



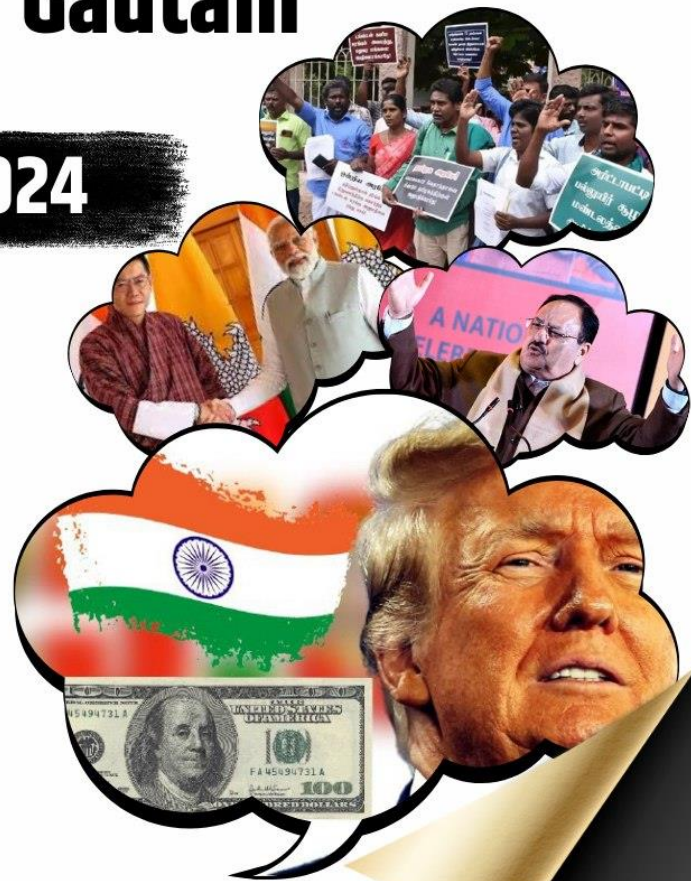
Daily Current Affairs



To The Point by Dhananjay Gautam

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1 RBI's Strategy on De-Dollarization and Risk Diversification

Context: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has clarified its stance on **de-dollarization**, asserting that recent measures aim at **diversifying risks** rather than completely moving away from the **US dollar**.

- **De-dollarization** refers to reducing dependence on the **US dollar** in **international trade** and **reserves**.
- This strategy often stems from **geopolitical tensions** and the pursuit of **economic sovereignty**.
- The RBI's approach reflects a balance between **global economic realities** and **India's financial stability**.



The clarification comes amidst geopolitical statements, including threats of "**100% tariffs**" by the US if countries, including BRICS nations, sought alternatives to the **dollar**.

Key Highlights:**1. Emphasis on Diversification Over Complete De-Dollarization:**

- RBI Governor **Shaktikanta Das** emphasized that initiatives like **local currency trade agreements** and **Vostro accounts** are designed to **reduce dependency** on the dollar, not eliminate it.
 - **Vostro accounts** are Indian rupee-denominated bank accounts held by foreign banks in India.
 - They enable **trade in local currencies**, reducing reliance on third-party currencies like the dollar.
- The primary aim is to **mitigate risks** from over-reliance on a single currency for trade and reserves.

2. Central Banks' Shift to Gold:

- Central banks, including the **RBI**, are increasingly buying **gold** to diversify reserves.
 - In **2022**, global central banks purchased a record **1,136 tonnes** of gold, followed by **1,037 tonnes** in **2023**.
 - The RBI added **27 tonnes of gold** in October **2024**, the largest acquisition among central banks during this period.
- This shift is driven by global **uncertainties**, including the **Ukraine war** and fears of **secondary sanctions** against countries like **Russia** and **China**.

3. Addressing Dollar Dominance:

- The **US dollar's share** in global foreign reserves is gradually declining, partly due to the rise of the **Chinese yuan**.
- Emerging markets like **India** are seeking alternatives to mitigate **geopolitical** and **economic risks** tied to dollar dominance.

4. Encouraging Domestic Currency Trade:

- India is promoting **domestic currency trade** with partners like **Russia** and the **UAE** to reduce risk exposure.
- However, international trade in rupees remains limited due to **India's trade deficits** with most nations, except the US.

Geopolitical Context:**1. BRICS and Currency Discussions:**

- **BRICS nations** have explored the idea of a **shared currency**, but challenges persist due to their diverse **economic** and **geographic landscapes**.
- India has resisted adopting the **Chinese yuan** for Russian oil imports, emphasizing the importance of **economic sovereignty**.

2. Challenges in South Asia:

- In neighboring countries like **Sri Lanka**, **Pakistan**, and **Bangladesh**, rising **oil prices** and declining **dollar reserves** have triggered **economic turmoil**.
- While India has maintained **healthy reserves**, the country remains alert to the **volatility of the dollar**.



Conclusion:

The RBI's cautious approach to managing **dollar dependence** highlights a **strategic balance** between mitigating **economic risks** and maintaining **global trade stability**.

- Initiatives like **increased gold reserves** and promoting the **rupee** for international trade underscore India's efforts to diversify risk.
- However, challenges such as **trade deficits** and **high transaction costs** in local currency trade hinder a full-scale move away from the **dollar**.

This strategy reflects India's commitment to **financial stability**, **economic sovereignty**, and navigating a complex global landscape with resilience.



2

New Genetic Study Reveals Close Ties Between Nicobarese and Southeast Asian Htin Mal Community

Context: A groundbreaking genetic study reveals that the **Nicobarese tribe**, indigenous to the **Nicobar Islands**, shares a significant genetic connection with the **Htin Mal community** of **Thailand** and **Laos**.

This study, published in the **European Journal of Human Genetics**, involved a comprehensive analysis of **1,559 samples**, offering fresh insights into ancient migrations and cultural exchanges across **South and Southeast Asia**.

Why in News?

The study highlights the **Austroasiatic linguistic and genetic linkages** between the **Nicobarese** and the **Htin Mal**, providing a deeper understanding of the tribe's ancestral roots.

The findings mark the **first detailed genetic analysis** of the Nicobarese population, emphasizing their migration patterns and evolutionary history.

Tribals in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Key Tribes:

The **Andaman & Nicobar Islands** are home to several indigenous tribes, each with distinct cultures and identities:

- **Great Andamanese**
- **Onges**
- **Sentinelese**
- **Jarawas**
- **Nicobarese**

Steps for Tribal Welfare:

1. **Building Communication and Trust:** The administration has established effective communication channels with tribes like the **Jarawas**, enhancing trust and collaboration.
2. **Protecting the Sentinelese**
 - A strict "**eyes-on and hands-off**" policy ensures minimal interference with the isolated **Sentinelese** tribe.
 - A circumnavigation protocol prevents poaching and safeguards their environment.

The Htin Mal Community:**Who are the Htin Mal?**

The **Htin Mal community** resides in mainland **Southeast Asia**, primarily in **Thailand** and **Laos**. They speak an **Austroasiatic language**, part of the **Khmuic branch**, which connects them linguistically to the **Nicobarese tribe**.

Ethnic Significance:

- Despite their genetic closeness to the Nicobarese, the Htin Mal have maintained a distinct ethnic identity.
- Their study is vital in understanding **ancient migrations** and **cultural exchanges** across Southeast Asia.

Key Findings of the Genetic Study:**About the Study:**

The research was led by scientists from the **CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB)**. It analyzed **DNA markers** inherited from both parents to trace the genetic history of the **Nicobarese population**.

Major Discoveries:

- The **Nicobarese** share a strong **ancestral connection** with **Austroasiatic populations** in **South and Southeast Asia**.
- The tribe likely settled in the **Nicobar Islands** approximately **5,000 years ago**, possibly during the Neolithic era.

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- A close genetic affinity was identified with the **Htin Mal**, reinforcing their **shared ancestry**.

Nicobarese Tribe: A Closer Look:

Location and Habitat

The **Nicobarese tribe** inhabits the **Nicobar Islands**, located in the eastern **Indian Ocean**. Key islands include **Car Nicobar, Great Nicobar, Little Nicobar, and Nancowry**.

Historical Migration:

- The Nicobarese are believed to have migrated to the islands **4,500–5,000 years ago**, with men and women relocating together.
- Earlier theories suggested migration during the **early Holocene (11,700 years ago)**, but this new study revises the timeline.

Cultural and Genetic Preservation:

- Isolation from mainland populations has preserved the **Nicobarese tribe's genetic lineage**, language, and ethnic identity.
- Stable **DNA markers** allowed researchers to trace their **ancestral roots** accurately.

Current Lifestyle:

- The **Nicobarese**, numbering approximately **25,000**, live sustainably in **forested regions**.
- Their livelihood includes **farming, animal husbandry** (pigs, goats, hens), and the use of **forest resources** like **coconut palm**.

Need for Protection:

To preserve their unique genetic and cultural heritage, researchers stress the importance of shielding the tribe from exposure to mainland pathogens, which could jeopardize their health and identity.

Conclusion:

This genetic study reaffirms the deep historical ties between the **Nicobarese** and **Southeast Asian communities**, shedding light on ancient migration patterns and cultural exchanges.

As a critical link in understanding human history in the region, the **Nicobarese tribe** underscores the importance of safeguarding **indigenous communities** and their unique legacies.

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3 Debate over Tungsten Mining in Madurai: A Clash of Priorities

Context: A recent decision to permit **tungsten mining** in the **biodiversity-rich Melur region** of **Madurai, Tamil Nadu**, has sparked intense debate.

The project, initiated by the **Union Ministry of Mines**, has drawn sharp criticism from **environmentalists, local activists**, and the **state government**, citing concerns over **biodiversity loss** and **cultural disruption**.

**What is Tungsten?****A Critical Mineral:**

Tungsten is a **rare, dense metal** renowned for its **hardness, heat resistance**, and the **highest melting point** among all metals (3,422°C).

It is deemed a **critical resource** due to its vital role in **defense, high-tech industries**, and **green energy** applications.

Key Applications:1. **Industrial Tools:**

- Utilized in **cutting tools, drills**, and **abrasives** due to its exceptional durability.
- Tungsten carbide**, a compound of tungsten, is highly valued for manufacturing robust tools.

2. **Electronics:**

- Integral to **light bulb filaments, X-ray tubes**, and **electrical contacts**.
- Used in **semiconductors** and **heating elements**.

3. **Aerospace and Defense:**

- Forms **high-strength alloys** for **military armor** and **aerospace components**.
- Employed in **missile tips** and **radiation shielding** due to its density.

4. **Medical and Green Energy:**

- Critical for **medical imaging devices** and **radiation shielding** in cancer treatment.
- Essential in **wind turbines** and **superalloys** for green energy technologies.

India's Tungsten Landscape:• **Major Deposits:**

- Rajasthan** (Degana Mines), **Andhra Pradesh**, and **Karnataka**.

- Current Status:** Limited production has led India to **rely on imports** for most of its tungsten needs.

Global Leaders in Tungsten:

- China:** Dominates production with over **80% of global output**.
- Other major players: **Russia, Canada, Vietnam**, and **Austria**.

The Controversy:**The Project:**

On **November 7, 2024**, **Hindustan Zinc Limited**, a **Vedanta subsidiary**, was awarded rights to mine tungsten in **Nayakkarpatti, Madurai**.

The site, spanning **2,015.51 hectares**, contains rich deposits of **scheelite**, a primary tungsten ore.

Concerns Raised:

The site overlaps with the **Arattapatti-Meenakshipuram Biodiversity Heritage Area**, notified in **2022** to protect its unique flora, fauna, and cultural landmarks.

Opposition to the Mining Project:**Environmental Concerns:**

- The biodiversity site, covering **193.63 hectares**, is home to rare **flora and fauna**.
- Activists warn of potential harm from **tailings**, which may release harmful metals like **arsenic, cadmium**, and **lead**, threatening both the **environment** and **human health**.

Cultural Significance:

- The region holds **ancient temples** and **Jain relics**, vital to Tamil Nadu's **cultural heritage**.
- Locals fear mining will **distort the identity** of this historic area.



Public Outcry:

- Environmental groups, including **Poovulagin Nanbargal**, have opposed the project.
- Activist **R.S. Mugilan** criticized **Vedanta's environmental track record**, citing past incidents like pollution from its **Thoothukudi copper plant**.

Government's Stance:

State Government's Position:

- Tamil Nadu's **Chief Minister M.K. Stalin** has pledged to **block the project**, citing ecological and cultural concerns.
- The state claims it **notified the Centre** about the biodiversity heritage status during initial discussions.

Union Government's Argument:

- The **Union Ministry of Mines** stated there was **no objection** from Tamil Nadu during the **auction process**.
- It highlighted the strategic significance of tungsten for **national security** and **technological progress**.

Conclusion:

The **Madurai tungsten mining project** reflects a broader conflict between **economic priorities** and **environmental preservation**.

While the Union government stresses the **strategic importance** of mining for critical minerals, Tamil Nadu and environmentalists argue for safeguarding **biodiversity** and **cultural heritage**.

The final decision could set a crucial precedent for balancing **resource exploitation** with **sustainability** in India.

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India-Bhutan Strengthen Ties: Key Areas of Cooperation

Context: The recent visit of **King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck of Bhutan** to India has further deepened the enduring partnership between the two nations. The visit focused on enhancing cooperation in **hydropower, regional connectivity, and sustainable development**, reaffirming the **strategic and economic ties** between the neighbors.

**Key Outcomes of the Visit:****Advancing Hydropower Collaboration:**

- **Punatsangchhu Hydropower Project:** Both sides stressed the importance of completing **Phase I & II** of this vital project.
- **New Reservoir Projects:** Discussions showcased a shared vision for expanding **energy cooperation** through **innovative hydropower initiatives**.

Gelephu Mindfulness City Project:

- India extended its support to develop **Gelephu**, a southern Bhutanese town near the **Assam border**, into a hub of **sustainable urban planning and development**.
- **Strategic Location:** Gelephu's proximity to Assam positions it as a **key point for regional trade and connectivity**.

Boosting Cross-Border Connectivity:

- **Rail and Digital Projects:** Talks focused on **enhancing cross-border trade, improving rail connectivity**, and upgrading **digital infrastructure** for seamless integration.
- **Integrated Check Post (ICP):** The opening of the **ICP at Darranga, Assam**, represents a significant step toward improving **regional connectivity and logistics**.

Private Sector Partnerships:

- Bhutan emphasized collaboration with Indian giants like the **Adani Group**, focusing on **renewable energy projects**, including **solar power, hydropower, and urban infrastructure** in Gelephu.

Significance of Hydropower in India-Bhutan Relations:**Economic Benefits for Bhutan:**

- **Revenue Generation:** Hydropower accounts for a substantial portion of Bhutan's **national income** through electricity exports to India.

Mutual Advantages:

- **Energy Security for India:** These projects support India's **renewable energy targets** and bolster its **energy security**.
- **Strengthened Cooperation:** Hydropower serves as a cornerstone of the partnership, fostering mutual growth and interdependence.

Future Prospects:

- Both nations are committed to exploring **new hydropower projects**, ensuring the **long-term sustainability** of this collaboration.

Challenges and Opportunities for India:**Challenges:**

1. **Project Delays:** Long-standing delays, such as in the **Punatsangchhu-I project**, hinder progress.
2. **Geopolitical Rivalry:** Increased **Chinese investments** in the region pose a challenge to India's influence in Bhutan.

Opportunities:

1. **Diversification of Cooperation:** Beyond hydropower, India and Bhutan can expand into areas like **urban development and digital infrastructure**.
2. **Private Sector Engagement:** Involvement of Indian firms like the Adani Group brings **new investments, technologies**, and strengthens India's role in Bhutan's development.



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Conclusion:

The visit of King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck underscores the importance of **India-Bhutan relations** in fostering **regional stability** and **economic progress**. With a renewed focus on **hydropower**, **connectivity**, and **sustainable development**, the partnership remains pivotal in addressing challenges and leveraging opportunities for mutual growth.



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5 India's 100-Day TB Elimination Campaign: A Bold Step Towards a Healthier Future

Context: India is taking a significant stride in its fight against **tuberculosis (TB)** with the launch of the **100-Day TB Elimination Campaign** by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**. This initiative aligns with India's ambitious goal of eradicating TB by **2025**, five years ahead of the **global target of 2030**.



About the 100-Day TB Elimination Campaign:

- The campaign will be implemented across **33 States and Union Territories**, focusing on:
 - Enhancing TB case detection.**
 - Reducing diagnostic delays.**
 - Improving treatment outcomes.**
- With **India carrying the highest TB burden globally**, this initiative is critical in addressing the epidemic effectively.

Understanding Tuberculosis (TB):

What is TB?

- TB is an **infectious disease** caused by the bacterium **Mycobacterium tuberculosis**, primarily affecting the **lungs** but also impacting the **kidneys, brain, spine, and skin**.
- Symptoms:** Persistent **cough, chest pain, fatigue, weight loss, fever, and night sweats**.
- Transmission:** Spread through the air when infected individuals **cough, sneeze, or spit**.
- Treatment:** Preventable and curable using antibiotics.
- Vaccine:** The **Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG)** vaccine offers moderate protection against severe TB forms, particularly in children.

India's TB Burden and Global Impact:

- Global TB Cases:** TB surpassed COVID-19 as the **leading infectious killer** in 2023, with **8.2 million new cases**.
- India's TB Burden:**
 - 2.8 million cases** recorded in 2023.
 - India accounts for **26% of global cases** and **29% of global TB deaths** (315,000 fatalities).
 - Home to **27% of the world's multidrug-resistant TB cases**, requiring specialized treatment approaches.

Challenges in Eliminating TB in India:

- Drug-Resistant TB:**
 - Multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB)** demands expensive and prolonged treatments.
 - India faces a significant challenge in managing these cases effectively.
- Diagnostics and Case Detection:** Limited access to **modern diagnostic tools** leads to reliance on outdated methods, delaying treatment.
- Inadequate Healthcare Infrastructure:** Rural and remote areas lack **quality healthcare facilities**, resulting in delayed diagnoses and treatment.
- Social Stigma and Awareness:** **Stigma** around TB prevents individuals from seeking timely medical help, while lack of awareness perpetuates the disease.
- Private Sector Coordination:** A large portion of healthcare services in India is provided by the **private sector**, necessitating standardized treatment protocols and better collaboration.
- Treatment Adherence:** Ensuring patients complete their **prolonged antibiotic courses** remains a critical challenge.
- Vulnerable Populations:** Migrant workers, urban slum dwellers, and individuals living in **crowded conditions** are at heightened risk.



Government Initiatives to Combat TB:

1. **Revised National Tuberculosis Control Program (RNTCP):** Launched in 1997, this flagship program has been strengthened over time to improve TB management.
2. **National Tuberculosis Elimination Program (NTEP):** The National Strategic Plan (2017–2025) focuses on achieving TB-free India by 2025.
3. **Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan (PMTBMBA):** Introduced in 2022, this initiative provides nutritional, diagnostic, and vocational support to TB patients.
4. **Universal Drug Susceptibility Testing (DST):** Enables early detection of drug-resistant TB strains for customized treatment.
5. **Ni-kshay Portal:** Tracks and monitors notified TB cases to ensure better management.
6. **Introduction of New Drugs:** Inclusion of advanced drugs like Bedaquiline and Delamanid for treating drug-resistant TB.
7. **Research and Vaccine Development:** Trials for new vaccines like Immuvac and VPM1002 are underway to provide better protection against TB.

Suggestions for Enhanced TB Control:

- Establish global norms and standards for TB prevention and care.
- Promote evidence-based policies and strengthen their implementation.
- Monitor progress in TB financing, diagnosis, and treatment at regional and national levels.

Conclusion:

India's 100-Day TB Elimination Campaign is a decisive step toward achieving its 2025 TB-free goal. While challenges like drug resistance, infrastructure gaps, and stigma remain, continued government initiatives, private sector collaboration, and increased public awareness can significantly reduce the burden of TB and set an example for the global fight against this deadly disease.

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6 SAARC: Navigating Challenges and Opportunities on Its 40th Charter Day

Context: On 8th December 2024, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) marked its 40th Charter Day, commemorating the establishment of this key regional organization.



What is the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)?

- **Origins of SAARC:** The concept of regional cooperation in South Asia was first discussed at several key conferences: the **Asian Relations Conference (1947)**, the **Baguio Conference (1950)**, and the **Colombo Powers Conference (1954)**.
- **Formation:** The idea took shape in **1980** when **Bangladesh's President Ziaur Rahman** proposed the notion of regional cooperation to promote **peace and stability**.
- **Establishment:** SAARC was officially founded on **8th December 1985** in **Dhaka, Bangladesh**, with **7 founding members**—**Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka**. **Afghanistan** joined as the **8th member** in **2007**.
- **Objectives:**
 - **Promote welfare and improve quality of life in South Asia.**
 - **Accelerate economic growth, social progress, and cultural development.**
 - **Strengthen self-reliance and mutual trust** among member states.
 - **Enhance collaboration in economic, social, cultural, technical, and scientific fields.**
 - **Cooperate with other developing countries and international organizations.**
- **Key Principles:** **Sovereign equality, territorial integrity, non-interference, and consensus-based decision-making** are central to SAARC.

Significance of SAARC Today:

- **Demographic and Economic Relevance:**
 - **3% of the world's land area.**
 - **21% of the world's population.**
 - **5.21% (USD 4.47 trillion) of the global economy as of 2021.**
- **Scope of Cooperation:**
 - The **South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA)**, established in **2004** and effective from **2006**, aimed at **reducing tariffs and promoting free trade** in South Asia.
 - The **SAARC Agreement on Trade in Services (SATIS)**, coming into force in **2012**, aimed to **enhance intra-regional investments and liberalize trade** in services.

India's Contribution to SAARC:

- **SAARC Summits:**
 - Hosted **three** out of the **eighteen SAARC Summits**: the **2nd summit in Bengaluru (1986)**, the **8th summit in New Delhi (1995)**, and the **14th summit in New Delhi (2007)**.
- **Technological Cooperation:**
 - **National Knowledge Network (NKN)** extended to **Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Bhutan**, fostering **educational and technological exchange**.
 - **South Asian Satellite (SAS)** launched in **2017**, providing **satellite-based services** to SAARC countries.
- **Currency Swap Arrangement:**
 - In **2019**, India approved a '**Standby Swap**' in the **Currency Swap Arrangement** for SAARC members, amounting to **USD 400 million**, aimed at enhancing **financial cooperation**.
- **Disaster Management:**
 - **Interim Unit of the SAARC Disaster Management Center** hosted in **Gujarat** provides **policy advice, technical support, and training** for **disaster risk management** across SAARC countries.



- **South Asian University (SAU):**

- Established through an **Inter-Governmental Agreement** at the **14th SAARC**, SAU provides **world-class education** and **research opportunities** for students and scholars from SAARC nations.

Role India Can Play in Strengthening SAARC:

- **Leadership Role:**

- As the **largest economy**, **India** constitutes over **70%** of the area and **population** among the SAARC nations and is strategically connected to almost all member nations.
- **Initiatives** like the **SAARC satellite** and **support for infrastructure development** underscore **India's commitment**.

- **Proposed Measures:**

- India must continue offering **unilateral concessions** like **duty-free access** for **least developed SAARC nations**.
- Smaller nations should **leverage India's growth** for their own **development** rather than perceive it as a threat.
- **Strengthen regional connectivity projects** like the **BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement** and integrate them with **global value chains**.
- **Counter** China's growing influence in South Asia while managing the **'Big Brother' perception** among **smaller neighbors**.
- Utilize platforms like **QUAD** and **Indo-Pacific partnerships** to **counterbalance** external pressures and ensure **regional cooperation**.
- Engage with **South and Southeast Asian nations** through **BIMSTEC**, bypassing **Pakistan**.
- Promote **people-to-people contact** through **scholarships**, **cultural exchanges**, and **tourism-focused initiatives**.

Key Challenges Facing SAARC:

- **Political Tensions and Bilateral Conflicts:**

- **India** and **Pakistan** dominate SAARC but their **strained relations**—including issues like **terrorism** and **territorial disputes**—have hindered cooperation.
- **Pakistan's refusal** to address **cross-border terrorism** led to **India** boycotting the **19th SAARC Summit** in **2016**, resulting in its **postponement**.

- **Low Economic Integration:**

- Intra-regional **trade** in SAARC is a mere **5%** of its total trade, compared to **65%** in the **European Union (EU)** and **26%** in the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations**.
- Limited **implementation** of **SAFTA** and **lack of product diversification** stymie **economic growth**.

- **Asymmetric Development:**

- India's dominance often leads to the **'Big Brother Syndrome'**, causing **mistrust** among smaller nations.
- Smaller member states often **perceive** India as **overly dominant**, leading to **resistance** against **Indian initiatives**. This perception discourages **collective action** and fosters **reliance** on **external powers** like **China**.
- **Nepal, Bhutan, and Maldives** struggle with **infrastructure deficits** and **limited resources**.

- **Institutional Weaknesses:**

- SAARC's **charter** requires **unanimous agreement** for decisions, enabling any **member** to **veto** progress on critical issues.
- **Pakistan** has frequently used this mechanism to **block agreements** like the **SAARC Motor Vehicles** and **Railways** pacts.
- **Observers** like **China, the EU, and the US** lack clarity on their roles, limiting external support.

- **External Influences:**

- **China's growing presence** through the **Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)** and its **strategic investments** in **Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Pakistan** complicates **intra-SAARC dynamics**.



- The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Hambantota port developments amplify China's influence.

Way Forward:

- **Promoting Economic Cooperation:**
 - Accelerate the operationalization of SATIS.
 - Expand initiatives like the SAARC Development Fund to support regional projects in infrastructure, healthcare, and education.
- **Resolving Political Conflicts:**
 - Mediation mechanisms within SAARC could help address bilateral tensions.
 - Promote Track-II diplomacy involving academia, business leaders, and civil society to reduce tension.
 - Prioritize issues like disaster management, education, and public health which are less politically sensitive.
- **Leveraging Sub-regional Groupings:**
 - Initiatives like BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal) and BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) can complement SAARC's objectives and foster trust.
- **Combating Non-traditional Security Threats:**
 - Strengthen regional cooperation on counter-terrorism, disaster management, and enhance intelligence-sharing frameworks among member nations.
- **Reform Institutional Mechanisms:**
 - Replace the consensus-based decision-making model with weighted voting to prevent a single country from blocking progress.
 - Strengthen the SAARC Secretariat with greater autonomy and financial resources.
- **Encouraging Youth Participation:**
 - Utilize South Asia's demographic dividend by fostering student exchanges, scholarships, and youth-centric development programs through the South Asian University and other regional platforms.

Conclusion:

SAARC remains a crucial platform for regional cooperation despite challenges like political tensions and low economic integration. India's growing leadership can strengthen the organization's potential. To realize its full potential, SAARC must focus on enhancing economic cooperation, resolving political conflicts, and fostering sub-regional partnerships.