

Non Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit

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Manifest pedagogy: Non Alignment policy and the movement formed a cornerstone of Indian foreign policy in post independence world. India considered itself as the leader of this normative world order. Today with the changing geopolitics and emergence of a unipolar to Multipolar transitioning world order the questions like the historical role, role in today's world and relevance of NAM are questions of importance to UPSC.

In news: Recently, the Vice President of India attended the 18th NAM Summit which was held in Baku.

Placing it in syllabus: Global groupings involving India

Static dimensions: NAM and its history

Current dimensions:

- 17th summit important decisions
- 18th summit
- Relevance of NAM today
- Effects of India's neglect

Content:

NAM and its history:

- The NAM was **founded during the collapse of the colonial system** and at the height of the Cold War.
- Its actions were a key factor in the **decolonization process**, which led later to the attainment of **independence by many countries.**

- It has always played a fundamental role in the **preservation of world peace and security.**
- The **African-Asian Conference held in Bandung, Indonesia, in 1955,** was convened by the Heads of State and Government **Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Ahmed Sukarno of Indonesia and Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia,** who later became the founding fathers of the NAM.
- Indonesia's President, Ahmed Sukarno, was the host of the conference in which **Ten Principles of Bandung** were set forth which later evolved as the **essential criteria to the membership of this movement.**

1. Respect of fundamental human rights and of the objectives and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.
2. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.
3. Recognition of the equality among all races and among all big and nations.
4. Non-intervention into the internal affairs of another country.
5. Respect of the right of every nation to defend itself, either individually or collectively.
6. Non-use of collective defense pacts to benefit the specific interests of any of the great powers.
7. Refraining from acts or threats of aggression and use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country.
8. Settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means in conformity with the Charter of the UN.
9. Promotion of mutual interest and cooperation.
10. Respect for justice and international obligations.

Six years after Bandung, **the NAM was officially established, at the First Summit Conference of Belgrade, 1961.** Today **NAM is a forum of 120 developing world states that are not formally**

aligned with or against any major power bloc. It has 17 observer countries and 10 observer organisations.

17th summit of NAM:

17th NAM Summit was held in **Margarita Island, Venezuela** in September, **2016** with the theme "**Peace, Sovereignty and Solidarity for Development**". A **21-article** final declaration was issued.

1. Full and decisive support to the consolidation, strengthening and revitalization of the NAM.
2. Strengthening the International Order
3. Right to Self-Determination
4. They resolved to work to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and achieve international security.
5. They reaffirmed their commitment to the promotion and protection of universal human rights.
6. Condemnation at the promulgation of unilateral coercive measures against countries of NAM.
7. Condemnation of terrorism
8. Importance of promoting respect for religious, social and cultural diversity.
9. Comprehensive and just solution to the Palestinian refugees' cause.
10. Reform of the UNSC in order to transform it into a more democratic, effective, efficient, transparent and representative body.
11. Reaffirming the need for greater transparency and inclusiveness in the process of selection and appointment of the Secretary General of the UN.
12. Working towards the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
13. Principles of peacekeeping operations
14. Promotion of Education, Science and Technology for Development
15. Climate change
16. Reform of the international financial architecture

17. Reiterated that South-South Cooperation is an important element of international cooperation and is a complement to the North-South Cooperation.
18. Highlighted the efforts of the international community to counter and eradicate the spread of various pandemics.
19. Refugees and migrants
20. Recognized the important role that youth and women play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as well as in peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts.
21. Emphasized the need for information and communication strategies.

18th summit of NAM:

- 18th NAM summit was held at **Baku, Azerbaijan.**
- The **theme of the summit** was “Upholding the Bandung Principles to ensure concerted and adequate response to the challenges of the contemporary world.”
- The theme **relates to the forthcoming 65th anniversary of Bandung Principles (2020) and the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Non-Alignment Movement (2021).**
- This NAM Summit majorly focussed on contemporary issues such as terrorism, threats to peace and security, UN reform, climate change, sustainable development, economic governance, and south-south cooperation.
- **Four final documents** adopted at the Summit are Baku Final Act, Baku Political Declaration, the Palestinian Declaration and the document of gratitude and solidarity to the government and people of Azerbaijan.

Relevance of NAM today:

- NAM has played an active role in **preserving world peace.** It has prohibited invasion of any country, **promoted disarmament** and a sovereign world order.
- NAM has acted as a **protector of third world countries** against the western hegemony.

- No matter the world is – bipolar or multi-polar, non-alignment as a foreign policy of the small / weak states will continue to remain valid so long as the sovereign nation states exist.
- As NAM represents **two third members of the UN general assembly**, NAM members act as important vote blocking group in UN.
- NAM together with the G-77 has succeeded to keep Third World issues on the agenda in most UN forums and agencies due to their numerical strength. This can also **help India getting a UNSC membership**.
- NAM **promotes equitable world order** and can act as a bridge between the political and ideological differences existing in the international environment.
- NAM has always been a platform which **negotiates and conclude disputes peacefully** securing the favorable decisions for each member nation.
- NAM can provide a **platform to raise human rights violation issues** and resolve the same through its principles.
- Can be used as larger **platform to make consensus on global burning issues** like climate change, migration and global terrorism and lead the world towards sustainable development and higher economic growth.

Thus, the **major thrust of NAM is the creation of a new world based on rational, democratic, equitable and non-exploitative inter-states relation**. Hence NAM continues to be relevant so long as there is exploitation, war, hunger, poverty and disease on the earth.

Effects of India's neglect:

Honourable **PM Narendra Modi skipped the second NAM summit in a row (17th and 18th Summits)**. It had been the customary practice ever since the inception of NAM that India had always participated in the summit meetings through its Prime Minister (single exception of the 6th NAM Summit when Chaudhury Charan

Singh was the caretaker PM and hence missed it).

This move marks **India's transformation from a non-aligned** country to one which is supposedly **multi-aligned**. This may be yet another sign of the **winds of change sweeping India's foreign policy**.

Many experts believe that NAM will be of little use in furthering India's case on important issues like the menace of terrorism and UNSC reforms. India is always wanting NAM to go ahead and form a working group on terror. Even in 18th summit at Baku, India's External affairs minister advocated the finalisation of the **Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT)** that India had proposed in 1996.

India **must not land into any kind of confrontation with any of the major powers** in the world including America, Russia and China, particularly against the backdrop of North Korea's mounting nuclear arms buildup, emerging Sino-US Cold War and China's mounting aggression in the South China Sea.

Given these conditions, PM Modi's non-participation in the Baku NAM Summit may be a **covert strategy to not displease the US and other Western nations and also China**, with a view to consolidate and **expand India's infrastructure, economy, military modernization** and also securing a **permanent seat in the UN Security Council**, besides **pressurizing Pakistan** to stop cross-border terrorism.

India's **ancient ethical-cultural roots** and rich traditional heritage characterised by peace, truth, equality, liberty, brotherhood and non-violence are truly **imbibed in the doctrine of the nonalignment**. Thus PM's absence in this NAM summit may be **a meticulous planning and sound strategy** on the part of Indian leadership which would prove to be more productive as regards protecting India's national interests.