
THE RISE OF INDIA IN THE GLOBAL ORDER

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INDIA AS AN ASCENDANT GLOBAL POWER

- **Economic Rise:** India boasts one of the world's fastest-growing economies, with a large and young workforce fuelling its potential. This economic strength translates to greater global influence.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** India's active participation in minilateral forums like the Quad, BRICS, SCO, I2U2 showcases its ability to build strategic alliances with major powers, shaping the regional security landscape.
- **Multilateral Leadership:** India's leadership roles in international organisations like the UN Security Council, G20 allows New Delhi to advocate for its (and the Global South's) interests and shape global agendas.
- **Technological Advancements:** India's booming IT sector and progress in DPI position it as a leader in the tech space. This technological prowess contributes to its overall economic and strategic might.
- **Neighbourhood Focus:** The "Neighbourhood First" policy demonstrates India's proactive approach to regional stability and development. This fosters a sphere of influence and strengthens its position in Asia.
- **Soft Power Projection:** India's rich cultural heritage, growing educational institutions, and increasing global diaspora contribute to its soft power. This fosters cultural exchange and international goodwill.

IS THE INDIAN ECONOMY HEADED TOWARDS ACHIEVING ITS TRUE POTENTIAL?

- **Fast-growing economy:** India is one of the world's fastest-growing major economies; it grew at 8 percent in the second last quarter of FY23. India has also seen a 10% YoY growth on exports in the years after COVID-19.
- **Demographic dividend:** A large working-age population - 60% of India's population is under 35 years of age.
- **Government initiatives:** Pro-Business policies, tax reforms and policies like "Make in India" aim to boost manufacturing, job creation and attract FDI.
- **Bullish stock and share markets:** The bullish Indian stock market driven by banks and other PSU stocks has attracted FDI.
- **Technological advancements:** India has a booming IT sector and is making strides in digitalisation, India's DPII and the INDIA STACK is a role model for financial digital inclusion.
- **Poverty alleviation:** 24.82 crore people escaped multidimensional poverty in last nine years. India has registered a significant decline in multidimensional poverty in India from 29.17% in 2013-14 to 11.28% in 2022-23 i.e. a reduction of 17.89 percentage points.

CHANGING CONTOURS IN INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY BETWEEN 2014 AND 2024

- **Assertiveness in Foreign Policy**, particularly towards neighbouring countries like Pakistan and China. It is characterised by a tougher approach in dealing with border disputes, cross-border terrorism, and regional security concerns.
- **Focus on strengthening regional alliances**, particularly with South Asian, Southeast Asian and the Indian Ocean region countries through the "Neighbourhood First", the "Act East", the "Indian Ocean Rim Association". India aims on connecting the South Asian and South-east Asian regions with India at the centre.
- **Increased focus on economic partnerships** as a key component of India's foreign policy. This includes initiatives to attract foreign investment, enhance trade relations, and promote economic cooperation with likeminded partners, such as the QUAD partners, EU, African Union etc.

CHANGING CONTOURS IN INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY BETWEEN 2014 AND 2024

- In an increasingly multipolar world, New Delhi has opted for **multi-alignment from the cold-war era policy of non-alignment**. This policy espouses that India will engage with various likeminded partners to pursue a multifaceted partnerships for its own strategic autonomy.
- There has been an **active enhanced India's engagement** in global and multilateral forums. This includes efforts to secure a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, strengthen ties with international bodies like the G20 and BRICS, and play a more prominent role in shaping global agendas on issues such as climate change, terrorism, and trade.
- There has been an attempt to **actively leverage India's civilisational linkages, past and culture** to enhance its soft power and strengthen diplomatic ties with other countries.
- **Key contributor to global issues** like health, climate change, and disaster management. E.g., Vaccine Maitri, Turkey and Nepal Earthquake relief packages, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, Security in the Indo-Pacific (Eg. Counter piracy and sending naval ships to protect merchant ships in the Red Sea).

PARTICIPATION IN MINILATERALS AND VOICE OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH IN MULTILATERAL FORUMS

- India has actively participated in minilateral groupings like the Quad (India, USA, Japan, Australia), I2U2, BIMSTEC, IORA and BRICS+ to address regional security challenges and build economic partnerships.
- India has also leveraged its increasing international relevance to opine the Global South's concerns in critical forums such as the UNSC, G20, WTO and the 77th session of the UNGA. It was during India's G20 Presidency that the African Union was admitted to the G20 grouping.
- India has voiced the growing irrelevance of the Bretton Woods system and the UN as a whole in an increasingly multipolar world and has called for reformed multilateralism.
- In 2 Voice of the Global South Summits in 2023, India's endeavour to deliberate on the concerns, interests and priorities that affect the developing countries and also to exchange ideas and solutions, and most importantly, to unite in voice and purpose in addressing the concerns and priorities, has been exceptional.
- India has also leveraged these minilateral and multilateral groupings to enhance global connectivity and has signed MoUs with likeminded partners to build greater infrastructure and digital connectivity - The IMEC, INSTC and India's neighbourhood connectivity projects stand as testimony.

NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST AND REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

➤ Neighbourhood First Policy:

1. Focuses on strengthening relations with immediate neighbours (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka).
2. Aims for mutually beneficial partnerships based on "Samman" (respect), "Samvad" (dialogue), "Shanti" (peace), "Samriddhi" (prosperity) and "Sanskriti" (culture).
3. Prioritises infrastructure development, trade expansion, and people-to-people ties.

➤ Regional Partnerships:

4. India complements Neighbourhood First with initiatives like "Act East" (Southeast Asia), "Connect Central Asia," and "SAGAR" (Security and Growth for All in the Region) along with the cooperation in IORA.
5. Increases engagement with broader regions for economic cooperation and security interests.
6. Participation with regional partners such as neighbourhood countries and ASEAN for furthering transport and digital connectivity.

NEW FACETS IN THE IFP MATRIX

➤ Centrality of Indo-Pacific

1. 80 percent of global trade passes through the Indo-Pacific
2. India's emphasis on free, open and secure Indo-Pacific
3. India's engagement with QUAD, EU etc. to counter Chinese dominance in South China Sea and IOR

➤ Marginalisation of Pakistan

1. India's tough stance and global condemnation of Pakistan's state-supported cross border terrorism
2. Domestic economic and political turmoil in Pakistan
3. Global alienation of Pakistan; China is the only major partner - India's regional adversary
4. India's shifting focus on other regional partners

➤ Emerging significance of the China Factor

1. Significant economic partner; strategic adversary
2. Flexing economic and political clout in India-dominated regional security and economic architecture
3. New Delhi has broadened engagement with like-minded partners to counter China

INCREASING GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

➤ India's Ambitions as a great power

1. Active engagement under the UN - climate change, SDGs, peacekeeping, terrorism, reformed multilateralism.
2. Humanitarian responses - Vaccine Maitri, HADR Exercises (Turkey and Nepal Earthquake), Net Security Provider in the Indo-Pacific (Eg. Counter piracy and sending naval ships to protect merchant ships in the Red Sea), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.
3. India has taken a forward role in aiding economies such as Sri Lanka, which were in economic and political turmoil and also addressed debt distress in its G20 Presidency.

➤ India's capacity for greater global responsibilities

1. India's foray into naval exercises with well over 30 countries (bilaterally and multilaterally) is on display in the Red Sea where the Indian Navy protects commercial ships traversing the conflicted region.
2. India extended LoCs to over 65 countries amounting to US\$ 30 billion, between 2014 and 2024.
3. India has also executed 150 HISEPS in 7 neighbouring countries to deliver social impact in communities.

➤ Imperative for a multipolar Asia

1. Offering solutions for the world's emerging challenges - war, famine, climate change
2. Sees itself as a pillar in the emerging multipolar order
3. As Russia declines and China is ascendant, India sees its rise as imperative to prevent a China dominated Asia.
4. Leverages soft-power and discussions to challenge North-Atlantic and euro-centric narratives propagated by the Global North

THANK YOU!