



INDIA - USA RELATIONS

India-US Bilateral Relations – A Brief

70th BPSC MAINS CLASS NOTES

Written By:

Bihar Naman GS Research Team, Patna- 16

Introduction

India and the United States share a multifaceted and strategic partnership, rooted in shared democratic values, economic interests, and security priorities. Over the decades, this relationship has evolved from a hesitant engagement during the Cold War era to a comprehensive global partnership in the 21st century.

In 2025, India-US relations are marked by robust cooperation across diverse sectors, including defense, trade, technology, and cultural exchange. The strategic partnership is underpinned by common goals of promoting regional stability, countering terrorism, and fostering economic growth.

Both nations collaborate extensively in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, space exploration, and cybersecurity, positioning themselves as leaders in global innovation. Additionally, defense ties have deepened through joint military exercises, defense procurement, and strategic dialogues, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region.

Economic engagement remains a cornerstone of bilateral relations, with the U.S. being one of India's largest trading partners. Ongoing negotiations for a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) reflect the commitment to expanding trade and investment opportunities. However, challenges such as trade imbalances, political dynamics, and differing climate change priorities continue to shape diplomatic engagements.

Amidst a rapidly changing global geopolitical landscape, the India-US partnership stands as a pillar of stability and progress. As both nations navigate complex regional and global challenges, their collaboration is pivotal in shaping a secure, prosperous, and sustainable future.

High-Level Exchanges

- Regular dialogue between the Leaders is an important element of the expanding bilateral ties. The outcomes of these visits have been instrumental in strengthening the multifaceted bilateral ties.

- There is regular high-level interaction with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Biden. The respective leaders had several bilateral meetings and met on the sidelines of multilateral events. Prime Minister also participated in virtual Summits convened by President Biden including Quad, I2U2 (India, Israel, USA and UAE), Summit for Democracy and other events.
- PM Modi made his first State Visit to US from 21-23 June 2023 at the invitation of President Biden. In addition to a bilateral meeting with President Biden, he addressed a Joint Meeting of US' Congress and interacted with business and thought leaders. PM Modi had visited the US in September 2021 for the first in-person Quad Leaders' Summit on 24 September 2021 and had a bilateral meeting with President Biden.
- President Biden visited New Delhi from 8-10 September 2023 to attend G-20 Leaders' Summit. President Biden and PM Modi had a bilateral meeting and co-hosted a group of G20 leaders to accelerate investments in high-quality infrastructure projects and development of economic corridors through the India Middle East Europe Economic Connectivity Corridor and the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGI).

Recent Visits from U.S.

- U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan visited India on January 5-6, 2025, for discussions with his Indian counterpart, Ajit Doval, and other senior officials. The meetings focused on a wide range of bilateral, regional, and global issues, aiming to finalize ongoing initiatives before the U.S. administration transition. During his visit, Sullivan delivered a significant foreign policy speech at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi, highlighting the importance of U.S.-India relations in the evolving geopolitical landscape.
- NSA Jake Sullivan visited in June 2024 for Second ICET Summit.
- US Trade Representative Ambassador Katherine Tai for 14th India-US Trade Policy Forum in January 2024.
- Senior Advisor to the President for International Climate Policy John Podesta in August 2024.
- Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Richard Verma visited India in February 2024 and again in August 2024.

Recent Visits to US:

- On February 13, 2025, President Donald J. Trump hosted Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for an official working visit in Washington, D.C. The leaders discussed enhancing defense cooperation, with President Trump announcing plans to increase military sales to India, including the potential provision of F-35 fighter jets. Additionally, agreements were made to boost India's imports of U.S. oil and gas, aiming to reduce the trade deficit between the two countries.
- From December 24 to 29, 2024, India's External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar, visited the United States. During this period, he engaged with officials from both the outgoing Biden administration and the incoming Trump administration. The discussions aimed to ensure a smooth diplomatic transition and to lay the groundwork for continued collaboration on key issues such as defense, trade, and technology.

- EAM and Secretary Blinken met in Tokyo on the sidelines of Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in July 2024. Earlier, EAM and Secretary Blinken attended the Munich Security Conference in February 2024. EAM met Secretary Blinken in Cambodia on sidelines of EAS in November 2022, August 2022, on sidelines of G20 FMM in Bali in July 2022, and on sidelines of G7 Summit in June 2022.
- Raksha Mantri visited the US in August 2024 and earlier in April 2022 for 4th 2+2 Ministerial Meeting.
- Foreign Secretary visited Washington DC from 9-12 April 2024 and held meetings at White House, State Department, Department of Commerce, Department of Defense. He also interacted with prominent think tanks and the business community. He had earlier visited Washington DC in June 2023 for the inaugural Strategic Trade Dialogue and other bilateral interactions.
- Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) Shri Ajay Sood visited Washington DC and California in August 2024 for second bilateral meeting of Quantum Coordination Mechanism and related lab and industry visits.

Parliamentary Exchanges

India-US relations enjoy strong bipartisan support in the US Congress. The India Caucus in the US Congress comprising the Senate India Caucus and the House Caucus on India and Indian Americans is one of the largest single country Caucus in the US Congress with more than 100 members.

Defence Cooperation

- India-US defence cooperation is based on "New Framework for India-US Defence Cooperation", which was renewed for ten years in 2015. In 2016, the defence relationship was designated as a Major Defence Partnership (MDP). On 30 July 2018, India was moved into the Tier-1 of the US Department of Commerce's Strategic Trade Authorization license exception.
- Defence cooperation is multifaceted and includes regular institutionalized bilateral dialogue, military exercises, and defence procurements. At the apex of dialogue mechanisms is the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue co-chaired by the Minister of External Affairs and Minister of Defence and the US Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense. This dialogue provides guidance on political, military and strategic issues. The fifth 2 + 2 Ministerial Dialogue took place in November 2023 in New Delhi. RM visited the US in August 2024. During the visit, RM met with Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and NSA Jake Sullivan. He interacted with US' defense industry and Indian community. Security of Supply Arrangement (SoSA) and MoA

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By- Santosh Kashyap

regarding Assignment of Liaison Officers were signed during the visit. India shall accordingly deploy an LO to US Special Operations Command (US SOCOM) in Tampa, Florida.

- The Defense Policy Group (DPG) headed by the Defence Secretary and Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) provides a platform for a comprehensive review of defense dialogues/mechanisms. The 17th DPG was held in Washington D.C. in May 2023. Defence procurement from the US are growing and amount to more than US\$20 billion. Major US origin platforms in use include C-130J, C-17, Apache, Chinook, MH60R helicopters, and P8I. Other bilateral dialogue mechanisms are the Defense Production and Procurement Group (DPPG), Joint Technology Group (JTG), bilateral Maritime Security Dialogue, Industrial Security Summit and the Defence Trade and Technology Initiative.
- Since 2022, three US' Maritime Sealift Command ships have visited Indian Shipyards for repair and allied services based on commercial contracts.
- Important defence agreements which provide the framework for interaction and cooperation are: Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (2016); Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (2018); Industrial Security Agreement (2019); and Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (2020) and Memorandum of Intent for Defense Innovation Cooperation (2018).
- The India-US Defence Industrial Cooperation Roadmap which concluded in May 2023, seeks to fast-track technology cooperation and co-production in areas of mutual interest. The India-US Defense Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS X) – a network of universities, incubators, corporates, think tanks, and private investment stakeholders was launched in June 2023. The second INDUS X Summit was held in New Delhi in February 2024.
- Military to Military exchanges take place through high-level visits, Exercises, Training Courses, and regular service-specific bilateral mechanisms. India has the largest number of military exercises with USA, which are growing in scale and complexity. Important bilateral exercises include Yudh Abhyas (Army), Vajra Prahar (Special Forces), Malabar (Navy), Cope India (Air Force), and Tiger Triumph (tri-services). Red Flag, RIMPAC, CUTLASS Express, Sea Dragon, Milan are some of the Multilateral Exercises in which the two countries participate. INS Satpura was the first Indian naval ship to visit US mainland when it came to San Diego in August 2022 as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. India joined the multilateral Combined Maritime Force (CMF) based in Bahrain, as an Associate Partner in April 2022. Counter Terrorism Cooperation
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- Cooperation in counterterrorism is one of the pillars of the bilateral partnership featuring information exchange, capacity building, operational cooperation and regular dialogue through the India-U.S. Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism. In 2017, both sides initiated a dialogue on domestic and international terrorist designations listing proposals. The last JWG on CT and Designations Dialogue was in Washington DC on 5 March 2024.
- In February 2025, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Washington, marking a significant step in reinforcing defense ties between the two nations. Both countries have committed to deepening their partnership, with Modi emphasizing a collaborative vision: "When America and India work together, when it's MAGA plus MIGA, it becomes mega—a mega partnership for prosperity."

Security Cooperation

- The Homeland Security Dialogue (HSD) at the Home Minister/Secretary of Department of Homeland Security level was established in 2010. There are five joint subgroups under HSD dealing with Border and Global Supply Chain Security, Law Enforcement Engagements and Cooperation, Capacity Building, and Aviation Security. US'
- Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Deputy Secretary Kristie Canegallo and India's Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla co-chaired the US-India Homeland Security Dialogue in February 2024 in New Delhi. India also participated in the U.S. led Counter Ransomware Initiative meeting in Washington D.C. in November 2023.

Counter-Narcotics Cooperation

- The fourth bilateral Counter Narcotics Working Group (CNWG) meeting was held in Washington D.C. in July 2023. India also joined the US-led Global Coalition on Synthetic Drugs.

Cyber Security Cooperation

- The India-US Cyber Framework signed in September 2016. India-US Cyber Dialogue was held in Washington D.C. in September 2022, led by respective DNSAs. India also participated in the US led Counter Ransomware Initiative meeting in Washington D.C. in November 2022.
- US is the largest trading partner of India with over all bilateral trade in goods and services of \$190.1 billion for calendar year 2023. (Source: US Census data)
- During FY 2023-24, US was the third largest source of FDI into India with inflows of USD 4.99 billion accounting for almost 9% of total FDI equity inflows. Many Indian companies are investing in the US and adding value. According to a CII study released in April 2023, 163 Indian companies invested over \$40 billion in the US and created over 425,000 direct jobs.
- An Investment Incentive Agreement between our Ministry of Finance and U.S. International Development Finance Cooperation [DFC] was signed in 2022 to enable equity investment,

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co-insurance, grants, feasibility studies, and technical assistance. As of January 2024, DFC's India portfolio stood at close to 4.0 billion across 100+ projects.

Dialogue Mechanisms:

- India-US Trade Policy Forum (TPF): Established in 2005, TPF discusses market access and trade related matters. The 14th TPF was held in New Delhi, India, on January 12, 2024, led by CIM and USTR.
- India-US Commercial Dialogue: Focuses on cooperation in standards, ease of doing business, travel & tourism, and other important issues of commercial significance. It is co-chaired by CIM and the U.S. Secretary of Commerce. The fifth Commercial Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 10 March 2023.
- India-US CEO Forum: Established in 2005, the Forum meets on sidelines of the Commercial Dialogue and submits recommendations to the Commercial dialogue. The CEO forum met on March 10, 2023 in New Delhi. On November 30, 2023, the Indian Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal and the US Secretary of Commerce Ms. Gina Raimondo convened a virtual review of the India US CEO forum as a follow-up to the March 2023 meeting.
- Information and Communications Technology: A Joint Working Group on ICT was established in 2005 to bring together government and industry from both sides to discuss cooperation in electronics & IT sector. The last meeting was in May 2023 in Washington DC.
- India – US Economic and Financial Partnership Dialogue (EFP): Led by our finance minister and the US Secretary of the Treasury, the 9th ministerial EFP Dialogue was held in November 2022 in New Delhi. 11th Financial and Regulatory Dialogue was held in March 2023, in Gandhinagar.
- Indo-Pacific Economic Framework [IPEF]: India joined the launch of the IPEF in May 2022 along with 13 Partner countries. India joined three of the four Pillars of IPEF, related to supply chains (2), tax and anti-corruption (4) and clean energy (3). Text of Pillar 2 'Supply chain resilience' was finalized in May 2023 which has come into force since February 2024. IPEF Ministerial Meetings this year, were held in March 2024 and June 2024. Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) Clean Economy Investor Forum ("Investor Forum") was held on 6 June 2024 at the Sands Expo and Convention Centre, Singapore.

Strategic Energy Partnership/ Climate & Clean Energy Agenda 2030.

India and US have a strong bilateral partnership in energy sector. In April 2021, an India-US Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership was launched, with two tracks i.e. Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP); and Climate Action and Finance Mobilization Dialogue (CAFMD). The SCEP has five pillars:

- 1) Power & Energy Efficiency,
 - 2) Renewable Energy,
 - 3) Responsible Oil & Gas,
 - 4) Sustainable Growth, and
 - 5) Emerging
- ✓ An Energy Storage Task Force supports integration of renewable energy needed to support the clean energy transition. The last SCEP Ministerial meeting led by US Energy Secretary and Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas was held in Delhi, India in July 2023.
 - ✓ Hydrocarbon trade was US\$ 13.6 billion in FY 2023-24.

- ✓ The US joined the International Solar Alliance in 2021 and ratified the ISA Agreement in 2022. US is also a Member of the Coalition for Disaster Relief Infrastructure (CDRI). India participates in the Major Economies Forum hosted annually by the US with focus on climate actions.
- ✓ In August 2023 India and the US launched US-India Renewable Energy Technology Action Platform (RETAP), to enable lab-to-lab collaboration, pilot projects, and testing of innovative technologies and capacitive development.
- ✓ The two countries agreed to a payment security mechanism financed through both public and private funds for providing financial guarantee to e-Bus manufacturers/operators in India.
- ✓ To lower the cost of capital and accelerate the deployment of greenfield renewable energy, battery storage and emerging green technology projects in India, in September 2023. Towards this end, India's National Investment and Infrastructure Fund and the U.S. Development Finance Corporation exchanged letters of interest to each provide up to US\$500 million to anchor a renewable infrastructure investment fund. The terms and conditions of the fund are under discussion.

S&T and Space Cooperation

- The Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement signed in October 2005, was renewed for 10 years in September 2019. The Indo-US Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF) promotes cooperation in S&T and Innovation. U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) and India's DST, MeITY and DBT signed three different Implementation Arrangements to support research collaboration in AI, advanced communication networks, quantum science, Internet of Things, Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical System, biotechnology manufacturing, bio safety and biosecurity etc.
- India and the US have a long history of cooperation in the civil space arena in Earth Observation, Satellite Navigation, Space Science and Exploration. Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has robust civilian space cooperation with the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA); National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); US Geological Survey (USGS) and academic institutions. India-US have setup a dialogue mechanism "Civil Space Joint Working Group (CSJWG)" for continuous evaluation and fostering the Space Cooperation. The last meeting of CSJWG was held in Washington D.C. in January 2023, co-chaired by Scientific Secretary, ISRO Associate Administrator of NASA and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Department of State.
- ISRO and NASA are developing a microwave remote sensing satellite for Earth observation, NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR). NASA/JPL will contribute Lband Radar, while ISRO will contribute S-band Radar. S-band SAR from SAC/ISRO Ahmedabad was delivered to NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in May 2021. An integrated payload was sent to URSC/ISRO Bangalore for integration with Satellite. Currently, the satellite is under the final stage of integration and testing and expected to be launched from Shriharikota, India later in 2024. The launch of Indian satellite GSAT20 onboard the US' launch vehicle Falcon-9 is scheduled to take place from Florida, US in September 2024.
- ISRO availed NASA/JPL's Deep Space Network Antenna support Chandrayaan-2 mission, and Chandrayaan-3 satellite missions. ISRO and NASA successfully implemented Professional Scientific Personnel Exchange Programme (PESEP) in earth observation applications under

the framework signed in April 2017. During the last CSJWG discussion in January 2023, ISRO and NASA agreed to expand the scope for including space science, Earth science, and human spaceflight under PESEP.

- In January 2024, ISRO and NASA signed a Joint Statement of Intent to deepen their partnership in space exploration and mount a joint effort to the International Space Station. ISRO and NASA signed an IA for Strategic framework for cooperation in human spaceflight in March 2024.
- Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) Shri Ajay Sood visited Washington DC and California in August 2024 for the second bilateral meeting of Quantum Coordination Mechanism and related lab and industry visits.
- NASA Administrator Senator Bill Nelson visited the India during November/December 2023. He had meetings with MOS PMO and Dy. NSA in New Delhi. He visited ISRO HQ and had a meeting with Chairman ISRO/ Secretary DOS.
- Initiative for Critical and Emerging Technology [iCET] was launched by the National Security Advisors in Washington, DC on 31 January 2023 to facilitate strategic technology collaborations in critical and emerging technologies, co-development, and coproduction, connect the respective innovation ecosystems especially in AI, quantum, telecom, space, biotech, semiconductors, emerging defence technologies and biotech. The second iCET meeting was held in New Delhi on 13-14 June 2023. An intersessional review of iCET was held in New Delhi on December 4, 2023, between the US Principal Deputy National Security Advisor Jon Finer and the Indian Deputy National Security Advisor Vikram Misri. The second iCET Summit, chaired by the two NSAs, was held in New Delhi on 17 July 2024.

Health Cooperation

- There is a longstanding research collaboration in the health sector to develop new therapeutics and diagnostics. Under the Bilateral Vaccine Action Program (VAP), a ROTAVAC® vaccine to counter diarrhea in children was developed by an Indian company at an affordable cost. The 34th JWG of VAP was held in Washington DC in 2022.
- There are more than 200 active collaborations between US National Institutes of Health network of labs and leading research agencies, to deliver affordable health-care solutions. India supplies about 40% of generic formulations marketed in US. Indian pharma companies have manufacturing units in about 14 locations in US. Indian companies, known for quality generic medicines have the largest US Food and Drug Administration compliant pharmaceutical plants. Indian Institutions are collaborating to promote Ayurveda.
- The India-US Health Dialogue is led by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of India and US Department of Health and Human Services. In 2021, the fourth Dialogue was held in New Delhi. The fifth dialogue was held in Washington DC during 9-12 Oct 2023 which discussed several areas of cooperation including pandemic preparedness, health safety and security, digital health, vaccine development, maternal and child health, traditional medicines, food and drug administrations, etc.
- India participated in the US-led Global Action Plan (GAP) launched in February 2022 to bridge policy gaps and end the COVID.
- Under the US initiative, Cancer Moonshot, launched in June 2023, India's DBT and US National Cancer Institute facilitate public and private sector's commitments to reduce the


burden of cancer in India. First meeting of the India- US Cancer Dialogue under the Cancer Moonshot programme was held on 5-6 August 2024 in New Delhi.

Education & Cultural Cooperation

- Education partnership is an important pillar of India-US ties with strong linkages and history of higher education collaborations. Under the Fulbright-Nehru binational Program, both countries support Fulbright-Nehru scholarships and grants to US and Indian scholars, professionals, and students. The Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) was launched by India in 2015 to facilitate visits by 1000 US teachers annually to teach in India. GIAN has been extended to other countries also.
- The India-US Working Group on Education and Skill Development (WGESD) was launched in May 2023 to focus on skilling and vocational education, certification and recognition, matchmaking between higher educational institutions and engaging with private sector. Subcommittees on Linkages in higher education, Leveraging Private Sector, Skilling and Vocational Training, and Certification and Recognition were launched in February 2024.
- The US is one of the most favored destinations of Indian students for higher education. As of May 2024, there are about 3,51,000 Indian students, mostly in graduate (masters) programs in STEM fields. As per the US State Department's website, Indian students in the US contribute about \$8 billion annually to the US economy.
- In September 2023, the Council of Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT Council), and the Association of American Universities (AAU) signed an MOU to establish India-US Global Challenges Institute which will bring together leading research and higher education institutions for S&T collaboration in sustainable energy and agriculture, health and pandemic preparedness, semiconductor technology and manufacturing, advanced materials, telecommunications, artificial intelligence, and quantum science.

- The academic collaboration has been multifaceted, encompassing joint research, faculty and student exchange programs, joint degree programs, and other activities. There are growing multi-institutional collaborative education partnerships in critical and emerging technologies. IIT Bombay joined the Chicago Quantum Exchange as an international partner. Several IITs have strong ongoing academic research partnerships with universities in the US.

- Cultural cooperation is rich and manifests in diverse ways. There are India-focused educational programs in universities and educational institutions. Indian Embassy and Consulates organize various cultural events to showcase diverse facets of Indian culture. Artists and technical experts from both countries undergo training in each other's institutions. Programs highlighting Indian cultural heritage, Indian festivals, and initiatives such as International Day of Yoga, World Hindi Diwas, Gandhi Jayanti, Ayurveda day are organized from time to time with participation of Indian diaspora and friends of India. Indian



The image shows the cover of the 'EDITORIAL MAINS SERIES' for February 2024 to January 2025. It features a collage of news headlines and a portrait of Vijay Singh. The headlines include: 'CONGRESS TO RAISE CONSTITUTION ISSUE IN BIHAR POLLS TOO', 'Japan attempts a bold balancing act between guns and butter', 'HARPANA TO INTRODUCE BHAGHAT GITA IN CURRIC', 'THE NEW WATER BOMB', and 'Support for Congress at its lowest, but its'. The cover also mentions '70th BPSC' and 'UPPSC'. At the bottom, it says 'Bihar Naman Publication (Bihar Naman GS: An Institute For UPSC & BPSC)'.

Diaspora cultural organizations are engaged in actively promoting Indian culture especially in younger generation.

- India and the US signed the first ever 'Cultural Property Agreement' in July 2024 in New Delhi to prevent and curb the illicit trafficking of antiquities.

Economic and Trade Cooperation

The economic partnership has seen notable developments. U.S. pharmaceutical company Amgen announced a \$200 million investment in a new technology center in Hyderabad, India, focusing on leveraging AI and data science for drug development. This initiative aims to employ around 2,000 people by the end of the year, exemplifying the growing technological collaboration between the two countries.

Challenges and Controversies in India-USA Relations (2025)

Despite the positive trajectory, challenges persist. A recent political controversy arose when Elon Musk claimed that the U.S. had canceled a \$21 million grant intended to support voter turnout in India. However, records indicate no such funds were allocated to India; instead, the money was directed towards political engagement in Bangladesh. This misinformation has fueled suspicions and political debates in both countries.

1. Political Challenges and Misinformation

- **Misinformation Incident Involving Elon Musk:**

In early 2025, a political controversy arose when **Elon Musk** alleged that the U.S. canceled a \$21 million grant meant to support voter turnout in India. However, official records showed that the funds were actually allocated to political engagement in **Bangladesh**, not India.

- **Impact:** This misinformation fueled political debates and suspicions, impacting diplomatic trust and creating political narratives that could strain bilateral ties.
- **Implication:** The incident underscores the growing challenge of misinformation in international relations, necessitating transparent communication and proactive diplomacy.

- **Domestic Political Dynamics:**

Both nations face complex domestic political landscapes that influence foreign policy decisions. In the U.S., partisan politics can impact trade and defense agreements, while in India, domestic electoral considerations may influence foreign policy stances.

- **Example:** Any perceived foreign interference or influence in domestic politics can trigger nationalist sentiments, complicating diplomatic negotiations.

2. Economic and Trade Disputes

- **Trade Imbalances and Protectionism:**

Despite ongoing negotiations for a **Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA)**, trade imbalances and protectionist policies remain points of contention.

- **Issue:** The U.S. has expressed concerns over India's high tariffs on American goods, while India seeks greater access to the U.S. market for its technology and pharmaceutical products.

- **Negotiation Hurdles:** Disagreements on intellectual property rights, data localization laws, and digital trade regulations continue to pose challenges.
- **Impact of Global Economic Trends:** Global economic uncertainties, including supply chain disruptions and currency fluctuations, influence bilateral trade dynamics. Additionally, the U.S.-China trade tensions indirectly impact India's trade relations with the U.S., as both countries navigate the shifting global trade landscape.

3. Defense and Strategic Concerns

- **Geopolitical Tensions in the Indo-Pacific:** The strategic cooperation between India and the U.S. is heavily influenced by **Indo-Pacific security dynamics**, particularly concerning China's assertive actions in the South China Sea.
 - **Challenge:** Balancing strategic interests while avoiding direct confrontation with China is a delicate diplomatic maneuver for both nations.
 - **Implication:** India's participation in the **Quad (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue)** with the U.S., Japan, and Australia is seen as a strategic counter to China's influence, but it also risks escalating regional tensions.
- **Defense Trade and Technology Transfer:** While defense ties are strengthening, differences over technology transfer agreements and defense procurement policies remain. The U.S. seeks more transparency and protection of intellectual property, while India aims for greater localization and indigenous defense manufacturing.

4. Human Rights and Social Issues

- **Human Rights Concerns and Political Criticism:** The U.S. has periodically raised concerns over human rights issues in India, including religious freedoms, press freedom, and minority rights.
 - **Political Sensitivity:** Such criticism is often viewed by India as interference in its domestic affairs, leading to diplomatic friction.
 - **Example:** U.S. lawmakers' comments on India's internal policies have occasionally sparked protests and political backlash in India.
- **Visa and Immigration Policies:** Visa and immigration policies, particularly regarding the **H-1B visa** program, continue to be a point of contention. Changes in U.S. immigration laws impact Indian professionals in the tech sector, influencing economic and social ties.

5. Environmental and Climate Change Disagreements



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- **Diverging Climate Change Priorities:**

Despite cooperation on renewable energy and climate technology, India and the U.S. have differing approaches to climate change commitments.

- **Issue:** The U.S. emphasizes strict carbon reduction targets, while India advocates for climate justice, emphasizing financial support and technology transfer from developed countries.
- **Diplomatic Challenge:** Reconciling these differences is crucial for effective collaboration in global climate forums.

Conclusion

India-U.S. relations in 2025 are characterized by strong strategic and economic partnerships but are also challenged by political dynamics, trade disputes, defense concerns, and social issues. Navigating these challenges requires strategic diplomacy, transparent communication, and mutual respect for each nation's domestic policies. As the global geopolitical landscape evolves, maintaining a balanced and constructive dialogue will be essential for sustaining this crucial bilateral relationship.



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