UPSC with Saurabh Kaushik

www.saurabhkaushik.in | 9953844874

GS-II: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Previous Year Questions

UPSC Mains 2013 – 2024

Compiled & Curated by:

Saurabh Kaushik

UPSC with Saurabh Kaushik

International Relations

1. India and its Neighborhood – Relations

Sub-Theme	UPSC PYQs (GS-II International Relations)	Year	Marks
India's Neighbourhood Policy & Diplomatic Doctrines	What is meant by Gujral doctrine? Does it have any relevance today? Discuss.	2013	**10**
	Project `Mausam' is considered a unique foreign policy initiative of the Indian Government to improve relationship with its neighbors. Does the project have a strategic dimension? Discuss.	2015	**12.5**
India–Sri Lanka & Maldives: Island Neighbour Dynamics	Discuss the political developments in Maldives in the last two years. Should they be of any cause of concern to India?	2013	**10**
	In respect of India-Sri Lanka relations, discuss how domestic factors influence foreign policy.	2013	**10**
	India is an age-old friend of Sri Lanka.' Discuss India's role in the recent crisis in Sri Lanka the light of the preceding statement.	2022	**10**
India–Pakistan Relations, Bangladesh & Soft Power Diplomacy	Terrorist activities and mutual distrust have clouded India-Pakistan relations. To what extent the use of soft power like sports and cultural exchanges could help generate goodwill between the two countries? Discuss with suitable examples.	2015	**12.5**
	The protests in Shahbag Square in Dhaka in Bangladesh reveal a fundamental split in society between the nationalists and Islamic forces. What is its significance for India?	2013	**10**

UPSC with Saurabh Kaushik

International Relations

2. Bilateral, Regional and Global Groupings and Agreements Involving India and/or Affecting India's Interests

Sub-Theme	UPSC PYQs (GS-II International Relations)	Year	Marks
India's Bilateral Relations: USA, Japan, Israel, China & Maldives	'The time has come for India and Japan to build a strong contemporary relationship, one involving global and strategic partnership that will have a great significance for Asia and the world as a whole.' Comment.	2019	10
	"What introduces friction into the ties between India and the United States is that Washington is still unable to find for India a position in its global strategy, which would satisfy India's National self-esteem and ambitions" Explain with suitable examples.	2019	15
	Economic ties between India and Japan, while growing in recent years, are still far below their potential. Elucidate the policy constraints which are inhibiting this growth.	2013	10
	India's relations with Israel have, of late, acquired a depth and diversity, which cannot be rolled back." Discuss.	2018	10
	What is the significance of Indo-US defence deals over Indo-Russian defence deals? Discuss with reference to stability in the Indo-Pacific region.	2020	15
	With respect to the South China sea, maritime territorial disputes and rising tension affirm the need for safeguarding maritime security to ensure freedom of navigation and over flight throughout the region. In this context, discuss the bilateral issues between India and China.	2014	12.5
	Discuss the geopolitical and geostrategic importance of Maldives for India with a focus on global trade and energy flows. Further also discuss how this relationship affects India's maritime security and regional stability amidst international competition?	2024	10
SAARC, SCO, BIMSTEC & Central Asian Engagement	Increasing cross-border terrorist attacks in India and growing interference in the internal affairs of several member-states by Pakistan are not conducive for the future of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation). Explain with suitable examples.	2016	12.5
	Evaluate the economic and strategic dimensions of India's Look East Policy in the context of the post-Cold War international scenario.	2016	12.5
	Critically examine the aims and objectives of SCO. What importance does it hold for India?	2021	15
	Do you think that BIMSTEC is a parallel organisation like the SAARC? What are the similarities and dissimilarities between the two? How are Indian foreign policy objectives realized by forming this new organisation?	2022	10
	'Virus of Conflict is affecting the functioning of the SCO'. In the light of the above statement point out the role of India in mitigating problems.	2023	10

	Critically analyse India's evolving diplomatic, economic and strategic relations with the Central Asian Republics (CARs) highlighting their increasing significance in regional and global geopolitics.	2024	**10**
Quad, AUKUS, I2U2, Africa & India's Trans-regional Partnerships	Increasing interest of India in Africa has its pros and cons. Critically examine.	2015	**12.5**
	"If the last few decades were of Asia's growth story, the next few are expected to be of Africa's." In the light of this statement, examine India's influence in Africa in recent years.	2021	**10**
	The question of India's Energy Security constitutes the most important part of India's economic progress. Analyze India's energy policy cooperation with West Asian Countries.	2017	**15**
	'Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad)' is transforming itself into a trade bloc from a military alliance, in present times - Discuss.	2020	**15**
	The newly tri-nation partnership AUKUS is aimed at countering China's ambitions in the Indo-Pacific region. Is it going to supersede the existing partnerships in the region? Discuss the strength and impact of AUKUS in the present scenario.	2021	**15**
	How will I2U2 (India, Israel, UAE and USA) grouping transform India's position in global politics?	2022	**15**

UPSC with Saurabh Kaushik

International Relations

3. Effect of Policies and Politics of Developed and Developing Countries on India's Interests; Indian Diaspora

Sub-Theme	UPSC PYQs (GS-II International Relations)	Year	Marks
Major Power Geopolitics, China's Rise & India's Strategic Interests	"The USA is facing an existential threat in the form of a China, that is much more challenging than the erstwhile Soviet Union." Explain.	2021	10
	The proposed withdrawal of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) from Afghanistan in 2014 is fraught with major security implications for the countries of the region. Examine in light of the fact that India is faced with a plethora of challenges and needs to safeguard its own strategic interests.	2013	10
	What do you understand by 'The String of Pearls'? How does it impact India? Briefly outline the steps taken by India to counter this.	2013	10
	'China is using its economic relations and positive trade surplus as tools to develop potential military power status in Asia', In the light of this statement, discuss its impact on India as her neighbor.	2017	10
	A number of outside powers have entrenched themselves in Central Asia, which is a zone of interest to India. Discuss the implications, in this context, of India's joining the Ashgabat Agreement, 2018.	2018	10
	In what ways would the ongoing US-Iran Nuclear Pact Controversy affect the national interest of India? How should India respond to this situation?	2018	15
	"The long-sustained image of India as a leader of the oppressed and marginalised Nations has disappeared on account of its new found role in the emerging global order". Elaborate.	2019	15
	'The expansion and strengthening of NATO and a stronger US-Europe strategic partnership works well in India.' What is your opinion about this statement? Give reasons and examples to support your answer.	2023	15
	The West is fostering India as an alternative to reduce dependence on China's supply chain and as a strategic ally to counter China's political and economic dominance.' Explain this statement with examples.	2024	10
Indian Diaspora: Economic & Political Significance	'Indian diaspora has a decisive role to play in the politics and economy of America and European Countries'. Comment with examples.	2020	10
	Indian Diaspora has an important role to play in South-East Asian countries' economy and society. Appraise the role of Indian Diaspora in South- East Asia in this context	2017	15
	Indian diaspora has scaled new heights in the West. Describe its economic and political benefits for India.	2023	10

International Relations

4. Important International Institutions, Agencies and Fora – Their Structure, Mandate

Sub-Theme	UPSC PYQs (GS-II International Relations)	Year	Marks
IMF, World Bank, NDB & AIIB: Development Finance	Some of the International funding agencies have special terms for economic participation stipulating a substantial component of the aid to be used for sourcing equipment from the leading countries. Discuss on merits of such terms and if, there exists a strong case not to accept such conditions in the Indian context.	2014	12.5
	The World Bank and the IMF, collectively known as the Bretton Woods Institutions, are the two inter-governmental pillars supporting the structure of the world's economic and financial order. Superficially, the World Bank and the IMF exhibit many common characteristics, yet their role, functions and mandate are distinctly different. Elucidate.	2013	10
	India has recently signed to become founding a New Development Bank (NDB) and also the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). How will the role of the two Banks be different? Discuss the significance of these two Banks for India.	2014	12.5
United Nations: UNSC, UNESCO, WHO, IMO & Climate Diplomacy	'Too little cash, too much politics, leaves UNESCO fighting for life.' Discuss the statement in the light of US' withdrawal and its accusation of the cultural body as being 'anti-Israel bias'.	2019	10
	What are the aims and objectives of the McBride Commission of the UNESCO? What is India's position on these?	2016	12.5
	What are the main functions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)? Explain different functional commissions attached to it.	2017	10
	Critically examine the role of WHO in providing global health security during the Covid-19 pandemic.	2020	10
	Discuss the impediments India is facing in its pursuit of a permanent seat in UN Security Council.	2015	12.5
	Terrorism has become a significant threat to global peace and security'. Evaluate the effectiveness of the United Nations Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) and its associated bodies in addressing and mitigating this threat at the international level.	2024	15
	'Sea is an important Component of the Cosmos'. Discuss in the light of the above statement the role of the IMO(International Maritime Organisation) in protecting environment and enhancing maritime safety and security.	2023	15
	Clean energy is the order of the day. Describe briefly India's changing policy towards climate change in various international fora in the context of geopolitics.	2022	15
WTO: Trade Negotiations, Doha	The aim of Information Technology Agreements (ITAs) is to lower all taxes and tariffs on information technology	2014	12.5

Round & India's Position	products by signatories to zero. What impact should such agreements have on India's interests?		
	The broader aims and objectives of WTO are to manage and promote international trade in the era of globalization. But the Doha round of negotiations seem doomed due to differences between the developed and the developing countries. Discuss in the Indian perspective.	2016	**12.5**
	What are the key areas of reform if the WTO has to survive in the present context of 'Trade War', especially keeping in mind the interest of India?	2018	**15**
	WTO is an important international institution where decisions taken affect countries in profound manner. What is the mandate of WTO and how binding are their decisions? Critically analyse India's stand on the latest round of talks on Food security.	2014	**12.5**

UPSC with Saurabh Kaushik