Edition I

# MANTHAN

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

VOL 1

REWRITING POWERS



SHEELAM PARAM BHUSHANAM

# *Table of* CONTENTS


1 PRESIDENT'S NOTE

2 EDITOR'S NOTE

3 ABOUT THE JOURNAL

4 FEATURE ARTICLES

1. From Ashes To Order: The World Reborn
2. When the World Stopped Orbitting One Power
3. The US–China Prism on the Global Order
4. Europe's Search for Relevance in a Fragmented World
5. India and the Global South: New Voices, New Alignments
6. The Indo–Pacific: The New Theatre of Power
7. BRICS and Beyond: Coalitions of Convenience or Change
8. Economies in Flux: Supply Chains and the New Geography of Power
9. Technology, Information, and Power in a Connected World
10. Divided We Burn: The Global Struggle for Climate, Sustainability and Energy Unity
11. The Possibility of a Multipolar Future: Towards a Cooperative Global Order

# Table of CONTENTS


5 **RESEARCH PAPERS**

1. Soft Power in Action: K-Pop, Bollywood, and the Rise of Cultural Multipolarity
2. The Power of Presence: India's Diaspora in a Multipolar World

6 **REVIEW ARTICLE**

1. Inside Today's Multipolarity: Chaos with a Capital C

7 **CURRENT AFFAIRS**

1. Theme Based
2. General

8 **STUDENT SUBMISSION**

1. Lives on the Margins: The Musahar Community of Bihar

9 **CROSSWORD**

10 **TRIIVIA ANSWERS**

11 **MEET THE TEAM**

12 **ODD-SEMESTER OVERVIEW**

13 **THANK YOU NOTE**

# President's Note



"Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise."
— Horace

This quote is significant because every word has applicability in the two contexts important here: Firstly, I never thought that one day I will be the president of CSF, a society that I have been a part of since the very first day. Secondly, the same goes for the Journal. For the longest time, CSF wanted to do this and I am very happy that we got to be the ones to make it happen. I made an agenda list of the things that I wanted to get done under my presidency, the journal was number three. My amazing journal team began this work months ago and truly embodied Horace's words, beginning without hesitation, being bold in their decisions, and wise in their execution. As I look back on the last few months, what stands out most is not the tasks accomplished, but the people who made them possible. Leadership often feels like a solitary word, but in reality, it is built entirely on collective effort, on those who show up, who care, who challenge, and who create. CSF has always been a society defined by its members, and this Journal is a testament to that spirit. I wholeheartedly thank every member of our team that has helped in making this dream of CSF possible. I would especially like to thank Hridayjoyti Sarma, who has been unwavering in his commitment from the very beginning, guiding the process, supporting every team, and ensuring that the Journal stayed true to the spirit of CSF. I also want to take this opportunity to thank my SY journal team: The Content Team including Hriday, Ananya, Navdeep, the Research Team including Ananya and Anchal, the Current

Affairs Team led by Rijul, who also oversaw the very interesting crossword and the review article, and our Design Team including Sharon and Isha, and all the amazing volunteers that made it all possible: Shubhanan Shukla, Nikhil J Palakeel, Ishaan Chhabra, Gauri Joshi, Sneha Bisht, Tanish Sethi, Satminson Chongloi, Varghese T Mathew. Nysa D'Cunha, Aarav Chandwaskar, Khushi Mahajan, Zarah Kumar, Rakshita Mishra, Ishita Singh, Uttara Malik, Vaibhav Kanojia, Susheen Shahabadi, Jishant Sapru, and Nirja Jain. All of them are the reason why this journal is in the flesh right now. And of course, I extend my appreciation to the entire Council for their encouragement and support throughout. This Journal stands as a collective achievement of all of us, a reminder of what CSF can accomplish when we begin boldly and work wisely, together. In exploring the idea of multipolarity, this Journal reminds us that strength lies not in a single centre of power, but in the many voices that shape our realities. CSF, too, thrives because of its plurality, of ideas, perspectives, and people. May this Journal spark conversations that travel far beyond these pages.

Smiles,
Saumadip Das

# Editor's Note



"Pursue excellence, and success will chase you."
— Rancho, 3 Idiots

Rancho from 3 Idiots has always been my biggest inspiration in life. After coming to college, I started volunteering for multiple societies and eventually I ventured towards CSF, guided by my passion for leadership and professionalism. I always wanted to be part of a journal but never thought that the first journal that I will be part of will be the one that I'll lead. This became possible only because of the volunteering opportunities, intellectual discourses and guidance that I received from my first by the people of CSF. It never felt like any other societies that I knew; CSF provided a space that allowed me to exercise my creativity and skills freely and in that process, assisted me in learning a lot about college, myself, careers and education. After becoming an editorial member of CSF as a second-year executive council member, one day the imagination behind Manthan came from discussions with my fellow council members. After editing various online events, finally I, along with the team, finally gained the courage and planning to start the journal. The entire council supported the initiative and contributed towards converting this final imagination into reality.

I would especially like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Saumadip Das, President of the Civil Services Forum for this academic year, for being a fantastic senior and devoting his time, even staying up late nights, and guiding each one of us from the very beginning towards achieving this milestone. I would also like to

take this opportunity to thank my fellow SY Journal Team heads from the council. Their unwavering dedication and critical ideas from the start of the process gave shape to the Journal. Also I would like to appreciate the people without whom the journal wouldn't have been possible—the volunteers. All of their efforts provided incredible content to all the teams. Additionally, working with such a talented team taught me a lot about leadership, responsibility and cooperation. I'm thankful for being able to guide this team and learn a lot of skills about various topics like writing, research, designing and, most importantly, global awareness about various topics. After such a great project, I believe that people should strive towards excellence and have the courage to take action towards their goal. Even if one doesn't have the prior knowledge about certain things, taking the first step can grant them great amounts of wisdom. I hope that everyone enjoys their time reading the Journal and that it may act as a spark towards greatness.

Smiles
Hridayjyoti Sarma
Editor-in-Chief



# ABOUT THE JOURNAL

Welcome to the Civil Services Forum, St. Stephen's College's journal "Manthan". It's the first edition of a series that will strive to attain a place in every Stephanian's heart who desires college life to be their best memory. Manthan is planned to be a biannual Journal that will be released towards the end of every semester. This initiative was long envisioned and this year we've finally been able to make it happen. Our purpose behind launching this series is to deepen public understanding on various topics—significant throughout various fields—through a structured and accessible narrative. Like all our other initiatives, Manthan's driving force is also rooted in CSF's motto—Sheelam Param Bhushanam (Character is the highest Virtue).

Our topic for the first edition will be "Worlds in Transition: Understanding Multipolarity in the 21st Century". The topic will be demonstrated majorly in the unique feature section, consisting of 11 wonderful articles. Each article, from Article 1 to 11, builds a progressive arc. It's designed to guide readers step-by-step through the complexity of multipolarity, starting from a post-World War world to contemporary times. This is followed by the Research section, adding scholarly depth and nuanced perspectives to the topic. As a bonus, this Journal also has a critical review article covering today's youth's perspectives of multipolarity.

Now, a CSF Journal can't be completed without articles and information regarding the civil services examination topics. Therefore, we've an exquisite Current Affairs section and student submission section curated for UPSC CSE and other similar examinations and general knowledge. The latter part of the Journal displays CSF's achievements in the odd semester of 2025-2026—ranging from competitions to lectures to online interviews. Through all the different sections in the Journal, we aim to provide a holistic understanding of the evolving world order and a platform for student voices to contribute to ideas of global concerns. This Journal is not just a one-time project but a tradition that CSF will work towards nurturing. Let's step together into a new chapter brought forth by the incredible Journal team.

THE JOURNEY

# AS NEW POLES RISE & OLD ORDERS  *evolve,* LET US BEGIN  THIS *journey* INTO THE MAKING OF A *Multipolar World*

OF MULTIPOLARITY

# FROM ASHES TO ORDER: THE WORLD REBORN

Let us dive into the ocean of history, back to 1945. The Second World War had ended, yet peace did not follow. Cities were in ruins, millions had perished, and nations were exhausted. In that silence, new storms began to gather. The world witnessed the rise of two great powers—the United States and the Soviet Union—standing taller than the rest. They had fought together against fascism, but their friendship was only one of necessity. The United States, confident and wealthy, upheld liberal democracy and capitalism, while the Soviet Union, scarred yet defiant, sought to spread communism. Winston Churchill famously called this divide the “Iron Curtain”.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

Following this, Germany became the first testing ground for this new rivalry. Both powers sought to rebuild it in their own image, leading to the creation of capitalist West Germany and communist East Germany. The United States launched the Marshall Plan, pouring billions into Europe’s recovery. This was not mere generosity but a strategic investment. Economic aid became a tool to secure loyalty and rebuild a capitalist world under American leadership. By 1949, NATO had formed around the United States, while the USSR countered with the Warsaw Pact. The Soviet atomic test that same year shattered



*Where does global dialogue truly begin in a multipolar world?*

America's monopoly, freezing the world into bipolarity. Though both were superpowers, only the United States possessed global reach. It controlled the seas and skies, dominated global wealth, and shaped culture through Hollywood and ideals of democracy. The 1950s and 1960s hardened the Cold War. The Korean War divided the peninsula and revealed how ideological conflicts could become real wars. The U.S. tested the hydrogen bomb, and the Soviets followed. Events like the Suez Crisis and the Hungarian Uprising in 1956 exposed the decline of old European empires, while Soviet control over Eastern Europe remained absolute. Newly independent nations in Asia and Africa, unwilling to align with either bloc, formed the Non-Aligned Movement to seek autonomy. Meanwhile, the race for supremacy extended beyond Earth. NASA was born from this contest, and the space race turned into a theatre of pride where rockets and astronauts replaced armies. Yet danger persisted. The Berlin Wall went up in 1961, and the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 brought the world to the brink of nuclear destruction.

Beyond military confrontation, the Cold War was a battle of cultures and ideas. The United States mastered soft power, projecting influence through music, films, consumer goods, and education. The 1969 moon landing symbolised not only a technological triumph but also the triumph of imagination and capitalism. By the 1970s, exhaustion set in on both sides. The U.S. and USSR turned toward détente, a policy of easing tensions through diplomacy and arms control treaties like SALT I. Yet cracks appeared within each bloc. For America, the Vietnam War became a painful lesson in the limits of power. The mightiest military could not defeat determined guerrillas. At home, civil rights struggles and mass protests questioned the idea of leading the "free world" while inequality persisted.

The Soviet Union, seemingly stable, was beginning to decay. Its command economy stagnated, and the public grew restless. The invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 turned into its own Vietnam, draining resources and morale. The 1980s became an age of contradictions. U.S. President Ronald Reagan revived Cold War rhetoric, labelling the USSR an "evil empire", yet he also recognised that cultural and economic dominance mattered more than sheer force. American corporations, media, and technology expanded across the world, making the American lifestyle a global ideal. Still, economic inequality and political cynicism revealed the fragility beneath the image of power.

**TRIVIA TIME**

Which 13-day Cold War standoff pushed the U.S. and USSR to the brink of nuclear war?

Across the Iron Curtain, Mikhail Gorbachev's rise brought reform and openness through perestroika and glasnost. His efforts unintentionally weakened the Soviet system. One by one, Eastern European nations broke free, and in 1989 the Berlin Wall fell at the hands of ordinary citizens. Two years later, in 1991, the Soviet Union itself dissolved, marking the end of the Cold War. The United States emerged as the world's sole superpower,

dominating militarily, economically, and culturally. For a brief moment, it seemed as if liberal democracy had triumphed completely, and some even proclaimed the “end of history”. Institutions like the United Nations, the World Bank, and the IMF became extensions of American influence, reinforcing this unipolar moment.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The U.S. spent more money rebuilding Europe through the Marshall Plan than it spent fighting in the European theatre of World War II—making economic aid one of its most powerful geopolitical tools.

Yet victory carried its own burden. Regional conflicts, economic inequality, and the rise of new powers soon revealed that no hegemony is eternal. The Cold Warhad ended not with a triumph of ideology, but with the realisation that global stability is fragile and power constantly shifts. The world, freed from the fear of nuclear war, now faced the uncertainty of untested leadership. The long night of bipolarity had ended, leaving behind a planet both free and fragile. New powers would emerge, and a new order would take shape, for history has always shown that power, like time, never stands still.

**—Tanish Sethi**
**I B.A. (Hons) History**

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# WHEN THE WORLD STOPPED ORBITTING ONE POWER

The 1990s marked what many called “the unipolar moment.” The United States reigned supreme, but dominance rarely lasts without disruption. After the Cold War, the world seemed to orbit around a single centre of gravity. Washington set the pace for global trade, institutions, and security. Its reach was hard to question, whether it be military, financial or cultural. Yet global power never stays still. At first, the changes were easy to overlook: small shifts in trade, technology, and diplomacy. Over time, they added up, and the world that once turned around one power began to move differently.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, globalisation looked like America’s high point. Markets opened quickly, supply chains stretched across continents, and U.S. technology and capital seemed everywhere at once. In 1995, the U.S. accounted for roughly 25% of global GDP; by 2023, its share had fallen closer to 15%, while China’s had risen to nearly 18%. This shift reflects how globalisation redistributed growth. The same openness that strengthened the United States helped others rise. China and India built industries, expanded exports, and attracted investment on a scale that rewired global production. Factories moved east, ideas travelled faster, and growth became more evenly spread. What had once reinforced U.S. dominance slowly diluted it. The system worked so well that it shared the power it was meant to secure and, in doing so, changed its own foundation.

**TRIVIA TIME**

What 2021 security partnership deepened military-technology sharing among the U.S., U.K., and Australia as part of the Indo-Pacific strategy?

Globalisation had exposed one kind of weakness; the Iraq War exposed another. The 2003 invasion proved that military strength could force outcomes, but not legitimacy. The war, launched without broad international backing, divided allies and fuelled mistrust in the very order the U.S. had shaped. It raised a question that still lingers: can leadership survive without consensus? As faith in American judgement faded, nations started carving out their own space. Some balanced ties between the U.S., Europe, China, and Russia; others turned inward, focusing on regional cooperation. The Iraq War, in hindsight, was more than a policy failure; it marked the point where the world stopped moving in unison behind one power.

Then came 2008, the moment confidence truly cracked. The crisis began in the U.S. housing market and spread faster than anyone expected, wiping out an estimated $15 trillion in global wealth within a year. When Western economies slid into recession, the assumption that their systems guaranteed stability collapsed with them. Emerging economies recovered sooner and began charting their own course. They built new institutions: regional development banks, South–South

Growth no longer depended on a single engine, and the authority of Western markets was no longer absolute. Economic, political, and moral authority all began to spread outward, opening space for new arrangements of power to take shape.

Diplomacy also adapted with the changing order. Large multilateral institutions struggled to reflect a world of competing priorities. Out of that gap came minilateralism: smaller, issue-based partnerships that unite countries with overlapping interests rather than identical ideologies. According to recent studies, there are now over 40 active minilateral groupings globally, many focused on climate, technology, and maritime security. The Quad, AUKUS, and I2U2 are clear examples of coalitions that move quickly on technology, infrastructure, and security while letting members stay flexible elsewhere. Minilateralism reflects the logic of multipolarity itself: cooperation that is selective, interest-driven, and pragmatic. The global system now works more through coordination than command and prefers partnership over hierarchy.

Together, these shifts explain how unipolarity faded. Globalisation shared prosperity, the Iraq War eroded legitimacy, and the 2008 crisis broke the illusion of Western certainty. None of these ended U.S. influence, but each made it harder for it to stand alone.

The unipolar moment didn't collapse; it evolved. What remains is a world that is more connected yet more contested—one that runs on persuasion, networks, and shared interests rather than command. The United States still matters deeply, but it leads among others, not above them. By the late 2000s, economic crises, endless wars, and a shifting balance of ambition had made it clear: unipolarity was giving way to something else—a stage where old powers returned and new ones rose.

**—Gauri Joshi**
**I B.A. (Hons) Economics**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

In 2003, protests against the Iraq War drew nearly 36 million people across 3,000 cities — one of the largest coordinated demonstrations ever recorded.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# THE US-CHINA PRISM ON THE GLOBAL ORDER

The 21st century opened with a competition that would serve to characterise the century as a strategic and ideological battle between the US and revitalised China. Such competition can be seen through the spheres of trade, technology, military buildup, and power brokering, as each party is looking to gain a competitive edge and is influencing world decisions in terms of governments and markets.

The US has sustained advantages such as high-end chip design and software and high-technology research. It maintains coalitions in Asia and Europe and controls the financial infrastructure of the globe via the dollar, SWIFT, and the large institutions. China, on the other hand, introduces scale, manufacturing depth, and state-orientated investment, which stimulates industrial upgrading by national plans and investments abroad in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Such attempts generate an economic push to those economies that depend on loans, commerce, and speedy infrastructure project conveyance. This economic rivalry extends directly into trade. The US denies Chinese companies a right to use high-tech chips and commands its allies to restrict equipment of Chinese telecommunications companies. China reacts with subsidised industry and stricter regulations on rare-earth exports, and the result is the change in supply chains when companies want to reduce risk. Thus, there has been an increase in investment in India, Vietnam, and Mexico.

**TRIVIA TIME**

Which country is now the top trade partner for over 120 nations, reshaping global supply chains worldwide?

The contest is based on technology. The US spends a lot of money on quantum research, artificial-intelligence models, and chip fabrication, and China seeks to be independent in chips and high-tech sensors. The two parties are racing to establish international standards in the flows of data and digital infrastructure; dominance of these standards determines the security and economic control of the future. Yet, the tussle of platforms, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence control shows that technological competition has become the determining factor of national power. Alongside tech, the Indo-Pacific has escalated on the military. The United States reaches out to Japan, Australia, South Korea, and the Philippines to increase their presence, and China constructs the naval bases and enhances the positions in the South China Sea. This leads to more patrols, exercises, and signalling, with each side probing the other and trying to influence the region's security setup.

Taiwan is the most delicate issue. China considers it as being central to national

unity; the United States provides weapons and has a policy that is intended to deter a forced status transition. The situation gets escalated by military flights around the island as well as discussions on military preparedness. Any sort of conflict would cause disruption in supplies of semiconductors, Pacific shipping, and international finance. Governments must carefully consider the risks, based on the effects on prices, production, and investment flows.

The strategic hub is the Indo-Pacific. Nations keep agency: India develops new military capacity and looks to new forms of partnership; ASEAN countries do not take sides but grow collaborations with both the nations; Australia supports security arrangements as a way of enhancing deterrence; Japan redefines the defence strategy and develops joint development programmes. The region is in search of stability as it competes over investment, technology, and also military support. This art of influence building goes a long way beyond Asia. The Belt and Road Initiative is a means through which China gains access to ports, minerals, and markets with loans and building contracts. These projects are welcomed in some countries as they develop fast, whereas other countries are worried about their debts and strategic reliance. The United States retaliates with investment relationships, security assurances, and technological relationships to engage in supply chain diversification with the G7 members and strong infrastructural resilience. Both parties are seeking long-term access and political affiliation.

This competition leads to multipolarity since all middle powers have to be placed in reference to the two superpower states. The decisions related to trade, technology, and security will rely on the way the states will assess the U.S. and Chinese promises. Selective alignment, hedging and issue-based cooperation ensue, and multipolarity is not created through the equality of power of many states but through the space in which strategy is created as a result of tension between the two overarching actors. In this rivalry, other powers respond not by choosing sides but by shaping their own strategies. The result is a world no longer defined by a single centre of gravity but by shifting alignments and a more contested, multipolar order.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Taiwan manufactures about 60% of the world's advanced semiconductors, making it central to both global technology and geopolitical tensions.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

**—Ananya Jain**
**II B.A. (Hons) Economics**

# EUROPE'S SEARCH FOR RELEVANCE IN A FRAGMENTED WORLD

Europe, once the epicentre of global politics, now finds itself torn between dependence and autonomy, between its Atlantic ally and the emerging poles of the East and South. After World War II, Europe became a symbol of peace and recovery. The European Union (EU) was created to stop wars and promote unity among countries. But today, in a world of growing divisions and power struggles, Europe faces a big question: does it still have the same importance? Yet its role is being challenged both from within and beyond its borders. The idea of European unity is being tested. Inside the EU, problems like Brexit, political divisions, and migration have weakened trust. Outside, Europe still depends on the United States and NATO for its security, which limits its independence. At the same time, new powers like China, India, and other countries in the Global South are changing the global balance. Europe now needs to find a new sense of purpose—not just power, but direction.

The United Kingdom's decision to leave the EU in 2016 was more than just politics—it was a major turning point. Brexit showed that even strong unions can break apart. It revealed deep social and regional divisions within the UK and forced both sides to rethink what kind of Europe they wanted. Trade and labour shortages followed, and the EU began discussing how to become more accountable and flexible for its citizens. Just as political cohesion was shaken, Europe's economic vulnerabilities surfaced even more clearly. If Brexit exposed political weakness, the 2022 energy crisis showed how dependent Europe was on others. For years, Europe relied on Russian gas. When Russia invaded Ukraine and used energy as a weapon, prices increased sharply, and many industries struggled. However, this crisis also pushed Europe to change. It began investing more in renewable energy, new pipelines, and cooperation among member states. The experience taught Europe that energy is not just an economic issue—it is part of national security and independence.

**TRIVIA TIME**

What surprising kind of "resource-sharing club" did Europe create after World War II—a club so simple that it eventually grew into today's European Union?

Migration is another challenge that divides Europe. Since 2015, many refugees have arrived from countries affected by war, poverty, and climate disasters. Some nations, like Germany and Sweden, accepted large numbers, while others refused. This disagreement has fuelled nationalism and anti-EU feelings. To stay united, Europe must find a fair balance between compassion and control—between helping others and protecting its borders. These internal pressures are mirrored by external dependencies,

© IAS SERVICES FORUM

particularly in the realm of security. Europe's defence system still relies mostly on NATO, led by the United States. Though the EU has started projects like the European Defence Fund and PESCO to strengthen its own security, full independence remains far away. The war in Ukraine united Europe, but it also showed that the U.S. still plays the leading role in defence and strategy. True autonomy will only come when European countries trust each other and agree on common goals.

Globally, Europe stands between an assertive America and a rising Asia. The U.S. is now more focused on the Indo-Pacific, which means Europe must take more responsibility for its own region. At the same time, it cannot ignore rising powers like China and India. Europe's "de-risking" policy shows it wants to reduce dependence on China without cutting ties completely. However, to have a strong voice in the world, Europe first needs to stay united at home. Even amid these pressures, Europe's strength has often come not from force but from values. Even if its influence seems weaker now, it can still lead by setting global standards in areas like climate change, data privacy, and humanitarian work.

At its heart, Europe's quest for relevance is a quest for purpose. In a disordered world, military strength and economic power are important, but so too are values, resilience, and vision. The EU, UK, and NATO collectively represent not just a geographic consideration but a civilisational idea: that cooperation is more enduring than coercion, and that shared destiny is greater than narrow nationalism. If Europe can learn from its vulnerability into vision, and its diversity into strength, it may still discover a meaningful sense of relevance. Rather than a superpower in the ordinary sense, it can serve as a principled, stabilising force for innovation in a disordered world. The question is not if Europe can lead again, but if it can trust again in the very ideals that sutured it together the last time. Yet as Europe debates its strategic direction, new voices from the Global South are demanding to be heard, led most notably by India, a country seeking to rewrite the grammar of global power.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

You can drive from Portugal to Poland, crossing several countries, without showing your passport even once. Thanks to the Schengen Area, which works almost like one giant border-free country!

**—Navdeep Kaur**
**II B.SC. (Hons) Mathematics**

© IAS SERVICES FORUM

# INDIA AND THE GLOBAL SOUTH: NEW VOICES, NEW ALIGNMENTS

Amid shifting global currents, India's rise is not just national—it is symbolic of a larger awakening across the Global South. This diverse group of over 130 countries, representing more than three-fifths of the world's population, has emerged from the cracks of a once Western-led global order. Though varied in culture and politics, these nations share a common goal: fostering growth, expanding trade, and reducing poverty. India, a leading voice among them, is pursuing a broad and balanced strategy and is rapidly improving its infrastructure to become a competitive manufacturing hub and an attractive alternative to China. At the same time, India's digital economy already accounts for 11% of its GDP and is expanding rapidly, driven by strong IT services, widespread broadband access, and a skilled technical workforce. With the world's third-largest start-up ecosystem and over a hundred unicorns, it is also making its mark in emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and high-performance computing. Once a region spoken for by others, the global south is now finding its voice, and India stands at the forefront of this transformation. Blending democratic power centres and a leading advocate for a fairer, more inclusive global order.

As the global order evolves from unipolar to a more fluid and multipolar configuration, India has emerged as a pivotal balancing force. Its foreign policy today is characterised by an assertive commitment to strategic autonomy, ensuring that national interest, rather than ideological alignment, remains the primary compass of diplomacy. As global power disperses, India's foreign policy reflects a deliberate shift towards multipolarity, rejecting dependency on any single bloc. Rather than aligning exclusively with either Western powers or emerging Eurasian groupings, it pursues strategic autonomy, strengthening ties with the United States through the QUAD, maintaining historic defence and energy ties with Russia, and engaging cautiously yet pragmatically with China on platforms like BRICS and the SCO. This balanced approach signals India's refusal to be subsumed into rigid geopolitical camps, showcasing instead a confident diplomatic posture rooted in sovereignty and long-term national interest. India's leadership role has been most visible on global platforms where the voices of developing nations were traditionally marginalised. Hosting the G20 Presidency in 2023, India foregrounded issues like climate finance, inclusive development, and digital empowerment, advocating not merely for its own interests but for the collective aspirations of the Global South.

**TRIVIA TIME**

Which South Asian country became the first to use India's UPI internationally for cross-border digital payments?

Similarly, India's proactive role in BRICS, its commitment to South–South cooperation, and its efforts to push institutional reforms at the UN and multilateral banks reflect its broader vision: a world order that is more representative, equitable, and driven by the priorities of developing countries.

These visions are reinforced by developmental diplomacy such as "Vaccine Maitri", which was a humanitarian effort by the Indian government to provide COVID-19 vaccines around the world. India supplied nearly 300 million vaccine doses to 99 countries and two UN bodies. It abided by its "Neighbourhood First" policy and gave access to the vaccines to its neighbouring countries first. The initiative generated significant international goodwill and bolstered India's soft power diplomacy a global health crisis. The ISA (International Solar Alliance) positioned India as a leader in global climate action and reinforced its commitment to renewable energy goals, while strengthening ties with other "Global South" countries, particularly in Africa and small island nations. Then came SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region), a geopolitical framework for maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region. It is a key component of India's foreign policy to counter the growing influence of other major powers in the Indian Ocean and enhance its strategic interests through a cooperative and inclusive approach.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The term "Global South" refers to over 130 countries outside the direct influence of the West and China, representing more than three-fifths of the world's population.

Ultimately, India's role in the Global South reflects more than power politics; it reflects a moral claim to leadership rooted in shared struggles and shared futures. In championing dialogue over dominance, inclusion over exclusion, and cooperation over coercion, India presents a hopeful alternative to confrontational geopolitics. As countries of the Global South reclaim their agency and shape global narratives, India serves as an anchor, a catalyst, and a credible voice advocating fairness and multipolarity. This rediscovery of agency by emerging nations is reshaping not only diplomacy but geography itself, nowhere more visibly than in the Indo-Pacific, the new crossroads of global strategy.

**—Satminson Chongloi**
**I B.A. Programme**

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# THE INDO-PACIFIC: THE NEW THEATRE OF POWER

Stretching from Africa's eastern shores to the coasts of the Americas, the Indo-Pacific has become the maritime heart of 21st-century geopolitics. Once upon a time, the oceans were just blue on the map. Today, they're battlegrounds of bandwidth and balance sheets. This vast expanse, encompassing the Indian and Pacific Oceans, is not merely a geographical region but a dynamic arena where global power is being redefined.

**TRIVIA TIME**

Which narrow maritime chokepoint handles nearly one-third of the world's shipping each year?

**A Sea that Shapes the Century**

Why does everyone suddenly care about the Indo-Pacific? Because over 60% of global GDP flows through these waters. Every ship cutting across the Strait of Malacca or the South China Sea carries more than goods—it carries influence.

For India, the ocean is a geopolitical mirror. Sitting snugly at the centre of this maritime sprawl, India is both audience and actor in the region's grand performance. The Indian Ocean is its lifeline—fuel, data, and defence all flow through it. When Delhi talks about "Act East" or the "Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative", it's not just policy-speak but a realisation that the next century will be decided not by who owns the land but by who sails the sea.

**The New Age of Alliances**

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad)—comprising India, Japan, Australia, and the United States—embodies a shared commitment to maintaining a "free and open Indo-Pacific." While not a military alliance, the Quad represents a strategic convergence rooted in values of democracy, maritime freedom, and technological collaboration. Initiatives like the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) underscore how these nations seek to safeguard common waters without formalising rigid blocs.

Then there's AUKUS—a pact between Australia, the U.K., and the U.S. that's all about high-tech submarines and cyber defence. For many observers, it signals a Western attempt to counterbalance China's expanding naval presence. The message is clear, though—under the calm waves, everyone's quietly flexing their muscles.

Meanwhile, ASEAN, the ten-nation Southeast Asian bloc, is the voice of reason in the room, trying to balance dialogue with diplomacy while bigger players lock eyes. Its member states pursue what they call "ASEAN centrality"—maintaining engagement with all powers while resisting domination by any—essentially, being rivals while being interdependent.

**The Great Balancing Act**

Here's the paradox—the Indo-Pacific thrives on both competition and

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

cooperation. One day, nations are conducting joint naval drills; the next, they're filing maritime disputes. China builds ports and calls it infrastructure; others call it influence. The U.S. talks about "freedom of navigation", which sounds noble, i.e., until their destroyers show up near contested reefs.

At the heart of this maritime crossroads stands India, both geographically and strategically. Flanked by the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal, India straddles crucial shipping lanes and exerts natural influence across the Indian Ocean. Through its *Act East Policy* and the *Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)* launched in 2019, India envisions a cooperative maritime order that promotes connectivity, environmental protection, and security for all.

New Delhi's approach blends hard and soft power. It engages through naval exercises like *Malabar* alongside the Quad, while also deepening development partnerships with ASEAN and African coastal nations. India's idea of *SAGAR—Security and Growth for All in the Region—captures* this dual spirit of strategic vigilance combined with inclusive prosperity. Unlike the Cold War's binary blocs, India's Indo-Pacific policy is multipolar and multi-aligned, enabling it to work with the U.S. and Japan on one front while collaborating with Russia and ASEAN on another. This flexibility positions India as both a bridge and a balancer in the emerging regional architecture.

**The Theatre of Tomorrow**

The Indo-Pacific isn't a single stage—it's an entire theatre complex. On one side, you have defence dialogues; on another, climate cooperation; backstage, tech and trade deals; and somewhere in the balcony, small island nations wondering when someone will finally address rising sea levels. It's messy, vibrant, and unpredictable—like global politics itself. Yet, that's what makes the Indo-Pacific fascinating.

*But as countries build new alliances to secure sea lanes and trade routes, another form of coalition is emerging—one built not on geography but on shared economic and political ambitions....*

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Over 90% of global data flows through undersea cables, most of which run across the Indo-Pacific seabed—making digital power just as critical as naval power.

©IAS SERVICES FORUM

**—Shubhanan Shukla**
**III B.A. (Hons) English**

# BRICS AND BEYOND: COALITIONS OF CONVENIENCE OR CHANGE

When five diverse nations—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—first came together as BRICS, few would have imagined they would challenge the world's established order. From its expansion to 10 countries to its de-dollarisation initiatives, BRICS has been at the forefront of the discussions about the shift towards a multipolar world. This shift is also indicated in the emergence and expansion of like-minded groups like the SCO and G20. Though they promote the idea of multipolarity and are predominantly non-Western, it is important to understand whether these entities meaningfully challenge the West-led global order or whether they are engaging in symbolic politics.

In recent years, BRICS is the organisation that has made the most headlines for challenging Western global dominance. This has even led US President Donald Trump to call the alliance "attacking the dollar" and "hurting the US".

**TRIVIA TIME**

Which country declined to join BRICS after being invited, following a policy shift toward closer alignment with the United States and the West?

The rapid expansion of the alliance and its novel initiative of BRICS partner countries might have added to these concerns. The development bank of the group, the NDB, established in 2015, has posed itself as an alternative to the IMF and World Bank, whose aid and loans have conditions which are often tied to perceived interventionism in the political and economic affairs of debtor states. BRICS has emphasised de-dollarisation mainly by trading in local currencies among member nations. Though a common currency has not been developed by the group, it has proposed a cross-border payment and settlement platform commonly referred to as BRICS Pay as an alternative to SWIFT.

On the other hand, the G20 has emerged as a platform where the issues faced by the Global South are addressed and prioritised. From late 2021, the G20 Presidency has been held continuously by nations from the Global South and the G20 agenda has moved beyond Western-centric issues. The inclusion of the African Union in the group is an example of this trend. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) has developed from a mere security alliance to a broader one. The forum's resolve to foster mutual respect and non-interference in internal matters and uphold sovereignty conveys a different worldview to that of NATO. It has included Iran and Belarus as members in recent years and granted partner status to 17 countries in 2025.

However, there is criticism regarding these organisations that their desire to change world order is not reflected in their actions, thereby framing them as "coalitions of convenience".

CIVIL SERVICES FOCUS

One of the major issues is related to their organisational structure. BRICS and the G20 are not legally binding treaty organisations. The SCO is not a traditional military alliance and lacks the mutual defence commitments of a bloc like NATO or the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). This kind of informality persists in the organisational structure and working of these organisations. This is a significant hurdle for these entities to achieve the effective changes they aspire to. There has been criticism about the NDB regarding its slow functioning and the significant portion of its funding in US dollars despite a commitment to local currency financing. Though de-dollarisation initiatives have been started, the dollar still dominates international trade despite slight declines in certain areas.

Another major issue faced by these groups is the friction among member states The motivation to join these organisations is different for member states. Iran, a big adversary of the US and the UAE, which shares close relations with the US, are members of BRICS. Another example is the membership of rivals India and Pakistan. In June 2025, India refused to endorse a joint statement at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) defence ministers' meeting in Qingdao, China, citing the omission of the 2025 Pahalgam attack while the militant activity in Balochistan was referenced. Therefore, friction remains a hurdle for effective cooperation.

While the direction of these forums has been directed towards change, the structural and organisational issues faced by them have made it difficult to execute their projects efficiently. The current scale of their activities does not reflect their potential. While they were able to present non-Western alternatives to the existing Western mechanisms, their alternatives have not yet become mainstream. At a time when the world is watching the global fragility caused by US tariffs and the continuation of the Western-established order is questioned, these coalitions might step in and lead their way to dramatic global changes. Whether they evolve into such genuine engines of reform or remain symbolic partnerships will depend on how they navigate the world's new economic realities—a world increasingly defined by trade, interdependence, and fragility.

**—Varghese T Mathew**
**I B.SC. (Hons) Mathematics**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

BRICS countries together make up more than 40% of the world's population and nearly one-third of global GDP when measured in purchasing power parity

© CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# ECONOMIES IN FLUX: SUPPLY CHAINS AND THE NEW GEOGRAPHY OF POWER

The global economy today is not collapsing—it's rearranging. Supply chains are redrawn, trade routes redirected, and national interests re-engineered for resilience. This fundamental redefinition of transnational economic relationships is the key determinant of modern multipolarity. By transitioning from surface-level cost efficiency towards strategic networks and geopolitical alignments, the very structure of global commerce is emerging where interdependence is strategically executed and power dynamics realign with global trade, digital networks, and technological exchanges.

**The pandemic effect and supply chain diversification**

Covid-19 was a pivotal shift, exposing the flaws of conventional production systems, spanning from essential medicines to high-end microchips, and the resultant transformation has made diversification the central foundation of global commerce, compelling governments and corporations to prioritise resilience and strategic networks over pure efficiency. The emerging policies, nations, and multinationals have embraced reshoring (bringing business and production operations back to the home country), friend-shoring (relocating to politically aligned nations), and the China+1 strategy. Japan has actively relocated funds for

**TRIVIA TIME**

Which country became the world's top exporter of high-end microchips during the post-pandemic supply chain restructuring?

Japan has actively relocated funds for diversifying the manufacturing sector. Meanwhile, corporate giants like Apple have diversified their production sector by employing more manufacturing units in India, transforming the nation into a high-end electronics export hub. The World Bank (2022) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have further underscored the immediate necessity of building redundancy into global systems, confirming the fact that firms now factor geopolitical risk directly into sourcing and inventory models, signifying a decisive transition from the "just-in-time" efficiency model to a more resilient "just-in-case" production framework, where the security of supply now rivals cost as the decision variable of global trade.

**Infrastructure, Trade Blocs, and New Channels of Power**

Trade blocs and infrastructure corridors have transitioned as the primary means through which economic power is linked and exercised. This is evident from the current global scenario, where China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) remains the most wide-reaching infrastructure network, creating international dependencies through debt-backed policies. In response, the India-Middle East-Europe Corridor

(IMEC) proposes to develop a multimodal alternative, connecting South Asia via the Middle East. Meanwhile, the EU's Global Gateway, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), and the US-led Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) showcase divergent yet interlinked attempts to establish shared trade ecosystems. As UNCTAD and the IMF propose that global trade is increasingly dictated by political alignment by creating potential inefficiencies in goods flow by raising transaction costs, it is concludable that emerging infrastructure and trade blocs are not just instruments of commerce; rather, they are the physical and legal decision variables of future global power.

**The Market Transformation and The Way Ahead**

The governance of the 21st century is no longer solely characterised by free-market mechanisms but by strategic economic statecraft, where governments consider technology, energy, and information as the key components of national security. The transformation in these key industries is marking the rise of a new geoeconomic order, where markets are not mere mechanisms but strategic imperatives of commerce. This transformation is evident in the technological sector, where nations are forging semiconductor alliances to secure control over advanced chip fabrication, alongside locking critical mineral supply chains, which will lead to digital and green transitions. The Indian economic diplomacy also follows the same decision route through the Make in India policy and G20 Presidency, ensuring credibility to attract global investments. In this emerging world, where economic interdependence becomes both the source of and an instrument for immense wealth and a tool for profound vulnerability. Power is being redefined, not just by the volume of trade but by the control over infrastructural nodes, technological advances, and crucial value chains. Yet in a world so digitally and economically intertwined, power is no longer measured only in GDP—it's measured in data, information, and the technologies that control them.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The global shipping industry moves over 80% of the world's traded goods, yet fewer than 10 companies control almost all major container shipping capacity, making supply chains far more concentrated and vulnerable than most people realise

**—Nikhil J Palakeel**
**I B.A. Programme**

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# TECHNOLOGY, INFORMATION, AND POWER IN A CONNECTED WORLD

Technology has become the new currency of power. Algorithms decide narratives, data fuels economies, and information shapes conflict. In the century ahead, the measure of influence will not be the size of armies or the reach of empires, but the speed of innovation and control over information. Nations that master algorithms, data, and digital networks will define the rules of tomorrow. The virtual realm is no longer just a space we inhabit—it has become the new theatre of power, politics, and progress.

### The New Currency of Power

Data is now the world's most valuable resource. Artificial intelligence, surveillance systems, and predictive analytics are not just tools—they're extensions of state power. Countries use them to secure borders, steer economies, and shape citizens' choices. What oil was to the 20th century, data is to the 21st. As digital ecosystems expand, sovereignty itself is being redefined. Borders no longer determine control; information flows do. The struggle over who owns, secures, and governs these flows—between Silicon Valley, Beijing, Brussels, and Bengaluru—will decide how freedom, privacy, and prosperity coexist. Europe's GDPR, for instance, has already set global benchmarks for digital rights, while India's UPI shows how inclusive innovation can transform an entire economy.

**TRIVIA TIME**

Which early cyber incident became the first major network attack in history, occurring even before the modern internet existed?

### Tech Wars: The Great Game of the Future

Semiconductors, 5G networks, and AI form the new front lines of global competition. The United States and China are locked in a race not only for technological dominance but also for digital independence—each striving to define the standards underpinning the global economy. But this race isn't just about chips or code; it's about the narrative of modernity itself. The nation that leads in technology will also shape the values behind it: openness or control, collaboration or surveillance. Emerging powers like India are carving their own path—building open digital public infrastructure, drawing global investment, and offering an alternative model that balances innovation with accessibility. In this race, agility may prove more decisive than size. The future will favour those who adapt faster, not merely those who spend more.

### Cyber Power and the Age of Influence

Power today is wielded as much through influence as through force. Cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns, and data leaks can destabilise societies more effectively than armies. The next conflict may begin

not with a missile but with a viral post or a blackout caused by a single line of corrupted code. Cybersecurity has become diplomacy by other means. States are investing in digital arsenals to protect their economies and assert their influence abroad. In this new era, safeguarding data is as vital as securing borders. The battlefield of tomorrow already exists—in our servers, satellites, and smartphones.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Every single day, the world now generates more data than the entire 20th century produced in total.

**The Rise of a Multipolar Digital Order**

As explored in 9DASHLINE's reflections on the multipolar world, global power is now distributed. The same is true of technology. No single nation will dominate the digital century. Instead, clusters of influence—American innovation, Chinese scale, Indian digital democracy, and European regulation—will coexist, compete, and sometimes collaborate. This diversity could become humanity's greatest strength. A multipolar tech order may prevent monopolies of power and encourage shared standards, accountability, and exchange. The future of technology will not be written by one superpower, but by many societies negotiating their digital destinies. Yet technology does not exist in isolation from broader global challenges. The real frontier lies in how wisely humanity wields its machines. Technology can deepen divisions or bridge them; empower individuals or entrench control. Its promise is immense—but so is its peril. But power built on technology cannot exist in a vacuum—it intersects with the planet's most urgent challenge: sustainability. The future of influence now depends as much on energy and environment as on innovation.

**—Ishaan Chhabra**
**I B.A. (Hons) Economics**

©CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# DIVIDED WE BURN: THE GLOBAL STRUGGLE FOR CLIMATE, SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY UNITY

As climate summits unfold under the banner of collective action, the fractures between nations grow increasingly visible. Every year, the world gathers for the ultimate high-stakes summit—a climate showdown known as the COP (Conference of the Parties). At first glance, COPs look like technical climate conferences. But beneath the policy papers lies the hum of power politics. Developed nations come armed with resources and negotiating experience. Emerging economies arrive determined not to repeat history—the one where they're asked to sacrifice growth for problems they didn't create. Vulnerable island states and African nations speak with moral urgency, reminding everyone that the climate crisis isn't tomorrow's issue; it's today's heartbreak. It's part science fair, part political theater, and part survival pact for the planet. Here, presidents rub shoulders with activists and make promises, but behind the polite smiles and late-night drafting sessions lies a web of power politics. Major emitters think that the U.S., China, and the EU shape the pace of global ambition. Meanwhile, island nations and least-developed countries bring moral firepower, reminding everyone that inaction means lost homes, vanished coastlines, and futures underwater. The COP is less a conference and more a mirror of global inequality, reflecting both the promise and paralysis of our collective will.

If the COP were a play, this would be its central drama: Who bears the greater burden of fixing the climate crisis? The North, wealthy, industrialised nations, built prosperity on carbon-heavy growth. The South, developing nations, faces the consequences with fewer resources and greater vulnerability. This divide has shaped every negotiation since the 1992 Rio Summit. Mechanisms like climate finance, loss and damage funds, and technology transfer are supposed to balance the scales. Yet delivery often lags behind promise. The $100 billion per year climate finance goal, pledged back in 2009, has been delayed and debated for more than a decade. For the Global South, climate justice isn't about charity; it's about equity. The demand is clear: honor commitments, share technology, and recognise that resilience and development must advance hand in hand. Climate finance, technology sharing, and the "loss and damage" fund are supposed to level the field. Yet the gap between promises and payments often feels like the distance between conference rhetoric and rising sea levels. True climate justice means action that matches accountability, where every ton of carbon saved counts the same, but every voice counts more.

**TRIVIA TIME**

Which climate pledge has been promised by wealthy nations since 2009 but still hasn't been fully delivered, becoming a symbol of North–South climate tensions?

The move from coal and oil to wind, sun, and lithium isn't just a green dream; it's a reshuffling of global power. Oil giants are nervous; solar states are rising. The world's new "gold rush" isn't for black gold but rare earths and critical minerals that power electric cars and batteries. For developing nations, the equation is complex: they want clean energy and affordable access. For richer economies, the pressure is on to lead without lecturing and to fund without foot-dragging. The energy transition could be a shared leap forward or a new kind of resource scramble

The story of climate negotiations is, in many ways, the story of humanity negotiating with its own conscience. Every COP summit is a reminder that while we may be divided by borders, we are united by atmosphere with one shared sky, one fragile balance. The power politics that slow progress are real, and the path to a sustainable future will not be forged by negotiations alone, but by trust. Climate negotiations must transcend the arithmetic of emissions and funding to confront the deeper imbalance of power and responsibility that defines our age. True progress demands that the global North acknowledge its historical debt and empower the South to lead its own transitions. Only through shared accountability and moral courage can we turn division into partnership and ambition into action on the planet we all call home. The climate crisis is not a contest of interests but a test of conscience.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Small island nations contribute less than 1% of global emissions, yet are among the first to face existential threats such as disappearing coastlines and rising sea levels.

**—Sneha Bisht**
**I B.A. (Hons) English**

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# THE POSSIBILITY OF A MULTIPOLAR FUTURE: TOWARDS A COOPERATIVE GLOBAL ORDER

There is nothing wrong if the idea of multipolarity seems chaotic and overwhelming, especially after reading 10 articles. It's true that this idea is often seen as extremely volatile, but multipolarity could be a new direction towards envisioning global power structures. The world is rapidly shifting from rigid systems to fluid networks. Amidst this shift, intense anxieties related to the instability and disintegration of cultures and institutions arise. But that's not the complete scenario. Opportunity for a vivid future lies somewhere in this chaos. Such hope makes us curious about whether multipolarity becomes the basis for a more cooperative and innovative global order forged by resilience. If we manage to achieve a stable multipolar world, the world might become a better place to live.

Upon expanding the vision, we see that this system is far better compared to the previous unipolar or bipolar structures. If constructed intentionally with proper planning and global adherence, this model promises a future that previous models weren't even capable of imagining in their wildest dreams.

The most fundamental structures that need renovation are the old institutions like the UN and Bretton Woods. Despite having achieved wonders, these institutions are not innovative enough to carry the burdens of the 21st century. Now, a somewhat stable multipolar world would provide room for the redesign of old institutions, considering various fields such as climate finance, health coordination, tech governance, autonomy of power, etc.

But multipolarity should be functional and practical. The new order must consider effective and sustainable utilisations of different regions. India leads in digital public goods, the EU excels in regulations, China ranks first in manufacturing, the US has the best frontier tech, Africa is essential for critical minerals, etc. A cooperative usage and distribution of these strengths will make the system more sturdy. This shows that the future isn't one world government or rigid blocs but small-purpose groups—Quad for security, I2U2 for economy, ISA for climate, and ASEAN for diplomacy—working together as a minilateral model. Additionally, competitions amongst institutions can push innovation to the next level without turning into conflicts if barriers exist: tech ethics, AI norms, sustainability guidelines.

**TRIVIA TIME**

Which international institution recently declared that "no single country will hold more than 15% of global GDP by 2050, signalling the long-term rise of a truly multipolar world?

As much as multipolarity is a way for innovation, it's also a path towards providing an opportunity for safeguarding humanity from catastrophes. Survival

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

challenges like climate issues, pandemics,digital threats and scarcity of resources can never be handled alone by a single pole. Multipolarity encourages everyone towards having a distributed responsibility. Distributing duty leads to a diversification where instead of one manufacturing hub or one security provider, multiple bodies step in, reducing risks. This cushions the world against shocks like pandemics or wars. This diversification opens the floor for new alliances for energy—hydrogen, solar, lithium, etc. It breaks the old oil geopolitics cycle and creates stability rather than competition. If energy issues can be solved, then solving digital issues also receives optimism. Instead of some powers causing tech wars and benefitting from them, the world can create compatible and collaborative systems that prevent digital divide. Additionally, the agency received by the Global South through multipolarity reduces resentment and imbalance that fuel global crisis.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

There are now over 70 minilateral groups worldwide, small purpose-driven alliances like the Quad or I2U2, making minilateralism one of the fastest-growing forms of global cooperation.

Multipolarity is not truly disorder. It's a worldwide drive towards attaining global redefinition—an attempt at transcending conventional power structures. If the next century wants to gain peace, it must happen through a shared global vision and not by domination. Future stability will depend on how nations choose to behave: choosing between isolation and collaboration. Multipolarity will grant space for new voices, new norms, new ways of approaching diplomacy and visionary leadership. It's important that the powerholders utilise such potentials the powerholders utilise such potentials and make the best out of those. The path leading to a world with multiple poles will demand great courage and determination. What unfolds will depend on whether nations choose rivalry or responsibility.

**—Hridayjyoti Sarma**
**II B.A. (Hons) English**

© WI SERVICES FORUM

# Research Papers

# SOFT POWER IN ACTION: K-POP, BOLLYWOOD, AND THE RISE OF CULTURAL MULTIPOLARITY

The world as we know it today is a system that has undergone a myriad of changes and has actively witnessed shifting regimes, political dynamics, economic powers, and even social orders. In today's modern landscape, where social media connects the globe based on algorithms and trends, culture remains both a unifying and divisive force. Polarity is not exclusive to forces of polity and economics but is also deeply rooted in culture and tradition. Throughout human history, culture has been a pathway to connection. Culture is a means to transcend geographical barriers. Culture will be the softest yet the boldest power the world has ever seen.

After the great wars fought, the decades which followed were all about the return to stability, normalcy and reconnection. In the 1980s, Joseph Nye Jr. correctly understood the new norms of diplomacy. It was not about military power and economic might; rather, it was the attractiveness of culture, political ideals and policies. With this, he coined the term 'soft power' to show that preferences can be shaped and influenced through attraction and not coercion and force. But soft power was not something novel which only arose in the late twentieth century. For the longest time, the world's culture was largely influenced by Eurocentric traditions to please royalty. After the two World Wars, when the United States of America showed great political and economic prowess, it sold the 'American dream' not only to every American citizen but also to every immigrant who yearned for a democratic, free and fearless future. This framework of attraction rather than intimidation has shaped the most influential cultural rise of the 21st century.

Today, soft power is at the forefront of global diplomacy. The greatest example of our times is the Hallyu (한류), commonly referred to as the Korean Wave. It is a state-backed cultural export strategy, bringing Korean pop culture to the global array through its K-pop, K-dramas, movies, gaming and food. Gaining influence and creating a positive national image without the use of military or economic coercion, South Korea has proven successful in bringing balance to an otherwise Western-dominated world and utilising the tenets of Joseph Nye Jr. to boost its global image strategically.

Data from the Korea Creative Content Agency in 2023 showed that South Korea's

cultural content exports, including music, audiovisual content, video games, animation, and webtoons, reached approximately USD 12.4 billion in 2023, marking a 6.6% increase over the previous year. The most lucrative segments are K-pop, K-dramas, and gaming. This growth outpaces traditional industrial sectors like shipbuilding and steel, signalling a structural shift in South Korea's export economy. Tourism has also been heavily influenced by Korean pop culture. According to the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO, 2024), 72.5% of foreign tourists in 2023 reported that K-pop or Korean TV dramas were motivating factors in their decision to visit South Korea. Cultural events such as the KCON series and Hallyu Expo continue to attract hundreds of thousands of international participants annually. Together, these numbers show how culture has become a core economic engine for South Korea, not merely a creative industry.

Beyond aggregate economic figures, individual K-pop groups have played a critical role. By 2024, BTS boasted over 75 million Instagram followers and fan bases in more than 120 countries, while BLACKPINK holds the record for the most subscribed music group on YouTube, with over 95 million subscribers. The Hyundai Research Institute (2023) estimates that BTS alone contributes around USD 5 billion annually to the South Korean economy through music sales, tourism, merchandise, and brand influence. Much of this success is also tied to deliberate state policy.

But behind this craze for the Korean culture is a prudent government which has made the Hallyu a formidable pillar for foreign policy and diplomacy and actively supports this cultural export by allocating public investment and policy instruments to support its global expansion. A landmark example of strategic cultural diplomacy was BTS's speech at the United Nations General Assembly in 2021, which combined entertainment with social and environmental messaging and was co-organised by the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNICEF. This event illustrates how the Korean government leverages cultural figures for high-level multilateral engagements.



***BTS at UNGA 2021, speaking on climate change, digital communities, and urging youth to embrace post-COVID change.***

Not too far from Korea is our own homeland, India, which has been on the same path of using soft power to its own advantage. The Indian film industry is

considered one of the biggest and most globalised industries in the world. Bollywood movies have indeed been a significant source of cultural export. Starting early, a film called Dharti ke Lal was released in the USSR and later, in 1952, Aan became the first globally released Indian film. It has long been famous for spreading Indian culture across South Asia, Africa and diaspora communities.

Cultural power today is shaped not only by film industries but also by the digital ecosystems that distribute them. Bollywood greatly conveys Indian values, music, and aesthetics globally. This, in turn, increases hybrid stories, which facilitates blending East–West narratives. In 2008, India's former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also recognised the role of Bollywood in forging its soft power resource. While giving a speech, he acknowledged that "the soft power of India can be a vital instrument of foreign policy". With the widespread switch to OTT platforms, the Indian film industry as a whole has started to gain a lot of attention, especially regional industries. There is no greater example than the Oscar-winning song 'Naatu Naatu' from the movie RRR, which propelled India's regional industries in the global filmmaking arena and showed the world India's culture beyond mainstream Bollywood.




***Naatu Naatu from the movie RRR winning the Oscars for Best Original Song in 2023***

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

Thus, growing soft power to be a formidable force to reckon with necessitates nurturing it and providing it with pathways for its exchange. This has been made easier with the rising role of digital media in our world. Through various platforms, social media, content, influencers, etc., digital media has helped democratise cultural exchange. By breaking out from traditional ways of exchange, which used to be state-run channels and newspapers, these new-age platforms let anyone and everyone become content creators and post the ideologies they stand for. It has improved accessibility and empowered citizens all over the world to participate in global dialogue. This has led to the creation of new centres of influence beyond the West.

Thus, in today's globalised world, cultural influence is no longer concentrated in a single region or civilisation. The cases of K-pop and Bollywood illustrate that the capacity to attract is no longer monopolised but distributed across various cultural poles. This dispersion redefines global hierarchies, allowing nations to project identity through creativity rather than conquest. This shift signifies that

global imagination, values, and trends are no longer dominated solely by the West. Instead, diverse cultural centres now contribute to shaping global narratives, aesthetics, and identities, fostering a more pluralistic and interconnected cultural order.




*KCON Event in 2023*

**—Nysa D'Cunha**
**I B.A. (Hons) Economics**

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# Works Cited

de Oliveira, Cristiane Vanessa Alves. *The Hallyu Wave as a Strategic Soft Power Tool: South Korea's Cultural Diplomacy in the 21st Century*. University of Westminster, 2019.

Kumar, Aman. "The Popularity of India's Cinema and the Role of Soft Power." *Centre for Strategic and Policy Studies (CSPS) India*, 2021,

Nye, Joseph S. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. PublicAffairs, 2009.

Thussu, Daya Kishan. "The Soft Power of Popular Cinema: The Case of India." *Journal of Political Studies,* vol. 13, no. 2, Winter 2006, pp. 29–43.

Varisco, Andrea Edoardo. "Towards a Multi-Polar International System: Which Prospects for Global Peace?" *E-International Relations*, 2013.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# THE POWER OF PRESENCE: INDIA'S DIASPORA IN A MULTIPOLAR WORLD

Upon hearing of the Qatar crisis, the Indian foreign minister's first response was to stress that Delhi's priority was helping stranded Indian workers. India's diaspora provides an unassuming asset to New Delhi: a unique soft power advantage that improves India's image as it competes with more powerful states. Simultaneously, however, it constitutes an added burden that can restrict Delhi's strategic options. India's diaspora in the Gulf, numbering between around 7 and 8 million, has of course always been important to the country's economy. The Gulf is India's main source of expat remittances. In 2015-2016, Indian workers sent back $35.9 billion in valuable foreign exchange. But New Delhi's interest in the region is no longer restricted to economic transactions of selling labour and buying oil. Partly in line with the country's other major objective, to raise its global status. The diaspora also builds upon, cements, and acts as a present-day reminder to the public in Middle Eastern countries of the historical and cultural links between the two regions. The scale of emigration to the Gulf is resulting in increased cultural exchange with Keralites back home, many of whom adopt culinary, linguistic, financial, and other practices of the region.

The notion reframes diaspora as actors in changing global structures—not simply migrants or exiles, but networked actors with multiple connections across poles. The question of diaspora engagement with home countries is an implicit theme. Diasporic communities have historically maintained—either actively or passively—their ethnonational identities. However, the ethnonational identities of diasporic communities have strengthened significantly in recent times as a result of the global forces, such as the Internet, commercialisation, etc., that created and recreated the existing and newer ways of transnationalism and ethnonationalism. Pertaining to such binaries is not advisable, as nuances exist. Bhabha emphasises that diasporic identities are marked by ambivalence — attraction and repulsion toward both home and host cultures. Diasporic individuals simultaneously desire belonging and feel alienated. Diasporic individuals live in what Bhabha calls a "third space", an in-between zone where negotiation of meaning occurs. This space allows diasporic communities to create new, hybrid cultural forms. Internally, Indians retain their traditions and overt symbols of dress, rituals, festivals, and food habits. Externally, they subscribe consciously to the broad principles of the country. Data based on the 2013 General Social Survey: 93% of immigrants reported a "very strong" or "strong" sense of belonging to Canada.

69% had a strong sense of belonging both to Canada and their source country (i.e., “integrated belonging” profile). 24% had a strong belonging to Canada but a weak one to the source country.

Using the situational approach, an ethnic group defines its minimum and maximum boundary and the limits of its "social structure" in terms of "we" versus "they". On the other side of the paradigm, there emerges a psychological feeling, translated into words such as, "They are like us and belong to the same country as me." Culture in terms of their heritage becomes an unforgettable historical fact which is shared in memory through interaction with other members of the community. Appadurai argues that the global cultural economy is not smooth—it’s full of disjunctures and uneven flows between different “scapes”. For Appadurai, diaspora communities use imagination through media, film, memory, and religion to recreate and sustain their identities across distances. Cultural identity is no longer tied to a single place or nation.

Delhi’s ability to manoeuvre strategically is somewhat restricted, given the fear that Gulf states would source labour elsewhere. This is, of course, mitigated by the fact that the size of India’s labour force and existing logistics mean the Indian diaspora are not easily replaceable. The welfare needs of the diaspora also provide some leverage to Gulf states when negotiating with India. Low-skilled and unskilled workers often endure conditions that violate their workers’ rights and suffer abuse by employers, something well known by voters back in India. Any steps to improve working conditions require Gulf State cooperation.

Member of Parliament E. Ahamed, linked to Kerala’s diaspora, led the crisis management group formed in response to the abduction of three Indians in Iraq in 2004 and secured their release. Diasporic media, remittances, and digital networks create transnational publics—communities without fixed territories. This in the world of information makes diasporas very susceptible and influential in bringing in changes. U.S. Census / Pew analyses for 2022–2023 data. Indian Americans are now one of the largest Asian-origin groups in the U.S. and exert significant economic, professional and political influence. The Indian-origin community in the U.S. organised lobbying, public advocacy and outreach to U.S. lawmakers and opinion leaders in support of the India—U.S. civil nuclear agreement. This diplomatic space for the deal is a clear example of diaspora shaping a major foreign-policy outcome for India. Scholarly work (Kannan; Kerala migration studies) documents how migration to the Gulf reshaped regional development and social structures. Kerala’s local economy and families feel immediate effects—demonstrating diaspora as a direct economic stakeholder in homeland well-being.

Diaspora has another politicised role Diaspora networks can be co-opted by host or home governments for geopolitical influence. Russia often justifies the

annexation of Crimea and the Ukraine war as a way of protecting Russian minorities. The US, ever since the Cold War, has followed this strategy to develop military bases overseas. This is an issue when transnational loyalties are instrumentalised or when diasporas become vectors for foreign state agendas. Diaspora communities sometimes fund or politically mobilise around homeland ethnic/communal causes; cases worldwide show how such mobilisation can amplify conflict back home. The Khalistan issue in Canada remains amongst the major issues, often contentious.

In a world no longer defined by a single hegemonic centre, diasporas embody the lived reality of multipolarity. They are not mere by-products of migration but dynamic agents negotiating power, identity, and belonging across overlapping spheres of influence. Their remittances shape national budgets; their advocacy shapes foreign policy; their identities weave together the global and the local. Yet, this multiplicity of loyalties—towards homeland, hostland, and transnational communities—also renders diaspora politics complex and, at times, contentious. Diasporas can be celebrated as development partners and soft-power ambassadors or mistrusted as instruments of influence, divided by competing nationalisms and ideologies. Ultimately, diasporas reflect the evolving grammar of global order itself. They personify the interdependence, fluid alliances, and hybrid identities that define the twenty-first century.

**—Aarav Chandwaskar**
**I B.A. (Hons) History**

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# Works Cited

Marshall, Tim. *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Tell You Everything You Need to Know About Global Politics*. Scribner, 2015.

Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. 2nd ed., Routledge, 2004.

Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

Gautam, M. K. *Indian Diaspora: Ethnicity and Diasporic Identity*. CARIM–India Research Report, 2013.

How India's Diaspora Affects Its Role in a Multipolar Middle East. *Brookings Institution*, 2023.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# Review Article



Will the world just get a handshake while power changes hands underneath?



Polished diplomacy hides chaotic bargaining in today's multipolar power arena.

# INSIDE TODAY'S MULTIPOLARITY: CHAOS WITH A CAPITAL C

The global order is shifting in ways that are both exciting and chaotic. In "Navigating Multipolarity: The Evolution of Foreign Policy Through a Political Lens", by Ikrame Kohl, the rise of multiple influential actors – China, India, Brazil, and the EU – is framed as reshaping alliances, strategies, and global influence. Meanwhile, "Multipolar World Order: Old Myths and New Realities" cuts through the romantic myths of multipolarity, wittily noting, "Calm down, this is not world peace; this is world juggling." Every actor wants the spotlight in a Bollywood-style ensemble, making multipolarity both structured in theory and messy in practice.

One way to interpret this shift is through three lenses. Realism warns that multiple powers increase miscalculation and alliance volatility. Liberalism emphasises that multilateral institutions and interdependence can reduce instability. Constructivism highlights identities, narratives, and shared beliefs in shaping state strategy. Yet frameworks like these rarely capture the improvisational dance of diplomacy. States pursue ambitions unevenly, hedge bets, and play multiple sides, showing that multipolarity is not inherently stabilising. The system rewards agility, negotiation, and a willingness to embrace discomfort—a fact clearly visible in India's nuanced foreign policy.

Major powers pursue assertive strategies: the U.S. through NATO, AUKUS, and the Quad; China via the BRI and SCO; Russia relies on old-school geopolitical muscle; and the EU leans on normative power. At the same time,

power today is asymmetrical: dominance in one domain doesn't guarantee supremacy in others. The U.S. remains the military champ but faces economic and technological competition; China may out-economise the U.S. but is vulnerable in security perception.

Multipolarity doesn't reduce competition—it intensifies it. States hedge, diversify, and improvise like actors claiming the lead in a crowded Bollywood ensemble.

Middle powers often adopt multi-alignment, cooperating with multiple blocs to maintain autonomy and flexibility. India exemplifies this, balancing energy needs, border tensions with China, and the Russia–Ukraine crisis, acting pragmatically rather than ideologically. Multipolarity rewards those who can juggle opportunities, bargain cleverly, and navigate discomfort while seizing space to influence outcomes. Smaller actors enhance relevance through neutrality, niche diplomacy, or selective partnerships, yet face pressures from competing poles and asymmetrical vulnerabilities. Success requires strategic subtlety; visibility is earned not through loyalty but through clever manoeuvring.

India illustrates these dynamics vividly. It engages in regional institutions, strengthens ties with the Quad, and expands developmental influence in the Global South. At the same time, it hedges in crises like Russia–Ukraine and navigates border tensions with China. This juggling act shows that multipolarity is less about picking sides and more about playing the ensemble wisely, negotiating space, and shining without overshadowing others. India rises through subtlety and strategic improvisation rather than direct confrontation—perfectly embodying the Bollywood ensemble metaphor in real life.

Power today is layered and domain-specific: military, economic, technological, and cultural influence are unevenly distributed. Each actor dominates some lanes and lags in others. Understanding these "asymmetrical poles" is crucial: success depends on strategy, agility, and knowing when to hedge or seize opportunities.

The analysis is insightful but not without limitations. It leans heavily on traditional hard-power metrics—military alliances, territorial control, and regional dominance—while overlooking modern dimensions of influence. Multipolarity today is also shaped by digital ecosystems, AI, satellites, surveillance networks, research, climate and renewable-energy transitions, and access to critical minerals such as rare earths and lithium. Domestic politics matter too: regime type, political leadership, public opinion, national identity, economic goals, and internal security concerns strongly influence foreign policy. Ignoring these variables risks oversimplifying state behaviour in a multipolar world. While multipolarity creates opportunities for rising actors, it does not automatically ensure stability. The global "ensemble" remains competitive and unpredictable, and success requires careful navigation of both external and internal factors.

While one perspective might suggest multipolarity fosters inclusive diplomacy, the reality is messier. Competing ambitions, selective cooperation, and constant hedging dominate. Multipolarity is not a peaceful roundtable; it is a chaotic

© IVE SERVICES FORUM

Bollywood ensemble—everyone thinks they're the lead, the plot moves unpredictably, and the real action happens backstage in negotiations. The key takeaway: multipolarity offers space for rising actors but rewards agility, strategy, and subtlety over rigid alliances or loyalty.

By weaving insights from both pieces, a full picture emerges: multipolarity is structured in theory but chaotic in practice. Major powers operate in domain-specific lanes, blending planning with improvisation, while middle and small powers must juggle opportunities, risks, and strategic subtleties to thrive. Success depends on agility, negotiation, and embracing discomfort. Multipolarity is not a harmonious roundtable; it is a dynamic, high-stakes Bollywood ensemble, where strategy, improvisation, and subtlety decide who shines.

**—By**
**Khushi & Rakshita**

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# Works Cited

Kohl, Ikrame. *Navigating Multipolarity: The Evolution of Foreign Policy Strategies through a Political Science Lens. Journal of International Relations and Policy,* vol. 6, no. 1, 2025, pp. 19–37.

Degterev, D. A. “Multipolar World Order: Old Myths and New Realities.” *Vestnik RUDN. International Relations*, vol. 19, no. 3, 2019, pp. 404–419.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# Current Affairs

## MULTIPOLARITY

# POLITY & GOVERNANCE

**1. EWS quota | 103rd amendment was a fraud on Constitution, petitioners tell Supreme Court**

Reservation cannot be implemented as a "poverty alleviation programme" for the socially and educationally forward classes, which is what the economically weaker sections (quota) do. Petitioners opened their challenge before a Constitution Bench led by former Chief Justice of India U.U. Lalit. The purpose of reservation is to provide representation or empowerment to classes of people who were historically denied access to education and employment.

**2. PM SVANidhi Scheme Extended to 2030**

The Union Cabinet has approved the restructuring and extension of the Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme until 31st March 2030 with an aim to benefit 1.15 crore street vendors, including 50 lakh new beneficiaries. Launched by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs in 2020, it aims to support street vendors affected by the Covid-19 pandemic by providing capital loans, interest subsidy on repayment, cashback for digital transactions, and social security through 'SVANidhi se Samriddhi'.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

**3. Educate Girls Wins Ramon Magsaysay Award for Advancing Girls' Education**

Indian non-profit Educate Girls has received the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award and dedicated the honour to thousands of field coordinators, volunteers and youth mentors who have helped bring millions of girls in the country back to school. Founded in 2007, Educate Girls works across more than 30,000 villages in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar to break cycles of poverty and illiteracy. With support from over 55,000 community-based volunteers, the non-profit has brought more than two million girls back to school.

# ECONOMICS

**1. India's GST Revenue Grows 4.6% to ₹1.96 Lakh Crore in October:**
India's Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections rose to ₹1.96 lakh crore in October 2025, according to official data released on November 1. This marks a 4.6% year-on-year increase, the slowest pace in 52 months, even as collections hit a five-month high. The previous month's revenue stood at ₹1.89 lakh crore, showing a steady rise in inflows October continued the trend of strong GST inflows, with total revenues staying above ₹1.8 lakh crore for the tenth consecutive month. The last time collections exceeded the ₹2 lakh crore mark was in May 2025, reflecting sustained consumption and tax compliance despite slower growth momentum.

**2. Small Finance Bank: RBI**
The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has returned Jana Small Finance Bank's (SFB) application for transition into a universal bank, citing non-fulfilment of eligibility criteria outlined under its 2024 guidelines for SFBs. Small Finance Banks are private institutions created to enhance financial inclusion in India. Announced in the Union Budget 2014–15 to boost financial inclusion, the idea stems from the 2009 Raghuram Rajan Committee's A Hundred Small Steps report. Eligibility Criteria: Resident individuals/professionals with 10 years of experience in banking and finance.

**3. RBI Gold Reserves Surpass USD 100 Billion:**
The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has stepped up its gold repatriation efforts, bringing back nearly 64 tonnes of gold from abroad between April and September 2025, raising India's gold reserves to USD 108 billion. Over the past decade, India saw its gold share in foreign exchange reserves almost double from less than 7% to nearly 15%. As of September 2025, the RBI held 880.8 tonnes of gold—575.8 tonnes in India, 290.3 tonnes abroad (Bank of England & Bank for International Settlements), and 14 tonnes as deposits.

# ENVIRONMENT & SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

**1. New Trapdoor Spider Species Discovery**

A new species of trapdoor spider, “Aptostichus ramirezae”, has been discovered by scientists from the University of California, Davis. Found in California’s coastal dunes, this hidden species was previously mistaken for its close relative “Aptostichus simus”. The discovery, published in “Ecology and Evolution”, emerged from a detailed genetic analysis confirming distinct genomic differences and highlighting urgent conservation concerns for fragile coastal ecosystems.

**2. Dragonfly & Damselfly Population Surge in Delhi**

Recent surveys across seven Delhi Development Authority (DDA) biodiversity parks reveal a rise in dragonfly and damselfly populations. Between September 25 and 27, 2025, a 54% increase was recorded compared to the previous year, with the total count rising from 8,630 to 13,253 individuals. Dragonflies and damselflies, collectively known as odonates, are vital bioindicators for wetland health and help control mosquito populations.

**3. EV Charging Stations under PM E-DRIVE Scheme**

The Government of India has launched operational guidelines for installing over 72,300 public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations across the country. This initiative under the PM E-DRIVE scheme aims to accelerate EV adoption by expanding accessible charging infrastructure. Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) has been designated as the Project Implementation Agency, and the subsidy will be disbursed in two tranches linked to compliance and performance benchmarks.

# HISTORY

**1. Neasden Temple, London**

King Charles III and Queen Camilla made a memorable visit to the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, widely known as Neasden Temple, in London. It was the first traditional Hindu stone temple in Europe and opened in 1995. The Guinness World Records 2000 once called it the "Biggest Hindu Temple outside India." The temple used 2,828 tonnes of Bulgarian limestone and 2,000 tonnes of Italian marble carved by 1,526 sculptors.

**2. Dilmun Civilization**

Kuwait's Failaka Island has just yielded a 4,000-year-old temple belonging to the powerful Bronze Age Dilmun civilisation. Dilmun was mainly located on the islands of Bahrain and Failaka Island in Kuwait. Dilmun acted as a central point for trade between Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley Civilisation. Goods like copper and pearls passed through Dilmun, making it a rich and powerful place.

**3. Rani Chennamma of Kittur**

The Government of India marked 200 years of Rani Chennamma's historic victory at Kittur (1824) with the release of a special Rs 200 commemorative coin. She was born on 23rd October 1778 and was trained in horse riding, sword fighting, and archery. She led an armed rebellion against the British and is revered as one of India's earliest freedom fighters.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# SOCIETY

**1. Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh Memorial & Tribal Freedom Fighters Museum**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh Memorial and Tribal Freedom Fighters Museum in Chhattisgarh on the state's 25th foundation day. Built at a cost of ₹50 crore across 10 acres, the museum will serve as a global centre for tribal culture, valour, and history. It features 16 thematic galleries combining historical artefacts, documentary footage, folk art, and digital storytelling to celebrate unsung tribal heroes.

**2. Mohammad Azharuddin Sworn in as Telangana Minister**

Former Indian cricket captain Mohammad Azharuddin has been sworn in as a minister in the Telangana cabinet, becoming the first member from the minority community in Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's council of ministers. With his induction, the cabinet strength has risen to 16, leaving room for two more ministers under the constitutional cap of 18. Azharuddin's inclusion carries major political weight ahead of the Jubilee Hills by-election.

**3. Food Grain Storage Infrastructure in India**

India's record foodgrain production in 2024-25 has told of the critical role of storage infrastructure in securing national food security. With a harvest of nearly 354 million tonnes, including over 117 million tonnes of wheat and 149 million tonnes of rice, India continues to lead globally. The Food Corporation of India manages centralised storage, forming the backbone of the Public Distribution System. India has 8,815 cold storages with a capacity exceeding 402 lakh metric tonnes.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**1. International Fleet Review 2026—India's Naval Diplomacy**

India has decided not to invite China, Pakistan, and Turkiye to the upcoming third International Fleet Review (IFR) scheduled in Visakhapatnam in February 2026. The event will be reviewed by President Droupadi Murmu and held alongside the Milan multilateral naval exercise and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS). So far, 55 nations have confirmed participation, including both the United States and Russia. Turkiye was excluded for its support of Pakistan during Operation Sindoor.

**2. India at World Summit for Social Development, Doha**

Union Minister for Labour and Employment Mansukh Mandaviya will represent India at the Second World Summit for Social Development (WSSD-2) in Doha, Qatar, from 4 to 6 November 2025. Between 2011 and 2023, 248 million Indians were lifted out of multidimensional poverty, reducing poverty levels to just 2.3 percent in 2022–23. India's social protection coverage has risen from 19 percent in 2015 to 64.3 percent in 2025.

**3. INS Gomati to Anchor Naval Shaurya Museum in Lucknow**

The decommissioned Indian Navy warship INS Gomati is set to find a new home in Lucknow as the centrepiece of Uttar Pradesh's upcoming 'Naval Shaurya Museum'. Commissioned in 1988, INS Gomati served the Indian Navy for over three decades before being decommissioned in May 2022. The museum project, expected to be completed by 2026, will highlight the Indian Navy's valour and technological evolution.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# INDIVIDUAL

**1. UGC Mandates SII Portal Registration for Foreign Students**

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has introduced a new rule mandating all foreign nationals studying in Indian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to register on the Study In India (SII) portal from the academic year 2025–26. The move seeks to improve tracking, safety, and compliance of foreign students in India. The SII portal will link study visas to the portal, ensuring better monitoring of student status and enhancing transparency in foreign student admissions.

**2. India's Sustainable Livestock Transformation Leadership**

At the 2nd Global Conference on Sustainable Livestock Transformation held by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome in 2025, India showcased its innovative and inclusive approaches. India's livestock sector contributes 31% to agricultural gross value added and 5.5% to the national economy. India is the world's largest milk producer and runs the world's largest livestock vaccination programme, administering more than 1.2 billion doses annually.

**3. 17th GRIHA Summit on Climate-Resilient Infrastructure**

Global leaders, policymakers, and sustainability experts will convene in New Delhi on November 3–4 for the 17th GRIHA Summit, themed "Innovate to Act for a Climate Resilient World." Organised by the GRIHA Council, the summit aims to drive scalable climate action within India's built environment through innovation, collaboration, and policy dialogue. The two-day event will include plenary and technical sessions with a focus on resilient infrastructure and sustainable construction.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# Current Affairs

## GENERAL

# AUGUST

## POLITY & GOVERNANCE

**1. Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, 2025**

The Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill proposes major electoral reforms, including updated delimitation norms and mechanisms to modernise constituency boundaries based on demographic changes. It aims to strengthen fair representation, reduce disparities between population and seat allocation, and introduce clearer legal frameworks for conducting future delimitation exercises.

**2. Reforms to the OCI Scheme**

India revised its Overseas Citizen of India rules to tighten entry norms and block individuals with criminal records. The changes introduce stricter security screening, enhanced digital monitoring of OCI visas, and stronger compliance requirements. The reform aims to improve national security while maintaining India's global outreach to its diaspora.

## ECONOMICS

**1. RBI's FREE-AI Committee Report**

The RBI's FREE-AI Committee released a sector-wide framework prescribing seven "sutras" for ethical AI adoption in finance. It highlights fairness, transparency, cybersecurity, and accountability in automated decision-making. The report warns that poorly governed AI could amplify systemic risks and urges banks to adopt robust audit trails, bias checks, and data-protection safeguards.

**2. Research Development and Innovation (RDI) Scheme**

The government approved the RDI Scheme to boost India's innovation ecosystem by investing in R&D, deep-tech manufacturing, and critical technologies. It targets sectors such as semiconductors, clean energy, electronics, and advanced materials. The scheme aims to push India into global value chains by strengthening industry–academia collaboration and incentivising private research investment.

## ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

**1. NISAR Mission**

NASA and ISRO are preparing to launch NISAR, one of the world's most advanced Earth-observation missions, designed to track land deformation, glacier retreat, wetlands, and climate-driven changes. Using dual-band radar, the mission will deliver high-resolution data essential for agriculture planning, disaster early warning, carbon monitoring, and climate change modelling.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

**2. Bharatiya Antariksh Station**

ISRO unveiled the first concept visuals of the Bharatiya Antariksh Station, India's proposed modular space station capable of supporting long-duration human missions and future space tourism. The project marks India's next leap after Gaganyaan, aiming to expand microgravity research, atmospheric studies, and international collaboration in space science and technology.

## SOCIETY

**1. Rudrastra – Asia's Longest Freight Train**

Indian Railways successfully operated "Rudrastra", a 45-km-long freight formation powered by seven locomotives, now the longest in Asia. The trial enhances heavy-haul capacity, decongests key routes, and demonstrates India's technological progress in freight logistics, signalling long-term benefits for supply-chain efficiency and cargo movement.

**2. Five Years of NEP 2020**

Five years since NEP 2020, India has advanced multidisciplinary undergraduate programmes, flexible curricula, stronger teacher-training systems, and digital learning through platforms like DIKSHA. The policy has accelerated foundational literacy efforts, vocational integration, and the transition to the 5+3+3+4 schooling structure, reflecting steady progress in systemic education reform.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**1. Armenia–Azerbaijan Peace Agreement**

Armenia and Azerbaijan signed a peace agreement at a global summit, marking a rare breakthrough after decades of conflict. The pact seeks long-term stability through demilitarisation, the reopening of trade and transport corridors, and structured confidence-building measures, signalling a major diplomatic milestone in the South Caucasus.

**2. India–Philippines Relations**

Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr's visit to India strengthened cooperation in defence, maritime security, healthcare, and digital technologies. Both nations reaffirmed alignment in the Indo-Pacific, expanded military and coastguard collaboration, and deepened economic ties amid heightened tensions in the South China Sea.

# SEPTEMBER

## POLITY & GOVERNANCE

**1. National Sports Governance Bill, 2025**

The National Sports Governance Bill received presidential assent, introducing term limits, transparency norms, and conflict-of-interest rules for sports bodies. It mandates athlete representation, financial audits, and stricter oversight to curb mismanagement and modernise India's sports administration ecosystem.

**2. Competition Commission of India – Digital Regulation Review**

A parliamentary panel sought a detailed report from the Ministry of Corporate Affairs on the CCI's role in regulating the digital economy. The review focuses on algorithmic transparency, market dominance, data-driven monopolies, and the need for updated competition tools to address emerging digital platforms.

## ECONOMICS

**1. Indian Ports Act, 2025**

The Indian Ports Act, 2025, replaces the colonial-era 1908 law to modernise port governance. It introduces a revised tariff framework, strengthens safety and environmental compliance, and enhances regulatory clarity for private players. The reform aims to boost maritime efficiency and position India as a competitive global logistics hub.

**2. Gig Workers and Labour Protection**

New discussions on gig worker legislation highlight the need for social security, grievance mechanisms, and baseline protections for platform workers. The framework seeks to ensure fair contracts, transparency in algorithms, and insurance coverage—addressing India's expanding gig economy employing millions across delivery, mobility, and digital platforms.

## ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

**1. Cloudburst Survey in Himalayan States**

A new multi-state survey assessed cloudburst and flash-flood patterns across the Himalayas, noting a rise in extreme rainfall events. The study highlights vulnerabilities in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and J&K, emphasising early-warning systems, watershed management, and climate-resilient infrastructure as urgent priorities.

**2. Revised Norms of the Green Credit Programme (GCP)**

The government revised GCP rules to prioritise canopy cover, native species plantation, and ecological restoration. Trade of credits has been restricted to prevent misuse, shifting the programme toward genuine environmental outcomes. The updates aim to strengthen climate action accountability across states and private institutions.

## SOCIETY

**1. Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025**

The Act establishes a comprehensive framework for licensing, age-gating, addiction safeguards, and financial transparency in online gaming. It differentiates games of skill from games of chance and introduces strict penalties for illegal betting, aiming to protect users and streamline a rapidly growing sector.

**2. Great Nicobar Island Project**

The Great Nicobar development project aims to build a transshipment port, airport, and ecotourism facilities while integrating sustainability safeguards. The project promises strategic value in the Indian Ocean but has raised concerns about ecological sensitivity, tribal rights, and long-term environmental impact.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**1. 25th SCO Summit**

At the 25th SCO Summit, India navigated complex geopolitical tensions while pushing for counterterrorism cooperation, supply-chain resilience, and respect for sovereignty. The summit showcased India's delicate balancing of regional interests amid divergent positions held by China, Pakistan, and Central Asian states.

**2. 'New Strategic EU–India Agenda'**

The EU and India unveiled a new strategic agenda to expand cooperation in trade, green technologies, digital governance, and security. The framework focuses on supply-chain diversification, semiconductor partnership, and Indo-Pacific coordination, signalling a major upgrade in EU–India ties.

# OCTOBER

## POLITY & GOVERNANCE

**1. PM SVANidhi 2.0**

The expanded PM SVANidhi 2.0 scheme encourages street vendors to access affordable credit, digital payment incentives, and social security benefits. The updated programme aims to deepen financial inclusion, streamline loan disbursement, and support urban livelihoods through targeted municipal outreach.

**2. Vice President of India**

C.P. Radhakrishnan assumed office as Vice President of India on September 9, 2025. His election marks a shift in parliamentary leadership and places him as the ex-officio Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha, where he will oversee legislative conduct and debates.

## ECONOMICS

**1. World Green Economy Summit**

The 11th World Green Economy Summit in Dubai focused on accelerating renewable energy adoption, climate finance, and green investment frameworks. Delegates highlighted the need for resilient infrastructure, carbon-neutral growth pathways, and global cooperation to meet net-zero targets in the coming decades.

**2. RBI Sets Up Payments Regulatory Board (PRB)**

The RBI established the Payments Regulatory Board to oversee digital payments, licensing norms, cybersecurity standards, and grievance redressal. The PRB aims to strengthen consumer protection, ensure interoperability, and regulate India's rapidly expanding digital payments ecosystem with clearer institutional accountability.

## ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

**1. NAVIC Standards Updated by BIS**

The Bureau of Indian Standards released updated NAVIC specifications, promoting wider adoption of India's satellite navigation system as an alternative to GPS. The move enhances self-reliance in positioning technology, improves accuracy for transport and telecom sectors, and supports future integration in consumer devices.

**2. Maitri II Research Station in Antarctica**

India is set to establish Maitri II, a new Antarctic research station focused on climate science, ice-core studies, and atmospheric monitoring. The station will replace the ageing Maitri base and strengthen India's long-term polar research capacity under the Antarctic Treaty System.

## SOCIETY

**1. Advancing Disaster Resilience in India**

A new policy push emphasises climate-adaptive urban planning, resilient infrastructure, and community-based disaster response systems. The approach integrates early-warning technologies, risk mapping, and stronger institutional coordination to reduce vulnerability to floods, cyclones, and extreme weather events.

**2. Kerala Declared Free from Extreme Poverty**

Kerala became India's first state to eliminate extreme poverty under multidimensional criteria. The achievement reflects strong public-health systems, targeted welfare programmes, and decentralised governance, setting a national benchmark for social development and inclusive growth.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**1. India–ASEAN Summit 2025**

India reaffirmed its Indo-Pacific strategy at the ASEAN Summit, expanding cooperation in supply-chain resilience, maritime security, digital connectivity, and green energy. The summit underscored ASEAN's centrality and India's role as a key regional partner amid shifting geopolitical dynamics.

**2. 8th Session of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)**

At the 8th ISA session, member states advanced plans for solar grid integration, concessional financing, and technological exchange. India highlighted initiatives for solar mini-grids, green hydrogen, and global solar manufacturing, strengthening ISA's role in the clean-energy transition.

# Student Submissions

# LIVES ON THE MARGINS: THE MUSAHAR COMMUNITY OF BIHAR

The Musahar community of Bihar remains one of the most marginalised groups in India. Their history, cultural life, and current socio-economic conditions reflect the burden of long-standing exclusion shaped by caste, landlessness, and poverty. Yet, their shared traditions show strong resilience and a clear identity.

The term "Musahar" comes from the Bhojpuri words "musa", which means "rat", and "ahar", which means "food". This term references a survival practice during extreme scarcity. What started as a coping strategy became a lasting stigma imposed by dominant castes. Historically, the Musahars are believed to have migrated from the forested Chota Nagpur region to the plains of Bihar, where they became bonded labourers under powerful landlords. Colonial policies like the Permanent Settlement of 1793 reinforced these hierarchies, and land reforms after independence rarely helped them because redistribution often overlooked the poorest families.

Government data reveals the extent of this disadvantage. The Bihar Caste Survey 2023 shows that Musahars make up about 3.1 per cent of Bihar's population and that 94 per cent of households remain landless, with nearly 90 per cent living below the poverty line. The Socio-Economic and Caste Census 2011 notes that most Musahar families live in kutcha houses and lack access to toilets and piped water. The Census of India 2011 reports their literacy rate at only 9.8 per cent, with women facing especially low levels of education.



*Musahar community in Bihar's Darbhanga district still live in extreme poverty and face social stigma.*

Social discrimination continues to limit opportunities. Musahar hamlets are often located on the fringes of villages, and families frequently encounter exclusion at hand pumps, temples, and local markets. Gender inequalities worsen these challenges. The National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5, 2019–21) reveals high levels of anaemia and child stunting among Scheduled Caste women and children in Bihar. Areas dominated by Musahars often experience even poorer outcomes due to limited diets, heavy duties, and inadequate access to health care.

Despite these hardships, Musahar cultural life remains lively. Worship of local deities like Masan Baba and Goraiya Baba reflects a belief system closely tied to rural life. Festivals such as Jur Sitai and Naya Khana celebrate agricultural cycles and

strengthen community ties. Oral stories and songs preserve memories of struggle and foster a shared sense of continuity and pride.

Religious change has also become more noticeable. While many Musahars continue to practise Hinduism, an increasing number have adopted Christianity in search of dignity, equality, and access to services like schooling and healthcare offered by mission organisations. These changes can provoke local resistance, yet they show a broader desire for respect and social mobility.

Economic hardship remains the main barrier. The Bihar Caste Survey 2023 shows that most Musahar households rely on casual daily wage labour, with fewer than one per cent securing stable formal employment. Average household income often stays below eight thousand rupees per month. Seasonal migration to states like Punjab and Haryana provides temporary work but separates families and exposes workers to exploitation. The ban on liquor production in Bihar took away a small but vital source of supplementary income that used to support household needs.

Educational exclusion further limits upward mobility. Many children drop out early due to financial pressures, household responsibilities, and discriminatory treatment in classrooms. While literacy has risen to about 19.7 per cent, according to the Bihar Caste Survey 2023, the gap with the state average remains wide. Without more inclusive schooling and ongoing academic support, education cannot effectively promote social advancement.

A meaningful path forward requires structural change. Land and housing security should be prioritised to stabilise livelihoods. Education needs local teacher recruitment, remedial programmes, and strong anti-bias measures. Health improvements rely on nutrition initiatives, maternal care, and community-based health workers. Livelihood programmes, such as skill training, microcredit, and support for women's groups, can lessen reliance on unstable Simplifying documentation processes for Aadhar and voter registration can strengthen political rights and access to welfare.



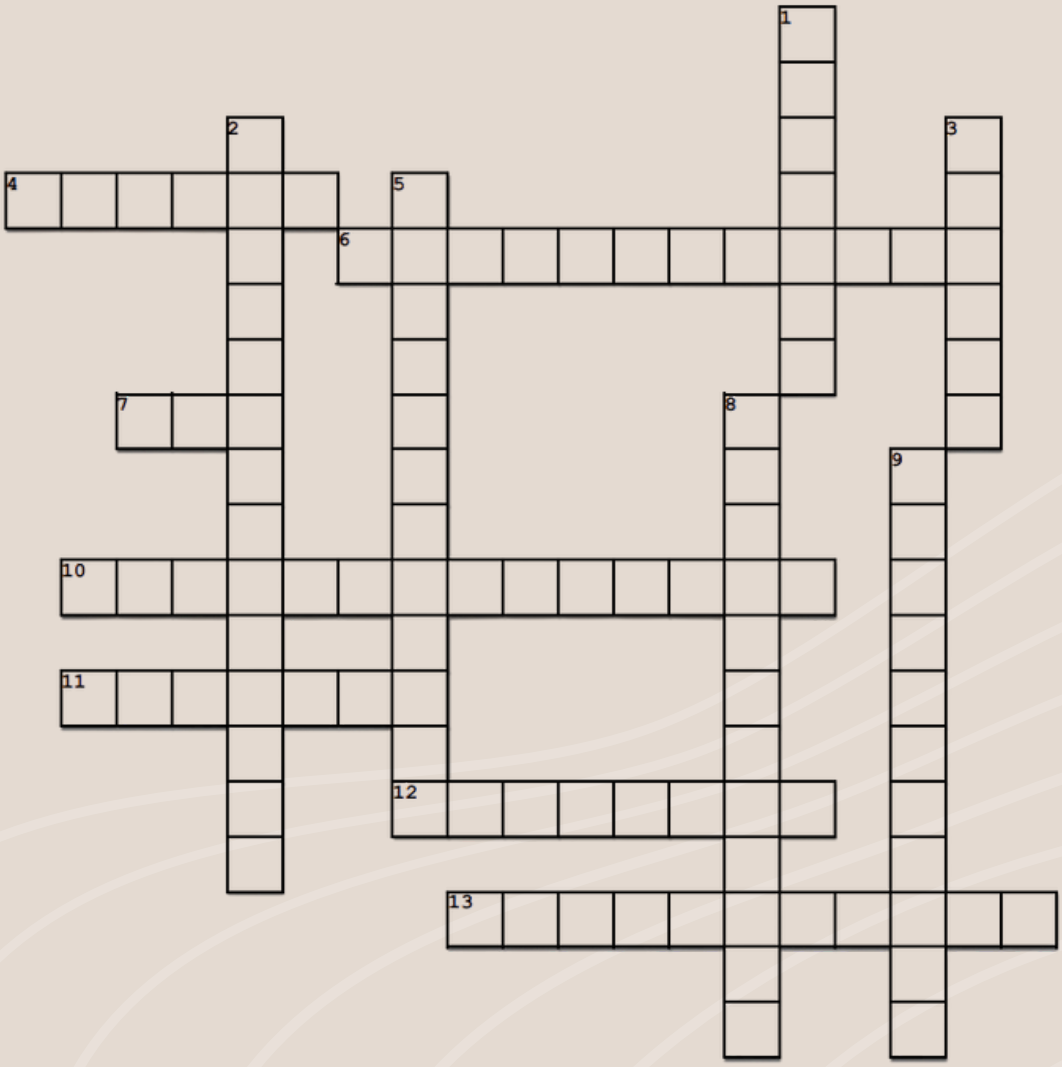

*Smile Foundation educating children from the Musahar tribe*

The experience of the Musahar community shows both deprivation and resilience. Government surveys highlight the seriousness of their marginalisation, while their cultural traditions reveal enduring strength. With sustained policy commitment and authentic social inclusion, the Musahars can strive for dignity and full participation in Bihar's social and economic life.

**—Paritosh Chauhan**
**II B.A. (Hons) History**

# CROSSWORD

## TEST YOUR GLOBAL IQ!




Across
4. A formal agreement between two or more countries, like the Paris Agreement on climate
6. A decrease in the rate of inflation, a slowdown in the rise of prices
7. A unified levy replacing a maze of indirect taxes across India (brought by the 101st Amendment)
10. The authority of a court to examine the constitutionality of executive and legislative acts
11. Detroit of India
12. City where the protocol to protect the ozone layer was signed
13. The policy of extending a country's power and influence through colonisation, use of military force, or other means

Down
1. A formal document issued by an administrative body containing instructions, orders, or a declaration of policy
2. The doctrine that actions are right if they are useful or for the benefit of the majority
3. A detailed enumeration of the population, often conducted every ten years, which determines delimitation
5. A legislative structure that ensures representation of both the people and states in lawmaking
8. The principle that a higher-level body (like Parliament) can transfer power to a lower body (like a municipality)
9. Study of coins

# TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. Which 13-day Cold War standoff pushed the U.S. and USSR to the brink of nuclear war?
- **The Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)**

2. What 2021 security partnership deepened military-technology sharing among the U.S., U.K., and Australia as part of the Indo-Pacific strategy?
- **AUKUS**

3. Which country is now the top trade partner for over 120 nations, reshaping global supply chains worldwide?
- **China**

4. What surprising kind of "resource-sharing club" did Europe create after World War II—a club so simple that it eventually grew into today's European Union?
- **Coal and Steel Club**

5. Which South Asian country became the first to use India's UPI internationally for cross-border digital payments?
- **Bhutan (2021)**

6. Which narrow maritime chokepoint handles nearly one-third of the world's shipping each year?
- **The Strait of Malacca**

7. Which country declined to join BRICS after being invited, following a policy shift toward closer alignment with the United States and the West?
- **Argentina**

8. Which country became the world's top exporter of high-end microchips during the post-pandemic supply chain restructuring?
- **Taiwan**

9. Which early cyber incident became the first major network attack in history, occurring even before the modern internet existed?
- **The 1988 Morris Worm**

10. Which climate pledge has been promised by wealthy nations since 2009 but still hasn't been fully delivered, becoming a symbol of North–South climate tensions?
- **The USD 100 billion annual climate finance commitment**

11. Which international institution recently declared that "no single country will hold more than 15% of global GDP by 2050, signalling the long-term rise of a truly multipolar world?
- **The OECD**

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

# Meet The Team

## CONTENT TEAM



**Hridayjyoti Sarma**
*Editor-in-Chief*



**Navdeep Kaur**
*Conten Team Head*



**Tanish Sethi**



**Gauri Joshi**



**Satminson Chongloi**



**Shubhanan Shukla**



**Varghese T Mathew**



**Nikhil J Palakeel**



**Ishaan Chhabra**



**Sneha Bisht**

# RESEARCH TEAM



**Ananya Jain**
*Content & Research Team head*



**Anchal Shekhawat**
*Research Team Head*



**Nysa D'Cunha**



**Aaav Chandwaskar**

# CURRENT AFFAIRS TEAM



**Rijul Zoe Alfred**
*Current Affairs Team Head*



**Rakshita Mishra**



**Khushi Mahajan**



**Zarah Kumar**

# DESIGN TEAM



**Sharon Giana Obediah**
*Design Team Head*



**Isha Vema**
*Design Team Co-Head*



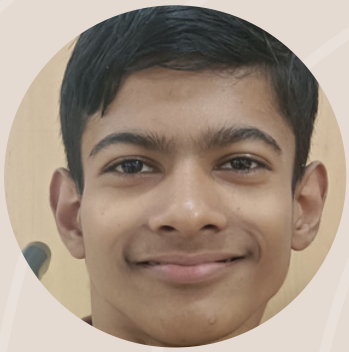
**Ishita Singh**



**Uttara Malik**



**Jishant Sapru**



**Vaibhav Kanoojia**



**Susheen Shahabadi**



**Nirja Jain**

# ODD-SEM OVERVIEW

## ORIENTATION

The Orientation on 28 August 2025 welcomed around 100 first-year students, offering them a structured introduction to CSF's verticals, initiatives, and council members. Interactive activities and discussions ensured enthusiastic participation and set a strong foundation for the year.

## TALKS & LECTURES

**• The Civil Servant's Mind with Dr. Tanu Jain**

With 200+ students in attendance, this was one of CSF's highest-turnout events of the semester. Dr. Jain spoke on consistency in preparation, dealing with pressure, and the ethics of administration, responding to over a dozen student queries.

**• Qualities for an Officer with Maj. Gen. Yash Mor**

Attended by 120+ students, this session explored the values that shape leadership in defence and civil services. Themes included moral courage, empathy, clarity of thought, and decision-making under stress.

**• The Evolution of Indian Culture with Parvez Dewan**

A focused, high-quality interaction with 40+ participants, this dialogue highlighted India's pluralism through lived cultural histories, administrative experience, and syncretic spiritual traditions.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM

## COMPETITIONS

**• CartoGenius Quiz Competition**

Held on 26 September, this map-based quiz saw 40 participants competing through preliminary and mains rounds. With a transparent scoring model and on-spot tie-breakers, the competition tested spatial intelligence and quick reasoning. Prizes were awarded to the top three teams.

**• Online Essay Writing Competition**

With submissions from students across disciplines, this competition encouraged analytical depth and creative expression. Three winners were selected after a rigorous evaluation of essays ranging from 500–600 words.

# ODD-SEM OVERVIEW

## ONLINE INTERVIEWS

**• Interview with Dr. Uttam Kumar Sinha**

This session provided an intimate and in-depth conversation on transboundary rivers, climate diplomacy, and the political dimensions of water. Dr. Sinha discussed how treaties, institutions, and geopolitics intersect in South Asia.

## VISITS

**• Indian Council of World Affairs**

Across August to November, CSF delegations attended six major ICWA events—including a prime ministerial lecture, book discussions, panel sessions, and geopolitical dialogues. A total of around 55 student participations were recorded across these visits.

Themes ranged from Indo-Pacific diplomacy and Indus water negotiations to minilateralism, AI governance, and India–Sri Lanka relations. These engagements provided students with rare policy-level exposure to contemporary international affairs.

**• Emergency@50: Lest We Forget – Inter-Generational Dialogue**

On 11 October 2025, 23 students attended the national dialogue “Emergency@50: Lest We Forget” at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre. Featuring prominent policymakers, journalists, and scholars, the event examined civil liberties, institutional integrity, and democratic resilience. Through panels, exhibitions, and film screenings, students reflected on the Emergency’s legacy and its relevance to ethical leadership and civic responsibility today.

# THANK YOU

It has been a pleasure working with the journal team. We would like to take a moment to thank all the people and their collective effort that made the Manthan a great success. Firstly, we would like to extend our gratitude to the Principal, Prof. John Varghese, for giving CSF the opportunity to continue its activities. Next, we would like to thank our Staff Advisor, Dr. Sudipto Basu, for his kind support throughout the entire semester across all our events. Also, our sincere appreciation goes to the entire Civil Services Forum Council for overseeing the process and showing academic integrity and support in all the stages of the Journal. Last but not least, we would like to thank the backbone of this project, the entire journal team, for their relentless commitment and dedication. From research and writing to design and editing—your coordination and diligence allowed us to enjoy the process greatly and enabled this project to attain a timely completion. With gratitude to all the contributors, we present the first edition of Manthan. We strive with great optimism towards future volumes reflecting the same level of commitment to excellence.

Warm Regards,
Civil Services Forum

As the global order reshapes,
Manthan traces the rise of many powers.
This edition reads the currents of change in a world moving beyond the old.

CIVIL SERVICES FORUM