India's geopolitical vision should be larger

arlier this month, Russian President Vladimir Putin thanked world leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, for their "noble mission" to end the fighting between Ukraine and Russia. This has brought cheer to Indians.

But there is a question to be asked – Why has India refrained from playing a more active political role in regional and international conflicts around the world?

This is all the more surprising when one considers the decisive steps taken by Indian leaders in conflicts in the neighbourhood whether, inter alia, in Bangladesh in 1971 when India helped stop a genocide and give birth to a new nation; in the Maldives in 1988 by stopping armed mercenaries overthrow its President; in Sri Lanka in 2009 by helping in the defeat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, or, recently, by combating piracy in the region.

Let there be no mistake. India has been an active net contributor to global public good whether through the 'Vaccine Maitri' initiative during the COVID-19 pandemic, robust climate action which includes establishing the International Solar Alliance, the sharing of digital public infrastructure to the world or its role as first responder during natural disasters.

A reticence

However, in the last two decades, India has, rightly, prioritised economic growth, both under the United Progressive Alliance and National Democratic Alliance governments. This has catapulted India to the rank of fifth largest economy. Having reached there, we seem to have convinced ourselves that if we take an active political role in global or regional conflicts, it could adversely affect our growth and development.

India's reticence may also stem from the fact that it feels that getting involved in regional conflicts will upset the strong bilateral relations that have been carefully cultivated with countries. Or that these conflicts are best left to key players in that region and outside, like in West Asia where India has big stakes but does not want to be more proactive than the Gulf countries, which are lukewarm to the unfolding tragedy in Gaza and the region. Yes, all of the above has some rationale. At a time when the world order is disintegrating, and with India having global ambitions of its own, India's geopolitical vision should be larger, which will

only help, not hinder, our economic ambitions. Historically, one will be right to say that India provided political leadership to the Non-Aligned Movement to empower developing countries emerging from colonisation to find their voice. One might also be right to say that our multi-alignment policy of today is an equally



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compelling political stand to navigate geopolitical fissures by strengthening our bilateral relations with every key country. But non-alignment was also for the Global South while multi-alignment is primarily for us.

However, when a country becomes the fifth largest economy, prides itself as a thriving democracy, aspires for a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) seat as a permanent member and also aspires to be an important pole in a multipolar world, the expectations of the international community from India only increase. India needs to do much more than take a stand or be a bystander. If in the UNSC, India claims that decisions are not credible without the participation of the world's largest democrac then this logic applies equally to decisions taken outside the UNSC.

Mr. Putin's statement is an expression of gratitude to India's Prime Minister, who made a bold statement in his visiting Russia last year in the midst of the Ukraine war. India's decision to abstain on UNSC votes on the war, when there was considerable pressure to vote against Russia, influenced big developing countries to take a more balanced position on the war. Further, Mr. Modi had conveyed to the Russian President earlier that this is "not an era of war" and press him not to use nuclear arms. But Mr. Putin's statement is also a subtle encouragement to India to play a much bigger role. When India is one of the few countries with credibility which can speak to both Russia and Ukraine, should it not be on the high table?

There is a global reset The flip side is that if India does not meet those expectations, it is ceding space to countries such as Türkiye or Saudi Arabia or Qatar, to tackle conflicts in Europe, West Asia, Africa, or the South China Sea, where the stakes for India are high. The meeting between Ukraine and Russia in 2022 took place in Türkiye. The U.S.-Russia and U.S.-Ukraine talks that took place in Saudi Arabia recently, fit into an ambitious Saudi Arabia's version of multi-alignment. And just now, the Presidents of Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo met in Qatar to forge a ceasefire in eastern Congo. Further, geopolitical clout is something the Trump 2.0 administration recognises, unlike when India was ignored by its 'strategic partner' the U.S. during Troika Plus talks on Afghanistan, or in Bangladesh recently, in India's own neighbourhood.

Faced with a global reset, with the U.S. and parts of Europe lurching to the right, where the U.S. could downsize its engagements in some regions, particularly Europe and Asia on the one hand, and with fragmentation of trade and rising protectionism on the other, India needs to reach outwards instead of just trying to protect its

space. Given that its adversarial relations with China are not going to vanish anytime soon and its trade deficit with China is set to increase with the supply chains closely linked, strengthening of alignments with friends in theatres outside the region is key. It becomes even more relevant when the U.S. and China move towards a "deal' which could end up dividing regions into their spheres of influence and the balance of power sĥifts in Asia, where the Quad (India, Japan, Australia and the U.S.) could potentially lose its strategic relevance and India comes under

A time for a shift and also reform

This calls for regional policies, since regional policy is not just the sum of India's bilateral relations with countries in that region, be it West Asia or Central Asia, For example, India developed close bilateral relations with the Central Asian countries and important regional stakes, but downgraded its participation in the regional grouping, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, East Asia demands India's enhanced attention too, especially after its refusal to join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). This is the time for a strategic shift towards Europe, which is under pressure. And also a time to undertake internal economic reforms to enhance India's competitiveness and meet U.S. expectations on a bilateral trade agreement, which could be the fulcrum for a broader engagement with the Trump 2.0 administration. However, being proactive in conflicts does not mean that India becomes a mediator or passes messages from one party to another. Further, waiting for warring parties or a dominant power such as America to invite India may be a prudent policy, but they will not ask India unless New Delhi conveys its readiness to be a geopolitical player committed to international peace and security

For example, India played an important role, but not a mediatory one, in the Korean war in the UN Security Council between 1951-52 barely four years after Indian independence. The fact that India was an impoverished nation did not deter it. In recognition, it was made chair of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission. During India's recent stint in the UNSC (2021-22), it was a bridge for divergent views.

Therefore, in a 'Trumpian' world, and as the world order gets shaped in favour of the big powers, both old and new, and when there is geopolitical fragmentation, even unilateralism, let us not treat economic development and geopolitics as mutually exclusive. We need to practise multi-alignment in all its dimensions to gain the full benefits. India should use the window of Trump 2.0 and emerge as a major pole by actively shaping a disintegrating world order.



10 Steps to Read The Hindu Editorial Effectively for CUET English

(• Applied to this editorial on "India's Geopolitical Vision")

1 Read the Headline & Identify the Core Theme

- **Headline**: *India's geopolitical vision should be larger*
- **Theme:** India's role in international politics and diplomacy, its foreign policy approach, and its strategic vision in global conflicts.

2 Scan for Important Keywords & Terms

• Key Terms Identified:

 Geopolitics, diplomacy, non-alignment, international conflicts, foreign policy, global good, multilateralism, strategic autonomy, regional security, bilateral relations.

3 Identify the Author's Opinion & Tone

- Author's Stand: India should play a larger role in global diplomacy instead of staying neutral
- **Tone:** Analytical, persuasive, slightly critical of India's passive stance in global conflicts.

4 Break the Editorial into Logical Sections

- (a) Introduction: Russia-Ukraine conflict & India's diplomatic role
- **(b) Historical Context:** India's past interventions (Bangladesh 1971, Maldives 1988, Sri Lanka 2009)
- **(c) India's Current Stand:** Prioritizing economic growth over global intervention
- (d) The Global Perspective: Other nations filling the diplomatic gap left by India
- (e) Conclusion: The need for India to have a bigger geopolitical vision

5 Pick Out CUET-Level Vocabulary & Their Meanings

Word	Meaning	
Geopolitics	Political influence in global affairs	
Multilateralism	Cooperation between multiple countries	
Reticence	Hesitation or reluctance	
Altruism	Selfless concern for the well-being of others	
Hegemony	Dominance of one country over others	

6 Frame MCQs for CUET English (Inference, Vocabulary, Grammar)

(A) Comprehension-Based MCQs
 Q1. What is the primary argument of the editorial? (A) India should increase its role in global conflicts (B) India should focus only on economic growth (C) India should avoid geopolitical issues altogether (D) India should align with either the US or Russia Answer: (A)
Q2. According to the passage, what has been India's primary focus in the last two decades? (A) Economic growth (B) Military expansion (C) Increasing intervention in global conflicts (D) Strengthening diplomatic relations with Russia Answer: (A)
(B) Vocabulary-Based MCQs
 Q3. What is the meaning of <i>multilateralism</i> as used in the passage? (A) Engaging with multiple countries for cooperation (B) Having strong military power (C) Aligning with only one global superpower (D) Remaining completely neutral in world affairs Answer: (A)
Q4. The word reticence in the passage is closest in meaning to: (A) Caution (B) Boldness (C) Carelessness (D) Indifference Answer: (A)
(C) Grammar & Sentence Completion MCQs
Q5. Fill in the blank: "India's stance in global affairs may lead to losing its influence in world politics." (A) Passive (B) Dominant (C) Expansive (D) Revolutionary ✓ Answer: (A)

7 Identify Figures of Speech

- Rhetorical Question: "Why has India refrained from playing a more active political role?"
- Historical Allusion: Reference to Bangladesh 1971, Maldives 1988, Sri Lanka 2009
- Contrast: "India aspires for a bigger global role but remains silent in conflicts."

8 Find Real-World Applications

- India's role in UNSC (United Nations Security Council)
- India's balancing act between the US and Russia
- Geopolitical tension in the Indo-Pacific region

Write a 50-Word Summary for Revision

"India, a rising economic power, must expand its geopolitical vision. While it has played key roles in past conflicts (Bangladesh 1971, Sri Lanka 2009), it now prioritizes economic growth over diplomacy. The editorial argues that India should engage more in global affairs to strengthen its position as a world leader."

Practice Speaking & Writing on the Topic

- Write a 250-word essay: "Should India take a stronger stance in global conflicts?"
- Speak for 2 minutes on: "India's geopolitical strategy past vs. present."

20 best vocabulary words from the editorial along with their synonyms and antonyms:

Word	Synonyms	Antonyms
Geopolitics	Diplomacy, Global Strategy, Foreign Affairs	Isolationism, Neutrality
Multilateralism	Global Cooperation, Alliance, Partnership	Unilateralism, Isolation
mannatoranom	Clobal Cooperation, / tillarioe, / artiferomp	Official officers of the control of
Reticence	Hesitation, Reserve, Reluctance	Boldness, Outspokenness
Hegemony Dominance, Supremacy, Authority We		Weakness, Subordination
Altruism	Selflessness, Generosity, Kindness	Selfishness, Greed
Intervention	Meddling, Involvement, Interference	Withdrawal, Non-involvement

Bilateral	Two-sided, Mutual, Reciprocal	Unilateral, One-sided
Strategic	Tactical, Planned, Calculated	Unplanned, Random
Conflict	Dispute, War, Struggle	Peace, Harmony, Agreement
Neutrality	Impartiality, Fairness, Detachment	Bias, Partiality, Prejudice
Alignments	Alliances, Affiliations, Coalitions	Divisions, Separations
Credibility	Trustworthiness, Reliability, Integrity	Doubt, Untrustworthiness
Escalation	Intensification, Aggravation, Expansion	Reduction, De-escalation
Advocacy	Support, Endorsement, Promotion	Opposition, Rejection
Deterrence	Prevention, Hindrance, Discouragement	Encouragement, Incentive
Undermining	Weakening, Sabotaging, Diminishing	Strengthening, Supporting
Autonomy	Independence, Self-rule, Sovereignty	Dependence, Subjugation
Diplomacy	Negotiation, Tact, Statesmanship	Confrontation, Aggression
Fragmentation	Disintegration, Division, Breakdown	Unification, Integration
Dominance	Control, Power, Supremacy	Submissiveness, Weakness

Pro Tip for CUET English:

7 words from the list with **contextual sentences** to help you **retain vocabulary** for CUET English:

- 1 Geopolitics
 - \overline{V} India's **geopolitics** is shaped by its relations with neighboring countries and global powers.
- 2 Multilateralism 🤝
- The United Nations promotes **multilateralism** by encouraging cooperation between multiple nations.
- 3 Reticence 🤫
- Despite having strong opinions, her **reticence** kept her from speaking in the debate.
- 4 Hegemony m
 - ▼ The economic hegemony of powerful nations often influences global trade policies.

- 5 Bilateral
- ☑ India and the US signed a **bilateral** trade agreement to strengthen economic ties.
- 6 Credibility V
 - A journalist's **credibility** is built on factual reporting and unbiased analysis.
- 7 Escalation 📈
 - The escalation of conflict in the region has raised concerns among world leaders.
- Practice Tip:
- 👉 Try framing your own sentences using these words to master them before CUET! 🔥 🚀

20 more CUET-level MCQs based on The Hindu editorial you provided:

Passage-Based MCQs:

- 1 Why has India been reluctant to play an active political role in regional conflicts?
- a) Lack of military resources
- b) Prioritization of economic growth
- c) Diplomatic restrictions by the UN
- d) Dependence on global alliances
- Answer: b) Prioritization of economic growth
- 2 What does "multilateralism" refer to in the passage?
- a) Strengthening bilateral relations
- b) Dominance of a single superpower
- c) Cooperation between multiple nations
- d) Economic reforms within a country
- Answer: c) Cooperation between multiple nations
- According to the passage, why is India's aspiration for a UN Security Council seat significant?
- a) It will allow India to dictate global policies
- b) It reflects India's growing economic influence
- c) It helps India strengthen ties with China
- d) It reduces India's involvement in regional issues
- Answer: b) It reflects India's growing economic influence
- 4 Which of the following statements best describes India's foreign policy stance in recent years?
- a) It has actively intervened in global conflicts
- b) It has maintained a cautious, non-aligned approach
- c) It has supported only Western nations
- d) It has taken a dominant role in military coalitions
- Answer: b) It has maintained a cautious, non-aligned approach

5 Why is "economic growth" prioritized over active political involvement in global conflicts, as per the passage?

- a) To increase India's trade agreements with Western nations
- b) To focus on developing domestic infrastructure and economy
- c) To ensure India's permanent membership in the UN
- d) To avoid tensions with neighboring countries
- Answer: b) To focus on developing domestic infrastructure and economy

6 What is India's stance on the Russia-Ukraine conflict, as mentioned in the passage?

- a) Completely supporting Ukraine
- b) Supporting Russia's actions
- c) A balanced diplomatic approach
- d) Imposing sanctions on Russia
- Answer: c) A balanced diplomatic approach

Which of the following challenges does the passage highlight regarding India's geopolitical approach?

- a) Decreasing economic influence
- b) Struggle to balance economic and diplomatic priorities
- c) Over-reliance on Western alliances
- d) Failure to establish regional trade agreements
- Answer: b) Struggle to balance economic and diplomatic priorities

8 What does the term "hegemony" in the passage refer to?

- a) Diplomatic neutrality
- b) Economic and political dominance
- c) Support for multilateralism
- d) Military expansion
- Answer: b) Economic and political dominance

According to the passage, why is regional policy crucial for India's global strategy? According to the passage, why is regional policy crucial for India's global strategy? According to the passage, why is regional policy crucial for India's global strategy? According to the passage, why is regional policy crucial for India's global strategy? According to the passage, why is regional policy crucial for India's global strategy? According to the passage, why is regional policy crucial for India's global strategy? According to the passage, why is regional policy crucial for India's global strategy? According to the passage of the passa

- a) It directly impacts India's bilateral relations
- b) It reduces economic dependency on Western nations
- c) It allows India to challenge global superpowers
- d) It ensures India's control over the UN
- Answer: a) It directly impacts India's bilateral relations

What does the passage suggest about India's approach to global conflicts?

- a) India avoids involvement at all costs
- b) India engages selectively based on national interests
- c) India prioritizes military solutions
- d) India follows the policies of the United States
- Answer: b) India engages selectively based on national interests

Vocabulary & Inference-Based MCQs:

III Which word from the passage means "hesitation or unwillingness to speak freely"?

- a) Reticence
- b) Escalation
- c) Hegemony
- d) Alignment
- Answer: a) Reticence

What is the opposite of "bilateral" in the context of diplomacy?

- a) Unilateral
- b) Multilateral
- c) Regional
- d) Exclusive
- Answer: a) Unilateral

In the passage, "credibility" refers to—

- a) Political influence
- b) Trustworthiness and reliability
- c) Economic strength
- d) Diplomatic aggression
- Answer: b) Trustworthiness and reliability

Mhat does the passage imply about India's future role in global politics?

- a) India will avoid global alliances
- b) India will balance diplomacy and economic growth
- c) India will intervene in military conflicts
- d) India will focus only on regional policies
- Answer: b) India will balance diplomacy and economic growth

Mhich word from the passage refers to "a rapid increase in intensity or severity"?

- a) Escalation
- b) Consensus
- c) Credibility
- d) Alignment
- Answer: a) Escalation

If India follows a "neutral stance" in global politics, what does it mean?

- a) It actively supports both sides
- b) It avoids taking a firm position
- c) It imposes economic sanctions
- d) It forms military alliances
- Answer: b) It avoids taking a firm position

MWhat can be inferred about India's foreign policy from the passage?

- a) It aims for absolute neutrality
- b) It selectively engages based on national interest
- c) It supports only Western nations
- d) It seeks military expansion
- Answer: b) It selectively engages based on national interest

Note: Which of the following best describes the tone of the passage?

- a) Highly critical
- b) Neutral and analytical
- c) Overly optimistic
- d) Aggressive and demanding
- Answer: b) Neutral and analytical

Mat is the impact of India's reticence in global politics?

- a) Strengthens its diplomatic credibility
- b) Limits its influence in global decision-making
- c) Increases its economic partnerships
- d) Leads to stronger military alliances
- Answer: b) Limits its influence in global decision-making

20 According to the passage, what is India's main goal in the UN Security Council?

- a) To control global trade policies
- b) To establish itself as a global leader
- c) To remain neutral in all global affairs
- d) To support only developing nations
- Answer: b) To establish itself as a global leader

These 20 MCQs cover passage-based questions, vocabulary, and inferences—ideal for CUET English preparation! $\sqrt[4]{6}$

Fig. Try **timed practice** with these MCQs to improve accuracy and speed for the **CUET English exam! Y**

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6 Frame MCQs for CUET English (Inference, Vocabulary, Grammar)

(A) Comprehension-Based MCQs

- **Q1.** What is the primary argument of the editorial?
- (A) India should increase its role in global conflicts
- (B) India should focus only on economic growth
- (C) India should avoid geopolitical issues altogether
- (D) India should align with either the US or Russia
- Answer: (A)
- **Q2.** According to the passage, what has been India's primary focus in the last two decades?
- (A) Economic growth
 - (B) Military expansion
- (C) Increasing intervention in global conflicts
- (D) Strengthening diplomatic relations with Russia
- Answer: (A)

(B) Vocabulary-Based MCQs

- **Q3.** What is the meaning of *multilateralism* as used in the passage?
- (A) Engaging with multiple countries for cooperation
 - (B) Having strong military power
- (C) Aligning with only one global superpower
- (D) Remaining completely neutral in world affairs
- Answer: (A)
- **Q4.** The word *reticence* in the passage is closest in meaning to:
- (A) Caution
 - (B) Boldness
 - (C) Carelessness
 - (D) Indifference
- Answer: (A)
- (C) Grammar & Sentence Completion MCQs

Q5. Fill in the blank: "India's ______ stance in global affairs may lead to losing its influence in world politics." (A) Passive (B) Dominant (C) Expansive (D) Revolutionary ✓ Answer: (A)

7 Identify Figures of Speech

- Rhetorical Question: "Why has India refrained from playing a more active political role?"
- **Historical Allusion:** Reference to Bangladesh 1971, Maldives 1988, Sri Lanka 2009
- Contrast: "India aspires for a bigger global role but remains silent in conflicts."

8 Find Real-World Applications

- India's role in UNSC (United Nations Security Council)
- India's balancing act between the US and Russia
- Geopolitical tension in the Indo-Pacific region

9 Write a 50-Word Summary for Revision

"India, a rising economic power, must expand its geopolitical vision. While it has played key roles in past conflicts (Bangladesh 1971, Sri Lanka 2009), it now prioritizes economic growth over diplomacy. The editorial argues that India should engage more in global affairs to strengthen its position as a world leader."

Practice Speaking & Writing on the Topic

	 Write a 250-word essay: "Should India take a stronger stance in global conflicts?" Speak for 2 minutes on: "India's geopolitical strategy – past vs. present."
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