



Political Science & International Relations

Crash Course & Test Series - 2020

Test 04

Time Allowed: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 250

Name RIA DABI
Test Date 2.12.2020
Email Address _____
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UPSC Roll No 0819907

Instructions:

1. There are EIGHT questions divided in TWO SECTIONS and candidate has to attempt five questions in all.
2. Question Nos. 1 and 5 are compulsory and out of the remaining, any three are to be attempted choosing at least ONE question from each section.
3. Content of the answer is more important than its length.
4. Answers must be written in the medium authorized in the admission Certificate, which must be stated clearly on the cover of the booklet in the space provided.
5. Content of the answer is more important than its length.
6. Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-Cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.
7. All parts of the question should be written at one place itself.
8. Write the test in exam atmosphere.
9. Filling all the details in BLOCK LETTERS is mandatory.

S. No.	a	b	c	d	e	Total
1						
2				X	X	
3				X	X	
4				X	X	
5						
6				X	X	
7				X	X	
8				X	X	
Grand Total						

ie.1(a)

India has no good reason to overturn its nuclear doctrine.

(10 Marks)

India's nuclear doctrine is an example of defensive realism. It supports no first use and credible minimum deterrence.

There have been calls to change the doctrine, due to failure to prevent the Kargil misadventure, growing asymmetry with China and rise of non-state actors.

However, this change would not be practical because it would be costly to develop intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems along with weapon delivery mechanism.

India has two nuclear adversaries and thus, it would

require additional resources. Further, India's number of weapons is very modest and MIRVs are still not inducted.

Shivshankar Menon argues that deterrence is about perception rather than posture. Changing the nuclear doctrine would create a provocative situation in South Asia.

Further, India's reputation as a responsible player would be affected and getting entry into NSG would be difficult.

India supports universal disarmament and the nuclear doctrine should not be changed as it is part of our strategic culture.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	



Q.1(b)

India's role in UN Peace keeping.

10 Marks.

India has been one of the most active countries in the UN Peacekeeping operations. India contributes the 5th largest troops in UN Peacekeeping forces.

India has served in many African countries as well as in Latin America, Korea, etc. India has sent medical units from time to time and women troops as well.

India believes in peaceful resolution of conflict along with rehabilitation and reconstruction. Indian peacekeeping forces are considered one of the most professional forces and have



good rapport with the local people.
India has often criticised other
troops like Pakistan and Bangladesh
for mismanagement of funds
and sexual violence.

India has suggested that
there should be consultation with
all troop contributing countries
at all levels and the UN Peacekeeping
Budget should be increased, to
make it more effective.

India has worked with US
troops in the recent past to
diffuse violent situations in
African countries.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	



ie.1(c)

As Sino Indian relations occur a free fall, New Delhi find itself on the margins of SCO. 10 Marks.

The Indo - China relationship has suffered a setback due to the current stand-off in Galwan valley. Many scholars have argued that due to this, China has lost India strategically to the west.

Further, the relations have become distant over China's increasing presence in south Asia, the COVID-19 crisis, steps taken by India to reduce dependence on Chinese imports, banning apps with Chinese links etc.

Shyam Saran has said that tensions may subside but the relationship may never be the same again.



Now, India finds itself stuck in the China-dominated SCO.

C. Raja Mohan has said that India is the odd man out here but it looks cute.

China's closeness with Pakistan and Russia is growing and India will find it difficult to navigate amongst such choppy waters.

However, India must learn to use this opportunity to its best interest. Like, in the recent SCO virtual summit, India can target issues like cross-border terrorism and increase cooperation with Central Asian countries.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	



Q.1(d)

The role of PMO in shaping India's foreign policy.

10 Marks.

The PMO has played a huge role in shaping India's foreign policy, over the years. This is why K. Subrahmanyam has said that Indian foreign policy is always a leadership function and rarely commands consensus.

After independence, Nehruvian ideas of Non-Alignment dominated our foreign policy, leading to creation of Non-Aligned Movement and South-South cooperation.

During Indira Gandhi's rule, India saw a tilt towards the Soviet Union with the signing of Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1971.

During I.K. Gujral's tenure, Indian foreign policy advocated close cooperation with our neighbours and thus the Gujral Doctrine promoted non-reciprocity and unilateral concessions.

The present government under PM Modi, has focused on promoting India's soft power through the Indian diaspora. PM Modi has called them the permanent and informal ambassadors of India.

Thus, PMO influences our foreign policy to a great extent.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	

Q.1(e)

China is a pivotal actor in South Asia's hydro diplomacy.

10 Marks

South Asian subcontinent is filled with numerous rivers, which gives rise to water sharing disputes among the countries here.

China is a pivotal actor in South Asia's hydro diplomacy since it has expanded its influence in the region.

The dispute between India and China over Brahmaputra river has seen some positive steps like sharing of hydrological data.

However, China's building of dams in upper riparian area, near Arunachal Pradesh, is a concern.

In the Indus Water Treaty,



the calls for leaving the treaty by India have been rejected, because it could strengthen China's position and lead to water terrorism.

Even in conflicts with Nepal and Bangladesh over the Kali or Teesta rivers, China plays a dominant role. It is believed that Nepal acts on the behest of an external force namely China. While China is helping Bangladesh financially to manage Teesta river.

Therefore, India needs to navigate carefully with its neighbours to prevent China's growing influence and increase trust levels in the region.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	

ie.2(a)

Deconstruct the recent territorial dispute between India and Nepal. What are the possible factors behind escalation of the problem? What are the mechanisms available to address the dispute in structured and institutionalised manner? 20 Marks

India and Nepal relations have a long history. The relationship is like a roller coaster ride with periods of mutual bonhomie and periods of deep distrust.

The recent territorial dispute between India and Nepal started when India inaugurated a link road in Uttarakhand. After that, Nepal criticised the move as unilateral and unacceptable.

Nepal has now issued a new map and given it constitutional status. It shows areas of Lipulekh, Kalapani, Limpiyadhura in Uttarakhand.



and Susta in Bihar, as its own territory, disputed by India.

The dispute became hurting when India said that Nepal acts on behest of an external force and Nepal said that the Indian virus looks more lethal than the one from China.

The possible factors behind this escalation are:

- 1) India's recent move to change status of Kashmir has made the neighbours uneasy.
- 2) K P Oli's nationalistic agenda to win support of local Nepali people
- 3) interference of China in Nepal's domestic politics, creating a rift between K P Oli and Prachanda.
- 4) Nepal applying cartographic aggression

According to the Treaty of Sugauli of 1816, territory to the east of Kali river, belongs to Nepal. However, after accepting this treaty for so long, now Nepal is claiming areas to the west of Kali river.

Therefore, India needs to protect its territorial integrity and sovereignty by making this treaty as the basis of negotiations with Nepal.

The mechanisms available to address the dispute are:

- 1) Having a dialogue between top leadership of both countries. The recent visit of foreign secretary to Nepal, has helped to calm the situation and Nepal recently



used the old snap to greet India on Diwali.

2) Having special Representatives and confidence building measures in place to continue dialogue.

3) using the goodwill of the Gorkha army men to address the conflict

4) Assuring Nepal that India is concerned about its development and wants to be the sherpa for it to scale Mt. Everest.

As Rajnath Singh has said India & Nepal share roti-beti vyavahar. Thus, peaceful resolution of conflict will be in ^{best} interest of both countries.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	

ie.2(b)

West Asia has now become a centre of internal squabbling and rivalries with civilizational and sectarian dimensions. Elucidate. Suggest how the power struggle in west Asia affects India's interest?
15 Marks

West Asia is considered as the extended neighbourhood of India. West Asia is considered as the least integrated and most sensitive region in the world. The region suffers from ethnic and religious conflicts.

Today, West Asia has become a centre of internal squabbling and rivalries. This can be seen in the recent Abraham Accords which signify the Arab-Israeli conflict coming to a close.

further, Saudi Arabia is uniting all nations like UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait etc. that is the



sunni majority areas, to counter Shi'a Iran's growing influence.

The Palestinian cause is now seeming to look orphaned. Only Iran and Turkey are actively supporting it, to counter Israel's claims. Iran and Turkey both want to emerge as the leaders of the Muslim world.

With retreating US, Russia and China's role in West Asia is increasing with BRI and sale of arms. West Asia is now also fighting over oil supply.

Saudi and UAE are looking to diversify their heavily oil dependent economies and the OPEC is facing internal conflicts.

This power struggle in West Asia has affected India's interests in the region. Due to US pressure, India had to reduce oil imports from Iran. Turkey's continued criticism over Kashmir and support to Pakistan, is also challenging.

Saudi and UAE adopting a softer stand for India is a positive sign. India has used clear-eyed realism to improve relations with Israel. Further, India is trying to secure its energy security.

Therefore, today, India is following the policy of multiple alignments in West Asia.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	

ie.2(c)

Permanent seat in UNSC is neither necessary nor the only way for India to assert its arrival on global centre stage. Comment.

15 Marks

The UNSC is considered as the only UN body with real teeth to bite. It has been the long-term ambition of India to get a seat on the high table of diplomacy, or as Nehru said, 'India's rightful place in the comity of nations'.

However, the aim of getting a permanent seat in UNSC is now not necessary and not the only way for India to assert its Great Power Status.

The UNSC is already been seen as an outdated body, under-represented and not reflecting the current world order. With veto



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Politics and China's resistance, India may not get a permanent seat anytime soon. Therefore, as C. Raja Mohan has suggested, India should not allow itself to be victim of bullying nations but instead focus on strengthening its internal capabilities.

India can assert its power through the non-permanent seat in UNSC for 2021-22. It can help India to tackle issues like terrorism, climate change, COVID-19 pandemic and reforming the UN. Adopting NORMS (New orientation for a reformed multilateral system) is the right step in the right direction.

further, india now sees a rare alignment of stars for agenda setting with being chair of WHO executive Board, being the host of G20 and BRICS and SCO in coming years.

india can assert its power in other ways as well. eg. NAM and BRICS for Third world solidarity, QUAD and BIMSTEC for maritime security and countering china and SAARC for creating a neighbourhood first policy.

Thus, india's rise ^{as a nation} is inevitable as was pointed out by svi Aurobindo.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	

ie.5(a)

Delineate the relative degree of continuity and change in India's foreign policy in the light of the major initiatives taken by the present government. 10 Marks

India's foreign policy has seen both continuity and change over the years. The present government's initiatives also point in such a direction.

(i) shifting from Look East to Act East Policy is seen as continuity towards strategic calculations. It will help increase India's influence in South East Asia and counter a rising China.

(ii) shifting focus from SAARC to BIMSTEC is seen as a change due to India-Pakistan hostilities after the surgical strikes.

(iii) The Doval Doctrine or hardline



approach towards terrorism is seen as a change. eg. covert operations

iv) Growing closeness with US, Japan, Israel and shifting away from Russia and China, is now evident as a change.

v) India still believes in South-South cooperation and Third World solidarity as seen in continuity of summits of NAM, BRICS etc.

vi) India still supports cooperation with its neighbours as seen in adoption of Neighbourhood First Policy and SAGAR approach.

Thus, Indian foreign policy is dynamic.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	



Q.5(b)

How India should priorities its economic, political and security needs in face of China's increasingly powerful and aggressive strategies?

10 Marks

China is currently showing increased aggression, since the outbreak of COVID-19. The recent border stand-off was China's way of asserting its power vis-a-vis India.

In this context, India has tried to reduce its overdependence on Chinese imports, supported the supply chain resilience initiative, not signed RCEP and is focusing on countering China economically. India's trade deficit with China has now reduced from \$ 63 billion to \$ 43 billion.

Politically, India is still

cooperating with china through negotiations - on platforms like SCO and BRICS. The wuhan and Mamallapuram spirit needs to be preserved for regional peace.

security concerns of india are also increasing with incursions at the border. china uses the unresolved border as leverage against india. Therefore, india needs to plug loopholes in its internal security and show china that it is not 1962.

Banning chinese apps was also aimed as a digital strike against china to protect our data and privacy.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	

ie.5(c)

The story of bilateral relations between India and Srilanka is a story of ups and downs.

10 Marks

Shiv Shankar Menon has said that Sri Lanka is like an aircraft carrier, parked 14 miles from India.

The bilateral relationship has seen better ups and downs.

1) The Tamil issue remains most controversial, with involvement of IPKF and assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. Since then, India has adopted the policy of non-involvement and wants 13th Amendment to be fully implemented.

2) Both countries have also had conflict over straying of fishermen and maritime security.

3) India and Sri Lanka are now



cooperating in areas of trade,
defence. India is developing the
East Container Terminal with
help of Japan and Trincomalee Port.

4) China's growing presence is a
concern eg. Hambantota Port and
Colombo Port City Projects are like
a debt trap for Sri Lanka.

5) The re-election of Rajapaksha
Brothers is being seen as a challenge.
However, Gotabaya's first visit was
to India where he described India
as a close relative and China as a
friend.

Therefore, India needs to adopt
development diplomacy in Sri Lanka.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	

Q.5(d)

How India's history as a dominant and oppressed entity affected and constituted India's foreign policy discourse? 10 Marks

A. Appadurai has explained how a nation's history affects its foreign policy in different ways.

India's history of colonial rule, shaped its support to the colonised African and Asian nations after independence. India thus wanted to protect its sovereignty during the cold war and came up with the Non-Aligned Movement.

India's dominant identity in its neighbourhood, due to its size, resources and population, made it look like a Big Brother or Bully for its neighbours.

Thus, General Ershad advocated



the formation of SARC. Today, the SAARC stagnates and one of the reasons is structural asymmetry between India and its neighbours.

India's colonial history also impacted its relations with the west, since India remained a closed economy till 1991 and remained under the security umbrella of USSR till its disintegration.

India's dominant entity has led to trust deficit in South Asia and poor relations with South East Asia as well.

Thus, history plays a major role in Indian foreign policy.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	



ie.5(e)

Discuss the current state of India-Africa relations. Examine the challenges and opportunities. 10 Marks

Nehru had said that India and Africa are divided by ocean but connected by history. The current state of relations can be seen as a positive phase of connect.

The challenges are:

- 1) Low diplomatic presence in Africa, with many embassies being headless and poor language proficiency especially in francophone countries.
 - 2) Increasing role of China in Africa eg. extending BRI, taking control of naval ports.
 - 3) Less number of visits to Africa and adoption of Banjul formula.
- As Harsh V. Pant says, we have not

utilised our historical advantage in Africa. However, the opportunities for India are:

- 1) strengthening initiatives like ITEC, TEAM 9, Pan Africa e-network project, India-Africa Forum Summit, AAGC etc.
- 2) strengthening oil supply and energy security from Africa to reduce dependence on volatile West Asia.
- 3) Africa will be the next Growth Pole. Thus India should increase Third world cooperation through NAM, BRICS and IBSA.

This will help India to become more entrenched in Africa.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	

1e.6(a)

The relationship between India and USA is more robust than ever. However, the deepening of relationship is bound to bring its own challenges. Critically examine. Analyse the challenges and opportunities in India US Relations.

20 Marks

India and USA are considered as Global Strategic Partners with like-minded democratic interests. Since the end of the cold war, Indo-US relations have grown tremendously.

Today, the opportunities of this close relationship are:

- 1) Increased trade between the two countries. US and UAE are the only two major trading partners with which India has a trade surplus.
- 2) Increased cooperation in defence sector, with US



supplying various equipments to India. India has now signed all the 4 foundational defence agreements with the US - BECA, LEMOA, COMCASA and GSOMIA. This has strengthened India's defence capabilities.

3) India and US are also increasingly cooperating to counter a rising China. Eg: through the QUAD, Malabar Exercises, Indo-Pacific construct etc.

4) With the recent election win of Joe Biden, US and India can now further cooperate on climate change, getting GSP waiver again and reducing threat of CAATSA to import oil



from Iran again. Biden's win will help reduce the policy uncertainty that was associated with Trump's tenure.

However, there are various challenges in the bilateral relationship:

- 1) India is still trying to pursue the policy of multiple alignments eg. RIC and JAI, to get the best of both worlds.
- 2) India will not get in between US - China conflict since it has a border dispute with China and does not want to become a victim of US's Bait and Bleed strategy.
- 3) While US and Japan want Quad to be formalised, India



is hesitant. Eg: on Shangri La Dialogue, India pointed out how it was not against any particular country.

4) Joe Biden's win can lead to questioning of CAA and NRC and human rights issue in Kashmir.

Eg: USCIRF has already criticised India, supported by Democrats.

5) Being in US's defence fold limits options for India since US is very particular. Eg: S-400 issue.

Therefore, India is adopting a realist approach in its relationship with US to balance its interests.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	



ie.6(b)

Critically examine the impact of Abraham Accords on India's West Asian diplomacy. What has been India's response to the accords?

15 Marks

West Asia is considered as the extended neighbourhood of India. The region has seen conflicts over religion and identity. The recent Abraham Accords are a testimony to that.

The Accords signify the Arab-Israeli conflict coming to a close. UAE, Bahrain, Sudan, Egypt and Jordan, have now formalised relations with Israel. In return, Israel has agreed to suspend its annexation plans in West Bank.

The Accords show how the Sunni nations are trying to counter Iran and Turkey. The



Palestinian cause now seems orphaned.

These Accords have impacted India's West Asian diplomacy both positively as well as negatively.

- 1) India's closer relations with Israel can now become more acceptable. Eg: PM Modi's stand alone visit, the issue of NGO Shaked
- 2) India's growing closeness with Saudi Arabia and UAE will also increase since Israel is now being accepted in West Asia and they want to diversify their heavily oil dependent economies.

- 3) However, India's relations with Iran will be affected further. Eg: India being out of Chabahar - Zahedan rail project, less oil imports.

4) India's relations with Turkey are already under stress due to Turkey's support to Pakistan over Kashmir.

India's response to the Abraham Accords has been positive. India supports Israel's growing acceptance in West Asia. India also still advocates the two-state solution.

The agreement to suspend annexation plans has also been welcomed. India is trying to maintain cordial relations with all, to get the best deal in West Asia.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	



ie.6(c)

What do you understand by strategic culture? Do you think India has its own strategic culture? What are the salient features of India's strategic culture?

15 Marks

Strategic culture signifies a country's attempt to integrate cultural considerations, cumulative historical memory and their influences in the analysis of states' security policies and international relations.

India's strategic culture can be traced back to Kautilya's Arthashastra, wherein his realist ideas have shaped Indian foreign policy.

Kautilya's ideas about state being an organism, with the urge to expand and the



Mandala theory, has shaped how India sees its neighbours. The organic theory of state of Kautilya has influenced India's domestic politics.

However, scholars like George Tanham and Teresita Schaffer have questioned India's strategic culture due to its colonial legacy, ideological foreign policy of non-alignment and the culture. Thus, Tanham says that India will remain an under performer.

However, this is an incorrect analysis since India has a rich strategic culture. As S. Jaishankar has said, India is looking at things strategically.



The recent initiatives of India point towards its strategic culture :

- 1) Shifting from Look East to Act East Policy and serving the role of net security provider.
- 2) Joining Quad and BIMSTEC, allowing Australia in Malabar exercises
- 3) The surgical strikes against Pakistani terror presents India's cold-blooded calculations.
- 4) Decision to revoke Article 370 and change status of Kashmir
- 5) India's Nuclear Doctrine also reflects its strategic culture.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	



1e.7(a)

In recent times certain developments have given rise to the increasing concerns among India's strategic community with respect to its reliance on Russia. Elucidate. To what extent do you support the view that in order to protect its interest vis-à-vis China, India has to forget its reliance on Russia. 20 Marks

India and Russia are considered as Strategic Partners. Both countries share a rich historical relationship, since the beginning of cold war. Thus, PM Modi has said that everyone knows in India, who is our best friend.

However, in recent times, certain developments have created concerns for India with respect to reliance on Russia!

1) India and Russia cooperate largely in defence sector where



Russia has provided various arms and equipments eg. T-90, Akula, BrahMos, S-400 system.

This dependence on Russia is a concern since India should have indigenous defence capability.

Further, servicing of Russian equipments creates dependency on Israel.

2) Russia's growing closeness with China and Pakistan is also a concern. Since US has cooperated closely with India, Russia shifted its attention to Pakistan. Eg: Joint military exercises, supply of arms.

Also, Russia is now emerging as the junior partner of China. Thus, it will not aid India to

counter a rising china.

on this context, scholars have pointed out that Russia needs to remember that it is not irreplaceable. A rising Russia will only be in interest of India and no other country. As PM Modi said, one old friend is better than two new ones.

It is believed that to protect its interests vis-a-vis china, India should forget its reliance on Russia. Russia and china are considered Blood Brothers, increasingly cooperating in defence, trade, Arctic eg. Power of Siberia pipeline.

India can therefore reduce its reliance on Russia, instead cooperate with US and build its



national capacity.

However, in today's multipolar world, with a retreating US and revanchist Russia, the policy of multiple alignments is necessary. India should protect its interests but also not forget its traditional partner, i.e. Russia.

India and Russia, as Middle Powers, can do a lot. eg. cooperating in other countries - Kooffur nuclear plant in Bangladesh, INSTC, ensuring stability in Afghanistan.

The recent Vladivostok summit shows that India-Russia relations are stronger than before.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	



ie.7(b)

Enumerate some of the recent developments in the relations between Japan and India. To what extent India's decision to withdraw from RCEP creates dilemma for Japan? 15 Marks

India and Japan are Global, Strategic Partners today.

According to Kautilya's logic, Japan is India's natural ally.

The recent developments in bilateral relations are:

1) Cooperating in Indo-Pacific through Quad to counter a rising China.

2) Reducing dependence on China economically through supply chain Resilience Initiative and CEPA between the two countries.

3) Cooperating in Africa through the AAGC initiative.



4) Japan has offered official development assistance to India for development of North east. Both have cooperated in fields of defence, nuclear technology and rare earth elements.

5) Due to Japan's demographic disadvantage, India serves as a saviour with export of services in healthcare, IT, fish packaging.

6) Cooperating in south Asia eg. East Container Terminal in Sri Lanka.

India's decision to withdraw from RCEP creates a dilemma for Japan because Japan was relying on India's economic might to counter China's unfair trade policies.

As democracies, Japan wanted India to counter China's authoritarianism, by both countries creating an 'Arc of Freedom' as an ideological sub.

However, with India's protectionist policy of AtmaNirbhar Bharat, Japan now feels isolated within RCEP. Trade is an essential part of closer relations.

With India's Act East Policy and Quad initiative, Japan wanted RCEP to be another stepping stone.

Thus, now India needs to preserve its closeness with Japan in other ways.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	



ie.7(c)

India's decision to remain out of RCEP shows that it is retreating from its Act East Policy. Comment. Support your view with convincing arguments. 15 Marks

The RCEP is the largest free trade agreement in the world, representing 30% of global GDP. It consists of 15 members.

India has chosen not to sign RCEP currently. It is being seen as retreating from Act East Policy because RCEP would have resulted in greater economic cooperation with ASEAN.

RCEP would have enabled India to pressurise China through complex interdependence (Keohane & Nye). RCEP would also have been significant given that WTO is in deadlock and India



is not a member of APEC.

RCEP would have enabled India to assert its Great Power Status in the region. This is why

Shyam Saran said that RCEP is not just a trading arrangement. India's decision is a short-sighted move.

However, we need to do a cost-benefit analysis to see the rationale of India's decision.

RCEP would have been a disaster for India since we have trade deficit with 11 members.

further, India's recent steps to reduce exposure of China would have sat uncomfortably with commitments under RCEP. RCEP would have led to flooding of our markets with cheap



Chinese products. India's concerns over Rules of Origin, Auto Trigger Mechanism, Base Year etc. were also not addressed.

India did not want to offer the same benefits to China which it does to its strategic allies, especially in face of recent border conflict.

Therefore, S. Jaishankar has argued that no pact is better than a bad agreement. Building on national capacity does not make India anti-global.

Therefore, India's decision should be treated separately from its Act East Policy.

Understanding of Questions	
Structure and Flow	
Subject Knowledge	
Presentation	
Overall Remarks :	