



INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

(Peer-reviewed, Refereed, Indexed & Open Access Journal)

DOI : 03.2021-11278686

ISSN : 2582-8568

IMPACT FACTOR : 8.031 (SJIF 2025)

EXAMINING INDIA - US RELATION IN LIGHT OF EXPANDING AND THE EVOLVING BRICS PARTNERSHIP

Nikita Kashyap

Bachelor of Arts (H) in Political Science,
Amity Institute of Social Science,
Amity University,
Noida (Uttar Pradesh, India)

Dr. Anna Nath Ganguly

Guide & Associate Professor,
Amity Institute of Social Science,
Amity University,
Noida (Uttar Pradesh, India)

DOI No. **03.2021-11278686** DOI Link :: <https://doi-ds.org/doilink/05.2025-19145235/IRJHIS2505020>

ABSTRACT:

This paper examines the historical trajectory and current state of India-US relations, tracing their evolution from India's independence in 1947 to the present. The relationship has transitioned through various phases, influenced by economic, political, and ideological factors, culminating in a strategic partnership characterized by growing cooperation in trade, defense, technology, and global security. Despite this progress, challenges such as differing international political perspectives, India's pursuit of strategic autonomy, limited US support on critical issues, and India's continued ties with Russia have constrained the deepening of their partnership. India's leadership within BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) underscores its commitment to fostering South-South cooperation and advocating for a multipolar global order. The recent expansion of BRICS to include nations like Egypt, Iran, and Saudi Arabia highlights its increasing significance, offering India both opportunities and challenges in balancing its global engagements. The study highlights India's ability to navigate these complexities, leveraging its partnerships with both the US and BRICS to advance national interests while maintaining strategic autonomy. This dual approach positions India as a key player in shaping a more inclusive and balanced global framework, providing valuable insights for policymakers in South and Southeast Asia to anticipate regional developments and adapt their strategies effectively.

Keywords: India-US Relations, BRICS Expansion, Strategic Autonomy, Balancing Diplomacy, Global Governance, Multipolar World Order, Defense Cooperation, South-South Cooperation , Economic Partnership, Trade dynamics

1. INTRODUCTION:

India and the United States have established a strong and evolving partnership, founded on shared democratic values and common interests. This relationship covers key areas such as trade, technology, energy security, and regional stability, playing a significant role in global diplomacy. As the world faces a range of complex challenges, including climate change, counterterrorism, and

regional security, the India-US partnership is vital in addressing these issues. This alliance underscores the mutual benefits both countries gain, positioning them as influential players on the global stage.

Meanwhile, India's involvement in BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) highlights its commitment to multilateralism and reforming global governance. BRICS provides a platform for emerging economies to advocate for a more balanced international system, promoting sustainable development and economic growth. The recent expansion of BRICS, with new members such as Iran, Egypt, and the UAE, has further strengthened its global presence, allowing for greater influence in shaping alternative economic and political frameworks.

Balancing these two important relationships—its growing ties with the US and its leadership within BRICS—presents both opportunities and challenges. The US partnership offers access to advanced technology and defense cooperation, while BRICS provides a space for collaboration with other emerging economies and the push for reform in global governance. Managing the differing priorities of these two alliances, such as the US's reliance on the dollar versus BRICS's call for alternatives, requires careful navigation. This study explores how these two partnerships shape a country's approach to global issues, contributing to a more inclusive and balanced international order.

2. INDIA'S STRATEGIC GLOBAL BALANCING ACT:

India has emerged as a prominent global player by skillfully balancing its relationships with major powers like the United States and fostering multilateral ties through platforms such as BRICS. This approach reflects India's foreign policy principle of strategic autonomy, which allows it to engage with diverse partners while maintaining its decision-making independence.

India's active involvement in BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) underscores its dedication to advancing the interests of the Global South. As a founding member, India consistently advocates for reforms in global institutions such as the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to amplify the voices of emerging economies. The establishment of the New Development Bank (NDB), an initiative strongly supported by India, provides an alternative to Western-dominated financial systems by funding infrastructure and sustainable development projects in underserved regions. BRICS serves as a vital platform for India to collaborate with other emerging economies and promote a more inclusive and equitable world order. Simultaneously, India has cultivated a strong and evolving partnership with the United States, rooted in shared democratic values and mutual interests in trade, technology, and security. The US-India Civil Nuclear Agreement marked a significant turning point, enhancing India's energy security and cementing bilateral ties. India's role in the Quad—a strategic partnership with the US, Japan, and Australia—highlights its commitment to ensuring stability and security in the Indo-Pacific region.

This collaboration reinforces India's strategic importance on the global stage and bolsters economic growth, with the US emerging as one of India's largest trading partners.

A defining feature of India's diplomacy is its ability to maintain strong ties with both the US and BRICS without compromising its autonomy. India's neutral stance during the Russia-Ukraine conflict exemplifies this balance, as it has called for peace while continuing its defense partnerships with Russia. Similarly, India's participation in the Quad aligns with its goal of a free and open Indo-Pacific, yet it actively engages with BRICS to promote a multipolar global order. This dual approach allows India to navigate complex geopolitical landscapes while safeguarding its national interests.

India's multi-alignment strategy transcends balancing relationships; it aims to shape the future of global governance. Through its leadership in BRICS, India champions institutional reforms and addresses pressing global issues such as climate change, public health, and sustainable development. Concurrently, its partnerships with regions like Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America demonstrate its commitment to fostering inclusive growth and strengthening global cooperation.

India's rise as a global power showcases its ability to bridge divides and build synergies across diverse geopolitical spheres. Whether through its leadership in BRICS or its strategic partnership with the US, India is crafting a vision of a balanced, multipolar world that emphasizes inclusivity, collaboration, and shared progress.

3. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF INDIA US RELATIONS:

The relationship between India and the United States is a fascinating tale of transformation, marked by historical interactions, ideological contrasts, and a convergence of interests over time. From limited exchanges during colonial rule to a strong strategic partnership in the 21st century, the evolution of this relationship reflects the adaptability and mutual aspirations of both nations.

During the British colonial era, interactions between India and the United States were limited but significant. Swami Vivekananda's groundbreaking speech at the Chicago Parliament of Religions in 1893 introduced Indian philosophy to the West, while Mark Twain's travels to India in 1896 fostered cultural exchange. During World War II, India served as a strategic base for the US-led China-Burma-India Theater. President Franklin Roosevelt's advocacy for Indian independence, however, clashed with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill's opposition, highlighting early geopolitical frictions.

After gaining independence in 1947, India approached its foreign policy with an anti-imperialist lens, wary of replacing British colonial dominance with American influence. Prime Minister Nehru championed non-alignment, leading India to spearhead the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1961. This policy aimed to maintain autonomy in a world polarized by the Cold War, avoiding alignment with either the United States or the Soviet Union.

The United States, however, viewed India's planned economy and socialist policies with

suspicion, especially as India deepened ties with the Soviet Union. The US's strategic partnership with Pakistan in the 1950s further strained relations. India's refusal to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968 and its first nuclear test in 1974 led to US-imposed sanctions, widening the rift between the two countries. Despite these challenges, India continued to assert its regional influence while adhering to its non-aligned principles.

The 1990s marked a transformative phase in India-US relations. The collapse of the Soviet Union and India's economic crisis prompted a reassessment of its foreign policy. Economic liberalization opened India's markets to global trade, creating new avenues for cooperation with the United States. As Cold War-era ideological divides faded, both nations began to prioritize shared interests over past differences.

The 21st century has witnessed a steady deepening of India-US relations. The 2005 US-India Civil Nuclear Agreement ended decades of mistrust, enabling cooperation in civilian nuclear energy and technology. Foundational defense agreements, including LEMOA (2016) and BECA (2020), have enhanced logistical coordination and intelligence sharing, solidifying their strategic partnership. Economically, the US has emerged as India's second-largest trading partner, with bilateral trade increasing by 72% between 2017 and 2023. Initiatives like the India-US Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (ICET) and the establishment of a semiconductor facility in India underscore their growing technological collaboration. Beyond economics, the partnership extends to defense, cultural exchanges, and joint efforts to combat global challenges such as climate change.

Today, India and the United States stand as key global partners, shaping a balanced and inclusive international order. Their journey from mutual skepticism to a robust alliance exemplifies how nations can evolve through dialogue, adaptability, and a shared vision for a better future.

4. INDIA'S EVOLUTION IN BRICS:

India's engagement with BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) reflects its strategic efforts to amplify its influence in global governance and foster South-South cooperation. Since the group's inception, India has played a pivotal role in steering BRICS initiatives toward equitable economic development and institutional reform.

4.1 Formation and Consolidation (2001–2014):

- **2001:** The term "BRIC" was introduced by economist Jim O'Neill, identifying Brazil, Russia, India, and China as emerging economies with significant growth potential.
- **2006:** BRIC leaders convened informally during the G8 Outreach Summit in St. Petersburg, Russia, laying the groundwork for formal collaboration.
- **2009:** The inaugural BRIC summit in Yekaterinburg, Russia, addressed the need for reforming global financial institutions and promoting a multipolar world order.
- **2010:** South Africa's inclusion transformed BRIC into BRICS, enhancing the group's

representation of the Global South.

- **2014:** The Fortaleza Declaration marked the establishment of the New Development Bank (NDB), aimed at funding infrastructure and sustainable development projects in member and other developing countries.

4.2 Expansion and Transformation (2015–2024)

- **2016:** The 8th BRICS Summit in Goa, India, emphasized counter-terrorism, economic collaboration, and sustainable development.
- **2021:** India hosted the 13th BRICS Summit virtually, focusing on cooperation in combating COVID-19, equitable vaccine distribution, and advancing digital transformation.
- **2023:** BRICS nations initiated steps toward creating a new currency to facilitate cross-border trade, aiming to reduce reliance on the US dollar.
- **2024:** The group expanded to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the UAE, ushering in "BRICS 2.0" and significantly enhancing its global influence. The Kazan Summit in Russia underscored the group's commitment to multipolarity and reforming global governance.

4.3 India's Engagement and Strategic Interests in BRICS Expansion and Economic Cooperation:

India has been instrumental in the formation and operations of the New Development Bank (NDB), advocating for infrastructure development and sustainable projects across developing nations. This reflects India's commitment to creating alternative financial institutions that address the specific needs of emerging economies. Additionally, India's participation in the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) demonstrates its dedication to financial stability within BRICS, providing a safety net against global liquidity pressures and reinforcing collective economic resilience.

The inclusion of Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the UAE in 2024 signifies a strategic shift in BRICS' composition, potentially aligning with India's interests in several ways. The expansion broadens BRICS' reach, offering India a more substantial platform to advocate for the Global South and address regional concerns. New member countries present avenues for increased trade, investment, and energy cooperation, aligning with India's economic and strategic interests. However, the expansion necessitates adept diplomacy from India to balance relations within the group, especially considering China's growing influence and the diverse political landscapes of new members.

India prioritizes initiatives that enhance trade, investment, and infrastructure development, aiming to bolster economic growth and integration among member countries. Addressing global security challenges, India advocates for collective action against terrorism, emphasizing the importance of a unified stance within BRICS. Furthermore, India emphasizes collaboration on renewable energy, climate change mitigation, and sustainable agriculture to promote environmental

sustainability and resource efficiency.

5. INDIA–UNITED STATES ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP:

The bond between India and the United States is enriched by countless personal narratives that highlight the depth of their economic ties.

- **Cultural Diplomacy in Action:** In September 2019, the "Howdy Modi" event in Houston, Texas, showcased the vibrant Indian-American community's role in strengthening bilateral relations. Over 50,000 attendees celebrated shared values and aspirations, reflecting the community's significant contributions to American society.
- **Pioneering Voices:** Individuals like Rajan Devadas, an Indian-American photojournalist, dedicated over five decades to documenting India-U.S. relations. His work not only captured historical moments but also bridged cultural gaps, fostering mutual understanding.
- **Educational Bridges:** The presence of over 320,000 Indian students in the U.S., contributing nearly \$7.7 billion annually to the American economy, underscores the importance of educational exchanges. These students act as cultural ambassadors, enriching campuses and fostering long-term bilateral ties.

6. INDIA'S TRADE RELATIONS WITH BRICS NATIONS

Within the BRICS framework, India's trade relations are also marked by personal and communal stories that reflect shared goals and challenges.

- **Collaborative Ventures:** Joint projects in sectors like agriculture, energy, and mining have not only boosted economic growth but also created employment opportunities, directly impacting communities in India, Brazil, and South Africa.
- **Navigating Challenges Together:** The collective efforts of BRICS nations to address global economic uncertainties demonstrate a shared resilience. For instance, India's consideration of new incentives for its exporters amidst global trade risks highlights the proactive measures taken to support local industries and workers.

7. ANALYZING INDIA'S TRADE DYNAMICS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND BRICS NATIONS:

India's international trade landscape is significantly influenced by its economic engagements with both the United States and the BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, China, and South Africa). These relationships are pivotal in shaping India's global economic footprint, presenting unique opportunities and challenges.

7.1 Economic and Strategic Dimensions of India-US Bilateral Relations:

The economic ties between India and the United States have evolved into a robust partnership, serving as a cornerstone of their broader strategic relationship. As of the fiscal year 2023–2024 (FY24), bilateral trade reached \$118.2 billion, with India recording a trade surplus of

\$36.8 billion. Indian exports to the U.S. are diverse, encompassing sectors such as engineering goods, electronics, gems and jewelry, pharmaceuticals, and petroleum products. Conversely, India imports essential commodities from the U.S., including mineral fuels, machinery, and precious stones.

Investment flows further underscore the depth of this partnership. The United States stands as India's third-largest foreign investor, with total Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows exceeding \$65 billion as of March 2024. Simultaneously, Indian companies have invested over \$40 billion in the U.S., creating more than 425,000 jobs across various sectors. These figures highlight the mutual economic benefits and the deep trust underpinning this relationship.

Beyond trade and investment, collaboration extends to critical areas such as defense, clean energy, and technology. The U.S.-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 exemplifies their shared commitment to combating climate change. In defense, initiatives like the development of Air-Launched Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (ALUAV) and the INDUS-X innovation network showcase growing technological cooperation. Educational ties are equally robust, with over 320,000 Indian students in the U.S. contributing nearly \$7.7 billion annually to the American economy.

High-level engagements have further strengthened this partnership. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to the U.S. and President Joe Biden's participation in the G20 Summit in India have led to agreements on infrastructure, space collaboration, and defense innovation. These developments reflect the growing trust and shared vision between the two nations.

7.2 India's Trade Relations with BRICS Nations:

India's trade relations with BRICS nations are integral to its international trade strategy. By 2022, trade with these countries surpassed \$100 billion, underscoring strong economic interdependence within the bloc.

- **Russia:** Emerging as one of India's most significant trading partners, Russia climbed from 25th place in 2013 to 7th in 2022. This ascent is largely driven by closer economic and strategic cooperation in response to evolving global dynamics.
- **China:** Despite ongoing geopolitical tensions, trade with China remains substantial, with bilateral trade reaching \$135.98 billion in 2022.
- **Brazil and South Africa:** Trade with these nations has seen steady growth, particularly in sectors like agriculture, energy, and mining, highlighting shared priorities and South-South cooperation.

India actively addresses trade challenges within the BRICS framework using mechanisms like Joint Commission Meetings (JCMs) and Joint Trade Committees (JTCs). These platforms facilitate discussions on market access issues and non-tariff barriers, paving the way for smoother trade flows and deeper economic collaboration. The BRICS alliance also offers India opportunities to

strengthen ties with regions such as Africa and South America, enabling expanded cooperation in energy, infrastructure, and sustainable development. These efforts align with India's broader goal of fostering a balanced, multipolar global economic order.

8. INDIA'S STRATEGIC AUTONOMY AND BALANCING DIPLOMACY: NAVIGATING RELATIONS WITH THE USA AND BRICS:

India's foreign policy is characterized by strategic autonomy and balancing diplomacy, enabling the nation to maintain independence in decision-making while engaging constructively with diverse international partners. These principles allow India to navigate relationships with major powers like the United States and emerging economies within BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa).

8.1 Emphasis on sovereignty and pragmatic foreign policy choices:

Strategic autonomy reflects India's determination to make foreign policy choices rooted in its national interests, free from alignment with any single power bloc. This approach emphasizes sovereignty and pragmatism, allowing India to chart an independent course in global affairs. By prioritizing its own needs, India ensures that its foreign policy decisions remain focused on long-term objectives rather than transient alliances. This concept has been a cornerstone of India's diplomatic strategy, enabling it to adapt to the evolving geopolitical landscape.

8.2 Balancing Diplomacy: Engaging with the USA and BRICS:

Balancing diplomacy highlights India's ability to manage diverse relationships simultaneously. For instance, India collaborates with the United States on defense, technology, and regional security, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region. Concurrently, it remains an active participant in BRICS, advocating for equitable global economic reforms and amplifying the voices of the Global South. This dual alignment reflects India's commitment to fostering a multipolar world order where cooperation among nations replaces domination by a few.

India's current strategy draws inspiration from its Cold War-era policy of non-alignment, which emphasized independence from dominant power blocs. Today, however, the global landscape requires a more dynamic approach. India exemplifies this by actively participating in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) alongside the United States, Japan, and Australia, while simultaneously supporting BRICS initiatives. These dual engagements highlight India's capacity to evolve its foreign policy to meet contemporary challenges and opportunities.

8.3 Impact on India's Global Positioning:

Through this balancing act, India not only bolsters its economic and security frameworks but also positions itself as an essential voice in global decision-making. This strategy goes beyond conventional diplomacy; it embodies India's core ideals of standing resolute on its principles while fostering partnerships built on trust and mutual respect. By championing strategic autonomy and

balancing diplomacy, India is paving the way for a more equitable, inclusive, and multipolar world that reflects the aspirations of diverse nations. India's foreign policy is a nuanced blend of strategic autonomy and balancing diplomacy, enabling it to assert its national interests while engaging with diverse global partners. This approach allows India to maintain independence in decision-making and foster constructive relationships with major powers like the United States and emerging economies within the BRICS consortium (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa).

9. TREATIES AND AGREEMENTS SHAPING INDIA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE USA AND BRICS:

India's foreign policy reflects a strategic balancing act, skillfully managing its relationships with both the United States and BRICS nations to enhance its global influence while maintaining strategic autonomy. Through a series of bilateral and multilateral agreements, India secures its position as a key global player in defense, economy, and technology. With the USA, India has strengthened military and economic ties through pivotal treaties, while its engagement with BRICS underscores its commitment to multilateral cooperation and economic development. This dual engagement strategy not only ensures India's national security and economic growth but also contributes to shaping a multipolar global order, reinforcing its role as a significant force in international diplomacy.

9.1 Treaties And Agreements Signed Between India And Usa:

- **Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)** is a significant bilateral defense agreement between India and the United States, signed on August 29, 2016. It establishes a framework for reciprocal logistical support between the armed forces of both nations, allowing access to each other's military facilities for refueling, replenishment, maintenance, and logistical support during joint exercises, training, humanitarian missions, and disaster relief operations. LEMOA is one of the foundational defense agreements that the U.S. signs with its allies to enhance military cooperation and interoperability. However, it does not involve the establishment of military bases but instead facilitates the use of existing facilities on a reimbursable basis. This agreement significantly strengthens India-U.S. defense ties, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, by enhancing India's ability to conduct maritime security operations and ensuring free and open sea lanes. It also facilitates faster and more coordinated disaster relief efforts and improves India's defense modernization by enhancing access to advanced U.S. military technology. Additionally, LEMOA enables better participation in joint military exercises, such as Malabar (India-USA-Japan-Australia) and Yudh Abhyas (India-USA Army exercise), further improving military-to-military engagement. The agreement expands India's strategic reach by allowing refueling at U.S. bases in key locations like Diego Garcia, Guam, and Djibouti, thereby boosting India's

defense logistics efficiency and reinforcing its role as a key strategic partner in global security architecture. While LEMOA does not obligate India to provide support in all situations, it enhances India's strategic autonomy by providing greater flexibility in joint military operations and Indo-Pacific security initiatives.

- **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA)** is a pivotal defense pact between India and the United States, signed on October 27, 2020, facilitating the sharing of geospatial intelligence, including high-quality satellite imagery and topographical data. This enhances India's military capabilities in navigation, targeting precision, and surveillance. As the final installment in the series of foundational defense agreements between the two nations—following LEMOA (2016), COMCASA (2018), and GSOMIA (2002)—BECA strengthens military cooperation, interoperability, and trust between India and the U.S. The agreement plays a crucial role in India's defense preparedness, particularly in border surveillance, missile systems, and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Access to classified geospatial data under BECA is essential for high-accuracy missile strikes, military navigation, and reconnaissance operations, significantly improving India's ability to track adversarial movements, monitor maritime activities, and conduct precision military operations, especially in critical regions like the Indo-Pacific and the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China. Additionally, BECA supports India's indigenous defense initiatives by integrating advanced geospatial technology into defense systems, reducing reliance on third-party intelligence sources. Strategically, the agreement reinforces India's position as a major defense partner of the U.S., enhancing military-to-military cooperation and interoperability. It augments India's network-centric warfare capabilities, improving coordination during joint military exercises such as Malabar and Tiger Triumph. The agreement also aligns with India's broader strategic autonomy, enabling it to leverage U.S. geospatial intelligence while maintaining independent decision-making in defense operations. As India faces evolving security challenges, including border tensions and regional threats, BECA provides a crucial edge in modern warfare, solidifying India's position in the global defense architecture and further strengthening its strategic partnership with the United States.
- **Civil Nuclear Agreement**, also known as the **123 Agreement**, is a landmark pact between India and the United States signed in 2008, marking a significant shift in bilateral relations by enabling civil nuclear cooperation. Named after Section 123 of the U.S. Atomic Energy Act, this agreement allows India to access U.S. nuclear technology and fuel for peaceful purposes, such as energy production, while ensuring that India's civil nuclear facilities are under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. A key feature of the agreement is India's commitment to separate its civil and military nuclear programs, which facilitated the

Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) granting India a special waiver. This waiver permits India to engage in civilian nuclear trade despite not being a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). However, the agreement excludes the transfer of sensitive technologies like enrichment and reprocessing equipment. The 123 Agreement effectively ended a 30-year ban on nuclear trade with India, significantly boosting its civil nuclear energy capabilities and strengthening strategic ties between the two countries. It underscores India's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation by agreeing to place its civilian nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards while retaining autonomy over its military nuclear program. This deal also played a crucial role in India's nuclear diplomacy, enabling similar agreements with other nations, including France, Russia, and Canada. By facilitating the development of nuclear power plants and reducing dependence on fossil fuels, the 123 Agreement contributes to India's long-term energy sustainability and climate change commitments. In essence, this agreement not only transformed India's nuclear energy landscape but also reinforced its strategic partnership with the United States, paving the way for greater collaboration in energy, security, and global governance.

- In 2016, the United States designated India as a **Major Defense Partner**, a unique status that institutionalizes the progress made to facilitate defense trade and technology sharing with India to a level at par with that of the United States' closest allies and partners. This designation reflects the deepening defense relationship between the two nations and underscores India's growing strategic role on the global stage. As a Major Defense Partner, India has access to advanced and sensitive U.S. defense technologies, facilitating enhanced collaboration in defense trade, technology sharing, and co-production. This status also paves the way for increased interoperability between the Indian and U.S. armed forces, strengthening combined military operations and joint exercises. The recognition of India as a Major Defense Partner signifies a mutual commitment to safeguarding international security and promoting stability in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)** is a foundational defense pact between India and the United States, signed on September 6, 2018, during the inaugural 2+2 dialogue in New Delhi. This agreement establishes a legal framework for the transfer of secure communication equipment from the U.S. to India, enabling encrypted and secure communication between the two nations' militaries. By enhancing interoperability, COMCASA allows India to access advanced U.S. defense systems and optimally utilize American-origin platforms like C-17, C-130, and P-8I aircraft. The agreement replaces less secure, commercially available communication systems with high-

end, encrypted ones, significantly strengthening India's defense preparedness. Notably, COMCASA includes India-specific adjustments to ensure that data acquired through these systems cannot be disclosed without India's consent, addressing national security concerns.

9.2 Treaties And Agreements Signed Between India And Brics:

- **The New Development Bank (NDB)**, also known as the **BRICS Bank**, was established in July 2014 by the BRICS nations—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—to mobilize resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in emerging markets and developing countries. Headquartered in Shanghai, China, the NDB has an authorized capital of \$100 billion, with the initial subscribed capital equally shared among the founding members. The bank's mission is to support public or private projects through loans, guarantees, equity participation, and other financial instruments, focusing on areas such as renewable energy, transportation, water supply, and urban development, thereby promoting environmental sustainability and economic growth. India, as a founding member, has been an active participant in the NDB, utilizing its resources to bolster infrastructure and green energy initiatives, reflecting the country's dedication to fostering global economic growth. In recent years, the NDB has expanded its membership beyond the original BRICS countries, with nations like Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Ethiopia joining, thereby broadening its global reach and impact. This expansion aligns with the bank's objective to provide financial support to a diverse range of developing countries, enhancing their capacity to address infrastructure deficits and achieve sustainable development goals. By offering an alternative to traditional financial institutions, the NDB embodies the collaborative efforts of BRICS nations to create a more balanced global economic order and cooperation among emerging markets.
- **Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)** is a financial mechanism established by the BRICS nations—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—to provide mutual support and strengthen financial stability by offering short-term liquidity support during balance of payments pressures. Established in 2015, the CRA serves as a self-managed reserve pool totaling \$100 billion, with contributions from each member country as follows: China (\$41 billion), Brazil, India, and Russia (\$18 billion each), and South Africa (\$5 billion). This arrangement allows member countries to access financial resources to mitigate potential crises, thereby reducing reliance on traditional financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF). By providing a framework for currency swaps among central banks, the CRA enhances financial resilience and exemplifies the growing trend of South-South cooperation among emerging economies.
- The BRICS nations—**Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa**—have established

several collaborative frameworks to enhance cooperation in trade, energy, and agriculture. The BRICS Trade in Services Cooperation Roadmap, adopted in July 2017, outlines strategies to boost trade in services among member countries, aiming to reduce trade barriers and promote mutual economic growth. In the energy sector, the Road Map for BRICS Energy Cooperation up to 2025 focuses on deepening collaboration in energy infrastructure, trade, and technology, thereby strengthening energy security and sustainability across the bloc. Additionally, BRICS has been actively working on enhancing agricultural cooperation to address global food security challenges. Initiatives include joint projects and policy alignments aimed at promoting sustainable agricultural practices and ensuring food security. These collective efforts reflect BRICS' commitment to fostering economic development and addressing shared challenges through coordinated action.

10. ROLE OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE:

Global governance plays a crucial role in shaping India's engagements with both the United States and BRICS, influencing their cooperation on economic, political, and security issues.

- **Global Governance as a Platform for Strategic Engagement**

India utilizes global governance institutions such as the United Nations (UN), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organization (WTO), and G20 to advocate for a more multipolar world order. While the USA remains a dominant player in these institutions, India collaborates with it on areas such as climate action, counterterrorism, and global trade regulations. Simultaneously, BRICS, through initiatives like the New Development Bank (NDB) and Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA), seeks to create alternative governance mechanisms that reduce reliance on Western financial systems.

- **Institutional Reforms and Representation**

A major point of convergence between India's role in BRICS and its relations with the USA is its advocacy for institutional reforms. India has long pushed for the expansion of the UN Security Council (UNSC) to include permanent membership for developing nations, including itself. Within BRICS, India champions the need for greater representation of emerging economies in IMF and WTO decision-making. While the USA plays a crucial role in these institutions, India's engagements with BRICS enable it to pressure Western-led governance frameworks for a more inclusive and representative global order.

- **Global Economic Governance and Trade Dynamics**

Economic governance frameworks such as the WTO and G20 influence India's trade policies with both the USA and BRICS nations. The USA remains one of India's largest trading partners, with key agreements like the India-USA Trade Policy Forum and Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) facilitating smoother trade and investment. In contrast, BRICS

promotes alternative trade mechanisms like the BRICS Payment System and local currency settlements, reducing dependence on the US dollar. India benefits from both arrangements by ensuring economic resilience and minimizing external economic shocks.

- **Security and Defense Cooperation in a Globalized World**

Global security governance, particularly through frameworks like the United Nations, QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue), and BRICS security dialogues, impacts India's strategic positioning. With the USA, India collaborates on Indo-Pacific security, defense technology sharing, and intelligence partnerships under agreements like BECA, LEMOA, and COMCASA. In contrast, BRICS emphasizes non-Western security cooperation, fostering diplomatic engagements on global conflicts and regional stability. India skillfully navigates these spaces to secure its national security interests without aligning exclusively with either bloc.

- **Multilateralism and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

India's engagements in global governance reflect its broader commitment to sustainable development, climate action, and multilateral cooperation. It partners with the USA on clean energy transitions under the US-India Clean Energy Partnership, while within BRICS, it supports initiatives like the BRICS Energy Cooperation and Sustainable Development Agenda. These efforts enable India to play a leadership role in global climate governance while maintaining economic growth.

11. MANAGING CONFLICTING INTERESTS IN INDIA-US AND INDIA-BRICS RELATIONS:

11.1 India - US Challenges

- **Trade and Economic Issues:** While efforts have been made to strengthen economic ties, trade disputes and market access restrictions continue to pose challenges. Differences in intellectual property rights, tariff structures, and regulatory policies can create friction and hinder smooth trade relations.
- **Geopolitical Considerations:** India's commitment to strategic autonomy and its engagements with nations like Russia and Iran may sometimes conflict with US interests. Balancing its regional and global partnerships while aligning with US expectations remains a diplomatic challenge.
- **Divergent Foreign Policy Approaches:** India and the US often adopt different strategies on key global issues. India's traditionally non-aligned stance contrasts with the US's preference for alliance-based diplomacy, leading to differing views on regions such as Afghanistan and the Middle East.
- **Climate Change and Environmental Cooperation:** Although both nations acknowledge the

urgency of climate action, their priorities and approaches differ. While the US emphasizes global climate commitments, India focuses on balancing sustainability with its developmental needs, including access to technology and financial support.

- **Visa and Immigration Policies:** Policies related to visas and immigration, particularly restrictions on H-1B visas, can impact professionals, students, and businesses. Such changes may affect talent mobility, academic collaborations, and overall people-to-people engagement, influencing bilateral relations.
- **Domestic Political Factors:** Political shifts, leadership changes, and evolving domestic priorities in both nations can impact the trajectory of India-US relations. Partisan debates and policy shifts may create uncertainties in bilateral cooperation.
- **Perception Gaps and Cultural Differences:** Variations in cultural perspectives, societal norms, and mutual perceptions can sometimes lead to misunderstandings. Strengthening educational exchanges, cultural programs, and dialogue initiatives is essential to fostering deeper trust and mutual understanding.

11.2 India-BRICS Challenges

- **Internal Cohesion and Strategic Rivalries:** The BRICS group comprises nations with distinct geopolitical and economic priorities. India's border tensions with China and strategic differences with other members often hinder a unified approach within the bloc.
- **Economic Disparities Among Members:** The economic strengths and development levels of BRICS countries vary significantly. While China dominates in terms of economic power, India has different growth priorities, which can create imbalances in decision-making and resource allocation.
- **Expansion and Integration Challenges:** The inclusion of new members like Argentina, Egypt, and Ethiopia brings added complexity. Ensuring smooth integration and maintaining consensus-based decision-making among an increasingly diverse group poses governance challenges.
- **Balancing Global Alliances:** India's growing strategic partnership with the US and its involvement in initiatives like the Quad sometimes raise concerns among BRICS members, particularly China and Russia, regarding its long-term commitment to the group.
- **Institutional Effectiveness:** Despite the establishment of BRICS-led institutions like the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA), bureaucratic inefficiencies and differing national priorities often limit their full potential.
- **Influence on Global Governance:** While BRICS aims to challenge Western-led financial and political institutions, internal disagreements and a lack of a cohesive global strategy weaken its influence in shaping global governance reforms.

- **Trade and Investment Barriers:** Although BRICS promotes economic cooperation, trade imbalances persist. For example, India's trade deficit with China remains a significant concern, and protectionist policies among members can restrict deeper economic integration.
- **Divergent Political Systems and Governance Models:** BRICS includes both democratic (India, Brazil, South Africa) and authoritarian (China, Russia) governance structures, leading to differences in policy approaches, decision-making styles, and international engagements.
- **Limited People-to-People Connectivity:** Unlike India's strong cultural and educational ties with the US, BRICS lacks significant people-to-people engagement, making public diplomacy and mutual understanding weaker compared to other international partnerships.
- **Security and Defense Cooperation Constraints:** While BRICS collaborates on security issues, there is no formal defense alliance. India's strategic concerns regarding China's growing military influence limit deeper security cooperation within the group.

12. FUTURE PROSPECTS AND EMERGING TRENDS:

12.1 India-US Relations

- **Strengthening Strategic Partnerships:** The India-US relationship is expected to deepen in defense, technology, and trade, with enhanced cooperation in areas like artificial intelligence, space exploration, and critical technologies shaping future engagements.
- **Indo-Pacific and Security Collaborations:** The US views India as a key partner in maintaining stability in the Indo-Pacific region, with initiatives like the Quad and defense agreements such as BECA (Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement) likely to expand in scope.
- **Economic and Trade Reforms:** While trade disputes persist, ongoing negotiations for a trade deal could lead to reduced tariffs and improved market access, focusing on strengthening supply chains and promoting investments in sectors like clean energy and semiconductors.
- **Technology and Innovation Hub:** India's role as a major technology hub, particularly in software, AI, and digital trade, is set to grow, with joint ventures in semiconductor manufacturing and 5G/6G telecommunications potentially redefining bilateral economic ties.
- **Climate Change and Green Energy Collaboration:** India and the US are expected to enhance cooperation on renewable energy, sustainable development, and climate finance, with initiatives under the US-India Clean Energy Partnership and commitments to net-zero targets driving future policies.
- **People-to-People Ties and Educational Exchanges:** Visa policies and immigration reforms, particularly for Indian students and professionals, will shape future relations, with increased collaboration in higher education, research, and skill development further solidifying ties.

- **Navigating Geopolitical Challenges:** As India continues its strategic autonomy, balancing ties with Russia and the US while addressing issues like the Russia-Ukraine conflict will remain a key diplomatic challenge.

12.2 India-BRICS Relations

- **Expanding BRICS Influence in Global Governance:** India will continue advocating for reforms in institutions like the UN, IMF, and WTO, leveraging BRICS as a platform to push for a more multipolar world order.
- **Trade and Investment Diversification:** With BRICS expanding to include new members like Argentina, Egypt, and Ethiopia, India will focus on strengthening trade and investment ties, especially in emerging markets.
- **Digital and Financial Cooperation:** The promotion of a BRICS digital currency or alternatives to Western financial systems could see India playing a key role in developing fintech solutions within the group.
- **Energy Security and Sustainability:** BRICS will likely emphasize renewable energy cooperation, energy security, and sustainability, with India driving initiatives on solar energy (under ISA - International Solar Alliance) and alternative fuels.
- **Tackling Internal Divergences:** As BRICS grows, India will have to navigate strategic differences with China and Russia while ensuring that the group remains relevant and beneficial to its economic and diplomatic interests.
- **Strengthening South-South Cooperation:** India's leadership within BRICS could enhance its outreach to the Global South, positioning itself as a bridge between developed and developing economies.
- **Geopolitical Balancing and Security Collaboration:** While BRICS lacks a security framework like NATO, India's engagement in initiatives like BRICS Counterterrorism Cooperation could expand, provided mutual trust among members improves.

13. CONCLUSION:

India's strategic engagement with both the United States and BRICS underscores its role as a key player in shaping the global geopolitical and economic landscape. By strengthening its defense, trade, and technology partnerships with the U.S. through agreements like BECA, LEMOA, and the Civil Nuclear Agreement, India has reinforced its security framework and expanded economic cooperation. Simultaneously, its leadership within BRICS, through initiatives such as the New Development Bank (NDB), Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA), and sectoral collaborations in trade, energy, and agriculture, reflects its commitment to fostering a multipolar world order and advocating for the Global South. As India navigates the complexities of global diplomacy, balancing its relationships with both Western and emerging powers, it must continue to uphold strategic

autonomy while leveraging these partnerships for economic growth, technological advancement, and security. The challenges posed by geopolitical rivalries, trade imbalances, and institutional differences within BRICS require India to adopt a pragmatic and adaptive foreign policy. Moving forward, India's ability to seamlessly integrate its engagements with the U.S. and BRICS will not only enhance its global stature but also contribute to a more equitable, stable, and inclusive international order.

14. REFERENCES:

1. *India trade relations with us.* (n.d.). The Economic Times. [Latest News & Videos, Photos about india trade relations us | The Economic Times - Page 1](#)
2. *India in BRICS: Eyeing new alliances and global influence.* (n.d.). BRICS. [India in BRICS: Eyeing New Alliances and Global Influence](#)
3. Gyan, I. (n.d.). *About the INDIA AND BRICS relations: UPSC current affairs.* IAS GYAN. [About The INDIA AND BRICS Relations: UPSC Current Affairs](#)
4. Baroni, P. A. (2024, December 12). *The role of BRICS in India's foreign policy.* E-International Relations. [The Role of BRICS in India's Foreign Policy](#)
5. Kgs. (2025, March 10). *India's Foreign Policy 2025: Priorities and Challenges.* Khan Global Studies Blogs. [India's Foreign Policy 2025: Priorities and Challenges | Khan Global Studies Blogs](#)
6. Farmonaut. (2025, February 18). *US-India Strategic Partnership: Advancing defense cooperation and bilateral trade in 2025 -.* Farmonaut®. [US-India Strategic Partnership: Advancing Defense Cooperation and Bilateral Trade in 2025 -](#) Smith, J. (2018, September 12). COMCASA: Another step forward for the United States and India. *The Diplomat*. [COMCASA: Another Step Forward for the United States and India – The Diplomat](#)
7. Gyan, I. (n.d.-a). *About India-US 123 Agreement of 2007: UPSC current affairs.* IAS GYAN. [About India-US 123 Agreement of 2007: UPSC Current Affairs](#)
8. Philip, S. A., & Philip, S. A. (2020, October 27). *The 3 foundational agreements with US and what they mean for India's military growth.* ThePrint. [The 3 foundational agreements with US and what they mean for India's military growth](#)
9. *Basic Exchange and Cooperation AGR* Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement. (n.d.). Drishti IAS. [Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement](#)
10. Testbook. (2023, August 9). *What is Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)* Testbook. <https://testbook.com/ias-preparation/lemoa-agreement>
11. [What proposals will Russia push at the BRICS summit? | Reuters](#)
12. Pinzón, L. C., Pinzón, L. C., & Pinzón, L. C. (2024, October 22). BRICS+, las claves para entender el ascendente bloque geopolítico del Sur Global. *El País*.

BRICS+, las claves para entender el ascendente bloque geopolítico del Sur Global | Internacional | EL PAÍS

13. BRICS Legal Texts and Policy Documents - tralac trade law centre
14. India Foundation. (2025, January 2). *Geopolitical alignment and internal differences in the BRICS bloc*. <https://indiafoundation.in/articles-and-commentaries/geopolitical-alignment-and-internal-differences-in-the-brics-bloc>
15. Staff @CD. (2023, July 5). The changing dynamics of India-US Relations: Opportunities and challenges - Civildaily. *CivilsDaily*. [The Changing Dynamics of India-US Relations: Opportunities and Challenges - Civildaily](#)
16. Maryam, J. (2024, November 10). India in BRICS: Eyeing new alliances and global influence | Policy Circle. *Policy Circle*. <https://www.policycircle.org/opinion/indias-strategy-in-brics>
17. Mohan, C. R., Miller, M. C., Aghi, M., Aamer, F., & Gopal, M. (2023, June 16). Modi comes to Washington: Prospects and challenges for India-US relations. *The Diplomat*. <https://thediplomat.com/2023/06/modi-comes-to-washington-prospects-and-challenges-for-india-us-relations>

