

India – Vietnam relations

November 29, 2018

Manifest pedagogy

Holistic preparation

East Asia as a region needs to be extensively covered under International Relations due to renewed emphasis on the region by the new regime under Act East policy. The topic has to be studied at multiple levels like policies towards the region, region as a whole, relations with important regional organizations of the region and some time relations with specific countries in the region which are in news.

In news

India – Vietnam co-operation is on rise in recent times.

Placing it in syllabus :

International relations-Bilateral

Static Dimensions

1. India and East Asia- pre cold war and post-cold war
2. India and ASEAN
3. Look East Policy -1
4. Look East policy-2

Current Dimensions

1. Act east policy and initiatives under it
2. India and ASEAN under Act East Policy
3. India- Singapore

4. India-Vietnam

Content

Relations Pre-cold war

Historically India good relations with East Asia.

1. Before Colonial rule they were based on strong economic ties and cultural linkages established on Hinduism and Buddhism.
2. After the coming of the British the system of indentured labor lead to establishment of Indian settlement's and Diaspora in East Asia.
3. India supported the decolonization process of Indonesia, Vietnam, Laos.

During Cold War

The links between India and East Asia weakened during the cold war as the economic and ideological perspectives were divergent.

1. Ideological differences : India was part of the non-alignment movement and was tilting towards USSR whereas East Asia was part of SEATO and aligned to USA.
2. Economic differences : And the economic interests were also not synergetic as India attempted to be a self-sufficient economy where as East Asian economies are export lead.

Relations post-Cold War

Post-cold war the relations underwent a pivotal shift.

As with the fall of USSR India started to look east and the east Asian countries started looking west with the rise and assertion of china leading to converging interests. New

economic synergies emerged with LPG reforms in India and the search for new markets by East Asian countries.

The relation has matured over phases

Look East Policy – 1

1. Started by P.V. Narasimha Rao.
2. it is based on Geo-Economics Model.
3. It is a product of the neo-liberal approach adopted by India.
4. It is an outcome of the new forces of globalization
5. This phase focused on mainly economic aspects of the relation.

Look East Policy – 2

1. Started by Vajpayee government.
2. It is an addition to LEP -1
3. Domestic component became very important.
4. There was a new emphasis on North East India.
5. Entire east Asia became the focus
6. Now a new strategic dimension is added to the earlier economic aspect of the relation.

Act East Policy

1. Started by Modi government.
2. Based on 3C's of Connectivity, Culture and Commerce.
3. This phase saw a more active and energetic engagement with East Asia like
4. Inviting the leaders of ASEAN to the republic day parade in 2018
5. Renewed focus on BIMSTEC
6. Strategic partnership signed with Singapore in 2015
7. Upgrading strategic partnership with Malaysia, Vietnam, Laos.
8. Strategic partnership signed with South Korea in 2015.
9. 25 years of ASEAN commemoration summit was celebrated.

10. Formation of QUAD
11. New alliances based on Blue Economy.
12. Recent concessions made in RCEP for India.
13. Recent Indo-Vietnam relations.

India-Vietnam

Historical Relations

Vietnam has been a close ally of India for over 70 years and is not limited to official diplomatic ties. Vietnam is critical for India's Foreign Policy at regional and systematic levels and similarly, Vietnam has calibrated its domestic and foreign policy shifts and where India's relevance can fit into these policy changes.

Cooperation in various areas

1. Committed to enhancing joint co-production in defense (includes Technology transfers)
2. Together they decided to address the Regional Security issues like Maritime security in Indo-Pacific region, calling for free and open seas by holding a bilateral level maritime security dialogue in early 2019.
3. Cyber security has also been made a part of Regional security.
4. India and Vietnam signed a joint statement in March 2018 which included the following
5. 3 agreements were signed on :
 - Enhancing trade
 - Agricultural research
 - MoU on Cooperation between the Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP) and Vietnam Atomic Energy Institute (VINATOM) , to enhance training and research collaborations – in line with the 2016 Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement

1. It reiterated the focus given on sub-regionalism and Mekong Ganga Cooperation framework.
2. Joint exploration for Oil and Gas reserves off the Vietnam coast in South China Sea by ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) and PetroVietnam(PVN).
3. India has committed to a \$500 million Credit Line to Vietnam, part of which is used to procure Offshore Patrol Vehicles (OPVs).

What can be done to improve relations?

1. With Indonesia ratifying the India-ASEAN Services agreement on November 13, New Delhi is a step closer to signing the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, bringing India to the forefront of the services sector globally. A potential area of convergence in the realm of health care through joint public-private partnership agreements can be explored by the two countries.
2. Jointly work on open, independent and prosperous Indo-Pacific region where International rules are respected

Hurdles to Act East Policy

1. With the coming of Trump and his "America First" policy, US has become an unreliable partner and initiatives like QUAD may not be possible.
2. Zero-Sum Approach in East Asian region may harm Indo-China relations.

So what is needed is a holistic policy towards East Asia based on Peaceful Resolution of disputes without aligning with any of the countries against a particular country. Provision like Non Alignment Movement is required to suit the architectural Maritime Security, this was clearly brought about by the Prime Minister's Indo-Pacific Vision

Statement at Shangri La.

Test yourself: Mould your thoughts

1. Critically assess the success of Act East Policy with special focus on increasing Indo-Vietnam co-operation in recent times.