India's Multi-Directional Foreign Policy

What is the issue?

\n\n

A range of events and diplomatic developments in the recent days suggest the emergence of a multipolar world and India's multi-directional foreign policy.

\n\n

What suggest this trend?

\n\n

\n
- **South Asia** - India recently hosted "Bodhi Parva, the BIMSTEC Festival of Buddhist Heritage.
\n
- It was part of the 20th anniversary of the Bay of Bengal Forum, the BIMSTEC.
\n
- It brings together five South Asian nations (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka) and two South East Asian nations (Burma and Thailand).
\n
- It gains significance in the context of India's ties with its neighbouring countries in the South Asian region.
\n
- Further, India’s eastward orientation is highlighted by the recent conference on connecting India and the 10-member ASEAN grouping.
\n
- **Russia** - India and Russia held their first bilateral tri-service exercise earlier in the year.
\n
- This is the first such exercise for India with any of its foreign partners; certainly reflecting a maturity in the strategic partnership.
\n
- The 'Indra' exercise is seen as India’s way of balancing strategic relations with Russia and the US and sending a message to China.
\n
- **Asia-Pacific** - India hosted the Russia-India-China (RIC) trilateral meeting recently.

\n
- Trilateral consultations will contribute to strengthening practical coordination on regional and global issues.
\n
- The meet also comes as an opportunity for discussions on deepening coordination in the Asia-Pacific region.
\n
- **Indo-Pacific** - India's recent engagement in the Indo-Pacific quadrilateral security dialogue is an example of rising minilaterlaism.
\n
- Minilateralism refers to the diplomacy among a limited number of members, dealing with defined subject matters.
\n
- The grouping highlights India's strategy of such flexible arrangements to pursue its interests in a more complex world.
\n
- Further, India and Australia are expected to hold their maiden 'two-plus-two' dialogue involving the Foreign and Defence Secretaries to expand their strategic partnership in the Indo-Pacific region.
\n
- **Indian Ocean Region** - India, Japan and Australia held their foreign secretary-level trilateral meet recently.
\n
- With the increasing Chinese presence in the IOR, it is important to re-assert the freedom of navigation in open seas.
\n
- The trilateral meet could help boost India's influence in the IOR.
\n
- This supplements the quadrilateral dialogue as well as the on-going trilateral engagement with the US and Japan.
\n
- **Commonwealth** - The recent visit by Prince Charles marked a key development in India's ties with the Commonwealth.
\n
- One idea being considered was that the administration of the grouping should be de-centralised.
\n
- As the world's largest democracy, India's role in decentralised administration and contribution to the Commonwealth could be crucial.
\n

\n\n

What do these signify?

\n\n

\n

- India's diplomatic developments, significantly highlights its adaptive policies amidst the newly emerging geopolitical world.
  \n
- It asserts India's place in the structure of global power and influence the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific and Eurasia.
  \n
- They also point to the breakdown of the post Cold War world order dominated by the United States.
  \n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Indian Express

\n

