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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION

- The pandemic has changed the world and its order, a world which was earlier grappled with issues like climate change, poverty, migration, terrorism, nuclear weapons has kept everything else on back burner. The health emergency and its ramifications are at the centre stage.
- This unprecedented situation worldwide has redefined the international relations and the role India would play in the years to come.
- With 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam' The world Is one family as the basic tenet of oar foreign policy, India is committed to work towards paving a road ahead for a world in the post-pandemic era.
- Simultaneously, it has to safeguard interests of its own by achieving self-reliance and reaffirming its presence in international trade.
- Under its 'Neighbourhood- first Policy'. India has strategic tics with its neighbours and has been involved in development diplomacy with many of them since lime. Also, it has played integral role in strengthening Ute multilateral relations among the nations in the subcontinent.
- With the major powers, India has a sustained and mutually beneficial relation which furthers its global interests. It has also strengthened its engagement with various other nations reflecting its rising global footprint.

INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY IN THE TIMES OF THE PANDEMIC

- The current international environment is challenging. We are living through the greatest shock to the international system since the Second World War.
- What began as health emergency has expanded into an economic disruption, a geo-political shock and a social challenge of unprecedented magnitude. How we deal with these immense difficulties-and whether we are able to transform some of them into opportunities-will influence our future trajectory as a nation.
- We are a country with global interests; we have one of the largest and most able Diasporas.
- We are a powerhouse in the services sectors. We look at the World as a borderless economy with an interlinked marketplace.
- India has begun sending dispatches of rescue medicines as gifts to neighbouring countries to help them fight the corona virus pandemic.
- The government was sending drugs to Bhutan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Nepal, Myanmar, Seychelles, Mauritius, and some African countries.
- The government has also cleared the export of Covid-19 drugs to countries such as the US, Spain, Brazil, Bahrain, Germany, and the UK in line with the commercial contracts signed with Indian pharmaceutical companies.
- India's diplomacy has played a major role in managing the crisis, be it the evacuation of distressed people or following the pandemic minute by minute, or settling immediate and complicated issues including facilitating the evacuation of stranded foreign nationals in India.
- Countries like India which were already making a concerted push towards Digitisation through its programs like Digital India can stand to advantage from the changed circumstances.
- There is at present a leadership crisis at the global level as no country is looking at the pandemic as a common fight of mankind against the virus.
- When the world is questioning the role played by China – in exporting much needed protective gear and testing kits that some governments have reportedly found faulty, India has offered not just supportive medical staff but also an entire buffet of generic medicines, medical training, and medical tourism.
- The Prime Minister has shown commendable initiative in convening leaders of the SAARC nations for a regional collaborative effort on COVID-19.
- The COVID-19 pandemic presents India with an opportunity to revive multilateralism, become a strong and credible champion of internationalism, and assume a leadership role.
- The Indian generosity in the times of this pandemic has not gone unnoticed and has earned India well-deserved goodwill. India also enjoys a world image of being a robust democracy and non-predatory as opposed to China.

GEOPOLITICAL AND GEO-ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF COVID-19

- The existing international institutions such as the United Nations, the United Nations Security Council and the World Health Organization (WHO) are seen to have failed to measure up to the grave challenge posed by the pandemic.

- The UN Security Council is under attack for being slow in dealing with a situation that appears, at least on the surface, far graver than any military threat in recent decades.
- The WHO has been tarred with the charge of bias and of grossly underestimating the nature of the epidemic.
- Notably, the US has shown no inclination to play a leadership role to harness international cooperation. China has blocked discussions in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on the issue.
- Even if China emerges relatively better in economic terms over the long-term, it will have to contend with the consequences of the worldwide resentment it has generated, as it is seen as the main cause of the predicament.
- A similar narrative is gaining strength in East Asia, ASEAN countries, India, Africa and the EU. There is a growing realisation and acknowledgement of the predatory nature of China.
- There were significant changes in the global power equations even before the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, such as the shift in the centre of gravity of economic power to the trans-Pacific from the Trans-Atlantic, the emergence of a more loosely structured multi-polarity, the upsurge of nationalist and parochial sentiments in countries across the world stalling the trend towards globalisation.
- There is a notable acceleration in the adoption of digital technologies; in fact, we are witnessing “galloping globalisation” in the digital space, including the extensive spread of work-from-home (WFH), the rapid adoption of tele-education and tele-medicine and the use of tele-conferencing and online meetings in place of physical gatherings.
- It is believed that the pandemic has provided China with an opportunity to advance its interests vis-a-vis other powers particularly the US. This may be seen in the recent coercive actions in the South China Sea, the passage of a highly restrictive National Security Law in Hong Kong, virtually abandoning the One Country Two System policy granting high degree of autonomy to the key international financial centre in Asia.
- China’s GDP is destined to overtake the US and this makes it a great economic power, however, in per capita terms it still lags behind. Its per capita GDP is only a quarter of the US.
- There could be a significant flow of capital, technology and advanced knowledge to India if an efficient and congenial economic and regulatory environment could be put in place. The size of the Indian market is an asset as is its political stability and democratic traditions. Economic reforms may be politically difficult but the pandemic is a crisis which could provide an opportunity to drive them.

EVOLUTION OF INDIA’S TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

- The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) of 1948 was the first multilateral agreement under UN aimed at boosting economic recovery by reducing barriers to trade.
- Even though India was one of the 28 founding members of GATT, it was not a serious stakeholder in multilateral trade negotiations.
- The newly-born independent countries known as ‘Third World Countries’ had their priorities firmly rooted in development issues such as providing basic necessities to its people—food, clothing and shelter as also building institutions for preserving the hard-earned freedom.
- India, along with 76 countries, was a founder member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995 which subsumed the Uruguay Round GATT negotiations from 1986-1994.
- India believes that a fair, equitable, justiciable and predictable rules-based multilateral trading system embodied in WTO is in the best interest of developing and Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

- The Dispute Settlement Body, a lynch-pin of WTO, makes trade rules enforceable and effective.
- India sought correction in the highly imbalanced trade negotiations under the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA), reasoning that since developing countries were unfamiliar of the long-term implications of the negotiated formula on agriculture under AoA during the Uruguay Round of negotiations, correction was necessary.
- Presently, talk on reform of the WTO has gathered momentum in the wake of unilateral measures and counter-measures imposed by mostly USA and China.
- Developed countries are seeking to graduate few emerging countries like India, China, Brazil, South Africa etc. from the status of 'developing countries' by withdrawing Special and Differential Treatment.
- The principles of Special and Differential Treatment enshrined in GATT and adopted into the WTO system, was based on the premise that developing countries and LDCs, faced with developmental challenges, require certain buffer to cope with external competition.
- India strongly opposed this distorted view arguing that development parameters of developing countries are not even remotely close to those of developed countries and putting them in the same basket as developed countries is unfair.
- Another challenge in WTO for developing countries is effort by plurilateral groups to push for new issues on the WTO Agenda for rulemaking such as e-commerce, investment facilitation, MSME and gender.
- Understanding how tariffs and non-tariffs impact trade is crucial for trade negotiations. The rationale for high tariffs is to protect domestic industry from external competition and enhance revenue collection for the State.
- WTO member countries had bound their tariff rates for each line of product; developed countries bound 99% of their tariff lines to below 5% rates and developing countries bound their rates to 98% but with varying peak rates, within which they can maintain flexible applied rates.
- India's share in the world merchandise exports at the time of our independence in 1947 was 2.2%; it dropped to 0.5% in 1983 and marginally rose to 0.7% in 2000. Currently, India's share in global exports is 1.7%.
- Experts attribute India's low share to its decades of insular economic policies but with 1991 economic reforms, leading to integration into the world economy, India's share has picked up.
- In contrast, countries such as Japan, Korea, China and even ASEAN enjoy much greater share in global trade as a consequence of their open economic policies with significant thrust on exports.
- Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) create conducive environment for GVCs to operate efficiently. Partner countries take advantage of liberalised investment climate under FTAs to set up production units as part of Supply Chain networks (GVC) to feed into finished products.
- India's trade negotiating approach would need to take a broader long-term view of things to come in future. Increasing volume of trade is more important than trade deficit because trade need not be a zero-sum game.
- Technology will impact trade in big way in near future and staying in niche technologies such as machine learning, 3D printing, robotic engineering, internet-based production; e-commerce, etc. will all impact global trade in a big way.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

- The integration of domestic economy through the twin channels of trade and capital flows has seen acceleration over the last two decades as India's GDP reached Rs 203.39 trillion (US\$ 2.88 trillion) in 2019–20*.

- Simultaneously, the per capita income also nearly trebled during these years. India's trade and external sector had a significant impact on the GDP growth as well as expansion in per capita income.
- Total export from India (Merchandise and Services) stood at US\$ 528.45 billion in 2019–20, while total import was estimated at US\$ 598.61 billion according to data from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- Merchandise export stood at US\$ 314.31 billion in 2019–20, while merchandise import touched US\$ 467.19 billion in the same period. The estimated value of services export and import for 2019–20 stood at US\$ 214.14 billion and US\$ 131.41 billion, respectively.
- In 2020–21, total export from India (merchandise and services) stood at US\$ 141.82 billion, while total import was estimated at US\$ 127.76 billion according to data from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. India registered a trade surplus of US\$ 14.06 billion from April 2020 to July 2020.
- Government of India is keen to grow export and provide more jobs for young, talented, and well-educated people as well as for semi-skilled and unskilled workforce in India.
- India is presently known as one of the most important players in the global economic landscape. Its trade policies, Government reforms and inherent economic strengths has attributed to its standing as one of the most sought-after destination for foreign investments in the world.
- Also, technological, and infrastructural development being carried out across the country augurs well for the trade and economic sector in the years to come.
- The Government of India has been working on striking important deals with the Governments of Japan, Australia, and China to increase contribution towards the economic development of the country and growth in the global market.
- India has a potential to increase its goods and services export to Australia to US\$ 15 billion by 2025 and US\$ 35 billion by 2035.

UN @ 75

- The UN is marking its 75th anniversary at a time of great disruption for the world, compounded by an unprecedented global health crisis with severe economic and social impacts.
- The United Nations is an international organization founded in 1945. It is currently made up of 193 Member States. The mission and work of the United Nations are guided by the purposes and principles contained in its founding Charter.
- Each of the 193 Member States of the United Nations is a member of the General Assembly. States are admitted to membership in the UN by a decision of the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council.
- The main organs of the UN are the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the UN Secretariat. All were established in 1945 when the UN was founded.
- The Secretary-General of the United Nations is a symbol of the Organization's ideals and a spokesman for the interests of the world's peoples, in particular the poor and vulnerable.
- The Secretariat, one of the main organs of the UN, is organised along departmental lines, with each department or office having a distinct area of action and responsibility.
- Offices and departments coordinate with each other to ensure cohesion as they carry out the day to day work of the Organization in offices and duty stations around the world. At the head of the United Nations Secretariat is the Secretary-General.

INDIAN DIASPORA: MAJOR ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

- People leave their homeland, some to follow their dreams, some run from war and hunger and some lured by the sense of adventure.
- On any case, leaving homeland and going abroad is a huge step and a life-changing experience. Migrants just don't leave behind their possessions but also leave behind their friends, family, social circle and personal identity.
- It is often conveyed that going abroad will improve one's lifestyle and their significant others. Overseas life is mostly considered easy to settle and prosper without any hardships in India.
- All luxury is invariably linked to those who have gone abroad. But this is far different from reality.
- However, there is no doubt that countries like Canada and the US are considered as the land of opportunities with a lot of promise.
- However, reality hits hard when a newcomer from India places a foot on foreign land. Language, education and common social behaviour that we took for granted are all up for recalibration.
- An online database of emigrants and comprehensive, Missions, Recruiting Agents, Foreign Employers, Insurance Agencies to make the whole emigration process faster and transparent, that allows online authentication/verification of credentials of all the stakeholders.
- Indian Government has signed MoU with six Gulf countries, Jordan and Malaysia. The major intent is to enhance bilateral cooperation and employment opportunities in the protection and welfare of workers.
- Government has also started 'Madad' portal for online lodging of the grievances of the emigrants, which are attended to on priority basis.
- The government recently amended the rules of the PIO Card Scheme so that new recipients of PIO cards will receive cards that will be valid for the duration of their life.
- New Embassies in Latin America and African country to help the Diaspora.
- Bilateral engagement with US, UK to address the concern of skilled labour.
- Programmes like "Bharat Ko Janiye" to help the Indians living abroad learn about India and also an opportunity to visit India.
- The Indian Diaspora is very varied and diverse and this rich diversity can help mutually both the countries, and hence a closer tie within is needed.
- The "Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas" is an initiative started by the Government in 2003 to mark the contribution of the Indian community overseas in the development of India.

ISSUES FACED BY INDIAN DIASPORA

◦ West Asia

- Low oil prices owing to Shale gas boom and slower global growth is resulting in job cuts for Indians.
- One of the most direct threats to the security of Indians is the rising conflicts and instability due to the Shia-Sunni conflicts and the radical Islamism.
- Fierce competition from skilled labour from the Philippines and cheap labour from Nepal.
- Regressive and medieval policies like employer seizing the travel documents upon arrival known as "Kafala" labour system are exploitative.

o **US, Canada and UK**

- Discriminative practices owing to a racist, colonial mindset persists.
- Stricter H-1B visa norms in the US Congress.
- President-elect Donald Trump's call to channel more jobs to Americans.
- Revision of visa norms in UK post-Brexit might hit the Indian diaspora hard, especially the IT professionals.
- The disparity in jobs and racial abuse due to terrorist branding.
- Cultural integration due to various eating preferences, consumerism and nuclear society.

CONCLUSION

This is the largest such logistical exercise undertaken in the recent past and highlights the ever-present requirement of preparing for and responding to contingencies. The pandemic is leaving a lasting imprint on all domains, including on the way we engage with the world. In this fast-evolving environment, Indian diplomacy has shown the necessary agility and adaptability to effectively respond to the emerging challenges, while also cementing India's credentials as a responsible and constructive member of the global community.

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CSE RESULTS

TOP 100
ALL INDIA RANKING
CSE 2019

3	6	10	11	16	17	21	22	28			
30	33	38	39	42	44	46	53	54	59	66	69
70	72	77	78	80	82	84	86	87	94	97	98

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TOP 100
ALL INDIA RANKING
CSE 2018

2	3	5	7	27	36	37	40	44	49		
51	52	56	58	62	74	81	89	92	94	98	100

TOP 100
ALL INDIA RANKING
CSE 2017

3	10	19	31	33	35	40	41	44	45	48		
97	100	54	57	63	64	68	71	75	77	80	83	93

TOP 100
ALL INDIA RANKING
CSE 2016

5	6	9	15	26	29	43	48	53	59	67
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TOP 100
ALL INDIA RANKING
CSE 2015

9	13	26	34	39	75	77	78	89	91
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