **arena of confrontation between the opposition and the government**
 - There was an amendment moved in the Rajya Sabha to refer the **Tribunals Reform Bill** to a select committee of that House, and the motion was rejected by 79 votes to 44.
 - In the first 10 days of the monsoon session 2021, 12 Bills were passed spending seven minutes on an average on each bill.
- The year **2021 saw passage of much controversial legislation which resulted in continued disruptions** in the upper house.
 - Pegasus Project is such examples of causing disruptions.
 - The Central Vigilance Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2021 and the Delhi Police Establishment (Amendment) Bill, 2021 that has made possible the extension of the tenure of the Directors of the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate up to five years.
- There were **disruptions and forced adjournments over the issue of suspension of 12 member of the House.** The continued disruptions pulled down the cumulative functionality of the House
- With Parliament being disrupted routinely, Members of Parliament (MPs) are not able to ask ministers tough questions during question hour to assess the work of their ministries

- "During the third week of winter session 2021, Question Hour which is meant for seeking the accountability of the Government has suffered the most with only four of the 75 listed Starred Questions orally answered by the concerned ministers," stated the RS secretariat
- Article 75 of constitution (council of ministers shall be collectively responsible) with regard to questioning would be curbed
- With disruptions into the time available for Parliamentary business, adequate time is not available for debating legislation. As a result, **Bills either get passed without effective debate or remain pending in Parliament**
 - Rajya Sabha (monsoon session 2021) for most Bills, only two Bills were discussed for over an hour.
 - Some Bills, like the **Limited Liability Partnership (Amendment) Bill, 2021**, were passed **within five minutes**. Only the OBC Bill was discussed for more than an hour in both Houses.
 - Every Bill introduced during the session was passed within the session. This means that there was no time for any scrutiny by members.
- With Parliament meeting for a fewer number of days and with its productivity falling on account of disruptions, **MPs are not able to raise matters of urgent public importance** and bring it to the attention of the government.
- It must **identify political controversies which lead to Parliamentary disruption**. For debate and deliberation to happen, Parliamentary procedure would have to evolve to enable political parties on different sides of the issue to set the agenda for debate and discuss the issue in detail on the floor of the house.
 - This would also require Parliament to meet for more number of days in a year and sit for longer hours. This would ensure that even if the proceedings are disrupted there is still enough time for deliberations.

Value addition for notes

Our Parliamentary procedures has not changed significantly over the last sixty years. In this context there are opportunities to learn from other countries. For example, in the **British Parliament, there are certain days** in a week in each **Parliamentary session where the opposition parties are allowed to determine the agenda** for the days discussion.

Way forward

Parliament is an institution where ideas are discussed and political and ideological differences ironed out through debate and consensus building. If disruptions in Parliament continue then slowly but surely it would lead to people slowly disengaging with the institution of Parliament. In a representative democracy like ours, Parliament is supposed to be the voice of the people and people's disenchantment with the Parliamentary system would risk the relevance of this 70 year old institution of our society.

Sources : <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/rajya-sabha-productivity-plunges-to-3760-during-3rd-week-of-winter-session/article37990778.ece>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/raiya-sabha-registers-second-lowest-annual-productivity/article38083069.ece>

Indian Cities—Stunted by Partial Democratizations

Syllabus: PSIR- Paper 1B- Urban local governance

States view municipalities as their deconcentrated local offices not a third level of government. Even the 74th Amendment to the Constitution, 1992, circumscribed their autonomy versus state governments. The robust form of parliamentary democracy in the Union and state governments, is missing in municipalities.

Constraints in Urban local governance:

- In most of the municipalities, the mayor is not elected. **State governments decide the terms of appointment for a mayor**—usually annually or for two years versus the full term of the elected municipal council of five years. This effectively undermines municipal political leadership.
- State governments have demurred from delegating the power to tax except property tax and the power to levy sundry usage fees. Secondly, **state government parastatals, directly funded by the state government or the Union government (Smart City Mission)**, plan and implement a range of public services including water supply and sewage management, building of major roads and bridges, transport services, fire services, electricity supply, and now e-mobility.
- Administrative “**work around**” **effectively excludes the municipality** and depletes its functional range even below the 18 functions specified in the 12th Schedule of the Constitution. In addition, cleverly designed administrative barriers constrain the ability of elected municipal government to act autonomously
- **The state government appoints the chief executive officer**
 - Sometimes after consulting the mayor—who is invariably an officer from the elite Union/state level administrative cadres deputed to the municipality.
 - The cadre controlling authority for even the senior technical municipal staff, is the state government.
 - The state government can directly instruct the CEO to act in a specified manner even without the consent of the elected council or the mayor. Reforms, stop short of severing the political control of state governments.
- The existing political **architecture for municipalities remains sub-optimal**. It gives few opportunities, for local innovation and skills to enhance urban governance and **discourages full utilisation of the economic growth and tax potential of municipalities**.
- Letting state or national governments lead in planning and financing infrastructure and public service delivery is unnecessary and exclusionary, since the expertise and wealth within cities, could be harnessed directly. Unsurprisingly **municipal political office** is the **last choice of**

aspiring politicians who fear getting trapped in the low-level political economy equilibrium cities offer.

- Cities accounted for nearly two-thirds of GDP in 2010 and around one-third of the population in 2011. So, the economic or political consequences of urban neglect are not trivial.
- The lack of municipal level, visionary, political leadership shows in the truncated, copy-cat, bureaucratic 20-year plans for cities, constrained by backward-looking planning models and minimalist aspirations are the major constraints
- Rigid land and town planning laws provide a static model of dividing land into zones by the nature of use and thereafter, loosely regulating land development therein. This often goes against the grain of how a city develops dynamically, based on market incentives.
 - The best illustration of planning, uncoordinated with ground reality, is the horizontal urban sprawl. Long-term fiscal constraints lead to **“Planning Pessimism”** which reflects in regulations prohibiting incremental vertical development, to contain the volume of population served per the historical service capacity.
 - This approach ends up encouraging the horizontal sprawl of low-level housing which becomes even more expensive to service equitably, rather than exploiting the potential for enhancing the basic services supply in-situ, through higher efficiency.
 - Rates are low and are often linked to the nature of use with self-owned, low rise, temporary houses attracting the lowest rates, irrespective of the soaring rates for the underlying land. This blunts the market signal which could otherwise incentivise collective, vertical growth, or **“densification” in high value land parcels.**
- The fiscal fragility of municipalities can be attributed to less than adequate transfers by the state and central governments and the low tax revenues of even the bigger municipalities. The two are linked by the **“broken window” effect—perpetual fiscal imbalance leads to a deterioration of public service standards**, lower citizen expectations, and low tax revenue.
- The municipality also collects fees from roadside vendors and street markets. But it is the state government which does the heavy lifting in policing, building roads, and bridges, providing fire-fighting services, maintaining the waste treatment and sewage systems, against which it appropriates road tax from owners of motorised vehicles, stamp duty paid at the time of transfer of property and entertainment tax, **now bundled into Goods and Services Tax_s**

Way forward

- Property tax rates can be doubled, if **at least one half of the collections in each ward, are used for specified purposes which directly enhance the taxpayer’s property value**—street lighting, solid waste management services, maintenance of public parks, playgrounds, blue-green areas, e-security networks, pedestrian road over and under bridges and intelligent traffic signals to reduce congestion.

- It would help if **ward committees are formed and empowered to consent in the proposed allocations on an annual basis**. Participative budgeting must be nurtured by an identified framework for consultative expenditure management.
 - The **city of Bengaluru** has implemented far-reaching reforms in property tax rate setting, GIS enabled assessment and collection leading to a near doubling in property tax revenue

Case study

Example of decongesting by changing the mode of transportation from private to public (**London and Singapore**), enhancing the drinking water supply by reducing leakages, more efficient end-use appliances and additional decentralised community-based management of sanitation and sewage to recirculate treated water and the use of waste or solar energy for generating electricity (**San Francisco**).

Source: <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/indian-cities-stunted-by-partial-democratisation/>

Build Back a Better World (B3W)

Syllabus: PSIR- Paper 2A- Regionalization of world politics

Build Back a Better World (B3W) is billed as “a values-driven, high-standard, and transparent infrastructure partnership led by major democracies to help narrow the \$40+ trillion infrastructure need in the developing world, which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Through B3W, the G7 and other like-minded partners will coordinate in mobilizing private-sector capital in four areas of focus—**climate, health and health security, digital technology, and gender equity and equality**—with catalytic investments from our respective development finance institutions



Constraints to act as alternative to Belt and Road initiative (BRI):

- **Global Financial Crisis**, from which some did not entirely recover. **Many countries in G7 suffered heavily during pandemic. For instance Italy.** They are yet to recover fully from the economic blow caused by the pandemic. In another **instance the U.K. had to cut its aid budget.** But the issue goes deeper than economic crises or even general economic performance.
- The same countries that now are proposing to help raise private capital to build infrastructure in middle- and low-income **countries themselves sought, and still seek, foreign, often Chinese, capital to upgrade their old infrastructural systems or to develop new infrastructures.**
- B3W is **heavily dependent on private investment for finances.**
- **Perhaps the materialization of the B3W will be less grandiose than the wording of the launch suggests.** If B3W promises more than it could accomplish then it could face backlash because such great expectations created.
 - This is similar to BRI when it launched project worth \$1 trillion. Many countries, including developed and advanced economies, sought Chinese capital to invest in their infrastructure. However, the enthusiasm lasted about five years. **Second half of the 2010s, this changed and investments became more targeted, meaning that investments should have been made only where there was a strategic or economic interest.**
- B3W being initiative of USA and G7 will have anti-China rhetoric. **However the nations have to remember that many nations in G7 have colonial past, and the rhetoric may backfire them.** Thus space for mistake is much lesser.
- However, when it comes to environmental attention, transparency, benefits, and the involvement of local communities and enterprises, the B3W appears to be set for a better start than the BRI.
- **Restrictive investment by China:** Data from Boston University's Global Development Center shows that Chinese overseas development finance peaked in 2016 and has plummeted since. The Chinese government now stresses high-quality BRI development. **The more restrictive infrastructure financing strategy on the part of China has given room for B3W to act as an alternative to BRI.**

However some political analysts are of the view that **B3W and BRI are not necessarily at odds. Notwithstanding China-U.S. competition, there are a lot of ways in which the two initiatives are complementary.**

In fact, it is not hard to **argue that in order to build back a better world following the COVID-19 pandemic, the B3W and BRI must work together.**

B3W and BRI complementary to each other:

- **China's BRI is primarily focused on traditional hard infrastructure:** ports, roads, dams, railways, electric power plants, and telecommunication facilities. On the other hand, **B3W focuses on "softer" outcomes, namely improvements in climate, health and health security, modernized digital technology, and gender equity and equality.**
- **B3W and BRI share the goal of developing green and sustainable infrastructure to minimize ecological impact, reduce pollution, and increase energy efficiency, all in order to confront the global challenge of climate change.**
- **Financing mechanisms, the BRI mainly relies on bilateral loans** (concessionary and commercial) and investment backed by state-owned banks and funds to support project construction in developing

countries, and has had limited success in leveraging private capital. On the other hand, **The B3W plans to mobilize bilateral and multilateral tools and private-sector capital** to catalyze hundreds of billions of dollars of investment. The **G-7 and their partners also have deep experience with bilateral and multilateral development finance, which could help address the \$40+ trillion global infrastructure gap** that has been identified by the G-7.

- **B3W can learn lessons from BRI** regarding with problems like credit risk, macroeconomic risk, legal and regulatory challenges, labor disputes and corruption in partner states, low returns on investment, and security risks and improve prospects of project compliance and transparency.

Therefore B3W and BRI has potential of both being leveraging all parties' comparative advantages, ensuring sustainability and high environmental standards, promoting development and prosperity at a global scale, and bringing mutual benefits for infrastructure providers and recipients and also engage in battle of narrative and counter narrative.

Source:

<https://thediplomat.com/2021/06/b3w-building-an-alternative-to-the-bri-or-falling-into-the-same-trap/>

<https://thediplomat.com/2021/06/build-back-better-world-and-the-belt-and-road-are-not-necessarily-at-odds/>

The “democracy” debate in China

Syllabus: PSIR Paper 2B Global power Centers

Context: Democracy summit by USA

Prior to USA conveyed Democracy summit, China's State Council Information Office released the “**Democracy in China**” white paper, followed by the **Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs releasing the white paper “The State of Democracy in the United States”**. Various conferences, seminars, discussion sessions were organized throughout the month, which were attended by Chinese bureaucrats and top scholars/strategists from China and abroad to **debate and discuss ‘democracy’**.

Democracy as “Soft Power” tool

- China so far had little or **nothing to offer to the global democracy discourse**. But apparently, things are a changing. Now, more and more **Chinese scholars are of the opinion that China must actively participate and contribute to the global democracy discourse** and not cede ground to others, particularly the US to dominate the space and use it as **a soft power tool** to further its foreign policy agenda.



The key arguments advanced by Chinese

- **An ideological front:** By organizing the “Democracy Summit”, they argued, the US has consciously opened up an **ideological front in the process of containing China**, attempting to divide the international community to build a value-based alliance against China, **triggering a new Cold**
- **Economical front:** US may use **democracy** as the key criteria for the **reconstruction of the global industrial chain security system**, establish new industrial standards and trade rules between democratic countries, and discriminate against and exclude China and other countries labeled as “non-democratic”.
- Others even suspected a greater international conspiracy behind the summit. They found uncanny similarity between Biden’s “Democracy Project” and the history of the formation of the United Nations—a model designed to primarily accommodate the members of the anti-fascist coalition

Chinese “Democracy discourse”

- **The US is no democracy**
 - **Zhang Weiwei**, Distinguished Professor of Fudan University, publicly asserted that **“the American democracy is no democracy”**. He argued, American democracy is democracy of a few people or a few interest groups, kidnapped, and distorted by a handful of oligarchs and their money power.
 - Democratic deficit: Chinese critique should focus on the **“democratic deficit”** that it is currently facing. It is argued that the **increasing political polarization, lack of social trust, widening disparity between the rich and the poor, its mishandling of the corona crisis** make it unfit to be the leader for the democratic world.
 - Overall consensus is that the model of American democracy, is not a matter of China’s envy but of its pity, because what the China sees is not the **“end of history but the end of the end of history”**.
- **China is the true democracy**
 - **China’s Vice Foreign Minister Le Yucheng** described China’s political system as **“true democracy, effective democracy, successful democracy, a well-deserved democracy”**. His argument was primarily based on China’s comparative success in issues like poverty reduction, overall economic development of its people, pandemic management, amongst others.

- Chinese strategists echoed the idea and described the current political system in China as **“People’s democracy”**, Some Chinese strategists are even of the opinion that in the next step China should organize the future **“Global Democracy Summit”** and inclusively invite the United States to participate in it.
- Paradigm shift: China must strive to bring in a major paradigm shift in the global democracy debate, which is to make it **shift from the “democracy or autocracy” paradigm defined by the West to the “good governance or bad governance” paradigm.**
- **Reconstruction of democratic theory**
 - Chinese strategists are carrying out an extensive theory “building exercise, striving to construct a democratic theory that **transcends the existing “democracy and authoritarian (totalitarian) binary”** and help legitimize Chinese political system as yet another form of democracy.
 - The Chinese argument is that such binary was formed during the Cold War days, when there was an antagonistic and confrontational relationship between socialism and capitalism, market economy versus planned economy; socialist democracy versus capitalist democracy. Today these relationships have blurred.
 - Their effort now is **to transform democracy–autocracy dualities into a triad.** Under this, **Chinese democracy and Western democracy constitute two subtypes of democracy, and democracy being on top.**
 - This is meant to challenge the common understanding that Western-style democracy is universal. This facilitates the Chinese argument that competitive elections are just a measure of Western style democracy, but not a measure of democracy as a whole.

Biden’s global democracy summit created much ripples within the Chinese strategic circles. *The “Chinese democracy” as a model of democracy has recently been advanced by China, carving a space for itself in the global democracy discourse.*

Source:

<https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/the-democracy-debate-in-china/>

Rare Earths: Fighting for the Fuel of the Future

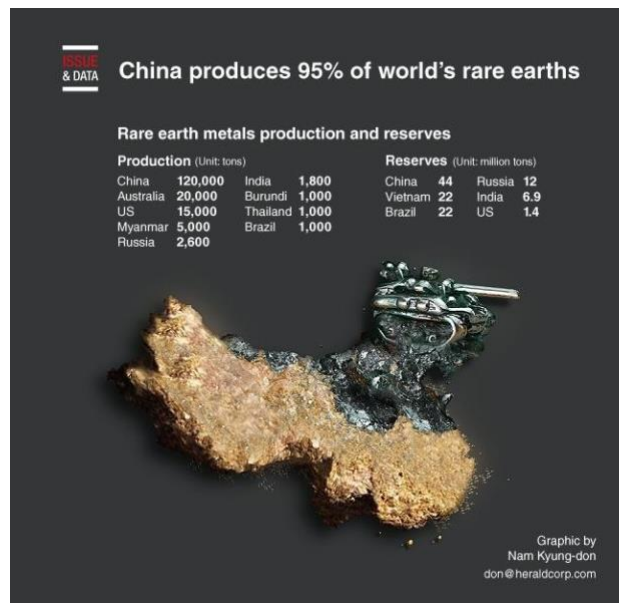
Syllabus: PSIR: Paper 2B – IR theories

Context: C2C - connect to concept: complex interdependence

Rare earth metals, or simply “rare earths,” are the essential, **irreplaceable materials powering** most of modern technology and, since 1985, China has systematically gained near complete control over the global supply chain.

- It has become a fundamental part of modern life. Cell phones, computers, televisions, and cars are among the indispensable products powered by the strong internal magnets manufactured from rare earths.

- Modern medical devices, communication systems, and a sustainable, “green” energy transition are entirely dependent on successful exploitation of this non-renewable resource and, as can be easily inferred, rare earths are vital for the development of military technology



US quest for rare earth minerals

- In the **U.S.**, **free-market capitalism** has long supported rare earth mineral industry's competitive outsourcing to China and the government is only recently beginning to acknowledge the dangerous strategic implications.
 - In 2017, U.S. President Donald Trump issued an Executive Order outlining a **“Strategy to Ensure Secure and Reliable Supplies of Critical Minerals,”** labeling them **“vital to the nation’s security and economic prosperity.”**
- Vulnerabilities in these supply chains were further realized when COVID-19 and the unprecedented response measures exposed the costly gambles of industrial outsourcing and the unintended consequences of globalization.
- In 2020, **Senator Ted Cruz introduced the “ORE Act”** to support and incentivize the development of domestic rare earth capacities and President Joe Biden included the industry in a 100-day Supply Chain Review.
 - The **future of U.S. security is tied directly to rare earth resource security**. Failing to secure the resources needed to keep pace with technological innovation means a failure to remain globally competitive.
 - **China** has had decades to **develop this industrial capacity and safeguard it from global free-market challengers**. At this point, private industry alone will not be able to correct this imbalance.

The Middle East Has Oil and China Has Rare Earths

- OPEC controls 41 percent of oil production and, with that, has wielded tremendous geopolitical power for decades. This dependency compelled the United States to aggressively support the development of alternative supply chains.
- Today, despite **China controlling approximately 60 percent of rare earth ore**, producing 85 percent of the oxides, and accounting for more than 95 percent of the rare earth manufacturing, there is no comparable response.

Supply Chain of Rare Earth Minerals

- The ability for the U.S. to maintain any militarily competitive edge over China is largely dependent on the same vulnerable supply chain.
 - Precision-guided weapons, stealth technology, drones, and satellites are among the key strategic defense elements that rely on rare earths.
 - Each **F-35 aircraft, shared by 14 allied nations** and considered instrumental for future warfare, **contains 920 pounds of rare earth material.** China has already demonstrated the ability to directly affect this development.
- U.S. defense deal with Taiwan, China threatened to cut off the supply of rare earths to three U.S. defense manufacturers – including F-35 producer Lockheed Martin
 - While it ultimately failed to materialize, this reaction demonstrated the power of the Chinese monopoly and the costly potential consequences for the United States and its allies.
- It also **served as a warning to any country that might indirectly challenge China's foreign policy** and an incentive for all to secure an independent and reliable rare earth supply chain.

China's Road to Monopoly

- Approximately **40 percent of the rare earth** reserves currently being exploited are in Chinese mines. It has also become the leading importer of both ore and concentrates.
- Unlike other industrial nations, the Chinese government has been able to align and subsidize the rare earth industry according to long-term strategic plans.
- **China has been responsible for filing more than 80 percent of new international patents** related to rare earth technology, making the industry increasingly inhospitable to international competition.

The Competitors

- **MP Materials in California** recently boasted delivering 15 percent of the global rare earth supply – but 100 percent of this "delivery" is sent to Chinese processing plants in the form of simple concentrates.
- The **Lynas Corporation**, based in Australia, manages the only complete supply chain outside of China.

- As encouraging as some of these developments are, building a comprehensive, **local “mine-to-magnet” supply chain to rival China requires several years**, significant investment, and, in most cases, **supportive environmental and fiscal policy**.
 - Without government intervention companies may not be able to maintain lofty ambitions while surviving initial losses against the entrenched Chinese monopoly.

Way Forward

- The **solution begins with awareness**, understanding the significance of this material and the perils of a Chinese monopoly. It is the responsibility of those who know to inform the rest and for elected officials to make it a political priority.
- Passing Senator Cruz’s **“ORE Act” is the next best opportunity to support long-term rare earth self-sustainment**. Beyond the substantial incentives for firms in the industry, the bill includes provisions for those pursuing **“secondary recovery”** – a process of harvesting material from recycled devices and/or industrial waste, contributing to critical national stockpiles.
- Beyond an investment in domestic supply chain development, the U.S. government can do more – through **diplomatic and legislative efforts – to support international business, research, and innovation** in order to create a system of cooperative burden-sharing and information exchange.
- China has yet to seriously flex its strategic advantage. It **cannot currently afford to alienate its top trade partners**, nor does it want to encourage competitive supply chain development
 - Considering advances in modern military technology and the interconnectedness of global economies, such a z.
- The United State is neither alone nor without alternatives. But, as time passes without substantial government initiative, it becomes increasingly difficult to catch up to China and less difficult to imagine similar scenarios of future desperation.

Quotes for notes

"US – China relationship of course, has elements of both Cooperation and competition"

-Thomas E. Donilon (Former National Security Advisor of the United States)

Sources: <https://thediplomat.com/2022/01/rare-earths-fighting-for-the-fuel-of-the-future/>

Maldives- China ink key deals

Syllabus: PSIR: Paper 2B – Indian Ocean region

Maldives and China recently signed key bilateral agreements during Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's visit, on developing and maintaining infrastructure in the Indian Ocean archipelago, besides agreeing on a visa-free travel arrangement for Maldivians intending to travel to China. Mr. Wang arrived in Male, as part of his five-nation trip to Eritrea, Kenya, the island nation of Comoros, the Maldives and Sri Lanka.

Key outcome

- Maldivian Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid and his Chinese counterpart **unveiled a special official logo to mark 50 years of diplomatic relations between the countries.**
- Describing China as **“one of the most important development partners”** of the Maldives, Mr. Shahid said that China **“has continued to contribute to the socio-economic development”** of the Maldives.
- A statement issued by the Maldivian Foreign Ministry said the **visa-waiver agreement would allow Maldivians to travel to China on 30-day visa free basis** once the pandemic restrictions are lifted.
- The two governments signed an **agreement of ‘Economic and Technical Cooperation’ on grant aid, focusing on social, livelihood, and infrastructure projects.**
- The Government of Maldives signed a **‘Letter of Exchange’** on a **‘Feasibility Study of Management and Maintenance of China-Maldives Friendship Bridge’**, for Chinese assistance in maintaining the 1.4-km bridge connecting capital Male with the island of Hulhumale.
 - The bridge is considered **China’s flagship project in the Maldives.** Male owes Beijing about **\$1.4 billion from past loans**, which government has **sought to “restructure”**.
- China also **agreed to back a sea-water desalination project and cooperate in the health sector**, the Foreign Ministry said. Minister Wang’s visit would be one of “great significance to the future development of our bilateral relations”

India’s close watch

- The Chinese Foreign Minister's visit will be watched closely by New Delhi, which has maintained frequent, high-level contact with the **Solih government that openly pursues an ‘India First’ foreign policy.**
 - Following regime change in Male in 2018, **New Delhi committed \$ 1.4 billion to development** in the island nation that is home to about 5.5 lakh people.
- Mr. Wang’s visit also coincides with a growing **‘India Out’ campaign** among sections within the Maldives that **oppose “Indian military presence” in the country.** The government has denied the allegation.
- The ‘India Out’ campaign has more recently intensified, with the backing of President Yameen, whose conviction in a money laundering case was recently overturned by the Supreme Court.

Quotes for notes

"India's development partnership is to empower the people, not to undermine them. We will not increase their dependence on us," PM Modi said in his address to the Maldives Parliament.

Sources: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/maldives-china-ink-key-deals-agree-on-visa-exemption-visa-exemption/article38191082.ece>

India - EU

Syllabus: PSIR: Paper 2B – India -EU

The two sides met in their **first ever EU+27 Leaders Meeting format**, where not just the European Commission and Council **but also 27 European heads of state were present to meet with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually**. The extension of this rarely used format to India signals the importance Brussels now attaches to the EU-India partnership. The previous EU-India Summit in 2020 brought fresh momentum to ties and broadened the scope of cooperation to **finally benefit a “strategic” partnership**.

**Range of discussion**

- Brussels and New Delhi have engaged in a host of discussions covering important aspects, including high level dialogues on trade, climate change, maritime security, human rights, as well as talks on 5G, strengthening multilateralism including WTO reform, digital transformation and AI.

Priority areas

- **Pandemic relief:** EU activated its **Special Protection Mechanism** to deliver valuable medical support to India cooperation on strengthening global health preparedness and supply chains.
- **Trade and investment:** Resumption of talks on a **free trade agreement (FTA)**, and negotiations on a separate **investment protection agreement** as well as an agreement on **“geographical indicators,”** was agreed upon. It is even more significant in the backdrop of the very recent suspension of the China-EU Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI) from the European side.
- **Connectivity agreement:** Converging visions on connectivity coupled with **apprehensions about**

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in their extended neighborhoods led to the signing of an India-EU connectivity partnership, visualized as an alternative to the **BRI that will focus on energy, transport and digital infrastructure, and collectively shape the norms around regional connectivity**

Challenges and Strategic dilemma

- **Obstacles to the infamous FTA** are likely to continue on the sticking points of agriculture and automobiles
- The urgent need for post-pandemic recovery will ensure that the strategic element of the partnership does not overshadow its **significant untapped economic potential**, as estimated in this European Parliament study.
- India's deadly second COVID-19 wave has exposed the weaknesses and collapse of its healthcare system, potentially constraining its political choices and also impacting its credibility as a partner

China as a factor

- India may **be bargaining for more than what Europe can offer with its "pragmatic, flexible and multi-faceted approach"** as stated by EU Ambassador to India Ugo Astuto, through which it justifies both cooperation and competition with China depending on the policy area.
- India's sloganeering of "self-reliance" and opting out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, whether resisting Chinese economic advances and consequences following Brexit will translate into potential concessions on trade on the part of India remain to be seen

Quotes for Notes

EU and India are natural partners. Unleashing our full potential for trade can help create next wave of economic growth – Soren Gade, Chairman of EIBC

Sources: <https://thediplomat.com/2021/05/eu-india-summit-2021-pushing-ahead-with-the-4-cs/>

BRICS

Syllabus: PSIR- Paper 2A- Regionalization of world politics

BRICS is the acronym coined to associate five major emerging economies: **Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa**. The BRICS remains a prominent grouping in the global governance architecture due to the individual influence of each member state and collective size of their economy. **BRICS countries represent 20% of global GDP, 40% of global population and 17% share in global trade.**



Areas of Strength:

Economic

- **New Development bank:** It has played instrumental role in funding infrastructure and sustainable projects in the BRICS countries. Funding has been majorly in areas clean energy, transport, infrastructure, irrigation etc.
- **Contingent Reserve Arrangement:** It aimed to provide short-term liquidity support to the member countries through currency swaps in response to a balance of payment crisis.
- **Interbank Cooperation Mechanism: BRICS bond Fund and BRICS payment system are the two initiatives. These initiatives are with the goal of encouraging cross-border payments among BRICS nations in their local currencies**

Science and Technology

- **Information and Communication Technologies:** Working group of ministers have been setup to strengthen cooperation on research and innovation in advanced digital technologies
- **Outer Space:** Cooperation on outer space has been active. **BRICS Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation was signed in 2021**

Security

- **Counterterrorism:** Security situation in West Asia and Africa shows that international security has been high on BRICS agenda

Global Governance

- Cooperation in Global Governance coordinated pressure from BRICS should continue in all global fora, including the G20, to **ensure that reform of the multilateral system remains a priority for all nations.**
- **WTO:** BRICS has opposed the new wave of protectionism and unilateral measures that are incompatible with WTO rules. It should continue to push forward the balanced results of WTO's Doha Development Agenda and contribute towards strengthening of UNCTAD capacity and WTO Dispute Settlement System
- **IMF:** BRICS should continue to push or reforms related to quotas and IMF governance. Further it

should urge to reduce the lending cost and adopt innovation lending tools and also, make its surveillance framework fairer and more integrated.

Sustainable development

- **Health:** BRICS TB research network and BRICS vaccine research and development center
- **Environment: BRICS Environmentally Sound Technology Platform (BEST Platform):** provides exchange off knowledge, technology and best practices in environmentally friendly technologies.

Issues and areas of improvement:

Economy:

- **Taxation:** Tax evasion is important or all BRICS countries and there is need to develop an action plan in this direction.
- **Finance:** BRICS bond fund, BRICS payment system and BRICS credit rating agency though proposed not much progress has been made.
- **Export Credit:** No plan of action regarding export credit.
- **Trade in Services:** Nearly half to 2/3rd of all the economy in BRICS are service dominated. However no comprehensive agreement regarding access to each other market and movement of people has not been concluded.

Science and Technology

- **IPR:** the scope of activities being pursued are presently very restricted.
- **Science, Technology and Innovation:** the initiatives on research infrastructure and mega science projects, oceans and polar science and technology etc. need re-examination for their salience and efficacy.

Sustainable Development:

- Basic Agriculture Information Exchange System is still under developed.
- **Environment:** Environment Clean Rivers Umbrella Program and the BRICS Partnership for Urban Environmental sustainability initiative have not made progress. Best platform still need to streamline specific activities that are to be taken up under this platform.

Other initiatives like standardization, industrial cooperation, cooperation on MSME, manufacturing tourism need re-examination for salience and efficacy.

Source: **Document name: Stocktaking and Recommendations for Consolidation** Joint Academic Paper by ORF and RIS

The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)

Syllabus: PSIR Paper 2A Contemporary Global Concern

Context: Denial of NSG membership to India

The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) is a group of nuclear supplier countries that seeks to contribute to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through the implementation of two sets of Guidelines for nuclear exports and nuclear-related exports.

The USA created the NSG, after India's 1974 nuclear test, solely to deny advanced technology to India, and isolate and contain India.

However experts are of opinion that **NSG membership is not really required for India's nuclear program**—for a variety of reasons.

- **No desire for nuclear fuel:** India's desire for inclusion into the NSG group is not due to its uranium fuel needs. Dr. Homi Bhabha formulated the program to secure the country's long term energy independence in three stages. With Uranium required only in initial stages, plutonium required by second stage is generated in the first stage. Third stage requires Thorium, which India have in abundance.
- **No material benefit: The 2008 NSG waiver** was important because it provided capacity building in nuclear energy development as well as mitigated the issue of uranium shortage for the existing programs.
- Outside of the NSG waiver, the United States lifted the **nuclear trade embargo on India that was in place since 1974 and signed a Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement with India that allowed New Delhi to trade civilian nuclear fuel and technology legally.**
- **The lifting of the NSG embargo** and related nuclear trade prohibitions permitted the development of **substantial trade agreements in nuclear material and technologies with several countries, as mentioned below. For instance, there are several civil nuclear cooperation agreements with countries such as Russia, France, and United Kingdom etc.**
- **Rigorous non-proliferation regime:** India has already had a rigorous non-proliferation regime without NSG membership. India's clean hand in nuclear technology has created global goodwill towards India.
- **Unilateral and voluntary moratorium:** India has observed unilateral and voluntary moratorium on further nuclear tests ever since 1998, in spite of non-signatory to international regimes like Comprehensive-Test-Ban Treaty and Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty.
- **Revisiting waiver criteria of 2008 is problematic: Shyam Saran** in his article "**The writing on the great wall**" warns that **India should be careful that in subsequent deliberations the NSG does not revisit the terms and conditions of the India-specific waiver.**

Where NSG membership would will help India

- **Clean energy opportunities:** India in its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) as part of the Paris climate agreement in December 2015, India has committed to produce 40 percent of its electricity from non-fossil fuels by 2030; nuclear energy will comprise one third of this energy production.

- **Economy and trade:** The Indian nuclear energy market is estimated to be around US\$ 150 billion. India has set its renewable energy goals as 100 GW by 2022, and contribution of nuclear energy at 25 percent of total energy by 2050. India is establishing new nuclear power plants. **American companies such as Westinghouse and GE as well as France's EDF are looking to develop these power plants in India.**
- **Technological:** NSG prohibits India from accessing certain sophisticated technologies in this sphere.
- **No need for several nuclear cooperation agreements:** For example, **Namibia is the fourth largest producer of uranium and agreed to sell it to India in 2009, but the clause of the Pelindaba treaty prohibits Namibia from exporting uranium to India.** If India joins NSG, such inhibitions will cease to exist. Namibia too has applied for NSG membership in 2016.
- **Rulemaking:** In the words of Sushma Swaraj "There is a big difference between sitting outside a room seeking the indulgence of others and being inside and making the nuclear rules.

C.Raja Mohan is of the opinion that, **Delhi's NSG diplomacy reveals a new level of self-assurance that can explore the room for accommodation in all directions rather than hide behind the slogan of non-alignment and do nothing.**

Challenges to join NSG

- **NSG works on consensus:** NSG of 48 nuclear equipment and material suppliers, all decisions are unanimous.
- **Geopolitics:** USA went all out to get waiver from NSG to India in 2008. However the change in geopolitics would not allow USA to show the same amount commitment to admit India to NSG.
- **China factor:** China using this as bargaining chip to negotiate with India on other issues.
 - **Shyam Saran in his article "The writing on the great wall"**, China today is a more confident and assertive power. It may even consider being the last man standing as a demonstration of its newfound great power status rather than a sign of international isolation.
 - **China's commitment to Pakistan**, not only as its traditional proxy against India but also because it has been assigned a key role in Xi Jinping's ambitious One Belt, One Road project.
- Compulsory signing of Non-Proliferation treaty (NPT) to get admitted to NSG.

India rather chasing the Chimera of NSG should focus on developing indigenous nuclear technology to leverage its position during negotiations. **Shyam Saran** is of the opinion that, NSG drama has brought to the surface trends which have been incipient so far but whose implications go beyond the immediate issue of NSG membership and reflect the ongoing changes in the geopolitical landscape. **India should take advantage of the NSG experience to carefully assess these changes, their impact on India and fashion an appropriate response strategy. That is more important than the pursuit of NSG membership.**

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<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/NSG-membership-The-writing-on-the-great-wall/article14403545.ece>

<https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/india-news-opinion-why-india-doesnt-need-nsg-membership/332880>

<https://southasianvoices.org/why-india-doesnt-need-the-nsg-and-why-it-does/>

India's neighborhood policy needs reworking?

Syllabus: PSIR: Paper 2B, South Asia

Over the past few years, there have been many strains in ties with neighbors — for instance, with Nepal over its Constitution in 2015 and now over the map, and with Bangladesh over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA).

Shyam Saran former diplomat and Constantino Xavier have expressed their opinion regarding India's neighborhood policy. Use these as viewpoints of scholars in answers.

India's policy in need of reworking

Shyam Saran:

- He is of the opinion that **our engagement with our neighboring countries should not be episodic. It should not be event-oriented; it should be process-oriented.**
- He also criticized the present political **dispensation's domestic drivers have relegated foreign policy objectives to the background. For example Citizenship Amendment Act.** He advises, India should fashion its diplomacy in a **manner which does not give rise to feelings [amongst smaller neighbors] of being slighted or marginalized.**

Constantino Xavier:

- He says that India's **neighborhood policy has been a constant work in progress.** It is almost impossible for India to get all its ducks in a row in the neighborhood at one time as it's a very complex region.
- Today region is being **exposed to various geopolitical competition dynamics,** with China making a grand entry and the U.S. developing relations on its own with some of India's neighbors.
- He argues that **China has done India a great favor because it's really pushed India to do much more, to focus on its neighborhood, which for a long time it took for granted.**

To counter China's forays into the region

Constantino Xavier:

- He says, India's neighborhood that used to depend and rely much more on India in the past are adopting a first come, first served policy.
- Over the last few years in the neighborhood, in terms of energy, interdependence, infrastructural connectivity, grants and loans, the numbers have been going up. **And that is not just because India's feeling more generous towards its neighbors; it's because India is facing competition from China.**

Shyam Saran

- He has also emphasized on connectivity and infrastructure projects because this would bring proximity to the neighbors.
- But **this connectivity has to be linked with the 'software of connectivity'.** There is no point in

having a glass-topped highway connect if trucks have to stop at the border for hours and hours. The procedures for allowing in cargo or people are still archaic compared to, for example, what we find in Southeast Asia or Europe.

- He also advised change in approach towards connectivity projects. He says, that India is an **important transit country in the region**. We have to give **national treatment to our neighbors to use our transport networks and ports**. This he believes can change picture dramatically.

U.S. engagement in the South Asian

- **Constantino Xavier** has appreciated the approach for coordination and cooperation with other extraregional powers.
- India has been much more open to coordinating and aligning policies in South Asia. That has an advantage because it increases synergies with the Japanese in Sri Lanka for infrastructure financing and with the U.S. and India on political issues. India should continue to do so.
- However, **Shyam Saran**, has different opinion regarding this. He argues, perhaps the U.S. or Japan or others may be pursuing projects or activities that are not necessarily aligned to India. This could be a problem in the future. I hope that India's objectives and interests remain the primary elements in any initiative by other countries in the region.

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

- **Constantino Xavier** argues that **the format of SAARC is outdated** and does **not serve the complex, fluid regional cooperation agenda any longer**. Pakistan has taken a very different approach to regional connectivity, where it sees itself mostly as a hub between China and the Gulf or Central Asian regions.
- **India has revived BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) and worked in the BBIN (Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal) quadrilateral for a framework on motor vehicle which do not include Pakistan**.
- However, **Shyam Saran** believes that BBIN and BIMSTEC should be pursued for their own merits. He argues **that BBIN and BIMSTEC cannot replacing SAARC**. I think the overall objective and **the idea of a fully integrated South Asia is something that India should keep in mind**.
- If **India walks out there could even be a possibility of China being welcomed into SAARC**. If that were to happen, our challenges would become even worse.
- **Keeping in mind the political dynamics in this region are working out, to keep that vision alive and will not abandon SAARC**

Quotes for the notes:

Our engagement with our neighboring countries should not be episodic. It should not be event-oriented; it should be process-oriented

Shyam Saran

Role of think tanks in foreign policy making

Syllabus: PSIR Paper 2B Indian Foreign Policy

Think tanks are the organizations whose main mission is to inform or influence public policies (and in some cases also corporate affairs) on the basis of research and analysis provided by in-house and affiliated staff.

- Traditionally marginalized, India's foreign policy think tank sector has gained in visibility and vibrancy due to new demand in the wake of India's expanding international stakes.
- **According to the data collected by McGann and his collaborators, in 2017 India had the third-largest number of think tanks after the United States (1,872) and China (512).**
- Some Indian think tanks have ranked relatively high in them, indicating a substantial degree of international visibility. **For instance, in McGann's recent 2018 report the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) was ranked 28th among top non-US think tanks worldwide, while the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) was ranked 35th.**

State of old think tanks

Indian international affairs and security and defense think tanks have traditionally faced a number of difficulties which have curtailed their significance. The problems faced by them are:

- **Lack of funding** (partly due to a lack of investment of the state and a lack of alternative sources);
- **Lack of human resources** and the dominance of retired civil servants in senior positions;
- **Restricted access to information:** Hindered the production of relevant research and the formulation of timely policy recommendations.
- **Dominance of Prime minister:** Since Jawaharlal Nehru's reign as India's first prime minister and minister of external affairs (1947–1964), foreign-policy making has largely remained the preserve of the prime minister, **while the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has traditionally been in charge of policy implementation.**

Thus, with the exception of a very few high-profile think tank leaders and public intellectuals, think tanks and other external providers of policy advice have not been influential in shaping Indian foreign policy.

However the landscape of foreign policy think tanks began to evolve in the first decade of the twenty-first century, when active and retired high-ranking military leaders started to establish specialist think tanks to produce knowledge on defense-related topics. For instance,

- Air Commodore **Jasjit Singh** created the **Centre for Air Power Studies, staffed with retired top brass and ambassadors.**
- **The then defence minister Pranab Mukherjee launched the National Maritime Foundation (NMF), which seeks to enhance dialogue on maritime issues.**

Towards the end of the first decade of the new millennium, other new foreign policy think tanks with a broader

focus emerged and became active and visible in the public sphere. For instance,

- **Think tanks ideologically close to the ruling Hindu nationalism: Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) and the India Foundation (IF) were founded in 2009 by personalities close to the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).**
- **International think tanks: Brookings Institution India Center was created in 2013, and the Carnegie Center India was opened in 2016. They are international centres of the prominent US think tanks.**
- **Business initiative think tanks: ORF has become particularly prominent. The Aspen Institute India was created in 2004 through the collaboration of the US-based Aspen Institute and the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII)**

Role played by think tanks in Indian context:

In the Indian context we can distinguish at least five roles.

- **Assistance for designing specific policies:** Some think tanks provide expertise in designing of policies. **ORF, for example, helped to devise India's BRICS policy.**
- **Platforms for political dialogue:** They provide platforms for political dialogue among foreign policy actors from India and abroad, such as governments, policymakers, the strategic community. For instance,
 - **ORF have also organised large annual conferences with the collaboration or participation of the MEA.**
 - **The annual Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi, a joint MEA–ORF initiative established in 2016, serves to showcase India's regional ambitions and leadership and helps the government convey its perspectives to the world.**
- **Informal diplomacy:**, they have utilised and further expanded their networks for engaging in informal diplomacy. **ORF, in particular, is greatly involved in Tracks 2 and 1.5 diplomacy, with the latter also involving government officials.**
- **Platforms for the dissemination of information:** Think tanks close to the government have come to function as significant nodes of information exchange.
- **Source of Soft power:** Some think tanks **have contributed to mainstream Hindu nationalist ideology** in foreign policy. For instance, **The IF has also established the Centre for the Study of Religion and Society, while the VIF has set up its Historical and Civilizational Studies programme.** These think tanks play major role in harnessing India's soft power using culture and heritage. For instance,
 - **VIF has co-organised with partners in Japan and Myanmar the Samvad Civilisational Dialogue a global Hindu–Buddhist initiative based on a culturalist ideology and designed to “adopt principles of Asia's age-old spiritual teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism to address modern-day issues threatening human civilization”**
 - **The IF has held its Dharma-Dhamma Conference annually since 2012 to promote the idea of India's interconnectedness with neighboring countries, in particular in Southeast Asia through Buddhism.**

Why there is increasing role of think tanks in Indian Foreign policy?

- **LPG reforms:** In the **context of economic liberalisation and globalisation, economic and political issues have been increasingly interlinked.**

- **Increase openness of the government:** Government's attitude of active engagement vis-à-vis selected think tanks has partly lowered the barriers to access to information for these organisations.
 - Prime Minister Modi indicated his openness to fresh thinking, arguing that "the input of intellectual think tanks" should be substantially enhanced for a better policy framework.
 - Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar announced in 2015 that the Policy Planning and Research Division of the MEA would look to employ external experts; the government subsequently advertised the possibility of three-year stints at the MEA.
- **Funding:** For instance, around 4 per cent of ORF's total funding for 2017 came from MEA grants. Also increase interest of corporate houses in foreign policy has also led to increase in funding.

Challenges faced by think tanks:

- **Lobbying:** They help to serve the interests of the dominant elites.
- **Funding:** Opaque source of funding has led think tank to be guided by sources of funding in opposition to public purpose orientation.
 - Government has been restricting external funding for think tanks and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) through The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA)
 - Recently, Home Ministry cancelled the licenses of more than 20,000 Indian NGOs, notably human rights NGOs, which meant they were no longer eligible to receive foreign funding. For example Government cancelled license of Oxfam international which give information regarding inequality.
- **No official channels of communication and funding with government:**
 - Think tanks are based on trust relations between individuals rather than on clearly demarcated institutionalised links between the MEA. The story of Indian foreign policy is more about the influence of certain individuals rather than institutions.
 - Funding is based on informal contacts as there is no official process to apply for MEA grants

Indian journalist Prashant Jha noted the paradoxical combination of centralized power under the National Democratic Alliance Government led by Narendra Modi and a greater openness of the system to "outside inputs and engagements" (Jha 2015). The greater visibility and engagement of the new Indian foreign policy think tanks illustrate the government's desire to project messages and to further India's image at both the regional and global levels. India's growing international status and ambitions have enabled new actors to be more involved in the country's external affairs. However, the rise of new Indian foreign policy think tanks also exemplifies an ideological turn within the larger sphere of foreign-policy making, in which Hindu nationalist ideology has become more prominent.

Source:

<https://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/publications/giga-focus/foreign-policy-think-tanks-in-india-new-actors-divergent-profiles>

Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement: Roadmap to India's Strategic Access in the Arctic

Syllabus: GS 2: International relations; PSIR: Paper 2B- Global power centres

Context: The annual India–Russia summit 2021.

Though several issues of mutual interest were discussed during the summit, agreement on an important **Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS) could not be reached.**



What is RELOS?

- The Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement administrative agreement that would enable the militaries of both the countries to access logistics and support facilities at each other's bases and ports.
- It would facilitate the replenishment of fuel, rations, spare parts and berthing for troops, warships and aircrafts while operating away from home ports and bases during the war and peacetime missions.
- RELOS would further ensure smooth use of the host nation's existing logistics networks which would reduce the overall costs of the mission and provide a strategic edge to each other's military operations.

Significance for India

Economic Significance

- **Investments:** India's interests in the Arctic region are increasing and it is keen to make investments particularly in **the exploration of Russian oil, gas and other rare earth minerals in the near future.**
 - In **order to secure the investments**, India need to have access to Arctic region. At present, India does not maintain any port facility or naval base in this region as a whole. An agreement such as RELOS would enable Indian Navy to have greater operational reach in the Arctic.
- **Emerging Shipping Connectivity:** The Arctic sea-ice along the Russian coast is receding drastically. The Northern Sea Route is humming with shipping activity that is significantly increasing annually.
 - India, does not have its own full-fledged base or **naval docking or refueling facility in the Arctic**, but through RELOS it would have access to all such facilities in the near future.
- **India's Act East Policy:** India has promised a **US\$ 1 billion Line of Credit for the development of Russian Far East.** Indian and Russian companies have identified energy, transport and logistics, maritime connectivity, diamond processing, forestry, pharmaceuticals and healthcare, tourism and humanitarian fields as key areas of future cooperation in the Russian Far East.
- **Energy security:** Moscow has also agreed for supplying oil and gas to India at a "preferential pricing" and ship them via the northern Arctic route.

Geo-strategic

Chinese presence: As China's strategic reach and **presence in the Arctic growing with its third heavy (nuclear**

powered) ice-breaker ship inline for entering into polar waters. It becomes extremely important for India to have such an agreement as RELOS in conclusion with its traditional strategic partner, Russia.

India still do not have technology to operate in Arctic independently, thus partnering with Russia becomes extremely important.

Mutual benefits:

India has signed logistics agreements with all its partner Quad countries. RELOS could strategically act as **counterweight leverage** to both India and Russia in the Indo-Pacific

- **Access to Indian ports:** It would also provide logistics support and easy access of required facilities to the Russian Navy via Indian naval ports and military bases located in the Indian Ocean.
- **Balancing both USA and China:** Enhanced naval cooperation between India and Russia through RELOS would not only act as a counterweight to increasing US strategic posturing in the region, but for Russia, it will also balance the strategic power equation with its evolving partner China in the region
- **Eurasian Partnership (GEP)** through which Russia aims to strengthen its geo-economic and geopolitical positioning from Lisbon to Vladivostok. Strengthening India–Russia partnership on framework such as RELOS could take **Russian vision of GEP further from Vladivostok to Indian Ocean and the Indian vision till the Russian high north.**

In the words of **Prime Minister Modi, he called “Vladivostok a true Sangam”** has also called for developing Chennai–Vladivostok Maritime Corridor (CVMC) by connecting the ports of Chennai, Visakhapatnam and Kolkata to that with Vladivostok, Vostochny and Olga on the east coast of Russia

- **Climate change:** India’s primary engagements in the Arctic are **focused on understanding scientific interconnections between Arctic sea ice melting and changes in Indian monsoon systems.**

Therefore, RELOS at the center of this would enhance strategic cooperation between India and Russia. It would act as an important existing mechanism to promote future maneuvers of both the countries in the Arctic and the Indian Ocean Region in times to come.

Source: <https://www.idsa.in/idsacomments/reciprocal-exchange-of-logistics-agreement-india-russia-bipandeeep-170122>

India rising: Soft power and the world’s largest democracy

Syllabus: PSIR Paper 2B Indian Foreign Policy, IR theory

Soft power term was coined by Joseph Nye. It captured the important and (at the time) poorly studied phenomenon in international affairs of “**getting others to want the outcomes that you want,**” predicated on the attractiveness of one’s culture, political values and foreign policy.

Dhruva Jaishankar, Director at Observer Research Foundation has analyzed India’s soft power. He argues that, India is variously described as a model of soft power, or a country that makes remarkably poor use of it.



India fares poorly in terms of elements of national attraction because

- Widespread reputation for corruption
- Endemic poverty
- Hostility to business
- Pollution in urban areas
- Child labor
- Violence against women
- Detracted expatriates, tourists, businesspeople and other visitors
- Human rights violation

There are several reasons that **may explain why India fares worse on objective metrics of soft power than it perhaps should.**

- **Comparison on per capita basis:** Any measure of soft power that compares countries on a per capita basis is bound to favor developed states over developing ones. For instance,
 - India may be home to more top 30 unicorns. Yet its digital penetration remains low, with millions still without access to electricity, let alone basic digital technologies
 - India has more UNESCO World Heritage sites than all but five other countries but still fares poorly on tourism and education on a per capita basis.
- **Poor state-driven cultural diffusion:** India rates badly on any measure of state-driven cultural diffusion rather than more organic and natural private sector and citizen-led efforts. For instance,
 - India's national airline—Air India—is in such woeful shape that the government struggles to find buyers or investors, **but four of the fastest-growing airlines in the world are Indian.**
 - Indian cultural diffusion to overseas audiences—**from yoga to Bollywood—has occurred without the involvement of the Indian government,**
 - the Indian government has made no more than modest efforts at promoting the study of Hindi abroad in large part because of its linguistic diversity at home
- **Indian contributions that are not necessarily associated with the country: Buddhism has hundreds of millions of adherents around the world but very few in its birthplace in India**
 - India has only recently made efforts at appealing to these countries as the fount of Buddhism, by facilitating pilgrimages and sponsoring religious renovations, in China and Myanmar
- **India's appeal is to others in the developing world rather than to high-value or prestige markets.**

For instance,

- India's universities continue to attract a large number of students from across the developing world, including Nepal, Afghanistan and Africa. **However it attracts very less percentage of students from developed nations.**
- **Indian food** is popular around the world but is **often seen as a cheap eat** rather than worthy of a Michelin-starred fine dining experience.
- Indian popular films may not be rewarded at the Academy Awards or at Cannes.

Despite the evident shortcomings—both in terms of actual soft power and in ways in which metrics capture India's soft power capabilities— India has a reasonably good track record of leveraging its culture, political values and foreign policy for national objectives.

- **Indian popular films may not be rewarded at the Academy Awards or at Cannes but have massive followings in China, Central Asia and the Middle East.**
- **Indian food** is popular around the world but is **often seen as a cheap eat however today** establishment of luxury Taj Hotel properties in Boston, San Francisco and London have changed the perception of Indian food.
- **Indian born CEO Head top most companies in the world. For instance, Sundar Pichai CEO of Alphabet, similarly, CEO of Microsoft, and Twitter are all Indian born.**

During the Cold War

- In the 1950s, India benefited from significant aid from both the United States and Soviet Union. Strong moral streak in India's external engagement during the Cold War, **helped in part by its self- perception as a pluralistic but postcolonial democracy.**
- **India's principled boycott of South Africa for its racist Apartheid policies won it respect from post-colonial states across Africa.**
- India created international acceptability for its intervention in East Pakistan (which resulted in the independent state of Bangladesh) by calling attention to the morality of its actions in spite of opposition from USA and United nations.
- **Decolonization of many African countries.**

After cold war

- India's soft power continued to reap benefits even after cold war was over. India was brought into Asian institutions by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which saw the appeal of its growing economy and democratic values.
- **International waiver from nuclear sanctions:** In 2000s, the U.S. worked to gain India an international waiver from nuclear sanctions, effectively recognizing it as a *de facto* nuclear weapon state, a process that was enabled by mostly positive associations of India as a democracy, growing market and responsible steward of nuclear weapons.
- India is also member of all the export control regimes except Nuclear Suppliers Group.

As India builds upon a range of ongoing political and diplomatic efforts—

- Unveiling its Incredible India tourism campaign by Buddhist circuits, Ramayana Circuit etc.
- Getting International Yoga Day recognized by the United Nations
- Investing in Buddhist diplomacy

During the Pandemic

- **Vaccine Diplomacy:** Free vaccinations to neighboring countries. For example Bhutan.
- **Line of credit and currency swap agreements** with Srilanka to help it recover from economic crisis
- **World Pharmacy:** India is largest supplier of vaccines through pharmaceutical industry.

With India's growing stature we can expect its soft power to gradually grow.

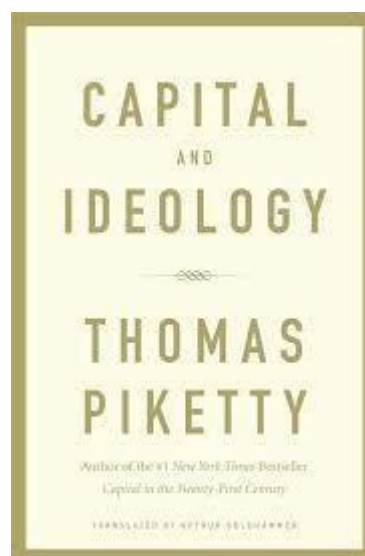
Source:

<https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/india-rising-soft-power-and-the-worlds-largest-democracy/>

NIKHIL K GOWDA PSIR NOTES

Book Review:

Capital and Ideology, by Thomas Piketty



Thomas Piketty's latest work *Capital and Ideology* is an ambitious work that explores the history of inequality with the objective of answering three questions:

- How have societies justified inequality to themselves?
- What lessons can we draw from this history?
- How do we apply these lessons in the political struggle for a more just society?

Inter-disciplinary work

- *Capital and Ideology* is a monumental work of inter-disciplinary scholarship. It straddles history, economics, political geography, sociology, electoral analysis, anthropology, and even literature.
- Piketty's thesis rests on a couple of self-evident truths: **human societies have always been unequal**, though in varying degrees; **all unequal societies, to be sustainable, need a justification of this inequality. This justification is what Piketty terms "ideology"**.
- He describes **six kinds of ideologies** as having played a dominant role in history: **proprietary (private property is sacred), social-democratic (welfare state), communist, trifunctional, slaveist, and colonialist ideologies**.
- **Most pre-modern societies were trifunctional**. They consisted of two elite classes that jostled for supremacy — the clergy and the nobility — and a third set subservient to the dual elite, the workers. **For instance French society divided into 3 estates.**

Unfettered capitalism

- **Europe changed trifunctional societies** (where the propertied elites exercised juridical power over the laboring masses) **into proprietary ones**, where the elites ceded their juridical powers to the State in exchange for guaranteed protection of their property. **State became a night-watchman where its primary duty is to protect the private property (Neo-liberal ideology)**

- Societies built on such extreme inequality were bound to collapse, and they did, with the two World Wars.
- Three decades after World War II saw the greatest reduction in inequality in recent history. And then, from the 1980s onward, inequality began to increase again
- He argues that the **steady decrease in inequality during the 1950s-80s** — a time when the idea of the **welfare state was hegemonic** — was the result of **redistributive policies such as progressive taxation**.
- **Collapse of Soviet communism** and the conservative revolution during the **Thatcher and Reagan era** inaugurated the simultaneous dismantling of both the welfare state and the ideological hegemony of social democratic politics.
- Social democratic parties themselves (in India, that would primarily be the Congress), who not only failed to challenge the revival of “neo-proletarian” ideology, but proactively implemented regressive policies derived from it.
- By neo-proletarianism, Piketty means not only the sacralization of private property, but the relentless extension of legal infrastructure aimed at instituting private property regimes in every domain of human activity. **Example: LPG reforms in India in 1991.**

Rise of identity politics

- The **disappearance of redistributive politics** is at the root of the resurgence of identity politics all over the world. With redistribution off the agenda, people’s anxieties are channeled towards issues of identity and borders. **For example, Hindutva ideology in India, Anti-immigrants movements in USA etc...**
- **Reducing inequality is vital on two grounds: social justice**, since a more equal society is also a more just society; and **social stability**, for identity cleavages can only be countered through a politics of socio-economic inclusion.

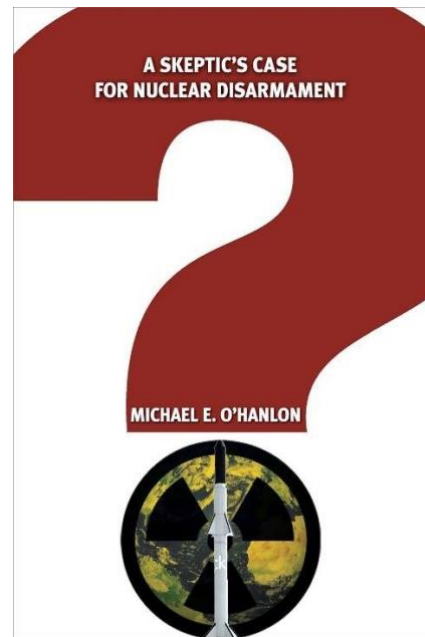
Way forward

- New redistributive politics — from capping large-shareholder voting rights and a “universal capital endowment” to forms of social federalism where fiscal governance structures at the trans-national level help curb tax evasion by national elites.
- For far too long, developmental economics has focused exclusively on poverty alleviation. Poverty is only a symptom. Its cause is multidimensional, structural inequality, a phenomenon that doesn’t seem to concern economists too much. In order to reduce inequality removing of structural inequality is as important as poverty alleviation.

Source:

<https://www.thehindu.com/books/books-reviews/capital-and-ideology-review-inequality-and-redistribution/article31922199.ece>

Michael O’Hanlon’s 2010 book “A Skeptic’s Case for Nuclear Disarmament,”



Michael O’Hanlon’s in his book **does not argue against nuclear abolition but fears that rushing to achieve it by a particular date is not only unrealistic but dangerous.** He analyses the conditions and caveats that would have to accompany any such treaty regime.

He argues, nuclear disarmament may lead to improper verification of nuclear weapons or it may also lead to development of new lethal weapons. For instance developing a new biological weapon.

Most of the advocates of nuclear disarmament consider the abolition of nuclear weapons the moral equivalent of the abolition of slavery. **They assume that once the nuclear weapons are abolished they would be gone forever. However this assumption is not true at practical level because, the former nuclear power countries have all the resources and technology to rearm themselves to produce nuclear weapons when needed.**

Moreover the human history is unpredictable, and one may need nuclear deterrence to secure national interest.

The author argues, putting up a time limit to eliminate nuclear weapons a dangerous trend. **This can be seen in slowness of negotiating the recent New START Treaty with Moscow and the likely slow ratification debates over both it and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.**

Consequences of Nuclear disarmament:

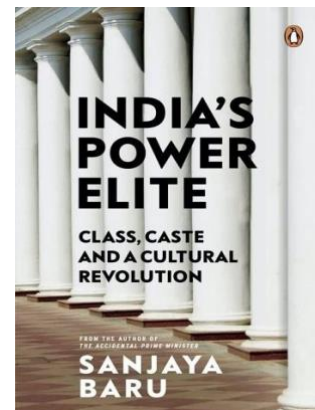
- **Deterrence comes to an end:** Today many countries are under the nuclear umbrella of USA. For example: Japan, South Korea etc. if USA undergoes nuclear disarmament, security dilemma of these countries increases and would lead to **arms race in these countries to acquire nuclear weapons.**
- **Nuclear power today do not have any interest in denuclearizing anytime soon. For instance: China refused to ratify Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty till USA ratifies it. This attitude of Nuclear power has led to proliferation of nuclear weapons by other countries. For example India.**

Therefore working on treaty with deadline is not suitable for nuclear disarmament. **Rather countries should work towards solving their major territorial and existential issues so that any new nuclear accord in the future would help to reduce nuclear arsenal to zero.**

Source: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2017/10/06/the-dangers-of-rushing-to-a-nuclear-free-world/>

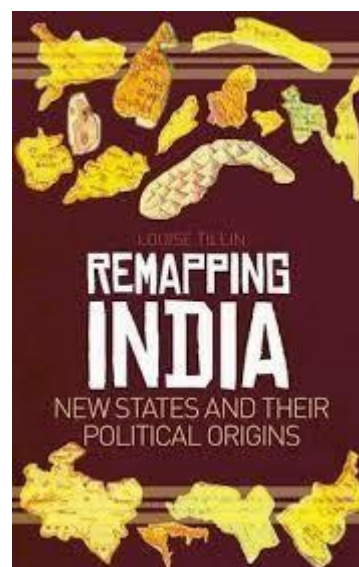
NIKHIL K GOWDA PSIR NOTES

India's Power Elite: Class, Caste and a Cultural Revolution, by Sanjaya Baru



- In *India's Power Elite*, **Sanjaya Baru** tries to capture not just the churn brought about by the 2014 general election and the decline of the Congress in the political sphere, but its impact on the social and cultural landscape, and the nuts and bolts that make up India's elite.
- Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the term power elite has acquired a new, thought-provoking, somewhat sinister inference. Modi, as Baru sees it, **has dismantled the old order of power elites in Delhi and seeks to impose an unquestioning hegemonic domination on an ideological basis.**
- According to Baru, a **“mix of Hindu nationalism and anti-elitism has become the basis of a new phase in Indian politics that many believe defines what Modi has termed as ‘New India’.**
- Baru does not take the year 2014 (as many have done in countless opinion pieces) as the watershed. The character of India's power elite has shifted over the years in consonance with the upheavals of electoral politics. For socialist Ram Manohar Lohia, India's power elite at the dawn of independence was defined by Brahminical castes, privileged schooling and familiarity with the English language.
- Over the years, many other factors have come into play. **The era of coalition politics and the introduction of Other Backward Classes (OBC) reservations, brought into prominence elite, regional parties and politically influential castes, which were not at the top of the traditional caste pyramid.**
- **Baru refuses to see India's elites as a static category** — there is constant churning and upward and downward mobility. **Caste, class, education and access to economic resources, patronage by the state and emergence of electorally significant caste groups have to be seen in totality.** He reveals the complexity of this process while also trying to find an Indian template to explain the phenomenon.
- Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/books/books-reviews/indias-power-elite-class-caste-and-a-cultural-revolution-review-the-dismantling-of-the-khan-market-gang-and-the-rise-of-a-new-elite/article34278963.ece>

Remapping India: New States and their Political Origins by Louise Tillin



Louise Tillin sets out to explain the politics that lay behind this episode of 'post-linguistic' state reorganization. Support for Telangana is thus representative of a broader trend over the last few decades within India, in which the former esteem for the linguistic principle seems to have been gradually marginalized.

Remapping India offers an original premise by suggesting that the calls for these states emerged out of 'longer term changes in local structures of power and the relations between social groups'.

Louise Tillin identifies three shifting socio-political dynamics over the preceding three decades, which account for the moment of state creation in 2000.

- **New social movements:** helped precipitate the decline in the Indian National Congress Party's 'system' of 'one-party dominance' from the early 1970s onwards. Example: Black Panther movement for development of Dalits
- The emergence of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as a national party capable of challenging the Congress's erstwhile political hegemony.
- **Vocal for local:** successfully weaves these narratives together to provide a rich understanding of the demands for statehood in Jharkhand and Uttarakhand.

Interactions between social movement actors, political parties and the state helped to produce a focus on statehood that functioned as a lowest common denominator among actors with divergent interests'.

Shifting socio-political dynamic

- Demands for statehood increased **with growing low caste assertion** in India's 'Hindi-speaking' heartland.

- **Affirmative action:** The implementation of **affirmative action for 'Other Backward Classes'** in the bureaucracy and educational institutions brought new parties ascribing to a social justice agenda to the forefront of politics in the early 1990s.
- **Louise Tillin** describe this as '**changed state-level political arenas in north India**'
- This created difficulties for those politicians looking to construct 'stable, state-wide political coalitions based on lower caste political identities' amongst class differentiated and spatially disaggregated low caste groups.
- Thus the change in socio-political dynamic led to demand for statehood in this region.

Language:

At the **time of independence and state reorganization during 1950's there was absence of affective ties of language that had influence in Southern India**. For instance, languages as Chhattisgarhi in Chhattisgarh, Magahi and Maithili in Jharkhand, and Garhwali and Kumaoni in Uttarakhand have been frequently treated by the state as simply dialects of Hindi. Thus could not form regional political community in northern India.

Today these assertions have taken front seat, thus demand for statehood.

Development:

Uneven development is also one of the main region for statehood demand. For instance, **Telangana state was demanded due to uneven development of Rayala seema districts compared to coastal Andhra Pradesh**. Similarly North Karnataka is being demanding separate statehood.

When Crime Pays: Money and Muscle in Indian Politics by Milan Vaishnav



Brief in Introduction

- To understand why voters readily forgive politicians and look away from the crimes they perpetrate, Milan Vaishnav's new book *When Crime Pays* is an enlightening read.
- It **studies the nexus of politics, money and muscle** using India as his case study. He sets himself up for a mammoth task of finding out how widespread crime and impropriety can co-exist alongside free and fair democratic elections.
- Using a database of candidates' self-disclosures, which the Election Commission maintains since 2003, Vaishnav crunches data from nearly 60,000 candidates spread across 35 state elections and two national elections. He supplements his desk research with fieldwork in India spanning over seven years where he conducts hundreds of interviews with various stakeholders in the system

Law and order collapse

- To understand the motivation of criminal candidates in standing for elections and of voters in electing them, **he uses the framework of an electoral marketplace**.
- Writing about the supply side of the criminal politicians' market, the author contends that it was the weakening of the Congress party and a growing assertiveness in the previously marginalised groups that initially led to strong linkages between criminals and politicians.
- The **primary drivers** that maintain the supply are the **collapse of the election finance regime and a continuing breakdown of the law and order** situation in India.

Money matters

- The author adds to the existing narratives by unravelling the black box of why criminals themselves turn into politicians. To do this, he **uses the concept of 'vertical integration'**, whereby criminals substitute market exchange with politicians by internal organisation (becoming politicians themselves).

- Vaishnav explains, **Criminals join politics for self-preservation, protection, and the potential financial benefits they stand to gain by holding office.**
- The supply of criminal politicians cannot, however, be explained without understanding the demand side of the equation.
 - The demand for criminal politicians by political parties can be understood on the basis of the soaring costs of election campaigns, which parties are unable to afford.
 - Therefore, **parties** increasingly look for candidates who not only self-finance their campaigns, but also add to the party coffers and line the pockets of party elites.
 - On the other hand, voters consciously elect such candidates for their ability to “get things done”. In the face of a weak rule of law and salient social divisions, the criminality of candidates gains credibility among voters, who rely on criminal politicians to protect their interests and to act like the crutch that helps them “navigate a system that gives them so little access in the first place”.
- Clearly, **amalgamation of criminality and politics has serious implications** for society. For sustainable solutions, it is imperative that both the demand and supply of criminal politicians be thwarted.
 - As Vaishnav points out, of utmost importance is clearing the morass around **election campaign finances and improving transparency and inclusion** in political parties.
 - Further, the state capacity in delivering public services should be improved and institutions dealing with rule of law must be strengthened. Of course, none of these solutions, as the author points out, is a silver bullet by itself.

Crime-politics marriage

- The insights from Vaishnav’s work, in terms of what sustains the crime-politics marriage and what should be done to facilitate a divorce, are fairly intuitive.
- The fascinating fact is the extraordinary deftness with which Vaishnav interweaves different **disciplines of political science, sociology, economics and history to create a nuanced narrative.** He takes the readers behind the scenes and regales them with an abundance of anecdotes about the foul and vicious men (while conspicuously leaving out the women) who win in Indian politics.

Quotes for your notes:

Politics isn’t about big money or power games; It’s about the improvement of people’s lives

-Paul Wellstone

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/books/books-reviews/an-unholy-nexus/article17367383.ece>

“Beta Know the Data”

- ✚ “In 2004, 24% of the Members of Parliament had criminal cases pending against them; in 2009, that went up to 30%; in 2014 to 34%; and in 2019 as many as 43% of MPs had criminal cases pending against them.” **by ADR report**

- ✚ **According to latest world inequality report 2022** “ Top 10% holds 57% of the total national income while the bottom 50% share is just 13% in 2021”

- ✚ **According to ADR report** “Almost 90 per cent of lawmakers in the newly elected Indian Parliament are millionaires”

- ✚ **The Indo Pacific region** is home to around 65% of the global population and 20 of the world’s 33 megacities. The region accounts for 62% of global GDP and 46% of the world’s merchandise trade.

- ✚ **According to 2021 data**, of the total 6,709 IAS officers in the country, 445 were posted with the Union —only 6.6%. In 2014, of the 4,605 officers, 651 were posted with the Union (14 %).
 - In 2021, only 10% mid-level IAS officers (deputy secretary/director, 9-14 years experience) were posted with the Centre in 2021, a sharp fall from 19% in 2014, even though the total pool of such officers at this rank expanded from 621 in 2014 to 1130 in 2021, an increase of around 80%

- ✚ **According to “ International Migration Report ”** released by UN Department of Economic and Social affairs (UNDESA), Indian diaspora is largest in the world with 18mn
 - They constitute 6.4% of total migration population