

ISBN: 978-93-47587-26-9

THE GLOBAL ADMINISTRATIVE STATE

Theory, Policy, and Global Governance



Editors:

Dr. Ruchika S. Rathi

Prof. (Dr.) Krati Sharma

Co-Editors:

Chandni Phophalia, Arzoo Yadav,

Pratha Biyani, Vaishnavi Singh, Anjali Yadav

Bhumi Publishing, India



First Edition: April 2026

The Global Administrative State: Theory, Policy, and Global Governance

(ISBN: 978-93-47587-26-9)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19425508>

Editors

Dr. Ruchika S. Rathi

Assistant Professor,
Department of Political Science,
IIS (Deemed to be University)

Prof. (Dr.) Krati Sharma

Professor, Department of English,
Poornima Institute of Engineering and
Technology, Jaipur

Co-Editors

Chandni Phophalia	Assistant Professor, Department of Development Studies, Vivekananda Global University, Jaipur
Arzoo Yadav	PhD Research Scholar, Department of Political Science and International Relations, IIS (Deemed to be University), Jaipur
Pratha Biyani	Research Scholar, Department of Political Science and International Relations, IIS (Deemed to be University, Jaipur
Vaishnavi Singh	Assistant Professor, School of Law, JECRC University, Jaipur
Anjali Yadav	Assistant Professor, Department of Liberal Studies and Political Science, JECRC University, Jaipur



Bhumi Publishing

April 2026

Copyright © Editors

Title: The Global Administrative State: Theory, Policy, and Global Governance

Editors: Dr. Ruchika S. Rathi, Prof. (Dr.) Krati Sharma

Co-Editors: Chandni Phophalia, Arzoo Yadav, Pratha Biyani, Vaishnavi Singh, Anjali Yadav

First Edition: April 2026

ISBN 978-93-47587-26-9



DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19425508>

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without permission. Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

Published by Bhumi Publishing,

a publishing unit of Bhumi Gramin Vikas Sanstha



Nigave Khalasa, Tal – Karveer, Dist – Kolhapur, Maharashtra, INDIA 416 207

E-mail: bhumipublishing@gmail.com



Disclaimer: The views expressed in the book are of the authors and not necessarily of the publisher and editors. Authors themselves are responsible for any kind of plagiarism found in their chapters and any related issues found with the book.

PREFACE

The contemporary world is witnessing unprecedented transformations in governance, policy formulation, and global institutional frameworks. Rapid modification in technology, shifting geopolitical dynamics, environmental concerns, and growing interdependence among nations have specify the nature of administrative systems across the globe. In this context, the concept of the *Global Administrative State* has appeared as a significant lens through which scholars and practitioners can understand the evolving mechanisms of governance beyond traditional national boundaries.

This edited volume, *The Global Administrative State: Theory, Policy, and Global Governance*, published by Bhumi Publishing, attempts to explore the theoretical foundations, policy implications and institutional practices that shape global governance today. The book brings together different scholarly perspectives to examine how administrative structures operate within and across nations and how global norms, regulations and policy frameworks influence governance in an increasingly interconnected world.

The chapters included in this volume address a wide range of interdisciplinary themes such as state power and sovereignty, global political economy and regulation, law and rule-making processes, artificial intelligence and digital governance, development and global inequality, environmental governance, human rights and diplomatic and security challenges. These contents reflect the complex and multifaceted nature of contemporary governance, where administrative decisions often transcend national jurisdictions and require collaborative global responses.

The purpose of this volume is not only to present theoretical insights but also to encourage critical dialogue among scholars from diverse disciplines including political science, public administration, law, international relations, economics, and the humanities. By examining both conceptual frameworks and practical dimensions of governance, the book aims to contribute to the growing body of research that seeks to understand the administrative mechanisms shaping global policy and institutional accountability.

We express our sincere gratitude to all contributing authors whose research and scholarly commitment have enriched this volume. Their diverse perspectives and rigorous analyses have made this book a valuable academic resource. We also extend our appreciation to the editorial and publication team of Bhumi Publishing for their continuous support and dedication in bringing this work to fruition.

It is our hope that this volume will serve as a meaningful platform for academic engagement and policy reflection, encouraging further research on the dynamics of global administration and governance. We believe that the insights presented here will benefit scholars, researchers, policymakers, and students who seek to interpret the challenges and possibility within the emerging global administrative landscape.

- Editors

Dr. Ruchika S. Rathi

Prof. (Dr.) Krati Sharma

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

1. Akshita Agarwal
Assistant Professor, JECRC University, Jaipur.
2. Anjali Yadav
Assistant Professor, Department of Liberal Studies and Political Science,
JECRC University, Jaipur.
3. Arzoo Yadav
PhD Research Scholar, Department of Political Science and International Relations,
IIS (Deemed to be University), Jaipur.
4. Chandni Phophalia
Assistant Professor, Department of Development Studies,
Vivekanand Global University, Jaipur.
5. Dr. Aditi Talware Patel
Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science,
Government Lochan Prasad Pandey Post Graduate College Saragarh, Chhattisgarh.
6. Dr. Chetna Yadav
Assistant Professor, Department of Liberal Studies and Political Science,
JECRC University, Jaipur.
7. Dr. Krati Sharma
Prof. Department of English and Soft Skills,
Poornima Institute of Engineering and Technology, Jaipur.
8. Dr. Ruchika S Rathi
Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science and International Relations,
IIS (Deemed to be University), Jaipur.
9. Dr. Triveni Patel
Prof. Department of Political Science/ Principle, Sanskriti Mahavidyalaya,
MEU, Pamgarh, Janjir Champa, Chhattisgarh.
10. Harshita Bhargava
Masters Scholar, Department of Political Science, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.
11. Harshita Singh
Research Scholar, Department of Psychology,
IIS (Deemed to be University), Jaipur.

12. Ishaan Arora
Senior Research Fellow, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Malviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur.
13. Ms. Aarshi Baid
Master Scholar, Department of International Studies, Symbiosis School of
International Studies (Symbiosis International University), Pune.
14. Ms. Aayushi Nagar
Assistant Professor, Department of Development Studies,
Vivekanand Global University, Jaipur
15. Nirmal Kumawat
Research Scholar, Department of Development Studies,
Vivekanand Global University, Jaipur.
16. Pratha Biyani
Research Scholar, Department of Political Science and International Relations,
IIS (Deemed to be University), Jaipur.
17. Prof. Deepmala Sanjay Tayade
Assistant Professor, Department of Electrical (Electronics and Power)
Engineering, Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, Amravati.
18. Prof. (Dr) Sumedha Bajpai
Prof. & Head of Business & Management, JNU, Jaipur.
19. R Kalaivani
Assistant Professor, Department of Cyber Security,
Mahendra Engineering College, Mallasamundram.
20. Shreeja Mathur
PhD Research Scholar, IIS (Deemed to be University), Jaipur.
21. Vaishnavi Singh
Assistant Professor, School of Law, JECRC University, Jaipur.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Sr. No.	Book Chapter and Author(s)	Page No.
1.	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN GOVERNANCE – OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES, AND FUTURE PROSPECTS Krati Sharma	1 – 11
2.	TRANSITIONING TO A GREEN ECONOMY: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF INDIA’S ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK Ruchika S Rathi and R. Kalaivani	12 – 24
3.	DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL INEQUALITY: PATTERNS, POWER, AND PROSPECTS Triveni Patel	25 – 36
4.	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND DIGITAL GOVERNANCE Deepmala S Tayade	37 – 47
5.	BEYOND PROFITS: CIVIL SOCIETY’S CALL FOR ETHICAL HRM AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLIANCE Sumedha Bajpai	48 – 56
6.	REIMAGINING STATE POWER: SOVEREIGNTY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN CONTEMPORARY GOVERNANCE Aditi Talware Patel	57 – 68
7.	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE GLOBAL ADMINISTRATIVE STATE Chetna Yadav	69 – 83
8.	PATTERNS, DRIVERS, AND HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS OF TARGETED KILLINGS AGAINST MINORITY COMMUNITIES IN BANGLADESH Ishaan Arora	84 – 91
9.	STRATEGIC HEDGING: INDIA AND JAPAN’S RESPONSE TO CHINA’S BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE Akshita Agarwal	92 – 103
10.	REGULATION, LEGITIMACY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN GLOBAL ADMINISTRATIVE STATE Anjali Yadav	104 – 110
11.	GENOCIDE PREVENTION AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE Vaishnavi Singh	111 – 120

12.	FROM REGIONAL TURBULENCE TO STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY: INDIA AND NEIGHBOURHOOD INSTABILITY Chandni Phophalia	121 – 129
13.	ROLE OF FEMININE LEADERSHIP IN DIPLOMACY: INDIAN CONTEXT Aayushi Nagar	130 – 137
14.	THE SECURITY TURN IN INDIAN DIPLOMACY: CHINA, BORDERS AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT Pratha Biyani	138 – 145
15.	STRATEGIC TRADE DIPLOMACY IN A FRAGMENTING GLOBAL ORDER: INDIA'S FTAs WITH THE UNITED STATES AND THE EUROPEAN UNION Shreeja Mathur	146 – 150
16.	MENTAL HEALTH AS A HUMAN RIGHT IN THE DIGITAL AGE: THE ROLE OF ONLINE CIVIL SOCIETY MOVEMENT Harshita Singh	151 – 163
17.	CONCEPTUALIZING THE GLOBAL ADMINISTRATIVE STATE: ORIGIN, MEANING AND EVOLUTION Arzoo Yadav	164 – 178
18.	HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER SIEGE: THE IMPACT OF RECENT ARMED CONFLICTS ON CIVILIAN POPULATION Nirmal Kumawat	179 – 190
19.	NAVIGATING RIVALRY: THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A THEATRE OF GREAT POWER COMPETITION IN THE 21st CENTURY Harshita Bhargava	191 – 201
20.	FROM NEGOTIATION TO MANAGEMENT: DIPLOMACY, SECURITY, AND CRISIS GOVERNANCE IN THE GLOBAL ADMINISTRATIVE STATE Aarshi Baid	202 – 213

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN GOVERNANCE – OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES, AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Krati Sharma

Department of English and Soft Skills,

Poornima Institute of Engineering and Technology, Jaipur

Corresponding author E-mail: kratibhomia@gmail.com

ORCID iD: [0009-0004-6304-6644](https://orcid.org/0009-0004-6304-6644)

Introduction

Governments across the globe are progressively more embracing the Artificial Intelligence (AI) to support decision making, enhance transparency, bolster the service to the people, and advance citizen participation. This chapter discusses the transformative prospective of AI in governance and provides examples; the area of application of AI to the delivery of public services, predictive analytics, transparency, risk management, and citizen participation. It also points at ethical issues, including bias, privacy issues, and technological inequalities. Lastly, the chapter highlights future opportunities of AI-enabled governance, including that responsible usage is necessary, there should be cooperation across the world, and that ethical standards should be established.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has full-fledged developed enormously in many sectors such as medical practice, investment, or education, and entertainment. Over the past few years, AI has shown massive prospective to change the system of governance to become more effectual in decision-making, progress in transparency, develop services to the population, and encourage citizenship commitment. Governments are exploring ways in which AI can be utilized and it can revolutionize the way nations develop policies, the speed at which they get their way through the administration process and how they solve global problems.

The chapter study how AI can be used in the future, the rising trends and the defy that are likely to come into view in the future of AI in governance. The paper explores the possible uses and advantages of AI in the optimisation of the public services, prediction of risks, transparency, and decision support, yet highlight the dangers and the ethical concerns that arise with regard to AI-based governance. AI has evolved through various fields, such as healthcare, finance, and education sectors, and is currently changing the nature of governance. Governments are using AI to simplify the administrative procedures, create evidence-based policies, and combat the global issues (PwC, 2022; Gartner, 2023). According to McKinsey & Company (2024), AI in the context of the state apparatus may produce more than 1 trillion in economic value in the world by 2035.

The Rise of AI Governance

Governments around the world are experimenting with artificial intelligence (AI) technology, which they believe will enhance their citizens experiences and its administration of the citizens. 60% of governments showed in a PwC poll in 2022 that they have piloted or deployed AI projects in citizen administration. Among the national digital plans that are beginning to employ AI, predictive policing, smart cities, and e-governance, are only a few. As an example, the country that has the best-developed digital infrastructure, Estonia, has already implemented AI in several areas, including chatbots in tax services and a court system that uses AI to handle minor cases. Similarly, China has embedded AI into its security system (public safety) using machine learning and surveillance devices that spy on metropolitan areas.

Applications of AI in government go viral across Europe, North America, and Asia-Pacific. The analysis of Gartner shows that by 2026, more than 40 percent of countries in the world will have implemented AI-based governance solutions, which proves the further spread of the influence of the technology in the government.

How Governance can be Transformed by AI

AI-Powered Delivery of Public Services

AI can change the way people receive services by automating the administration-related tasks, maximizing resource allocations and improving communications between citizens. Using AI-based solutions such as chatbots to respond to pre-determined questions, governments can release human resources to engage in more challenging tasks. Indicatively, the Singapore-based virtual assistant, Ask Jamie, enables people to access government services by responding to their natural language queries and providing prompt and precise responses to them through the multiple government bodies.

The welfare services can be potentially enhanced by AI because it can be used to identify the eligibility of a person to receive help in the future. The predictive algorithms analyse socioeconomic data to determine the people who are most likely to need the government assistance. Such proactive approach has been applied in the UK where AI algorithms recognize those people who are at risk of becoming homeless, allowing local authorities to intervene.

In the future, AI people can make a large contribution to infrastructure management and urban planning. Smart cities with AI will monitor waste management, transport systems, and energy consumption at any given time. The IDC predicts that by 2030, approximately 500 cities around the world will be able to optimize services using AI. Such reform could cut the inefficiency in the delivery of public services and could save up to over 700 billion a year by the cities.

Predictive Analytics for Policy Making

AI can change the policymaking process completely, offering evidence-based information to reduce uncertainty and improve decision-making. Predictive analytics being a branch of AI

studies historical evidence to forecast the future trend and event. Governments can use predictive models to anticipate the issues of the society and come up with preventive measures, including health outbreaks in the society, unemployment, and crime.

Machine learning models can also be used to model the outcomes of the proposed policies that governments intend to implement. These simulations will help the policymakers make more informed decisions by assessing potential risks and rewards. In the future, predictive analytics will allow the so-called evidence-based governance, where decisions are determined under the influence of existing data and knowledge, and not guesses or biases.

AI for Transparency and Anti-Corruption Efforts

AI can enhance the abuse, fraud, and corruption of the public funding because of the sifting of extensive databases to detect trends. Artificial intelligence algorithms, such as machine learning, can be used to perform auditing of government transactions and detect irregularities, which anti-corruption organizations can use to detect suspected activity at its initial stages. A report by the world bank has discovered that AI-powered auditing systems have the potential of saving governments billions of monies in corruption-related losses by 25 percent.

A World Bank analysis suggests that AI-based auditing systems may potentially save governments billions of dollars per year by 25 reducing the loss amounts related to corruption. The use of AI-based anti-corruption has been already tested in several countries. The Indian government also utilizes AI to scan procurement data and identify any anomalies in open bids. Similarly, the Procure2Pay program in the Philippines is an AI-based initiative which aims to improve the accountability of the procurement process in the country.

Also, blockchain is a technology that functions in collaboration with AI to enhance transparency by ensuring the correctness of published documents. Using blockchain technology can also automate the verification of transaction in case it is applied together with AI in order to eliminate the chances of fraud or human error. According to the predictions made by the World Economic Forum, over 20% of the countries are expected to employ blockchain and artificial intelligence to improve governance by 2030.

Risk Management and Security Enhanced by AI

Governments have increasingly been using AI to enhance the security levels and the management of the risks, including cyberattacks and natural disasters. Surveillance systems based on AI can monitor critical infrastructure in view and report unusual activity in real-time and alert authorities about a threat. Predictive policing is an AI-centred crime prevention technique that enables law enforcement to better mobilize its resources by analyzing and predicting both the time and place of crimes based on crime data. An example of this is that the Prepolls program in the United States uses machine learning algorithms to predict hotspots of crime using previous data. Although there have been positive results with regards to predictive

policing in certain communities, as it continues to evolve, the ethics surrounding prejudice and infringement of privacy will have to be addressed.

catastrophe management can also use AI greatly. In Japan, earthquakes and tsunamis are predicted with machine learning algorithms, which allow the early warning and evacuation. Likewise, AI-based technologies are used in the US to predict the trends of wildfires and optimize the firefighting operation. With the increase in the severity of climate change, governments will increasingly rely on AI-based solutions to minimize environmental threats.

Citizen Engagement and Participatory Governance

The AI provides a new opportunity to engage the people in government, as it facilitates their involvement. Citizens can share their ideas, present thoughts, and participate in the decision-making processes with the help of AI-based platforms. Finland has already experimented with AI to gather feedback among people on urban planning projects.

Sentiment analysis may also serve as a way of real-time analysis of the public opinion that might benefit governments. New tendencies are traceable, and the social media information and online polls are evaluated by AI algorithms to determine the concerns of the population. This helps the governments be preventative. The Accenture study shows that AI-based citizen engagement technologies can also lead to a 30 percent increase in the level of public trust in governments through more inclusive and transparent decision-making processes.

Challenges And Ethical Considerations

Although AI might offer a lot to the governance, there exist some few concerns that ought to be addressed.

Fairness and Bias

The AI systems can deliver biased information by preserving an existing bias in data. Unless AI systems used in governance are designed and managed correctly, they can increase inequality and marginalize the vulnerable population. Algorithms used by police, such as predictive police, have been criticized as being unfair to the minorities in society and this has brought up the concept of institutionalized racism. Governments need to ensure liability, equality and precision of AI systems. This will necessitate executing efficient auditing protocols, encircling the addition of a miscellaneous range of stakeholders in the advancement process, and the standard appraisal of the impacts of AI policies on diverse demographical categories.

Surveillance and Privacy: Concerns.

The employment of AI in government also elevates the concern of privacy and civil rights, particularly in surveillance and predictive policing. In order to end AI exploitation by the government, governments must strike a steadiness between privacy and protection of individuals. One of the indispensable bases of ensuring the ethical application of AI is the construction of privacy laws and regulations, together with the general data protection regulation (GDPR) in the EU.

Technological Disparities

The make use of of AI in governance can worsen technological discrepancy across and between countries. The developing countries will resist employing the latest AI technologies because of their meager communications and resources, which would root a digital divide. Moreover, the inconsistent access to AI-enabled services may lead to contradiction in the circulation of the public services in certain areas.

Programs of in sequence sharing and cross-border collaboration play an important role in solving these problems. Governments should fund programs that will enable people to be digitally literate and get equal access to AI technology.

Future Prospects: An Idea of AI-Powered Governance.

The opportunities associated with AI in governing are fairly bright. In the coming decade, AI is likely to have a significant impact on the functioning of governments, making it possible to have smarter policies, more responsive services, and greater appointment by people. According to a prediction made by McKinsey and Company, AI application in the sphere of public administration can serve more than 1 trillion in the global economy by 2035. AI will play a critical role in solving global challenges such as pandemics, climate change and cyber security challenges. Governments using AI responsibly will be able to deal with challenging issues and offer permanent solutions.

Nevertheless, to fulfill the full possible of the AI-based governance, a comprehensive approach should be considered that implies international collaboration, legislation, and morality. Governments should ensure that AI projects are inclusive, accountable, and transparent so that they can generate public trust. The use of AI in the future can create more flexible, well-organized, and people-centered governance systems, which will open the way to a more just and sustainable society.

The potential of AI in transforming governance is very massive, as it allows increasing the chances of decision-making, enhancing transparency, and benefiting the population. The governments can make people happier by abridge the managerial processes, maximizing resource distribution, and offering personalized services using AI- based technologies. Predictive analytics facilitate data-driven policymaking, whereas answerability is supported by the ability of AI to detect deception and maleficence. As well, AI-driven platforms can offer new methods of citizen interaction, promoting popular confidence and involvement in the government.

However, earlier to the full accomplishment of AI in the field of governance, one should address several problems. The drawbacks of artificial intelligence, which comprise algorithmic bias, privacy, and the digital divide, could outweigh the benefits. Regulatory control, transparency and moral constructs will be vital in order to ensure fairness and accountability. Governments should also find a balance between civil liberties and their safety in addition to addressing the concerns of the masses regarding AI-driven surveillance.

The global collaboration will be necessary in the future to unify the process, share best practices and address global problems through AI-enabled governance. Governments will be in a better position to solve challenging issues such as pandemics, climate change, and cybersecurity in case they invest in the proper application of AI. Proper design and involvement of stakeholders AI can completely change the face of government by making it more democratic, adaptable, and people-centric.

The future of governance is responsible AI adoption; it will not only enhance productivity but also develop systems that can enable sustainability, equity, and trust. The governments should ensure that, as they embrace and utilize the promise of AI, it propels the society and prepares the people to meet the challenges of tomorrow in a fair and strategic manner.

Table: Comparative Applications of AI in Governance

Country	Domain	AI Use Case	Impact
Estonia	Judiciary	AI for minor court cases	Faster resolution
China	Public Safety	Surveillance & ML	Enhanced monitoring
Singapore	Public Services	Ask Jamie chatbot	Improved citizen access
UK	Welfare	Predictive homelessness prevention	Early intervention
USA	Policing	PredPol predictive policing	Resource optimization
India	Procurement	AI anomaly detection	Reduced corruption
Philippines	Procurement	Procure2Pay AI system	Increased accountability

Free AI Tools for Various Tasks

1. ChatGPT - Conversational AI model for generating human-like text responses. OpenAI
2. Power BI - Business analytics service with interactive dashboards. Power BI
3. Python - Open-source programming language used in AI, ML, and data science. Python
4. DataRobot - Automated machine learning platform for building AI models. DataRobot
5. Jupyter - Interactive notebooks for live code, visualizations, and equations. Jupyter
6. KNIME - Open-source analytics platform for data mining and machine learning. KNIME
7. Google Cloud AutoML Vision - Custom model training for image analysis. Google Cloud AutoML Vision
8. Tableau - Data visualization platform for creating interactive dashboards. Tableau
9. RapidMiner - Data science platform for building ML models. RapidMiner
10. MidJourney - AI-based image generation from text descriptions. MidJourney
11. GitHub Copilot - AI-powered code completion and suggestion tool. GitHub Copilot
12. Adobe Firefly - AI tool for creating images and designs using Adobe's generative AI. Adobe Firefly
13. Fliki - AI tool for converting text into videos with voiceovers. Fliki
14. H2O.ai - Open-source AI platform for machine learning and predictive analytics. H2O.ai
15. AutoDraw - AI-based tool to turn sketches into art. AutoDraw

16. Sketch (Meta Demo Lab) - AI tool to create and animate sketches. Sketch Meta Demo Lab
17. Unscreen - AI-powered tool to remove backgrounds from videos. Unscreen
18. Speak (Streams) - AI transcription tool for meetings and conversations. Speak (Streams)
19. Data Driven - AI-powered platform for transforming data into insights. Data Driven
20. AI Image Generators - Platforms that generate images from text prompts (e.g., DALL·E, MidJourney). AI Image Generators
21. Beautiful.ai - AI-powered tool for creating presentations quickly. Beautiful.ai
22. Grammarly - AI-powered grammar and spell-checking tool for writing. Grammarly
23. Hugging Face - A library for NLP models including BERT, GPT, etc. Hugging Face
24. OpenAI Codex - AI tool for coding and natural language processing. OpenAI
25. DeepL Translator - AI-based translation tool for more accurate translations. DeepL
26. TensorFlow - Open-source machine learning platform for AI development. TensorFlow
27. Keras - Deep learning API for fast experimentation with neural networks. Keras
28. IBM Watson - Suite of AI tools for language processing, data analytics, and more. IBM Watson
29. FloydHub - Cloud platform for training and deploying AI models. FloydHub
30. Clarifai - AI platform for visual recognition, image, and video analysis. Clarifai
31. Dialogflow - Google's NLP tool for building conversational applications. Dialogflow
32. Veed.io - AI-powered video editing platform. Veed.io
33. Snazzy AI - AI tool for content generation and marketing copy. Snazzy AI
34. Artbreeder - Create unique images by blending AI-generated images. Artbreeder
35. Deep Dream Generator - AI-powered tool for transforming images into art. Deep Dream Generator
36. Copy.ai - AI writing assistant for creating marketing copy. Copy.ai
37. Descript - AI-powered video editing with transcription and voice cloning. Descript
38. Wordtune - AI-based writing assistant for improving content quality. Wordtune
39. Synthesia - AI tool for generating realistic AI-powered video avatars. Synthesia
40. DeepArt - AI-powered art generation from photos. DeepArt
41. AI Dungeon - Interactive AI-powered storytelling game. AI Dungeon
42. Wit.ai - NLP platform for building conversational interfaces. Wit.ai
43. Replicate - Share and run machine learning models in the cloud. Replicate
44. Hotpot.ai - AI tool for image editing, background removal, and design. Hotpot.ai
45. Runway - AI tools for video and image generation. Runway
46. Scribe - AI tool for automating and documenting processes. Scribe
47. Otter.ai - AI tool for transcribing meetings and creating notes. Otter.ai
48. Pictory - AI-powered video creation from text. Pictory
49. Soundraw - AI-powered music generation tool. Soundraw

50. AI Writer - Content creation AI for blog posts and articles. AI Writer
51. Jasper AI - AI writing tool for long-form content generation. Jasper
52. Rasa - Open-source conversational AI platform for chatbots. Rasa
53. Chatbot.com - Build chatbots using AI with ease. Chatbot
54. Designify - AI for automating and enhancing image design. Designify
55. Lumen5 - AI video creation platform for content marketers. Lumen5
56. Murf AI - AI text-to-speech voice generation platform. Murf.ai
57. Bard (Google) - Conversational AI developed by Google. Google Bard
58. Neural.love - AI platform for photo restoration and enhancing videos. Neural.love
59. Craiyon - AI-powered image generator based on text input. Craiyon
60. Scribble Diffusion - Turn sketches into polished illustrations using AI. Scribble Diffusion
61. Talk to Transformer - GPT-powered text generation tool. Talk to Transformer
62. DALL·E - AI model that generates images from textual descriptions. DALL·E
63. Xailient - Real-time object detection using AI. Xailient
64. Riffusion - AI for generating music based on text input. Riffusion
65. Remove.bg - Automatically remove image backgrounds using AI. Remove.bg
66. Let's Enhance - AI-based image enhancement and upscaling tool. Let's Enhance
67. Notion AI - AI-enhanced productivity and note-taking tool. Notion AI
68. Pexels AI - AI tool for searching high-quality stock images. Pexels
69. AI Image Enlarger - AI-powered tool for upscaling low-res images. AI Image Enlarger
70. Pixray - AI tool that turns text descriptions into images. Pixray
71. Sembly AI - AI meeting assistant for automatic transcription. Sembly AI
72. Superhuman - AI-enhanced email client for productivity. Superhuman
73. CopySmith - AI-powered content creation for ads and copywriting. CopySmith
74. PredictLeads - AI-based lead generation for businesses. PredictLeads
75. Quillbot - AI-based paraphrasing and summarizing tool. Quillbot
76. Veed.io Subtitles - AI-powered tool to generate video subtitles automatically. Veed.io Subtitles
77. Gretel.ai - AI-generated synthetic data platform. Gretel.ai
78. WordHero - AI-powered content generator for various writing tasks. WordHero
79. DeepAI - Open-source platform for AI and machine learning research. DeepAI
80. WriteSonic - AI tool for copywriting and content generation. WriteSonic
81. SurferSEO - AI tool for SEO optimization and content strategy. SurferSEO
82. Beautiful.ai - AI-powered presentation creation platform. Beautiful.ai
83. Copy Shark - AI-powered ad and marketing copy generator. Copy Shark
84. ContentBot - AI writing tool for generating blog posts and articles. ContentBot
85. GoCharlie.ai - AI tool for social media content generation. GoCharlie

86. Anyword - AI content writing tool focused on marketing. Anyword
87. Frase - AI tool for generating SEO-focused content briefs. Frase
88. Thundercontent - AI-powered tool for generating high-quality content. Thundercontent
89. Jina AI - Open-source deep learning for neural search. Jina AI
90. Lalal.ai - AI-based music and audio stem separation. Lalal.ai
91. Parabola - Drag-and-drop tool for automating data workflows using AI. Parabola
92. Caktus AI - AI-powered student productivity tool. Caktus AI
93. Scalenut - AI-powered SEO and content creation platform. Scalenut
94. SheetAI - Use AI inside Google Sheets to generate text and analyze data. SheetAI
95. Fireflies.ai - AI assistant for transcribing and summarizing meetings. Fireflies.ai
96. Krisp.ai - AI-powered noise-cancellation for audio and video calls. Krisp.ai
97. Aiva - AI-powered music composition tool. Aiva
98. HitPaw AI - AI tools for image and video editing. HitPaw
99. Smartwriter.ai - AI tool for cold emailing and sales copywriting. Smartwriter.ai
100. AISEO - AI tool for writing SEO-focused content. AISEO
101. Zyro - AI-powered website builder with content generation. Zyro
102. Jitter - AI-based tool for creating motion designs easily. Jitter
103. ArtSmart.ai - AI tool for generating custom art and designs. ArtSmart.ai
104. Patterned.ai - AI tool for generating digital patterns for art or fashion. Patterned.ai
105. DeepSwap - AI-powered face-swapping tool for videos and images. DeepSwap
106. HeyFriday - AI tool for generating writing and content ideas. HeyFriday
107. Visily - AI-powered design tool for creating UI/UX prototypes. Visily
108. Genei - AI tool for summarizing and analyzing academic papers. Genei
109. InVideo - AI-powered video editing and creation platform. InVideo
110. Mage - AI tool for generating images and art from text prompts. Mage
111. Claude - AI assistant and chatbot developed by Anthropic. claude

Public Trust as a Foundation for AI Governance

Artificial Intelligence Governance through Public Trust

Openness and Transparency

Transparency is crucial to the trust of AI systems. The citizens need to be informed about the way algorithms make decisions, what data is utilized, and how results are verified. The studies indicate that opaque AI systems can destroy the legitimacy of an institution and cause distrust among the population (Robles and Mallinson, 2025). Democracies which clearly explain the design, restrictions, and purpose of AI technologies stand a chance of getting support. The other aspect of transparency includes the disclosure of audit findings, responsible sharing of data, and ensuring that AI systems are explainable, not black boxes.

Ethics and Moral Leadership.

The adoption of AI requires ethical leadership. The leaders need to show dedication to equality, inclusiveness and responsibility in AI-based governance. According to Asimiyu (2025) the perception of fairness and institutional legitimacy determine the way the AI bureaucratic systems are perceived with respect to trust in their use by the people. Governments that promote ethical BPMs can achieve this - like not engaging in discriminatory abilities in predictive policing or welfare benefits allocation - to inform the citizens that AI is used responsibly.

Privacy Protection

A large number of personal data is the basis of AI technologies, and it is possible to become concerned about surveillance and misuse. It is generally accepted that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) by the European Union is a point of reference in ensuring privacy in the digital era (EU, 2018). Good protection of privacy is a measure that the citizens will be confident in their rights being observed. Researchers point out that as long as they believe their privacy is safeguarded, people are less reluctant to receive AI-based communal services (Robles and Mallinson, 2025).

Accountability and Responsibility

Accountability Mechanisms Accountability mechanisms (independent oversight bodies, ethical review boards, algorithmic audits, etc.) are essential to sustain trust. When the AI systems fail or lead to destructive results, citizens should be aware who is in charge. Trust will be achieved by governments setting clear lines of responsibility and being able to respond very quickly to mistakes. This is consistent with the findings of Asimiyu (2025), who states that accountability is the requirement of legitimacy in the AI-based governance.

Housing Community Relations and Cultural Assimilation

The adoption of AI is not entirely a technical procedure, as it has to be incorporated in the cultural norms and values. The engagement of the people via participatory channels, consultations, and feedback systems can make AI systems to mirror the societal priorities. According to Robles and Mallinson (2025), the act of engagement by the citizens enhances trust since people feel that they own AI-enabled governance. Additionally, the implementation of AI in cultural settings will prevent opposition and make sure the technology will not replace social activities but will be used to supplement them.

Conclusion

Public trust is not a peripheral issue but a central determinant of AI's success in governance. Openness, ethical leadership, privacy protection, accountability, and citizen involvement form the pillars of trustworthy AI systems. As governments and organizations continue to deploy AI, they must proactively address public concerns and demonstrate their commitment to ethical practices. If trust is established and maintained, AI has the potential to unlock unprecedented

opportunities for improving lives and addressing global challenges such as climate change, pandemics, and inequality.

References

1. Accenture. (2023). *Citizen engagement through AI*. Accenture Research.
2. Asian Development Bank (ADB). (2023). *AI in public procurement in the Philippines*. Asian Development Bank.
3. Asimiyu, Z. (2025). Public trust in AI-driven bureaucratic systems: Opportunities and concerns. *Journal of Digital Governance*, 12(3), 45–62.
4. Batool, A., Zowghi, D., & Bano, M. (2025). AI governance: A systematic literature review. *AI and Ethics*, 6(2), 145–162.
5. Chen, L., & Qiu, J. (2022). *AI surveillance in China: Governance and ethics*. Beijing University Press.
6. European Union. (2018). *General data protection regulation (GDPR)*. European Union.
7. Gartner. (2023). *AI governance adoption forecast*. Gartner.
8. GovTech Singapore. (2023). *Ask Jamie virtual assistant*. Singapore Government Technology Agency.
9. IDC. (2023). *Smart cities and AI adoption forecast*. IDC Research.
10. Japan Meteorological Agency. (2023). *AI in disaster prediction*. Japan Meteorological Agency.
11. Lum, K., & Isaac, W. (2016). To predict and serve? *Significance*, 13(5), 14–19.
12. McKinsey & Company. (2024). *AI in public administration: Economic impact*. McKinsey & Company.
13. OECD. (2023). *AI governance and international cooperation*. OECD.
14. PwC. (2022). *AI in public administration survey*. PwC.
15. Robles, P., & Mallinson, D. J. (2025). Artificial intelligence technology, public trust, and effective governance. *Review of Policy Research*, 42(1), 88–104.
16. Tamm, G., & Draheim, D. (2021). Digital governance in Estonia. *Government Information Quarterly*, 38(1), 101–118.
17. UK Government. (2022). *AI in welfare services*. HM Government.
18. UNESCO. (2023). *AI and the digital divide*. UNESCO.
19. World Bank. (2023). *AI-based auditing for anti-corruption*. World Bank.
20. World Economic Forum. (2023). *Blockchain and AI in governance*. World Economic Forum.

TRANSITIONING TO A GREEN ECONOMY: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF INDIA'S ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Ruchika S Rathi¹ and R. Kalaivani²

¹IIS (deemed to be) University

²Department of Cyber Security, Mahendra Engineering College, Mallasamudram

Corresponding author E-mail: ruchikarathi.political@iisuniv.ac.in, kalaivani10@gmail.com

Introduction

Economic growth and environmental sustainability are particularly tricky for a country like India. One of the major aims of the Indian Government is to expand the economy and generate jobs to improve the living standards of millions of people. However, the increasing industrialization and urbanization during the past few decades, along with the changes in agricultural practices, have had negative effects on the environment. Being the second-most populous country and with a fast-growing economy, how India discusses and resolves these problems is crucial for the entire world. Simply put, environmental governance is the management of a society's relationship with the environment, including the rules, policies, public involvement, and the institutions that connect them. India's approach to environmental governance has gone through a significant amount of change during the past century, influenced by changing perspectives on how development and the environment coexist. The most recent shift is the focus on what has been termed a "green economic transition," a transition that aims to reengineer the economy to achieve carbon neutrality while also being inclusive and equitable.

Transformation in this context, does not entail abandoning growth, rather it calls for growth to be redefined in such a way that economic advancement is restricted to imposed within sustainable ecological boundaries and intergenerational equity is upheld. And this is what India considers its focus-fostering development but not at the cost of the ecology.

This section illustrates the India challenge. It focuses first on the primary and secondary causes of the pollution. Next, it considers the actions, or lack of them, on the part of the government, including the policies, the reforms, the whole works. Finally, the section reflects on what is or has been in the works. It is of primary importance to emphasize that in regard to India's environmental management, great advancements have been achieved – triumphs, in fact. However, great challenges still remain. These challenges lie, in particular, in the realm of integrating policies, implementing designs, and resolving the politics of adjustment that accompany a major change of this sort.

Challenges of Comprehending India's Pollution Problem

India's pollution challenge is not a singular challenge. It is a complex challenge comprising the pollution of the air, water and land. Each of these, in addition and in isolation, carries its own

causes and effects. It is not a question of blaming one or the other, there are fundamental, structural reasons that explains the impediments to the country’s ability to maintain a clean environment.

Air Pollution in India: Sources, Drivers, and Evidence

Source of Pollution	Key Pollutants	Drivers / Structural Causes	Major Affected Regions	Estimated Contribution
Industrial Emissions	Particulate Matter (PM2.5, PM10), Sulphur Dioxide (SO ₂), Nitrogen Oxides (NO _x)	Outdated technologies; inadequate pollution control systems; weak enforcement of environmental regulations; high cost of technological upgrades, especially for MSMEs	Industrial clusters across India; major impact in the Indo-Gangetic Plain	Significant year-round contribution
Vehicular Emissions	PM2.5, NO _x , Carbon Monoxide (CO), Hydrocarbons	Rapid urbanization; rising income levels; growth in private vehicle ownership; old vehicle fleet; traffic congestion; inadequate public transport	Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru	Approximately 20–40% of urban particulate matter (varies by season and location)
Construction Dust	Coarse and Fine Particulate Matter (PM10, PM2.5)	Rapid urban expansion; poor dust control measures at construction sites; weak monitoring and compliance mechanisms	Major metropolitan cities	Substantial urban contribution (varies locally)
Crop Residue Burning (Stubble Burning)	PM2.5, PM10, CO, NO _x	Structural agricultural constraints; Green Revolution-era paddy-wheat cycle; limited time between harvests; lack of affordable alternatives; policy-induced cropping patterns	Northwestern states (Punjab, Haryana); affects National Capital Region	Up to ~20% on peak winter pollution days in Delhi
Regional Climatic Factors (Winter Inversion)	Secondary particulate formation	Low wind speed; temperature inversion; geographical features of the Indo-Gangetic Plain trapping pollutants	Indo-Gangetic Plain	Amplifies existing pollution

Water Pollution in India: Sources, Drivers, and Evidence

Source of Pollution	Key Pollutants	Drivers / Structural Causes	Major Affected Regions	Estimated Contribution
Industrial Waste	Heavy metals, toxic chemicals, untreated effluents, high BOD (Biochemical Oxygen Demand)	Weak enforcement of environmental regulations; profit-driven industrial practices; malfunctioning or poorly maintained Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs); power shortages; improper segregation of industrial waste	Industrial clusters across India; polluted river stretches identified by the Central Pollution Control Board	Significant contributor, but not the largest source; localized yet severe impact near industrial hubs
Municipal Sewage	Organic waste, pathogens, high BOD, domestic wastewater	Rapid urbanization; inadequate sewage treatment infrastructure; untreated discharge into rivers and lakes; capacity gaps in Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs)	Urban river stretches nationwide; monitored under the National Water Quality Monitoring Programme	Largest contributor to water pollution in India; majority of domestic wastewater discharged untreated
Agricultural Runoff	Fertilizers (nitrates, phosphates), pesticides, agrochemicals	Intensive farming practices post-Green Revolution; overuse of chemical inputs; water-intensive cropping patterns; poor regulation of non-point source pollution	Punjab, Haryana, and other high-yield agricultural states; groundwater and surface water bodies	Diffuse but widespread contributor; major cause of eutrophication and groundwater contamination

Structural factors: Policy, governance, and political economy-

Many policies work at cross purposes. In agriculture, for example, the minimum support prices incentivize the cultivation of water-intensive crops, which contradicts the focus of water conservation efforts. Building roads instead of prioritizing public transport leads to worse air quality. Current energy policies that rely on coal worsen climate contradictions. There are also structural issues of governance. There are regulations and compliance mechanisms, but enforcement and compliance are inconsistent. The structural conditions of many agencies appear under-resourced -at least in the monetary and power-redistributive sense - to perform their functions. In some cases, corruption permits polluters to avoid legitimate compliance. The fragmentation of environmental mandates across agencies creates disputes where none exist and hinders collaborative efforts to increase the pace and quality of interventions. Finally, there are political factors. It is politically unpopular to impose tighter regulatory frameworks on industries that rely on the pollution of their business models. Control of agricultural production is exercised by farmers who will not shift to other crops unless there are guaranteed prices and buyers. The political will to facilitate the inconvenient but clean transport options is also lacking. All of these stakeholder groups frame the limits of the politically possible and invariably place meaningful interventions beyond reach.

Here's a table showing recent AQI (Air Quality Index) levels for six major Indian cities, based on available real-time and recent data sources (latest available from AQI Tracker and other reports). Please note that AQI values fluctuate daily and seasonally, so these should be taken as indicative rather than static figures:

City	Approx. AQI Level	Air Quality Category	Primary Pollutant (Typical)
New Delhi	~130	Moderate to Poor (AQI 101–200)	PM2.5 / PM10
Kolkata	~151	Moderate (AQI 101–200)	PM2.5 / PM10
Ahmedabad	~84	Satisfactory (AQI 51–100)	PM2.5 / PM10
Bengaluru	~106	Moderate (AQI 101–200)	PM2.5 / PM10
Hyderabad	~96	Satisfactory (AQI 51–100)	PM2.5 / PM10
Mumbai	~126	Moderate (AQI 101–200)	PM2.5 / PM10

Constitutional and legislative backgrounds-

The Indian government has indeed increased its attempts to address an entire gamut of environmental issues. They have developed a rather intricate apparatus over the years, which presupposes new rules, grand programs, artistic institutions, and everything of international pledges. We can deconstruct what they actually have done.

The Constitution lies at the very core of the Indian environmental policy, although it did not necessarily begin as such. The environment was not even referred to in the original Constitution

in 1950. This was altered by the 42nd Amendment of 1976 that introduced Articles 48A and 51A(g). In an instant, environmental protection became not only an attractive notion but also a policy principle to the government and a basic responsibility of any citizen. This transformation paved the way to a new wave of laws.

Environmental Law	Year Enacted	Background / Context	Key Provisions	Institutional Mechanism Established
Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act	1974	Enacted after India's participation in the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment	Prevention and control of water pollution; maintenance and restoration of water quality	Establishment of Central Pollution Control Board and State Pollution Control Boards
Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act	1981	Extended environmental regulatory framework initiated in the 1970s	Prevention, control, and abatement of air pollution	Empowered Central and State Pollution Control Boards to monitor and regulate air pollution
Environment (Protection) Act	1986	Strengthened environmental governance after growing industrial and ecological concerns in the 1980s	Granted broad powers to the Central Government to take measures to protect and improve environmental quality	Central Government empowered to intervene in all matters concerning environmental protection

Since then, India continued to update and expand these laws in the following years. The National Green Tribunal Act of 2010 has produced a special court that deals specifically with environmental disputes and is a combination of science and law. New hazardous waste rules, plastic waste rules and solid waste rules have continued to emerge that delve further into the manner of handling certain forms of pollution. The system continues to become elaborate and specialized with the emergence of new challenges.

The National Action Plan on Climate Change of India began in 2008. It is basically a nationwide broad strategic plan on how to handle climate change. The plan contains nine missions with each one being dedicated to a major area solar energy, energy efficiency, water, sustainable cities,

reforestation (named Green India), protecting the Himalayan ecosystem, climate science, agriculture and public health.

Among these nine, six are all related to assisting individuals to adjust and achieve resilience. India has already experienced some consequences of climate change that could not be avoided, particularly to the most susceptible. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change describes that every mission is addressed by its ministry or department, with various programs and schemes cutting across the water, health, agriculture, forests, energy, housing etc.

The missions have not remained the same. They have been updated over the years by India to maintain their changing climate commitments according to the Paris Agreement. Besides, each state and union territory 34 in total have their own climate action plan. These plans put the large national objectives into service to local needs and issues.

Regarding the air quality, India has had the National Clean Air Programme that was initiated in 2019 and has been expanded ever since. It initially addressed 122 cities, which simply could not comply with the national air quality standards, but currently, 130 cities in 24 states and union territories are included.

The program does not simply point the finger on any single source; it understands that air pollution is everywhere. It thus unites the central and state governments, local city organizations and other groups to solve. The government has awarded over Rs. 13,000 crores in performance-based grants to enable the cities to clean up. That money directly enters into the projects of air quality improvement.

NCAP has also received its share of the blame that it is not really keeping up with what is going on the ground. Down To Earth (2025) analysis has identified a major issue, which is that the distribution of the money does not necessarily match what is actually polluting the environment. The new regulations drew much attention to such aspects of road management as dust control, tree planting, vehicle emissions reduction, and the cleanup of crematoriums and dissemination of the awareness. However, here is the aspect whereby some of the largest contributors to pollution such as burning biomass, burning municipal solid waste, and the waste caused by construction and demolition have been pushed to either additional or need-based categories. This implies that cities can only take action on them when they seek special authorization of the centre.

This installation is not very sensible, particularly when you consider another section of NCAP the Ward-Level Swachh Vayu Sarvekshan. In fact, that framework puts the greatest emphasis on such factors as biomass and waste burning when scoring cities. The analysis goes further to indicate that this ward level approach is more local and actually considers the sources of pollution that people actually encounter in their day-to-day activities. It is not ideal but it is at least more in line with reality than the manner in which NCAP is utilizing its funds today.

Another large matter is that all cities, however different, receive similar types of targets. Regardless of whether the topic is climate, geography, population density or any of the special pollution issues each location experiences, all cities are getting annual reduction targets that largely rely on population and PM10 levels. This clichéd style is not just not fair. It has the effect of prompting the cities to pursue superficial wins that sound nice in theory, as opposed to cleaning up the air.

Water Quality Management Initiatives

Policymakers have paid consistent attention to water quality, and various programs have addressed the various aspects of the issue. National Water Quality Monitoring Network, which is managed by CPCB along with State Pollution Control Boards, provides the nation with an opportunity to monitor water quality with time passing. The network has 4,736 monitoring points throughout rivers, ponds, groundwater, and the sea, among others, and allows everyone to view the trends and determine what has the most attention.

River Rejuvenation Committee was established by the state governments to address polluted stretches in rivers, and respective committees have come up with action plans. They are targeting the blatant criminals, such as factories and urban sewage but also addressing such issues as the fertilizer runoff in farms. However, there are states that are improving at a better rate. In 2019, the CPCB published the Indicative Guidelines on the Restoration of Water Bodies that provides everyone with a technical manual on how to restore rivers and lakes.

Regulators have made it more restrictive on the rules front. The CPCB instructed state departments to treat sewage and industrial wastewater under the book, which is the Environment (protection) rules, 1986. They also informed them to ensure that sewage and effluent treatment plants are maintained in proper operation. These guidelines have taken authority out of the Water Act and the Environment Protection Act.

These days, in regard to waste management, things are different. It has turned to the circular economy where the resources are reused rather than wasted. The Solid Waste Management Rules of 2016 encourage local governments and village councils to engage the communities, compost in their backyards, create biogas, and recycle waste in their areas. They also need to carry out campaigns in spreading the word and informing people.

There is also a huge rush to blame hosts. Extended Producer Responsibility is what Minister Yadav mentioned during the G20 Environment Ministers' Meeting that places responsibility on the companies producing such items as plastic packaging, electronics, and batteries. They are obliged to install or finance systems to collect and recycle their products.

India also takes this circular economy concept to their global negotiations, as well. India, at a G20 meeting in Cape Town, indicated that it was in support of a circular economy, but cautioned that there should be no international regulations regarding the issue of chemical management, as

countries must be free to decide themselves. The goal is not to overburden the small businesses and the developing countries with requirements. In effect, India desires to strike a balance between the environment objectives and the development necessity.

Energy Transition and Climate Commitments

Policy / Commitment	Target / Objective	Base Year	Target Year	Progress / Status	Key Remarks
Initial Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement	Reduce emissions intensity of GDP by 33–35%	2005	2030	Achieved 36% reduction between 2005–2020	Target exceeded ahead of deadline
Initial NDC Commitment	40% of installed electric power capacity from non-fossil sources	—	2030	Achieved 50% non-fossil power capacity by June 2025	Target surpassed 5 years early
Initial NDC Commitment	Create additional 2.5–3 billion tonnes of CO ₂ equivalent carbon sink through forests and tree cover	—	2030	Ongoing	Focus on afforestation and tree cover expansion
Updated (2022) NDC	45% reduction in emissions intensity of GDP	2005	2030	In progress	Strengthened climate ambition
Updated (2022) NDC	50% of installed power capacity from non-fossil sources	—	2030	Achieved by June 2025	Demonstrates accelerated renewable transition

Solar energy is quite exceptional in this case. Installed capacity increased by over 41x, with the figures surging massively, by 2.82 GW in 2014 to 116.25 GW by June 2025. Another policy support that is under a big push approach is the National Green Hydrogen Mission, which seeks to make the industries that are hard to decarbonize less reliant on fossil fuels and more climate-friendly.

It is becoming evident to the international community every day that finance, technology, and capacity-building support are necessary to achieve a just energy transition in each sector, which Minister Yadav continues to emphasize. This attention to the means of implementation is not new to India it has been based on the idea of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC), which lies at the core of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement.

The emphasis here is on digital environmental governance and monitoring innovations.

Digital Environmental Governance and Monitoring Innovations

Technology has become one of the pillars in the Indian management of its environment. One of the four strategic pillars identified by Minister Yadav is the notion of digital environmental governance, but it is on the same plane as the transformation of energy, sustainable economic transition, and nature-based solutions.

An ideal case is the Online Continuous Effluent/Emission Monitoring Systems (OCEMS) directive. The highly polluting industries, as well as the common waste treatment plants, must install real-time monitoring systems. Such feeds are directly sent to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and State boards. When the pollution exceeds the threshold, it will trigger automatic SMS notifications, thus companies can take quick measures and authorities may pursue them. This architecture is far more effective in providing compliance monitoring than its traditional counterpart of periodic checks but again, there is a way to go in ensuring that the data is reliable and the responses are fast enough.

International Cooperation and International Positioning

The leadership of India on the environment is not limited to what goes on at home. The nation is very prolific in the international arena as well. The Indian Ministerial statements were clear in the G20 Environment Ministers meeting in Cape Town: India supported ecosystem-based approaches without commodifying biodiversity, encouraged land restoration as an economic prospect, advocated global standards that would remain voluntary and flexible, and embraced marine spatial planning without sacrificing equity or climate justice.

In 2016, the United Nations Environment Programme established a presence in India. UNEP India has been fairly active since that time, however, assisting in bridging international initiatives with those taking place in the field here on the ground. They concentrate on what India cares the most about at this point in time: how to transform the economy, address climate change, reduce pollution, conservation and development, help people to make greener decisions, and support intelligent policy and good governance. This is not a partnership of advice or direction. It is a two-way street of knowledge exchange, technical assistance and importation of the most successful ideas in the world, and ensuring that the national interests and independence of India are placed in the first position.

Assessment and Critical Analysis-To this point we have already observed that there has been a significant transformation in the environmental governance of India over the years. So now, it is time to be realistic and see what is working, what is not yet changing, and why there are just things that do not want to change.

Nature-Based Solutions and Community-Centred Approaches

Initiative / Programme	Launch / Platform	Core Objective	Key Features / Approach	Impact / Progress
Himalayan Coalition	Launched at the TERI World Sustainable Development Summit	Promote sustainable development in the Himalayan region	Focus on community participation, inclusivity, and nature-based solutions	Strengthens regional cooperation and grassroots environmental governance
Him-CONNECT	Under the National Mission on Himalayan Studies	Translate research into scalable, practical solutions	Links scientific research with community-based implementation; emphasizes local engagement	Supports evidence-based policymaking and local resilience
“Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam” Campaign	Launched by Narendra Modi on World Environment Day 2024	Promote tree plantation through emotional and cultural appeal	Encourages citizens to plant a tree in honour of their mother and Mother Earth; mass mobilization model	1.64 billion trees planted by February 2025
Mission Life (Lifestyle for Environment)	National sustainability initiative	Mainstream sustainable lifestyles	Encourages behavioural change at individual, institutional, and community levels; builds environmental responsibility as a social norm	Expands citizen-driven climate action and sustainable consumption practices

Achievements and Successes

India has actually achieved advancement in a number of aspects. Only consider the renewable energy boom, and solar in particular. When the government makes ambitious objectives, and the privates leap to the occasion, then huge things occur. Meeting that goal of 50 percent non-fossil power capacity five years early? That’s no small feat. This actually places India in a good position as the world abandons fossil fuels. It is not all about a buzzword here. Climate work has

developed some real staying power due to the NAPCC missions and the State Action Plans. These plans are engraved within the system and hence continue going on, regardless of the incumbent. Rather than ad hoc projects, one has a structure that endures.

The nation has also improved a great deal in monitoring the environmental situation. New air and water quality networks, as well as continuous emission monitoring, give the policymakers, finally, more concrete data to be worked with. Admittedly, the holes are still present, but the information that is there is miles better than what was there before. It implies that interventions are smarter and measurement of progress simplified.

On the regulation front, the situation is beginning to change, as well. The Extended Producer Responsibility regulations are altering the manner in which companies consider waste. Rather than merely responding to the pollution when it occurs, the regulations compel the companies to develop products that are simpler to recycle as well as produce less waste in the first instance. In the long term, that would make the game.

Disjunction between Policy and Practice

Although there are many environmental laws and policies, there are still a lot of problems to be overcome in order to have productive results. Among the key problems is the discrepancy between the promise and practice with regard to policies. Even the best laid down environmental regulations rarely bear fruits because of poor enforcement, occurrence of limited financial resources and political goodwill. On paper, there can be strong rules, but it is a very hard task to put them into real practice on the ground.

Discordant Policies in Sectors

The other challenge that is of significant importance is the contradictions between policies in various sectors. An example is in agriculture where water intensive crops are promoted whilst water conservation campaigns are being done. Likewise, in the transportation industry, the road infrastructure continues to extend as road projects to enhance the quality of air are undertaken. This is also the case in the energy sector, where coal is still being supported even at a time when renewable energy is getting more emphasis. This does not make the overall environmental governance more effective as such conflicting policy directions send mixed signals.

Political and Economic Opposition

Political and economic interests are also among the significant obstacles to environmental reforms. Polluting industries are also known to oppose policy changes that might interfere with their economic benefits. Depending farmers that rely on current trends in crop farming might be reluctant to move to other practices unless they are guaranteed adequate support and incentives. Moreover, the consumers used to get cheap products that are damaging to the environment might be reluctant to change their consumption patterns. Such groups can easily organize and affect policy making and this undermines the capability and implementation of environmental policies.

Disconnect of Policy Planning and Ground Implementation

Another problem is the lack of connection between the design of the policy and its implementation at the grassroots level. As an example, with the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), there are sometimes major sources of pollution placed in a need-based category of funding that must be central approved, whereas minor sources are immediate funded. Such a setup can postpone intervention of the biggest sources of pollution diminishing the success of the program. Down To Earth states that vague priorities can also make cities concentrate on the projects which seem to work on paper and still do not result in significant air quality improvement.

The Structural Constraint: Development Imperative

Below all these challenges is a greater problem; India is still developing. It is actual poverty, massive infrastructure disparities and citizens have a right to desire a better life. This developmental impetus defines what can be achieved in the environmental policy, both politically and economically.

the change does not imply abandoning the idea of development, but reformulating it in a way that it is within the ecological constraints. That's the real test. It is about seeking means to develop and uplift people, without destroying the environment and then raising the political ground to continue those changes, despite the other interests pushing the opposite way.

India continues to fight Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) in the international arena and, frankly speaking, it is not a bad idea. India, when addressing the G20, was making it very clear: without good finance, technology and actual assistance in building capacity, the concept of a fair transition is merely a mere show. The developing countries cannot be expected to bear equal expenses as the rich countries, particularly at a time when the rich countries accumulated their fortunes over centuries of intense emissions. India's environmental governance is hardly the same as it was in the 1970s. Back then it was a small thing, now it covers almost every area including constitutional provisions, environmental laws, regulatory bodies, new programs, tech solutions, worldwide partnerships to name a few. You can see the progress through the figures, more renewable energy, reduced emissions intensity, more forest areas. So, whenever the system is actually used, it produces results.

However, let's face it: the problems are still major. There are implementation gaps, and sometimes policies even contradict each other. Political interests and the development-environment dichotomy dictate what becomes feasible. Take the NCAP for instance it is robust in theory, but due to lack of funding, things fell apart. Or consider the burning of crop stubble; it isn't about the culprits; it's about the root structural problems.

Path Ahead

For one thing, cross-sector policies must support rather than conflict each other, imagine that agriculture, energy, transport, and industry would be all in line for the environment. What works

in one place won't work in another; states and cities need their own environment plans. Besides, the agencies which carry out the work must be given additional resources, better data, and a higher level of accountability. It is also important to strike a balance in transition so that costs and benefits do not fall disproportionately on certain groups. Furthermore, India can't do it all by itself, international assistance in the form of funds, technology, and expertise remains highly necessary.

Looking ahead, it's not going to be of any help if we just give ourselves a pat on the back or, on the other hand, only highlight the failures. The main focus should be on understanding what has been successful, what has not, and the reasons. India has formidable environmental challenges, but amid them, it has significant strengths: the willingness to learn, the capability to change, as well as the power to invent. The coming decade will be a test whether these strengths are able to cope with the problems of pollution, climate change, and degradation of nature even while providing development for those who are dependent on it.

References

1. News On AIR. (2026). *Union minister Bhupender Yadav says India is advancing systemic reforms across four strategic pillars.*
2. Singh, G., & Sharma, N. (2025). The annual witch-hunt of farm stubble burning masks the real policy culprits. *Down To Earth.*
3. Press Information Bureau. (2025). *Parliament question: Climate resilience and pollution control.* Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
4. Press Information Bureau. (2025). *Parliament question: Nationally determined contributions.* Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
5. United Nations Environment Programme. (2025). *UNEP India.*
6. MAWEB. (2025). *Why does India have so much air pollution?*
7. *Down To Earth.* (2025). *NCAP 2025: Are India's air quality priorities aligned with ground realities?*
8. Press Information Bureau. (2025). *Parliament question: Climate change mitigation and adaptation.* Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
9. Press Information Bureau. (2025). *Climate finance, technology, and capacity-building support remain central for fair transition: Shri Bhupender Yadav at G20 Environment Ministers' Meeting.* Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
10. MAWEB. (2025). *Major causes of air pollution in India.*
11. World Air Quality Report. (2023). *World air quality report.* IQAir.
12. Singh, S., & Sharma, N. (n.d.). *Study on structural causes of crop residue burning in northwestern India.*

DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBAL INEQUALITY: PATTERNS, POWER, AND PROSPECTS

Triveni Patel

Department of Political Science,

Sanskriti Mahavidyalaya, MEU, Pamgarh, Janjgir Champa, Chhattisgarh, INDIA

Corresponding author E-mail: tanu1973.patel@gmail.com

Introduction

Global development has been one of the most significant transformations in the modern world. Over the past two centuries, many countries have experienced rapid economic growth, technological progress, and improvements in living standards. Advances in health care, education, and infrastructure have contributed towards longer life expectancy and reduced extreme poverty in several parts of the world. Despite these achievements, global inequality remains a persistent and complex challenge that continues to shape economic, political, and social relations between nations and within societies (Thomas Piketty, 2014).

Development generally refers to the process through which economies grow, modernization of the societies, and people experiencing improvements in well-being and the quality of life. Traditionally, development was measured mainly through economic indicators such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, scholars and international organizations now emphasize broader measures that include health, education, and human capabilities (United Nations Development Programme, 2020). These broader perspectives highlight that economic growth alone does not guarantee equitable distribution of wealth or opportunities.

Global inequality refers to the uneven distribution of income, wealth, resources, and opportunities across countries and among individuals. While some regions have achieved remarkable economic success, others remain trapped in cycles of poverty and limited development. Historical factors such as colonialism, unequal trade relations, and geopolitical power structures have contributed to the widening gap between the Global North and the Global South (Samir Amin, 1976). These structural inequalities often persist despite international development efforts.

In recent decades, globalization has further reshaped the dynamics of development and inequality. The expansion of global markets, technological innovation, and increased capital mobility have created new opportunities for economic growth. At the same time, globalization has also intensified disparities, as benefits are often concentrated in certain regions, industries, and social groups (Joseph Stiglitz, 2002). As a result, many countries face the challenge of achieving inclusive development that benefits a broader segment of the population.

This paper examines the relationship between development and global inequality by focusing on three central dimensions: patterns, power, and prospects. It first explores the historical and contemporary patterns that shape global development and inequality. It then analyzes the power structures embedded in global economic and political systems that influence how resources and opportunities are distributed. Finally, the paper discusses possible prospects for reducing inequality through policy reforms, international cooperation, and sustainable development strategies.

Understanding the interaction between development and inequality is crucial for designing policies that promote more equitable and sustainable global progress.

Conceptual Framework

Understanding the relationship between development and global inequality requires a clear conceptual framework that explains how development is defined, measured, and interpreted. Scholars from the field of Development Studies have proposed different theoretical perspectives to explain why some countries achieve higher levels of development while others remain economically disadvantaged. These theories help explain the structural and historical factors that shape global inequality.

Development is commonly understood as a multidimensional process that involves economic growth, social progress, and improvements in human well-being. Earlier approaches focused mainly on economic expansion, often measured through indicators such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita. However, this narrow approach has been widely criticized for ignoring social factors such as health, education, and quality of life. In response, broader frameworks have been developed, including the United Nations Development Programme Human Development Index (HDI), which measures development using indicators of income, education, and life expectancy (UNDP, 2020).

Several major theoretical perspectives explain global development and inequality. One of the earliest is Modernization Theory, which emerged in the mid-twentieth century. This theory argues that development occurs through a gradual transition from traditional to modern economic and social systems. According to scholars such as Walt W. Rostow, societies move through stages of economic growth driven by industrialization, technological progress, and institutional development (Rostow, 1960). However, critics argue that modernization theory assumes all countries follow the same development path.

In contrast, Dependency Theory emphasizes the unequal relationships between developed and developing countries. Scholars such as Andre Gunder Frank argue that underdevelopment in poorer countries is closely linked to the economic dominance of wealthier nations. According to this perspective, global capitalism often reinforces inequality by concentrating resources and power in the developed world.

Another influential perspective is World-Systems Theory, developed by Immanuel Wallerstein. This theory divides the global economy into three main categories: core, semi-periphery, and periphery. Core countries dominate global production and trade, while peripheral countries often provide raw materials and low-cost labor, reinforcing unequal economic relationships (Wallerstein, 1974).

To analyze development and inequality, researchers rely on several key indicators. These include GDP per capita to measure economic output, the Human Development Index to assess overall well-being, and the Gini Coefficient to measure income inequality within a country. Poverty rates and access to education, health care, and technology are also widely used to evaluate development outcomes.

Together, these theoretical perspectives and measurement tools provide a framework for understanding how development occurs and why inequality persists across different regions of the world.

Historical Patterns of Global Development and Inequality

The historical evolution of global development reveals how economic growth and inequality have developed unevenly across different regions of the world. These patterns are closely linked to major historical processes such as industrialization, colonial expansion, and the rise of the global capitalist system. Understanding these historical dynamics helps explain why some countries achieved rapid development while others continue to face structural economic disadvantages.

One of the most significant turning points in global development was the Industrial Revolution, which began in the late eighteenth century in the United Kingdom and later spread to other parts of Europe and North America. Industrialization transformed production systems, increased economic productivity, and accelerated technological innovation. Countries that industrialized early gained substantial economic advantages, creating a growing gap between industrialized economies and agrarian societies. According to economic historians, this period marked the beginning of what is often referred to as the “Great Divergence,” where Western economies began to outpace many regions in Asia, Africa, and Latin America in terms of income and industrial capacity (Pomeranz, 2000).

Colonialism also played a crucial role in shaping global inequality. European powers established colonies across Asia, Africa, and Latin America, extracting natural resources and integrating colonial economies into global trade networks that primarily benefited the colonizing countries. Colonial economic systems often focused on raw material extraction and plantation agriculture, limiting the development of local industries and infrastructure. Scholars argue that the legacy of colonialism continues to influence development patterns today, particularly in countries that inherited weak institutions and unequal economic structures (Walter Rodney, 1972).

After World War II, the global economic order underwent significant transformation. Many newly independent countries sought to accelerate development through state-led industrialization and development planning. International institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were created to support global economic stability and development. During this period, several regions adopted strategies aimed at reducing poverty and promoting economic growth.

From the late twentieth century onward, globalization became a major force shaping global development. Increased international trade, foreign investment, and technological innovation helped some emerging economies, particularly in East Asia, achieve rapid economic growth. Countries such as China and South Korea experienced significant industrial expansion and poverty reduction. However, globalization has also produced uneven outcomes, with some regions benefiting more than others.

Overall, historical patterns of development demonstrate that global inequality is not accidental but the result of long-term economic, political, and institutional processes that have shaped the modern global economy.

Current Patterns of Global Inequality

Global inequality today reflects significant disparities in income, wealth, and opportunities across countries and within societies. Despite substantial progress in reducing extreme poverty in some parts of the world, large gaps in economic development and living standards persist. These inequalities are visible in differences in income levels, access to education and healthcare, technological advancement, and overall quality of life.

One important dimension of global inequality is inequality **between countries**. Wealthier nations, particularly those in North America and Western Europe, generally have higher levels of income, advanced technology, and stronger institutional systems. In contrast, many countries in Africa and parts of South Asia continue to experience lower levels of economic development. Indicators such as GDP per capita show clear differences between high-income and low-income economies. Reports from the World Bank highlight that although global poverty rates have declined in recent decades, many developing countries still struggle with slow economic growth, unemployment, and limited infrastructure.

Another important aspect is **inequality within countries**. Even in rapidly growing economies, wealth and income are often unevenly distributed among the population. Economic gains from globalization and technological advancement frequently benefit urban areas, skilled workers, and wealthy groups more than rural populations or low-income households. Research by economists such as Branko Milanović shows that while global middle classes have grown in some emerging economies, income concentration among the richest groups has increased in many societies.

Regional disparities also remain significant. The divide between the Global North and the Global South continues to shape development outcomes. Countries in the Global North tend to dominate global finance, trade, and technological innovation, while many countries in the Global South rely heavily on primary commodity exports and face structural economic constraints. These imbalances often limit opportunities for sustainable development and long-term economic diversification.

Another growing source of inequality is the digital divide. Access to digital technologies, high-speed internet, and advanced knowledge systems is uneven across regions. Technological leadership is concentrated in developed economies and major global corporations such as Apple, Microsoft, and Alphabet Inc.. Countries with limited technological infrastructure may struggle to participate fully in the digital economy, which further reinforces existing development gaps.

Overall, current patterns of global inequality reveal that economic growth alone does not automatically lead to equal opportunities. Structural factors, institutional capacity, and technological access continue to shape the uneven distribution of global development.

Power Structures Shaping Global Inequality

Global inequality is not shaped only by economic growth or resource availability. It is also strongly influenced by power structures within the international political and economic system. These power relations affect how global rules are created, how resources are distributed, and which countries or groups benefit the most from the global economy. Institutions, financial systems, and multinational corporations all play important roles in shaping these outcomes.

One important source of global power lies in international economic institutions. Organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization influence global financial stability, development assistance, and trade regulations. These institutions were created to support international economic cooperation and development, particularly after the Bretton Woods Conference of 1944. However, critics argue that decision-making power within these institutions is often concentrated among wealthier countries, giving them greater influence over global economic policies.

Global trade systems also shape patterns of inequality. Developed economies typically have stronger negotiating power in international trade agreements and greater control over high-value industries such as technology, pharmaceuticals, and advanced manufacturing. Meanwhile, many developing countries remain dependent on exporting raw materials or low-value goods. This imbalance can limit opportunities for industrial growth and economic diversification in poorer nations.

Financial power is another key factor. Global capital flows, investment patterns, and international debt arrangements often influence development outcomes. Many developing countries depend on foreign investment or loans to finance development projects. However, high

debt levels and strict repayment conditions can restrict public spending on essential services such as health care, education, and infrastructure. Economists such as Dani Rodrik argue that global economic governance often reflects the interests of powerful states and financial actors.

Multinational corporations also play a significant role in shaping global inequality. Large corporations such as Amazon, Apple, and Walmart operate across multiple countries and influence global supply chains, labor markets, and investment flows. While these corporations can create jobs and stimulate economic growth, they may also concentrate profits in wealthy economies and contribute to wage disparities between regions.

Political power within countries further affects development outcomes. Governments with strong institutions, transparent governance, and effective policies are often better able to promote inclusive economic growth. In contrast, weak governance, corruption, and political instability can reinforce economic inequality and limit development opportunities.

Overall, global inequality is closely linked to the distribution of economic and political power within the international system. Addressing these imbalances requires reforms in global governance, fairer trade policies, and stronger institutions that support equitable development.

Contemporary Challenges Intensifying Inequality

In the twenty-first century, several global challenges have intensified existing inequalities between and within countries. Although economic globalization and technological progress have created new opportunities for growth, these benefits are unevenly distributed. Issues such as climate change, global health crises, rising debt burdens, and unequal access to technology continue to widen the development gap between richer and poorer regions.

One of the most pressing challenges is climate change, which disproportionately affects developing countries. Many low-income nations depend heavily on agriculture and natural resources, making them highly vulnerable to environmental changes such as droughts, floods, and extreme weather events. Organizations like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change emphasize that poorer countries often lack the financial and technological resources needed to adapt to climate impacts. As a result, climate-related disasters can slow economic growth, damage infrastructure, and push vulnerable communities deeper into poverty.

Global health crises also highlight structural inequalities. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed major disparities in healthcare systems, economic resilience, and access to medical resources. Wealthier countries were able to secure vaccines, provide economic relief packages, and strengthen public health responses more quickly than many developing nations. In contrast, countries with weaker healthcare infrastructure faced higher social and economic disruptions. The World Health Organization reported that unequal vaccine distribution during the pandemic reflected broader inequalities in global health governance.

Another challenge is the rising debt burden faced by many developing countries. External borrowing is often necessary to finance infrastructure projects, social programs, and development initiatives. However, high levels of public debt can limit governments' ability to invest in essential sectors such as education, healthcare, and poverty reduction. Institutions like the International Monetary Fund frequently highlight the financial vulnerability of low-income economies that rely heavily on external loans and aid.

The digital divide is another factor reinforcing global inequality. Access to digital technology, internet infrastructure, and advanced technical skills remains uneven across the world. While many developed countries are leading innovations in artificial intelligence, automation, and digital commerce, several developing nations still struggle with limited internet access and inadequate technological infrastructure. According to the International Telecommunication Union, billions of people worldwide remain offline, restricting their ability to participate fully in the digital economy.

These contemporary challenges demonstrate that inequality is not only a historical issue but also a dynamic problem shaped by current global crises. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated international action, stronger social protection systems, and policies that ensure development benefits are distributed more equitably.

Prospects for Reducing Global Inequality

Although global inequality remains a major challenge, several policy approaches and development strategies offer opportunities to reduce disparities between and within countries. Addressing inequality requires coordinated efforts at national and international levels, focusing on sustainable economic growth, inclusive policies, and stronger global cooperation.

One important strategy is the promotion of sustainable development. The adoption of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 created a global framework aimed at reducing poverty, improving education and healthcare, promoting gender equality, and addressing environmental challenges. These goals emphasize inclusive and sustainable economic growth while ensuring that development benefits reach marginalized populations. Achieving these objectives can help reduce structural inequalities and improve living standards in developing regions.

Another key approach involves inclusive economic policies. Governments can promote more equitable growth through investments in social protection systems, progressive taxation, and targeted public spending. Programs such as unemployment benefits, healthcare access, and poverty alleviation initiatives can help reduce income disparities and support vulnerable groups. Economists like Amartya Sen emphasize that development should focus on expanding people's capabilities and opportunities rather than only increasing economic output.

Education and technology access also play a crucial role in reducing inequality. Expanding access to quality education helps individuals develop skills that improve employment opportunities and economic mobility. Similarly, greater access to digital technology and knowledge networks can enable developing countries to participate more actively in the global economy. Investments in innovation, research, and digital infrastructure are therefore essential for long-term development.

Reforms in global governance and international cooperation are also important. Institutions such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and World Trade Organization can play a significant role in promoting fairer financial systems and trade policies. Greater representation of developing countries in global decision-making processes may help ensure that international policies better address development challenges.

Finally, strengthening partnerships between governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector can support more effective development outcomes. Collaborative initiatives can mobilize financial resources, share knowledge, and promote innovation aimed at reducing inequality.

Overall, while global inequality remains deeply rooted in historical and structural factors, strategic policy reforms, inclusive development strategies, and international cooperation provide realistic prospects for building a more equitable global economic system.

Case Studies and Comparative Examples

Examining specific country experiences helps illustrate how different development strategies and historical conditions shape inequality outcomes. Some countries have successfully reduced poverty and achieved rapid economic growth, while others continue to face structural barriers that limit development. Comparative examples highlight both the possibilities and the challenges involved in addressing global inequality.

One widely discussed example is the rapid economic transformation of China. Since the late 1970s, China has implemented major economic reforms, including market liberalization, export-oriented industrialization, and large-scale infrastructure development. These policies helped the country achieve one of the fastest economic growth rates in modern history and lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty. According to reports from the World Bank, China's economic expansion significantly reduced extreme poverty and increased global economic integration. However, despite these achievements, China also faces rising income inequality between urban and rural regions, as well as disparities between coastal and inland provinces.

Another example of successful development is South Korea. After the Korean War, South Korea was one of the poorest countries in the world. Through strong government policies, investments in education, and export-led industrialization, the country transformed into a highly industrialized economy within a few decades. South Korea's development model demonstrates

how strategic state intervention, human capital development, and technological advancement can support rapid economic growth and social mobility.

In contrast, many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa continue to face persistent development challenges. Factors such as colonial legacies, political instability, limited infrastructure, and dependence on primary commodity exports have slowed economic diversification in several African economies. Countries such as Nigeria and Democratic Republic of the Congo possess abundant natural resources but still struggle with poverty, governance challenges, and uneven wealth distribution.

Latin America also provides important examples of inequality. Although several countries in the region have relatively high middle-income status, income distribution remains highly unequal. Nations such as Brazil have historically experienced large gaps between wealthy and poor populations. Efforts such as social welfare programs and conditional cash transfer schemes have helped reduce poverty in recent years, but structural inequality remains a significant concern.

These comparative examples demonstrate that development outcomes are influenced by a combination of policy choices, institutional capacity, historical context, and global economic integration. Studying these cases provides valuable insights into how countries can pursue more inclusive and sustainable development strategies.

Policy Implications and Recommendations

Reducing global inequality requires coordinated policy actions at both national and international levels. Governments, international institutions, and development organizations must work together to address the structural factors that limit equitable development. Effective policy responses should focus on inclusive economic growth, stronger social systems, fair global governance, and sustainable development strategies.

At the national level, governments play a central role in promoting inclusive economic growth. Public investment in education, healthcare, and infrastructure can improve productivity and expand economic opportunities for disadvantaged groups. Expanding access to quality education is particularly important because it strengthens human capital and increases long-term economic mobility. Economist Amartya Sen argues that development should focus on expanding people's capabilities and freedoms rather than only increasing national income (Sen, 1999). Policies that support small businesses, rural development, and job creation can also help reduce income disparities within countries.

Strengthening social protection systems is another important policy priority. Programs such as unemployment benefits, health insurance, pension schemes, and targeted poverty-reduction initiatives can protect vulnerable populations from economic shocks. Conditional cash transfer programs in countries such as Brazil have demonstrated how social policies can reduce poverty

while improving access to education and healthcare. Institutions like the World Bank emphasize that effective social safety nets are essential for inclusive development and poverty reduction.

At the international level, reforms in global economic governance are necessary to address structural inequalities. International organizations such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization influence global financial stability, trade regulations, and development assistance. Increasing the representation of developing countries in these institutions could improve the fairness of global economic decision-making. In addition, fairer trade policies and better market access for developing economies may support economic diversification and industrial growth.

Another key recommendation involves debt management and development financing. Many low-income countries face high levels of external debt that restrict their ability to invest in public services. International initiatives that promote debt relief, concessional lending, and sustainable financing can help countries allocate more resources to development priorities. Multilateral cooperation through institutions such as the United Nations is important for coordinating these efforts.

Finally, global cooperation is necessary to address shared challenges such as climate change, pandemics, and technological inequality. International partnerships can promote knowledge sharing, technology transfer, and financial support for developing countries. The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals provides a global roadmap for reducing poverty, promoting inclusive growth, and addressing environmental challenges.

Overall, reducing global inequality requires comprehensive policy strategies that combine domestic reforms with international cooperation. By strengthening institutions, expanding social protections, and promoting fair global economic systems, policymakers can support more balanced and inclusive global development.

Conclusion

Global development over the past two centuries has produced remarkable economic progress, technological advancement, and improvements in human well-being. Many countries have experienced significant reductions in poverty, increased life expectancy, and expanded access to education and healthcare. However, these achievements have not been distributed evenly. Large disparities in income, wealth, and opportunities continue to exist between countries and within societies, making global inequality one of the most pressing challenges in contemporary development.

This paper has examined the relationship between development and global inequality through three key dimensions: patterns, power, and prospects. The historical analysis showed that global inequality is deeply rooted in long-term processes such as the Industrial Revolution, colonial expansion, and the formation of the modern global economy. These historical developments

created structural imbalances that continue to influence development outcomes in many regions today.

The paper also explored how power structures shape global inequality. International institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization play important roles in shaping global economic policies and financial systems. While these institutions aim to support development and economic stability, their policies and decision-making processes often reflect broader geopolitical and economic power dynamics. As a result, the distribution of global resources and opportunities can remain uneven.

In addition, contemporary challenges such as climate change, global health crises, rising debt burdens, and technological inequalities continue to intensify global disparities. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated action across national governments, international organizations, and civil society.

Despite these challenges, there are promising opportunities for reducing inequality. International initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals highlight the importance of inclusive growth, social protection systems, environmental sustainability, and global cooperation. Investments in education, digital infrastructure, and technological innovation can also help create new pathways for equitable development.

Ultimately, achieving more balanced global development requires structural reforms in both domestic policies and international governance systems. By addressing historical inequalities, strengthening institutions, and promoting inclusive economic strategies, the global community can work toward a more just and sustainable development future.

References

1. Amin, S. (1976). *Unequal Development: An Essay on the Social Formations of Peripheral Capitalism*. New York: Monthly Review Press, pp. 15–32.
2. Frank, A. G. (1967). *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*. New York: Monthly Review Press, pp. 3–20.
3. Milanović, B. (2016). *Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of Globalization*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 1–28.
4. Piketty, T. (2014). *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 24–45.
5. Pomeranz, K. (2000). *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 6–25.
6. Rodney, W. (1972). *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. London: Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, pp. 75–102.
7. Rodrik, D. (2011). *The Globalization Paradox: Democracy and the Future of the World Economy*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, pp. 55–80.

8. Rostow, W. W. (1960). *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 4–16.
9. Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 3–20.
10. Stiglitz, J. E. (2002). *Globalization and Its Discontents*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, pp. 9–34.
11. Wallerstein, I. (1974). *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. New York: Academic Press, pp. 15–38.
12. World Bank. (2020). *World Development Report 2020: Trading for Development in the Age of Global Value Chains*. Washington, DC: World Bank, pp. 1–20.
13. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2020). *Human Development Report 2020: The Next Frontier – Human Development and the Anthropocene*. New York: UNDP, pp. 22–40.
14. International Monetary Fund (IMF). (2022). *World Economic Outlook*. Washington, DC: IMF, pp. 50–65.
15. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). (2021). *Sixth Assessment Report*. Geneva: IPCC, pp. 10–28.
16. International Telecommunication Union (ITU). (2022). *Measuring Digital Development: Facts and Figures*. Geneva: ITU, pp. 5–18.
17. World Health Organization (WHO). (2021). *COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan*. Geneva: WHO, pp. 12–25.
18. United Nations. (2015). *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. New York: United Nations, pp. 14–30.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND DIGITAL GOVERNANCE

Deepmala S Tayade

Sant Gadge baba Amravati University, Amravati

Corresponding author E-mail: deepmalatayade39@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) in public administration and regulatory affairs at a rapidly growing rate has radically redefined how modern governance systems function. Governments, international organizations, and transnational regulatory bodies increasingly rely on the deployment of algorithmic tools to support decision, making processes and hence involve activities such as the distribution of welfare benefits, migration control, financial supervision, environmental monitoring, and public service delivery.

These developments represent a drastic departure from traditional governance to digitally mediated governance structures, which are more commonly known as digital governance. In this context, AI has evolved into not only a technological instrument but also a significant component of the global administrative state being formed.

Conceptually, the global administrative state refers to the growing impact of administrative norms and regulatory institutions, as well as decision, making processes, which operate beyond the boundaries of a nation, state. AI systems embedded within such frameworks inevitably raise basic legal and policy issues concerning accountability, transparency, legitimacy, and democratic control. It is not given that we can simply rely on the traditional principles of administrative law; such as legality, procedural fairness, and the giving of reasons when confronted with opaque algorithmic systems that often extend beyond the territory of a single nation. This chapter looks at the topic of artificial intelligence and digital governance through the lens of the global administrative state's theoretical and normative framework. It suggests that AI, powered governance systems deepen the already existing conflict between efficiency and accountability and at the same time, reallocate regulatory power among states, international organizations, and private technology actors. The chapter also, from a developmental angle, points out how disparities in digital infrastructure, data access, and regulatory capability influence the results of global digital governance, which often leads to a loss for development and Global South countries.

The chapter is divided into seven parts. After the opening, Section 2 explains the ideas behind the global administrative state and how it relates to digital governance. Section 3 looks at the legal issues raised by AI administrative decision, making. Section 4 reviews the global policy and regulatory initiatives that are being put in place as a response. Section 5 considers the impact

of digital governance and AI on development. Section 6 discusses the issues of human rights and administrative justice. The last part gives normative and policy recommendations to enhance the capability of digital governance to be accountable and inclusive in the global administrative state.

This chapter contributes to existing scholarship by combining global administrative law theory with the development, oriented analysis of digital governance. It presents a Global South centered perspective which is still underrepresented in the current AI governance literature.

1.1 Methodology

This chapter makes use of qualitative, doctrinal, and analytical research methodologies in its investigation of the role of artificial intelligence and digital governance in the context of the global administrative state. The examination is based on global administrative law theory and relies on legal scholarship, international policy documents, and governance frameworks dealing with AI regulation and digital governance.

This research relies on the doctrinal legal analysis of international norms, soft, law instruments, and regulatory principles related to AI, combined with a comparative policy review of selected global and national governance initiatives. A review of secondary sources such as academic literature, reports of international organizations, and policy documents is conducted in a systematic manner to evaluate the development of AI, powered digital governance.

Besides, this part also uses genuinely local examples from India and the Global South sphere of influence to demonstrate how AI governance operates in developing and transitional systems. These examples are definitely not scientific investigations but figurative artistic samples that serve a purpose of reminding one about legal accountability, regulatory capacity, and developmental changes. Taking such a methodological position allows the reader to question and study how global digital governance tools become integrated with national legal systems and the facts of development.

2. The Global Administrative State and Digital Governance

The global administrative state is a concept that captures the extensive and complex network of regulatory authorities, rules, and procedures that govern not only cross border transactions and activities, but also those going beyond the usual legislative and judicial areas. These include international organizations, Trans- governmental networks, private standard, setting bodies, and hybrid public, private arrangements. The administration globally, in this case, is powered through making rules, monitoring, enforcement, and adjudicatory functions that increasingly mimic domestic administrative governance.

The emergence of digital governance is one of the hallmark characteristics of this new global administrative order.

Through the use of digital technologies, regulatory coordination over different jurisdictions has been made possible, data collection can now occur in real time, and automated enforcement tools are also facilitated.

It is worth noting that Artificial Intelligence (AI) algorithms have increased the ability of public administrators to digest huge volumes of data and at the same time achieve their policy implementation objectives on a large scale.

This means, the impact of digital governance goes beyond merely changing the decision, making processes as it also influences the distribution of power within global administrative governance frameworks.

AI, driven digital governance makes the line between public and private authority less clear. For instance, tech companies create and tweak algorithms that determine regulatory outcomes, and at the same time, international organizations depend on digital tools provided by the private sector. This diffusion of power makes it more difficult for traditional accountability mechanisms to be effective, since the decisions that have an impact on people and communities are often the result of complex socio, technical systems rather than easily identifiable administrative acts.

Legally speaking, the increasing use of AI in digital governance puts in question some of the main assumptions of administrative law. Most international administrative bodies do not have any legislative force, but work through soft law instruments, guidelines, and technical standards. In cases where AI systems are integrated into such instruments, they move the source of decisions even further away from democratic oversight and judicial review. Hence, analyzing AI, based digital governance is a matter of extending the concept of administrative accountability outside the state.

3. Legal Challenges of AI-Driven Digital Governance

Among all the legal issues AI in digital governance might be facing, accountability is the one that would cause most significant troubles. Normally, administrative law is based on the direct and clear assignment of decisions to the respective authorities. However, algorithmic decision, making changes that, by dividing the responsibility among various actors, such as programmers, data providers, public agencies, and international institutions. Thus, it shows that figuring out who is legally responsible for an error or unjust decision is significantly more difficult now.

Another major concern that has been raised is the lack of transparency. Many AI systems operate like a black box, producing outputs without understandable explanations of their internal logic. This opacity goes against the principles of procedural fairness and the right to a reasoned decision, which are fundamental elements of administrative justice. Moreover, in the digital governance realm, the benefits of transparency are undermined by territorial fragmentation and the absence of standardized disclosure norms. One more issue with AI, driven administrative systems is the risk to procedural fairness. People who have been negatively affected by decisions

made by algorithms about social welfare benefits, immigration risk assessments, or financial compliance may see their chances of challenging these decisions significantly diminished. Moreover, when such systems operate on a transnational level, it becomes even more difficult to obtain an effective remedy because of the lack or weakness of judicial review mechanisms.

Moreover, the use of AI for digital governance is typically associated with legality concerns. In fact, most of the algorithmic systems are used at the will of the administration without the proper legal authorization by the legislature. In the case of global governance, such administration discretion is usually granted through the unofficial agreements and technical standards which however lack democratic legitimacy. It is thus crucial that AI systems be kept strictly within the bounds of the law in order to preserve the rule of law in the global administrative state.

“As illustrated in Table 1, AI-driven digital governance spans multiple regulatory domains...”

Table 1: AI Applications in Digital Governance and Associated Legal Challenge

Domain	AI Application	Governance Function	Key Legal Challenges
Welfare Administration	Automated eligibility systems	Benefit allocation	Due process, transparency
Migration Control	Risk scoring algorithms	Border governance	Discrimination, accountability
Financial Regulation	AI fraud detection	Compliance monitoring	Explain ability, oversight
Environmental Governance	Predictive analytics	Monitoring & enforcement	Data reliability, legality

Source: Author’s compilation based on OECD (2019) and Yeung (2018).

3.1 Data Protection and Algorithmic Legality in India

Data protection is one of the main legal issues that AI, driven digital governance inherits. Recently, India has passed the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 which is a major development in legislations concerning data, centric governance. The Act lays out the duties of data fiduciaries, including obtaining consent, limiting use of data for specific purposes, and ensuring accountability, thus reinforcing the legal structure of digital governance. Yet, the Act has only a limited scope in cases of automated decision, making, algorithmic transparency, and explain ability. The lack of direct rules for AI, based administrative decisions is a sign of the bigger problem of how to make data protection laws consistent with the novel regulatory needs of algorithmic governance in the global administrative state.

3.1.1 (DPDP Act discussion), ADD

The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 stipulates statutory duties for data fiduciaries under Sections 410, which include obtaining consent, limiting purposes, and putting in place

mechanisms for accountability. But the Act neither directly addresses the issue of automated decision, making nor does it require explanations of algorithms in administrative settings.

4. Global Policy and Regulatory Responses

Since AI, based digital governance has developed so quickly, various international policy initiatives and regulatory frameworks have come out to meet the challenge. These have, among others, been a series of ethical guidelines, principles of soft law, and a risk, based regulatory model that were all prepared by different international organizations and regional bodies. In fact, these measures not only indicate a rising consciousness of the issues in governance but also, on the other hand, expose the substantial shortcomings of such areas.

Most global AI governance frameworks mainly depend on non, binding norms like transparency, accountability, and human, centered design principles. Although the above, mentioned principles offer some useful guidance, they are not legally binding and, in most cases, their implementation depends on the willingness of the parties. However, the multiplication of overlapping frameworks also leads to regulatory fragmentation, thus coordination becoming a challenge and the overall lack of consistency in digital governance practices being undermined.

Risk, based approaches to AI regulation has been increasingly recognized, especially when it comes to categorizing AI systems based on their possible impacts on society. These approaches are intended to ensure both innovation and the protection of fundamental rights. Nevertheless, rolling out risk, based regulation worldwide is still hard because of the differences in legal systems, regulatory powers, and political considerations.

Private actors have become instrumental in influencing the trajectory of global digital governance by way of technical standards and various industry, led initiatives. Partnerships between government and business will certainly help make regulations more effective. However such collaborations also raise concerns of regulatory capture where the commercial interests are prioritized at the expense of public values. Hence, it is very important that we strengthen public scrutiny over mechanisms of private governance as a way of legitimizing and holding them accountable.

Table 2: Global AI Governance Frameworks and Implications for Developing Countries

Framework Type	Example	Binding Nature	Developmental Implications
Soft Law	OECD AI Principles	Non-binding	Limited enforcement
Regional Regulation	EU AI Act	Binding (regional)	Regulatory spillover
Ethical Guidelines	UN AI ethics	Voluntary	Normative influence
National Policy	India AI Strategy	Advisory	Capacity-dependent

4.1 National AI Strategies and Soft-Law Governance: The Indian Experience

National AI governance approaches are yet another reflection of how the world continues to heavily rely on policy, driven and soft, law mechanisms.

Indias National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence, published by NITI Aayog, portrays AI as a means to ensure inclusive growth and efficient public service delivery in major areas like healthcare, agriculture, and governance. While the plan stresses the importance of embedding ethical values and responsibility in innovation, it mainly depends on an advisory model rather than legally enforceable regulatory standards.

This approach matches the present general digital governance trend at the global level where policy measures often come before binding legal regulations, thus leading to a situation of fragmented and less effective accountability mechanisms.

5. Developmental Implications and Global Inequality

Embedding AI in digital governance can have a great impact on worldwide development. However, not all countries are equally equipped with digital infrastructure, good, quality data, and technical knowledge. And these disparities are a deciding factor in how countries associate with and benefit from AI based on the concept of labor governance systems.

Developing and Global South countries may struggle mainly due to the serious capacity constraints of regulating AI technologies. Shortage of resources, weak institutional frameworks, and reliance on foreign technology providers are some of the factors that could diminish regulatory autonomy and even increase digital dependency. Consequently, digital governance arrangements might end up strengthening the already existing power asymmetries in the global administrative state.

Digital governance powered by AI can similarly influence development results through changing the way people get public services and access to economic opportunities. For instance, automated decision, making based on algorithms could replicate or enhance existing social prejudices hidden in the data and hence, have a more negative impact on disadvantaged communities. It is essential that governance structures are inclusive; otherwise, the process of digital transformation through its implementation may increase inequality which is the opposite of what sustainable development is about.

Capacity, building and technology transfer should be among the most important elements of fair digital governance. International cooperation should be oriented towards strengthening the regulatory authorities in the developing countries, promoting the use of open data standards, and making easier the deployment of context, aware AI. We have to make sure that development matters are included in the global AI governance discussion if we want to achieve results that are both inclusive and sustainable.

Illustrative Legal and Policy Case

Example 1: India's Digital Governance and AI in Public Administration (Developmental Implications)

India is a prime example of AI, powered digital governance in the Global South.

The government programs that deploy AI in various aspects of welfare services, such as verifying identities and providing other public services, are showing the benefits of as well as the challenges of algorithmic management. On the one hand, digital tools for targeting and eligibility criteria have been key in making administrations more efficient and cutting down on leakages. On the other hand, these tools have brought out problems of exclusion errors, lack of transparency, and procedural fairness.

From the governance perspective, the India case study reveals that in most instances, digital governance systems rapidly become obsolete with regard to the legal safeguards that go hand in hand with them. While policy papers are in favour of ethical AI and responsible innovation, the truth is that there exist only a handful of severely restricted legal frameworks able to regulate the issue of algorithmic accountability, which is, by and large, the principal point of contention in the evolution of these technologies. The uncovered discrepancy mirrors the overarching challenge that developing countries face when attempting to harmonize the rapid tempo of digital transformation with the notions of administrative law. The gap revealed is a reflection of the general problem developing countries have in reconciling the fast pace of digital transformation with the concepts of administrative law.

Illustrative Legal and Policy Case Examples 2: AI Governance Capacity in the Global South

AI, based digital governance in many Global South contexts is largely influenced by external technology providers and international policy models. Domestic oversight of algorithmic systems is very limited because of the low regulatory capacity and the dependence on foreign digital infrastructure. As a result, governance frameworks usually focus on efficiency and scalability, neglecting rights protection and local accountability.

This dynamic deepens administrative asymmetries in the global administrative state, with developing countries mostly acting as rule, takers rather than rule, makers. Hence, it is crucial to raise the regulatory capacity of institutions and enable inclusive policy engagement in order to make digital governance a tool for development and not a mechanism of dependency.

5.1 Digital Governance Capacity and Developmental Asymmetries in the Global South

The dispersion of AI, powered digital governance systems in developing countries is influenced by huge differences in the regulatory capacity, institutional resources, and technological infrastructure. International development organizations have flagged the potential as well as the risks of digital governance reforms. World Bank and United Nations Development

Programme reports point out that AI, based systems could improve government bureaucracy and service delivery, but at the same time, in the absence of strong regulatory frameworks, they may lead to greater exclusion and inequality issues. The results of such research point to the necessity of incorporating development, related protection measures into global AI governance frameworks to prevent the deepening of existing administrative and economic disparities.

The issues raised are at the core of Sustainable Development Goals achievement, especially SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 16 (Strong Institutions).

6. Human Rights, Ethics, and Administrative Justice

Human rights considerations shall form the core of AI governance in the context of the global administrative state. AI, powered systems have the potential to impact a variety of rights such as the right to privacy, non, discrimination, freedom of expression, and the right to access the court. Hence, digital governance frameworks should integrate rights, based approaches that are consistent with international human rights standards.

Algorithmic bias is an ethical problem that has a significant impact. When AI systems are trained on biased data, they are likely to give discriminatory results, which goes against the principles of equality and non, discrimination. However, in global governance situations, the danger of these risks is increased since cultural and contextual differences, which are frequently ignored in system design, are present.

Administrative justice demands that people whose rights are being encroached upon due to AI, generated decisions are provided with proper remedies. It refers, among other things, to the right to a detailed explanation, the opportunity to challenge the decisions enacted, and the facilitation of independent review mechanisms. Without a doubt, these protective measures should be incorporated into the governing frameworks of the digital world if the latter is to be considered legitimate and trustworthy.

Ethical frameworks for AI governance typically highlight core values like fairness, accountability, and transparency. Although there is a general agreement on these principles, it is still difficult to turn them into working standards. One of the main challenges faced by the global administrative state is the incorporation of the ethical dimension in the law and policy frameworks.

Illustrative legal and policy case examples 3: Human Rights and Algorithmic Welfare Systems

Automated welfare management systems in a handful of developing countries offer a glimpse of how AI, based digital governance can impact social rights. Mistakes caused by algorithms, wrong data, and a lack of proper appeal channels have led to people being unfairly denied access to basic services. Such results highlight that administrative justice features like the ability to

explain decisions, complaint handling, and human intervention are necessary to be built into the digital governance setups.

6.1 Privacy, Dignity, and Constitutional Limits on Digital Governance

Judges acknowledging privacy as a fundamental right through the law have made it even more evident that digital governance frameworks should be rights, based. Where Justice K. S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017) was concerned, the Supreme Court of India recognized the right to informational privacy and data protection as natural elements of constitutional dignity and personal autonomy. Such case law is applicable to AI, based administrative systems especially when algorithmic decision, making entails gathering, profiling, and automated processing of large amounts of data. The Court's reasoning in this case sets forth the constitutional boundaries within which digital governance tools, whether local or cross, border ones, must be implemented.

6.1.1 (Puttaswamy), ADD

The proportionality and necessity standards articulated by the Supreme Court impose constitutional limits on AI-driven digital governance systems that rely on large-scale data processing and profiling.

6.2 Ethical AI Frameworks and Administrative Accountability

Ethical governance initiatives disclose in greater detail the struggle to control AI within administrative systems. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, has unveiled the ethical principles in its framework of Responsible AI for All that focus on transparency, fairness, and accountability in the usage of AI. Such initiatives are instrumental in the creation of normative standards; however, the fact that they are not legally binding reflects the majority of the world that is relying on ethical self, regulation in digital governance. This situation will most probably give rise to concerns with regard to enforceability, supervision, and the safeguarding of administrative justice in the processes of decision, making by AI.

Enforcement through binding laws is the main weakness of the ethical AI governance initiatives.

7. Towards Accountable and Inclusive Digital Governance

The difficulties of AI, led digital governance can only be solved if a thorough and planned coordinated approach is taken. The law should lay down the clear objectives of employing AI in administrative decision, making, thus, guaranteeing AI decisions to be lawful and proportional on the one hand. At the same time, the measures that aim at transparency should be intensified so that both the authorities and the public could have a clear understanding of how the decisions are reached and thus be able to take part in the decision, making process actively.

At the same time, we require more global coordination to align standards of regulation and reduce fragmentations. Institutions of multilateral nature play a role in arranging dialogues, sharing good practices, and organizing capacity building activities.

Governance mechanisms that are inclusive and empowered by various stakeholders such as civil society and developing countries should fulfill criteria of legitimacy.

From a developmental perspective, the global digital governance platform needs to center its efforts on equity and sustainability. It entails, on one hand, addressing the disparities in access to and usage of digital technology between the rich and the poor, on the other hand, the widespread availability of technology, and finally, ensuring that AI systems effectively facilitate the achievement of development goals. Putting development at the heart of AI regulation can guide the way in which the digital revolution is turned into a tool for global justice.

Conclusion

Artificial intelligence is one of the main components of digital governance in the worldwide administrative state. On one hand, AI, based systems have great potentials to increase regulatory efficiency and policy implementation; however, on the other hand, they bring with them grave legal, moral, and even developmental challenges. Moreover, issues of accountability deficits, lack of transparency and global disparities risk eroding the very legitimacy of digital governance systems.

This chapter has contended that to address these challenges, it is necessary to rethink administrative law and governance beyond the nation, state. Global digital governance has the potential to be legally accountable, policy, coordinated, development, oriented to bring about equity and a rights, based system. The global administrative state should change correspondingly to the revolutionary changes in the AI sector so that new technology benefits the public and is not just another tool of the powerful.

References

1. Bovens, M. (2007). *Analysing and assessing accountability: A conceptual framework*. *European Law Journal*, 13(4), 447–468.
2. Kingsbury, B., Krisch, N., & Stewart, R. (2005). *The emergence of global administrative law*. *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 68(3–4), 15–61.
3. Mayer-Schönberger, V., & Cukier, K. (2013). *Big Data: A Revolution That Will Transform How We Live, Work, and Think*. London: John Murray.
4. OECD. (2019). *Artificial Intelligence in Society*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
5. Pasquale, F. (2015). *The Black Box Society: The Secret Algorithms That Control Money and Information*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
6. United Nations. (2020). *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*. New York: United Nations.

7. Yeung, K. (2018). *Algorithmic regulation: A critical interrogation*. *Regulation & Governance*, 12(4), 505–523.
8. Eubanks, V. (2018). *Automating Inequality*. St. Martin's Press.
9. World Bank. (2020). *GovTech and Digital Governance*.
10. Government of India. (2018). *National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence*. NITI Aayog.
11. Government of India. (2023). *Digital Personal Data Protection Act*.
12. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. (2021). *Responsible AI for All*.
13. *Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India* (2017) 10 SCC 1.
14. United Nations Development Programme. (2021). *Artificial Intelligence for Sustainable Development*.
15. DeNardis, L. (2014). *The Global War for Internet Governance*. Yale University Press.

BEYOND PROFITS: CIVIL SOCIETY'S CALL FOR ETHICAL HRM AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLIANCE

Sumedha Bajpai

School of Business and Management, Jaipur National University

Corresponding author E-mail: sumedhab80@gmail.com

Introduction

"Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free." **- Dalai Lama 14th**

Human resource management (HRM) has evolved from a transactional role focused on hiring, payroll, and performance metrics to a moral battleground in a time when global supply chains span continents and corporate actions have far-reaching consequences. Conventional HRM prioritizes business expansion over moral principles and human rights. However, this perspective is contested by civil society, which consists of activists, labour unions, grassroots campaigners, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Instead of viewing employees as expenses to be reduced, they insist that businesses treat them as rights-holders deserving of justice, equity, and dignity.

The fundamental framework is the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), which were adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in 2011. The state's duty to defend human rights, businesses' duty to uphold them, and the availability of efficient remedies are the three pillars established by these principles. By serving as watchdogs, exposing wrongdoing, and promoting change, civil society fortifies the third pillar. This article argues that as consumers, investors, and regulators become more watchful, civil society interventions encourage ethical human resource management, changing business practices.

The urgency is highlighted by real-world problems. NGOs like the Clean Clothes Campaign supported the international outcry following the 2013 Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh, which claimed the lives of over 1,100 textile workers. In a similar vein, #MeToo revealed widespread sexual harassment in businesses from Hollywood to internet giants. These incidents draw attention to HRM flaws, such as discrimination, erratic contracts, and a lack of grievance procedures. This article offers compliance strategies based on ILO treaties and FPIC principles by dissecting these problems and civil society responses.

HRM Challenges in the Human Rights Era

HRM works at the intersection of human welfare and business efficiency, but persistent problems threaten rights compliance. The supply chains at the top are the most exploitative. Multinational corporations frequently outsource to low-wage nations, which promotes forced

labour, child labour, and unhealthy working conditions. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), 160 million children were supposed to be employed as child labourers worldwide by 2020, with many working in corporate supply chains. Discriminatory behaviours increase existing disparities. Despite DEI rhetoric, women, minorities, and LGBTQ+ employees experience glass ceilings, wage disparities, and harassment. According to a McKinsey analysis published in 2023, ethnic minorities are 20-30% underrepresented in leadership positions in Fortune 500 companies. (McKinsey & Company and LeanIn.Org, 2023). Stakeholder disputes emerge when HRM ignores community implications, such as indigenous land rights in mining activities, so breaking FPIC—a concept that requires communities' free, prior, and informed permission before projects can start.

These challenges come from profit-driven metrics. Shareholder primacy, as embodied in theories such as Friedman's philosophy, dismisses ethics as irrelevant. However, UNGPs contradict this by requiring human rights due diligence, which includes recognizing, preventing, mitigating, and accounting for detrimental impacts. Without it, businesses face litigation, boycotts, and reputational harm—costs that much outweigh compliance expenses. Civil society fills the void by using moral authority to compel responsibility when states fail, particularly in areas with poor governance.

Civil Society's Advocacy: Tools and Tactics

Civil society advocacy refers to organized efforts by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), activists, unions, and community networks to influence corporate, governmental, or public behaviour in favour of greater accountability, fairness, and human rights protection. Civil society exists between the state, the market, and the family, working independently to represent disadvantaged perspectives and push structural change. In this context, advocacy refers to strategic measures used to raise awareness of topics such as labour rights, DEI, and human rights compliance in human resource management. As it can be stated also through a Sanskrit verse: -

“यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः |
स यतप्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते || ”

(Whatever actions great persons perform, common people follow. Whatever standards they set, all the world pursues.)

-BHAGWAD GITA 3.21

Civil society exerts significant influence on corporations through non-traditional power sources, compelling ethical shifts in HRM. Civil society advocacy means everyday people, activists, and groups like NGOs push big companies to do the right thing, especially around fair treatment of workers. Some of them can be explained as follows: -

Asymmetric Power Sources

These are the special advantages civil society has that companies can't easily match.

Information dominance- NGOs get secret info straight from workers and locals through tips and deep investigations. They publish honest reports that cut through company lies or PR spin.

Mobilization speed- They have huge networks of regular people who can jump into action fast—think online petitions or street protests that go viral overnight, putting millions of eyes on a problem.

Legal expertise- Activists are pros at finding weak spots in laws across countries. They sue companies in courts that will listen, holding global giants accountable even for stuff happening far away.

Key NGOs and Exposés

Major watchdog groups that dig up dirt and share it widely.

Publishing exposés- Groups like Human Rights Watch release yearly reports calling out companies by name, like audits showing Shein used forced labour in its factories.

Social media amplification- They post real worker stories on X (Twitter) or TikTok, reaching billions fast. Amnesty's job rights campaign got 50 million views by making issues feel personal.

Worker voice elevation- Instead of just numbers, they share workers' own words and stories, turning employees from "business costs" into people with real rights.

Impact of Public Campaigns

These are big public attacks that hurt a company's image and wallet quickly.

#BoycottNike (1990s)- Activists exposed awful sweatshops in Indonesia making Nike shoes. People stopped buying, costing Nike \$1 billion, so Nike added factory checks and better supplier rules.

Mechanism- Angry customers dump the brand, stock prices crash (Nike fell 20% fast), and stores drop products—forcing quick fixes.

Modern parallels- Like the 2023 Starbucks boycott over blocking unions, which won workers better pay.

Litigation Strategies

Using courts to force real change, not just promises.

US Alien Tort Statute (ATS)- A US law lets people from other countries sue American companies for bad stuff done abroad. The Shell case in 2013 scared others into cleaning up.

Transnational reach- In Europe, new laws like Germany's make parent companies responsible for their suppliers' messes.

Outcomes- Companies pay up for fixes—like Unilever's \$2 million in 2022 to help Kenyan tea workers hurt in violence.

Boycotts and Divestment

Hitting where it hurts: money from customers and investors.

Anti-apartheid inspiration- In the 1980s, global boycotts pulled \$4 billion from South Africa, helping end that system.

Investor pressure- big funds like BlackRock now check companies' ethics and dump bad ones.

Powered by People coalition (2021)- Over 200 groups showed Amazon had double the normal worker injuries, leading Amazon to spend on safety and recognize unions in 2022.

DEI Advocacy Tactics

Pushing companies to hire and treat diverse people fairly.

Black Lives Matter and Time's Up- After the 2020 protests, they demanded openness on diversity. Over 40% of top US companies started tracking and improving it.

Quotas and policies- Their pressure helped EU rules for 40% women on corporate boards by 2026.

ESG linkage- \$35 trillion in investments now Favor companies good at diversity, punishing others with low scores.

FPIC and Community Advocacy

Protecting locals from big projects on their land.

Survival International's role- In 2013, they rallied India's tribes and courts to stop Vedanta's mine, forcing real talks first (FPIC means "free prior informed consent").

Tactics- Petitions, films, and complaints to groups like the ILO block projects until locals agree.

HRM implications- Companies now hire people to keep talking with communities long-term.

Alignment with UNGPs Remedy Pillar

All this fits the UN's rules for fixing human rights wrongs (Pillar 3).

Policy embedding- Pushes companies to set up always-on complaint systems like hotlines.

Training mandates- Make bosses learn about rights in their jobs.

Audit integration- Brings in outsiders to check fixes, cutting problems by 60% according to UN stats.

Case Studies: Lessons From the Frontlines

Rana Plaza Supply Chain Catastrophe

On April 24, 2013, Rana Plaza, a Dhaka clothing factory that supplied brands such as Primark and Benetton, fell, killing 1,134 and injuring 2,500. Civil society groups, like the Bangladesh Centre for Worker Solidarity and the International Labour Rights Forum, uncovered subcontracting opacity and ignored safety concerns.

Campaigns resulted in the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh, which was signed by 220 brands and enforced by unions. HRM changes followed, with factories adopting ILO-aligned norms and lowering infractions by 80% in 2020 audits. This example demonstrates civic society's involvement in forming legally enforceable agreements, raising HRM from compliance checkboxes to systemic transformation.

DEI Failures: Uber and Google

Uber's 2017 problems, unearthed by activist Susan Fowler's blog, exposed widespread sexism and harassment. Civil society, especially Model Alliance, amplified #DeleteUber, prompting CEO Travis Kalanick's resignation. HRM shifted: Uber added bias training, anonymous reporting, and DEI measurements, increasing female representation from 15% to 27% in 2023. In 2018, Google employees staged walkouts about pay inequality and sexual misconduct payouts. Employees, supported by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Cworker.org, requested transparency. The outcomes included the elimination of forced arbitration and DEI audits, as well as compliance with ILO Convention 190 against workplace violence.

Community Conflicts

FPIC in Mining: The North Mara mine by Barrick Gold in Tanzania evicted Maasai communities without FPIC. Advocacy by the Oakland Institute and local activists resulted in a 2022 suspension of operations and ILO complaints. HRM reacted by assuming community engagement positions and implementing grievance channels to restore relations. These examples show civil society's catalytic impact: exposure prompts reform, transforming liabilities into assets.

Actionable Strategies for Ethical HRM

Robust Grievance Mechanisms

These are simple ways for employees, suppliers, or adjacent communities to report issues such as unsafe working conditions, harassment, or unfair compensation without immediately resorting to court or public protests. The UN Guiding Principles require companies to establish these "operational-level" remedies right at the workplace or project site, such as 24/7 multilingual hotlines, independent investigators known as ombudsmen who are not biased against the company, and neutral third-party mediators to resolve disputes fairly and promptly. Nestlé, for example, conducted a 2024 trial program in collaboration with NGOs to address supplier issues, such as low pay on cocoa farms, and effectively handled 70% of instances before they escalated into larger crises, such as boycotts or lawsuits. This approach catches problems early, builds trust with employees and locals, and fully meets the UN's standards for providing real "remedies" or fixes for harm done.

Transparent DEI Audits

Diversity, equity, and inclusion audits are frequent, public checks to guarantee that corporations are hiring, promoting, and compensating women, minorities, and other underrepresented groups fairly—rather than making hollow promises. These adhere to Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards, which specify exactly what to measure, such as pay discrepancies by gender or race, promotion rates, and employee attrition across demographics, with full yearly reports made public. Civil society organizations become involved to evaluate the data and expose any

falsifications, ensuring that the process is legitimate. Unilever, for example, collaborated with Oxfam to audit its factories around the world, discovering hurdles such as women being locked in low-level occupations; they addressed these concerns, dramatically narrowing gender pay inequalities and demonstrating genuine improvement. This transparency prevents accusations of fake "greenwashing" on diversity, reassures investors, and helps attract top talent.

NGO Partnerships

Rather than establishing their own regulations and training in isolation—which sometimes ignores real-world problems—companies work directly with non-governmental organizations to co-create human rights and labour standards. This includes collaborative training on the UN Guiding Principles and major ILO conventions, such as No. 87, which protects workers' right to form unions without fear of punishment. NGOs use their on-the-ground knowledge to shape the content, test it, and ensure that it is being followed. Patagonia stands out as a leader in this area, collaborating with rights groups to incorporate rigorous human rights requirements into their supplier codes—no child labour, decent wages, and safe workplaces—and throwing out any facilities that fail independent NGO audits. These partnerships lend credibility to corporate efforts, reduce future conflicts, and turn potential critics into allies.

Ethical Training and Due Diligence

Every HR action, from recruiting to supply chain contracts, undergoes a "human rights checkup" that includes required staff training and formal assessments to identify risks early on. Human Rights Impact Assessments (HRIAs) are similar to pre-mortems in that teams analyse rules or expansions and ask, "Could this lead to discrimination, unsafe work, or exploitation?" They then change accordingly. All managers are given regular training to spot prejudices, handle complaints ethically, and prioritize rights over short-term savings. Microsoft and other IT titans go a step further, using AI-powered tools to analyse job advertisements for discouraging language (such as words that alienate women or minorities) and warn potential issues with global suppliers before they arise. This proactive approach avoids costly scandal court battles and reputational damage, while making ordinary HR choices automatically "rights-proof."

FPIC Integration

For any commercial projects—like factories, mines, or farms—that affect local people, particularly indigenous groups, Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) necessitates obtaining true consent upfront through open talks, with appropriate pay if approved. "Free" means no threats or bribes, "prior" occurs before labour begins, "informed" provides all data on affects such as noise or job opportunities, and "consent" allows for a firm no without punishment. In HR terms, this entails establishing community liaison roles to support town halls, providing benefits like as local jobs, schools, or income shares, and being prepared to halt or redesign if communities object. This integration eliminates blockades, lawsuits, and violence from dissatisfied

communities, complies with UN indigenous rights declarations, and fosters long-term goodwill for smooth operations.

Actions Towards a Moral Imperative for Sustainability

The clear call from civil society redefines HRM, making human rights a fundamental component of profitability. Advocacy highlights shortcomings and drives improvements that enhance resilience, from the Rana Plaza tragedy to DEI reckonings. Businesses that ignore this issue run the risk of becoming obsolete; those that embrace it get a competitive edge through devoted employees, investor confidence, and social acceptance. Some of these actions towards a moral imperative for sustainability can be stated as: -

Ethics as the Foundation of Enduring Success

Civil society's unwavering advocacy substantially affects human resource management, establishing human rights as inextricably linked to company sustainability and long-term success. Through high-profile exposés—from the horrific Rana Plaza catastrophe to ubiquitous DEI failures exacerbated by #MeToo and Black Lives Matter—these organizations show the significant human and financial costs of unethical corporate behavior. Their strategic interventions, which include boycotts, legal challenges, and public campaigns, expose supply chain flaws, biased hiring, and community harms, while also spurring actionable reforms such as grievance systems and rights-focused training that strengthen organizational resilience in the face of future crises.

Perils of Resistance, Rewards of Adaptation

Companies that ignore these demands face serious consequences, ranging from multimillion-dollar stock drops and talent flight to strict rules and exclusion from the emerging ESG investment sector. Previous examples, such as Nike's sweatshop scandal and Amazon's labour disputes, demonstrate how neglect breeds vulnerability, whereas leaders like Unilever and Patagonia benefit from stable operations, dedicated employees with low turnover, sustained investor support, and a strong social license that protects against reputational risks.

Essential Steps for Leadership

Corporate executives must prioritize human rights within HRM frameworks by incorporating UN Guiding Principles into core policies, partnering with NGOs on ILO-compliant training and FPIC protocols, and implementing transparent DEI metrics with proactive grievance channels. This integration fosters workplaces where justice ignites innovation and loyalty, echoing the Dalai Lama's vision that "peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free".

Strategic Vision for a Connected Era

This move is not only compassion, but rather strategic foresight in our globalized society. Firms that embrace civil society imperatives transform ethical compliance into a competitive

differentiator, supporting resilient ecosystems that generate long-term success while affirming humanity's important role in business.

As the echoes of civil society's fervent campaigns fade into transformative action—from the rubble of Rana Plaza to the resonant demands of DEI justice—Human Resource Management reveals itself not as a mere cost ledger, but as a vibrant canvas on which human dignity sketches the blueprint for enduring enterprise. Advocacy's chisel has expertly cut away corporate illusions, exposing cracks in global supply chains, shadows of prejudice in hallowed boardrooms, and stifled voices of displaced populations, all while infusing life into reforms: Grievance procedures that choreograph resolution with the soft cadence of a symphony, DEI audits that weave tapestries of true inclusion, NGO collaborations that compose ethical librettos based on UNGPs and ILO expertise, and FPIC bridges that tenderly span the gap between progress and people.

To defy this current is to tempt the storm—stocks falling like fallen stars, talent scattering like leaves in autumn's gale, ESG rivers diverting to fertile banks—yet those who embrace the rhythm, emulating Patagonia's quiet guardians or Unilever's bold navigators, discover prosperity's hidden melody: workforces blooming in loyal harmony, investors gathering like moths to authenticity's flame, and a societal embrace that murmurs welcome through globalization's tempests.

Let leaders take up the poet's quill, inscribing human rights into HRM's hallowed charter, collaborating with NGO muses to teach minds in rights' great opera, auditing with dawn's unwavering clarity, and seeking consent as one does when courting a beloved's genuine union. In the Dalai Lama's timeless verse—"Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free"—we find the coda: not an elegy for forsaken profits, but a rhapsody for commerce reborn, where ethics dances indelibly with enterprise in our interconnected sonata, proving that every corporation attuned to humanity's voice composes not fleeting gold, but legacies of timeless, sustainable triumph.

References

1. Amnesty International. (2024). *My job my rights campaign*. Amnesty International.
2. Black Lives Matter Global Network. (2020–2023). *Corporate accountability and racial justice*. BLM Official Reports.
3. BlackRock. (2024). *Sustainable investing: ESG screening practices*. BlackRock Investment Institute.
4. Bloomberg NEF. (2024). *Global ESG assets under management: 2024 outlook*. Bloomberg NEF Annual Report.
5. Clean Clothes Campaign. (2013). *Annual report 2013*. Clean Clothes Campaign.
6. Clean Clothes Campaign. (2013). *Annual report 2013: Rana Plaza aftermath*. Clean Clothes Campaign.

7. European Union. (2022). *Directive on gender balance on corporate boards*. Official Journal of the European Union.
8. Global Exchange. (1996–1998). *Nike sweatshop campaign chronology*. Global Exchange Archives.
9. Global Reporting Initiative. (2024). *GRI standards*. Global Reporting Initiative.
10. Human Rights Watch. (2023). *Forced labor and supply chain abuses: 2023 global report*. Human Rights Watch.
11. International Labour Office, & United Nations Children's Fund. (2021). *Child labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward*. International Labour Office.
12. International Labour Organization. (1948). *Freedom of association and protection of the right to organise convention, 1948 (No. 87)*. ILO.
13. *Kiobel v. Royal Dutch Petroleum Co.*, 569 U.S. 10 (2013).
14. Leigh Day Solicitors. (2022). *Unilever Kenya tea plantation settlement*. Leigh Day Case Reports.
15. McKinsey & Company, & LeanIn.Org. (2023). *Women in the workplace 2023: The 9th annual report on women in corporate America and Canada*. McKinsey & Company.
16. Nike, Inc. (1998). *Supplier responsibility reports: 1998 reforms*. Nike Corporate Archives.
17. Powered by People Coalition. (2021–2022). *Amazon workplace safety campaign report*. Purpose Coalition.
18. Risse, T., *et al.* (Eds.). (1999). *The power of human rights: International norms and domestic change*. Cambridge University Press.
19. Starbucks Workers United. (2023). *#Boycott Starbucks: Union recognition victories*. Starbucks Workers United.
20. Survival International. (2013). *Niyam Giri campaign: Vedanta mine victory*. Survival International.
21. United Nations Human Rights Council. (2011). *Guiding principles on business and human rights*. United Nations.
22. United Nations. (2022). *Effectiveness criteria for grievance mechanisms*. OHCHR Business and Human Rights.
23. United Nations Human Rights Council. (2011). *Guiding principles on business and human rights: Implementing the United Nations "protect, respect and remedy" framework*. United Nations.

REIMAGINING STATE POWER: SOVEREIGNTY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN CONTEMPORARY GOVERNANCE

Aditi Talware Patel

Department of Political Science,
Government Lochan Prasad Pandey Post Graduate College Sarangarh,
Sarangarh Bilaigarh, Chhattisgarh, INDIA
Corresponding author E-mail: draditalwarepatel@gmail.com

Introduction

The concept of state power has long been central to political theory and governance. Traditionally, the state has been understood as the primary authority that exercises control over a defined territory and population. This authority is commonly expressed through the concept of sovereignty, which refers to the state's supreme power to govern without external interference. Classical political theorists such as Thomas Hobbes and Jean Bodin emphasized the necessity of a strong sovereign authority to maintain order, stability, and political unity within society (Bodin, 1992; Hobbes, 1651). For centuries, this traditional understanding shaped the foundations of modern state systems.

The modern state system itself was largely institutionalized after the Peace of Westphalia, which established the principle that states possess territorial sovereignty and legal equality within the international system (Krasner, 1999). Under the Westphalian model, states were considered autonomous actors with exclusive authority over their domestic affairs. This framework reinforced the notion that state power is centralized and insulated from external control.

However, in the contemporary era, the nature of state power is undergoing significant transformation. Processes such as globalization, regional integration, technological advancement, and the growth of international institutions have reshaped how states exercise authority. Global economic interdependence and cross-border challenges have reduced the ability of individual states to act entirely independently. International organizations such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization increasingly influence domestic policy decisions and regulatory frameworks (Held & McGrew, 2007). As a result, sovereignty is no longer exercised solely through unilateral state control but through complex networks of cooperation and governance.

At the same time, demands for accountability have become more prominent in contemporary governance. Citizens, civil society organizations, and international actors increasingly expect governments to operate transparently and responsibly. Democratic norms emphasize that state power must be justified and subject to oversight through institutional mechanisms such as judicial review, legislative scrutiny, and public participation (Schedler, 1999). These expectations have expanded beyond domestic governance to include international accountability frameworks, particularly in areas such as human rights and environmental regulation.

Technological change has also contributed to the transformation of governance. Digital communication platforms and data technologies have expanded public access to information and created new avenues for citizen engagement. Governments are now expected to maintain higher levels of transparency while responding more quickly to public demands. This digital transformation has both strengthened mechanisms of accountability and introduced new challenges related to information control, surveillance, and cyber governance (Castells, 2010).

These developments raise important questions about the evolving relationship between sovereignty and accountability in modern governance systems. While some scholars argue that globalization has weakened the authority of the nation-state, others contend that state power has not disappeared but rather adapted to new political and institutional realities (Krasner, 1999; Held & McGrew, 2007). The state remains a central actor in governance, yet it now operates within a broader framework that includes international institutions, private actors, and civil society networks.

Against this background, this paper seeks to examine how contemporary governance is reimagining the exercise of state power. It explores how traditional concepts of sovereignty are being reshaped by global interconnectedness and how accountability mechanisms are evolving to ensure responsible governance. By analyzing these dynamics, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how state authority is being transformed in the twenty-first century.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Understanding the transformation of state power requires a clear conceptual and theoretical foundation. The ideas of state power, sovereignty, and accountability have evolved over time through different political and academic traditions. These concepts help explain how authority is exercised within political systems and how governments are expected to justify their actions to citizens and institutions. Examining these theoretical foundations provides the basis for analyzing the changing nature of governance in contemporary societies.

Concept of State Power

State power generally refers to the authority and capacity of the state to govern its territory, enforce laws, maintain order, and implement public policies. In classical political theory, the state is seen as the central institution responsible for organizing political life and ensuring collective security. According to Max Weber, the modern state is defined by its monopoly over the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory (Weber, 1946). This definition highlights the institutional authority of the state and its ability to enforce compliance through legal and administrative mechanisms.

State power also includes the ability to create and enforce policies that regulate economic, social, and political activities. Scholars in political science often emphasize that state power operates through institutions such as the executive, legislature, judiciary, and administrative agencies. These institutions work together to shape governance structures and public decision making.

Over time, the scope of state power expanded as governments assumed greater responsibility for welfare, development, and regulation, particularly during the twentieth century (Fukuyama, 2013).

However, contemporary governance has introduced new dynamics that complicate the traditional understanding of state power. Global economic integration, international agreements, and the growth of transnational networks have influenced the capacity of states to independently control policy outcomes. As a result, state authority is increasingly exercised in collaboration with international organizations, private actors, and civil society groups.

Theories of Sovereignty

Sovereignty is one of the most fundamental concepts in political theory and international relations. It refers to the supreme authority of the state to govern within its territory without external interference. Early theorists such as Jean Bodin argued that sovereignty must be absolute and indivisible in order to maintain political stability (Bodin, 1992). Similarly, Thomas Hobbes emphasized the importance of a powerful sovereign authority capable of preventing disorder and conflict within society (Hobbes, 1651).

In modern political systems, however, the concept of sovereignty has evolved. Democratic theories emphasize popular sovereignty, meaning that ultimate authority rests with the people rather than a monarch or ruling elite. Governments are therefore expected to derive their legitimacy from the consent of the governed. International relations scholars have also highlighted the emergence of shared or pooled sovereignty, particularly in regional governance arrangements such as the European Union, where member states collectively make decisions on certain policy matters (Held & McGrew, 2007).

These developments suggest that sovereignty is no longer purely absolute. Instead, it is increasingly negotiated within networks of global governance, international law, and multilateral cooperation.

Accountability in Governance

Accountability refers to the mechanisms through which public officials and institutions are held responsible for their actions. It ensures that those who exercise political authority remain answerable to citizens and legal frameworks. Political scientists often distinguish between different forms of accountability, including political accountability through elections, legal accountability through courts, administrative accountability through bureaucratic oversight, and social accountability through civil society and the media (Schedler, 1999).

Democratic governance depends heavily on effective accountability systems. These mechanisms help prevent abuse of power, promote transparency, and strengthen public trust in government institutions. Independent judicial institutions, legislative oversight committees, and anti corruption agencies are common tools used to maintain accountability within political systems.

In recent decades, accountability has expanded beyond national borders. International organizations and human rights institutions increasingly monitor state behavior and encourage governments to adhere to global norms and standards. This shift reflects the growing recognition that governance today operates within interconnected political and institutional frameworks.

Together, the concepts of state power, sovereignty, and accountability form the theoretical basis for understanding how contemporary governance structures are evolving. As political systems become more interconnected, these ideas continue to adapt to new realities while remaining central to debates about the role of the state.

Transformation of Sovereignty in Contemporary Governance

In the twenty-first century, the traditional concept of sovereignty is undergoing significant transformation. While sovereignty once implied absolute authority of the state within its territory, contemporary political and economic developments have altered how this authority is exercised. Globalization, the expansion of international institutions, and technological innovation have reshaped governance structures and created new forms of shared authority. As a result, sovereignty is no longer understood solely as complete independence but as a dynamic concept operating within interconnected systems of governance.

Impact of Globalization

Globalization has been one of the most influential forces reshaping state sovereignty. Increasing economic interdependence has linked national economies through trade, investment, and financial markets. Governments today must consider global economic conditions when making domestic policy decisions. International trade agreements, multinational corporations, and global supply chains often influence economic regulations and national development strategies (Held & McGrew, 2007).

International financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank also play important roles in shaping economic governance. States that seek financial assistance or development funding may adopt policy reforms recommended by these institutions. This interaction illustrates how national policy choices are increasingly connected to global governance frameworks.

Globalization has also intensified the movement of people, information, and capital across borders. Issues such as climate change, migration, public health crises, and international security require cooperation among states. These transnational challenges often cannot be addressed by individual governments acting alone, which encourages collaborative forms of governance and reduces the exclusivity of traditional sovereign authority.

Role of Supranational and Transnational Institutions

Another important factor transforming sovereignty is the rise of supranational and transnational institutions. These institutions create frameworks through which states coordinate policies and address global issues collectively. Organizations such as the United Nations facilitate

cooperation on matters related to peace, security, and human rights, while regulatory bodies such as the World Trade Organization establish rules governing global trade.

Regional organizations also play a significant role in reshaping state authority. For example, the European Union represents one of the most advanced forms of regional integration, where member states share decision making powers in areas such as trade, monetary policy, and regional development. In such arrangements, sovereignty is often described as pooled or shared, meaning that states voluntarily transfer certain decision-making powers to collective institutions in order to achieve common goals (Krasner, 1999).

These developments demonstrate that sovereignty is increasingly exercised through cooperation rather than isolation. States remain key actors in global governance, but their authority is frequently mediated by international norms and institutional agreements.

Digital Governance and Technological Change

Technological change has also contributed to the evolving nature of sovereignty. The rapid expansion of digital technologies, the internet, and global communication networks has created new challenges for governments attempting to regulate information and data flows. Cybersecurity, data privacy, and digital surveillance have become important policy areas that require new forms of regulatory oversight.

Digital platforms have also transformed how citizens interact with governments. Online activism, social media, and digital communication tools allow individuals and civil society organizations to mobilize quickly and influence public policy debates. According to Manuel Castells, the rise of networked communication has reshaped political power by enabling new forms of social organization and political participation (Castells, 2010).

At the same time, governments have attempted to assert control over digital spaces through policies related to cybersecurity, data localization, and internet regulation. These efforts have led to discussions about “cyber sovereignty,” a concept that refers to the ability of states to regulate digital activities within their jurisdiction.

Overall, these developments illustrate that sovereignty in contemporary governance is not disappearing but evolving. States continue to exercise authority, yet they do so within complex networks of international cooperation, technological change, and global governance structures.

Mechanisms of Accountability in Modern Governance

Accountability is a fundamental principle of democratic governance. It ensures that those who exercise public authority remain answerable for their decisions and actions. In modern political systems, accountability is maintained through a combination of institutional, legal, and social mechanisms that monitor government activities and enforce responsibility. As governance becomes more complex and interconnected, these mechanisms have expanded beyond traditional state institutions to include civil society, media, and international organizations.

Institutional Mechanisms

Institutional accountability refers to the formal structures within government that monitor and regulate the exercise of power. These mechanisms typically involve the separation of powers among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. Each branch plays a role in checking the authority of the others and ensuring that state power is exercised according to legal and constitutional frameworks.

Legislatures often provide oversight through parliamentary debates, committees, and investigative procedures. These processes allow elected representatives to question government actions, review policies, and hold public officials accountable for their decisions. Judicial institutions also play a crucial role in accountability by interpreting laws and ensuring that government actions comply with constitutional principles. According to Montesquieu, the separation of powers is essential for preventing the concentration of authority and protecting individual liberties (Montesquieu, 1748).

In addition to traditional institutions, many states have established independent regulatory agencies and anti-corruption bodies. These organizations are designed to monitor administrative conduct, investigate misuse of authority, and enforce ethical standards in public administration. Such institutions strengthen governance by promoting transparency and reducing the risk of abuse of power.

Transparency and Open Government

Transparency is another key component of accountability in contemporary governance. It refers to the availability of information about government actions, policies, and decision-making processes. When citizens have access to reliable information, they are better able to evaluate government performance and demand responsible leadership.

Many countries have adopted legal frameworks such as freedom of information laws that guarantee public access to government records. These laws allow journalists, researchers, and citizens to obtain official documents and scrutinize policy decisions. International initiatives, such as those promoted by the United Nations and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, have encouraged governments to adopt open governance practices and strengthen transparency standards (Fox, 2007).

Digital technologies have further expanded transparency by enabling governments to publish data online and communicate directly with citizens through digital platforms. Open data portals, online budget disclosures, and digital reporting systems have increased public access to government information and improved opportunities for civic engagement.

Civil Society and Citizen Participation

Civil society organizations, media institutions, and citizen movements play a significant role in promoting accountability. These actors often monitor government activities, expose corruption, and advocate for policy reforms. Independent media outlets investigate government actions and

provide information that helps citizens make informed political decisions. Non-governmental organizations also contribute to accountability by representing public interests and facilitating dialogue between governments and communities. According to Robert Putnam, active civic engagement strengthens democratic governance by building social capital and encouraging public participation in political processes (Putnam, 1993).

Citizen participation mechanisms such as public consultations, participatory budgeting, and community monitoring programs also enhance accountability. These initiatives allow individuals to influence policy decisions and ensure that governance reflects public needs and priorities.

Overall, accountability in modern governance operates through a combination of institutional oversight, transparency initiatives, and civic engagement. Together, these mechanisms help maintain responsible leadership and reinforce democratic legitimacy in an increasingly complex political environment.

Challenges and Tensions Between Sovereignty and Accountability

While sovereignty and accountability are both essential principles of governance, maintaining a balance between them often creates significant political and institutional challenges. Sovereignty emphasizes the autonomy of the state to make decisions within its territory, whereas accountability requires that state authority be monitored and constrained by legal, political, and social mechanisms. In contemporary governance, these two principles sometimes come into tension as states attempt to preserve their independence while responding to increasing demands for transparency, oversight, and adherence to international norms.

One major challenge arises from the growing influence of global governance institutions and international legal frameworks. International agreements and regulatory regimes often require states to comply with rules that extend beyond their domestic legal systems. Organizations such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization establish standards and dispute resolution mechanisms that may influence national policy decisions. While these institutions promote cooperation and stability, critics argue that they may also limit the ability of governments to exercise independent authority over domestic matters (Krasner, 1999).

Another source of tension is the complexity of multi level governance. In many regions, decision making is shared among local, national, and international institutions. This layered structure can create accountability gaps, where it becomes difficult to determine which institution is responsible for particular policies or outcomes. Citizens may struggle to identify the appropriate authority to hold accountable when decisions are shaped by multiple actors across different levels of governance (Held & McGrew, 2007).

Global economic integration also presents challenges to the relationship between sovereignty and accountability. Governments often face pressure from international markets, multinational corporations, and financial institutions when designing economic policies. These pressures can restrict policy options and reduce the direct influence of domestic democratic processes. As a

result, citizens may perceive that important economic decisions are being shaped by external actors rather than by elected governments.

Security concerns further complicate this balance. States frequently justify expanded executive authority in the name of national security, particularly in response to terrorism, cyber threats, and other transnational risks. However, increased security measures can sometimes reduce transparency and weaken oversight mechanisms. For example, surveillance programs and emergency powers may limit civil liberties if they are not carefully monitored through institutional accountability structures.

Technological developments have also introduced new governance challenges. Digital communication platforms allow information to spread rapidly across borders, making it more difficult for governments to regulate public discourse or maintain control over national information environments. At the same time, digital surveillance tools have expanded the capacity of governments to monitor citizens, raising concerns about privacy and misuse of state power. Scholars such as Shoshana Zuboff argue that the rise of digital surveillance systems creates new forms of power that require stronger accountability frameworks (Zuboff, 2019).

These challenges demonstrate that sovereignty and accountability must be carefully balanced in contemporary governance systems. Excessive emphasis on sovereignty may allow governments to avoid necessary oversight, while excessive external constraints may undermine democratic self-determination. Effective governance therefore requires institutional arrangements that preserve state authority while ensuring that power remains transparent, responsible, and responsive to public interests.

Case Illustrations

Examining real-world examples helps illustrate how sovereignty and accountability operate in contemporary governance. Different political systems respond to global pressures, institutional reforms, and technological changes in distinct ways. Comparative case illustrations show how states attempt to balance sovereign authority with increasing demands for transparency, participation, and international cooperation.

One important example is the governance model developed within the European Union. Member states of the European Union voluntarily share certain aspects of their sovereignty in order to achieve collective economic and political goals. Policies related to trade, competition, environmental regulation, and monetary policy are often coordinated through EU institutions. While this arrangement enhances regional cooperation and economic integration, it also raises debates about democratic accountability. Critics argue that decision-making processes at the supranational level can appear distant from citizens, making it difficult for the public to directly influence policy outcomes. As a result, EU institutions have gradually introduced stronger transparency mechanisms and increased the role of elected bodies such as the European Parliament to improve democratic accountability (Held & McGrew, 2007).

Another useful illustration comes from governance reforms in India. As the world's largest democracy, India has introduced several institutional mechanisms aimed at strengthening accountability and transparency. One of the most significant reforms is the Right to Information Act, which grants citizens the legal right to access information from public authorities. This law has empowered civil society organizations, journalists, and ordinary citizens to scrutinize government actions and expose cases of corruption or administrative inefficiency. By expanding public access to information, the act has strengthened democratic accountability while preserving the sovereign authority of the state.

In Latin America, several countries have implemented participatory governance mechanisms to increase citizen involvement in decision making. A well-known example is participatory budgeting initiatives introduced in cities such as Porto Alegre, where residents directly participate in discussions about how public funds should be allocated. These initiatives allow citizens to influence policy priorities and hold local governments accountable for public spending. Participatory governance models demonstrate how accountability can be strengthened through direct citizen engagement without undermining the authority of elected institutions.

Global responses to climate change also illustrate the evolving relationship between sovereignty and accountability. International agreements such as the Paris Agreement require participating states to commit to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and regularly report their progress. Although countries retain sovereignty over their environmental policies, they also accept international monitoring and reporting obligations. This arrangement reflects a growing recognition that global challenges require cooperative governance structures that combine national decision making with international accountability.

These case illustrations show that the transformation of state power does not imply the disappearance of sovereignty. Instead, states increasingly adapt their governance practices to operate within networks of regional cooperation, global institutions, and citizen participation. By integrating accountability mechanisms into these evolving frameworks, governments can maintain legitimacy while addressing the complex challenges of contemporary governance.

Implications for Future Governance

The evolving relationship between sovereignty and accountability has significant implications for the future of governance. As political, economic, and technological changes reshape the global environment, states must adapt their governing practices to maintain legitimacy, effectiveness, and public trust. Rather than disappearing, state authority is transforming in ways that require new institutional arrangements and governance strategies.

One key implication is the need for stronger multi-level governance systems. Contemporary policy challenges such as climate change, global health crises, migration, and cybersecurity often extend beyond national borders. These issues require coordination between local, national, and international institutions. Effective governance in the future will therefore depend on cooperative

frameworks that allow states to retain sovereignty while engaging in collective decision making. International cooperation through institutions such as the United Nations demonstrates how states can address global problems while maintaining their political independence.

Another important implication concerns the strengthening of democratic accountability. As governance structures become more complex, ensuring that political authority remains transparent and answerable to citizens becomes increasingly important. Governments must continue to develop mechanisms that promote openness, public participation, and institutional oversight. Scholars such as Robert Dahl emphasize that democratic governance depends on meaningful participation and access to information, which allow citizens to evaluate and influence government decisions (Dahl, 1998).

Technological change will also play a central role in shaping future governance practices. Digital technologies have created new opportunities for improving public administration and citizen engagement. Governments can use digital platforms to share information, deliver services more efficiently, and facilitate communication between public officials and citizens. At the same time, technological advancements raise concerns about data privacy, digital surveillance, and misinformation. Ensuring that digital governance systems remain accountable and transparent will be an important challenge for policymakers in the coming decades.

Another implication is the growing importance of collaboration between states and non-state actors. Civil society organizations, private companies, and international networks increasingly participate in governance processes. These actors contribute expertise, resources, and innovation that can improve policy outcomes. However, their involvement also raises questions about responsibility and oversight. Governments must establish clear regulatory frameworks that define the roles and accountability of both public and private actors in governance systems.

Finally, the transformation of sovereignty suggests that the role of the state will continue to evolve rather than decline. States remain central to maintaining political order, enforcing laws, and providing public services. However, they must operate within more interconnected and cooperative frameworks than in the past. Scholars such as Francis Fukuyama argue that effective states will be those that combine strong institutional capacity with transparent and accountable governance structures (Fukuyama, 2013).

In this context, the future of governance will depend on the ability of states to balance authority with accountability. Governments must preserve their capacity to make and implement policies while remaining responsive to citizens and international norms. Achieving this balance will be essential for sustaining democratic legitimacy and addressing the complex challenges of an increasingly interconnected world.

Conclusion

The concept of state power has undergone significant transformation in the contemporary era. Traditionally, sovereignty was understood as the supreme and absolute authority of the state

within its territorial boundaries. This classical understanding, shaped by political theorists such as Thomas Hobbes and Jean Bodin, emphasized centralized authority and the ability of the state to govern independently. However, developments in globalization, technological innovation, and international cooperation have reshaped the ways in which sovereignty and governance are understood and practiced today.

The discussion in this paper has shown that sovereignty is no longer exercised solely through unilateral state authority. Instead, it increasingly operates within complex networks of global governance, regional cooperation, and transnational institutions. International organizations such as the United Nations and global regulatory frameworks influence how states design policies and address cross-border challenges. These changes demonstrate that sovereignty is evolving from a rigid concept of absolute control toward a more flexible system of shared and negotiated authority.

At the same time, accountability has become an essential element of modern governance. Democratic institutions, judicial oversight, transparency initiatives, and civic participation mechanisms ensure that state power remains responsible and responsive to public interests. The growth of civil society, independent media, and digital communication platforms has further strengthened the capacity of citizens to monitor government actions and demand greater transparency.

Despite these developments, tensions between sovereignty and accountability remain a persistent challenge. States must balance their need for autonomous decision-making with increasing expectations for compliance with international norms and democratic standards. Global economic pressures, technological change, and multi-level governance systems often complicate this balance, creating situations where authority is dispersed across multiple actors and institutions.

Nevertheless, the transformation of state power does not signify the decline of the state itself. Instead, it reflects the adaptation of governance structures to a more interconnected world. As scholars such as David Held argue, contemporary governance requires new forms of cooperation and institutional innovation that integrate national authority with global accountability mechanisms (Held, 2007).

In conclusion, reimagining state power requires recognizing that sovereignty and accountability are not opposing principles but complementary elements of effective governance. Strong states are those that maintain institutional capacity while remaining transparent, participatory, and responsive to citizens. Understanding this evolving relationship is essential for addressing the political and administrative challenges of the twenty-first century and for strengthening democratic governance in an increasingly interconnected global order.

References

1. Bodin, J. (1992). *On sovereignty* (J. H. Franklin, Trans.) (pp. 1–15, 44–46). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. Castells, M. (2010). *The rise of the network society* (2nd ed.) (pp. 69–72, 373–376). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
3. Dahl, R. A. (1998). *On democracy* (pp. 37–45). New Haven: Yale University Press.
4. Fox, J. (2007). The uncertain relationship between transparency and accountability. *Development in Practice*, 17(4–5), 663–671.
5. Fukuyama, F. (2013). *Political order and political decay: From the industrial revolution to the globalization of democracy* (pp. 26–28, 350–355). New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
6. Fung, A., & Wright, E. O. (2003). *Deepening democracy: Institutional innovations in empowered participatory governance* (pp. 3–8, 15–17). London: Verso.
7. Held, D., & McGrew, A. (2007). *Globalization/anti-globalization: Beyond the great divide* (2nd ed.) (pp. 2–5, 155–160). Cambridge: Polity Press.
8. Hobbes, T. (1996). *Leviathan* (pp. 87–90). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1651)
9. Krasner, S. D. (1999). *Sovereignty: Organized hypocrisy* (pp. 3–9, 20–25). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
10. Montesquieu, C. de. (1989). *The spirit of the laws* (A. M. Cohler, B. C. Miller, & H. S. Stone, Trans.) (pp. 155–160). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1748)
11. Putnam, R. D. (1993). *Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy* (pp. 87–91, 163–167). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
12. Schedler, A. (1999). Conceptualizing accountability. In A. Schedler, L. Diamond, & M. F. Plattner (Eds.), *The self-restraining state: Power and accountability in new democracies* (pp. 13–28). Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
13. Zuboff, S. (2019). *The age of surveillance capitalism* (pp. 8–12, 376–380). New York: PublicAffairs.
14. Weber, M. (1946). Politics as a vocation. In H. H. Gerth, & C. Wright Mills (Eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in sociology* (pp. 77–78). New York: Oxford University Press.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE GLOBAL ADMINISTRATIVE STATE

Chetna Yadav

Department of Liberal Studies and Political Science, JECRC University

Corresponding author E-mail: chetna.Yadav@jecrcu.edu.in

Introduction

The fast adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the processes of the public administration and world governance is transforming the form and operations of the Global Administrative State. The international organizations, regulatory bodies and transnational institutions are increasingly using AI-driven systems in policy formulation, enforcement of regulations, service delivery, risk management and decision-making. Although the technologies offer greater efficiency, accuracy and responsiveness in the governance, serious legal, ethical, and accountability issues are also brought about.

This chapter critically assesses the role of Artificial Intelligence in the Global Administrative State by evaluating the opportunities that have been brought about by it and the risks inherent in it. It examines the role of AI in evidence-based policymaking, administration, and regulation of the cross-national coordination. Concurrently, the chapter throws important issues associated with transparency, algorithmic bias, data privacy, democratic legitimacy, and loss of human control in administrative decision-making processes.

The paper also explores regulatory loopholes and lack of accountability in AI regulation on the international level with a particular focus on the lack of harmonized legal standards and effective regulations. Through its interactions with the recent discussions on digital sovereignty, ethical AI, and human rights, the chapter suggests normative and policy-level suggestions regarding the responsible AI governance in international administration bodies. Finally, the chapter states that a human-centered, balanced, and responsible AI system is the crucial solution to make technological innovation make the world order stronger and not

The fast dissemination of artificial intelligence (AI) into mass government and international politics is presenting the face of global bureaucracy. Scholars observe that the policy-making has moved more towards isolated national actions to transnational systems of regulation or regulatory cooperation in spheres such as finance, health, environment and security. This establishes a sprawling global administrative space whereby administrative functions are done by international organizations and networks with little direct control by any particular government. AI comes into this market as a disruptive power and a tool. On the one hand, AI will enhance efficiency, facilitation of evidence-based policy, and coordination across borders. Alternatively, algorithmic decision-making and data-driven automation present some new obstacles - whether it is bias and obscurity or lack of accountability and questions of human rights.

This chapter discusses the way AI is redefining the Global Administrative State - the combination of international and transnational institutions that is currently in control of most of the affairs of the public. It discusses in which areas AI can reinforce global governance (such as the ability to make data-driven insights and coordinated regulatory action) and in which areas it can pose risks (such as the possibility to intensify existing legitimacy deficits or encroach on fundamental rights). We take into account domestic and global regulatory programs (UNESCO, OECD, G20, EU, etc.), and the discussion of ethics, accountability and the necessity of new institutions. We maintain an interdisciplinary critical viewpoint in all of this: we contextualize AI as a concept within global public administration, law, and discussions on human rights to determine not only its potential but also its hazards in the modern global administrative state.

1. Learning the Global Administrative State

Global Administrative State is used to describe the development of a large global bureaucracy that governs cross-border problems similarly to the national public management. The globalization process, as Kingsbury, Stewart and others explain it, has created transnational systems of regulation in the areas of trade, finance, environment, health and security. The systems are based on international organizations, regulatory networks and informal group of officials to make and implement decisions that would have conventionally been within the scope of national governance. These bodies (the WTO and EU Commission, the Basel Committee on Banking, and the international tribunals, the UN agencies, and standard-setting consortia) have operations that resemble those of administrative agencies, but do not directly serve a given state. This change implies that the regulatory and policy making is becoming more globalized. Indicatively, UN agencies or multilateral treaties tend to set environmental or health standards, transgovernmental networks (e.g. Basel Committee, FATF, or the Internet Governance Forum) tend to set financial or data rules. Kingsbury et al. note that a lot of administrative specifics and enforcement of such regulations is carried out by international organizations that are not directly answerable to a single legal framework. We are now presented with a globally administrative space that is thickly populated by bureaucrats and principles of an administrative type that has gone beyond borders.

Such internationalization of management poses common governance issues at international level. Critical observers cite a growing lack of accountability: the actions of world administrators might impact people and countries but are beyond the usual democratic checks and balances. Scholars have responded to this by arguing that principles of administrative law (transparency, participation, reasoned decision-making and review) should be applied to international regimes. Benedict Kingsbury and Richard Stewart observe that international organizations are already being subjected to the norms of administrative law character in order to enhance responsiveness and legitimate. Therefore, the concept of a Global Administrative State highlights the growth of

bureaucratic governance in the world, and the necessity of lawful and institutional protections, to be accountable, based on the developing domain of Global Administrative Law.

2. Artificial Intelligence in Public Administration

The domestic public administrations are already undergoing change with AI. All governments across the globe are implementing machine learning, natural language processing and other AI technologies to automate processes, analyze information, and identify abnormalities. As an example, AI chatbots and virtual assistants are now able to address inquiries by the citizen and assist with the interpretation of the public opinion on regulations. Machine-learning systems are used to analyze vast amounts of data to detect fraud or error: tax authorities have tried to use algorithms to identify suspicious filings, and the U.S. Social Security Administration has tried to use AI to a better case adjudication, which has been shown to be faster and more accurate. Inspections and monitoring are also another aspect of AI that governments utilize: the computer vision algorithm could be used to scan images of infrastructure to identify defects in infrastructure or violations. Notably, successful AI can frequently necessitate the combination of different government data using the shared architectures and APIs, which allows agencies to dismantle silos and leverage shared information.

OECD notices that governments are starting to embrace AI particularly in sectors that require high volume with citizen interaction. Most of the cases of AI applications reported are focused on automating or customizing public services (57% of cases) or aiding decision-making (45%), including through predictive analytics and policy simulations. According to one of the reports by OECD, AI holds immense possibilities in the public sector: it could automate and personalize services, enhance decision-making, detect fraud, and enhance the work and learning process of civil servants. But it also points to limitations: the large number of governments trailing behind the private sector by legacy systems, data dearth, talent shortage and privacy and transparency concerns.

International organizations are also applying AI in the research and development. An example of such application is the GovTech Innovation Lab, which uses AI and synthetic data to enhance governance around the world: it developed models to enhance the selection of tax audit and a conversational AI tool to assist the development practitioners in searching project data. Those are examples that demonstrate how AI in the realm of public administration can extend as far as frontline services (chatbots, automated processing), and as far as analytical systems to evaluate policies and design the programs. With AI being further experimented by governments (including in smart city monitoring and resource allocation in health) concerns of scale, interoperability, and regulation emerge.

3. AI as a Tool of Global Governance

Outside of the national frontiers, AI is becoming an instrument of global and multilateral governance. Global organizations and networks are starting to utilize AI and other technologies to address cross-border issues. As a case in point, the UN authorities see AI-based humanitarian aid and conflict management. Machine learning might also help frontline humanitarian workers predict food insecurity or displacement, and peacekeepers might use predictive analytics to defuse conflict - the UN system is currently exploring this option. AI can process satellite data and world statistics to monitor the environmental conditions and hazards of disasters in sustainable development and climate and support multilateral policymaking (e.g. by UNFCCC or WHO). The example of the UN Global pulse initiative and other data hubs represents attempts to use the power of big data analytics to develop, respond to health and crisis at an international level.

Internal decision support is also performed using AI tools by multilateral bodies. The G20, OECD and the UN Economic and Social Council have applied AI to carry out scenario modeling, risk assessment and to enhance the transparency of complicated datasets. It is also worth noting that at the 2023 G20 summit in Johannesburg, AI governance was explicitly related to sustainable development: leaders made the statement that AI is not only a commercial or security asset, but a public good, which should be governed collectively. Their declaration demanded human-centered as well as development-oriented AI, which is in line with such an ethical framework as the UNESCO AI ethics recommendation. This will be a significant change in international governance: key actors who conceptualize AI as a set of international norms (human rights, fairness, data custodianship) and not just a contention in the market.

The other new concept is the application of AI to create a more inclusive representation in international forums. It is suggested by Eduardo Albrecht and others that AI-controlled agents or proxies might make simulations of the views of under-represented groups (e.g. vulnerable or conflict-affected communities) in international policy discussions. Ideally, an artificial intelligence proxy would be able to voice future generations or marginalized communities during climate negotiations or development planning. Although still experimental, such AI agents should transcend traditional barriers to participants in the United Nations and other organizations. Nonetheless, the innovation also creates a governance issue (as will be seen later) regarding authenticity, consent and trust.

In addition, AI is being promoted by multilateral and transnational institutions via developing capacity and creating policy. To demonstrate this point, the example of the World Bank shows how the world development banks are investing in AI to enhance their governance and service provision. The UN System Staff College (UNSSC) is educating UN staff on how to use AI ethically in practice, which is seen as an indication that the UN needs to become a leader in an

AI-driven future. In the meantime, the international partnerships such as Global Partnership on AI (GPAI) and International Telecommunication Union (ITU) contribute to collaboration on AI research, policy development, and infrastructure. Overall, AI will become a tool of collective world governance, whether it is to monitor the world challenges or to influence the international norms, yet the states and IGOs struggle with the aftermath.

4. Opportunities Offered by AI in the Global Administrative State

The domestic public administrations are already undergoing change with AI. All governments across the globe are implementing machine learning, natural language processing and other AI technologies to automate processes, analyze information, and identify abnormalities. As an example, AI chatbots and virtual assistants are now able to address inquiries by the citizen and assist with the interpretation of the public opinion on regulations. Machine-learning systems are used to analyze vast amounts of data to detect fraud or error: tax authorities have tried to use algorithms to identify suspicious filings, and the U.S. Social Security Administration has tried to use AI to a better case adjudication, which has been shown to be faster and more accurate. Inspections and monitoring are also another aspect of AI that governments utilize: the computer vision algorithm could be used to scan images of infrastructure to identify defects in infrastructure or violations. Notably, successful AI can frequently necessitate the combination of different government data using the shared architectures and APIs, which allows agencies to dismantle silos and leverage shared information.

OECD notices that governments are starting to embrace AI particularly in sectors that require high volume with citizen interaction. Most of the reported instances of AI applications are intended to automate or customize public services (57% of the cases), or assist in decision-making (45%), such as through predictive analytics and policy simulations. According to one of the reports by OECD, AI holds immense possibilities in the public sector: it could automate and personalize services, enhance decision-making, detect fraud, and enhance the work and learning process of civil servants. But it also points to limitations: the large number of governments trailing behind the private sector by legacy systems, data dearth, talent shortage and privacy and transparency concerns.

International organizations are also applying AI in the research and development. An example of such application is the GovTech Innovation Lab, which uses AI and synthetic data to enhance governance around the world: it developed models to enhance the selection of tax audit and a conversational AI tool to assist the development practitioners in searching project data. Those are examples that demonstrate how AI in the realm of public administration can extend as far as frontline services (chatbots, automated processing), and as far as analytical systems to evaluate policies and design the programs. With AI being further experimented by governments

(including in smart city monitoring and resource allocation in health) concerns of scale, interoperability, and regulation emerge.

5. Risks and Challenges of AI-Driven Governance

AI also poses considerable threats and issues to the administration of the population, most of which are doubled in the international arena. One of the initial issues is algorithmic prejudice and fairness. Historical data can be used to train AI systems that reinforce or increase existing biases. When left unchecked, they can lead to discrimination (e.g. biased visa allocation, enforcement targeting or aid distribution) in a largely opaque manner. Governments across the globe have realized this risk: according to Baker Tilly, such distorted information may cause pernicious decisions in case AI models mirror inequalities in the society, so one needs to be very careful in its design and audit. These concerns of fairness pose a threat to the legitimacy of AI-based governance.

Second is the problem of privacy and surveillance. International agencies continue to centralize enormous individual and international information. The ability of AI to process such information brings up the issue of invasive surveillance. The AI-based systems may compromise the core rights without effective data protection. As an example, the automatic control of communications or travel information would be against the privacy standards. According to one of the professionals, governments need to strike a balance between AI innovation and risks: the most basic issue is privacy, especially in security applications. This issue has tangible policy outcomes: multiple Western governments already prohibited or restricted AI surveillance (e.g. some U.S. municipalities prohibiting predictive policing) to safeguard civil rights.

The third challenge is cybersecurity and hardness. The AI systems introduce additional vulnerabilities: adversarial attacks can introduce subtle corruption into the algorithms or training data and deliver improper results. A bug or hack in a global common AI (like an algorithm to coordinate an aid logistics) might have a far-reaching impact. Baker Tilly observes that the larger attack surface posed by AI implies the need by governments to test and assure automated systems with high levels of security. The lack of sufficient protection may compromise the trust in any AI-governed governance.

Fourth is accountability and explainability. Automated systems are also usually black boxes, and one cannot know the way a decision was made. Already, this is problematic in the national contexts (e.g. citizens challenging automated welfare decisions). In a global system, the situation is even more difficult: in case transnational decisions are based on AI, it is not always clear to whom one can be held responsible in case of errors. The Baker Tilly flags that human control is essential and that autonomous systems put the accountability under challenge. On the same note, OECD cautions that absence of transparency destroys accountability. In absence of explicit means of human oversight and remedy, it is quite possible that AI will cause a democratic deficit

in global administration: there will be little meaningful way that stakeholders can challenge or appeal the AI-influenced decisions.

Lastly, there are more general governance issues. Countries vary across the board in terms of their legal systems, resources and values. With the creation of its own data economy, AI may divide between states that regulate it differently. To illustrate this difference, the recent discussions draw attention to it: the US has developed an industry-focused, domestic policy of AI, with little multilateralism involvement, and most other nations (Brazil, India, South Africa, EU member states) are driving collective international norms. This disintegration may slow the collaboration or dismember markets. Furthermore, developing or smaller countries might not be able to implement or control AI, which can possibly expand global disparities. The regulations that are currently implemented will define the intelligent economy, and thus an inconsistent set of standards or regulatory flinchiness on the part of the great powers might leave the Global Administrative State unprepared to handle the risks of AI on a transnational scale.

Simply put, even though AI has the promise of efficiency, it is also increasing the risks relating to fairness, privacy, security, and the democratic governance. To solve them, legal and institutional protection needs to be changed to suit an AI-based world administration.

6. Accountability and Legitimacy in AI-Based Administration

Every administrative system and in particular cross-national system should be accountable and legitimate. These purposes are complicated by AI in various aspects. The legitimacy is concerned with how the governed communities view the power as being fair and acceptable. In conventional bureaucracy, legitimacy is based upon such factors as democratic contribution, transparency, and rule-of-law process. The legitimacy of a Global Administrative State has never been strong: the global regulators do not always face a direct electoral sanction and are remote. The AI injection will have a further deteriorating effect on the perceived legitimacy unless it is addressed.

One of the problems is the AI decision-making transparency. Scholars and practitioners believe that a citizen is entitled to know how people are making decisions. Democratic right to know and access information about the algorithms that impact people is highlighted by the OECD algorithmic transparency framework. That is to say that algorithmic decision-tools are to be explained in practice. Global Administrative Law approach also demands transparency, participation and reasoned decision making even at international regimes. In the case of AI, it means the documentation of algorithms, sources of data and decision criteria. Governments are considering formal auditing methods or so-called algorithmic impact assessment to keep AI systems within the standards of transparency. At the least, meaningful transparency implies that the individuals impacted have the right to the AI output and should be able to get accessible explanations that are comprehensible to ensure accountability and trust.

Contestability and human control are also needed. A lot of AI proponents focus on the fact that automatic mechanisms must have control measures in that human authorities are still able to interfere. International principles reflect this principle: the OECD AI Principles request that AI systems should be able to allow human agency and supervision, and the principles of ethics given by UNESCO state that human rights and dignity should also be the core of AI governance, and human oversight should be implemented. In real life, all decisions made by the government based on AI must be subject to scrutiny. When a country is identified by an automated system to a global risk assessment as deserving a trade sanction or reduction of aid, it should have a way of appealing the ruling and the officials should override the ruling in case of necessity. In the absence of this, decision-making becomes invalid. In fact, one scholar cautions that going totally AI-only on citizen input will cause a lack of trust: the communities adversely affected might still need to feel that their voices are heard. The use of AI in governance must not substitute human judgment and democracy.

Formal accountability systems also need to be on-board. The conventional public law provides ways of redress (administrative appeal, judicial review, ombudspersons). These are few in the international administration. Expanding responsibility to AI would involve instituting mechanisms at the global or cross-border level i.e. developing independent oversight entities or allowing stakeholders to be involved in the review of decisions i.e. observers of civil society in AI advisory councils. This can be assisted with the help of soft-law instruments and international norms. To illustrate, partnership on AI (a multi-stakeholder forum) and UNESCO Recommendation promote grievance responses and surveillance of the effects of AI. The guidelines by the OECD clearly visualize mechanisms and safeguards to deal with misuse such as oversight and redress. Finally, a transparency of the technologies, as well as the rights of the law (opportunity to appeal to an automated decision) and the institution will be needed as the conditions of accountability in an AI-based world government.

Compliance to universal values is also a factor of legitimacy. AI governance is required to honor well-known rights and democratic principles in order to be acceptable. As mentioned above, global ethics standard by UNESCO captures human rights and dignity as the basis of any AI system. The OECD also places fairness, privacy, and the rule-of-law values at the core of AI utilization. Administrative organizations deploying AI at the global level must not make sure that the results do not breach the international law obligations (e.g. the ICCPR, CEDAW, etc.). Indicatively, an AI employed by an agency at the UN should not selectively discriminate against race or gender and violate the privacy of data without reasonable protection. To be legitimate, it is necessary to put ethical limits into the design of AI - such that it is also the case that automated world governance is answerable to the principles that grant institutions authority in the first place. Clearly presented information culture, the appreciation of individual and group rights, and

citizen engagement are all evidence towards the believability of an AI-enhanced Global Administrative State.

7. Ethical and Human Rights Dimensions of AI Governance

The use of AI creates numerous ethical and human rights issues that administrators in the world must discuss. Among the ethical principles, it is possible to identify fairness, non-discrimination, transparency, and respect towards autonomy and human dignity. UNESCO Recommendation on AI ethics, which is signed by 194 states, specifically calls on Do No Harm, fairness, nondiscrimination, privacy, transparency, human oversight and accountability in AI systems. It puts the safeguarding of human rights and dignity as the cornerstone of the AI policy. Such principles are the ones that any AI-enhanced governance must be directed towards.

Theoretically, numerous rights may be involved. The first is privacy and protection of data. Artificial intelligence lives on information, including personal information. In the absence of powerful security measures, citizens may have their personal data abused. Even in the case of benevolent goals (e.g. monitoring the requirements of refugees), AI demands informed consent, data minimization, and solid security. Researchers emphasize that societies have to be in charge of deciding whether their data can be utilized in AI proxies or analyses. One of the examples is international laws such as GDPR (EU data protection), though the international regulation must include similar protections. The AI-based approaches of public administrations should also guarantee adherence to the human rights law, e.g., by anonymizing data and minimizing surveillance capabilities.

Another issue is non-discrimination and equity. The systems trained on skewed datasets, besides, are the possible carriers of the biases (on race, gender, socioeconomic status, etc.), moving across the borders. As an example, an international development agency should have an AI model to target funds but it will have to undergo a close audit in order not to hurt those who are already disadvantaged. The OECD principles require AI to value the human-based values, such as non-discrimination and equality. Strict impact analysis must be mandated by global regulators so as to identify biasness. There are some governments taking the first steps: as one of the analyses points out, predictive policing AI is seen by many Western countries as an unacceptable one and thus they are banning it, whereas other parts of the world are trying it out. Such difference is indicative of ethical variations; the international systems should at least strive to achieve a minimum of justices and human rights observance, and diverse views should be taken into consideration.

Freedom of expression and association is another area that is affected by AI. People all over the globe can be affected by algorithms that control the content on the international level or that filter news feeds. An AI-powered information campaign by an international organization is one example of a global administrative application of AI, which should be cautious not to be

propaganda. They have to be supervised so that AI is not employed to eliminate dissent and control the opinion of the populace. Similarly, the right to work and non-exploitation would be influenced: when international agencies implement AI that will eliminate human labor, international labor standards should be taken into consideration. Ethical AI governance entails its adherence to all essential rights established by the UN: cultural rights, child rights, rights of individuals with disabilities, and so on.

Lastly, AI usually poses new challenges of shared rights. Who is the owner or the controller of AI voice when an AI proxy is speaking on a behalf of a future generation or a community? Eduardo Albrecht argues that there is a necessity of transparency in the process of AI agent formation and that it is possible to be misrepresented. Affected people should have control over digital avatars that are played on their behalf. This highlights the greater ethical issue: AI is not to replace human agency in global governance. Ethical governance requires that the technological edge should not be able to focus on power or silence actual individuals. Overall, the moral and rights aspects of AI governance demand that the AI systems should be designed and implemented according to universal human rights standards, that the impacted populations should consent to the implementation, and that the remedies should be accessible. The inability to satisfy these requirements would in turn compromise the human impact and also the moral legitimacy of the Global Administrative State.

8. Regulatory Gaps and Global AI Governance Frameworks

At this point, there is no worldwide legal framework that can entirely regulate AI. Rather, an array of standards, guidelines, laws and institutions has been created with large gaps. On the global front, different common values are expressed by different frameworks of soft law. The OECD adopted AI Principles in 2019 (since adopted in 42 countries and revised in 2024), the first intergovernmental standard which promotes AI as innovative, trustworthy, and respectful of human rights and democratic values. The G20 has approved these non-binding principles and affected the national legislation, e.g., they assisted in the development of the new AI Act in the EU and the risk framework of the NIST in the U.S. In the same vein, in 2021 UNESCO published a Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, which is adopted by all UN member states. This international report puts more importance on rights-based values (Do No Harm, human rights, transparency, human oversight, etc.) and demands tangible policy changes such as strong data governance and impact measurements. It is the inaugural UN standard on AI ethics, and specifically it applies to all 194 UNESCO members.

There is also work on technical bodies on the standardization front. The first AI management system standard is the ISO/IEC 42001:2023 standard that offers a formal structure to establish an organization governance framework of AI. Self-regulatory approaches like the U.S. NIST AI Risk Management Framework and the IEEE 7000 series also provide advice on how to deal with

AI risks, transparency and accountability. These tools are in between high-level ethics and concrete practice, but cannot be enforced as law.

There are more layers of the national and regional laws. The recently enacted AI Act by the European Union is an unprecedented binding regulation that categorizes AI systems based on risk and provides obligations to high-risk AI. Innovative though, the EU Act is localized and its extraterritorial effectiveness is minimal. By contrast, the US now lacks a full-scale federal AI legislation; it prefers the field-specific regulations and has already published an AI Bill of Rights roadmap but does not emulate the self-regulation of the private sector. In other nations such as China and India, there are plans or rough policy documents concentrating on the aspects of AI and their economic growth and security. Such fragmentation implies that companies and governments are confronted with complicated compliance environment and global consistency is not that near.

Significant transnational projects are trying to occupy voids. In 2020, the Global Partnership on AI (GPAI) was introduced by 15 countries to collaborate on AI studies and standards utilizing the OECD principles. The United Nations holds multi-stakeholder forums (e.g. AI for Good, ITU events and Secretary-General panels) where norms are discussed. More importantly, the most recent G20 held in Johannesburg generated a non-binding statement that members would commit to human-centered, development-oriented AI governance. These declarations however are not binding. Unless the major powers participate or agree, as one analyst cautions, no progress would be made.

Comprehensively, there are broad regulatory loopholes. There is no international AI authority that can impose regulations. The principles of soft-law (OECD, UNESCO) are general and rely on the national enactment. The divergent national policies, including both firm regulation policy of the EU and the more laissez-faire policy of the U.S, result in a patchwork of norms which can clash. To illustrate, data sovereignty and privacy standards vary and an AI system which is unacceptable in one location can be harmless in another. It is one of the main gaps that need to be bridged: without enhanced cooperation, AI within the global administrative state will be governed by loose rules and geopolitical games instead of being enforced by a consistent application of law or ethics.

9. Policy Recommendations for Responsible AI Governance

In order to exploit the advantages of AI without its downsides, an active, multi-layered policy is required. The following are some of the main suggestions based on interdisciplinary analysis and existent frameworks:

- **Adopt Common Principles and Global Coordination:** AI principles (such as those of the OECD and UNESCO standards) should be accepted by governments and international organizations. The policies of AI at the global level should value human rights, equity, and

openness and sustainability. International organizations (UN, G20, G7, OECD, ITU, etc.) are encouraged to remain consistent on a similar normative agenda. Indicatively, the request of a human-centred and fair AI in the Johannesburg G20 declaration can be used to provide international standards. States do this publicly by avowing the values, and in making this commitment it becomes more difficult to deviate in the future. These dialogues should involve other stakeholders such as civil society and technical experts to make them varied.

- **Build Institutional Capacity and Cooperation:** The global governance organizations need to enhance their responsibility in the use of AI. This includes investing in common technical infrastructure (open data platforms, interoperability standards), and human resource (training officials in the AI literate). Unlike other agencies, the UNSSC should be copied and offers UN personnel the skills to become an example when dealing with AI during a time of integrity. The development countries should be assisted in the development of AI by the international cooperation programs (e.g. through OECD or World Bank) without having a digital divide. Specifically, by promoting the digital public infrastructure in the poorer areas (which the G20 was encouraging), all nations can engage equally in the governance of AI. Simultaneously, some specialized groups or networks (such as the suggested World Council of Cooperative Intelligence) may be considered to track worldwide AI trends and coordinate the policies across the borders.
- **Ensure the Algorithms Transparency and Supervision:** There should be policies that require transparency and explainability of AI systems applied in government as much as possible. Algorithms of decision criteria, data sources and audit reports may have to be publicly disclosed by legislative and regulatory frameworks. As an illustration, the governments might use the concept of an algorithmic transparency standard of the OECD that proposes citizens a right to understand the work of the algorithms and allow independent auditing. Importantly, every AI system must have designated aspects of human control: human authorities must be in a position to audit and disregard AI judgments. This is consistent with the international recommendations (the focus on human agency of OECD and the insistence on human control of UNESCO) and the democratic accountability. In any instance where AI decision impacts on legal rights (e.g. immigration, social benefits), procedures should be made explicit on how to appeal or remedy such decisions.
- **Safeguard Data Rights and Privacy:** The AI governance should support both privacy and rights of the group. Whenever dealing with sensitive information, policymakers ought to enact solid data protection regulations (according to the international human rights law) and exercise severe barriers on the movement of data across borders. The use of their data or digital proxies on a global decision-making process should be accompanied by clear consent of the affected communities. The global standards of privacy and ethical review boards of

international AI projects might be established by means of international agreements. Due to aspects of privacy, certain purposes or applications (such as facial recognition in the streets) might merely require restriction or prohibition as in certain jurisdictions.

- **Turn Compliance into Accountability:** The global society must strengthen the processes, where AI-driven institutions are held responsible. The following steps might be taken: establishing new compliance review boards in UN agencies; integrating the requirement of algorithmic audits into the charters of international institutions; negotiating agreements that will permit the affected states or citizens to dispose of the decisions made by AI in the categories of dispute resolution. Laws like Global Administrative Law could be invoked through such mechanisms making such ideas as reasoned decision-making, and periodic impact reporting even of international AI policies mandatory. The civil society organizations and human rights bodies ought to be enlisted in as an observer capacity with the ability to insist on clarifications. Publicity portals and reports of AI use would also expose the world administrative state to scrutiny.
- **Managed High-Risk Applications:** Some of the AI applications should be subject to stricter regulation and be categorized in the high-risk category by national and international law (e.g., border security, refugee management, criminal profiling and so on). The AI Act created by EU serves as an example, with strict conformity assessment of high impact systems. Similar rules can be emulated in other countries in accordance with the OECD and UNESCO guidelines. On the international level, in the treaties or communal pronouncements, specific delicate spheres of AI may be recognized and must have unique security.
- **Encouraged to use Ethical Designs and Standards:** The requirements to public procurement and funding must give preference to AI systems developed based on international construction standards (ISO 42001, IEEE 7000, and so on) and evaluated by the independent organizations. This enhances and facilitates interoperability and trust. Different countries can also assist governments in the promotion of technical standards of safety, security and robustness (e.g. via ISO, ITU and IETF) to make the systems of different countries to co-operate safely.
- **Make an investment in Impact Assessment and Research:** All significant AI ventures must be anticipated and accompanied by detailed impact studies as suggested by UNESCO. This will comprise social, ethical and legal assessments, and international fallout scenario drills. Research on the AI governance should be funded based on interdisciplinary research that should incorporate the technologists, lawyers, social scientist and the communities in question.

- **Enhance Inclusion and Equity:** There should be policies that overcome digital divide. AI/tech elements (training, infrastructure, connectivity) should be introduced to the international aid and development programs because only in such a way impoverished countries and marginalized groups should benefit. Localization AI (e.g. language and culture adaptation) and preventing the emergence of technology colonialism should be given attention. The Global South must be heard through global forums (G7/G20, UN summits) in formulating AI norms, which has been the case with the recently launched multilateral AI declaration by India, Brazil among others.
- **Refresh Legal Frameworks:** Lastly, there might be a need to revise some of the legacy laws. The conventional standards of administrative law (due process, non-arbitrariness, reasons) need to be explicitly applied to the decisions made by AI, even at international courts. There are also new laws or amendments that law enforcement should take into consideration to enshrine AI ethics in the government sector. This is to see to it that even an automated global governor remains a black box but which is still governed by the rule of law.

To conclude, the responsible AI governance within a global administrative state necessitates reformed institutions, commonality of norms, and close scrutinizing. The recommendations made above, most of which are based on the current international suggestions, will attempt to utilize the power of AI to the open benefit of the population whilst preserving the principles of democratic governance.

Conclusion

AI is both a hope and a warning to the changing global administrative state. The opportunities are unparalleled by its ability to scale through volume and provide answers to information: smarter policy, more efficient services and better coordination across the global system. But unless well managed these possibilities can erode fairness, transparency and human rights. The instruments we require to deal with the risks posed by AI as José Hernández and such others comment are well-known, the conventions of administrative law and popular control, but now must be exercised at the global stage. This practice practically implies expanding responsibility and engagement across the borders, as well as embedding human-based values in all AI implementations of governance.

The recent years experience shows that patchwork ethics guidelines and one-sided regulations will be not enough. In order to have legitimate global governance, another synthesis of international collaboration and an enforced local compliance is necessary. The literature of Global Administrative Law even conjectures that applying principles of transparency, participation and review can transform world-level governing principles to be more responsive and fairer. This thesis is more appropriate in the age of AI than ever. The Global Administrative

State can use AI to serve all the humanity by making the AI system guessable and challengeable, by ensuring human rights in technology, and by establishing institutions that cut across the digital divide. Without such efforts, the lack of accountability that is observed in transnational governance may only increase, neglecting trust in international organizations when cooperation between countries is the most required.

To sum up, the balanced approach remains an absolute must: the proactive policies and international collaboration must tend to make AI beneficial in terms of development and regulatory efficacy, but at the same time, efforts must be focused on guarantees and structures ensuring maintenance of rule-of-law principles on the global arena. Through wise management and planning, AI can be put into practice as a tool of global evidence-based inclusive administration, otherwise its traps might race its benefits.

References

1. Albrecht, E. (2025). AI agents in global governance: Digital representation for unheard voices. *IOUNS Blog (Columbia University)*.
2. Baker Tilly. (2025). AI in government: Opportunities, risks and real-world impact. *Baker Tilly US (blog)*.
3. Davis, N., et al. (2023). *Network architecture for global AI policy*. Brookings Institution.
4. G20 (South African Presidency). (2025). *AI task force chair's statement*.
5. Hernández G., J. I. (2024). A global administrative law for an era of AI. *The Regulatory Review*.
6. ISO/IEC. (2023). *ISO/IEC 42001:2023—Information technology: Artificial intelligence—AI management systems—Requirements and guidance*. Geneva: ISO.
7. ISO/IEC. (2025). *ISO/IEC 42005:2025—Information technology: Artificial intelligence—AI system impact assessment*. Geneva: ISO.
8. Kingsbury, B., Krisch, N., & Stewart, R. B. (2005). The emergence of global administrative law. *Law & Contemporary Problems*, 68(3), 15–62.
9. Komaitis, K. (2025). The G20 is moving forward on global AI governance—and the US risks being left out. *Atlantic Council (blog)*.
10. NIST. (2023). *AI risk management framework (AI RMF) 1.0* (NIST Special Publication 1270). Gaithersburg, MD: NIST.
11. OECD. (2025). *Governing with artificial intelligence: The state of play and way forward in core government functions*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
12. UNESCO. (2021). *Recommendation on the ethics of artificial intelligence*. Paris: UNESCO.
13. World Bank. (2025). *Institutions in action: Artificial intelligence for the selection of tax audit cases in Georgia*. GovTech Innovation Lab Brief. Washington, DC: World Bank.

PATTERNS, DRIVERS, AND HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS OF TARGETED KILLINGS AGAINST MINORITY COMMUNITIES IN BANGLADESH

Ishaan Arora

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Malaviya National Institute of Technology Jaipur

Corresponding author E-mail: 2022rhs9511@mnit.ac.in

Introduction

Targeted killings of minorities in Bangladesh represent a critical human rights concern that intersects with issues of religious intolerance, political instability, and weak accountability mechanisms. This study examines the patterns, motivations, and impacts of targeted killings against minority communities—particularly religious and ethnic minorities—within Bangladesh over the past decade. The research seeks to understand how such violence affects social cohesion, minority security, and the broader rule of law, while also exploring the responses of state and non-state actors. The study employs a descriptive qualitative research methodology, relying primarily on desk-based research. Data were collected from secondary sources, including human rights reports, governmental and non-governmental publications, court documents, reputable news media, and academic literature. A thematic content analysis was conducted to identify recurring patterns related to perpetrators, victims, methods of targeting, geographic concentration, and institutional responses. The study also adopts a case-study approach to highlight emblematic incidents that illustrate broader structural trends, without focusing on graphic or sensational details. Findings indicate that targeted killings are often driven by a combination of extremist ideology, political motives, and local power dynamics, with minorities disproportionately affected due to their marginalized social position. The research reveals persistent gaps in prevention, investigation, and prosecution, contributing to a climate of fear and impunity. Furthermore, the study underscores how underreporting and inconsistent data collection obscures the true scale of the problem. By systematically documenting and analyzing existing evidence, this research contributes to the academic and policy-oriented understanding of targeted violence in Bangladesh and emphasizes the need for stronger legal safeguards, inclusive governance, and effective accountability mechanisms to protect minority rights.

An Overview

The atrocities being witnessed in the contemporary Bangladesh is not just the scene of the present era, rather they have been taking place since the Islamic conquest under the rule of Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khilji spanning the thirteenth century. Though studies have been available in ample centering around the Hindu phobia engulfing Bangladesh, a very few of them address the human rights aspect of the situation as the attempt is majorly towards addressing the geo-political stances.

The current violent scenario had had adverse repercussions for the Hindu Community in Bangladesh as amidst the era ranging from 1946 to 2024, approximately 3 to 4 million Hindus were murdered, around 4 lakh women and girls have been raped, around 2.6 million acres of land was snatched away from 1.2 million Hindu families and to top it all, a massive dwindling of the Hindu Population from 28% in the year 1941 to 7.9% in the year 2022, indicating the tough and testing times that the Hindu Community has been subject to in Bangladesh.

Genocidal Happenings since the 1940s – Decoding the History to understand the Present

The atrocities and horrors of Partition were not limited to this event in wholesome, but they have been continuing to haunt the Bengali Hindus even till date. This section of the chapter attempts to explore the various incidents of genocide that have been taking toll of the Hindu Community since times immemorial.

- 1. Direct Action Day 1946-** This day dated 16th August 1946 was the day when All India Muslim League put forth strong demands for a separate nation dedicated to Muslims post British Exit from the Indian subcontinent. Visually, it appeared that this event was being observed to overthrow the British but tacitly, this event was born out of a pre-planned anti-Hindu plot. Studies suggest that approximately 6000 Hindus were brutally killed within 72 hours of the beginning of this event. It was not just murder or killing of the innocent, but a plenty number of innocent girls were kidnapped and raped, with a good number of them being forcibly converted to Islam. Specific Hindu centric places of worship were attacked and dismantled.
- 2. Naokhali Genocide 1946-** The above-mentioned genocide was followed by another brutal genocide in Naokhali. On October 10, 1946 the Bengali Hindu population were undertaking preparations to worship Goddess Lakshmi, but destiny had other plans as before the rites and customs could commence, wave upon wave of the Islamists set upon the minority Hindus, murdered thousands of men, brought women hostages thereby raping them, and forcibly carrying out their conversion to Islam. The Hindus in minority were forced to consume beef and recite Kalma
- 3. East Pakistan Genocides between 1958 and 1971-** Post Partition, the vulnerability of the minority Hindu Population even surmounted more. With Gen. Ayub Khan assuming the post of military dictator as well as President in 1958, Bengali Hindus were not only seen as Kafirs but also as a corrupting force on the Muslims of the so-called East Pakistan. Several genocides were executed spanning the given time frame from 1958 to 1971. For instance, the very first genocide instance of Gopalganj wherein 500 minority Hindus were reported murdered, injured or missing. The second instance can be traced from the pronouncement of the Emergency through the Pakistan's Defense Ordinance in the year 1965. A good number of over 1 Lakh Hindus were forced to migrate to India. The third phase commenced with the uplifting of the proclaimed emergency which lasted until the Liberation War in 1971. This phase was marked by a political volatility, the repercussions of which were borne by the minority Hindu Population of East

Pakistan.

- 4. Operation Searchlight- The 1971 Bangladesh Genocide-** This operation centered around a one-point objective of cleansing or rather overthrowing the Bengali Hindu minority from the then East Pakistan on the very onset of the Bangladesh Liberation War. The onset was penetrated by the military officials of Pakistan as well as East Pakistan's Razakars, which was a parliamentary force under the leadership of General Tikka Khan who was famously regarded as the Butcher of Bengal back in 1971. It was 25th March 1971 when this operation was proclaimed on official grounds. The intention was to curb the Bengali self-realization movement coupled with large scale military deployment in the region. This nine month spanning movement witnessed approximately 3 million Hindus being killed and around 4 lakh Hindu Women getting raped owing to which this mass genocide was regarded as the sexually violent genocide. Hindus were targeted by specifically evaluating whether they went through circumcision or not as well as making them to recite Islamic prayers. This event led to 10 million refugees migrating to India so as to escape the ill effects of the genocide. Pakistan's extensive involvement in Bangladesh's Liberation war instigated India to advocate the Mukti Bahini (Bangladesh's Liberation) which in turn triggered the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971.
- 5. The Atrocities in 1989-** Bangladesh embraced Islam as its state religion in the year 1988 following which a series of planned attacks were specifically targeted at the Hindu Minority Groups. The violence erupted as a repercussion of the Babri Masjid's demolition and laying down the foundation of the Ram Mandir in the Ayodhya District of India. Following the 1989 atrocities, several Hindus lost their lives, many got forcibly converted to Islam and many women were subjugated to rape and allied evils.
- 6. The 1992-1993 Bangladesh Hiatus-** Bangladesh was engulfed by a series of violent incidents in the year 1992 and these incidents continue to dominate the streets of Bangladesh till 1993. Following the Ayodhya Tussle, attacks were organized at the Dhakeshwari Temple, the Bholanath Giri Ashram in Dhaka, looting the jewellery shops of several Hindu Businessmen, etc.
- 7. Persistence of Atrocities between 2001 and 2023-** A series of published reports unveil the atrocities that the entire Hindu Population of Bangladesh was subjected to. As per the data, several numbers of Hindus were displaced from their places of residence, women and girls being hounded throughout the region and the massive scale massacre of the Hindu Men during the 2001 and 2002 pogroms. In 2020, at least 3679 attacks were executed upon the minority communities in Bangladesh. The Islamists attacked the Hindu dominant villages of Shalla and Sunamganj, thereby looting several homes and destroying temples. These atrocities were followed by mass attacks being subjected upon the Hindu Communities spread across the entire Bangladesh. As recorded by a Human Rights Organization of Bangladesh, across 34 districts out of the present 64 districts in the region, at least 600 women and girls were brutally raped,

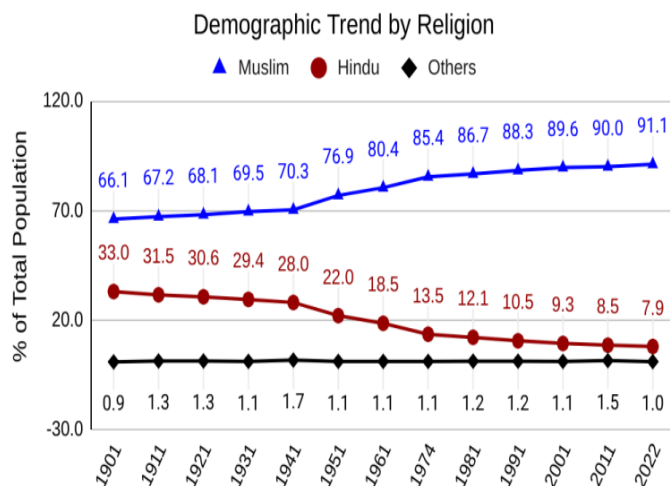
several homes and temples looted and burnt and 15 Hindu men succumbed to death in just one district named Hajiganj.

- 8. The Saga of Atrocities Continues: 2024-2025-** In July 2024, what started as a Student Uprising, turned into a mass movement thereby overthrowing the previous Sheikh Hasina Government, forcing her to flee to India with a view to escape the heated mob. This movement too witnessed the targeting of the Hindu Community thereby implementing a series of planned attacks at them.

Repercussions of the Targeted Atrocities: Decoding the Hindu phobia in Bangladesh

After diving deep into analyzing as well as decoding the philosophies of a diverse set of researchers across the globe, the following reaped outcomes have been reached-

- 1. Surmounted Crime Count against Women-** There has been a rapid surge in the crimes against women hailing from the minority sections of the society in Bangladesh. Reports suggest that there have been instances where women were made to watch their husbands being brutally murdered or were raped in front of their husbands. Studies unfurl that there have been approximately 4 Lakh cases of rapes recorded and reported throughout the era spanning 1946 to 2024.
- 2. Massive Rate of Hindu Killings-** This has been the tacit and utmost urge behind all the genocidal tendencies witnessed and reported in Bangladesh. As per the studies, approximately 3 million Hindus were brutally murdered during the Operation Searchlight. Approximately 5000 Hindus were killed on the Direct Action Day in 1946, and the list goes on for all the genocidal attacks witnessed in Bangladesh.
- 3. Abetment to Convert and Embrace Islam-** Many minorities, especially the women hailing from the minorities were forcibly made to embrace Islam and marry a Muslim man who in most cases was the murderer of their husbands and sons. Studies report that around an approximate 350,000 forceful conversions were reported during the Naokhali Genocide in 1946.
- 4. Surge in Attacks on Hindu Places of Worship-** There has been a surmounting surge in the attacks being executed on the Hindu Places of Worship throughout these genocidal tendencies that were witnessed and reported in Bangladesh.
- 5. Dwindling of the Hindu Population-** There has been a persistent decline reported in the Hindu Population right from the very inception of the twentieth century. The Hindu Population has reportedly dwindled from 31% in 1901 to merely 8% in 2022 in the erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). This decline was at its peak during 1944-71 when Bangladesh was awaiting its liberation from the clutches of Pakistan. A Graphical Illustration to augment the aforementioned claim has been presented below:



6. Surge in Mass Migration- This has been an obvious repercussion of the large scale riots and genocidal tendencies witnessed in Bangladesh throughout the period discussed above. Approximately 2 million Hindus vacated East Pakistan and migrated to India’s West Bengal during the Partition of India in 1947. The period 1958-65 witnessed massive number of displacement of the Hindus, approximately 8 million, who turned to India as refugees. Besides these statistics, persistent migration of the minority sections used to take place on a daily basis.

7. Land Grabbing- Besides these crimes mentioned and stated above, the military rulers of Pakistan and erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) came up with policies and tactics that focused on snatching away the lands possessed by the minority sections of the society. The most obvious and nasty law was the “Enemy Property Act, 1965” which gave full - fledged rights to the government in power to confiscate the property of those who are deemed as “enemies” of the state. The impact of this has been so much that around 1.5 million households have been directly affected on a real-time basis as they lost approximately 3.0 million acres of their possessed property. The damage that has been ushered by the aforementioned law in Bangladesh is not just limited to the quantifiable terms but has been beyond the very notion of quantity. There has been an immeasurable extent of nation-wide loss in relation to the gross refusal of liberty and allied freedom, institutionalization of socio-political as well as economic deprivation, abetted mass migration of the minority sections, loss of human caliber, disruption in the procedure of human capital constitution, etc.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Centered on meta-analysis, which amalgamates multiple studies and research work, I have attempted to reach out to an inclusive conclusion and that is atrocities against some specific sections of the society are not isolated events rather they have been occurring spontaneously coupled with acts of genocide, violent threats as well as intimidation. These cover the large number of genocidal tendencies and cases reported as well as witnessed during the Direct Action Day as well as the Naokhali Genocide in the year 1946. The persisting violence has had an everlasting impact on the Hindu Community of Bangladesh spanning over the period from 1946 to 2024.

Around 3 to 4 million Hindu sections were killed, more than 4 lakh women were kidnapped and raped, approximately 2.6 million acres of land were snatched away from 1.2 million households impacting over 6 million Hindus and making them, approximately 10 million Hindus, to migrate or rather flee to India so as to escape the brutal atrocities being waged against them in Bangladesh, and this in turn led to a large rate of decline in the Hindu Population from 28% in 1941 to a mere 7.9% in the year 2022.

The aforementioned data forces one to ponder if they want their future generations to emerge as easy prey, literally waiting for the invaders and terror inflicting agencies to come and drop their pants and then decide whether they deserve to live or not. Is it acceptable to them as Hindus to let their women be raped and forcefully asked to embrace Islam? If not, then it is high time for us to identify and ponder on the solutions at the earliest for us to ensure that the land becomes a safe and secure place for everyone to coexist on cordial terms.

Over the years, there have been many governmental as well as non-governmental agencies who have been striving with submitting a whole plethora of recommendations to curb and curtail such genocidal tendencies across the globe. For instance, the website of the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner submitted 1315 recommendations having their base from 23 documents. These recommendations have been filed from countries ranging from Afghanistan to the United Arab Emirates but sadly only one of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council i.e. France advised for some reforms and what is more surprising the painful silence of India who as an immediate neighbor has been the most affected by the incidences of violence that erupted in Bangladesh. It is thus the need of the hour to go beyond these recommendations that appear to have no teeth and base and escape the obvious official responses of “noted” and “supported”. It is high time for all of us to-

1. Join hands with the local organizations centered around human rights and take individual initiative to approach one’s state or central government representatives.
2. In addition, attaching this copy of report and forward it to the Centre or Department of South Asian Studies in the nearby universities asking them to take this matter and investigate it with utmost care.
3. Share the reports with the students and urge them to join student organizations on their premises with intent to uphold the human rights.
4. Most importantly, write honestly and openly about the plight of the minorities in Bangladesh and get as well as let them reach the wider audiences via newspapers, magazines and blogs.

References

1. Agarwal, A. (2019). Noakhali massacre of 1946 – 5000 Hindus killed, 3.5L forced to convert to Islam. *Hindu Genocide*. Retrieved May 10, 2025, from <https://hindugenocide.com/islamic-jihad/noakhali-massacre-of-1946-5000-hindus-killed-3-5l-forced-to-convert-to-islam/>

2. Ahn, E., & Kang, H. (2018). Introduction to systematic review and meta-analysis. *Korean Journal of Anesthesiology*, 71(2), 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.4097/kjae.2018.71.2.103>
3. Banarjee, S. (2024). The cycle of violence against minorities in Bangladesh. *Devpolicy Blog from the Development Policy Centre*. Retrieved April 28, 2025, from <https://devpolicy.org/the-cycle-of-violence-against-minorities-in-bangladesh-20240821/>
4. Barkat, A. (2014). A treatise on political economy of unpeopling of religious minorities in Bangladesh through the enemy property act and vested property act. *Bangladesh Journal of Political Economy*, 30(1), 1–62. Retrieved April 27, 2025, from <https://bea-bd.org/site/article-details/398>
5. Bass, G. J. (2013). *The blood telegram: Nixon, Kissinger, and a forgotten genocide*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
6. Bass, G. J. (2023). Bangladesh, 1971. In *The Cambridge world history of genocide* (pp. 497–517). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108767118.022>
7. Benkin, R. L. (2018). Elections and human rights in Bangladesh. Written statement to the US House Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission. Retrieved May 3, 2025, from <https://humanrightscommission.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/humanrightscommission.house.gov/files/documents/Dr%20Benkin%20Combined%20Statement.pdf>
8. Bergman, D. (2016). The politics of Bangladesh's genocide debate. *The New York Times*. Retrieved May 18, 2025, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/06/opinion/the-politics-of-bangladeshs-genocide-debate.html>
9. Bhan, K. (2025). Hindus massacred after verifying as non-Muslims by Islamist terrorists in Pahalgam Kashmir. *Hindu Council UK*. Retrieved June 5, 2025, from <https://hinducounciluk.org/2025/04/24/hindus-massacred-after-verifying-as-non-muslims-by-islamist-terrorists-in-pahalgam-kashmir-on-22-april-2025/>
10. BHGRC. (2021). Timeline of Bengali Hindu genocide. *Bengali Hindu Genocide Resource Centre*. Retrieved May 18, 2025, from <https://bengalihindugenocide.org/overview/timeline/>
11. BowerGroupAsia. (2025). Bangladesh navigates economic challenges, political reform and election uncertainty in 2025. *Bower Group Asia*. Retrieved June 1, 2025, from <https://bowergroupasia.com/bangladesh-navigates-economic-challenges-political-reform-and-election-uncertainty-in-2025/>
12. Brown, D., & James, P. (2018). The religious characteristics of states: Classic themes and new evidence for international relations and comparative politics. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 62(6), 1340–1376. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002717729882>
13. Claude, M. (2007). The Calcutta riots of 1946. *SciencesPo*. Retrieved May 3, 2025, from <https://www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/fr/document/calcutta-riots-1946.html>

14. Cosgrove, B. (2014). ‘Vultures of Calcutta’: The gruesome aftermath of India’s 1946 Hindu-Muslim riots. *Time*. Retrieved May 3, 2025, from <https://time.com/3879963/vultures-of-calcutta-the-gruesome-aftermath-of-indias-1946-hindu-muslim-riots/>
15. Das, Y. S. (2024). Hindus in Bangladesh shiver amid attacks: Soft targets, hard facts. *India Today*. Retrieved May 3, 2025, from <https://www.indiatoday.in/world/story/attack-on-minorities-hindus-bangladesh-communal-violence-soft-target-social-media-sheikh-hasina-yunus-temples-2581491-2024-08-13>
16. Dasgupta, S. (2000). A home ... far from home? *The Hindu (online edition)*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20070305174949/http://www.hinduonnet.com/thehindu/2000/07/30/stories/13300611.htm>
17. Dastidar, S. G. (2008). *Empire's last casualty: Indian subcontinent's vanishing Hindu and other minorities*. Firma KLM.
18. Dastidar, S. G. (2021). *Bengal's Hindu Holocaust: The partition of India & its aftermath*. Garuda Prakashan Private Limited.
19. De, A. (2024). Temples burnt, houses attacked: How Hindus have become soft targets in Bangladesh. *India Today*. Retrieved June 1, 2025, from <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/bangladesh-violence-hindus-minorities-attacked-temples-set-on-fire-2577703-2024-08-06>
20. Dharmapuri, A. (2024). Violence against Hindus in Bangladesh. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. Retrieved April 28, 2025, from https://www.mea.gov.in/lok-sabha.htm?dtl/38838/QUESTION_NO_4366_VIOLENCE_AGAINST_HINDUS_IN_BANGLADESH
21. Dubey, U. (2025). The plight of Hindus in Bangladesh—Historical patterns and current crisis. Retrieved May 27, 2025, from <https://www.abvp.org/article/plight-hindus-bangladesh-historical-patterns-current-crisis>
22. Focus Economics. (2025). Bangladesh GDP per capita. *Focus Economics*. Retrieved June 1, 2025, from <https://www.focus-economics.com/country-indicator/bangladesh/gdp-per-capita-usd/>
23. Gardiner, B. (2024). Bangladesh: Attacks on Hindu community. *House of Commons, UK Parliament Debates (Vol. 758)*. Retrieved April 28, 2025, from <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-12-02/debates/3EB947C1-8F4B-4EB5-B6FB-6707A6A5916C/BangladeshAttacksOnHinduCommunity>
24. Gerlach, C. (2018). East Pakistan/Bangladesh 1971–1972: How many victims, who, and why? In A. Barros & M. Thomas (Eds.), *The civilianization of war: The changing civil–military divide, 1914–2014* (pp. 305–324). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108643542.007>

STRATEGIC HEDGING: INDIA AND JAPAN'S RESPONSE TO CHINA'S BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE

Akshita Agarwal

Department of Liberal Studies and Political Science, JECRC University

Corresponding author E-mail: akshita.agarwal@jecrcu.edu.in

Introduction

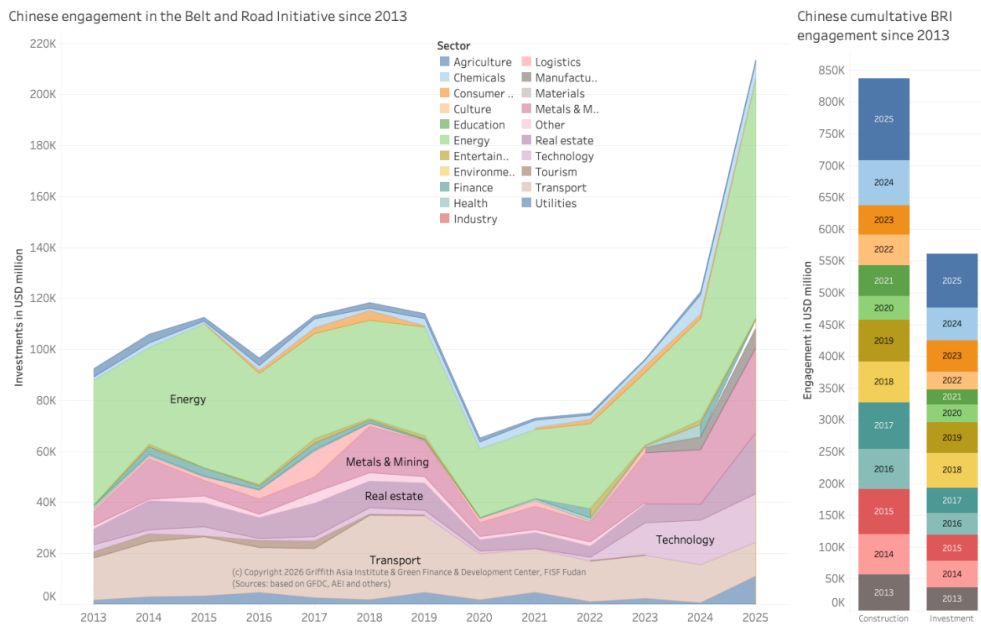
Global power structures have changed in the early 21st century, especially in Asia. China's quick rise to prominence as a military and economic force has drastically changed regional dynamics and brought in new forms of collaboration and competition. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which was started in 2013 under Xi Jinping's direction, is at the heart of this change. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is envisioned as a massive network of infrastructure corridors connecting Asia, Europe, Africa, and beyond, is a strategic tool for expanding China's influence as well as an ambitious geoeconomic endeavour.

China's Belt and Road Initiative massively alter the power dynamics of Asia and Beyond. If we talk about India and China then we see that through the concept of Strategic Hedging, these nations have responded in order to counter China influence. The very concept of BRI started in 2013, which connects over 140 countries via trade, structure and economic investments across land and sea routes. It raises concerns related to debt trap and dominance in this strategic area though the major purpose of BRI is to revive ancient networks of Silk Road.

As per ideology and viewpoint of China BRI is inclusive development project for shared prosperity, growth, structural development and economic upscaling but on contrary several nations view this from realist lens thus concluding that It's a strategic move of China in order to bring its expansion policy to success. India and Japan are looking forward to diplomatic approach which incorporates the concept of "Strategic Hedging" which refers to a midway between direct balancing against China and full alignment with it. Both nations are contemporarily challenging China through minilateral groupings, economic co-operations and diplomacy.

As per the lens of realists, BRI extends the China's power projection with several projects and its 'String of Pearls' strategy that appears to strategically encircle India through port developments. As per the data from China Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Investment Report 2025, which shows that cumulative Chinese engagement across investment and construction contracts under the BRI has reached nearly \$1.4 trillion since the initiative's launch in 2013 — exceeding the \$1 trillion threshold by around 2025–2026.

Figure 1: China's BRI engagement by sector since 2013 (left) and cumulative (right)



Share of construction in China's BRI increases, driven by high-value construction contracts

Diagram official link: https://blogs.griffith.edu.au/asiainsights/china-belt-and-road-initiative-bri-investment-report-2025-2/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

This chapter examines how India and Japan respond to China's BRI Project by opting midway concept of Strategic Hedging. This incorporates both views of realist perspective and development policies of China. This highlights how balance of power geopolitics is contemporarily functioning in Indo-Pacific region. This chapter analyses both realist and non-realist views. It argues that BRI is not simply a connectivity project of China instead It has several dimensions to ponder over like strategic diplomacy, maritime security and others.

Expanding footprints of BRI are making it a tedious task for India and Japan to trade through region of Indo-Pacific as this region accounts for nearly 60% of global trade through critical sea lanes; India and Japan are highly dependent on these for export and energy supplies thus making it essential for these nations to counter China's expansionist policy. In response both nations have opened gateways to strategic hedging, strengthening counter groupings like QUAD [Quadrilateral Security Dialogue comprising the United States, Japan, India, and Australia] and initiatives like Asia-Africa Growth Corridor which began in 2017 between India and Japan aiming quality and sustainable infrastructure development across Asia and Africa.



<https://share.google/mUOvr9D91gc0gvqz5>

Broadly, the Indo-Pacific region where major sea lanes have become central point of concern resulting in counter mechanisms being activated by countries like India, Japan in order to counter China's maritime dimension of BRI. Both nations are concerned about protecting and securing sea lanes from hegemony through debt dependence, infrastructure investments as done by China for betterment of growing nations thus debt trap policy is somehow linked with strategic expansion of China's presence in the region.

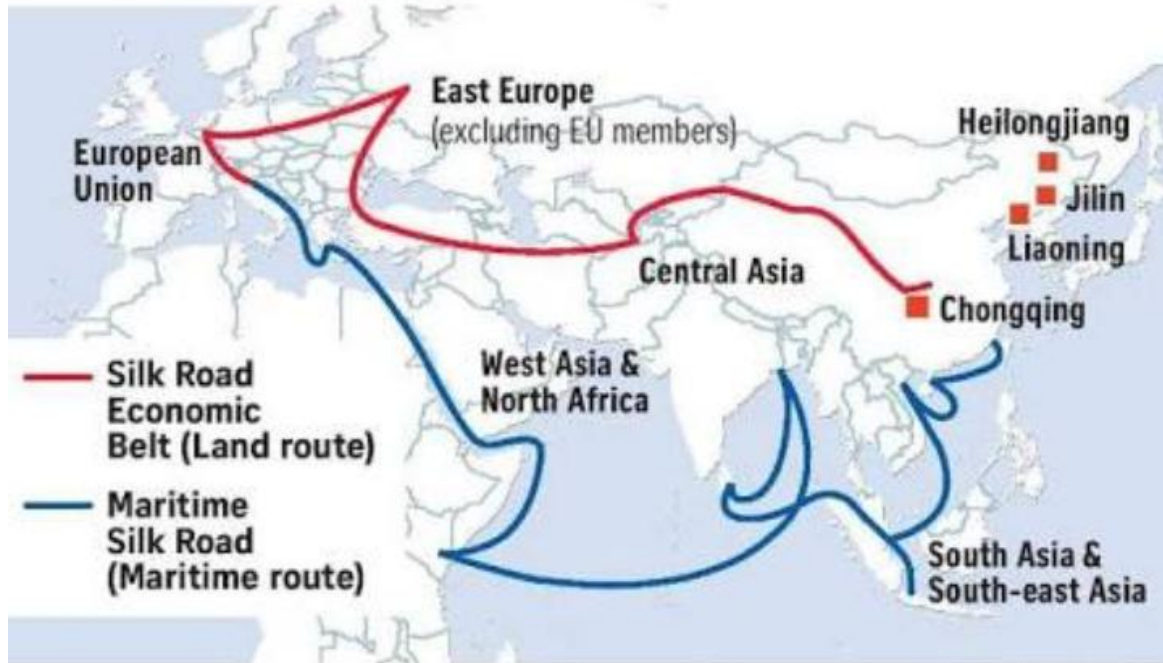
The Belt and Road Initiative: Geo-economic Vision and Strategic Implications

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) reflect China's plan to reconnect regions along the historic Silk Road by investing heavily in infrastructure such as roads, railways, and ports. Through these projects, aim of China is to strengthen its trade and strategic interests that also involves economic cooperations with other nations. Additionally, China managed to influence developing nations through financial aids and thus expanding its influence its presence in key strategic region like Indo-Pacific. Its aim was even wider as its purpose incorporates geopolitical effects and managing dynamic regional power balance thus enhancing its access to important resources and enhancing trade relations for mutual economic growth.

Some analyst like Daniel F. Runde, Austin Hardman, and Clara Bonin argue that China's port infrastructure policy successfully serves commercial and strategic purposes. Somehow this approach increases China's strategic dominance and challenging traditional powers in this region and their policies. China's debt trap policy is another tool that actually incorporates countries like Sri Lanka and Pakistan that are under debt burdens. In many cases loans have been restructured rather than leading to direct action of asset seizures. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor [CPEC] and connection of China with Pacific Island countries have somehow captured the interest of developing nations like India and Japan which has led to counter strategies

implementation, that includes strategic hedging, sustainable financing and efficient trade relations that would result in balancing power in strategic regions.

China's One Belt, One Road initiative



<https://share.google/ospz8GQV0V8I2a1Fc>

Theoretical Framework: Realism, Soft Balancing, and Strategic Hedging

According to the realist theory, nations exist within an international system whereby no central authority exists to ensure that their safety is secured. Due to this uncertainty, all states are primarily concerned with preserving their existence and gaining more power. When one nation gains power and begins to increase its influence over other nations, other nations find themselves unsafe and attempt to balance this with them. Such balancing may be in various forms, which may include creating military alliances, enhancing military power, or establishing strategic alliances to curb the presence of the emerging power. The contemporary world however, where nations are economically integrated and dependent on one another in terms of trade and investment, would make it expensive to be publicly hostile towards a mighty state. Consequently, most nations are drawn to soft balancing which entails alignment of actions through diplomacy, advancement of other economic activities and reliance on international organizations to curb the role of an emerging force without necessarily going to war. The other related approach is strategic hedging whereby a country is still able to cooperate with a major power in the economic field but also hedges in case the relations become undesirable. Good examples of such a cautious approach are India and Japan. Both nations have a good economic relationship with China but they also collaborate and with others to advance alternative

connectivity initiatives and enhance security collaboration in the region. Their policies bear them out as the current policies in international politics demonstrate that economic policies as well as development initiatives are as vital as military strength in establishing the regional equilibrium.

India's Response: Sovereignty, Security, and Strategic Autonomy

The reaction to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), by the major nations, has been extremely aggressive by India. India has made it quite clear when it refused to attend the first BRI Forum in Beijing in May 2017, becoming the only such large regional power to stay home. The core issue that led to this move is the factor of sovereignty by India. One of the projects of the BRI is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which operates between a Gwadar Port in Pakistan and the Xinjiang region of China across a route that traverses the territory of Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (PoK) especially the region of Gilgit-Baltistan, which is regarded by India as its own territory. India is looking at supporting the BRI, which would effectively support the control that Pakistan has over this contested area and would permit China to construct infrastructure in the area. To Indian policymakers, securing territorial sovereignty is a paramount national security concern, hence they have never been in support of projects that do not put such concerns into consideration. The second concern that India is having is that it could be encircled strategically by China. This has been frequently referred to in Indian strategic discussions as the so-called String of Pearls strategy, where China is building a chain of ports and facilities in the Indian Ocean area. These are places like Gwadar in Pakistan, Hambantota in Sri Lanka, Chittagong in Bangladesh and Kyaukpyu in Myanmar as well as increasing relations with the island nations like the Maldives and Seychelles. Even though most of these projects are officially commercial in nature, some analysts have felt that they may also be applied to military purposes in the future. The growth in such infrastructure has been looked at with some trepidation in India because it is relying on the Indian Ocean to carry out its maritime trade as well as its energy imports. These fears relating to China and its long-term strategic interests have been enhanced by tensions along the India Pakistan border over the last few years. As a counterpoint, India has taken a moderate approach that includes delivering protests against some of the features of the BRI with the establishment of their connectivity and cooperation plans. In the country, there exist initiatives like Sagarmala and the Bharatmala that are supposed to reinforce ports, highways and domestic networks to enhance connectivity and the reduction of reliance on external routes. The Act East Policy in India is aimed at enhancing economic and strategic ties with the members of Southeast Asia, internationally. Other infrastructure initiatives like the IndiaMyanmarThailand Trilateral Highway and the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project are designed to enhance connectivity in the region besides providing alternative routes that are predominantly controlled by China. India has also been encouraging other connectivity projects such as the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) which aims at establishing faster trade routes between

India, Central Asia and Europe. Simultaneously, India is actively engaged in multilateral collaboration with other partners of the region. A notable case is the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) between India, United States, Japan, and Australia that advances the concept of a free and open Indo-Pacific. These countries strive to facilitate open and sustainable growth in the region through such initiatives as infrastructure, maritime security, and economic cooperation. India however still believes that these alliances are not aimed at taking China on head but to ensure that the region is balanced and stable. All in all, the Indian policy is one of passive intervention; safeguarding its fundamental interests and sovereignty as well as establishing alliances and other development programs that will secure a stabilized regional situation.

Japan's Approach: Participation, Competition, and Soft Balancing

Japan has been overwhelmed with a measured and moderate reaction to the Belt and road Initiative (BRI) of China. Initially, Japan denounced the initiative as not being transparent and expressed some issues concerning financial sustainability. Nevertheless, in the year 2018, Tokyo relaxed its position and assumed a more realistic course. Japan did not absolutely refuse the BRI, but its companies were permitted to take into account some of the projects, and meanwhile, to popularize its concept of quality infrastructure. This is a strategy that indicates an economic rivalry with China without necessarily facing each other. Japan has introduced the Partnership for Quality Infrastructure (or PQI) to help with this strategy in 2014. By this program, Japan facilitates infrastructure development programs that focus on transparency, quality, ecology, and long-term financial sustainability. Another strategy employed by Japan in financing projects in Asia is its long history of development aid, which it operates through other institutions like the Asian Development Bank (ADB). In such a manner, Japan is offering other financing options to the countries but indirectly leveling the increasing influence of China. The policy of Japan thus is a mixture of economics and strategy. Though it desires to protect its economic prospects within the Asian region and keep its access to the regional markets, it is not insensitive to geopolitical impact of increasing influence of China. Under Japan former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Japan encouraged the notion of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, which emphasizes the values of respect towards international law, freedom of navigation and high-quality infrastructural growth. Even though this vision does not explicitly focus on China, it offers a different model of cooperation in the region. The connectivity projects between Japan and India also include the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor, where Japan has been in close collaboration with India in trying to encourage sustainable development and clear investment in developing areas. Japan funds infrastructure through agencies such as Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) with a high quality of environment and governance guidelines. These are some ways of soft balancing where nations engage one another on economic and institutional fronts instead of in military fronts.

Simultaneously, Japan has occasionally showed readiness to collaborate with the BRI in case projects comply with the international requirements of transparency and sustainability. This demonstrates a tactic of strategic hedging which is to have an economic involvement with China but enhance security ties with other nations. This balancing strategy that Japan is pursuing in which it aims to have economic participation and regional stability is emphasized by its close relationship with the United States as well as increasing defense relations with India.

Indo-Japanese Strategic Convergence

In 2017, India and Japan unveiled the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) together at a summit level. As an alternative to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which was introduced in China, the initiative was supposed to bridge the development efforts in Asia and Africa. The AAGC puts more people-driven developments unlike the massive and state-led infrastructure developments related to the BRI. It focuses more on such areas like logistic centres, agro processing industries, digitization, creation of employment, and eco-friendly projects. The vision of the initiative, even though it is still in its development phase and a small number of projects have already been introduced by this point, is to reinforce the Indian-African maritime connectivity and to assist the industrial spheres with the Japanese investment. The greater interest is to offer partner countries development choices that would not impose heavy debts in the attempt to promote economic independence. Other significant fields of interaction between India and Japan include the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) that involves the United States and Australia. In 2017, the Quad was resumed when the tension in the Indo-Pacific rose. Since that time, it has progressively evolved to serve as a forum of advancing a regional order that is based on rules by collaborating on infrastructure, maritime security, and supply chains. The group has helped in other projects like clean energy projects in southeast Asia and undersea communication cables in the Pacific but has also promoted transparency and standards of high quality in development projects. In 2025, the Quad had formed working groups on topics including critical technologies and climate infrastructure, which represents its wider aim to enhance regional cooperation and defend freedom of navigation in disputed space such as the South China Sea. The bilateral relationship between Japan and India has improved tremendously at the bilateral level as well. Japan is the largest donor of Official Development Assistance (ODA) in India, having put high investments in the major infrastructural developments in India like the Mumbai Ahmedabad high speed railway line and highway systems in the northeastern part of India. They also co-operate in areas other than economics like on security and technology. The two states engage in collective naval drills like Malabar drills which currently involve other Quad members and emphasize on the enhancement of naval interoperability and anti-submarine skills. They are also collaborating in the new fields like artificial intelligence to manage disasters, space exploration initiatives and cybersecurity to defend the sophisticated

communication networks. The rising relations between India and Japan are majorly inspired by their common interest of having a stable and balanced regional state coupled with the fact that both of them are worried about the increasing influence gained by China and they are interested in the same. They work on infrastructural projects in other countries like Bangladesh and Kenya where they provide models of development that have a high level of transparency and good governance. Their strategic goals are also integrated in such policies as Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) concept by Japan and SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) policy by India. These concepts consistently feature in the collective diplomatic consultations, such as the 2 + 2 consultations between the foreign and the defense ministers and the national level summits between the national leaders. Security cooperation is also becoming more dynamic over the past years. The Indian and Andaman military exercises have enhanced the military coordination between the two countries. Their capacity to monitor security issues in the region has also been enhanced by agreements that permit them to give each other mutual logistical support and intelligence regarding the maritime activities. These are aimed at deterring aggression in the area without necessarily forming military alliances. In general, the Indian-Japanese relationship demonstrates that nations can join their forces to overcome the challenges in the region. India would provide a huge market and high human resource whereas Japan would provide high level of technology, financial power and developmental skills. Both of the countries favor flexible collaboration or alliances over solid ones like the Quad or smaller cooperative groups with other partners. This will enable them to have strategic autonomy and cooperate to achieve stability, economic integration and balanced development in the Indo-Pacific region.

Geo-economics as an Extension of Balance-of-Power Politics

Geo-economics is no longer a mere issue of trade and economic growth today. It has taken a significant role in international politics, with nations capitalizing on investments, infrastructure development, and financial leverage to form the world power relations, as in the olden days, military strategy. A vivid case in point here is the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) through which China will have invested more than 1 trillion dollars by 2026 in over 140 countries. Most of these projects like ports, railways and digital network do not simply complement economic development. Such ports as Gwadar in Pakistan and Hambantota in Sri Lanka have potential to serve the naval operations, the rail services facilitate the maintaining access to resources, and the digital infrastructure which is associated with Chinese tech companies moving to the foreign territories spread the Chinese technological influence. In retaliation, the Quad and other partners have launched efforts like the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) to raise up to \$600 billion by 2027 in an attempt to offer alternative financing for infrastructure and encourage more open development patterns. India, Japan and other countries consider such activities not just as development programs but also as the means of equalizing the power of

China. Countries are no longer depending on the military confrontation as a primary method of achieving strategic objectives, but are increasingly employing economic instruments. This is a thinking that is less militaristic and more realistic in which states aim to build their strength non-militaristically whenever possible. Nations in parts of Southeast Asia have developed reservations towards large BRI projects after accumulating high levels of debt, e.g. the Laos railway project with China was estimated to cost the country about 6 billion dollars which is very high bearing in mind that the economy of the country is very small. In reaction to this, India and Japan propagate other connectivity and development projects. The International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) of India is expected to cut the time taken by goods to travel between Europe and Asia by approximately 40-percent without having to pass through China dominated routes. The Partnership for Quality Infrastructure (PQI) is a fund that is based in Japan which supports thousands of projects all over the world with the aim of ensuring sustainability, transparency, and environmental standards. Such efforts also provide new options to the developing nations. To avoid relying on just one country some African and Asian states will unite the Chinese investments with the project that is backed by the India, Japan, or any other partners. Simultaneously, world supply chains are slowly restructuring. The Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI) between India and Japan is an attempt to minimize vulnerabilities in such sectors as semiconductors and advanced technology. Maritime security and trade routes within the Indo-Pacific are now also in the focus of these strategic debates and the ideas of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) policy highlight the open sea routes and international regulations. India and Japan have rather different perspectives on such developments yet they have numerous concerns. The BRI is considered to be a significant strategic issue in India, especially as China-Pakistan Economic Corridor cuts through the territory which India has asserted and due to the increasing influence of China in the ports located within the Indian ocean. This has led to India spending heavily in enhancing its own port networks and regional connectivity plans. Japan in its turn is more concerned with China as a powerful economic rival and approaches it more softly, permitting only partial collaboration and advertising its high-quality infrastructure projects. The differences notwithstanding, both nations are coming together in larger and larger projects, including the high-speed rail between Mumbai and Ahmedabad, and collaborate by the partnerships, including the Quad. Their cooperation is oriented to assist a multipolar world, in which one power does not predominate but the countries have various possibilities to develop and collaborate.

Challenges and Limitations

India and Japan are becoming closer partners in the Indo-Pacific, but they lack capacity to work against the increasing Chinese influence due to a number of structural and practical issues. Among them is the fact that economic capacity is largely differentiated to that of China. Belt and

Road Initiative (BRI) is supported by huge finances provided by the Chinese state banks and government support that enables China to finance enormous infrastructure projects in a short period. The development projects are very appealing to many developing countries since they offer rapid funding in roads, ports and railways. Conversely, other initiatives that are backed by India and Japan like the Asia Africa Growth Corridor and the Partnership of Quality Infrastructure in Japan tend to be more dedicated to transparency, sustainability and high standards. Though these principles are much more valued, their projects are slower to implement and tend to be more restrictive and need more stringent conditions making them less competitive in the short term. Local conditions also influence the responsiveness of India and Japan in response of foreign countries. India has to strike a balance between its international ambitions and domestic development and development of infrastructure or connectivity may at times be brought to a halt due to bureaucracy and liaisons between the central government and the states. Even though Japan is a large economic power, it has internal issues like an aging population, slow economic growth and financial pressures. Foreign policy decisions and resource distribution can be affected by the public opinion, political discussions and the change in the leadership in the two countries. These domestic facts restrict the extent to which either of these nations might extend its reach abroad. The conduct of the other nations within the region is another aspect that is crucial. Various states in the Southeast, South Asian, and Pacific region do not desire to take sides between superpowers. They instead like keeping an even relationship with many partners. As an illustration, some ASEAN nations collaborate with China in the economic sphere as well as enhance the connections with India, Japan, and the United States. This will enable them to reap the rewards of the Chinese investment and leave other partnerships open as well. This has led to the fact that the regional environment is more flexible than it is divided into hard rival blocs. Meanwhile, there is additional uncertainty due to global changes. The modulation of the United States policies with reference to the Indo-Pacific can affect the expectations and security arrangements in the region. Moreover, border tensions, maritime disputes, and global economic shocks are only some of the issues that can change the priorities of countries and risk perception very fast. Under these circumstances, a hard-line approach towards China would enhance tension whereas over accommodative approach would undermine the strategic position of a nation. Due to such complexities, India and Japan are slowly assuming more fluid and stratified approaches instead of challenging China head-on. They are enhancing their collaboration in multilateral forums, facilitating standardization of infrastructure, and increasing their collaboration in maritime security among other aspects. They do not aim at necessarily containing China but rather have a stable and rules-based regional order. The problem is to maintain the right balance between the two nations, stay strong enough to defend

their interests without taking any actions that might trigger the major conflict in the already complicated Indo-Pacific region.

Conclusion

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China is not merely the process of road, rail, and port construction, but it also carries significant political and strategic consequences. China is extending its network in the economy and the political world through investing in massive infrastructure projects in various parts of the world. This has shifted the power balance in the Indo-Pacific that has caused such nations as India and Japan to think well how to react. India has been very firm against the BRI and the issue of sovereignty and security are the main concerns. Other projects such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) are crossing on land that India considers its own and this renders the project unacceptable in the eyes of India. Concerns about the increased presence of China in ports around the Indian Ocean also exist that may result in strategic encircling. Because of this, India has opted not to join the BRI but rather work on its own infrastructure and create new relations and even help other connectivity projects. The reaction of Japan has been somehow diverse though it has been informed by the same concerns. Japan has acted in a conservative manner as opposed to shunning BRI entirely. It occasionally gives some involvement even in BRI related projects as well as promoting its infrastructure projects which are transparency, sustainable and of high standards. This is how Japan is competing with China in economic terms without diplomatic imbalance and confrontation. All in all, India and Japan have adopted a commonly referred-to-as strategic hedging strategy. This implies that they will remain economically active with China but at the same time, they are planning how to come up with alternatives as well as tightening the ties with other nations. This can be seen in their collaboration in programs like the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) and forums like the Quad as they strive to offer alternative ways in which the region can develop and create a balance in the Indo-Pacific. Due to the increasing multipolarization of the Indo-Pacific region, the rivalry over infrastructure, the level of technology, and the trade routes will probably take an even more significant role in the world politics. Higher order military strength is being overtaken by projects like highways, ports, and supply chains becoming as strategically important in this new environment. The cautious policies of India and Japan demonstrate how nations are moving to the world in which economic power and geopolitical rivalry are intertwined.

References

1. John, J. V. (2023). Japan's approach to BRI: Between cooperation and competition. In *China's BRI in different regions of the world* (p. 17). Routledge.

2. Bhuiyan, M. S., & Yi, W. (2023). India and Japan response to the Belt and Road Initiative: What China should do? *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies*, 9(1–4), 249–267. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S2377740023500124>
3. Wason, K., & Nagao, S. (2025). Japan–India strategic evolution in the Indo-Pacific: Partnerships, security, and regional order. *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*.
4. Amos, L. D., & Levkowitz, A. (2024). India and Japan are balancing the Indo-Pacific region and the global arena. *BESA Center Perspectives*.
5. *Online Library Wiley*. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/ajph.12821>
6. *Sociostudies*. <https://www.sociostudies.org/>
7. East Asia Forum. (2017). Why India boycotted the Belt and Road Forum. <https://eastasiaforum.org/2017/06/13/why-india-boycotted-the-belt-and-road-forum/>
8. Austin, L. (2020). Japan: A master of soft balancing? *Human Security Centre*.
9. Tu, B. (2017). KCI—An analysis on the developmental change of India’s hedging strategy against the Belt and Road Initiative. *TOPSR*, 27(2), 167. <https://doi.org/10.17937/TOPSR.27.2.201709.167>
10. Wagner, C., & Tripathi, S. (2018). India’s response to the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative: New partners and new formats. *SWP Comment* (No. 7). Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik.
11. Small, A. (2018). India’s answer to the Belt and Road: A road map for South Asia. *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*.
12. Pant, H. V., & Passi, R. (2017). India’s response to China’s Belt and Road Initiative: A policy in motion. *Asia Policy*, 24(1), 88–95.
13. Sachdeva, G. (2019). Indian perceptions of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative. *Global India*. Heinrich Böll Stiftung/SAGE.
14. Bhuiyan, M. S., & Yi, W. (2023). India and Japan response to the Belt and Road Initiative: What China should do? *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies*, 9(1–4), 249–267. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S2377740023500124>
15. Runde, D. F., Hardman, A., & Bonin, C. (2024). Responding to China’s growing influence in ports of the Global South. *Center for Strategic and International Studies*.

REGULATION, LEGITIMACY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN GLOBAL ADMINISTRATIVE STATE

Anjali Yadav

JECRC University

Corresponding author E-mail: anjaliyadav2702@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Governance has progressively expanded outside the borders of the nation-state during the last few decades. Domestic political institutions are no longer the only places where decisions about markets, environmental protection, digital technology, public health, and human rights are made. Instead, how policies are created, carried out, and upheld internationally is increasingly influenced by a complex web of international and transnational regulatory organizations. The term "Global Administrative State" is frequently used to characterize this dynamic organization. These organizations are not like conventional international organizations that only help states communicate with one another. Instead, they carry out governance, monitoring, standardizing, and rule-making tasks that have real implications for individuals, businesses, and governments. But despite their increasing strength, they don't have the traditional democratic underpinnings that usually support political authority. This raises an urgent question: How can global administrative authority assert its legitimacy?

Accountability has been the main focus of a large portion of the scholarly discourse. However, accountability might not be enough on its own. The risk of arbitrariness—decisions taken without sufficient justification, openness, or significant review—is the fundamental problem. This chapter makes the case that understanding legitimacy in the Global Administrative State requires considering both the general caliber of decision-making procedures and accountability measures.

2. Understanding the Global Administrative State

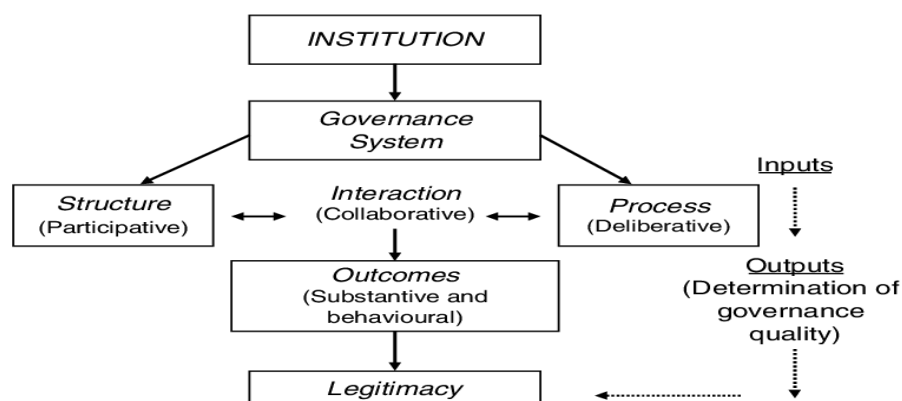


Figure 1: The Architecture of the Global Administrative State

2.1 What Is the Global Administrative State?

The group of international regulatory agencies, expert committees, transnational networks, and hybrid public-private institutions that carry out cross-border governance functions is referred to as the "Global Administrative State." These bodies:

- Create guidelines and standards
- Keep an eye on compliance
- Offer suggestions for policy
- Interpret standards and regulations
- Organize regulatory reactions.

These organizations frequently function without direct election authority, in contrast to national governments. Their competence, effectiveness, and the necessity of coordinated solutions to global crises typically serve as justifications for their authority.

2.2 Why Has Global Administration Expanded?

Global administrative governance has grown as a result of several structural factors:

- Harmonized trade and financial rules are necessary for interconnected economies
- Coordinated measures are necessary to address global threats like pandemics and climate change
- Innovation in technology advances more quickly than national legal systems
- States are encouraged to rely on institutions run by experts due to the complexity of contemporary government.

Global regulation is required as a result of these advances, but they also pose a problem for legitimacy because democratic control is not growing at the same rate as governance.

3. The Legitimacy Problem

3.1 Traditional Notions of Legitimacy

Legal authority, moral justification, democratic agreement, or successful performance are the usual foundations of legitimacy in political philosophy. Because decisions are made by representatives they elected, adhere to constitutional procedures, or result in desired consequences, citizens accept them.

However, there isn't a single global democracy in which global institutions function. No worldwide electorate has the power to approve these organizations in the same manner that national voters approve governments. Therefore, traditional democratic structures cannot serve as a foundation for legitimacy.

3.2 The Dominance of Accountability in Legitimacy Debates

Scholars and policymakers frequently place a strong emphasis on accountability in order to close this gap. International organizations try to prove their legitimacy by: Reports and performance evaluations are published.

- i. Consulting with stakeholders
- ii. Submitting to member state oversight
- iii. Setting up internal review procedures

The goal of these procedures is to guarantee that institutions can be observed, questioned, and assessed.

Global accountability, however, is frequently indirect. Generally speaking, institutions are answerable to states rather than to the people of the world. Furthermore, the fairness, consistency, and appropriate justification of judgments are not always guaranteed by reporting requirements.

3.3 The Risk of Arbitrariness

Arbitrariness is the main problem. Decision-making may remain unclear, inconsistent, or unduly reliant on specialized knowledge even in the presence of accountability protocols. Arbitrariness appears when:

- The criteria used to make decisions are ambiguous or inconsistent.
- Political or normative decisions are concealed by technical arguments.
- There are no significant channels for review in the impacted communities.
- Outcomes are disproportionately shaped by powerful states or private entities.

Accountability procedures may give the impression of legitimacy without addressing more fundamental structural issues if they simply concentrate on formal compliance rather than substantive justification.

Table 1: Accountability-Based vs. Quality-Based Legitimacy

Dimension	Accountability Model	Quality-of-Decision Model
Primary Focus	Reporting & Oversight	Reasoned Justification
Mechanism	State Monitoring	Transparent Criteria
Review	Internal or Peer Review	Independent & Substantive Review
Public Role	Limited Consultation	Meaningful Participation
Risk	Symbolic Compliance	Reduced Arbitrariness

4. Global Regulation in Practice

It is helpful to look at particular aspects of international regulation in order to gain a better understanding of these dynamics.

4.1 Economic and Financial Governance

Global financial regulation serves as an example of how administrative power transcends geographical boundaries. Monetary policy and domestic banking systems are shaped by international bodies and regulatory networks. States legally embrace these norms, but they frequently do so in response to intense international pressure.

These regulatory organizations use their technical know-how and the necessity to avert systemic disasters to defend their jurisdiction. However, citizens and domestic governments often have little say in how these standards are developed. Thus, organizations that function outside of democratic control may have an impact on decisions pertaining to employment, credit availability, and economic stability.

4.2 Environmental Governance

Environmental governance draws attention to the benefits and drawbacks of international governance. Environmental policy and climate negotiations are guided by assessments produced by scientific organizations. Global consensus and scientific legitimacy are the foundations of their authority.

However, normative judgments are involved in the selection of research priorities, the framing of scientific findings, and the conversion of science into policy. These procedures are not only technical. Fairness, accountability, and burden-sharing issues add political elements that aren't typically discussed in public.

4.3 Digital and Artificial Intelligence Regulation

Debates about legitimacy are made more difficult by the administration of digital platforms and artificial intelligence. Governments, businesses, and technical specialists are frequently involved in multi-stakeholder projects that result in regulatory standards. Rules affecting online speech, algorithmic decision-making, and data privacy are significantly shaped by private parties. These arrangements blur the line between public and private authority, even though they may promote efficiency. It's possible that users and impacted communities have little control over standards that have a big impact on their liberties and rights.

4.4 Human Rights Administration

International human rights organizations keep an eye on state compliance and provide recommendations. Rather than enforcement power, their authority is based on normative commitments. Although these organizations uphold moral principles, their rulings occasionally take into account geopolitical factors or unequal enforcement.

While irregular application may erode perceptions of justice, the lack of robust enforcement measures raises concerns about effectiveness.

4.5 Crisis Governance

Pandemics and other global disasters highlight the significance and vulnerability of international governance. Distribution of resources, data sharing, and coordinated advice are crucial. However, differences in access to vaccines and medical resources show how power inequities affect results.

Even well-meaning international coordination may find it difficult to balance technological know-how with moral principles of justice and equity.

5. Moving Beyond Accountability: A Quality-Based Approach to Legitimacy

If accountability alone is insufficient, how should legitimacy be reconceptualized?

5.1 Emphasizing Reason-Giving

Transparent thinking is necessary for legitimate authority. Institutions need to make it clear:

- The standards by which they make judgments
 - The proof that was used
 - The normative presumptions that underlie policy decisions
- Public trust is increased and arbitrariness is decreased when justification is easily accessible.



Figure 2: Framework for Legitimate Global Decision-Making

5.2 Strengthening Procedural Safeguards

Decision-making procedures become more legitimate when they incorporate:

- Open and honest rule-making processes
- Evaluations of impact
- Possibilities for significant involvement
- Unambiguous conflict-of-interest protections

Maintaining procedural integrity lessens the possibility that authority may be used unfairly or inconsistently.

5.3 Ensuring Independent Review

Mechanisms for effective oversight are crucial. Decisions can be evaluated by independent review committees to see if they adhere to accepted norms and values. Accountability has the risk of becoming symbolic in the absence of scrutiny.

5.4 Expanding Civil Society Participation

Deliberative legitimacy is increased when various stakeholders, marginalized populations, and civil society organizations are involved. Participation must allow for real influence over results and go beyond official consultation.

6. Sovereignty, Inequality, and Power

It is impossible to divorce the legitimacy of the Global Administrative State from more general structural disparities. Regulatory objectives are frequently shaped by powerful states and economically dominating entities. States that are smaller or in the process of developing might not have as much negotiating power.

This fact presents serious issues:

- Do international norms represent the interests of the powerful, or are they genuinely universal?
 - Do legal frameworks perpetuate inequality around the world?
 - How can equity and efficiency be balanced in global governance?
- It is necessary to incorporate issues of justice and power distribution into discussions of legitimacy in order to answer these questions.

Conclusion

One inevitable aspect of modern government is the Global Administrative State. Coordinated solutions that surpass the capabilities of individual states are required to address transnational concerns. However, concerns regarding legitimacy and authority are becoming more pressing as global regulation grows.

Accountability systems are crucial, but they fall short in addressing the dangers of power disparity and arbitrariness. The quality of decision-making, which includes broad involvement, independent assessment, procedural fairness, and reasoned rationale, must be the foundation of legitimacy.

Global governance can progress from formal accountability to substantive good governance by adopting this more comprehensive perspective. Then and only then will global administrative authority be able to demand true normative acceptance rather than just compliance.

References

1. Abbott, K. W., & Snidal, D. (2009). The governance triangle: Regulatory standards institutions and the shadow of the state. In *The politics of global regulation* (pp. 44–88).
2. Barnett, M., & Finnemore, M. (2004). *Rules for the world: International organizations in global politics*. Cornell University Press.
3. Buchanan, A., & Keohane, R. O. (2006). The legitimacy of global governance institutions. *Ethics & International Affairs*, 20(4), 405–437. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7093.2006.00043.x>

4. Cassese, S. (2005). Administrative law without the state? The challenge of global regulation. *New York University Journal of International Law and Politics*, 37, 663–694.
5. Cohen, J. L., & Sabel, C. F. (2006). Global democracy? *NYU Journal of International Law and Politics*, 37, 763–797.
6. Dunoff, J. L., & Pollack, M. A. (2017). The judicial trilemma. *American Journal of International Law*, 111(2), 225–276.
7. Esty, D. C. (2006). Good governance at the supranational scale: Globalizing administrative law. *Yale Law Journal*, 115, 1490–1562.
8. Grant, R. W., & Keohane, R. O. (2005). Accountability and abuses of power in world politics. *American Political Science Review*, 99(1), 29–43.
9. Harlow, C. (2006). Global administrative law: The quest for principles and values. *European Journal of International Law*, 17(1), 187–214.
10. Held, D. (1995). *Democracy and the global order: From the modern state to cosmopolitan governance*. Stanford University Press.
11. Keohane, R. O. (2003). Global governance and democratic accountability. In D. Held & M. Koenig-Archibugi (Eds.), *Taming globalization: Frontiers of governance* (pp. 130–159). Polity Press.
12. Kingsbury, B., Krisch, N., & Stewart, R. B. (2005). The emergence of global administrative law. *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 68(3–4), 15–61.
13. Krisch, N. (2010). *Beyond constitutionalism: The pluralist structure of postnational law*. Oxford University Press.
14. Moravcsik, A. (2004). Is there a ‘democratic deficit’ in world politics? A framework for analysis. *Government and Opposition*, 39(2), 336–363.

GENOCIDE PREVENTION AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Vaishnavi Singh

Department of Political Science and Liberal Studies, JECRC University, Jaipur

Corresponding author E-mail: vaishnavikachawa@gmail.com

Introduction

Since the incorporation of the Genocide Convention in 1948, the international system has continuously evolved and has made different international legal instruments, mechanisms, and global frameworks aim towards either preventing or punishing genocide and mass atrocity crimes. These legal instruments and mechanisms include the United Nations system, international criminal courts, early warning systems, and the evolving doctrine of Responsibility to Protect, among others. This paper discusses the mechanisms through which global governance has institutionalized the prevention of genocide in the international system and also analyses the functioning of these existing mechanisms. By situating genocide prevention within the broader framework of global governance, the analysis offers an overview of the promises and limitations of existing international mechanisms and considers why genocide continues to occur despite an increasingly dense prevention architecture.

Historical Background

The 20th century saw some of the worst instances of mass violence in the history of mankind, leading to genocide becoming recognized and criminalized internationally (Schabas 17). The adoption of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1948 was a landmark of international law in this regard (United Nations). It was the first time the international community decided that acts of genocide are a crime and that states not only have the obligation to punish them but also, to prevent them (United Nations, Genocide Convention art. 1).

Since 1948, the global governance architecture has undergone tremendous changes. International organizations, legal institutions, regional bodies, and transnational networks have progressively institutionalized the prevention of genocide and related mass atrocity crimes. These changes signify a move away from the traditional, state-centric notion of sovereignty to a more elaborate model where sovereignty is linked to certain obligations, such as the obligation to protect members of one's population from mass atrocity crimes.

However, even with such a dense institutional architecture, genocide and mass atrocities have not ceased to exist in different parts of the world. This paradox calls for a deep questioning: why do genocides continue to happen even when there is a plethora of international legal instruments and different levels of governance that are all aimed at the prevention of genocide? This chapter traces the journey of embedding genocide prevention into global governance structures, looking

at the existing regime mechanisms, their effectiveness, and the structural and political limitations that lead to the failure of these prevention efforts.

I. Conceptualizing Genocide Prevention within Global Governance

Global governance is the network of institutions, norms, rules, and actors (both state and non-state) that determine international behaviour outside the control of any one government (Weiss and Thakur). It comprises of intergovernmental organizations, treaty regimes, judicial bodies, regional institutions, civil society organizations, epistemic communities, and informal diplomatic coalitions.

The 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide provides a definition of genocide as acts intended to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group (United Nations, Genocide Convention art. 2). This legal codification recognizing genocide as a crime under international law, calls for measures that go far beyond prosecution after the fact. It calls for global anticipatory governance: regular mapping of structural risk factors, continued diplomatic outreach, deployment of economic and political leverage, and, if the situation deteriorates, impelling measures to stop further escalation.

Genocide prevention in world governance has three ways of being implemented and each one works together:

1. Normative Dimension

This dimension focuses on developing and building norms and legal standards in International Law (treaty law, customary international law, etc) and developing emerging doctrines such as the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). Norms establish prohibitions on certain behaviours, duties to be carried out and standards of legitimacy which help shape how States behave towards one another (Finnemore and Sikkink 891). If there are no solid normative foundations upon which to base preventive action, then naturally there cannot be any moral or legal authority for doing so.

2. Institutional Dimension

An institution is how norms are structured into a mechanism. Institutions implement the commitments made in the normative dimension through monitoring bodies, investigative commissions, early-warning systems, sanctions committees and judicial tribunals, leading to continuity, procedural legitimacy and accountability (Barnett and Finnemore 699).

3. Operational Dimension

Operational actions represent the dimensions of mediation, preventive diplomacy, targeted sanctions, peacekeeping forces, humanitarian assistance, arms embargoes and, in some extreme cases, collective military intervention. Operational success depends primarily upon the timing, coordination, sequencing, and continuing commitment to executing preventive actions. Even if the normative and institutional dimensions are solid and strong, if operational actions are delayed or not coordinated, they will have no chance for success.

The interrelationship between all three dimensions is the basis for determining whether efforts to prevent genocide will be successful or not. Norms that are not being enforced will be interpreted as mere symbolic commitments, institutions that operate without political support will simply become bureaucratic shells and operational tools that lack normative legitimacy are vulnerable to accusations of politicization or neo-imperialism.

II. The United Nations (UN) and Genocide Prevention

The UN is based on the UN Charter, which establishes the maintenance of international peace and security as one of its main functions (United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations*). This provides a legal basis for collective action to respond to atrocity crimes (genocide, ethnic cleansing, etc.). Within the UN system, exists a normative, institutional and operational system. All three of these systems work together or coalesce into one UN system, however they do so at varying degrees of effectiveness.

The UN Security Council has the primary responsibility for dealing with threats to international peace and security (United Nations Charter art. 24). When it has determined that genocide or mass atrocities pose such threats, the Security Council can:

- Impose sanctions on the nation's economy
- Create an arms embargo
- Authorize a peacekeeping mission
- Refer the matter to the appropriate court for prosecution
- Authorize the use of force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter (United Nations Charter art. 42).

In theory, the Security Council can effectively be the most powerful operational tool to prevent genocide.

However, political players can utilize their veto (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council- US, UK, France, Russia and China) and this causes limitations to the effectiveness of the Security Council to prevent genocide. Political rivalries frequently cause the Security Council to not take decisive actions towards prevention, which has a negative effect on the perceived impartiality and credibility of the collective security mechanisms. The UN is a very sophisticated structure, and it will always have a tension between the various underpinnings of the global structure of governance. This structural limitation illustrates a core tension in global governance that prevention depends not only on institutional design but on the alignment of major power interests.

The UN has created an office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, under the Secretary-General, within the UN Secretariat, which will help increase the capacity of early warnings through monitoring risk factors, assessing risks and reporting to the Secretary General and to the UN (United Nations, Office on Genocide Prevention). The general mandate of the office is to provide preventive guidance within a framework that highlights:

- i. Identifying the structural risk factors
- ii. Monitoring the patterns of incitement to violence and hate speech
- iii. Analysing the triggers that lead to escalation

Although the current mechanisms of early-warning have significantly improved since 1994, there remains an ongoing gap in governance, between identifying the risk and responding to it. Simply collecting information does not suffice enough to produce action. Often, there are political calculations that take precedence over preventive recommendations made by experts; particularly if an intervention carries the possibility of bringing about a confrontation with one or more major powers or contributes to regional instability. Thus, the challenge of preventing genocide is far more about generating political will than it is about knowledge (Power 508).

III. Responsibility to protect (R2P Doctrine)

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine has created a major change in how we prevent genocide. It is a new way of understanding sovereignty as instead of being about the complete control of a state over its own territory and population, R2P says that states have a responsibility to protect their citizens from genocide, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, and war crimes.

The adoption of R2P by the 2005 UN General Assembly was in direct response to the failures of the international community to prevent genocide during the 1990s due to the lack of an intervention norm.

R2P is based on three mutually reinforcing pillars:

- i. The state has a primary responsibility to protect its population from genocide, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, and war crimes, including preventing incitement, addressing structural discrimination and having security institutions.
- ii. The international community has a responsibility to assist states in their efforts to fulfil their obligation to protect their populations through mediation support, judicial reforms, human rights monitoring, security sector reforms and development assistance aimed at reducing structural risk factors, etc.
- iii. The international community has the responsibility to collectively take action through the United Nations structures (diplomatic pressure, sanctions, peacekeeping, and as a last resort, coercive measures authorized by the Security Council) when a state is failing to protect its population (United Nations General Assembly, *2005 World Summit Outcome*, paras. 138–139).

R2P expanded the scope of prevention beyond just genocide by bringing atrocity prevention into the range of governance strategies available to states as early action was given priority to some extent over reactive military intervention. Prevention under R2P is thus multi-faceted which includes legal, diplomatic, economic, and institutional forms.

IV. International Criminal Justice and Accountability

International Criminal Law is an Innovative Form of Global Governance and International Criminal Justice. It is one of the most important new forms of global governance around the world and has established accountability mechanisms as critical components in prevention as they transform acts of genocide and other mass atrocities from being mere moral wrongs into legal wrongs.

International criminal law established individual criminal responsibility and this shifted the focus of accountability for genocide and mass atrocity crimes from states collectively to individuals like, the leaders, military commanders, militia leaders, and ideological instigators who individually perpetrated them (Cassese 332). It is crucial that individual criminal responsibility has been established in international criminal law as it breaks down the excuse of absolute sovereignty and affirms that there is no position of official title that gives anyone immunity from being punished for committing genocide.

From Nuremberg to Ad Hoc Tribunals

The foundations of modern international criminal law began with the Nuremberg (Nazi) and Tokyo (Japanese) War Crimes after World War II, which established that all persons and not just states could be held accountable for committing international crimes. However, the institutionalization of individual responsibility for all individuals committing international crimes came to fruition in the late twentieth century with the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunals for former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and for Rwanda (ICTR) by the UN Security Council and created under Chapter VII. While these tribunals were formed to specifically respond to two individual conflicts, the ad-hoc nature of these tribunals confirmed that the heads of state, leaders, and high-ranking officials may be criminally charged by the international community. Sexual violence can be included in genocide and crimes against humanity and actors in the media may also be held responsible for direct incitement to genocide.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) clarified in its decisions, the legal meaning of 'intent to commit genocide' (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda). The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) (International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia) further developed the doctrine of joint criminal enterprise and also the doctrine of command responsibility (Schabas 423). The development of these doctrines provided clarity on the legal meaning of genocide and decreased the level of ambiguity that existed previously with respect to the prosecution of those charged with genocide.

From an overall governance perspective, the establishment of ad-hoc tribunals meant that the international community would use international law to hold people accountable for their actions. Furthermore, the ad-hoc tribunals established models for procedures and evidence, which ultimately provided guidance to both the ad-hoc and permanent international criminal justice institutions through their adoption by the International Criminal Court (ICC) (which was

created in 1998). Unlike the ad hoc tribunals, the ICC exercises jurisdiction when territorial or nationality criteria are satisfied, or when the United Nations Security Council refers a situation, covering genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression on the basis of state consent or Security Council authorization.

V. Institutionalization through the International Criminal Court

The International Criminal Court (ICC), established through the Rome Statute in 1998, is the permanent legal entity for international criminal justice. Unlike ad-hoc tribunals that are constrained to specific regions, the ICC has jurisdiction over the offences of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression provided that one or more states consent to its jurisdiction or the UN Security Council refers a particular case to the ICC (International Criminal Court, *Rome Statute*, art. 12).

The ICC judges cases, if and when the relevant state(s) do not want to prosecute a particular case or do not have the capacity to do so. This judicial structure creates a mechanism for international oversight. Because of the ICC's influence in the context of judicial authority and international law, the ICC not only investigates and judges individuals but also impacts how States create and amend their own national legal systems. In response to the ICC's activities, States frequently amend their criminal codes, increase their prosecutors' independence, and develop dedicated units to handle war crimes.

Preventive Functions of International Criminal Justice:

These structural means show that international criminal justice has a role in the prevention of atrocities, even though they generally take place after an atrocity has occurred.

1. Norm Consolidation

Judicial decisions based on factual findings clarify the definitions of legal norms, strengthen the standards for interpreters and reinforce the prohibition of genocide as a 'jus cogens norm' (International Court of Justice, *Bosnia and Herzegovina v. Serbia and Montenegro*). Repeated prosecutions also establish a stable normative structure around genocide.

2. Deterrence Signaling

The issuing of indictments and arrest warrants provides a deterrent to future attacks. The possibility of international prosecutions, even if they remain uncertain, may alter the calculations of political elites in transitional or conflict settings (Sikkink 112).

3. Discrediting of Atrocity Narratives

Judgments made in international criminal courts help establish an authoritative historical record, thereby discrediting those who would engage in denialism or revisionism. In addition, through the documentation of patterns of violence, command structures and ideological incitement international criminal courts assist in the establishment of a historical record for the purposes of establishing truth.

4. Victimization and reparative justice

By providing mechanisms for victim participation, and ordering reparations, international criminal courts both recognize the harm suffered by affected communities and reinforce the rights of those communities.

The effects of each of these structural mechanisms are long-term and indirect, rather than immediate. They reshape the structure of incentives and institutional norms, rather than stopping an act of violence in real-time. A key change in today's world of criminal law is not necessarily related only to the increase in number of persons convicted of crimes, but also to how much accountability is now expected. At the international level, there was little or no prosecution for crimes such as genocide prior to 1990, but there is now a widespread expectation that people committing crimes that are egregious enough to warrant an investigation, either at home or abroad, are generally thought of as being held legally responsible.

Accountability was previously viewed as a one-off event; after the shift away from this viewpoint, it is now viewed as being fundamentally built-into how nations conduct themselves toward other nations, including their ability to prosecute individuals for committing crimes against humanity. The shift in how accountability is viewed has changed the way we talk diplomatically about various situations, the way we create transitional justice processes and how we design constitutions within our domestic legal system. Essentially, what international criminal law has created is a qualitative improvement in how nations can govern themselves and how they govern others during times of mass atrocities. Although international criminal justice is not the sole solution to preventing genocide, it does solidify the institutional role of prevention by embedding legal responsibility into the overall structure of the international system.

VI. Why Genocide persists?

Genocide continues to occur, not because of the lack of international norms or institutions but because of the structural, political, economic and psychological dynamics that sabotage efforts at preventative actions.

The most notable factors leading to the continued existence of genocide are:

1. Defective Political Will

The mechanisms that are meant to provide support for intervention are dependent upon the consent and cooperation of states. When powerful states believe that intervening into an area of genocide would go against their own strategic, economic and geopolitical interests, they generally delay or block such action. Legal obligation is not enough to create enforcement, and thus, any enforcement from the International Community, must first have the major powers interests aligned, which is often not the case.

2. Perpetrators Are Shielded from External Intervention by their Sovereign Status

The definition of state sovereignty is an inherently limiting factor to intervention in an instance of genocide. When a government is accused of committing an act of genocide, that government

will want to use the principle of non-intervention in times where the State is the perpetrator or is, in fact, responsible for the crime, then international action becomes much more diplomatically and legally complicated.

3. UN Security Council Stalemate

As a result of the UN Security Council's veto power, permanent members of the body have the ability to stop resolutions that can authorize sanctions, peacekeeping, or any coercive action against another member state. Geopolitical rivalries that exist between countries transform humanitarian crises into battlegrounds for those rivalries and thus prevent resolution.

4. Inconsistent Enforcement/Norm Issues

When some international actors take definitive action in response to humanitarian crisis situations and others fail to act, it undermines deterrence because perpetrators are not given a uniform message that enforcement is based upon established norms regarding how they will respond. In addition, by enforcing selectively, the credibility of the international community will be eroded and preventive signals weakened.

5. Gradual Escalation/Normalization

Genocide seldom begins with a rapid series of murders of a large group of people. Rather, it typically occurs over time through stages that include discrimination, dehumanization, exclusion, institutional erosion and incitement (Stanton). As a result, the gradual radicalization that occurs in the lead-up to genocide can cause early indicators of the potential for genocide to be missed domestically and internationally.

6. Political Incentives within a Nation

When the economy is going through hard times or the government has lost some legitimacy, the leaders may use ethnic groupings, nationalism or scapegoating to promote themselves and maintain their position. Violence may easily become a means of allowing a government to stay in power and domestic political decisions may take higher priority than the international consequences of these decisions.

7. Weak State Institutions

When governments have weak institutional systems (judicial systems, police forces, legal and political institutions) terrorists can freely operate and conduct their acts of violence with impunity. Institutional weaknesses therefore limit the effectiveness of both preventive and punitive measures against extremists.

8. Resource and Capacity Constraints

The funding of peacekeeping missions and the ability of these missions to conduct effective monitoring often suffers from shortcomings due to inadequate funding, lack of manpower, intelligence capacity or robust mandates. A lot of the times, even if well-defined mandates exist, a mission's operational capacity will limit the effective implementation of those mandates.

9. Implementation Lags Behind in Responding to Warnings

Early warning systems have become more accurate at identifying certain indicators of risk. However, knowing about a problem does not necessarily mean that we will act when a problem is detected. Compounding this is the impact of bureaucracy, diplomacy and the fear of escalation in delaying the implementation of preventive actions. The gap between knowledge and the implementation of preventive measures against an identified action is a significant governance failure.

10. Priority of Stability Over Justice

Fundamentally, many international actors view meeting their immediate goal of short-term stability (counterterrorism cooperation, economic partnerships, etc.) as more important than acting against crimes such as ethnic cleansing or genocide when they occur. Depending upon the situation, acting in a preventive manner may be viewed as destabilizing, creating uncertainty in terms of action.

Genocide persists because global governance operates within a political system shaped by power asymmetry, competing national interests, and institutional limitations. Normative consensus exists at the declaratory level, but enforcement remains contingent. The persistence of genocide reflects a structural tension between legal commitments and political calculation. Effective prevention therefore requires not only institutional design but sustained political alignment, credible enforcement mechanisms, and stronger integration between early warning systems and rapid policy response.

Conclusion

The shift away from absolute state sovereignty toward a responsibility-based model has significantly impacted processes for stopping genocide. Global instruments like the Genocide Convention, international criminal tribunals, and the International Criminal Court together have embedded prevention within law/procedural mechanisms and tools. Global accountability has now shifted from state accountability to individual accountability, the early warning systems have been institutionalized and the potential of atrocity prevention has been recast as something we must collectively be concerned about rather than just a domestic issue.

Even with the formalization of genocide prevention, the continuing occurrence of genocide is evident. Without adequate political structures in place, political considerations will continue to inhibit timely intervention at the state level. As a result of sovereignty constraints, security Council veto politics, selective enforcement by the Security Council, dependence on enforcement, and competing global geopolitical interests, there are still extended delays between warning of potential genocide and an effective response. The most significant barrier to effective genocide prevention is the time between an alert to a potential genocide and the appropriate response; therefore, to ensure genocide prevention there must be a commitment of political will

over time, a commitment to ongoing enforcement, strength in domestic governance structures, and the translation of these commitments into coordinated and decisive action.

References

1. Barnett, M., & Finnemore, M. (1999). The politics, power, and pathologies of international organizations. *International Organization*, 53(4), 699–732.
2. Bassiouni, M. C. (2013). *Introduction to international criminal law* (2nd ed.). Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.
3. Cassese, A. (2008). *International criminal law* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
4. Evans, G. (2008). *The responsibility to protect: Ending mass atrocity crimes once and for all*. Brookings Institution Press.
5. Finnemore, M., & Sikkink, K. (1998). International norm dynamics and political change. *International Organization*, 52(4), 887–917.
6. International Court of Justice. (2007). *Application of the convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide (Bosnia and Herzegovina v. Serbia and Montenegro)*. Judgment.
7. International Criminal Court. (1998). *Rome statute of the International Criminal Court*.
8. International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. (1998). *Prosecutor v. Jean-Paul Akayesu* (Case No. ICTR-96-4-T). Judgment.
9. International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. (1993). *Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia* (United Nations Security Council Resolution 827).
10. International Military Tribunal. (1946). *Trial of the major war criminals before the International Military Tribunal (Nuremberg judgment)*.
11. Power, S. (2002). *“A problem from hell”: America and the age of genocide*. Basic Books.
12. Schabas, W. A. (2009). *Genocide in international law: The crime of crimes* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
13. Sikkink, K. (2011). *The justice cascade: How human rights prosecutions are changing world politics*. W. W. Norton & Company.
14. Stanton, G. H. (n.d.). The ten stages of genocide. *Genocide Watch*.
15. United Nations. (1945). *Charter of the United Nations*.
16. United Nations. (1948). *Convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide*.
17. United Nations General Assembly. (2005). *2005 World summit outcome* (A/RES/60/1).
18. United Nations Security Council. (1993). *Resolution 827 (1993)* (S/RES/827).
19. United Nations. (n.d.). *Office on genocide prevention and the responsibility to protect*.
20. Weiss, T. G., & Thakur, R. (2010). *Global governance and the UN: An unfinished journey*. Indiana University Press.

FROM REGIONAL TURBULENCE TO STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY: INDIA AND NEIGHBOURHOOD INSTABILITY

Chandni Phophalia

Department of Development Studies, Vivekananda Global University, Jaipur

Corresponding author E-mail: chandniphophalia21@gmail.com

Historical Background

It is well said, you can change your friends but not your neighbour. From ancient times it is seen that the neighbour and specially the immediate neighbours played an important role in the growth and security of the region. From the ancient text such as Manusmriti or Arthashastra provide a narrative of neighbourhood countries and their role in the region in the mandal theory. With that there are chances to have greater peace and stability in the region if there are cordial relations with the neighbours. Countries which are closer to another country play a vital role. Instability in one region can bring instability in another region, this domino effect can be protected when the region having stability internally and having cordial relations with other regions so they could find opportunities and mutual dependence with each other.

India, a sub-continent, is giant in size and has rising aspirations. With these ambitions, India must establish itself as a strong nation, which requires cordial relations with its neighbours. In this dynamic era, India is expanding socially, politically and economically. It must first strengthen its dominance in South Asia as a part of its expansion and its ambition to become a superpower. Additionally, a stable and tranquil neighbourhood environment is necessary globally. 'No nation can become a genuine power in the world arena', according to Mohan (2007), unless it has long-term primacy in its own neighbourhood. (Evolution of 'India's Neighbourhood First Policy' Since Independence Saroj Kumar Aryal Simant Shankar Bharti)

Tracing the historical background, before independence, Britishers have used the policy of 'diplomacy of dependence' towards its neighbours. Policy where the Britishers tried to secure the boundary of the country in such a way by which the neighbouring countries were made reliant on so they can bring into the confidence of Britishers and India shall be secure.

C Raja Mohan in his work describe about the British raj and the relations with the small neighbouring country, small countries want the protection of the Raj but after these neighbouring countries became conscious of their self-identity and with the rise of nationalism these small entities tried to balance its relations with India and other superpower so their sovereignty will not be sacrifice. Also to ensure the dominance of India in this region will not increase they let the superpowers like US and China to enter into the region. For example, Pakistan in order to curtail the influence in the region look to these superpowers. This is just one example; other countries of

this region also use this “China card” in order to counter India. (Aryal and Bharti, “Evolution of ‘India’s Neighbourhood First Policy’ Since Independence”)

The country’s immediate neighbour is the primary focus in order to comprehend its socio-economic and political development. Considering the increasing regional instability manifested by protest in Nepal, ethnic conflict and balance of payment issue in Sri Lanka, religious extremism and terrorist organisation in Pakistan and Afghanistan and the regime change in Myanmar. The country’s policy toward India is changing in tandem with the increasing instability and shifting dynamics, as well as the leader’s interest. Lets take the Maldives as an example, with the shift in political regime under Abdullah Yameen (2013-18) and Mohamed Muizzu (2023-present), the government adopted an anti- India strategy and moved closer to China. But Ibrahim Solih took a friendly approach to New Delhi.

India’s traditional relations with Nepal and Bhutan started declining after the increased intervention from China. Initially New Delhi did not give much attention to Beijing’s interest in the region but as the power and influence of China increased in these countries it became a threat due to its superior military and economic resources. (Aryal and Bharti, “Evolution of ‘India’s Neighbourhood First Policy’ Since Independence”)

India has traditionally viewed itself as the guardian of this area, protecting it from Chinese interference of any type. It also works to advance their interests and provide them with greater prospects in a variety of fields. However, these small neighbours do not see it as an opportunity; rather, they are more wary of India, which may not threaten their sovereignty. Their sense of uncertainty leads some of these nations to look for other options. And they found China as another alternative in the region. China following an expansionist policy, these neighbouring countries losing trust and declining relations with India give a chance to China to have good relations with the neighbouring nations. India must develop policies that are helpful to its neighbour since China has a fair probability of countering India’s interests due to the growing rivalry between the two countries. (Upadhya, *India’s ‘Turbulent Neighbourhood’*)

It is often seen in the world that neighbourhoods impact the countries around it and this is best described by the Domino theory which is the best theoretical foundation to explain how the impact of one regional instability is on the other region. Domino effect described as of one country falls to an opposing ideology (like communism), its neighbours will inevitably follow, creating a chain reaction.

India is the centre of the South Asian region and due to its size, geographical position and its growth, it is assumed to become a natural leader in the region. Due to its position and its drastic growth, India is in its stepping stone to become a global leader but in its way it has to assume the leadership in south Asia and has to strengthen its position in the neighbourhood.

The term neighbourhood is a dynamic concept in India. Leadership under various Prime Ministers changes the very idea of neighbours. With the change in government and change in the international arena the interest also changed. In the early years of Congress rule (1950s-70s) India viewed its neighbours as small states and as a protectorate towards these neighbouring states. With time the idea shifted from reciprocity to non-reciprocity during the 1990s and in the Atal Vihari Vajpai leadership the idea of neighbourhood was extended with his party ideology, considered the countries who are the followers of Hinduism or Hindutva philosophy would be the neighbour of India. In the contemporary era the idea of neighbourhood is presented in the form of neighbourhood first and respecting the extended neighbourhood. (Chattopadhyay)

India since its independence had tried to create a friendly policy towards its neighbourhood. From the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru till Narendra Modi, it is seen that India has always pushed to be a hegemon in the South Asian region. (Aryal and Bharti, “Evolution of ‘India’s Neighbourhood First Policy’ Since Independence”)

Since its inception, India has attempted to project an image of a big brother who acts as a protector and collaborates with neighbours. Mutual reliance is possible, and both nations can cooperate more effectively. India also positioned itself as a fantastic place for neighbouring countries to find more and bigger chances rather than relying on the home market. (Chattopadhyay)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has asserted that neighbours are not only those with whom one shares geographical boundaries but also those with whom hearts meet. As a result, it is very important for India to have good relations with the neighbourhood. Today India followed the policy of Neighbourhood First wherein the country will prioritise its relations with its neighbours and foster friendly and non-reciprocal relations with immediate neighbours.

Leadership Perspectives Towards Neighbourhood

After independence, India under the leadership of Nehru continued the same kind of policy wherein he tried to make good relations with the countries, being a protectorate but in a way wherein the sovereignty of these small nations like Nepal, Bhutan, etc. will not be compromised. Pratib Chattopadhyay had talked about India’s attitude to become a big brother in the South Asian region and especially in the Himalayan region in order to protect its boundaries from external threats. With the growing external challenges, India at that time was also dealing with internal unification which increased the problems. The Nehruvian idea towards neighbourhood was more on the security side, neglecting economic dimension. During his speech on 6th January 1950 in parliament mention the importance of small states and how the neighbouring country has to be protected in a way so they will not become a threat in the future to India's security. The author also presented three assumptions of Nehru in order to support his policy towards the neighbours; first, India has to take up its role and responsibilities in the region; second India

would be the leader of anti-colonial struggle in the region; thirdly India collaboration with china for protecting the region for superpower rivalry. In order to make a security umbrella, India considered the Himalayan states as buffer states. In short, Nehru followed the 'family approach' towards its neighbours where they are treated as the part of the whole. (Chattopadhyay)

On the contrary, Ram Manohar Lohia was in the view of making India a confederation under which Pakistan and other neighbouring countries come together. In order to work on the common causes, he believed that the nations shall form an alliance allowing each nation to govern itself but agree to work together for a better future.

It is often seen that the foreign policy of a country really depends upon the kind of leadership it is going with. With the end of Nehru's Neighbourhood policy, which was far more idealistic, his successor Indira Gandhi came up with a much more realistic approach towards the neighbours. Her policies were not only to give India a more secure neighbourhood but also to protect the countries from any kind of disturbance. For example, India's role in the liberation of Bangladesh or integration of Sikkim for the interest of India. Other than this, India played a massive role to bring these neighbouring countries together under the vision of Indira Gandhi by contributing towards the establishment of SAARC (Southeast Association for Regional Cooperation).

After the Indira Gandhi era, policy toward the neighbourhood had evolved with the change of leadership in the country, Rajiv Gandhi as the Prime Minister played a crucial role in shaping India's neighbourhood policy as that was the time of conflict between India and Sri Lanka. But it was his diplomatic tactics and policies characterized by a mix of proactive diplomacy, and interventionism designed to establish India as the dominant and stabilizing power in South Asia. His pushes for neighbourhood cooperation through the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) which was established in 1985. His neighbourhood policies are often termed as 'the Rajiv Doctrine'.

The new leader, H D Gowda has come in and his external affair minister Inder Kumar Gujral brought a significant change in the neighbourhood policy with a new policy termed as 'Gujral Doctrine'. This policy viewed the country in a way that India will aid the neighbouring countries of Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives without asking for anything in return, excluding Pakistan and China which open new dimensions of relations with these countries. This doctrine was brought in a way to counter the influence of Pakistan and China.

Pratip Chattopadhyay views this doctrine as an exclusion shift in India's neighbourhood policy from hard power strategy of military and diplomatic intervention to soft power diplomacy in the form of intergovernmental cooperation, cultural and economic diplomacy and enhancing people to people contact. This policy was an attempt to link Indian development with the development of the South Asian region. (Chattopadhyay)

Former PM Manmohan Singh Said “the real test of foreign policy is in the handling of neighbours”, which shows his vision towards the neighbour. He was of the view that it is easier to build relations with distant countries but harder to maintain and manage relations with the neighbours because of the historical disputes, cultural and political diversity and sensitive border issues. His policies were often criticised as passive but they could be characterised by a “quiet diplomacy” and a “hands-on” approach that tries to create a balance between security needs and desire for a peaceful, cooperative and prosperous neighbourhood.

Presently, India under the leadership of Narendra Modi followed the policy which came under ‘Neighbourhood First’, under which India will prioritise on building peaceful and friendly ties with its neighbouring countries. Here India also promotes people-to-people exchange and respecting each other’s cultural diversity. Today, cooperation in the field of technology, economy, strategic and defence are promoted by India. With this, India also promotes the “*Wadki Vyavahar*” approach which is often characterised by a personal, and neighbourly spirit, aiming to foster goodwill and long-term cooperation and partnership. (Karak)

Instability in India’s Neighbourhood and Its Strategic Significance

India has always been a country to believe in the traditional idea of *Akhand Bharat* that is treating India and its neighbourhood countries as a single entity. In this idea there are various sovereign actors and some great powers which are treated as a threat to this idea. India follows the vision of common civilizational history; this commonality makes India confident about its vision. (Mohan)

India in the recent years has seen various forms of instability in the neighbourhood such as economic crises in Sri Lanka, Coup in Bangladesh and Myanmar, protestt against the Nepal government and cross border terrorism in Pakistan or Afghanistan. All these crises are emerging as a growing challenge for India as it portrays itself as the voice of Global South countries and follows the idea of *Vasudeva Kutumbakam* (the whole world is one family). But on the other hand, due to the growing tension in the neighbourhood, India’s inability to trust these nations create more problems for India. With this, China’s growing ambition towards these countries and its ability to gain trust of these countries came up as an alarming sign for India and its security.

Looking at India, it is sometimes not only cooperation but also the cultural ties and secular character which possess threat for other nations around it. India has a diverse neighbourhood in terms of religion, culture and government. Starting from Pakistan which itself remains insecure of being an incomplete nation due to its unfair partition, with other kinds of tension in the form of Kashmir issue, cross-border terrorism etc. Bangladesh, once part of Pakistan, got its independence with the help of India. But today, especially after the coup, relations have become strained. Bangladesh demand for extradition of Sheikh Hassina is also a matter of tension between both the countries. Nepal and Bhutan for a long time had cordial relations, both the

countries signed the treaty of peace and friendship with India but today they showed insecurity towards India which is growing into tension and the entering of China to hamper the relations further much harder. China being India's neighbour and major competitor, is working to isolate India among its neighbours. China with its attitude to curtail India for being a major geostrategic player in the Indo-Pacific region and has the capacity to face its bully attitude. ("Nation's Pride India and Its Unstable Neighbourhood")

Myanmar recently went through a coup which led to the transition from democracy to autocratic regime. From a geographic point of view, Myanmar proximity to India's north eastern region which is strategically very crucial for India shows a great setback because of this instability and due to its dependence on the country for securing the border of the north eastern region. India together with Myanmar cooperation can work against the insurgents and any other actions which are sensitive for its security. In order to protect the region, there is a need for India to improve its relations with the Myanmar government and upgrade its relations in order to counter the security challenges. But this seems difficult after the coup as the government policy and relations of Myanmar were tilted towards China.

Impact of this Instability

Looking at the instability among the various neighbouring countries of India, various disturbance as the impact of the instability is created. Strategically India considers these problems as a scope to enhance its role in the region and can increase cooperation with these countries. For example, when the economic fallout of Sri Lanka happened in the year 2022, India was one among the first countries to come for the aid, which led to the improvement of relations among the nations. This reflects the way by which India can take advantage of these unstable countries to not only gain their trust but also to improve their bilateral relations.

This was just one side of a coin, as with advantages there come various disadvantages in the form of growing interference from China. In order to support this argument, we can look at the Myanmar (Burma) case where China from outside the country try to control the autocratic regime and generated anti-India sentiments.

The theory of Domino effect is also visible wherein we see two of the India states also saw protest, violence and instability. Manipur and Ladakh, recently saw the violence and instability and this could reflect the disturbance in the neighbourhood and its impact on these states.

Instability in the neighbourhood can not only impact its own but other regions around it as well. While the instability creates flux in the region, it also creates economic and geopolitical tension in the region. The unstable neighbourhood diverted the attention of the country and economic growth through reduction in trade, investment and regional cooperation. If there is instability in the region for example the economic growth will also hamper as the Multinational Companies in order to establish their manufacturing units look for a stable and peaceful region which could

benefit the developing countries like India but due to the threat of domino effect, which restricted development in the region.

The persistent instability in India's neighbourhood acts as a structural impediment to India's economic performance and strategic autonomy. The political uncertainty, economic collapse, and governance failures in neighbouring states translate into tangible economic costs for India by disrupting established trade networks, delaying critical regional connectivity and infrastructure projects, and weakening investor confidence in cross-border economic cooperation. These disruptions not only reduce the potential gains from regional integration but also limit India's ability to leverage its geographical centrality for economic expansion.

With that India also has conflict with most of its neighbours in the form of state-sponsored terrorism, border dispute or dispute of interest and as a result of growing instability in the region it becomes difficult for India to collaborate with these nations to solve these tensions. The unresolved rivalry between India and Pakistan is one of the results of the unstable government which has not led these countries to resolve the disputes bilaterally.

China's increasing engagement with these nations is the result of growing disunity among the nations. China has used the shambled economy in order to make the countries dependent on it and its military advancement, to create a kind of influence on these countries to create a division among them. (Gahir)

The increase in this unstable environment around India's neighbourhood creates a deteriorating condition as the security of the country is compromised. With the growing instability in the region new challenges came up for India in terms of its geography, economy, security, and stability. (Gahir)

The instability in Afghanistan, the establishment of Taliban regime was the result of US withdrawal, which not only freed the region from US dominance but also created the power vacuum which was neither filled in by Russia or China in 2021. (Katoch) This brought instability in Afghanistan, which affected India as it could increase cross-border terrorism in the region. This could also boost the Islamic ideology in India which can lead to the spread of separatist tendency in the region.

India is unfortunately gifted with an unstable triangle of relations with China and Pakistan which act as a fuel to the fire and interrupt India's vision to have peaceful and cordial relations with its neighbour. ("Nation's Pride India and Its Unstable Neighbourhood")

Further, the neighbourhood instability compels India to allocate substantial financial and institutional resources toward security preparedness, humanitarian assistance, and diplomatic crisis management. Such expenditures, while necessary, divert attention and capital away from domestic development priorities such as infrastructure, social welfare, and industrial growth. Instability in the region creates strategic vacuums that external powers—most notably China—

are able to exploit through economic investments and strategic partnerships, thereby reshaping regional economic alignments in ways that constrain India's policy options.

Overall, India's neighbourhood is not merely a security concern but as a critical economic variable influencing growth trajectories, regional connectivity ambitions, and strategic competitiveness. It concludes that sustainable economic development in India is closely linked to the restoration of political stability, institutional resilience, and cooperative economic frameworks in South Asia, necessitating a more integrated and proactive regional engagement strategy from New Delhi. (Velangi, "India's Unstable Neighbourhood and Its Impact on the Indian Economy")

Conclusion

As the neighbour can't be changed India has to make an attempt to create an environment where it will not only benefit for India but also for other neighbouring countries so they could work together and manage to have cordial relations which will result in prosperity and growth for each other. India's journey towards becoming a global superpower is inextricably linked to the stability of its immediate surroundings. As the 'Indira Doctrine' and 'Gujarat Doctrine' previously highlighted, India cannot insulate itself from the fires in its neighbour's house. The contemporary 'Neighbourhood First' policy must therefore evolve beyond mere diplomatic rhetoric into a robust framework of economic integration and security guarantee. To counter 'China card' and the 'Domino effect' of regional coup, India must transition from being a 'Big Brother' which often triggers sovereignty fears- to a 'Reliable Partner' that offers a more sustainable, transparent, and culturally resonant alternative to expansionist power.

References

1. Aryal, S. K., & Bharti, S. S. (2023). Evolution of India's neighbourhood first policy since independence. *Society*, 60(2), 224–232. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12115-023-00819-y>
2. Chadha, A. (2022). Walking a tightrope: India's security challenges in its neighbourhood. In *Amsterdam University Press* (pp. 73–80). <https://doi.org/10.5117/9789048557820/icas.2022.009>
3. Chattopadhyay, P. (2011). The politics of India's neighbourhood policy in South Asia. *South Asian Survey*, 18(1), 93–108. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0971523112469526>
4. Chopra, A., & Choudhury, A. (n.d.). The India-Myanmar affair: Between a rock and a hard place. In S. Chawla (Ed.), *India's neighbourhood: Challenges and opportunities* (pp. 145–147).
5. Editor's. (n.d.). *India's precarious periphery*.
6. Gahir, S. R. (2023). Challenges to democracy in a shifting global landscape: India's neighborhood perspective. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, 1–7.
7. Indian Council of World Affairs. (2025). *India on the rise*.

8. Karak, S. (2025). Wadki vyavhar in Indian diplomacy: PM Modi's neighborhood first approach. *BlueKraft*.
9. Katoch, D. C. (2021). A changing world order: Challenges for India. *India Foundation Journal*, 3–6.
10. Mantoo, S., & Dahiya, A. R. (2019). Indian and challenging neighborhood. *Research Review International Journal of Multidisciplinary*, 4(12).
11. Mohan, C. R. (n.d.). India and South Asia: The elusive sphere of influence. *Institute of South Asian Studies*.
12. Nation's pride India and its unstable neighbourhood. (n.d.). *Issuu*.
13. --- (n.d.). *Issuu*.
14. Observer Research Foundation. (n.d.). Instability in India's neighbourhood: A multi perspective analysis. *ORF*.
15. Sankar, K. R., et al. (2022). *India's foreign policy* (Revised ed.). Black Prints India Inc.
16. Upadhya, S. (2024). India's turbulent neighbourhood.
17. Velangi, A. (2024). India's unstable neighbourhood and its impact on the Indian economy. *Geojuristoday*.
18. India's unstable neighbourhood and its impact on the Indian economy. (2024). *Geojuristoday*.

ROLE OF FEMININE LEADERSHIP IN DIPLOMACY: INDIAN CONTEXT

Aayushi Nagar

Department of Development Studies, Vivekananda Global University, Jaipur

Corresponding author E-mail: ayushinagar.550@gmail.com

A. Introduction

Women leadership in law making is crucial in enhancing democratic rule. It adds variety to legislative debates and assists in developing inclusive and equitable community policies particularly where women representation in politics is still low. This study considers the significance of active women involvement in law-making and investigates whether an increased level of feminine leadership influences the agenda of policy and law fairness. Available literature indicates that the women in leadership in politics are concerned about social welfare, public health, education and ethical leadership. This specialization is an indication of a deep sense of community health and social justice. There have been indications that the more women a country is represented in the parliament, the more resources the country is likely to allocate towards healthcare, education as well as child welfare. They are also more financially responsible and reduce corruption rates. These findings show that the participation of women leads to better quality of policies and governance. As well, women members of parliament tend to employ collaborative and consensus-based leadership styles. Such styles increase the process of discussion and guarantee broader representation of community interests in the law-making. With these contributions, women are yet to enjoy full participation in politics. Such obstacles are patriarchal values, financial difficulties, and lack of access to decision-making circles. The regional variations in women leadership and its effects are also evident however the general body of literature confirms the view that more feminine leadership leads to increase in democratic legitimacy and governmental performance. These observations reveal that there is an urgent need to take specific policy measures, structural interventions, and supportive initiatives to enhance women access to legislative positions. This, in its turn, would advocate inclusive law-making and stimulate just and sustainable governance at the international level.

a. Historical Context

The history of the role of women in governance and law-making in India is a complicated and multi-layered one. It is indicative of other social and cultural shifts. There was no unified situation in ancient India where women were subordinate or empowered but their position would be determined by region and the text and by history. The ancient Vedic texts depict the involvement of women such as Gargi and Maitreyi in the philosophical discussions, meaning that they had an intellectual interest. But over time, the roles of women in social life have become progressively restricted by the social structures and the rules of patriarchy. This development is

important to understand the current discourse surrounding the issue of gender and political representation in a wider historical perspective. The governance and law-making in ancient India amalgamated the royal power, religious legislation, and traditions. Dharma was the term used as the legal and political basis and the institution such as sabha and samiti was used as initial deliberative institutions. Kinship, social hierarchy and religious rules dictated the way women were associated with these systems. What can be explored through the roles of women in these structures is the influence of gender on the allocation of political authority and legal rights. The analysis of women's role in governance is significant not only in identification of the missing figures but also in understanding of the gendering in the Indian state development. It helps the researchers to track the impact of the legal norms, religious perceptions as well as economic developments on the political awareness of women. The analysis can also be used in contemporary discussions regarding gender quotas, representation, and inclusive governance as it will give an idea of the historical context of the ongoing reforms.

b. Scope and Objectives

This chapter discusses the historical pathways of the inclusion of women in terms of governance dating back to the Vedic era up to modern India. It is divided chronologically (ancient, medieval, colonial, and post-independence) and is also focused on such aspects as legal status, institutional engagement, and informal political influence. Even though it also makes reference to regional differences, it primarily concerns other Indian trends backed with case studies. The chapter explores three major research questions that include: first, what has been the transformation of the role of women in the governance system in regard to formal and informal roles in various historical periods? Second, what are legal, religious and economic factors that have facilitated or restricted the role of women? Third, to what extent has contemporary India institutionalized gender inclusive governance as opposed to other periods? These are the questions that determine the analytical framework of the chapter. This work is important as it grounds the contemporary gender discourse into history, and it rejects the naive notions of the advancement or the stagnation. This chapter is able to create a better perception about gender dynamics in Indian politics by following the way women have changed their involvement in politics over the years. It also brings about the structural origins of inequalities of today.

B. Women in the Indian Governance of Ancient times

a. Vedic Period (1500 BCE – 600 BCE)

The Rigveda, and subsequent documents on the Vedas suggest that women in early Vedic society were more socially visible than that of later times. References to educated women such as Gargi Vachaknavi and Maitreyi indicate that they were involved in intellectual and perhaps advisory exercise. Certain researchers state that women were allowed to attend such meetings as sabha and samiti but the scope of their political power remains controversial. These examples

demonstrate that early Vedic society did not prevent female participation in social discussions, but in a restricted way. During this period, women were also participating in religious governance in significant roles. The socio-political order was based on ritual life, and women were also involved in it, serving as ritual patrons called yajamana-patni (wives of ritual patrons), who could even conduct religious ceremonies together with their husbands. Since ritual legitimacy was a form of kingship and social power, women participation in rituals indirectly connected them with politics. Their involvement was however usually mediated by their marital status as opposed to their own political identity. Although these opportunities were there, there were no gender restrictions during the Vedic period. There was restriction on property rights, men were preferred to inherit property and the texts in society were inclined to give more attention to the domestic roles of women. The age of Vedic was also characterized by the tightening of the patriarchal standards, which preconditioned more strict exclusions in the future. Therefore, the Vedic age can be seen as a period of transition and not an age of gender equality.

b. Classical Period (600 BCE – 650 CE)

Under the influence of the Dharmashastra literature, the legal position of women became narrower in the classical times. The literature such as Manusmriti developed a patriarchal society in which women were supposed to be under the patronage of males all their lives. These rules defined both legal and social expectations although the practice in various regions might have differed. However, it was also during this time that women who were politically empowered were born. Crown queens and royal mothers were occasionally regents and inscriptions dated Satavahana and Gupta have references to royal women granting land. The existence of such women as Prabhavati Gupta demonstrates that the women of the elite were able to exercise administrative authority to certain extent even in the dynasties. Nevertheless, their power depended mostly on family relationships and not official power. Women also had an impact on their roles in the public due to religious developments. Buddhism and Jainism emerged, which provided few other options to the female agency in their participation as monks. However, even in these settings, there were still gender hierarchies. In general, the classical period was the time of institutionalization of patriarchal legal systems, and there were certain instances of female political power.

c. Early Medieval Period (650 CE – 1200 CE)

The early medieval era had great women rulers and regents. The Chalukya and Rashtrakuta dynasties were ruled by queens who issued charters and took care of administrative issues. Queen Didda ruled Kashmir in the 10th century. These instances demonstrate that the political influence of women, though not common, may be high in certain circumstances of the dynasty. On the local level, it was sometimes inscribed that women were involved in the administration of temples and in grants of land. The South Indian sources, particularly those of the Chola Era,

reveal the donation of money by women towards the village meetings and religious organizations. Such activities are a symptom of the poor yet actual participation of women in local government. But, changing social conventions applied more and more emphasis on the seclusion of women and male domination of property. The emergence of caste systems and feudal relations brought the limitation of the roles of women in the public. By the close of the era of the Middle Ages, women's involvement in government had become rather an exception than a rule.

C. Medieval to Early Modern India Transition Period.

a. Delhi Sultanate (1206 CE, 1526 CE)

New political and cultural structures formed as the Delhi Sultanate was formed bearing the influence of the Persian court and the Islamic law. Although informal political influence, royal intrigues, and regency, elite women in royal families possessed informal political power at times. Women were however largely restricted in their formal positions in governance by customs of purdah and court regulations. (Jackson, 1999; Lal, 2005) One of the exceptions was Razia Sultan, who was a ruler of Delhi herself in the 13th century. This rule demonstrated that a woman may be in power, but it also demonstrated how the nobility vehemently opposed female leadership. The ultimate collapse of Razia suggests that women had structural issues in medieval politics. (Jackson, 1999; Lal, 2005) Beyond the throne, royal and noble women had a role in the administration by supporting architecture, charity and court liaisons. Nevertheless, these sources of power were informal and were based on the relations they had with male rulers. Continuity in elite women impact and a rise in gendered constraints can be seen in the Sultanate period. (Lal, 2005; Sharma, 2005)

b. Mughal Empire (1526 CE, 1857 CE)

There was a lot of political impact, albeit indirectly, of women in the imperial court during the Mughal era. Others such as Nur Jahan possessed significant power and she issued farmans and influenced imperial decisions under Jahangir. Her case is an example of how court systems might permit extraordinary women to influence governance internally with the zenana. (Lal, 2005; Richards, 1993) The Mughal princesses were also involved in diplomacy, patronage and running the imperial house. Jahanara Begum, Zeb-un-Nissa were women of culture and politics who played the court politics. But their influence was never institutionalised and no permanent structure was formed on formal political participation of women. (Richards, 1993; Lal, 2005) The subsequent Mughal period brought a gradual reversal of the women's influence in politics, as the political fragmentation and increased social conservatism led to the weakening of the women's influence in the political arena. Although elite women retained their cultural privilege, they became actively less involved in government. This fall preconditioned a new type of female involvement in the colonial period. (Forbes, 1996; Lal, 2005)

D. British Colonial Period and the Struggle of Freedom.

a. Effects of the British Rule on the participation of women.

The development of new legal, educational, and administrative systems that were introduced by British colonial rule altered the role of women in the public. The transmission of Western education, particularly the missionary and reforming activities resulted in the appearance of a new circle of educated women who started to take part in the discussion. There were also social reform movements that focused on changing social vices such as sati and child marriage and in the process involved women status in political discussions. (Forbes, 1996; Sarkar, 2001) Females became active members of such reform groups like the Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj networks. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, such organizations as the All India Women's Conference provided significant calculus in terms of legal reform, education, and the right to vote. Such organizations were a transition to elite patronage to institutionalized female political activism. (Forbes, 1996; Hasan, 2010) Patriarchal systems were also reinforced by the legal changes that were carried out by the colonial government as a way of civilizing them via codified personal laws. In that way, the colonial era generated a paradoxical situation: increased publicity on the woman and a strengthening of the gendered boundaries of legislation. (Sarkar, 2001; Nussbaum, 2000)

b. The Indian Independence Movement of women.

The nationalist movement transformed the politics of women since they were mobilized in a way they had never been before. Sarojini Naidu, Annie Besant, Kasturba Gandhi, and Aruna Asaf Ali were the leaders who participated in mass movements conspicuously. Non-violent resistance as made by Mahatma Gandhi was an invitation to women to join it, making it more of a patriot obligation and a source of moral power. (Forbes, 1996; Sarkar, 2001) Women participated in civil disobedience, protests and boycotts as well as underground resistance activities in great numbers. Their involvement worked against colonial rule and changed the gender roles in Indian society. More importantly, women activists started to demand political rights, i.e. universal suffrage, legal equality in independent India. (Hasan, 2010; Forbes, 1996) By 1940s, women had gained a formal recognition in the nationalist politics although the males remained in control. However, their participation in the struggle to achieve freedom was the foundation to the inclusion of gender after gaining independence. (Rai, 2011; Sarkar, 2001)

E. Women in Modern Indian Governance

a. Post-Independence Era (1947, Present)

Women in the Constituent Assembly like Hansa Mehta, Durgabai Deshmukh and Ammu Swaminathan were instrumental in forming constitutional provisions on equality and fundamental rights. They succeeded and the result saw the introduction of a universal adult franchise and gender free citizenship which was a definite repudiation of the colonial exclusions.

(Austin, 1999; Hasan, 2010) Even after independence, women were under-represented in both Parliament and state legislatures even though this was guaranteed by the constitution. Political parties took long before they nominated women candidates and aspects such as patriarchy, inequality of resources as well as electoral violence persisted. But over time there has been an increment of the representation. This circumstance will lead to a decrease in the total amount of U.S. denim exports. This situation will result in a fall in the overall level of U.S. denim exports. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments (1992, 1993) was a serious blow to the state as it demanded one third of women on the local governance bodies. These reforms have greatly increased women participation in the grass root politics and are regarded as revolutionary in the local democracy. (Hasan, 2010; Rai, 2011)

b. Modern Day Problems and Successes

Recent statistics have indicated that women representation in the Lok Sabha has exceeded 14 percent yet it still lags behind the rest of the world. Although local governance has experienced a huge growth in women because of reservations, gender imbalance is experienced in higher legislative bodies. This distinction shows the distinction between descriptive and substantive representation. Moreover, they regard the idea of democracy as essentially a commercial partnership between states and nations. More so, they consider the concept of democracy to be a business alliance between the states and the nations. The Protection of Women against Domestic Violence Act (2005), the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act (2013) and the Women Reservation Bill (once again in the limelight after many years) are clear examples of how gender can become a more significant factor in policy-making. These actions are an indication of improvement and the current gender justice agenda in governance. (Nussbaum, 2000; Rai, 2011) Women have not yet participated fully due to the continuous hindrances; political violence, an uneven distribution of campaign financing, social norms, and intersectional imbalances. These issues need not only legal adjustments but also institutional and cultural ones to overcome them. (Hasan, 2010; Rai, 2011)

F. Comparative Analysis

a. Patterns and Trends in the Past

The participation of women in governance in India has had a complicated journey through its earlier ritual prominence, the classical restraints, the elite power of its medieval period, mobilization in the colonial period and its institutional inclusion in the modern period. The most significant shift was in the nationalist and post-independence years when women changed the status of symbolically to formally political citizenship. (Thapar, 2002; Forbes, 1996) Among the crucial agents of change are the change in religious views, state building, colonial modernity and reform of the constitution. Interestingly, the growing levels of participation among women are also usually accompanied by the expansion of democratization. Nevertheless, structural

patriarchy has had a consistent effect on the level of such gains. (Rai, 2011; Nussbaum, 2000) India is among the pathways of the world which took the pattern of many postcolonial nations in which women were granted the right to vote upon gaining independence but were unable to find the way to achieve actual representation later. The introduction of universal suffrage in India was a progressive move but the reality of the results of the representation in India are still unequal with some developed democracies. The site additionally offers information on various countries, especially those connected to the Euro zone crisis. The site also provides information about different countries, particularly those related to the Euro Zone crisis.

b. National Differences in India

The political participation of women is diverse in the Indian states. In other states such as Kerala, West Bengal, and Rajasthan, participation in local governance is relatively high, in part because of the effective application of the reservation policy and the existence of active civil society networks. (Government of India, 2022; Rai, 2011) The influences on the regional outcomes are cultural norms, literacy rates, economic development, and the structure of parties. Indicatively, in Kerala in some regions and the Northeast, matrilineal societies have enabled women to be more mobile and regions with deeply rooted patriarchal land relations tend to develop more gradually. (Hasan, 2010; Nussbaum, 2000) The case studies demonstrate that an increased number of women in politics does not necessarily empower them. There are also other areas in which there are proxy women representatives where men in the family actually control. Nevertheless, the long-term experience shows that the continued reservation policies have a gradually increasing effect on accumulating the political strength and independence of women. (Rai, 2011; Government of India, 2022)

G. Conclusion

a. Summary of Key Findings

History indicates that the involvement of women in the Indian government has been evolving in cycles of visibility, limitations, accommodation and institutionalization. With the meager intellectual-agency of the Vedic era to the constitutional rights of contemporary India, women have had to find their way in male dominated political spaces. The most revolutionizing were the nationalist movement and the post-independence constitution. Although significant advances have been achieved particularly in local governance, real gender equality is not achieved. Women still experience structural impediments that are based on social norms, political processes, and economic inequalities, which are influencing their political careers. Indian experience can be characterized as both very promising and quite challenging.

b. Prospects and Recommendations.

Multi-layered strategies are required to improve the involvement of women in governance. These must involve enactment and adequate execution of the legislative quotas in the Parliament and

state assemblies, enhancing the political training programs, and correcting the campaign financing. The changes of the patriarchal social norms should be accompanied by institutional efforts. (Rai, 2011; Nussbaum, 2000) Intersectional analysis should be the focus of future research on how caste, class, religion, and region are determining the political experiences of women. Research on women leaders in local politics, digital politics, and South Asian comparative views will make the subject matter more profound. It is important to note that sustained academic and policy focus is essential to attain true gender equity in Indian governance. (Hasan, 2010; Forbes, 1996)

References

1. Altekar, A. S. (1956). *The status of women in Hindu civilization*. Motilal Banarsidass.
2. Austin, G. (1999). *The Indian constitution: The backbone of a nation*. Oxford University Press.
3. Chakravarti, U. (1993). Branding Brahmanical patriarchy. *Economic and Political Weekly*.
4. Election Commission of India. (2023). *The general election statistical reports*.
5. Forbes, G. (1996). *Women in modern India*. Cambridge University Press.
6. Government of India. (2022). *Panchayati raj annual report*.
7. Hasan, Z. (2010). *Inclusion politics: Minorities and castes and affirmative action*. Oxford University Press.
8. Inter-Parliamentary Union. (2023). *Nations with women representatives in national parliaments report*.
9. Jackson, P. (1999). *The political and military history of the Delhi Sultanate*. Cambridge University Press.
10. Karashima, N. (2009). *South Indian history and society*. Oxford University Press.
11. Lal, R. (2005). *Domesticity and power in the early Mughal world*. Cambridge University Press.
12. Nussbaum, M. (2000). *Women and human development*. Cambridge University Press.
13. Olivelle, P. (2004). *Manu's code of law*. Oxford University Press.
14. Rai, S. (2011). *Gender and the political economy of development*. Polity.
15. Richards, J. F. (1993). *The Mughal empire*. Cambridge University Press.
16. Sarkar, S. (2001). *Modern India 1885–1947*. Macmillan.
17. Sharma, R. S. (2005). *India's ancient past*. Oxford University Press.
18. Singh, U. (2008). *History of ancient and early medieval India*. Pearson.
19. Thapar, R. (2002). *Early India: From the origins to AD 1300*. Penguin.

THE SECURITY TURN IN INDIAN DIPLOMACY: CHINA, BORDERS AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Pratha Biyani

Department of Political Science and International Relations, IIS (deemed to be) University

Corresponding author -mail: prathabiyani35@gmail.com

Introduction

When a country starts to deal with other countries mostly by thinking about security and managing risks instead of just talking to them or working together on business this is called a security turn in foreign policy. The people who make decisions for the country, they start to take care about being able to protect themselves watching what is going on working with other countries and being able to handle problems quickly than they do about just talking and doing business to make things better. When a country focuses more on security it does not mean that they stop talking to countries, it just means that they start to think about security and managing risks at the same time. This is especially important when we think about India and China because they have disagreements about land. They are competing to build things, which has changed the way they talk to each other.

The way India and China have worked together in the past in the 1990s and the early 2010s was to try to get along. They would have meetings between leaders increase trade work together with other countries and make agreements to build trust. Economic ties grew as a result of the management of security challenges through procedures and steps to encourage confidence. However, following 2014, under Narendra Modi's leadership, diplomacy first blended engagement with open strategic signaling. While high-level visits, informal summits, and economic outreach persisted, there was also a stronger focus on military preparedness, diverse strategic alliances in the Indo-Pacific, and infrastructure development along the border.

After the 2020 border crisis in eastern Ladakh, clashes and China's increasing assertiveness along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) raised some concerns about the strategy's effects. Important turning events that demonstrated the limitations of involvement without sufficient deterrent were the Doklam stalemate in 2017 and the Galwan Valley conflict in 2020. In addition to diplomatic channels, military and security channels were increasingly used for discussions. Key diplomatic topics included force posture, buffer zones, disengagement talks, and verification procedures.

Historical Background of India-China Relations

After the 2020 border crisis which took a turn towards a clear change concerning a security-first approach and the events that demonstrated the limitations of involvement without sufficient

deterrent were the Doklam stalemate in 2017 and the Galwan Valley conflict in 2020. In addition to diplomatic channels, military and security channels were increasingly used for discussions. Both nations worked to normalize relations through diplomatic engagement starting in the late 1980s. Despite the lack of a definitive boundary settlement, agreements on peace and calm along the LAC made in 1993 and 1996 contributed to relative stability. Although they did not settle underlying issues, these agreements lessened the possibility of violent conflict. India's worries about a strategic imbalance intensified in the 2000s as China's economic and military might increase. When the Modi administration took office in 2014, India-China ties were marked by diplomatic and economic cooperation alongside unsolved security issues (Tellis, 2020).

Diplomatic Engagement under the Modi Government

At first, the Modi administration placed a strong emphasis on diplomacy as the main strategy for handling ties with China. Priority was given to high-level interactions, with President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Modi often meeting outside of global organizations. The goal of the establishment of informal summits, such as the 2018 Wuhan Summit, was to encourage strategic communication and a personal connection between the two leaders. The main goal of these talks was to manage conflicts, rather than to solve the big problems between the countries. To make sure everyone was on the page they set up some rules like talking to each other about military things, having diplomatic discussions and meeting with people who work at the border. They also had an agenda of assisting citizens of nations to coexist and collaborate on economic initiatives. Despite all these measures things were still extremely tense along the LAC. China was constructing in ever-increasing amounts. Its patrol activities were a big danger to the status quo that people questioned whether talking things out was indeed working. This was quite evident in the Doklam conflict as diplomatic negotiations could not resolve the situation and China issue remained in the twilight with China being the primary issue. The problem of China was not fading away. It was evident that China made a large portion of the problem (Madan, 2020).

India-China: Emerging Security Challenges

The increasing aggressiveness of China in Asia has had a significant influence on the foreign and security policies of India. China has invested a lot in forward troop presence, improved logistics and infrastructure along LAC. These events led to the change of the ground situation and face-offs between the Chinese and Indian troops became more frequent. In addition to the border, New Delhi feared strategic encirclements given that China was increasing its influence in South Asia which consisted of infrastructure projects as part of the Belt and Road Initiative. The strategic alliance between China and Pakistan added more complexity in the security environment of India, as it enhanced the perception of a concerted challenge. India met this by gradually re-allocating its priorities to military preparedness, enhancing surveillance capacity

and ensuring border infrastructures were safe. The shift in Indian security posture was now an important element of the Indian message to China (Bommakanti, 2020).

- **The Doklam Standoff: A Diplomatic and Strategic Test**

India and China have had a lot of issues in the past. One big problem was the Doklam conflict in 2017. This happened when China started building roads in a place that India and Bhutan also claim. India did not want China to do this because it would change the situation and make India less safe. India got involved because it was worried about its security and strategy. India was afraid that if China kept doing what it was doing it would hurt India's interests. In the end India and China were able to talk things out and stop the fighting. This conflict showed how dangerous it can be when countries disagree about their borders. The Doklam conflict taught India that it needs to have a plan in place to deal with these kinds of situations. It also showed that India's government and military need to work to make decisions. The Doklam conflict was also a sign that India is getting stronger and more confident. India is now more willing to stand up to China. Say no to things that it does not think are fair. India is making it clear that it will not let China do whatever it wants. The Doklam conflict was a deal for India and China ties, under the Modi administration (Senthilkumar, 2019).

- **Trade Imbalances**

Before 2014 India and China trade grew fast. Was not balanced. By 2013 trade between India and China had reached over USD 70 billion. This was mostly because India was buying more Chinese machinery, electronics, power equipment, chemicals and medicine ingredients. On the hand India was mostly selling raw materials like iron ore to China. This created a problem. India was importing a lot more from China than it was exporting. The India-China Joint Economic Group was set up to help solve these issues. India found it hard to sell more to China in areas like IT, medicines and farming. So even though India and China were trading a lot the trade was not fair. This unfair trade set the stage for problems, between the two countries. During Modi's term the trade deficit kept getting bigger. It was around 37.8 billion USD in 2014. By 2019 it had grown to, over 56 billion USD. Later it even crossed 100 billion USD (Rajesh Panda, 2016). This disequilibrium was perceived as more than an economic issue. It was also considered as a weakness in the India's strategy. The dependency of the imports of China was seen by many analysts to place India's in danger of pressure in case of political problems and border related problems. Due to this, the trade imbalance began to be linked to the geopolitics and national security issues in the relationships between India and China. The dependency caused India to be concerned about its reliance with China. Goods reliance was a concern to the economy and security of India's economy. India-China relations had a problem of the trade imbalance. It was also not trade but India's strategic vulnerability, to China.

- **Clash of Galwan Valley**

The fight in the Galwan Valley in 2020 was a turning point for India and China. This time people died on both sides, which changed how people in India think about things. It showed that the plans to keep the Galwan Valley calm were not very strong. After what happened India started to stand up for itself. India did this by being tough on security and also by talking to China. India also tried to rely on China for important things. India put a lot of soldiers along the border. What happened in Galwan Valley showed India that it needs to be ready and strong. It also showed that just talking to China is not enough. The Galwan Valley incident also made India want to work with its friends in the Indo-Pacific area who think like India. The Galwan Valley incident was a deal for India and China and it changed a lot of things. India is still dealing with what happened in the Galwan Valley. It is trying to be stronger. The Galwan Valley is still an issue for India and China (Gokhale, 2021).

Crisis Governance and Decision-Making

The Modi administration has made crisis governance a big part of India's policy with China. When there are problems at the border, the military, diplomats and leaders have to work to make decisions. They do this to keep India safe and prevent things from getting worse.

India has done a job managing these crises. Signaling and communication have been employed by them to make their point. They apply such methods as statements, military drills and messages to the people to demonstrate their seriousness without engaging in a fight. This is in line with the India's strategy to keep off China without being overbearing. India's China policy goes hand in hand with crisis management. To governance of crisis India's approach is very cautious. This is demonstrated in their policy towards China.

The Dual-Track Approach: Dialogue and Deterrence

The policy of the India and China is widely referred to as a dual-track policy since it attempts to maintain a balance between engagement and security preparedness simultaneously. It is not only the working with China or the conflict with China that India relies on. India continues negotiating with China through platforms, military discussions and diplomatic meetings so as to control tensions and prevent misunderstandings along the Line of Actual Control. This indicates that India is fully aware that some stability should be maintained in the relationship with China as well as ensuring that things do not go out of control between two countries which possess weapons. In such a way, India does not solve old conflicts but reduces risks and copes with the crisis with the help of engagement. China has increased the aggression of India on the track through its response. This translates to India closely monitoring the border with improved border infrastructure deployment of more military resources as well as deterrent. This security plan aims at ensuring that China does not succeed in altering the border without the consent of India's and that India is serious. India does not want to spoil its standing with China and be more fragile in

the cases of crisis, as these negotiations are supposed to be good. The India- China policy remains a two-track policy that attempts to balance both engagement and security preparedness that is highly valued in their relationship (Jaishankar, 2020). India is struggling with a difficult scenario. The nation is attempting to determine ways of dealing with China. When these two concepts are combined India's policy towards China becomes very sensible. India is aware that they can make matters more difficult by being tough on China without having to talk to them. It may not work in case India is too nice to China without being strong. India desires to be the boss in the case of China that it does not want to fight. It does not wish to jeopardize its own interests totally without fully severing their ties with China. Therefore, India is applying a two-step strategy that involves talking to China and being prepared to do anything. In this manner, India will be able to manage the relationship with China flexibly.

India-China Responses to Emerging Security Challenges

The situation between India and China has been very tense after what happened in Ladakh in 2020. China has been acting aggressively along the border that India and China disagree about. This has caused a lot of security problems for India. In going to war both countries have decided to use a combination of talking to each other and being ready for a fight. India has improved its position along the border by sending soldiers, making it easier to supply them with what they need by building more roads and airports and using better technology to keep an eye on things. India has also matched what China is doing in areas by copying their strategy. China has made its bases on the plateau stronger and it can react faster to problems. All of this has made the border a militarized but controlled place. With all of this India and China have not stopped talking to each other. They have opened avenues to deal with the crisis, including discussing with special representatives by following the foreign ministry protocols and engaging in dialogue between the ranking military officials. In other regions that experience high levels of friction such well-planned deliberations have served to ease the situation and ensure that conflicts are not escalated into bigger ones. India has also developed friendly relations with the Indo-Pacific nations to have alternative choices of its security. China has continued to attempt to be influential in the region coupled with paying attention to stability and dispute resolution. India as well as China have demonstrated the ability to be tough yet cautious that they do not push the matter too far. China has ensured that trade continues to be one of the ways of maintaining things stable. India has taken steps to reduce risks in areas that are vulnerable. Even though there are still tensions they are being managed through a combination of diplomatic efforts rather than just escalating into a bigger conflict. This has created a model where India and China compete with each other. In a controlled way that uses deterrence, negotiation and crisis control.

India and China are still competing; they are doing it in a way that is managed. India and China are using a combination of being strong and talking to each other to resolve issues. This is

helping to prevent a conflict between India and China. The situation between India and China is still tense. It is being managed through diplomatic and military efforts. India and China are finding ways to compete without escalating into a blown conflict (Tellis, 2020).

Regional and Global Implications

The shift towards security in diplomacy has a lot of impact on the whole world and the region. Indian diplomacy is. This change affects global geopolitics and regional stability.

At the time India was trying to balance the power of China. India is doing this by getting involved in the Indo-Pacific region and joining organizations. India wants to counterbalance China's influence.

India does not want to be part of alliances because it wants to be independent and make its own decisions. So India's plan for dealing with China is to be careful with what it says and does and to balance its relationships with countries in the region. This makes Indian diplomacy more complicated and Indian foreign policy is not so simple.

Conclusion

The relationship between India and China is very tense now. They have had some problems at their border and have had to deal with military standoffs. In the past they used to focus on working and talking about politics and economics. Now they are more focused on security and being prepared for anything. They are trying to be ready to respond to any problems that come up and are working to keep their border stable.

This shows that security is an important thing for both India and China. They are talking to each other. Attempting to not be surprised at each other. They also are developing their military. Observing one another in order to avoid any kind of accidental conflict. They are attempting to work out a few rules and agreements to assist in avoiding issues at the time. This is a way to handle things. They are not only competing with one another but are careful and also risky. They continue to collaborate in some global matters, thus contributing to avoidance of their relationship going too wrong. A combination of strength is being used in India and China. Discussing so as to attempt to cope with their problems without letting them get out of control. Both of them are very powerful and are surveying one another to prevent any suspicious activities. They also know how to communicate with each other such as holding meetings with officials to assist in solving any arising issues. They also are concentrating on certain issues such as withdrawing their troops in certain regions and establishing buffer zones to ease the tension. They also have been wary of what they say so as not to complicate the situation. Some trade and institutional connections still exist between them that contribute to the stability. In the future India and China will probably still have a lot of competition and tension between them. It is unlikely that they will stop talking to each other but it is also unlikely that they will suddenly become very trusting of each other. More likely they will just keep competing with each other.

Will work to prevent any big conflicts by talking to each other and being prepared. Overall, the key to stability will be communication, good management of problems and ongoing talks between India and China rather than just being friends.

References

1. Chatterjee, S., & Das, U. (2021). Indian foreign policy as public history: Globalist, pragmatist and Hindutva imaginations. *India Review*, 20(5), 565–588. Taylor & Francis. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/14736489.2021.1993707>
2. Deepak, B. R. (2017). The Doklam standoff: What could be done. *SADF Comment*. https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0,5&qsp=6&q=doklam+standoff+history&qst=bl
3. Gokhale, V. (2021). *The road from Galwan: The future of India–China relations* (Vol. 10). Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. https://carnegie-production-ssets.s3.amazonaws.com/static/files/Gokhale_Galwan.pdf
4. Gokhale, V. (2021). *The long game: How the Chinese negotiate with India*. Penguin Random House India. https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/The_Long_Game/vYE0EAAAQBAJ
5. Gong, X., & Balazs, D. (2025). Where India and China meet: Competing regional statecraft in Southeast Asia. *Political Science Quarterly*. <https://academic.oup.com/psq/advancearticle/doi/10.1093/psquar/qqaf059/8195582>
6. Jaishankar, S. (2020). *The India way: Strategies for an uncertain world*. HarperCollins Publishers India. https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/The_India_Way/EIHxDwAAQBAJ
7. Kaura, V. (2020). India's relations with China from the Doklam crisis to the Galwan tragedy. *India Quarterly: A Journal of International Affairs*, 76(4), 501–518. SAGE Publications. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0974928420961768>
8. Kuppusamy, S. (2019). Doklam stand-off 2017: A geopolitical rivalry between India and China. *Adalya Journal*, 8(9), 1251–1265. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336148220_Doklam_Standoff_2017_A_Geopolitical_rivalry_between
9. Madan, T. (2020). *Fateful triangle: How China shaped US–India relations during the Cold War*. Penguin Random House India. https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/Fateful_Triangle/PrmLDwAAQBAJ
10. Panda, S. (2014). India–China relationship: A case of trust deficit. *Journal of Peace Studies*, 21(1). <https://www.icpsnet.org/journal/peaceandsecurity/2014Jan-Art2.pdf>

11. Pant, H. V., & Bommakanti, K. (2020). *From Doklam to Galwan: India–China relations in crisis*. Observer Research Foundation. <https://www.orfonline.org/research/china-india-border-crisis-reaches-new-heights>
12. Pant, H. V. (2018). Modi and Xi in Wuhan: Bringing normalcy back to the India–China relationship. *Observer Research Foundation*. <https://coilink.org/20.500.12592/7mfedd>
13. Ranjan, A. (2016). India–China boundary disputes: An overview. *Asian Affairs*, 47(1), 101–114. Taylor & Francis.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03068374.2015.1129869>
14. Smith, J. M. (2014). *Cold peace: China–India rivalry in the twenty-first century*. Bloomsbury Academic. https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/Cold_Peace/o-BiEQAAQBAJ
15. Tellis, A. J. (2020). *Trouble on the roof of the world: The India–China border crisis*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
<https://carnegieendowment.org/india/people/ashley-j-tellis>
16. Tellis, A. J. (2021). *Hustling in the Himalayas: The Sino-Indian border confrontation*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. <https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-eurasia/research/2020/06/hustling-in-the-himalayas-the-sino-indian-border-confrontation>

STRATEGIC TRADE DIPLOMACY IN A FRAGMENTING GLOBAL ORDER: INDIA'S FTAs WITH THE UNITED STATES AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Shreeja Mathur

IIS (deemed to be University) Jaipur

Corresponding author E-mail: bhawmaa@gmail.com

Introduction

The twenty-first century global trading system is experiencing a significant structural transition. The multilateral framework established after the Second World War initially under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and later formalized through the World Trade Organization (WTO) is no longer operating with the coherence and predictability that once defined it. Instead, the contemporary trade environment is marked by institutional strain, selective rule formation, and intensifying geopolitical rivalry. The weakening of dispute settlement processes, the resurgence of protectionist policies, the strategic restructuring of supply chains, and the increasing deployment of trade measures for political purposes have collectively reshaped the landscape of international economic relations. In this setting, Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) have evolved beyond instruments of tariff reduction to become central mechanisms of strategic statecraft.

India's ongoing trade negotiations with the United States and the European Union must be interpreted within this wider context of systemic transformation. Traditionally, India adopted a cautious approach toward deep trade liberalization, emphasizing policy autonomy, developmental priorities, and a strong commitment to multilateral institutions. However, developments in the mid-2020s suggest a measured recalibration of this stance. Engagements with the United States and the European Union reflect a pragmatic shift toward targeted bilateral cooperation designed to expand market access, reinforce supply chain resilience, attract investment, and enhance India's strategic positioning in a competitive global order.

This chapter contends that India's pursuit of FTAs with the United States and the European Union constitutes a strategic adaptation to changes in the global political economy. Rather than signaling a departure from multilateralism, these initiatives demonstrate India's effort to operate effectively within a fragmented trade environment by engaging selectively with major economic actors. Through an analysis of geopolitical motivations, economic imperatives, and regulatory considerations, the chapter situates India's evolving trade diplomacy within broader scholarly debates on global economic fragmentation, strategic autonomy, and the behavior of emerging powers in an era of contested globalization.

Fragmentation of the Global Trade Order: Conceptual Framework

The contemporary global trading landscape is increasingly characterized by fragmentation, signifying a gradual weakening of the universal, rules-based multilateral system and the rapid

expansion of regional, bilateral, and plurilateral trade frameworks. This shift has been shaped by several interrelated developments, including stalled negotiations within the World Trade Organization, the continued dysfunction of its dispute settlement mechanism, intensifying geopolitical competition, and widening differences in regulatory approaches among major economies. As consensus-driven decision-making gives way to power-oriented negotiations, the logic underpinning trade policy has undergone a significant transformation.

Theoretically, this transition can be understood through neo-realist and strategic political economy perspectives, both of which highlight how states behave in an environment marked by uncertainty, rivalry, and shifting power balances. Under such conditions, trade agreements are no longer confined to tariff reduction or market access; instead, they function as instruments for advancing strategic interests, enhancing economic resilience, and influencing rule-making in emerging domains such as digital commerce, renewable technologies, and supply chains for critical minerals.

For rising economies such as India, this evolving environment generates a complex mix of limitations and possibilities. Although the weakening of multilateral institutions diminishes predictability and stability in global trade governance, it simultaneously creates room for more flexible, interest driven engagement. India's pursuit of free trade agreements with major economic partners such as the United States and the European Union can therefore be interpreted not as an unqualified endorsement of neoliberal trade principles, but as a calculated strategic response designed to align external economic commitments with domestic development priorities.

Evolution of India's Trade Diplomacy

Since independence, India's trade strategy has passed through several clearly differentiated stages. In the decades immediately following decolonization, policy was guided by economic self-reliance, protection of domestic industry, and an import substitution model that limited deep engagement with global markets. The balance began to shift with the economic reforms of the early 1990s, which opened the economy and facilitated gradual integration into international trade and investment flows. Even so, India maintained a guarded approach toward extensive trade obligations, especially in sensitive areas such as agriculture, services, and intellectual property.

In the 2000s, India adopted a more proactive role in multilateral forums while entering into selected regional trade arrangements. Nevertheless, hesitation toward broad-based and high-standard free trade agreements remained, largely because of domestic political and economic considerations related to employment, industrial capacity, and market vulnerability. The decision to opt out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations in 2019 reflected persistent concerns about uneven liberalization and the potential adverse impact on local manufacturing and trade balances.

By the mid-2020s, however, a noticeable recalibration had taken place. India's re-engagement with free trade negotiations is increasingly interpreted through a strategic lens rather than a purely commercial one. Contemporary trade agreements are being positioned as tools to advance developmental goals, preserve strategic autonomy, and strengthen India's role within an evolving global order. In this context, trade diplomacy functions not merely as an economic policy instrument but as an integral component of India's wider foreign policy framework.

India–United States FTA: Strategic Selectivity and Economic Pragmatism

Economic relations between India and the United States have historically combined expanding commercial exchange with periodic tensions over trade policy. Despite strong alignment in areas such as Indo Pacific security, emerging technologies, and defense cooperation, disagreements continue regarding tariff levels, standards regulation, agricultural access, and digital trade governance.

The evolving trade arrangement between the two countries reflects a gradual and carefully structured approach rather than a sweeping, comprehensive free trade agreement. Instead of pursuing across the board liberalization, both sides have concentrated on sectors carrying strategic and political weight, including pharmaceuticals, selected agricultural products, advanced manufacturing, and technology-driven services. At the same time, particularly sensitive domains such as electric vehicles and segments of small-scale farming have been approached cautiously or left outside the current framework.

For India, engagement with the United States serves multiple strategic objectives. It provides improved entry into one of the largest consumer markets globally, offering opportunities for export-led growth. It also supports deeper participation in resilient supply chains across critical sectors, thereby reducing overreliance on China. Additionally, strengthening trade ties complements the broader strategic partnership with Washington while allowing New Delhi to retain flexibility in domestic policymaking.

Nonetheless, the relatively narrow scope of the arrangement underscores enduring limitations. Political considerations within both democracies, contrasting regulatory traditions, and the absence of a robust multilateral anchor constrain the potential for far reaching liberalization. In this sense, India U.S. trade cooperation represents a model of pragmatic and interest driven engagement rather than a move toward comprehensive economic integration.

India–European Union FTA: Regulatory Engagement and Long-Term Integration

Unlike the more limited trade engagement with the United States, the proposed agreement between India and the European Union reflects a broader and more structured vision of economic partnership. After almost two decades of intermittent negotiations, progress toward this arrangement signals growing alignment shaped by both shared commercial interests and shifting geopolitical realities. The European Union's trade architecture is grounded in detailed regulatory frameworks that prioritize sustainability, labor protections, environmental safeguards, and high

technical standards. India's readiness to negotiate within this framework marks an important shift in its external economic strategy. While continuing to protect particularly vulnerable sectors, India has shown openness to gradual tariff reductions and structured regulatory dialogue in return for improved access to European markets and increased investment opportunities.

From a strategic standpoint, deeper engagement with the European Union enables India to widen its economic network and reduce vulnerability to unilateral measures by any single major power. It also strengthens India's appeal as a manufacturing base and investment hub for firms seeking to diversify supply chains within Europe's external economic partnerships.

At the same time, the agreement presents notable domestic challenges. Meeting stringent regulatory standards may impose higher compliance costs, and certain industries could face transitional strain. Preserving adequate policy flexibility while implementing reforms will therefore be critical. Ultimately, the long-term effectiveness of the India EU trade partnership will depend not only on negotiated tariff concessions but also on India's institutional preparedness and capacity for structural adjustment.

Comparative Analysis: USA vs EU as Trade Partners

The evaluation of India's trade engagements with the United States and the European Union highlights two contrasting strategic approaches. Cooperation with the United States tends to be adaptive and issue-focused, shaped by sectoral negotiations and broader geopolitical alignment. In contrast, engagement with the European Union is more institutionalized, emphasizing structured rule-making, regulatory harmonization, and long-term normative alignment.

For India, simultaneously advancing these two tracks demands careful diplomatic calibration. Balancing the commercially driven and flexible orientation of the United States with the standards based and regulatory model of the European Union enables India to extract economic and strategic advantages from both relationships without compromising its policy independence. This parallel strategy reflects India's growing significance as a pivotal actor capable of influencing the direction of global trade governance.

Trade as Strategy: Geopolitical Implications

India's free trade agreements should be viewed not merely as commercial arrangements but as components of a wider geopolitical design. In a global environment marked by renewed economic nationalism and intensifying competition among major powers, trade partnerships increasingly operate as tools of strategic signaling demonstrating alignment, reliability, and long-term commitment.

Through parallel engagement with both the United States and the European Union, India expands its negotiating leverage, avoids excessive reliance on any single power center, and strengthens its capacity to participate in shaping emerging economic rules. These partnerships also complement India's broader strategic posture in the Indo Pacific, reinforcing its image as a responsible and stabilizing force within an increasingly fragmented international system.

Conclusion

India's trade agreements with the United States and the European Union represent an important turning point in the trajectory of its external economic policy. Rather than signaling a retreat from strategic autonomy, these arrangements illustrate a carefully adjusted strategy designed for an increasingly fragmented and competitive global trade landscape. By combining calibrated market opening, structured regulatory cooperation, and geopolitical balancing, India is repositioning trade policy as a central instrument of strategic governance.

In a world where economic fragmentation continues to intensify, India's approach demonstrates how emerging economies can manage systemic uncertainty while safeguarding developmental priorities and national interests. The enduring impact of these agreements, however, will rest on their practical execution, the strengthening of domestic institutional and industrial capacities, and the continuity of proactive and balanced diplomatic engagement.

References

1. World Trade Organization. (2023). *World trade report 2023: Re-globalization for a secure, inclusive and sustainable future*. WTO Publications.
2. European Commission. (2023). *EU–India trade and investment negotiations: Factsheet and policy overview*. Publications Office of the European Union.
3. Office of the United States Trade Representative. (2023). *2023 national trade estimate report on foreign trade barriers*. Executive Office of the President of the United States.
4. Government of India, Ministry of Commerce and Industry. (2023). *Annual report 2022–23*. Department of Commerce.
5. Bown, C. P. (2022). *The crisis in global trade governance and the WTO dispute settlement system*. Peterson Institute for International Economics.
6. Hoekman, B., & Zedillo, E. (Eds.). (2021). *Trade in the 21st century: Back to the past?* Brookings Institution Press.
7. Palit, A. (2020). *India's trade policy: The 1991 reforms and beyond*. Springer.
8. Evenett, S. J., & Fritz, J. (2019). *Going it alone? Trade policy after three years of populism*. Global Trade Alert Report.
9. Rodrik, D. (2018). *Straight talk on trade: Ideas for a sane world economy*. Princeton University Press.
10. Narlikar, A. (2017). *Poverty narratives and power paradoxes in international trade negotiations and beyond*. Cambridge University Press.
11. Baldwin, R. (2016). *The great convergence: Information technology and the new globalization*. Harvard University Press.

MENTAL HEALTH AS A HUMAN RIGHT IN THE DIGITAL AGE: THE ROLE OF ONLINE CIVIL SOCIETY MOVEMENT

Harshita Singh

Department of Psychology, IIS (deemed to be) University

Corresponding author E-mail: jusharshitasingh@gmail.com

Introduction

The issue of mental health has been a neglected issue in the human rights field for a long time now. Until recently, a person's mental health condition was not perceived as a human rights issue but rather as a medical issue. Much of the mental health policy and law revolves around the biomedical model, institutional care, and gross neglect (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022). Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) embodies the right to the highest attainable standard of mental health. Additionally, psychosocial disabilities are clearly included in and are part of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The 2006 International Treaty Has Been Adopted Most Significant Development of a Right to Mental Health International Human Rights Sphere 2006 International Treaty Has Been Adopted. The United Nations (2006) describes psychosocial disability as a type of disability that requires States to provide accommodation and prevent discrimination. More than 75% of individuals with mental health conditions in low- and middle-income countries receive no treatment whatsoever (WHO, 2022). Evidence suggests there is a global treatment gap for mental health issues. Nonetheless, digital activism through the internet changed the scenario. Currently, those who have mental health experiences are using online forums to argue for their entitlements of respect, non-discrimination.

Earlier, people experiencing mental health issues were seen as needy and deserving of pity. Now, it is recognized that these are people with rights, capable of claiming what is rightfully theirs, and holding their governments accountable. The disability rights movement and other networks of survivors that are forming coalitions and moving on-line have made this shift possible. The online realm is thriving today, where efforts are being made to launch community organizing, and documentation is seen in new and powerful ways. The issue on human rights related to mental health transits easily to the online sphere such that linkages globally are made in a matter of seconds, what once took years offline. Online movements bridge the gap between words and actions. People are using Twitter, Instagram, TikTok and other platforms to gather, demand action, and educate each other. On-line communities are increasingly changing the game of mental health advocacy and social movement justice.

Mental Health as a Human Right: Legal and Conceptual Foundations

The evolution of mental health as a human right took place over many decades as a result of political, economic, international consensus building, and expert initiatives and activist strategy and mobilization. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a key human rights document that was created in 1948. This states that everyone has a right to a standard of living sufficient for their health and wellbeing (Article 25).

ICESCR provides the strongest legal basis. According to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (2000), General Comment No. 14 interprets the right to health to include mental health. It highlights four critical aspects of the right to health as output, outcome and process measures, and participation. The acronym AAAQ is often used to refer to all four elements. It may serve as a yardstick to gauge a state's performance. In 2006, the most recent treaty adopted was the CRPD which places disability in a social frame of reference (UN 2006). It illustrates the transition from the medical model of disability to the social model of disability.

As per the convention, State Parties are required to acknowledge that persons with psychosocial disabilities have legal capacity on an equal basis with others (UN, 2006). Persons with disabilities shall not be subjected to forced treatment or institutionalization. Activists feel really grateful to it as they are able to challenge forced treatment and other coercive practices in the mental health system around the world. We still have a lot to accomplish. According to Patel and others (2018), systems were poorly resourced, as identified by The Lancet Commission on global mental health and sustainable development. The average worldwide spending on mental health is 2% of total health budgets with many low and middle-income spending less than that.

The situation was worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic. There was a 25 percent increase in anxiety and depression comparable to WHO (2022). Nonetheless, the systems were not ready for this. The increasing failure of power systems has increased the importance of civil society movements.

Digital Civil Society: Theoretical Frameworks

Larry Diamond defines civil society “as the realm of organized social life that is voluntary, self-generating, (largely) self-supporting, autonomous from the state and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules.” “Rethinking Civil Society: Towards Democratic Consolidation” was the title of his famous article. The concept of civil society refers to the freedom and autonomous spaces between state and market. Digital civil society simply refers to a global ecosystem of NGOs and individuals who use digital tools to connect and communicate. Nonetheless, it brings ownership and access rights as well as Government Regulation under the Company Governance of Technology.

Manuel Castells (2012) states that the network is the principle of social organization of the new social movements. Thus, networks make possible the organization of new forms of movement

which are leaderless, horizontally organized and Trans territorial, and able to scale up quickly. The Angry Network encompasses a wide range of communities.

Earl and Kimport, 2011, highlight that through digital technologies “super-sized” movements can be enabled. The theorists of collective action cite that digital media can significantly decrease the costs of collective action. As a result, it can facilitate mobilization on a large scale without the support of formal organizational infrastructure. New theories can explain why online movements are so prevalent and successful. These movements can do tangible things, such as: Set up peer support networks (e.g. #MeToo); Policy pressure (e.g. #EndTheStigma - pressure WHO to update its guidance on mental health); Norm shifts. All of them, however, require critical consciousness of platform power if they are to be wins based on rights and not easily obliterated losses.

The term slacktivism was coined / popularized by Evgeny Morozov to describe taking actions that have little effect but create the feeling that you took action. When you click a button, share a post or change your profile picture in support of a cause, that is slacktivism.

Counter Publics and Digital Safe Spaces

Nancy Fraser’s (1990) essay “Rethinking the Public Sphere” introduces the idea of “subaltern counter publics”. The term we use refers to parallel conversational arenas in which members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter narratives, formulating oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs. Therefore, we can analyze online mental health communities through the idea of “subaltern counter publics”.

These arena spaces are where people suffering from a mental illness are allowed to share their experiences and create their dialogue along with a discourse on mental health beyond the mainstream. Outlets include closed Facebook groups, Psych central and Reddit's r/mental health. They offer spaces in which users can support each other, free from judgement, communicate without barriers, mobilize against stigmatizing language and develop a sense of community. This means online spaces do various things. Support that may not be gained due to health care system restrictions is provided. They present opposing viewpoints against the common medical conversation. Lastly, they link disconnected individuals with peers that understand them. The individual may serve as a pathway for people to join the mental health activist movement.

According to the findings of Naslund and colleagues in 2014, online communities have shown that they can help people living with severe mental illnesses. Through these services, a person will not feel socially isolated and will benefit from peer guidance. People for whom it is harder to access mainstream services such as those who live in regional areas, who have mobility issues or those who are fearful of being labeled or judged often find these spaces helpful.

Online Civil Society Movements in Mental Health: Key Examples

Online mental health movements have evolved from small support groups to strong global forces. Driven by personal experiences, these movements use digital platforms to challenge stigma, shape policies, and offer peer support that traditional systems are not able to provide.

Below are the key examples of these digital movements:

#BellLetsTalk (Canada)

Bell Let's Talk was launched in 2010 by Bell Canada to promote awareness and acceptance of mental illness in Canada. Furthermore, the initiative behind the campaign helps to create conversation, fund access to care, reduce stigma and much more. A yearly campaign is run that helps to provide insight into mental illness.

On Bell Let's Talk Day (usually held in January), Bell donated 5 cents for:

- Every text message sent by Bell customers
- Every mobile or long-distance call made by Bell customers
- Every tweet or social media post using #BellLetsTalk
- Certain other social media interactions (depending on the year)

The campaign focuses on anti-stigma, care and access, research and workplace leadership as its four broad themes.

Global Mental Health Movement (GMHM)

After 2007, the worldwide mental health movement commenced, which was the year of publication of a certain report. Reports indicated gaps in care for mental disorders in low- and middle-income countries. A digital platform called Global Mental Health Action Network (GMHAN) was launched in 2018. This initiative links more than 400 organizations and 7000 members from over 170 countries. GMHAN organizes a series of webinars, policy briefings, online discussion forums and other initiatives to mobilize advocates to impact global health policies. They align their work with the World Health Organization's Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP). Task-sharing is also mentioned as one of the measures to strengthen mental health services. GMHAN has been attending UN meetings on NCDs and Universal Health Coverage.

#MentalHealthAwareness and #BreakTheStigma (Global)

#MentalHealthAwareness and '#BreakTheStigma' are global and perhaps the most popular hashtags appearing in mental health conversations and content of all kinds. Among others, these two hashtags get their fair share of use across platforms, including Instagram, TikTok, Twitter and Facebook as it is the Mental Health Awareness Month and also World Mental Health Day. In together you'll notice hashtags such as #mentalhealth, #endthestigma, and #mentalhealthsupport that also has millions of posts. Hashtags such as #mentalhealthawareness and #breakthestigma serves a great purpose in today's social media world. People suffering from

mental health issues use these platforms to communicate with people and get useful materials. Hashtag tracking tools indicate mental health hashtag drives strong engagement.

Tele MANAS

Tele MANAS offers a tele-mental health assistance program with free telephonic services available round the clock. Furthermore, this program was initiated by the government of India in October 2022. Most importantly, you just need to dial a toll-free number for psychological assistance. Mental health stigmas are countered since the services are completely confidential. Subsequently, any individual with a psychological need would make use of the service. Service is available in many Indian languages to overcome language barriers.

Key features include:

- Immediate support from trained mental health professionals
- Emotional support, psychological guidance, and counseling
- Referral services for further evaluation and care
- Accessible from anywhere in India

Peer-to-Peer Support Networks

Online platforms have established ways to connect people to support each other's mental health. Platforms like 7 Cups, TalkLife, Wisdo and Crisis Text Line leverage technology to match individuals with trained peer supporters and counselors. Here's a fine example is Crisis Text Line which started in the US in 2013. By 2022, the NGO had sent over 200 million SMS to beneficiaries in crisis.

Digital backing can exert a powerful influence and drive a great reach based on Mental Health Data Received from Platforms. The platform's data which is anonymous and clustered together has helped identify trends in mental health and shape mental health responses of public health bodies. The stipulations set out in Article 4(3) of the CRPD require that we support peer support networks as a rights-based principle. Training and hiring peer supporters who have lived experience create jobs. Furthermore, they challenge the assumption that only trained experts can help settings through the verified approach to mental health care which limit professional intervention only. It provided a different perspective to assist mental health.

Mechanisms of Digital Mobilization

Movements seeking to enhance mental health in cyberspace succeed through the use of technology, communication, emotional processes, and intelligent strategic use. Digital communication tools do more than pass messages. They also engender frameworks of meaning, identity, solidarity and collective claim. As a result, it allows those people with lived experience to be able to become active agents of advocacy and not a passive object to health interventions in terms of mental health. Social media encompasses popular Internet social networking sites like Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, YouTube etc.

Marginalized voices can talk about mental health issues thanks to social media which has given them a platform. The algorithms are generating an environment that values sensationalism over actual policy across the board. As a result, 'emotional visibility without substantive change' is present. People are also being educated on the symptoms and possible fixes. Moreover, social media is generating an environment of collectiveness and solidarity.

Using digital storytelling allows big issues to be personalized through telling real people's stories. When people freely share personal stories, it can humanize a treatment or stigma or access to care. By sharing our stories, we are staking a claim to rights. Digital Storytelling on Mental Health Advocacy Storytelling showcases how systems fail us. It shows an unwillingness to be silenced. Furthermore, it achieves esteem and worthiness and normalizes behavior.

A significant incorporation of human rights approach, online communities is also a way that people come together to make sense of this distress. They usually look beyond the immediate issue. For instance, they take into account how issues like the following affect mental health-

- Socioeconomic inequality
- Gender-based violence
- Pressure at work or school
- Digital overload
- Discrimination

Hybrid activism combines online actions like likes, shares, and hashtag campaigns with tangible outcomes like policy changes, funding, and expanded services. This shift helps connect mental health advocacy to other justice efforts. Digital participation that achieves real world results is the most successful online mobilization.

Online campaigns often move from awareness to action through:

- Online petitions and signature drives
- Coordinated email campaigns to policy makers
- Digital lobbying tools and policy discussions
- Collecting data from people's experiences

The combination of their strengths leads to a greater digital mobilization presence in policy debates and negotiations, especially with institutionalized mental health advocacy groups. Today, the online movements are becoming a part of policy discussion both at the national and international levels. Campaigners are able to get involved in parliamentary committee hearings, UN events, budget campaigns, and public health reforms talks thanks to digital platforms. Tools and platforms also help advocates in collaborative global efforts.

Global Digital Platforms create safer spaces for collective advocacy actions by groups while strengthening their voices to speak together. To illustrate, international joint initiatives- suicides prevention or youth mental health-have led to policy briefs, new research, funding as well as

governance institutional changes. Activism in the digital space, whether global or local, has moved beyond the politics of representation. Rather, its enabling governance and decision making. Local changes have occurred due to hybrid activism. The launching of campaigns to broaden youth peer support will lead to youth peer support initiatives on campuses, youth mental health literacy workshops in the community, employee training for workplace mental health, and school initiatives. There are countless examples of how online activism and solidarity turn into practical and action-oriented support.

Risks of Digital Mental Health Advocacy

Algorithmic Amplification of Harm

Although the digital platforms that advocate mental health help educate people, they also have a nerve-wracking effect. Many studies suggest that high social media use has correlated with the increased rates of depression, anxiety, loneliness and low self-esteem, especially in adolescents (Twenge *et al.*, 2018). Many different factors can cause anxiety and depression in teenagers on social media, but one of the biggest is unsafe social comparisons. More importantly, recent studies suggest algorithms spread harmful content more widely.

A subsequent instance of irresponsible behavior was uncovered in 2021 by The Wall Street Journal when they found out that Facebook, the parent company, was aware of the studies that Instagram use by teenage girls harms their body image and mental health (Wells *et al.*, 2021). Social media and other platforms rely on specially designed algorithms that keep the user engaged for a longer time. This often leads especially vulnerable users towards the content that promotes self-harm like eating disorder, suicide, and more.

This poses a challenge in the case of digital mental health advocacy since the same companies which enable advocacy also benefit from harmful patterns which can be detrimental to mental health. Regulations should require social media platforms to be accountable for their algorithm design and functioning, and not solely for their content moderation (Rosen, 2022).

Data Privacy and Surveillance

Digital platforms for mental health pose serious risks from data privacy perspective since mental health information is sensitive and personal. When people share details about their mental health, suicidal thoughts, or past trauma on social media or mental health apps, that data can be collected, aggregated, and sold to third parties. Insurers, employers, and law enforcement could be among them. According to one review of mental health apps, most apps share user data with third parties (i.e. advertisers, etc.). This can happen without the informed consent of the user and without any transparency of use.

People who use mental health services may face discrimination based on what they have shared, which represents a significant threat to their rights. Data use presents issues for digital mental health tools as they provide more positive utility. The European Union's General Data Protection

Regulation (GDPR) is a step forward for mental health, but implementation is inconsistent. Those in low and middle-income contexts face the highest risk due to weak governance mechanisms. Mental health data is classified as a “special category” under Article 9 of the GDPR, so explicit consent must be obtained.

Misinformation and Unregulated Advice

Thanks to technology, we’re able to speak about mental health more than ever before. It is generating chances for social acceptance. Moreover, the amount of misinformation is greater than before. There is a constant spread of false information about mental health. It's growing increasingly challenging for the average individual to differentiate between what is right and wrong. There is a lot of mental health advice on social media. Some of these pieces of advice can be quite dangerous. It consists of promoting untested treatments, instructing people to cease their medication and oversimplifying nuanced matters. There is widespread misleading information which is harming the best quality of care. It also continues the stigma. Knowledgeable persons who have gone through professional education also believe that. Research indicates that a huge number of people, especially young people and people with limited education do not possess adequate skills to identify misinformation on the internet platform.

How is it Affecting People?

- TikTok trends are leading people to self-diagnose with misinformation. Conditions like the new “TikTok Tics”.
- On social media, beauty influencers are seen telling people to stop taking their medication or telling people to start.

Intersectionality, Equity, and the Digital Divide

Digital mental health advocacy is subject to a digital divide. The digital divide refers to the uneven access to the internet, devices, and digital skills. For instance, over 2.9 billion people are not online due to factors like poverty, geography, gender, and disability (International Telecommunication Union, 2022). In particular, people in the Global South, rural communities, older adults, women, and individuals with disabilities face this divide. Therefore, those who are most in need of mental health care and support might be least able to access digital mental health care and support.

Intersectionality provides a framework for understanding how digital mental health advocacy can simultaneously be beneficial and harmful. It refers to the compounding ways by which systems of power and oppression impact people. Thus, it recognizes overlapping identities and how these compound disadvantages. For example, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) experience mental health due to racism, poverty, and trauma from colonization and genocide. They also experience a digital divide through discrimination such as online policing and banning

as well as emotional labor. For example, Black and Indigenous peoples may not feel ready to engage online due to their past experiences of marginalization.

Further, many LGBTQ+ people rely on online communities not only for affirmation but also for refuge from an unsupportive environment. In other words, these online spaces can be life-saving and provide them access to critical affirmation, resources, and connections. One other important factor is gender. Women and girls more often suffer from eating disorders, depression, and anxiety, and they seek online support more than men. At the same time, they face more online harassment which impacts their mental health at a very serious level.

Policy Recommendations

For Governments and International Bodies

Governments ought to implement the UN Principles for the Protection of Persons with Mental Illness and Improvement of Mental Health Care, along with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). There ought to be clear safeguards in place for people who speak about mental health on the internet. National mental health strategies should include a digital component within which online peer support groups, digital mental health literacy, and creation of online resources for specific cultures and communities that are usually neglected and get lesser support should have a separate budget line with a more individualized and personalized approach. The World Health Organization and United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health should provide guidance and concrete recommendations on the effect of digital technology on the right to mental health. The duty of tech companies to respect human rights law should be subject to a rigorous assessment, as should recommendations for how to regulate mental health apps and online services, and the specific safeguards around mental health data.

The WHO and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health should issue guidance and concrete recommendations on the implications of digital technology for the right to mental health (In accordance with international human rights norms). They should include guidance on regulating mental health apps and online services, specific safeguards regarding mental health data, and a full assessment of the duty of tech companies to comply with human rights law. International organizations can encourage the emergence of a human rights-based approach to digital mental health through a number of mechanisms. These include: development of international standards and guidelines on digital mental health practice. When governments and international organizations do all those things, digital mental health support can be made safe, effective and accessible to every person who needs it. It is very necessary to integrate the voice of digital civil society to mental health policy. These voices influence policy formulation, transform society and enhance public awareness. The opinions of diverse communities, advocacy groups, individuals, etc., are included. To effectively integrate these voices, the policy must aim to create an inclusive, monitored and secured online space.

The marginalized groups must not be neglected under any circumstances. It is also important to initiate the building of strong partnerships with digital advocacy groups. Policymakers must also allocate adequate resources for the enhancement of digital literacy development. It is equally important to ensure that there is transparency regarding the inclusion of digital voices in the shaping of policies. These methods can help us manage issues like the digital divide, misinformation, tokenism, and more. The seamless incorporation of digital civil society voices enhances policies making them more inclusive and effective. We can amplify multiple marginalized voices through web-based community consultations, advocacy campaigns, and collective policy formulation. As a result, this will facilitate a necessary modification.

For Technology Companies

Technology companies providing mental health support on their platforms is good for business but it also makes sense ethically. They should create their platforms in a manner to not virally share it. Platforms must be designed so users have maximum control of their data. Research must be funded by them on how their platforms are impacting the mental health of users. Safety by design and safety by default should become the core principle of digital content creators. Mental health protections from design decisions that are not actively harmful must be considered. Companies should create clear guidelines that explain when the market timing will operate, quantities available, and availability of certain content.

Mental health organizations must be consulted when developing platforms to ensure all resources and crisis referral information is accurate. They should also use their technology to support outreach and make warm transfers of resources, with user approval. Mental health issues can be detected by tech companies by monitoring their users and contacting them. It is a good move if they do it in a transparent and ethical manner. Creating structures and guidelines, not just for the benefit of the partnering companies or organizations, but for users too, is necessary for partnerships that work. Besides that, it must have clear, transparent protocols that prevent exploiting users' private information. In addition, they should not commercialize mental health data or in the absence of any antifraud and anti-discriminatory safeguards.

On the whole it is essential to collaborate with experts for crisis solutions. In addition, strict regulation of platform moderation policies is necessary to safeguard vulnerable users. When tech companies make mental health a priority, they can offer much. Above all, they have to guarantee access to mental health supplies and support services like promoting digital literacy and healthy online behaviors should be prioritized for many experts. In order to tackle cyberbullying and online harassment, tech companies will create online spaces that foster connection and community. Above all, they must provide access to mental health resources and support. It is equally effective to promote digital literacy and healthy online behaviors. Tech companies will

tackle cyber bullying and harassment by establishing online platforms and spaces that inspire interaction and community.

Conclusion

The notion that mental health constitutes a human right is a considerable departure from mainstream thinking on public health and human rights. Online mobilizations, which utilize digital spaces and platforms to affect this shift, have catalyzed this shift. Mobilizations have recently gained momentum and presence. Sharing of experiences and involvement in policymaking has been made possible by them. Moreover, they have sparked a reconsideration of mental health as a subject not merely for individuals and charities but also for justice and dignity that governments must tackle. The power of online mobilization to challenge stigma, build networks, change laws, and global connection is huge. The cost of mobilization has decreased thanks to hashtags, storytelling, petitions, and the growth of online communities such as Facebook groups.

The implementation of core human rights principles (participation, non-discrimination, transparency, and accountability) has empowered communities living in marginalization. It is not always so easy, however. The same tech and tactics that empower do disempower via surveillance, data extraction, misinformation, amplification of harm. Digital mental health activism is impacted by bigtech, the fragmented jurisdictional landscape, and the existence of large ‘digital divides’ between regions and populations. Previously the digital spaces were thought to be a boon for the promotion of mental health awareness. However, it seems the wording of their campaign is an overreaching and contradictory.

Despite the abundance of potentially empowering content available online, there is equally a lot that can be potentially harmful. Fears are generally cultivated by the creators of content for websites. For the web content developers to host something on their site, they need to pay. To put it another way, we are being monetized in the name of mental health. Our government is not doing anything to help its citizens with necessary assistance, which is depressing. To sum up, it is not just the youths, who are the most vulnerable section, but everyone. So, we need to be cautious not to let the campaign be contrary to what mental health awareness should be.

References

1. Betton, V., *et al.* (2015). The role of social media in reducing stigma and discrimination. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 206(6), 443–444.
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/the-british-journal-of-psychiatry/article/role-of-social-media-in-reducing-stigma-anddiscrimination/13C35DB424523B4210530288561CE615>

2. Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989(1), 139–167.
<https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclf/vol1989/iss1/8>
3. Corrigan, P. W. (2007). How clinical diagnosis might exacerbate the stigma of mental illness. *Social Work*, 52(1), 31–39. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/52.1.31>
4. Crisis Text Line. (2022). *Data insights*. <https://www.crisistextline.org/data-philosophy/>
5. Diamond, L. (1994). Rethinking civil society: Toward democratic consolidation. *Journal of Democracy*, 5(3), 4–17. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.1994.0041>
6. Earl, J., & Kimport, K. (2011). *Digitally enabled social change: Activism in the internet age*. MIT Press. <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/9780262015103.001.0001>
7. Fardouly, J., & Vartanian, L. R. (2015). Negative comparisons about one's appearance mediate the relationship between Facebook usage and body image concerns. *Body Image*, 12, 82–88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2014.10.004>
8. Fraser, N. (1990). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. *Social Text*, 25/26, 56–80. <https://doi.org/10.2307/466240>
9. Freeman, M. C., et al. (2015). Reversing hard won victories in the name of human rights: A critique of the general comment on Article 12 of the CRPD. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 2(9), 844–850. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366\(15\)00218-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366(15)00218-7)
10. Grundy, Q., et al. (2019). Data sharing practices of medicines related apps and the mobile ecosystem: Traffic, content, and network analysis. *BMJ*, 364, 1920.
<https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.1920>
11. International Telecommunication Union. (2022). *Measuring digital development: Facts and figures 2022*. ITU Publications. <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/facts/default.aspx>
12. Metzl, J. M., & Hansen, H. (2014). Structural competency: Theorizing a new medical engagement with stigma and inequality. *Social Science & Medicine*, 103, 126–133.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2013.06.032>
13. Mittelstadt, B. D., et al. (2016). The ethics of algorithms: Mapping the debate. *Big Data & Society*, 3(2), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951716679679>
14. Naslund, J. A., et al. (2014). Naturally occurring peer support through social media: The experiences of individuals with severe mental illness using YouTube. *PLOS ONE*, 9(10), e110171. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0110171>
15. Patel, V., et al. (2011). A renewed agenda for global mental health. *The Lancet*, 378(9801), 1441–1442. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(11\)61385-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(11)61385-8)

16. Patel, V., *et al.* (2018). The Lancet Commission on global mental health and sustainable development. *The Lancet*, 392(10157), 1553–1598. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(18\)31612-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)31612-X)
17. Repper, J., & Carter, T. (2011). A review of the literature on peer support in mental health services. *Journal of Mental Health*, 20(4), 392–411. <https://doi.org/10.3109/09638237.2011.583947>
18. Twenge, J. M., *et al.* (2018). Increases in depressive symptoms, suicide-related outcomes, and suicide rates among U.S. adolescents after 2010 and links to increased new media screen time. *Clinical Psychological Science*, 6(1), 3–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2167702617723376>
19. United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities*. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>
20. United Nations. (1948). *Universal declaration of human rights*. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>
21. Wells, G., *et al.* (2021). Facebook knows Instagram is toxic for teen girls, company documents show. *The Wall Street Journal*.
22. World Health Organization. (2021). *Comprehensive mental health action plan 2013–2030*. WHO. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240031029>
23. World Health Organization. (2022). *World mental health report: Transforming mental health for all*. WHO. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240049338>

CONCEPTUALIZING THE GLOBAL ADMINISTRATIVE STATE: ORIGIN, MEANING AND EVOLUTION

Arzoo Yadav

Department of Political Science and International Relation, IIS (deemed to be) University

Corresponding author E-mail: arzooyadav38811@iisuniv.ac.in

1. Introduction

Governance has changed a lot since the world began. In the past, international relations were based on the sovereignty of nation-states and diplomacy based on treaties. Today, however, the world order has seen the rise of complex administrative structures that operate outside of those borders. Academics are increasingly calling this change the Global Administrative State (GAS). This is what is called the expanding body of international, transnational, and hybrid institutions that have regulatory, supervisory, and adjudicatory powers in various countries, in the manner of domestic administrative agencies (Kingsbury, Krisch & Stewart, 2005). The global administrative state is not just rule-making, but also monitoring, review of compliance, and standard-setting, which affects the domestic legal system closely, as the latter is not an issue of traditional international law concerning relations between sovereigns.

This is a result of the institutional establishment that occurred after the Second World War. The establishment of the United Nations marks an evident shift towards the development of an ideology of a model for structured global governance. This is because, with its establishment, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank were created to establish a stable monetary structure in the world. Initially, these bodies were created as avenues for cooperation among nation-states; however, over time, they have developed bureaucracy and competence in their operations, leading to the establishment of operational mechanisms similar to those in domestic administration systems. The establishment of the World Trade Organization in 1995 has also increased the shift from GATT to WTO, as it established binding rules in the field of dispute resolution. (Zürn, 2018).

The intellectual construction of the Global Administrative State became articulated more clearly in the early twenty-first century, especially in studies of Global Administrative Law. Kingsbury, Krisch and Stewart (2005) contended that a number of international organisations have what would be called public authority, with accountability requirements akin to that on domestic administrative bodies. They noted that international regulatory agencies engage in rulemaking, fact-finding, monitoring for compliance and resolution of disputes—regulatory capacities that have historically belonged to the realm of administrative law. Accordingly, they suggested that transparency, participation, reason-giving and review should be globally relevant mechanisms for grappling with legitimacy issues.

Global Administrative State expansion mirrors more profound structural changes that accompany globalization. Greater economic integration, technological interdependence, cross-border financial flows, environmental issues and planetary ecological hazards are leading to governance issues that are beyond the reach of a state acting in isolation. Authority, therefore, has focused more and more on regulatory networks and international organisations that can co-ordinate responses beyond national borders. Anne-Marie Slaughter (2004) terms this the rise of transgovernmental networks where domestic regulators work directly in contact with foreign agencies without the mediation normally involved in diplomacy. This networked paradigm has also dissolved boundaries between national and global jurisdictions, integrating global norms and values into home-grown structures.

At the same time, the development of the Global Administrative State has given rise to a wide variety of normative debates. Perhaps the most profound of the lingering issues relates to the issue of democratic legitimacy. While national administrative bodies are contained within a national constitution and are thus directly accountable to democratic representatives or the judiciary, this is not the case with global regulatory bodies. In fact, Robert Dahl argued that the democratic character of such bodies will never be 100% democratic in nature, “if indeed there existed, as there is not, a voice worldwide.”

The argument of the opponents is that the technocracy-based global administration would remove the role of the citizenry, as well as the sovereignty of the state. Some have also argued that the interdependence of the world requires an administration for the proper functioning of the system, and that the rule of law can be achieved through procedural changes rather than the electoral process alone. (Kingsbury *et al.*, 2005).

Most notably, the Global Administrative State is not the denouement of the nation state. Instead, it is the recasting of the state in a system of multi-level governance. While the state is an important factor in the establishment of international institutions and the construal of the directives, when these occur, they often possess an element of operational independence that is beyond state governance. This is the exercise of “authority beyond the nation state,” as noted by Michael Zürn (2018), where the global institution guides domestic policy through standards, recommendations, and decisions.

In the twenty-first century, a Global Administrative State now encompasses new arenas such as climate governance, digital regulation, cybersecurity, and global health. Such areas of policy call for ongoing oversight, technical coordination and standardization in reporting, characteristics of administrative governance. The growing complexity of these issues underscores the need for understanding the GAS not as an assemblage of institutions but with respect to a structural transformation in how global power mechanisms are produced through its ordering and use in the course of its operations.

Definition and Theoretical Basis

A conceptual clarity is needed to make sense of Global Administrative State (GAS). And the word, the international organization, has not remained just a phenomenon; it symbolised a structural shift in the exercise of power beyond the borders of the nation state. This chapter will provide a descriptive definition of the term, briefly describe its fundamental features, and finally draw a distinction between the idea and relevant frames of reference in global governance theory.

What is the Global Administrative State?

The term Global Administrative State is an increasing group of existing, international and foreign authorities involved in cross-national and hybrid governance that exercise administrative powers in the global marketplace in addition to rule-making, setting standards, enforcing or supervising them. Contrary to classical international law which is a model based primarily on treaties made between sovereign states, the GAS presents a pattern of real-time regulatory governance, which resemble domestic regime and government administration as well as its structure (Kingsbury, Krisch & Stewart, 2005).

Its basic idea is to demonstrate the ‘migration’ of the principles of administrative law, such as ‘fairness,’ ‘transparency,’ and ‘accountability,’ from the domestic to the global sphere. Many of the aforementioned global institutions are today in the business of administering administrative tasks: They lay out technical regulations, monitor compliance with the same, collect data, conduct inspections, and even impose sanctions. Take, for example, the World Trade Organization, which is no longer merely in the business of brokering agreements but is the final arbiter of a dispute resolution mechanism that balances national regulations with international trade rules. Similarly, financial regulatory rules set out by transnational organizations find their way into domestic banking regulations and oversight mechanisms as well.

This phenomenon, according to scholars linked to the Global Administrative Law (GAL) project, speaks to the exercise of “public authority” in the global sphere, in the sense that decisions which international regulatory organs make have a considerable impact on individuals, corporations and states (Kingsbury *et al.*, 2005). For this reason, such authority is subject to legal and moral challenge. Michael Zürn (2018) also views this evolution as the emergence of governance frameworks that assert authority “outside the nation-state,” thus influencing policy development in previously reserved fields for domestic regimes.

Of course, the Global Administrative State does not mean a global government with a centralized role. There is no individual authority of hierarchy such as the national executive. Instead, the GAS is fragmented, but interconnected, in its regulatory approach across diverse issue domains: trade, finance, environment, human rights and health. The regulatory, not sovereign, is the administrative dimension rather than the political— ongoing governance more effective than episodic diplomacy.

Thinker	Definition of Administrative Power
Max Weber	Administrative power rests on rational-legal authority exercised through a bureaucratic structure governed by formal rules, hierarchy, and specialized competence.
Woodrow Wilson	Administration is the detailed and systematic execution of public law, removed from the hurry and strife of politics.
Frank J. Goodnow	Administration is the execution of the state will as distinguish from its expression.
Herbert Simon	Administrative behavior is the process of decision-making within organizations, constrained by bounded rationality and procedural norms.
Dwight Waldo	Public administration is a process infused with authority and responsibility in the service of democratic governance.
Michel Foucault	Power is exercised through administrative practices that normalize, discipline, and regulate conduct beyond the mere command of sovereignty.
Friedrich Hayek	Administrative discretion, if unconstrained by general rules, threatens the ideal of the rule of law.
Jürgen Habermas	Administrative power functions as a steering mechanism of the state, coordinating complex societies through instrumental rationality.
Giandomenico Majone	Regulatory authority delegated to non-majoritarian institutions derives its legitimacy from expertise and credibility rather than electoral representation.
Anne-Marie Slaughter	Transgovernmental networks of regulators exercise authority across borders, creating a new world order of administrative governance.
Benedict Kingsbury	Global administrative law concerns the mechanisms, principles, and practices that promote accountability of global regulatory bodies.
Richard B. Stewart	Administrative law principles are increasingly applied to global governance institutions exercising regulatory power beyond the state.
Sabino Cassese	A global administrative space is emerging in which international institutions perform regulatory and adjudicative functions.
David Held	Political authority is increasingly multilayered, dispersed across national and global institutions in an interconnected world.
Fritz W. Scharpf	Institutional legitimacy in complex governance systems often rests on effective problem-solving capacity.
James N. Rosenau	Governance without government describes systems of rule sustained by shared goals and regulatory mechanisms in the absence of centralized authority.

Michael Barnett	International bureaucracies exercise authority by classifying, regulating, and normalizing behavior through their expert status.
Martha Finnemore	International organizations create norms and define appropriate conduct, thereby exercising bureaucratic authority.
Colin Scott	Regulation today is dispersed across public and private actors operating within hybrid governance arrangements.
Gunther Teubner	Transnational regimes generate autonomous legal orders that function beyond the constitutional framework of the nation-state.

Comparison with Similar Concepts

The Global Administrative State bears connections to and overlaps with several recognized theory.

(a) Global Governance: Global Governance is a descriptive umbrella term that encompasses a wide range of processes, institutions, and norms that organize collective action at an international level.

This comprises both formal organizations and informal networks; it involves state- and non-state actors alike. GLOBAL ADMINISTRATIVE STATE: A more narrowly defined kind of global governance that emphasizes regulatory and administrative needs rather than politics through cooperation per se. You get to call this global governance as diplomatic talks as opposed to conference meetings or summit conferences, global administrative state, it's the GAS, it's the GAS, as at present it's over there and always is an exercise in the sphere of global governance the overall aim of GAS is continuous rule implementation and management.

(b) Supranationalism: Supranationalism is the system in which sovereign power is handed from states to institutions, institutions that delegate power to organizations on their own that can be the arbitrators of binding decisions independent of national governments within states' power networks. Take for example, the European Union, whose bodies carry legislative, executive and judicial functions. By contrast, the Global Administrative State does not imply that sovereignty is pooled at the same level. Several of the global administrative agencies are not true supranational entities; indeed, many are not full supranational and do not have all of the supranational power they would be assumed to, and their status is a function not so much of legislative monopoly as it is of regulatory cooperation and normative expectation.

(c) Transnational Regulation: Networks (also encompassing private actors and non-governmental organizations) represent cross-border regulation. Some examples of such are private-certification regimes and industry-led standards bodies. While the GAS is also influenced by transnational regulation, it is mostly about institutions exercising public and quasi-public authority. While some of GAS' members will be private parties, its primary feature, it must be said, is the administrative exploitation of regulatory competence that rests on a public governance structure.

(d) International Organizations: States create International Organizations to promote cooperation. Yet international organizations are not all parts of the Global Administrative State. The main difference, of course, is in the depth and continuity of administrative functions. Instead institutions that are essentially negotiation forums are the ones that actually monitor compliance, deliver binding results, and set up and maintain lasting regulations that govern all aspects of society.

3. Roots: The Historical and Theoretical Background of the Global Administrative State

Historical changes in international organization and a theoretical change in the idea of power beyond the state made GAS gradual in emergence rather than a sudden development. It is rooted in the institutional revolution which accompanied World War II, the development and expansion of international regulatory authorities, and the elaboration of theories which remodelled governance for an ever more interdependent world. This section is divided into three parts: post-WWII genesis, institutional evolution and conceptual linkage.

Emergence after World War II

The destruction caused by the Second World War highlighted the weakness of an international system that was state-centric. The experiment with international policy between the two world wars, which was the League of Nations, was so weak that, above all, it was weak institution and weak enforcement. The post-1945 world was all about building a new, more ordered, and more lasting system of global governance.

The foundation of the United Nations in 1945 was the very basis for revolution. This is because it was conceived as a collective security organization, which included specialized agencies that coordinated economic, social, and humanitarian issues. This is further supported by the fact that peace and stability can be achieved through cooperation between all administrations in all areas of governance, as opposed to diplomatic negotiations, and it is something that has come to be seen as a necessary form of governance at some point.

At the same time, the Bretton Woods institutions, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank were set up to stabilize the world economy and assist in the reconstruction and development of the world. Devices of financial monitoring, conditional lending, and the provision of technical assistance were set up. Eventually, the administrative role was transformed into the normal practice of policy monitoring and evaluation and the formalization of activities in a domestic economic domain.

This post-war setup was a tremendous change in the role of international institutions, which was a change from the role of a conduit for the make-or-break transactions between two or more sovereign states. However, these institutions started to provide the ongoing role of governance. Authority shifted from episodic treaty-making to routine supervision and regulatory coordination. The institutions of formal creation continued to be states, but the functional implementation of authority was now mainly based on professional bureaucracies and expert

committees which wielded considerable discretion and autonomy. The post-war period therefore produced what is today referred to as the Global Administrative State. It made cooperation institutional, just as much, for the purpose of diplomacy as it was for administration.

Institutional Evolution: Co-ordination to Regulation

While the institutions of the post-war stage must be taken into account, in the last few decades the emergence of the Global Administrative State traces some of its development to later decades, especially in the 70's. The increase in international trade flows, financial integration, environmental interlinkedness and technological interconnectedness lead to increased requests for regulatory harmonisation. In 1995, the establishment of World Trade Organization is one of those crucial events. Unlike its predecessor GATT, WTO provided a legally binding enforcement mechanism and a quasi-judicial jurisdiction for settling disputes. Such a mechanism analyzes the national laws and policies in order to ensure their compliance with the international trade standards, and this is not only helpful in institutionalizing the oversight of the international regulations at the domestic level, but it is also helpful in embedding it in the system of governance. Administrative adjudication, as opposed to the traditional political bargain, is the mechanism that guides the WTO dispute resolution and appellate procedures (Zürn, 2018).

The financial systems, such as the centralized network of central bankers and financial supervisors, were becoming more sophisticated in their systems of monitoring due to the repeated experience of financial crises. The systems normally operate through the principle of peer review, reporting, and standardized approaches, which is an administrative measure for the promotion of collective policy without the actual power of an individual super state.

Global environmental governance was also being enhanced through the signing of multilateral agreements that provided for the creation of reporting systems and the creation of compliance committees. The state was no longer merely signing environmental agreements; rather, it was engaging in review processes that were similar to the administrative control of their states. There is an emerging trend in the above areas under the umbrella of global institutions; the focus is no longer the coordination of the preferences of the state, but the monitoring of the behavior of the state. Policies, such as the collection of data, assessment, review, and dispute, were the elementary building blocks of global governance.

This change, therefore, signals the shift from intergovernmentalism to global regulatory governance. In addition, the emergence of non-state actors hastened the changes in institutions. The significance of the role of the processes extended from non-governmental organizations to multinational corporations and eventually expert networks. Moreover, the emergence of these actors blurred the line between the private and the public sectors, further solidifying the hybridity of the Global Administrative State.

After the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, global governance was an elaborate web of intertwining and overlapping regulatory arrangements. These regimes did not have

governments around the globe at the center of their government, but rather together wielded extraordinary administrative powers that crossed borders, influencing everything from trade and finance to health and digital regulation, and impacting domestic policies relating to trade, health, digital and other fields.

From the International Organization to Global Administrative Law: Theoretical Relevance

Academic theory developed in response to the simultaneous expansion of global regulatory organizations. Realism and state sovereignty were among the basic principles of post-war foreign policy. Institutions were conceptualized as tools of state power, not as autonomous entities.

But liberal institutionalism and regime theory in the 1970s-1980s had come to emphasize the autonomous nature of international institutions in fostering cooperation and reducing transaction costs (Keohane, 1984). These perspectives accepted the possibility for institutions to shape state behavior when norms, rules, and information-sharing mechanisms were considered. End of the Cold War also proved the source of some innovation in theory. As globalization moved up its development curve, international organizations began to adopt authority concepts to align more with such treaty-mandated regimes, researchers observed. This discovery led to the idea of “global governance” as the concept of the variety of actors and processes who work in ways that contribute to control of the world problems.

Theoretical developments One of the most important theoretical achievements was to produce Global Administrative Law (GAL). Kingsbury et al. (2005) argue that many global regulatory organizations may carry out administrative tasks, therefore it is appropriate for them to judge these organizations in terms of principles of domestic administrative law. They named new norms of transparency, participation, reason-giving and review emerging from global institutions and drew up a blueprint for constitutionalising global regulatory powers.

This dialogue led Michael Zürn (2018) to develop a new theoretical framework when he theorized how global governance institutions determine that authority is “beyond the nation-state.” For Zürn, the key feature of international cooperation within modern global arrangements is far greater than cooperation — rather, the institutionalization of a ruling decision-making framework also curtails domestic policy independence. This theoretical position is similar to that of a Global Administrative State, focusing on the role and its regulatory authorities and legitimacy challenges.

Moreover, studies on transgovernmental communication systems (Slaughter, 2004) have highlighted that local regulators cooperate across nations and create decentralized, yet functionally integrated regulatory systems through collaboration between local regulators. Through these networks they operate administratively, rather than diplomatically, and as a result retain the structural aspects of the GAS.

Collectively, these theoretical advances recast international institutions as active sites — rather than passive arenas of state interaction — of governance. They provided the conceptual

vocabulary through which we identified and evaluated the administrative transition to a new global order.

4. In Other Words: Normative Perspectives and Current Debates

If the previous section discussed the historical and theoretical rise of the Global Administrative State (GAS), this section will interpret its content in normative and political terms. While naming institutional-expansion, also framing the GAS means looking at its legitimacy, authority, sovereignty and democracy. The expansion of bureaucracy outside the public sphere has evoked mixed reception — both adulation and disparagement. Some viewers interpreted it as a necessary reaction to the interdependence of the globe it envisaged, others as a technocratic enlargement of power, not grounded in democratic values. Three interrelated themes in these ongoing debates in this part are Authority and Legitimacy, the Democratic deficit, and Sovereignty in Transformation.

Authority and Legitimacy in the Global Administrative State

The key component in the Global Administrative State is an organizational change that will be a part of the reorganisation of authority at the international level. This is how authority here is about the way in which institutions make decisions that determine or restrict behavior of states or other non-state actors. Unlike classical international law, which states obey voluntarily, with negotiated agreements, GAS functions by continuously making rules, monitoring and adjudicating.

Michael Zürn (2018) calls this the institutionalization of “authority beyond the nation-state.” International organizations, Zürn says, are exerting more influence over decisions that influence domestic policy outcomes even if their institutions do not possess classical sovereignty.

The Democratic Deficit Debate

One of the prevailing criticisms of the Global Administrative State relates to a “democratic deficit.” It is based on the insight that at a global level, regulatory authorities are able significantly to influence and control what is in the interest of citizens that most do not wish to do.

Robert Dahl (1999) famously argued that international organizations suffer from intrinsic democratic restrictions because there exists no single global electorate which can authorise or remove decision-makers. Global administrative institutions, unlike in national governments, are often run by appointed experts or bureaucrats. How they go about making these decisions is not always in the public eye, prioritizing technical expertise over political dialogue and debate.

This, it is argued, is a technocratic agenda that threatens democracy. Decisions arrived at in global organizations could, for instance, limit the involvement of national electorates in the legislative process, thus limiting national sovereignty in the decision-making process. For instance, it is likely that domestic laws would incorporate international regulations arrived at in international organizations without any opportunity to debate these regulations, which, after all,

are enshrined in domestic laws. From this perspective, the GAS represents a step backward from democratic structures that are accountable, into a world of bureaucratic barriers that are not accountable to democracy.

There are, however, arguments put forward by the proponents of the Global Administrative State.

They argue that many of the world's issues — climate change, financial instability, pandemics — need specialized knowledge and concerted action that goes well beyond national politics. In these contexts, administrative expertise improves the results and decreases the collective action issues. Furthermore, theorists of Global Administrative Law insist that reforms to procedures may assuage legitimacy concern. Even when there is no direct electoral structure, tools for inclusive and participatory decision-making and mechanisms for addressing participation (inclusiveness or non-inclusiveness, e.g. public consultation, stakeholder participation, transparency) can be in place (Kingsbury *et al.*, 2005).

Sovereignty Reconsidered

The emergence of the Global Administrative State also demands the reconsideration of sovereignty. Traditional Westphalian sovereignty was based on states' autonomy within their territorial boundaries. Under this configuration, international institutions were arenas of mutuality rather than of authoritative control.

Today's realities, however, are more complicated. International regulators influence domestic trade, finance, environmental protection and human rights. But this impact does not imply undermining or disappearing sovereignty. Instead, many scholars interpret it as a change or repositioning of sovereignty.

States are the architects of international institutions. They conduct treaties, appoint representatives and devise mandates. Yet once institutions have been established, their operations, their administrative practices establish normative constraints that states have to negotiate. Anne-Marie Slaughter (2004) has been referring to this phenomenon as a “networked model of governance” in which domestic regulators work directly with foreign ones. In these networks, sovereignty is relational and not absolute and is pursued in engaging in transgovernmental frameworks not by being cut off.

Efficacy, Equity and Power Asymmetries

The normative argument also extends to the issue of effectiveness and distributive justice in another way. For the supporters, the GAS ensures the coherence and coordination of regulations, and this would enhance the capacity of the rest of the world to deal with problems. For the detractors, there is a risk that the global bureaucracy could mirror the power imbalance in the world. For the richer members of the global institutions as a whole, the richer countries in general have a stronger position in the international institutions, and these countries have a stronger grip on these norms, with a powerful hand to shape the norms on global regulatory

standards to suit their own needs and not those of other countries. Capacity issues could be a problem in the complex administrative negotiation process, and this could affect the developing countries. In this way, the GAS could mirror the global inequalities, and this is in spite of the fact that it could promote global uniformity.

The critique is meant to emphasize the need to assess not only whether or not global administrative governance is efficient, but also whether or not it is equitable. Of course, the inclusion of procedural safeguards is important for the legitimacy of GAS, and so too is the perception of fairness and balanced representation.

5. The Evolution of the Global Administrative State

The GAS has undergone very different, and quite different, development. Instead, however, its development is symptomatic of larger changes in world politics, economy and technology more broadly. Global governance after the end of the Cold War and for a new millennium From the Cold War era to international and post-1990s globalization that began in the U.S., and into the 21st century, worldwide governance has moved more and more from relations through diplomatic coordination to organized regulatory management. This portion charts this in three stages: the consolidation of the Cold War, post-1990s globalization and growth in the twenty-first century into new governance areas.

Cold War Era: Institutional Consolidation and Technocratic Governance

During the Cold War, global governance institutions operated in a bipolar geopolitical environment. Although ideological competition among superpowers reduced the deep integration level of democracy, it did not prevent institutional consolidation. Many global organizations even made their technical and administrative capacities much more developed during this time. Institutions like the United Nations and its specialized agencies became much involved in development planning, humanitarian coordination and technical assistance. The World Bank enlarged its lending portfolio beyond post-war reconstruction to long-haul development projects in the Global South. At the same time, the International Monetary Fund created surveillance instruments for macroeconomic policies, especially after the fall of the pegged exchange rate Bretton Woods system in the early 1970s. As states continued to have formal sovereignty over their economies, their operational forms would be more bureaucratic. Standardized reporting, economic reviews and policy stipulations were a signal to the world of continuous monitoring rather than a periodic presence. The period also witnessed the expansion of specialized regulatory bodies in areas such as civil aviation, telecommunications, and public health. These bodies had to depend on technical capabilities and uniform processes—elements of administrative governance.

Post-1990s Globalization: Regulatory Deepening and Legalization

The Global Administrative State, as we know it today, began to mature at the end of the Cold War and would develop in the years to come. Rapid globalization facilitated economic and

financial integration, wider cross-border flow of financial activity, and speed of trade, and an accelerated technological diffusion between countries. These changes brought about governance and capacity challenges that could not be met by a single state. Among the most important institutional accomplishments of that period was the creation in 1995 of the World Trade Organization. In contrast with previous trade agreements, the WTO established a system of binding dispute settlement with quasi-judicial powers. This system evaluates national action as to its level of adherence with international trade standards, and it can authorize retaliatory measures against non-complying countries accordingly. The legalization and institutionalisation of trade governance are a hallmark of an administrative deepening of global institutions (Zürn, 2018).

Likewise, as global financial governance was more established in the 1990s and early 2000s, the structure of global financial governance grew increasingly structured post-renewal of crises. Transgovernmental regulatory networks produced codes for banking supervision, for capital adequacy and financial transparency. Although these standards are referred to as “soft law,” they had a considerable impact on the domestic national standards, highlighting the power of administrative authority, albeit outside the legislation promulgated by a supranational body. It was also a period of institutional expansion in environmental governance.

Multilateral environmental agreements had compliance committees, reporting, and peer review, as well. Rather than merely agreeing to the treaty in paper form, the tools of compliance demonstrate the hand of administrative supervision, thereby underscoring the regulatory aspect of the global governance process. This stage could be named the ‘regulatory deepening.’ Not only did the number of institutions grow, but they became more methodical as well. The systematicisation of monitoring, the legalization of dispute resolution, and the systematic coordination of policies. This stage also marked the beginning of the understanding of the evolution of global governance into an administrative phenomenon and the development of the resulting Global Administrative Law framework. (Kingsbury, Krisch & Stewart, 2005).

The Twenty-First Century: Multi-Level Governance and Emerging Domains

The Global Administrative State emerged in the modern era, in the twenty-first century, in the second phase, in the form of multi-level government, which made inroads into new areas of policy. However, globalization, which brought with it the digital revolution, climate change, public health challenges, and the resurgence of geopolitics, has solidified the global administrative state.

One of the areas that illustrate this is climate change. Global approaches to climate change have established regular reporting systems, transparency measures, and analysis. While the enforcement of such measures is limited, the administrative system for climate change resembles the dynamic cycle of regulation rather than the singular diplomacy.

This is also evident in the health sector, whereby the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the need for efficient administrative processes in the monitoring, communication, and dissemination

of guidelines. This is evident from the various international institutions that made recommendations, monitored, and promoted the need for cooperation across the country through their various governments, an aspect that is similar to the concept of administrative governance. The other aspect is the issue of digital governance. This is similar to issues such as data protection, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence, which require the need for international regulation in a world where borders do not act as a barrier in the regulation of issues. This is despite the fact that there is no central authority governing the world in terms of the issue of digital governance, and yet there is the emergence of domestic legal frameworks through the various regulators.

Meanwhile, this stage has also witnessed contestations within the Global Administrative State framework. For instance, the rise of populism and nationalist politics in various parts of the world has led to a certain skepticism towards international institutions, with some arguing that the existence of global regulatory bodies undermines domestic self-sufficiency and lacks democratic accountability. This shows that the nature of the GAS is not a given or uncontested issue.

However, the interdependence between the government and the administration still exists, even in the presence of political resistance. Mechanisms for financial stability, for environmental monitoring, and for trade disputes still exist, as economies and societies have always been intertwined. The practice of authority beyond the state has become part of the political power mechanisms, despite the fact that its legitimacy is still questionable. (Zürn, 2018).

Conclusion

Global Administrative State symbolizes the structural change in the exercise of power outside the nation-state. Derived from the post-war expansion of the institutional framework and the process of neoliberal globalization and regulatory pluralism, the Global Administrative State is a fragmented but powerful form of administrative governance. Rule-making, monitoring/adjudication, and expert decision-making characterize the Global Administrative State, which acts independently in a normative but authoritative fashion rather than in the fashion of power.

Theoretically, the Global Administrative State occupies the space between domestic administrative theory and international law, which contradicts the idea of sovereignty versus anarchy. Historically, the Global Administrative State is the product of incremental rather than revolutionary constitutional change. The Global Administrative State is normatively replete with promise and risk, promise of collective conflict resolution in an interdependent world and risk of technocratic rule and structural inequality.

The nature, meaning, and evolution of the Global Administrative State, therefore, requires crucial attention from the modern perspective of scholarship. This throws important light on how global power is exercised, contested, and legitimated in the absence of world government. The

key issue is not whether there is a Global Administrative State, but how we can make it accountable, inclusive, and responsive.

References

1. Abbott, K. W., & Snidal, D. (2000). Hard and soft law in international governance. *International Organization*, 54(3), 421–456.
2. Barnett, M., & Finnemore, M. (2004). *Rules for the world: International organizations in global politics*. Cornell University Press.
3. Börzel, T. A., & Risse, T. (2005). Public-private partnerships: Effective and legitimate tools of transnational governance? In E. Grande & L. Pauly (Eds.), *Complex sovereignty: Reconstructing political authority in the twenty-first century* (pp. 195–216). University of Toronto Press.
4. Dahl, R. A. (1999). Can international organizations be democratic? A skeptic's view. In I. Shapiro & C. Hacker-Cordón (Eds.), *Democracy's edges* (pp. 19–36). Cambridge University Press.
5. Delmas, M., & Young, O. R. (2009). *Governance for the environment: New perspectives*. Cambridge University Press.
6. Duffield, M. (2001). *Global governance and the new wars: The merging of development and security*. Zed Books.
7. Epstein, R. A., & O'Halloran, S. (1999). *Delegating powers: A transaction cost politics approach to policy making under separate powers*. Cambridge University Press.
8. Finnemore, M., & Sikkink, K. (1998). International norm dynamics and political change. *International Organization*, 52(4), 887–917.
9. Hurd, I. (2019). *International organizations: Politics, law, practice* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
10. Keohane, R. O. (1984). *After hegemony: Cooperation and discord in the world political economy*. Princeton University Press.
11. Kingsbury, B., Krisch, N., & Stewart, R. B. (2005). The emergence of global administrative law. *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 68(3–4), 15–61.
12. Krasner, S. D. (1999). *Sovereignty: Organized hypocrisy*. Princeton University Press.
13. Lipson, C. (2007). *Reliable partners: How democracies have made a separate peace*. Princeton University Press.
14. Majone, G. (1997). *Credible commitments: Policy credibility and political trust in European and American regulatory politics*. Cornell University Press.
15. Moravcsik, A. (1993). Preferences and power in the European Community: A liberal intergovernmentalist approach. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 31(4), 473–524.
16. Oatley, T. (2019). *International political economy* (6th ed.). Routledge.
17. Slaughter, A.-M. (2004). *A new world order*. Princeton University Press.

18. Stone, R. W. (2011). *Controlling institutions: International organizations and the global economy*. Cambridge University Press.
19. Tallberg, J., Sommerer, T., Squatrito, T., & Jönsson, C. (2016). *The opening up of international organizations: Transnational access in global governance*. Cambridge University Press.
20. Zürn, M. (2018). *A theory of global governance: Authority, legitimacy, and contestation*. Oxford University Press.
21. Abbott, K. W., Genschel, P., Snidal, D., & Zangl, B. (2015). *Orchestration: Global governance through intermediaries*. Oxford University Press.
22. Levi-Faur, D. (2012). The global diffusion of regulatory capitalism. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 646(1), 45–65.
23. Bodansky, D., Brunnée, J., & Rajamani, L. (2017). *International climate change law*. Oxford University Press.
24. Hale, T., Held, D., & Young, K. (2013). *Gridlock: Why global cooperation is failing when we need it most*. Polity Press.
25. Abbott, K. W., & Snidal, D. (2009). Strengthening international regulation through transnational governance networks. *Global Governance*, 15(1), 1–17.
26. Keohane, R. O., & Nye, J. S. (2000). *Power and interdependence* (3rd ed.). Longman.
27. Scott, J., & Trubek, D. M. (2002). Mind the gap: Law and new approaches to governance in the European Union. *European Law Journal*, 8(1), 1–18.
28. Held, D., & McGrew, A. (2007). *Globalization/anti-globalization: Beyond the great divide*. Polity Press.
29. Slaughter, A.-M., & Hale, T. (2010). Transgovernmental networks: The future of global regulation? *Harvard International Law Journal*, 51(2), 321–356.
30. Cutler, A. C., Haufler, V., & Porter, T. (1999). *Private authority and international affairs*. SUNY Press.

HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER SIEGE:

THE IMPACT OF RECENT ARMED CONFLICTS ON CIVILIAN POPULATION

Nirmal Kumawat

Department of Development Studies, Vivekanand Global University, Jaipur

Corresponding author E-mail: nirmalkumawat295@gmail.com

Introduction

Armed conflicts have become one of the biggest threats to global human rights and security in the 21st century. Civilians have always been affected by war, but recent conflicts show a worrying change in both size and severity. Civilians are now being targeted on purpose instead of being incidental casualties. The United Nations says that conflicts in places like Yemen, Sudan, Gaza, Ukraine, and Myanmar have caused unprecedented humanitarian crises, including massive displacement, civilian deaths, destruction of vital infrastructure, and systematic violations of basic human rights. These events have raised serious doubts about how well the current international legal framework protects civilians during armed conflict.

International humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL) were made to protect civilians and make sure that wars are fought fairly. The Geneva Conventions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and later treaties protect people's rights to life, dignity, health, food, and shelter (International Committee of the Red Cross). However, the continued occurrence of serious violations – such as targeted attacks on schools and hospitals, indiscriminate bombing, forced transfers, sexual exploitation and recruitment of minors into armed groups – reflects the growing gap between the application of the law and its standards on the ground (Amnesty International). The complexities of modern war, including state and non-state actors, political interest and lack of accountability, often erode enforcement mechanisms, which persist despite the existence of strong international frameworks (Human Rights Watch).

A disproportionately large burden of war falls on civilians, as recent armed conflicts show. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), millions of civilians are fleeing violence and persecution in conflict-affected areas, record levels of forced displacement worldwide. In addition to suffering physical damage, residents also face long-term psychological trauma, food insecurity, loss of livelihood and breakdown of basic services such as healthcare and education (World Health Organisation). Particularly affected are vulnerable populations such as women, children, members of ethnic minorities and people with disabilities. Contrary to international standards, children are recruited into armed groups, exploited and deprived of their basic rights, and conflict-related sexual violence has become a common weapon of war (UNICEF).

The evolving nature of modern warfare makes protecting civilians even more difficult. Urban warfare, mixed military tactics, cyber operations and the involvement of private military actors are becoming increasingly common features of modern conflicts. The blurring of lines between combatants and civilians, especially in densely populated areas, has led to more civilian casualties and greater difficulties in humanitarian intervention. Attacks on aid workers, restrictions on humanitarian access and information manipulation through digital platforms increase all civilian vulnerabilities and hinder effective responses (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs).

Humanitarian organisations and civil society groups are very important for keeping track of abuses, pushing for accountability, and helping communities that have been hurt. But political repression, insecurity, and limited access to conflict zones often make it harder for them to do their jobs (Amnesty International). Many victims do not get the help they need because of problems with jurisdiction, political vetoes, and slow responses. This makes it harder for international organisations like the United Nations and the International Criminal Court to do their jobs and hold people accountable (International Criminal Court).

This study utilises a human rights framework to examine the effects of recent armed conflicts on civilian populations. It looks at the experiences of civilians living in war-torn areas, checks to see if the current legal system is working, and looks at patterns of human rights abuses, mostly from 2020 to 2025. The article seeks to enhance scholarly discourse on civilian protection, highlighting the growing necessity for international cooperation and accountability in periods of renewed human conflict.

Impact of Armed Conflicts on Civilian Populations

Armed conflicts result in significant and diverse repercussions for civilians, transcending immediate physical destruction. In recent conflicts, civilians have suffered significant violations of their fundamental human rights and have faced escalating violence. Features of modern warfare, such as urban warfare, involvement of non-state actors and disregard for international norms, have made civilians more vulnerable and prone to casualties.

Violation of the Right to Life and Personal Security

One of the most serious effects of armed conflict on civilians is that it violates their right to life and personal safety. Random attacks, aerial bombardments and the use of explosive weapons in densely populated areas have resulted in significant civilian casualties. According to UN reports, a large number of those killed and injured in recent armed conflicts have been civilians, showing a blatant disregard for the principle of distinction under international humanitarian law (UN). The protection afforded to non-combatants has weakened, and civilian insecurity has been exacerbated by targeted attacks on homes, markets and places of worship.

Forced Displacement and Refugee Crisis

One of the main causes of forced displacement in the world is armed conflict. Violence, harassment and loss of livelihood often force civilians to leave their homes. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees claims that one of the worst humanitarian crises in modern history has arisen due to recent conflicts, which have led to record numbers of internal displacement and cross-border refugee movements (UNHCR). Displaced civilians are subject to additional human rights violations, such as inadequate access to food, shelter, medical care and education. In addition to disrupting social structures, prolonged displacement places enormous pressure on host communities and governments.

Destruction of Civilian Infrastructure

Another significant consequence of armed conflict is the deliberate destruction of civilian infrastructure. Repeated destruction or deliberate targeting of hospitals, schools, water facilities and energy systems has a significant impact on the survival and well-being of the civilian population. According to the World Health Organization, there have been many attacks on medical facilities in conflict zones, resulting in deaths and the collapse of vital health services. When educational institutions are destroyed, children are deprived of educational opportunities, and this has long-term effects on development and post-conflict recovery.

Impact on Health and Psychological Well-being

Armed conflicts have a big impact on the mental and emotional health of civilians, in addition to hurting them physically. Exposure to violence, loss of family members, forced relocation and continued insecurity contribute to trauma, anxiety and depression. Studies show that civilians in conflict areas have an increased risk of post-traumatic stress disorder, especially women and children (UNICEF). Limited access to mental health services in war-affected areas further exacerbates these challenges, leaving long-term psychological scars on affected populations.

Gender-Based Violence and Impact on Vulnerable Groups

Armed conflicts disproportionately affect women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities. According to Amnesty International, gender-based violence – including rape, forced marriage and sexual slavery – has been widely documented in recent conflicts and is often used as a weapon of war to intimidate and subjugate the civilian population. Children are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking, child labour, recruitment to armed groups and being deprived of education. In addition to causing harm to individuals, these breaches also destroy community cohesion and hinder post-conflict peace-building.

Erosion of Human Dignity and Socio-Economic Rights

Armed conflicts also result in the loss of socio-economic rights such as the right to food, employment and an adequate standard of living. Disruptions to local economies, supply chains and agricultural operations lead to food insecurity and widespread poverty. According to the

United Nations (UN), conflict-related economic collapse disproportionately affects civilians, especially those who are already marginalized. When these deprivations combine, they strip civilians of their dignity and perpetuate cycles of vulnerability and dependence on humanitarian aid.

Case Studies

This section looks at some recent conflict studies to understand how armed conflict affects civilian populations in the real world. These events highlight the limitations of the international security system, the insecurity of civilians and repeated human rights violations.

1. Russia–Ukraine Armed Conflict

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has led to a number of human rights violations and great suffering among civilians, which has intensified dramatically in 2022. Mass civilian casualties, attacks on civilian infrastructure and indiscriminate shelling of residential areas have been documented in UN reports. Continued attacks in urban areas such as Mariupol, Kharkiv and Kiev resulted in the destruction of homes, hospitals and schools.

One of the worst consequences of conflict is forced displacement. There is a serious refugee crisis in Europe as a result of the internal displacement of millions of inhabitants and their flight to neighboring countries (UNHCR). Human rights organizations have reported claims of war crimes. These include attacks on humanitarian corridors, random detentions, and illegal killings (Human Rights Watch). These incidents show the poor protection of civilians, even with international humanitarian laws in place.

2. Gaza Conflict

The ongoing armed conflicts in Gaza have severely affected the civilian population, made worse by the area's high population density. Reports from Amnesty International show that civilians have faced a disproportionate impact from airstrikes and ground operations, resulting in significant loss of life and destruction of civilian infrastructure. Homes, hospitals, water facilities, and schools have been repeatedly damaged or destroyed, which has greatly affected basic living conditions.

Humanitarian conditions have worsened due to blockades and travel restrictions, making it hard to access clean water, food, medical care, and other necessities. Constant exposure to violence and insecurity has caused long-term psychological trauma for civilians, particularly children. The situation in Gaza illustrates how ongoing hostilities and limited humanitarian access lead to human rights abuses and increased suffering among civilians.

3. Sudan Civil Conflict

In Sudan, widespread violence against civilians stems from armed conflict. This conflict has intensified in recent years, especially in urban and ethnically vulnerable areas. Reports from the UN and humanitarian groups detail attacks on civilian populations, forced relocations, sexual

harassment, and extrajudicial killings. With the breakdown of law and order, civilians are at risk from armed groups and face limited access to justice or protection.

Women and children are particularly affected. They encounter higher risks of sexual violence, exploitation, and displacement. According to the World Health Organization, the humanitarian crisis has worsened due to limited access for aid agencies. This has led to severe shortages of food, medical care, and housing. The conflict in Sudan highlights the devastating impacts that internal armed conflicts have on human security and civil rights.

4. Myanmar Armed Conflict

Myanmar has experienced a protracted armed conflict followed by military operations against civilians and political unrest. Human rights organizations report systematic abuses that disproportionately affect ethnic minorities, including extrajudicial executions, village burnings, arbitrary arrests, and forced transfers (Human Rights Watch). Civilians have been targeted directly and indirectly, destroying livelihoods and essential services.

The conflict has led to large numbers of people being displaced in the country, as civilians fled violence in ethnic and rural areas. Children have faced psychological problems, disruptions in their education and the risk of being recruited, while the healthcare system has been greatly strained (UNICEF). Myanmar exemplifies how internal conflict and state-sponsored violence can lead to widespread and persistent violations of civilian human rights.

Comparative Analysis of Case Studies

There are recurring themes in all four case studies. Civilians bear the brunt of armed conflict through continued loss of life, displacement, destruction of infrastructure and denial of basic rights. Civilian vulnerability has increased due to political restrictions on the involvement of non-state actors, urban warfare and international intervention. Even with international legal frameworks designed to protect civilians, accountability processes are often ineffective and enforcement remains patchy.

These case studies show that modern armed conflicts are significant human rights crises in addition to military conflicts. As the experiences of civilians in Sudan, Myanmar, Gaza and Ukraine show, there is a strong need for a strong international response, effective accountability and civilian-centred conflict resolution techniques.

Role of International Law and Institutions

In order to control armed conflicts and protect the civilian population from human rights violations, international law and international organizations are essential. An entire legal framework has evolved over time to limit the conduct of hostilities, protect non-combatants and encourage accountability for violations. Nevertheless, recent armed conflicts highlight the significant gap between legal principles and their practical implementation, raising doubts about the effectiveness of international mechanisms to protect civilians.

International Humanitarian Law and Civilian Protection

The basis for the protection of civilians during armed conflicts is international humanitarian law (IHL). The 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols impose a legally binding duty on belligerents to distinguish between combatants and civilians, prevent indiscriminate attacks, and guarantee humane treatment to all persons not taking part in hostilities. These guidelines seek to protect human dignity and reduce the humanitarian consequences of war, even in times of armed conflict.

Although these standards are clear, there are still many violations. Human rights organizations have documented a number of violations of international humanitarian law (IHL), such as attacks on civilian infrastructure, killings and forced transfers (Amnesty International), often without sufficient accountability. Compliance with IHL is made more difficult by the involvement of non-state armed groups, urban warfare and asymmetric conflict strategies, all of which put civilians at greater risk.

International Human Rights Law in Armed Conflict

Both International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL) apply in times of armed conflict. Basic rights, such as the right to life, freedom from torture and equality before the law, are guaranteed by documents such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN). Core human rights obligations are inalienable, although some rights may be waived in an emergency.

However, IHRL enforcement in conflict situations is fraught with difficulties. While accountability systems are still lacking in conflict-affected areas, states often use national security as an excuse to limit people's rights. According to researchers, the protective capacity of human rights legislation during armed conflict is hampered by the absence of effective monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.

Role of the United Nations

To maintain global peace and security and promote civilian protection, the United Nations (UN) is essential. The UN implements resolutions through the Security Council with the aim of protecting civilians, sanctioning peacekeeping operations and punishing criminals. Human rights monitoring, humanitarian aid and civilian protection are often the main objectives of United Nations peacekeeping missions (UN).

However, political considerations, particularly the veto power of permanent members of the Security Council, often limit the effectiveness of UN intervention. The UN's ability to prevent or stop civilian suffering is often hampered by slow responses, unclear mandates and lack of funding. International action in many recent conflicts has failed to stop widespread human rights abuses, demonstrating these limitations.

International Criminal Court and Accountability

International humanitarian law (IHL) forms the foundation for civilian protection during armed conflicts. The 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols establish a legally binding obligation for warring parties to differentiate between combatants and civilians, avoid indiscriminate attacks, and ensure humane treatment for all individuals not engaged in hostilities. These rules aim to uphold human dignity and mitigate the humanitarian impact of war, even amidst armed conflict.

Despite the clarity of these standards, numerous violations persist. Human rights organizations have reported various breaches of international humanitarian law (IHL), including assaults on civilian infrastructure, killings, and forced relocations (Amnesty International), often with insufficient accountability. Adherence to IHL is further complicated by the involvement of non-state armed groups, urban warfare, and asymmetric conflict tactics, all of which heighten the risk to civilians.

Role of Humanitarian and Civil Society Organizations

Humanitarian organizations and civil society organizations have played an important role in strengthening the international legal framework. Organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and the International Committee of the Red Cross are instrumental in ensuring compliance with international law, documenting violations and advocating for civil protection. Their findings often serve as important resources for global investigations and legal proceedings.

Despite their importance, these organizations face challenges such as political repression, threats to their employees and limited access to conflict areas. The attacks further compromise the safety of humanitarian workers, hindering their ability to provide vital assistance and protect civilians (World Health Organization).

Responsibility to Protect (R2P)

A central principle of international law is the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), which outlines the obligation of both states and the international community to protect the population from mass atrocities. Although R2P has been implemented in some cases, implementation is inconsistent and heavily influenced by political factors. Scholars argue that the lack of enforcement mechanisms and consensus limits its effectiveness in protecting civilians (UN).

Assessment of Effectiveness

More generally, political agendas, enforcement gaps and new conflict dynamics undermine the effectiveness of international law and institutions aimed at protecting civilians. The continued widespread suffering of civilians in recent conflicts underscores the need for stronger enforcement, strengthened international cooperation and reforms to strengthen the accountability and credibility of international institutions.

Challenges

Despite established international legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms, the protection of civilians during armed conflicts continues to face significant structural, political and operational barriers. Ongoing incidents of serious human rights violations in recent conflicts highlight the shortcomings of current international responses.

1. Weak Enforcement of International Law

One of the most important challenges is the strict enforcement of international human rights law (IHRL) and international humanitarian law (IHL). Despite the fact that civilian protection is clearly defined in the Geneva Conventions and associated treaties, compliance remains inconsistent. Violations such as attacks on civilian infrastructure, extrajudicial killings and forced displacement often go unpunished. This culture of impunity is exacerbated by weak enforcement and the state's unwillingness to hold its citizens accountable.

2. Political Constraints and Geopolitical Interests

Political considerations often dictate how countries respond to civilian casualties. In cases of mass atrocities, the UN Security Council's veto power often prevents or delays action. Humanitarian needs can outweigh geopolitical interests and strategic alliances, resulting in selective intervention and unequal justice in conflicts.

3. Rise of Non-State Armed Actors

The involvement of non-state armed groups has further complicated the application of international legal norms. These institutions may lack awareness of their international responsibilities and often operate outside established legal frameworks. They increase civilian vulnerability by adopting asymmetric tactics such as targeting civilians or using them as human shields.

4. Urban Warfare and Technological Evolution

The involvement of non-state armed groups has complicated the implementation of international legal standards. These groups often lack an understanding of international obligations and operate outside the formal legal system. The use of asymmetric tactics, such as targeting civilians or using them as human shields, increases civilian vulnerability.

5. Restricted Humanitarian Access

Humanitarian organizations often face challenges in reaching conflict areas. Administrative barriers, security threats and blockades prevent the delivery of food, shelter and medical aid. Attacks on humanitarian workers violate established international protections and hinder further efforts to help civilians.

6. Inadequate Victim-Centered Justice

The victims' needs are often taken care of through legal processes within international accountability mechanisms. However, inadequate psychosocial support, limited reparations and

delayed investigations undermine the restorative aspect of justice and fail to address the long-term consequences of the conflict for individuals and communities.

Recommendations

Comprehensive reforms, increased political commitment and innovative approaches to civil protection are needed to tackle these problems.

1. Strengthening Enforcement Mechanisms

The state's domestic implementation of international humanitarian law and human rights legislation should be strengthened. This includes enacting national legislation to prosecute war crimes, integrating IHL into military training and fully cooperating with international judicial bodies. Expanding the application of universal jurisdiction can help reduce impunity for serious violations.

2. Reforming Global Governance Structures

Reform of the UN system is necessary for a more effective response to mass atrocities. Limiting the use of the veto in cases of serious human rights violations could facilitate timely intervention. There is a need to set specific targets and ensure adequate funding for civil protection to increase the operational effectiveness of peacekeeping missions.

3. Enhancing Accountability and Victim Participation

International courts and investigative bodies should adopt more victim-centred strategies. Compensation, community-based reconciliation work and ensuring the meaningful participation of victims in legal proceedings can strengthen the justice system and promote sustainable peace.

4. Prioritizing Protection of Vulnerable Groups

Special protection measures should address the specific needs of women, children and marginalized groups. Targeted humanitarian aid, child protection initiatives and gender-sensitive peace building projects can help reduce disproportionate losses. Combating conflict-related sexual violence and preventing the recruitment of child soldiers must remain global priorities.

5. Ensuring Safe Humanitarian Access

Aid workers must be protected and humanitarian corridors must be respected by all parties to armed conflict. The international community must sanction and monitor the deliberate obstruction of humanitarian aid. Better coordination can increase the effectiveness and reach of humanitarian organizations.

6. Leveraging Technology Responsibly

Technological innovations, such as digital documentation, satellite imagery and open source research, can improve evidence collection and transparency. However, measures must be taken to protect citizens' privacy and prevent misuse of digital data.

7. Emphasizing Preventive Diplomacy and Early Warning

Ensuring long-term civilian security requires proactive conflict prevention strategies. Inclusive peace processes, diplomatic mediation and early warning systems can prevent mass atrocities and escalation. The root causes of conflict, such as inequality and political marginalization, can be solved by financing peace building and development projects.

Conclusion

This research explores the impact of recent armed conflicts on civilians through a human rights perspective, highlighting the serious and complex nature of civilian suffering in modern war. Studies show that civilians are increasingly the targets of deliberate and systematic violations of their basic human rights, rather than being the casual victims of conflict. Recent wars have had serious humanitarian consequences, highlighting recurring patterns of gender-based violence, forced displacement, destruction of civilian infrastructure, extrajudicial killings and denial of essential socio-economic rights.

The findings indicate that civilian protection remains inadequate despite the existence of comprehensive international legal frameworks such as international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The effectiveness of international bodies responsible for civilian protection is consistently compromised by weak enforcement mechanisms, political sanctions and selective administration of justice. The gap between legal obligations and their actual implementation has led to widespread impunity and civil damage becoming common in various conflict scenarios.

The case studies examined in this research also reveal how civilian risks have increased due to the changing nature of armed conflict, urban warfare, the involvement of non-state actors and hybrid military tactics. Disproportionate damage to vulnerable groups, especially women and children, has long-term consequences for social cohesion, development and post-conflict recovery. These findings underscore the urgent need to reframe armed conflict as a human rights crisis that requires coordinated international intervention.

The study concludes that legal norms alone cannot ensure effective civil protection. Strong political commitment, institutional reforms and continued international cooperation are essential. Reducing civilian suffering requires implementing preventive and civilian-centered conflict strategies, prioritizing victim-centered justice, strengthening accountability systems, and ensuring humanitarian access. Upholding human rights and dignity must be a top priority in international peace and security efforts as armed conflicts continue to grow in complexity and scale.

Ultimately, protecting civilians during armed conflict is a moral and legal imperative. If the impact of war on human rights is not addressed, the cycle of injustice, displacement and violence will continue. By affirming adherence to international law and prioritizing the rights and dignity

of citizens, the international community can work for a more just and compassionate world order.

References

1. Amnesty International. (2023). *The state of the world's human rights*. Amnesty International. www.amnesty.org
2. Betts, A., & Collier, P. (2017). *Refuge: Transforming a broken refugee system*. Oxford University Press.
3. Bothe, M., et al. (2013). *New rules for victims of armed conflicts*. Martinus Nijhoff.
4. Cohen, R., & Deng, F. M. (2019). *Masses in flight: The global crisis of internal displacement*. Brookings Institution Press.
5. Evans, G. (2008). *The responsibility to protect: Ending mass atrocity crimes once and for all*. Brookings Institution Press.
6. Geneva Academy. (2022). *Rule of law in armed conflicts*. Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law. www.rulac.org
7. Human Rights Watch. (2024). *World report 2024: Events of 2023*. Human Rights Watch. www.hrw.org
8. International Committee of the Red Cross. (2010). *The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their additional protocols*. ICRC. www.icrc.org
9. International Committee of the Red Cross. (2020). *International humanitarian law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts*. ICRC.
10. International Criminal Court. (2023). *Report on preliminary examination activities*. ICC. www.icc-cpi.int
11. Kaldor, M. (2012). *New and old wars: Organized violence in a global era* (3rd ed.). Stanford University Press.
12. Mégret, F. (2010). International criminal justice as a juridical field. *Champ pénal*, 7. journals.openedition.org/champpenal
13. Orend, B. (2013). *The morality of war*. Broadview Press.
14. Sassòli, M. (2019). *International humanitarian law: Rules, controversies, and solutions to problems arising in warfare*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
15. Slim, H. (2010). *Killing civilians: Method, madness, and morality in war*. Oxford University Press.
16. United Nations. (2023). *Protection of civilians in armed conflict*. United Nations Security Council. www.un.org
17. United Nations. (2023). *Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict*. United Nations.

18. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2024). *Global trends: Forced displacement in 2023*. UNHCR. www.unhcr.org
19. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (2024). *Global humanitarian overview 2024*. OCHA. www.unocha.org
20. UNICEF. (2023). *Children and armed conflict: Annual report*. UNICEF. www.unicef.org
21. United States Institute of Peace. (2021). *Civilian protection in modern warfare*. USIP. www.usip.org
22. Weiss, T. G. (2012). *Humanitarian intervention*. Polity Press.
23. World Health Organization. (2022). *Attacks on health care in armed conflict*. WHO. www.who.int
24. Zartman, I. W. (2019). *Collapsed states: The disintegration and restoration of legitimate authority*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

NAVIGATING RIVALRY: THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A THEATRE OF GREAT POWER COMPETITION IN THE 21st CENTURY

Harshita Bhargava

Department of Political Science, Rajasthan University, Jaipur

Corresponding author E-mail: harshi.bh2004@gmail.com

Introduction

For much of modern history, discussions on Asian geopolitics were mostly centred on the Pacific region. The Indian Ocean did not receive the same level of attention for a long time. But in recent years, it has slowly re-emerged as an important maritime space in global power politics. The region connects energy suppliers, consumer markets, manufacturing centres and major resource routes, stretching from the eastern coast of Africa to the western side of Australia. Because of this, secure sea lines of communication (SLOCs) are essential, not only for trade but also for the energy security of many economies. Key chokepoints such as the Straits of Malacca, Bab-el-Mandeb and the Strait of Hormuz further increase both the strategic importance and vulnerability of these routes. In response to these realities, India's outlook has gradually shifted. New Delhi has begun placing greater emphasis on maritime strategy, acknowledging that "the geo-static importance of Indian Ocean cannot be underestimated," rather than focusing only on continental concerns (Khurshid 2012). At the same time, the Indian Ocean Region remains institutionally fragmented. Even though it includes 33 countries and nearly 2.9 billion people (Baruah, 2023), there is still uncertainty about whether the region will move toward greater cooperation or drift into deeper strategic competition.

1. Strategic Geography of the IOR

The geography of IOR is important not just because it is large, but because of how the sea, nearby land areas and major chokepoints connect with each other. These features together shape wider global power dynamics. Unlike more enclosed seas, the Indian Ocean opens toward several key regions of the world. It links Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia and Australia. The region naturally becomes both connected and strategically significant. IOR functions as an active corridor where trade, cultural exchange and strategic competition between states continue to take place.

1.1 Geographical Location of IOR

The Indian Ocean is the world's third largest ocean, bordered by Asia to the north, Africa to the west, Australia to the east and the Southern Ocean to the south. It links with the Pacific Ocean via the Strait of Malacca and the Atlantic Ocean via the Cape of Good Hope. It also contains key maritime chokepoints including the Strait of Hormuz, Bab-el-Mandeb and the Lombok Strait. These narrow passages are critical for global trade and energy transportation, since they carry a large share of the world's oil and cargo cargoes (International Affairs and Diplomacy Review,

2023). This geographical location makes the IOR vital for global supply networks. Major sea lines of communication (SLOCs) pass across its seas, allowing trade between the East and West. The transfer of energy resources from the Persian Gulf to Asia is significantly reliant on stable marine routes in the area. Any interruption to these lines has a direct impact on global markets, emphasising the strategic importance of the IOR's position.

1.2 International Affairs and Diplomacy Review in IOR

The UN Convention on the Laws of the Sea, plays a role in establishing global governance in the Indian Ocean. The IOR possesses very minimal international administration and a weak sense of regionalism. The principal organization is IORA which is an intergovernmental organisation. Some commentators, like former Indian Minister of Foreign Affairs Shashi Tharoor, have high hopes for the organization. Research findings plates that there are certain setbacks which policy makers are facing to establish regional agenda.

In contemporary times, the IOR has become a main nerve of international diplomacy. Regional and extra-regional nations are actively involved in marine cooperation, naval exercises and infrastructure development throughout the area. According to the International Affairs and Diplomacy Review (2023), the Indian Ocean has emerged as a key player in global strategic calculations due to its importance in trade security and energy flows (Jones Kelley, 2025). Diplomatic initiatives, multilateral forums and strategic conversations frequently center on preserving maritime stability. Coastal states want to protect their sovereignty while simultaneously promoting economic cooperation. The ocean, determined mainly by its topography and connectedness, acts as both a collaborative and cautious competition arena.

2. Theoretical Framework

The growing strategic importance of the Indian Ocean Region cannot really be understood just by describing what is happening in the region. It needs some theoretical understanding as well. The region today is shaped by many things at the same time. There are shifts in power. There are new alignments between states. At the same time, regional institutions are still uneven and not very strong. Because of this, the IOR reflects both older and newer ideas from international relations. It can be argued that looking at the region through only one theory does not fully explain what is going on.

One way to understand this is through structural realism. From this view, the growing naval competition in the Indian Ocean is not surprising. It is a reaction to changes in material power. China's maritime presence has expanded in recent years. Because of this, countries like the United States and India have also started adjusting their strategies. This indicates a pattern similar to the traditional balance-of-power logic. States try to increase their naval capabilities, form partnerships or strengthen their presence in key areas. The attention given to sea lanes, chokepoints and island territories also shows this type of thinking.

But competition alone does not explain everything in the IOR. Liberal institutionalism highlights the role of cooperation. Platforms like QUAD, IORA and maritime domain awareness initiatives try to manage tensions and maintain some level of rule-based order. Constructivist ideas also matter here. Narratives such as “community of shared future,” “net security provider,” and the “Indo-Pacific vision” shape how states see their role. So, the Indian Ocean is not just a space of rivalry. It is also a place where power politics, cooperation and ideas interact together.

3. External Balancing: Competing Rises and Colliding Ambitions

3.1 China’s Foray in the Indian Ocean Region

The importance of the IOR is closely linked to its sea routes. These routes carry a large part of global trade. In many ways, they work like strategic corridors that connect different parts of the world. These routes are commonly called Sea Lines of Communication, or SLOCs. They connect Europe, the Middle East, East Asia, Southeast Asia and even the Americas. As large scale of trade and energy transport passes through them, their security becomes very crucial for global economic stability (Dutta, 2024).

For a long time, IOR was mostly seen as an area of influence rather than direct strategic competition, but this has been slowly transforming. China’s increasing maritime presence has started to reshape the strategic environment of the region. A clear example was seen in December 2011 when China announced plans to build its first overseas defence facility in Seychelles (Pant, 2017). Beijing described the move in softer terms. It said the facility was mainly for “supplies and recuperation” for its naval fleet and linked it to anti-piracy operations. China also argued that using friendly ports for naval resupply is a normal practice followed by many countries. Seychelles supported this explanation as well.

However, beyond these official statements, the development indicated something deeper. It can be argued that China was no longer just a distant trading power passing through the Indian Ocean. Instead, it was becoming a more active strategic actor within the region. For India, this was not seen as a single isolated event. Rather, it appeared to be part of a broader pattern. China’s so-called “two oceans” approach shows its gradual attempt to expand influence from the South China Sea toward the wider Indo-Pacific region. This indicates a larger strategic shift. The first goal of this strategy is to guarantee access to distant oceans for strategic reasons; the second is to establish the Maritime Silk Road in the modern era to ensure the seamless operation of economic activities (Shabbir, 2020). China is the largest energy consumer in the world and its reliance on unbroken sea routes has led to a security perspective that is centred on the ocean, combining strategic depth with commercial connectivity. But in New Delhi, what seems defensive from Beijing's perspective takes on a new significance. Visible asymmetry has resulted from the PLA Navy's modernisation, which is backed by the Chinese Defence White Paper of 2006 and ongoing procurement expansion. With 55 submarines, 79 surface ships, ballistic missile capabilities and investments in cutting-edge technology. According to Indian strategists,

China's maritime capability is steadily surpassing India's present naval trajectory. This limits manoeuvrability in an area that has long been seen as crucial to India's continental-maritime security continuum. China's attempts to secure trade and energy lifelines are perceived in India as gradual encirclement, which amplifies the security dilemma.

This impression is further heightened by the so-called "String of Pearls" tactic. China's operational reach has been expanded by strategic access points like Gwadar in Pakistan, facilities in Myanmar and the 2017 99-year lease of Sri Lanka's Hambantota Port. (Dutta, 2024)

Control over ports and access for research vessels has slowly become a sensitive issue in the Indian Ocean. When Chinese

○ INDIAN PRESENCE/INFLUENCE ○ CHINESE PRESENCE/INFLUENCE



ships dock or when ports are developed with Chinese support, it raises concerns in India. Many analysts worry about surveillance and the possibility that these facilities could have dual uses. China, on the other hand denies accusations of “debt trap diplomacy.” It argues that such projects are mainly about development and logistics. Still, it can be argued that these developments create a sense uneasiness in the region. Smaller coastal states often get caught in the middle of this situation. As Sri Lanka’s decision in 2023 to temporarily ban foreign research vessels from docking at Hambantota. The ban was later lifted in March 2024. But the episode showed how decisions taken by smaller states are closely linked to larger geopolitical pressures.

The Maldives adds on another dimension to this rivalry. After winning the election in November 2023, President Mohamed Muizzu signalled that he wanted closer ties with Beijing. In March 2024 he supported China’s offer of unconditional military assistance. Around the same time, the “India-Out” campaign also returned in domestic politics. This indicates that the rivalry between India and China is not only about naval presence. It also enters the political space of smaller states. Because of this, the competition works at many levels. It appears in port development, infrastructure projects, naval activities and also diplomatic influence. It is not a direct confrontation most of the time. Instead, it feels like a constant tension between reassurance and suspicion. China says its presence protects trade. India often reads it differently. And this difference shapes the current balance in the region.

3.2 India's Response to Chinese Challenges

The expansion of China's force estimates abilities in the Indian Ocean has concerned India and prompted it to take corrective steps.

Underscoring India's dissatisfaction with China's "string of pearls" approach, a former Indian navy chief claimed that "each pearl in the string is an essential component in the web of the Chinese Maritime presence" (Pant, 2017). In 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the 'Security and Growth for All in the Region' (SAGAR) principle, which solidifies the concept of the 'Indo-Pacific' in India's strategic perspective and promotes the region being "free, wide, equitable, peaceful and profitable." The SAGAR concept closely resembles Canada's and the U.S.A' Indo-Pacific policies. Through SAGAR India is breaking the "String of Pearls" and making a "Necklace of Diamond".

India additionally participates military exercises in the Indian Ocean and 'mini-lateral' initiatives with nations which share its maritime strategic goals, such as repelling or limiting Chinese aggressiveness and guaranteeing freedom of passage. Examples include the India-Australia-Indonesia Trilateral Dialogue, Japan-India-US Dialogue and most importantly, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), which includes Japan, Australia, U.S.A and India. The I2U2 Group formed in 2022 composed of United Arab Emirates, India, the U.S.A and Israel was also initiated to indirectly reduce the dominance of China over IOR.

India is equally attempting to close the substantial divide between its naval strengths compared to those of China. New Delhi has increased its naval budget, which is the highest increase in the entire defence budget in 2023, with the goal to upgrade its warships, expand its fleet and embrace new technology. In March 2023, the navy tested ship-launched variants of the BrahMohs supersonic cruise missile, plans to profit from getting hold of MQ-9B Sea Guardian drones from the U.S.A and is developing submarines and aircraft carriers. In 2022, the Indian first aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant, was launched. (Dutta and Chaudhary, 2024)

In 2024, in February, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi commenced an airfield, a jetty and six infrastructure projects on Mauritius' strategically crucial Agalega Island which was recently subject to intrusions by Chinese vessels. In April 2024, the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs allowed India Ports Global, an Indian government-owned firm, to operate Myanmar's Sittwe Port, which was also developed with New Delhi's support. Additionally, India has erected a new naval base, the INS Jatayu, on Minicoy Island in the strategically significant union territory of Lakshadweep, off the coast of Kerala in the Laccadive Sea, making it the "nearest major military installation to the Maldives." India is also launching several massive research vessels like INS Sandhayak and INS Nirdeshak to counter Chinese ones.

3.3 U.S.A. Interventions in IOR

In different periods of world history, powerful states have tried to control sea routes so that global trade could move safely. This was visible during Pax Britannica and later during Pax

Americana. As the aftermath of 2nd World War, USA became the superpower regulating the IOR with its strong and huge naval power. The aim was to support allies, limit Soviet influence and keep important oil and trade routes open (Upadhyaya, 2019). But this period also had its problems. At times the U.S. supported authoritarian regimes and intervened in regional politics. It can be argued that economic development of the region was not always its main priority.

By the end of World War II, the U.S. Navy was clearly successful in dominating the Indian Ocean. But today the situation looks different. The region is slowly moving toward a more competitive and multipolar environment. China's expanding presence is one major reason. In recent years China has increased investments in parts of Africa, especially in areas like telecommunications, energy, oil, minerals and infrastructure (Berlin 2010). These projects are often presented as economic cooperation. Still, many analysts believe they also help China secure access to resources and advance wider strategic goals. This indicates why both the United States and India sometimes see these developments with concern.

The shift was openly recognised in the United States as well According to the Trump administration's 2017 National Security Strategy, "great rivalry for power has arrived," with a focus on the Indo-Pacific area and China. The US intends to protect the area from any prospective the dominant nation that may represent a danger to its security. To impede the dominance of a different nation, the U.S.A has developed a number of tactics, including maintaining good courteous and security relationships among its coalition partners, promoting an authoritative and control-based customs for regional security, collaborating to ensure the safety of its power resources, supporting diplomatic choke points and liberty of navigation throughout the Indo-Pacific, and carrying out anti-terrorist operations across the region. (Vaughn, 2018).

3.4 Confrontation between India and Pakistan in IOR

The Indian Ocean is essential to Pakistan's economic survival because of its 150-kilometer coastline and strong reliance on maritime trade. Over 90% of the nation's oil imports and vital supplies pass through Karachi port alone, making it strategically vulnerable during times of conflict. India is the main source of Pakistan's concerns because the Indian war threat could have a negative economic impact. Pakistan's maritime and geopolitical position in the region could be weakened by this hysteria. Up until the 1990s, Pakistan enjoyed autonomous naval advantages prior to US sanctions; at that point, India acquired second strike capability, endangering the balance in the IOR (Khan, 2016).

Gwadar Port has become a strategic counterweight as a result of Pakistan-China cooperation under the Pakistan-China Economic Corridor. This has important ramifications because it serves as a defense against India's possible embargo on the port of Karachi (Fatima & Jamshed, 2020). There may be advantages to Pakistan and China working together on the Gwadar Port and the Pakistan-China Economic Corridor. It is a preventative measure for the vulnerable port of Karachi, which the Indian Navy blocked in 1971 as part of "Operation Trident" and "Operation

Python." Since Gwadar port is well out of the Indian Navy's reach, it can help ensure that all business operations run smoothly during the conflict (Fatima and Jamshed, 2020).

3.5 IOR: India's Sphere of Influence

India's status as a permanent naval force in the Indian Ocean is crucial. With nearly 7,500 km of coastline, 14,500 km of accessible waterways and 212 operational ports (12 owned by the government and 200 immediate and minor ports), India is largely reliant on the Indian Ocean for business and nonprofit shipping, imports of energy, tourism, trade and fishing. The Indian Navy prioritizes the whole Indian Ocean, from Africa's eastern shore to the Andaman Sea, reinforcing its position as both an emergency response force and a net supplier to security for its regional partner countries.

As India's global financial and political stature has increased in the past few decades, it has, not unexpectedly, attempted to define its goals for strategy in increasingly wide terms. The Indian Ocean remains a hugely important region for India, the only country in the world that has a whole ocean named after it. Like other globalizing economies India's economic growth is heavily reliant on free flow of goods through the Indian Ocean SLOCs, especially as around 90% of India's trade is reliant on merchant shipping. India's EEZ in the Indian Ocean that according to the Law of the Seas runs 200 nm contiguous to its coastline and its Islands, covers around 30% of resource - abundant IOR. Indian strategic strategists have always considered the Indian Ocean as their backyard, emphasizing the necessity for India to play a larger role in ensuring its security and stability. (Pant, 2017)

Nevertheless, in order to impose superiority in the IOR, India is modernizing its naval arsenal. India appreciates its geographical place in the IOR as a peninsula, which strengthens its position of significance. To achieve optimum oversight over the IOR, India has increased naval funds from 11 percent to 18 percent of its budget for the 'Blue Water' program, which aims to fulfill the goal and maximize security by influencing the littoral governments. The actual emerging concern for India and the US in Asia is rapid Sino-economic autonomy and the US has supported India's naval might since the Bush administration to limit the influence of China in the IOR (Owais, 2020).

The improvement of India's ties towards Iran is important because to Iran's position of importance adjacent to the Strait of Hormuz, which transports 30% of world oil commerce. To gain foreign money for such a key asset, Iran has already faced obstacles as well as sanctions from the West. India, a longtime customer of Iranian oil, has formed a purposeful cooperation with Iran to build the Chabahar Port. This relationship will boost India's strategic influence in the area, but its success is predicated on Afghanistan's long-term peace and security. Furthermore, India's strategic partnership with the US has always safeguarded it in obtaining an exemption from US restrictions on crude oil imports from Iran.

Its future intentions include not just monitoring the movement of Chinese vessels, but even halting Chinese shipments for an extended length of time. This Indian plan is solely based on the planned stationing of the Indian Naval Forces in the IOR. However, India has secretly taken over Oman's Duqm port for the purpose of upgrading and supplying military boats. The port provides India with access to the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, which is significant.

4. Non-Traditional Security Threats

4.1 Expanding Prevalence of Piracy in and around the Horn of Africa

It is a structural indication of the failure of IOR governance rather than just an isolated act of maritime crime. Piracy has caused huge economic costs for states that rely on trade, global losses ranging from approximately \$7 billion to \$12 billion annually. From 2009 to 2014, the hijacking of tugboats and barges; from 2011 to 2017, the theft of oil cargo from tankers; and from 2016 to 2020, the kidnapping of crews for ransom was the predominant type of piracy. 111 out of 293 pirate assaults occurred off the coast of Somalia. 200 pirate attacks took place in the western Indian Ocean in 2010, with 49 of them resulting in successful vessel hijackings (International Chamber of Commerce's International Maritime Bureau, 2023). The International Maritime Organization took initiatives like the Malacca Straits Patrol (2004), ReCAAP (2006), Djibouti Code of Conduct (2008) and UNSC-authorized patrols (2009). But since October 2023, there has been a resurgence of Somali piracy and Houthi attacks close to the Bab-el-Mandeb, which highlights a more profound reality, maritime security in the IOR is still dependent on geopolitical stability rather than just naval deterrence.

4.2 Terrorism

Maritime terrorism is a multifaceted threat, connecting terrestrial extremism with maritime susceptibility. The Hamas–Israel conflict in October 2023 caused instability to spread across important waterways, showing how non-state actors use chokepoints to turn local conflicts into international ones. Attacks on commercial shipping, energy tankers and infrastructure linked to ports show that terrorism in the IOR is no longer limited to coastal insurgencies but is now also targeting major trade routes around the world. This change shows a change in strategy: disrupting maritime trade has an outsized effect on geopolitics. For littoral states with limited naval capacity, terrorism exacerbates existing governance deficiencies and heightens reliance on external security guarantors.

4.3 Red Sea Crisis

Since late 2023 the Red Sea crisis has changed threat perceptions in the western Indian Ocean. Houthi attacks near the Bab-el-Mandeb chokepoint have affected major shipping routes. This area carries around 12–15% of global trade and a lot of energy shipments. Because of the attacks, many shipping companies started avoiding the route. Ships are now going around the Cape of Good Hope, making longer travel time and higher transport costs. It also shows how fragile maritime trade networks can be. A conflict in one area can affect global supply chains. It can be

argued that the crisis has blurred the line between maritime security and regional conflict, forcing outside naval powers to get involved.

5. Combating Governance Deficit

One of the main issues in the IOR is the gap in governance. The region is important for global trade, but its governance mechanisms remain unsustainable. A significant amount of global trade and nearly 80% of the world's seaborne oil trade (UNCTAD, 2023) travels via marine routes, many of which cross via the Indian Ocean. So, what takes place in this region has an impact on many countries, not just the ones nearby. Despite its importance, the area lacks a robust and cohesive security system. Groups such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association and ReCAAP exist, although they primarily facilitate communication and information sharing across nations. They do not have much ability to enforce restrictions. As a result, many problems in the region remain unresolved.

In recent times there are various innovative approaches which have been proposed to address this governance gap. One such conceivable option is to establish a "Regional marine information system". Such a platform might incorporate satellite data, ship tracking information, and reports from other country's coast guards. If governments communicate this information on a regular basis, it may get easier to spot piracy, illicit fishing, or questionable vessel movements in their early stages. Another way could possibly be to enhance economic collaboration through what is frequently referred to as the blue economy. The ocean economy is currently worth more than two trillion dollars worldwide, thus "Regional investment" in ports, fisheries, and marine infrastructure might help smaller governments flourish without relying too much on outside powers for capital.

From a strategic aspect, collaboration among littoral governments is also important. Naval gatherings, such as the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, regularly bring together regional navies. If these platforms eventually shift toward combined patrols or coordinated training, confidence may gradually grow. In many aspects, more regional ownership may be critical if the Indian Ocean is to achieve more stable administration. Without stronger governance structures, the regional order in the IOR will likely remain shaped by shifting power politics. So, building deeper institutions is not just optional. It may be necessary if the region wants to prevent competition from gradually turning into open confrontation.

Conclusion

Today, the Indian Ocean is more than just a maritime route for ships. It has evolved into a hub for power politics, trade interests, and poor government. Many nations rely on these seas, therefore what occurs here impacts a large number of people. The actual issue is more than just competitiveness between nations. The larger issue is that there is no effective structure in place to control the rivalry. If clear norms are not followed, competition can gradually develop into coercion from greater powers. One conceivable stage would be a regional agreement in which

major countries and coastal states share responsibility. This might help keep the area stable and prevent unneeded conflicts in the future.

References

1. Verma, R. (2017). Harsh V. Pant. Indian Foreign Policy: An Overview. *Asian Affairs*, 48(2), 383–385. <https://www.kharagpurcollege.ac.in/studyMaterial/231917Pant-Harsh-V.-Indian-foreign-policy--an-overview-Manchester-University-Press-2016-15-10-2020.pdf>
2. Pant, H. V. (2009). India in the Indian Ocean: Growing Mismatch Between Ambitions and Capabilities. *Pacific Affairs*, 82(2), 279–297. <https://doi.org/10.5509/2009822279>
3. Sanyal, S. (2016). *The Ocean of Churn: How the Indian Ocean Shaped Human History*. Penguin UK.
4. THE INDIAN OCEAN. https://www.bluebird-electric.net/oceanography/indian_ocean.htm
5. Malone, D., Mohan, C. R., & Raghavan, S. (2015). *The Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign Policy*. Oxford Handbooks.
6. Morgan, J. R., Verlaan, P. A., & Kanayev, V. F. (2024, October 20). Indian Ocean History, Map, Depth, Islands, & Facts. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Indian-Ocean>
7. Pant, H. V. (2016). *Indian foreign policy*. <https://doi.org/10.7228/manchester/9781784993368.001.0001>
8. China to open its first military base abroad in Indian Ocean. <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/china-to-open-its-first-military-base-abroad-in-indian-ocean-566988>
9. Menon, K. R. (2016). Drivers of Indian Naval Expansion. In *Routledge eBooks* (pp. 33–54). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315553399-7>
10. Pakistan and the Indian Ocean on JSTOR. (n.d.). www.jstor.org. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45181865>
11. Dutta, S., & Dutta, S. (2024, April 24). India's Competition with China for Dominance of the Indian Ocean. <https://www.asiapacific.ca/publication/balancing-tides-indias-competition-china-dominance-indian>
12. Indian Ocean Rim Association | iora. <https://www.iora.int/indian-ocean-rim-association>
13. Darshana M. Baruah, Nitya Labh, Jessica Greely. (June 15, 2023). Mapping the Indian Ocean Region. <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2023/06/mapping-the-indian-ocean-region?lang=en>
14. Parasuram. (2024, March 23). INS Jatayu at Minicoy Island Lakshadweep to Counter China. <https://hindupost.in/featured/ins-jatayu-at-minicoy-island-lakshadweep-to-counter-china>
15. Darshana M. Baruah (March 3, 2021). What Is Happening in the Indian Ocean? <https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2021/03/what-is-happening-in-the-indian-ocean?lang=en>

16. Jadranka, B., & Naletina, D. (2013). Piracy influence on the shipowners and insurance companies.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324441187_Piracy_influence_on_the_shipowners_and_insurance_companies
17. Pti. (2011, December 12). China to open its first military base abroad in Indian Ocean. *The Times of India*. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>
18. China's National Defense in 2006 - china.org.cn. (n.d.).
<http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/194421.htm>
19. Khurana, G. S. (January 2008). China's "String of Pearls" in the Indian Ocean and Its Security Implications | Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses.
https://www.idsa.in/strategicanalysis/ChinasStringofPearlsintheIndianOceanandItsSecurityImplications_gskhurana_0108
20. India, China jostle for influence in Indian Ocean. (2008, June 8).
<https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna25024945>
21. Jadranka, B., & Naletina, D. (2013b). Piracy influence on the shipowners and insurance companies.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324441187_Piracy_influence_on_the_shipowners_and_insurance_companies
22. Nissanka, H. S. S. (2007). *International Relations and Geopolitics*.
23. Dutta, Suyesha, and Suyesha Dutta. "India's Competition with China for Dominance of the Indian Ocean." *Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada*, 24 Apr. 2024,
www.asiapacific.ca/publication/balancing-tides-indias-competition-china-dominance-indian.
24. India Foundation. "Maldives at the Crossroads: Implications for India's Maritime Strategic Interests." *India Foundation*, 9 Sept. 2025, <https://quillbot.com/citation-generator/folders/5icyvXVoYOFIDfaicMZI2g/lists/4puXIPjTURWmcTswBh87AN/source/s/3BCnE0s8oF5mMXKaqm8otX>
25. Nandy, Debasish, and Monojit Das. *Small Islands and Invisible Boundaries*. 2025,
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-96-7090-1>.
26. Jones Theresa Kelley. *An Analysis of China's Presence in the Indian Ocean: A Maritime Perspective*. 2025 www.proquest.com/docview/3217536555.
27. Upadhyaya, Shishir. *India's Maritime Strategy*. 2019,
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429397653>.

FROM NEGOTIATION TO MANAGEMENT: DIPLOMACY, SECURITY, AND CRISIS GOVERNANCE IN THE GLOBAL ADMINISTRATIVE STATE

Aarshi Baid

Department of International Studies student at Symbiosis School of International Studies

Corresponding author E-mail: jrc959224-26@ssispune.edu.in

Introduction

This chapter looks into the evolution of diplomacy and security, and crisis governance in an era where global crises have become continuous rather than exceptional, situating this shift within the framework of the Global Administrative State. It contends that modern crises spanning from armed conflict and maritime insecurity to sanctions regimes and strategic competition not only handled through traditional diplomatic negotiations instead are increasingly governed by networks of regulators, executive officials, military coordinators, socio and economic networks. The chapter also discuss about blurred boundaries between diplomacy, security, and crisis management.

The chapter conceptualizes the emergence of managerial crisis diplomacy. In the context, states and international institutions prioritize coordination, compliance, and risk mitigation. These practices demonstrate how security governance now works through administrative tools like sanctions, export controls, naval task forces. This reflects how the growing influences of the Global Administrative State in shaping crisis responses.

The chapter includes an India centered and Global South perspective to look how emerging powers navigate this administrative crisis order. India's strategic autonomy and its role in maritime security, and its engagement in energy, and supply chain diplomacy exemplify the opportunities and limitations faced within current crisis governance framework. While these processes make diplomacy more efficient and effective, they have created new challenges regarding issues of accountability and democracy and their implications for power relations in the Global South. At the end of this chapter will discuss how diplomacy in the 21st century is preoccupied with permanent crises and therefore raises pertinent questions regarding its legitimacy and future directions in security governance.

Diplomacy from Negotiation to Administrative Coordination

Diplomacy and security are no longer separate realms; they have merged into a continuous process of risk management.” – Barry Buzan

Diplomacy is arts and science of managing a country's national interest. The second thing which is very important to understand is that diplomacy does not exist in a vacuum as it is a function of time and space. The diplomacy which one only understands as a state-to-state practice centered

on negotiation, representation, and treaty making between sovereign states. However, in the changing world order the concept of "Diplomacy in the 21st century" has undergone a tremendous change in the era of crisis, diplomacy now functioning as a mechanism of coordination in an increasingly complex and fragmented world order (KS Rana 2011). Today, the form and purpose of diplomatic engagement vary from supply chain issues, financial volatility, competition, and geopolitical conflicts; it is functioning through summitry, task force, working groups, and executive level engagements. This all lead to increasing importance of "networked diplomacy," where influence is exercised through dense webs of interaction as opposed to formal agreement itself (Slaughter 2004).

India marching ahead with a Leap of Faith, with a dream in eyes, that India would be a developed country by 2047. India is passing through Amrit Kaal, "The Era of Elixir" this dream is not exaggeration it is based on reality, and the reality is the country which was stricken with hunger and poverty, closed and state controlled economic order foreign policy was guided by the principal of non alignment, faced severe balance of payment crisis, is today the fourth largest economy in the world, and very confidently India is leading global platforms. Initially India foreign policy was mainly concentrated on safeguarding its territorial integrity, security, promoting economic development, and India did not join any of the blocs, it wanted to relish the newly achieved independence, its own decision making power, it was against colonial legacies and India adopted to remain Non- Aligned to any military blocs. (Dipannita Maria Bagh, 2025)

During independence India did not have a strong army, neither robust economy but, India had strength, and the strength was civilizations and cultural values and these are very much reflected in India foreign policy and diplomacy that time and even today, values like non- violence, values like tolerance, values like pluralism, values like respect for diversity, values like peaceful coexistence, and all these are molded in India foreign policy principles. Initially the foreign policy of India was idealistic, later moving forward to Pragmatism, 1971 India asserted itself as a regional power, after 2000 India was more oriented towards balancing act, globalization was getting stronger, economically growing as a big market, and Indian diplomacy mainly shifted on economic cooperation with different countries, and now in present time Indian diplomacy have become very proactive, as mentioned above diplomacy is a factor of time and space, there are many internal and external factors which are giving this kind of energy to the diplomacy.

Internal factors like now India is focusing on manufacturing sector, make in India, make for the world, for that India is engaging with different countries in the world looking for new markets, new collaboration and this can be very well seen in Indian diplomacy, between 2025- 2206 India have signed some of the biggest trade deal in its history with Britain, European Union (mother of all deal), Oman, New Zealand and recently with USA. From London to Brussels, from Gulf to Pacific what explains these larger trends all the countries showing their interest to work with

India the old trade playbook is broken, diplomatic trends are changing. The United States is unpredictable, China is overproducing and undercutting. Middle powers like Europe, Canada, Japan, the Gulf all these countries are looking for reliable scale and India offers that. A 1.4 billion strong market 4th largest global economy and a politically stable player just ahead of Japan, services now contribute to 50% of the GDP manufacturing at 28%. India's per capita income in 1947 during independence was about 250 rupees per year and in 2025 its nearly 2 lakh rupees per year, nation once with shortages now with surpluses, and this data is important to note as India's rise as one of the world largest economies has strengthened its diplomatic leverage, enabling it to negotiate from a position of greater confidence and strategic autonomy.

India is big enough to matter and big enough to be trusted, and it also shows the change in diplomacy for decades, India was wary of free trade. Self reliance came first, economic entanglement was seen as a risk but today, traditional stance have changed so have the Indian diplomacy, the world where alliances are shaky and rules keep on changing. Indian diplomacy is doing something remarkable turning global uncertainty into opportunities, looking beyond usual partners, doubling down old friendships and deepening ties in West Asia and Africa also focusing on internization of defense production, technological transfer it's no more buyer or seller relationship. External factors rise of china in indo pacific, tariff war; sanctions all these external and internal factors combined together have shaped Indian diplomacy.

In the present time Indian diplomacy is more about dehyphenation, focusing on strategic autonomy from Non- Alignment to Multi Alignment to now going for Self Alignment. Today, India is shaping the global discourse on various important discussions on tables, actively talking about issues like maritime connectivity, issue like security, terrorism, resilient supply chain, data and cyber security, and not only this, Indian diplomacy have been very vocal about climate changes, India climate diplomacy have come up with new initiatives. Earlier India was rule followers, and to India is rule maker.

India on various environmental platforms, India has been advocating the voice of global south, right of global south. Indian diplomacy is now too much focusing on Indian Diaspora, through diplomacy India is now focusing on rights of Indian citizens and very swift in taking up Diaspora issue through diplomacy, moving towards social and economic networking and in the recent time India has done many evacuation projects like Operation Sindhu 2025 as regional tensions intensified and security conditions deteriorated where India was the first country to evacuate its citizens from Iran, Operation Sankat Mochan, Operation Raahat in Yemen not only these evacuation operations but also India is diplomatically addressing challenges of migration and mobility. Modern diplomacy is only restricted to agreements and national interest? No the things have changed it now encompasses protective diplomacy evacuations are not handled solely by diplomats; they require coordination across ministries, military logistics, aviation management,

and host governments. This “whole of government” response and coordination reflect how diplomacy now functions within an administrative network rather than through isolated diplomatic channels it’s not solely restricted to one ministry it has now diversified.

Earlier Indian diplomacy was balancing act, now we are the balance, and to achieve that India have changed one crucial thing in its diplomacy the mistake which India made in 20th century is not not that same India today India have changed its foreign dependence it use to depended mainly on export to now shifting towards *Atam Nirbhar Bharat* and to understand this case better nothing can be better than 1971 case. During 1971 India and Pakistan were indulged in war and the time when India was heavily depended on USA for agriculture and during war, USA was supporting Pakistan through military aid, strategic motivation and the same time USA used India’s agriculture dependence as a pressure point and USA threatened India that it will stop agriculture supply to India, India during that time was highly depended on USA for agriculture goods this also limited India diplomatic flexibility. Years back in 1971 where India was depended and need to look to foreign world in crisis like situation to now in present 21st century India engages with the United States from a position of far greater economic resilience and strategic confidence. Rather than being compelled under pressure, Recently India have negotiates trade deal in (2026) through sustained diplomatic engagement, often over months of structured dialogue. Recent trade negotiations clearly demonstrate this shift India has been able to protect key sector particularly agriculture and while simultaneously expanding economic cooperation. The process reflects not submission to pressure, but calibrated bargaining rooted in national interest. This transformation highlights important changes in Indian diplomacy.

Today India doesn’t depend on foreign aid. On the contrary, India is a global donor. Since the year India have donated to 65 countries, even during pandemic India became pharmacy to the world, in the neighborhood India is the first responder from pandemic like Covid 19 to earthquake or tsunamis or a pirate attack India is the first to respond. In 1947 when the world looked at India with doubt and today they look towards India with hope.

The evolution of Indian diplomacy is part of a larger structural transformation in international politics. India’s recent diplomatic trajectory demonstrates how emerging powers adapt to an era of continuous disruption. Whether it is evacuation work that safeguards the lives of citizens abroad, or the intricacies of trade negotiations and the pressure of tariffs, or engagement with multilateral institutions and crisis governance, diplomacy has become irretrievably administrative and operational. It is no longer occasional; it is permanent. India was non-aligned before it was cool, now India is multi aligned because it is wise. The Indian experience, therefore, shows how a Global South power can navigate this new world of diplomacy, walking the tightrope between strategic autonomy and global engagement, between defending national interest and being part of global networks. More generally, it suggests that the future of

diplomacy will lie in the realm of adaptive governance, coordinated, and able to respond in real time to multiple crises simultaneously.

Security and Crisis Governance: Strategic Autonomy in an Era of Permanent Crisis

Earlier security was seen as defense of borders and deterrence of armed attacks protection of territorial sovereignty, deterrence against armed attack, and the balance of power between states. But today in this changing world things are not same a time when wars were seen as primary threat and military alliances were main instrument of security policy. But today security cannot be confined just to this. Military defence still remains important, but with that contemporary security challenges are far more complex and multidimensional. Contemporary security environment is shaped by supply chain protection, maritime trade routes, energy, and financial vulnerabilities. Armed conflict continues to exist, but it is not stuck just with arms new challenges have evolved like sanctions regimes, trade restrictions, maritime security, and strategic competition battlefields the sole domain of security? No, it operates within markets, and regulatory systems.

One defining feature of twenty first century security is interdependence. States are deeply connected through trade, and finance. This interconnectedness comes with opportunities but also vulnerability. A conflict in one region can disrupt global energy markets in other region and world have felt and continue to face the very recent USA and Israel attack Iran on 28 Feb 2026 where trade routes, oil prices are going to be great security risk and even during Russia Ukraine conflict, Russia faced sanctions, removed from SWIFT banking system 3rd largest crude oil producer, 1/3 oil from Russia was exported to Europe, each nation felt pressure, stock market crashed. New Delhi and Moscow separated by nearly 4000 km but the friendship, trust and mutual respect remained utmost nation which helped India during India Pakistan 1971 conflict, it stood for India provided not only strategic support but crucial diplomatic. Soviet Union vetoed resolution in UN that were seen unfavorable to India, provided navy support. If 1971 reflected a moment of close Indo Soviet strategic alignment the Russia–Ukraine conflict illustrates a transformed geopolitical landscape in which India prioritizes strategic autonomy, economic stability, and multi alignment rather than bloc-based solidarity.

India faced western pressure still India continued buying oil from Russia as the decision was consistent with India long standing principle of strategic autonomy and its emphasis on protecting national interest. India's diplomatic position was clear it needs to serve a population of 1.4 billion, India never supported Russia military actions and repeatedly called for dialogues on the other side India did not even join western sanction against Russia it made it stance clear as matter of national interest rather than geopolitical interest and continued the purchase of oil from Russia.

Till today India have been under scanner since the war in Ukraine, first with Europe's virtue signaling and more recently USA President Donald J. Trump sanctioning Russian oil, for the first time sanctioned imposed on Russian oil suppliers, doubled tariffs to India from 25% to 50%, Donald trump introduced a new angle in tariffs 25% for India's purchase of Russian oil. India and USA in Feb 2026 have come on a trade deal and reducing the Tariffs to 18% on India but demand remains the same India not to buy oil from Russia and diversify it oil purchase to USA and Venezuela. This is an instance that demonstrates the link between security and economics. The oil purchases, therefore, were not just economic exchanges, as they started being part of the geopolitical struggle.

In essence, the above instance reveals three broader aspects of the contemporary security scenario: economic decisions have strategic consequences, trade and tariff instruments are being employed as tools for influencing, and strategic autonomy in the globalized world requires a balancing act, not isolation.

Maritime security offers a clear example of this transformation. As well said the one who owns seas controls the world. As seas carry majority of global trade and energy supply. Protecting these routes is not only military objective but also an economic necessity. The Chabahar Port illustrate how security today is embedded within crisis governance rather than military confrontation. India is building a strategic port; it is located in the southern city of Chabahar. India is using this Chabahar port as it leads to Afghanistan and Afghanistan leads to Central Asia all of this without touching Pakistan and that's make it very important transit project for India. (Ali Omid and Gauri Noolkar-Oak 2021). In May 2024 India signed a major 10 years long term contract with Iran operates and develop the Shahid Beheshti Port terminal in Chabahar. (HV pant 2018) This agreement is highly strategic, allowing India to enhance regional connectivity, particularly with Afghanistan and Central Asia, while bypassing Pakistan's ports. India also promised to pump in money under the project \$120 million in investments, and \$250 million in loans.

Every year India allocates funds for this project in 2025 budget 100cr rupees were allotted but the budget of 2026 India allocated no funds for Chabahar for the very first time. The investment is on risk because of Donald Trump, Trump have imposed crippling sanctions on Iran the date back to his first term as president, in 2018 president trump imposed sanctions on Iran for its nuclear programme but a waiver for Chabahar, under which port was left out of the sanctions but in 2025 Donald Trump second presidency it's not any more, United States have announced that it will revoke the sanctions and wavier granted in 2018 which will directly impact India, any Indian company which will trade through Chabahar will face problems in getting loans, insurance, and even in dollar trade even in the terms of cost and time the Chabahar port provided leverage to India. The port is also significant for the security purpose it provided strategic eye to India as

Chabahar port of Iran and Gwadar Port of Pakistan have 170km distance very important for intelligence services.

USA granted India a waiver of six months and set to expire on April 26, 2026 time to wind up operations in Chabahar. In this sense, the Chabahar Port emerges as a significant case in crisis governance, and security from India's perspective. The project shows how modern crisis governance extends beyond immediate threats, incorporating economic security, intelligence, maritime access, and the strategic handling of sanctions pressures imposed by powerful external actors like the U.S. Geography requires India to keep Chabahar it's the only viable way for New Delhi to get access to central Asia but operating under US sanctions create challenge and also raises question on is India losing Chabahar or it have kept in slow burner?

One major shift in 21st security is the increasing use of sanctions and geo economic measures. Countries now use economic tools such as tariffs, trade restrictions, export controls, financial regulations, and investment rules to achieve strategic objectives. These majors are not new they were used even in history but the objective during that time was to protect the infant industries from foreign competition and give the time and space to grow but now they are been used as a tool of power projection and to pressure foreign governments and these measures allow states to influence the behavior of others without resorting to military force. As a result, the line between economic policy and security policy has blurred. Today, security is not just the matter of strong army or national borders are protected it is also important to ensure resilience against economic coercion, restrictions, and global financial pressures.

Under the Mr. Tariff Donald Trump, tariffs have become headline diplomacy. From years India have been facing pressure from America to open its agriculture market for USA farm products like corn, dairy products, India have faced multiple pressure. Despite this pressure, India never compromised its economic and diplomatic priorities. It protected its farmers' interests by maintaining key safeguards and resisting immediate demands, while simultaneously negotiating with the U.S. to reduce tensions. As a result, the two countries reached a compromise that brought tariffs down to 18 percent (Feb 2026) a figure lower than in previous disputes but still reflecting India's priority to safeguard domestic agriculture.

This shows that economic coercion, trade disputes, and sanctions have emerged as tools of strategic influence. This Indian strategy of negotiation, risk management, and strategic autonomy in managing economic coercion and sanctions reflects a new form of managerial crisis diplomacy in world politics, in which economic and security considerations converge. In such a scenario of emerging world politics, national security involves preparedness not only against conventional threats but also against economic coercion in a complex world order.

While economic coercion and sanctions and maritime issues reflect a new geo-economic turn in world politics, security issues have a military dimension that cannot be ignored. For emerging

powers in contested regions of the world, territorial sovereignty and military deterrence are core issues of security policy, and economic issues merely set the limits of security preparedness.

India's decision to suspend historic Indus Waters Treaty following major attack on militants in Baisaran valley. Signed in 1960 and often described as one of the most durable water sharing agreements in the world, the treaty survived for six decades the Indus water treaty with hood everything four wars multiple terror attacks but that line was crossed the Pahalgam attack was the proverbial last straw. India has drawn clear red line water and blood cannot flow together. This move illustrates river system, water sharing agreements can become part of broader strategic calculations. Water, traditionally treated as a developmental issue, and thus enters the realm of national security.

Security is no longer a matter of waiting for crises to break out and then negotiating an end to them. It is now a matter of governing uncertainty as a permanent reality. The distinctions between war and peace, economics and strategy, diplomacy and deterrence have progressively blurred. This is the change: strength and strain in one package. It is the ability to act swiftly, to tap into instruments across sectors, and to adapt to changing pressures. It is also the concern that the normalization of emergency type governance may mean the concentration of power, less transparency, and increased global inequalities. No longer is the question how to avoid crisis situations at all, but how crisis situations are managed, managed by whom, and in what way, and with what consequences in terms of legitimacy and fairness. In the world of permanent turbulence, security is not only about power and preparedness, but also about balancing resilience and responsibility.

Global South Perspective

During the Cold War, where world was divided between ideology. Today, they are based on geo-economics. Sanctions can make it harder to get energy. Tariffs can have an effect on the farming industry, textile markets, and supply chains in the area. The process of industrialization can be affected by how well technology is controlled. Financial systems can have an impact on how businesses enter the market. In this situation, where one crisis affects other and total uncertainty the new economies have to figure out how to become independent and work together. The Global South uses the strategy of selective engagement and follows their national interest over pressure. Global South take part in multilateral forums and trade talks to get into markets and have a say in how rules are made. At the same time, they secure their strategic sectors and diversify their relationships to avoid depending on any group of powers. They are moving towards middle path neither isolating them which is not even possible in today era and not even aligned in the fragmented world.

However, there is still asymmetry in the structures. As developed nations still have great influence over the major currencies held in reserve, international banking systems, and high-tech

value chains, dominance in organization and a power to make decisions in their favor. Even if they do not take part in the war, the developing countries may be more adversely affected by crisis management instruments such as economic sanctions. Therefore, the idea behind the Global South is not so much about striking back as it is about cooperating in a smart way as they are the growing economies. The new powers operate in a crisis system of their own choosing but are trying harder and harder to influence the outcome. Their foreign policy is a response to feeling weak, and they want to have more power in a world where crises are constantly occurring and government is becoming more businesslike.

Conclusion

Till now it's clear the international system is no longer now divided into war and peace or not even in, negotiation and enforcement, economics and security. Instead, it is a system of constant strategic adjustment. Crises do not come and go in a cycle. They stay, they overlap, they change. Wars affect energy prices, sanctions affect supply chains, naval disputes affect trade routes, and technology controls affect paths of development which can be very evidently been seen in the ongoing USA, Israel and Iran war if war continues the energy markets will be hit hard, supply chains will be disrupted.

In this system, the old division between diplomacy, security, and crisis response is no longer relevant. Diplomacy is no longer exclusively concerned with negotiation and treaties especially today where disruptions is everywhere whether its between Pak and Afghanistan, Maldives and Mauritius or USA, Israel and Iran. Security is no longer exclusively concerned with military deterrence. Crisis response is no longer a temporary phenomenon. Instead, it is an integrated system of governance based on the principles of regulatory coordination, economic instruments, executive networks, and strategic partnerships where India is trying hard to save its citizens to reach their home state safe, securing its supply chains.

This change marks a fundamental transformation from the episodic nature of the negotiation to a permanent state of management. Trade policy has become a security issue. Sanctions have become strategic tools of coercion. Maritime presence is not only to secure economic but also vital lifelines. Financial systems have become the realm of strategic influence. Under this situation, the tools of diplomacy cannot be seen as separate from the tools of security. It is not only the situation where governance occurs but also the realm of export controls, change in tariffs, maritime presence, and supply chain transformation that have become integrated.

This is especially true when the focus is on the foreign policy of India. The foreign policy of India is closely related to the issues of energy availability, maritime stability and partnership, as well as economic security. In this era one can't stay isolated what matter is effective managing. Trade negotiations are conducted in tandem with security issues where taking care both of national interest and domestic farmers and industries become important. Maritime initiatives are

closely related to economic security as major trade flows from there. The foreign policy of India is a case study in the response to the system that has a managerial approach to diplomacy and a multidimensional approach to security.

This also brings up issues that are more fundamental in nature. The managerial approach to crisis management is efficient and flexible, yet it is also unbalanced. Power is still not equally distributed in the global financial system, the regulatory system, and the technology. Countries that have the capacity dictate the terms of engagement to other countries like USA with Venezuela; China still continues its dominance over South China Sea, and the new USA demand for Greenland. For several Global South nations, inclusion in this order is a source of expansion and integration, but it also makes them susceptible to global shocks and policy choices made elsewhere. The processes that govern crises can also consolidate imbalances of power.

Furthermore, the institutionalization of crisis management also challenges the normative basis of global governance. When crisis management practices that are characteristic of emergency coordination become the new normal, issues of transparency and democratic accountability can be pushed to the side. Executive-led mechanisms, technocratic decision-making, and ad-hoc groupings tend to proceed at a pace that outstrips more deliberative institutions. While this is important in a rapidly changing world, it is not possible to treat legitimacy as an afterthought. Governance that values speed over inclusiveness may well stabilize markets but will surely destabilize politics and better coordination of both the interest become very important here.

The future of global security governance, therefore, depends on more than its ability to deliver; it depends on the ability of this integrated system of diplomacy and security to develop into an even more participatory and equitable form of global governance. The Indian experience, therefore, indicates that the rising powers are not only takers of the global order but also movers of the global order, seeking space, leverage, and voice in the global order in forums like G20, Quad, BRICS where foreign countries also seek India's involvement. But to achieve this, there has to be a change at the systemic level, as opposed to the focus on strategic action at the national level.

In a world of permanent crisis, the task at hand is not merely to cope with instability, but to ensure that the management of instability itself does not become disconnected from accountability. The future of the global order will therefore be determined by its ability to balance efficiency with equity, power with legitimacy, coordination with democratic responsibility, and so on. As the world of diplomacy and security merges into a single field of continuous governance, the challenge of our time is whether the integrated global order can remain both effective and equitable.

References

1. Bagh, D. M. (2025, February 15). *India's role in shaping international norms during Amrit Kaal: Navigating multipolarity and global governance*. SSRN.
https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5161235
2. Rana, K. S. (2011). *21st century diplomacy*.
<https://books.google.co.in/books?id=EC0AwAAQBAJ>
3. Sabar, P. (2024). *India's diplomatic influence and strategic positioning in 21st century global politics*. <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10258/>
4. Press Information Bureau. (n.d.). *Press note*.
<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressNoteDetails.aspx?id=156654&NoteId=156654&ModuleId=3®=1>
5. Dutta, D., & Deb, A. (2025). *India's ascendancy to fourth largest economy: Mapping the growth trajectory and strategic implications*.
<https://www.rgujournal.in/index.php/RGUJSSR/article/view/53>
6. Press Information Bureau. (n.d.). *Press note*.
<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressNoteDetails.aspx?NoteId=156893&ModuleId=3®=3&lang=1>
7. Ministry of Commerce and Industry. (2026). *Factsheet on India–EU trade deal*.
<https://www.commerce.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Factsheet-on-India-EU-trade-deal27.1.2026.pdf>
8. *Russia remains top arms supplier to India: SIPRI report*. (2025, March 11).
<https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2025/Mar/11/russia-remains-top-arms-supplier-to-india-sipri-report>
9. Mitra, R. (2019, June 2). *India's Persian desire – Analysing India's maritime trade strategy vis-à-vis the Port of Chabahar*.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09733159.2019.1625226>
10. Miner, M., Patankar, G., Gamkhar, S., & Eaton, D. J. (2009, May 18). *Water sharing between India and Pakistan: A critical evaluation of the Indus Water Treaty*.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02508060902902193>
11. *Russian oil exports under international sanctions*. (n.d.).
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0140988325008369>
12. Ershov, M. V. (2022). https://www.vopreco.ru/jour/issue/view/259?locale=en_US
13. *India–US trade deal: 25% penal tariffs linked to Russian oil gone—here's what we know*. (n.d.). <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/india-us-trade-deal-25-penal-tariffs-linked-to-russian-oil-gone-heres-what-we-know/articleshow/127868647.cms>

14. Manhas, N. S. (2025, August 12). *Can the Indus Waters Treaty survive India–Pakistan tensions?* <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00358533.2025.2545564>
15. Sinha, U. K. (2025, November 17). *Indus Waters Treaty: Looking back, looking ahead.* <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09700161.2025.2587404>
16. Omidi, A., & Noolkar-Oak, G. (2021, November 25). *Geopolitics of Chabahar Port for Iran, India and Afghanistan.* <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/02627280211055981>
17. *Budget 2026: Why India didn't allocate funds for Iran's Chabahar Port despite past annual ₹100 crore outlay.* (2026). <https://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/budget-2026-why-india-didnt-allocate-funds-for-irans-chabahar-port-despite-past-annual-100-crore-outlay/4127247/>
18. Pant, H. V. (2018). *India-Iran cooperation at Chabahar port.* <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep22312.pdf>
19. Aslan, K., & Rashid, Y. (2020). *The increasing role of geoeconomics: Competition between the Chabahar and the Gwadar ports.* https://iramcenter.org/uploads/files/The_Increasing_Role_of_Geoeconomics_Competition_between_the_Chabahar_and_the_Gwadar_Ports.pdf

NOTES

The Global Administrative State: Theory, Policy, and Global Governance

(ISBN: 978-93-47587-26-9)

About Editors



Dr. Ruchika S. Rathi is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at IIS (Deemed to be University), known for her strong academic foundation and dedication to teaching and research. She holds Master's degrees in Political Science, Public Administration, and History, enabling a multidisciplinary approach to socio-political studies. She completed her Ph.D. in 2021 from MNIT Jaipur, focusing on political theory, governance, and historical analysis, and is also UGC-NET qualified. Her research interests include political institutions, public policy, governance processes, and historical dimensions of political developments. She is committed to making complex political concepts accessible and relevant for students. Dr. Rathi has actively participated in Faculty Development Programmes and national and international conferences. As an educator and mentor, she strives to equip students with analytical skills, ethical understanding, and global perspectives essential for academic and professional success.



Dr. Krati Sharma is a Professor of English at Poornima Institute of Engineering and Technology, Jaipur, with sixteen years of teaching experience. She earned her Ph.D. in English from Jaipur National University, focusing on gender identity and narrative perspectives in Indian women autobiographies. A prolific academician, she has actively participated in and presented papers at numerous national and international seminars, conferences, and webinars on English language teaching, postcolonial literature, gender studies, and narrative techniques. She has authored one book and edited five books with international publishers, contributed around 30 book chapters, and published more than 35 research papers in UGC CARE-listed journals. She has conducted FDPs and sessions on the use of AI tools for teaching excellence and completed IIT-based courses, receiving the NPTEL Discipline Star award in 2024. She secured AICTE ATAL FDP funding and serves as editor of reputed journals while mentoring research scholars.

