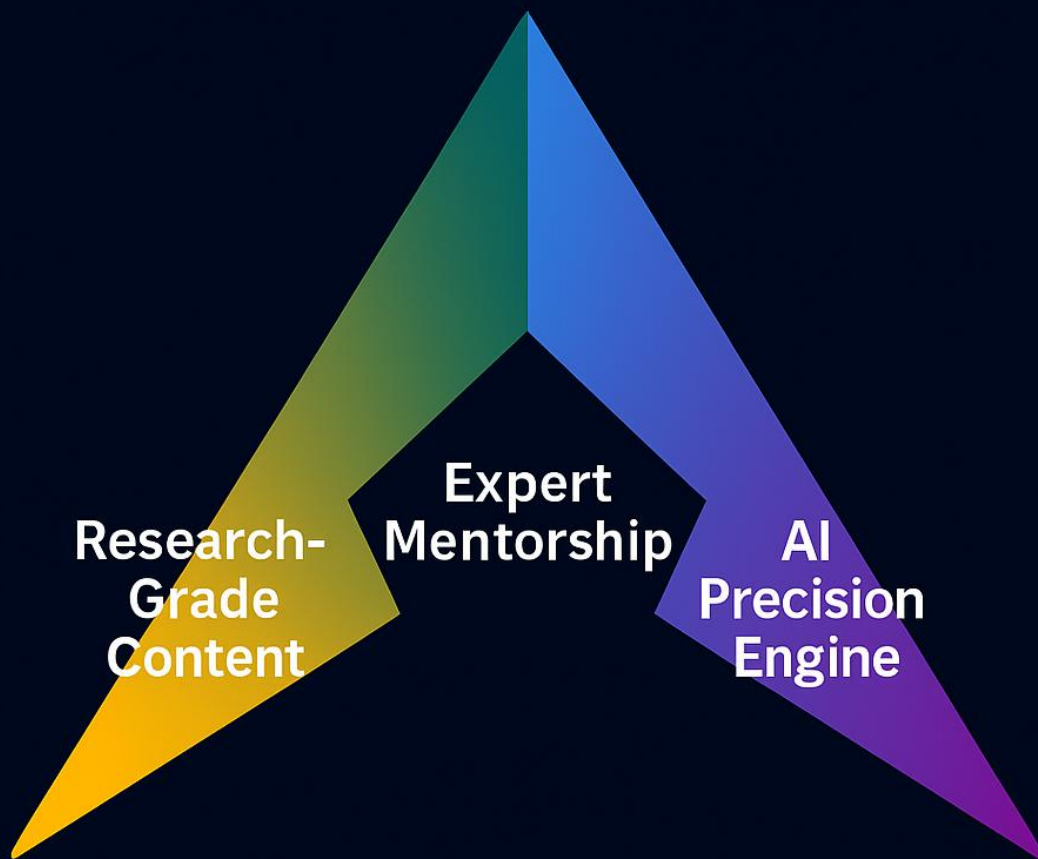


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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS DATED 08.07.2026

GS Paper II: International Relations

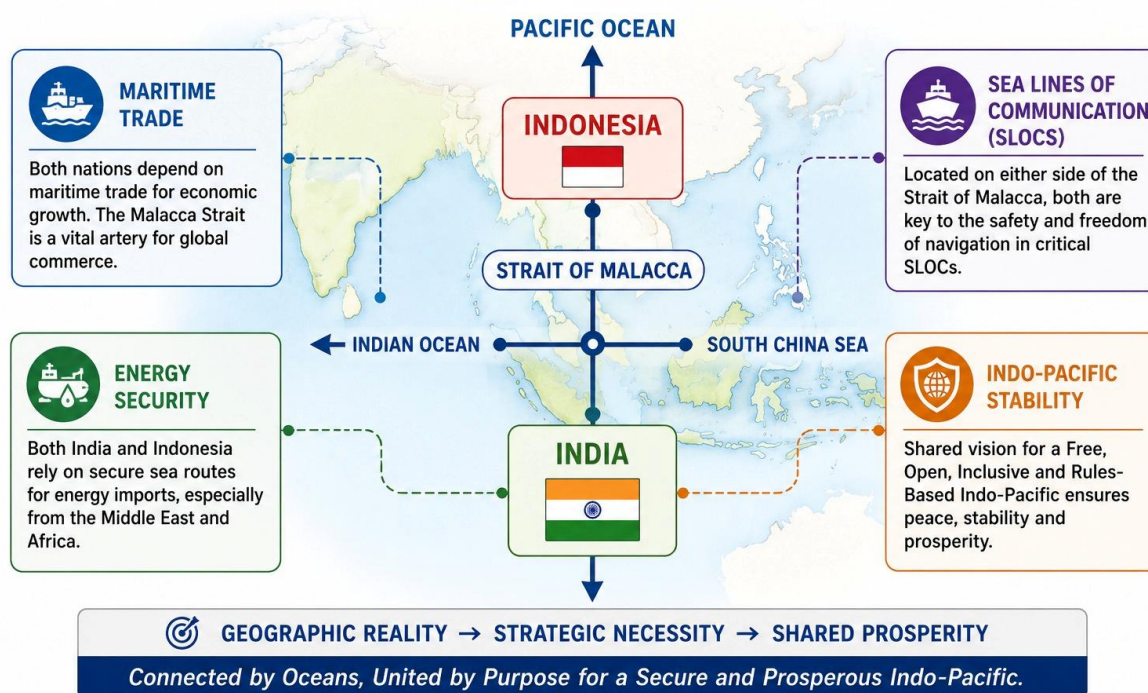
1. India-Indonesia Relations: Strengthening the Strategic Partnership in the Indo-Pacific

a. Introduction

India and Indonesia occupy pivotal positions in the Indo-Pacific, connected by centuries-old civilisational ties, maritime linkages and expanding strategic cooperation. Situated on either side of the Strait of Malacca, both countries are natural maritime partners with shared interests in safeguarding sea lanes, promoting regional stability and ensuring a Free, Open and Inclusive Indo-Pacific (FOIP).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Indonesia marked another significant step in the evolution of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, with agreements covering defence, critical minerals, maritime security, space and agriculture. The visit reflects the growing convergence between the two countries on regional security, economic resilience and technological cooperation.

WHY INDIA AND INDONESIA ARE NATURAL MARITIME PARTNERS



b. Background

India and Indonesia established a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership based on:

- Civilisational links.
- Shared democratic values.
- Maritime cooperation.
- Economic engagement.

Indonesia is a key pillar of India's Act East Policy and an important partner in strengthening engagement with ASEAN. Its strategic location along the Strait of Malacca, through which a significant share of global maritime trade passes, makes it indispensable for India's maritime and economic security.

Against this strategic backdrop, the recent summit significantly broadened bilateral cooperation across multiple sectors.

c. Key Outcomes of the Visit

Defence Cooperation

- Agreements to deepen defence cooperation.
- Proposed supply of:
 - BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles.
 - Astra air-to-air missile systems.
- Expansion of defence technology collaboration and military capability development.

Critical Minerals Partnership

Both countries agreed to strengthen cooperation in:

- Critical minerals.
- Rare earth elements.

These are essential for:

- Semiconductors.
- Batteries.
- Electric vehicles.
- Renewable energy technologies.
- Advanced manufacturing.

Maritime Security

Enhanced cooperation in:

- Maritime domain awareness.
- Coastal surveillance.
- Maritime security.
- Protection of Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs).

Space and Agriculture

The partnership expanded into:

- Space technology.
- Agricultural cooperation.
- Research collaboration.

Diplomatic Recognition

Indonesia conferred its highest civilian honour, Bintang Adipurna, upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi in recognition of his contribution to strengthening bilateral relations.

Indo-Pacific Vision

Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to a:

- Free, Open and Inclusive Indo-Pacific (FOIP).
- Freedom of navigation.
- Freedom of overflight.
- Respect for international law.

- Peaceful settlement of disputes.

These outcomes reflect the broader strategic importance of Indonesia in India's Indo-Pacific vision.

d. Strategic Significance

Maritime Security

Indonesia lies at the junction of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, making it a crucial maritime partner.

Enhanced cooperation strengthens:

- Maritime domain awareness.
- Coastal security.
- Protection of critical shipping routes.
- Regional stability.

Defence Partnership

Growing defence cooperation supports:

- Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence.
- Defence exports.
- Indigenous technological capability.
- Strategic interoperability.

Critical Minerals Security

Collaboration on critical minerals enhances:

- Semiconductor supply chains.
- Electric vehicle manufacturing.
- Clean energy transition.
- Strategic resource security.

Strengthening Act East Policy

Indonesia is India's largest trading partner within ASEAN.

Closer ties promote:

- Regional connectivity.
- Economic integration.
- Engagement with Southeast Asia.

Rules-Based Indo-Pacific

The partnership supports:

- International law.
- UNCLOS.
- Freedom of navigation.
- Peaceful dispute resolution.
- Regional balance of power.

Beyond strategic cooperation, Indonesia itself occupies a uniquely important position within Southeast Asia.

e. Importance of Indonesia

ASEAN Leadership

- Largest economy in ASEAN.
- Most populous ASEAN country.
- Influential regional political actor.

Strategic Geography

Indonesia exercises influence over major maritime chokepoints, particularly the Strait of Malacca, through which a substantial share of global trade and energy supplies passes.

Regional Connectivity

Indonesia is an important partner for India in:

- ASEAN.
- East Asia Summit (EAS).
- Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).
- Indo-Pacific cooperation.

Blue Economy

The partnership supports cooperation in:

- Sustainable fisheries.
- Marine resource management.
- Coastal resilience.
- Ocean governance.

Building upon these strategic complementarities requires sustained cooperation across both traditional and emerging sectors.

f. Way Forward

Strengthen Defence Industrial Cooperation

Promote:

- Joint production.
- Technology collaboration.
- Defence manufacturing.
- Regular military exercises.

Expand Maritime Cooperation

Enhance collaboration in:

- Maritime domain awareness.
- Anti-piracy operations.
- Search and rescue (SAR).
- Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR).

Build Trusted Supply Chains

Expand cooperation in:

- Critical minerals.

- Semiconductors.
- Digital technologies.
- Clean energy.
- Emerging technologies.

Deepen Economic Integration

Increase:

- Trade.
- Investment.
- Tourism.
- Educational exchanges.
- Cultural cooperation.

Coordinate Regional Diplomacy

Continue working closely through:

- ASEAN.
- East Asia Summit.
- IORA.
- Other Indo-Pacific platforms.

to strengthen a Free, Open and Inclusive Indo-Pacific.

Conclusion

India-Indonesia relations have evolved from traditional diplomatic engagement into a comprehensive strategic partnership encompassing defence, maritime security, critical technologies, economic resilience and regional governance. As geopolitical competition intensifies in the Indo-Pacific, deeper cooperation between the two maritime democracies will be essential for advancing a rules-based regional order, strengthening ASEAN centrality, promoting secure and resilient supply chains, and realising the shared vision of a Free, Open and Inclusive Indo-Pacific.

GS Paper II: International Relations

2. "G Minus Two": India's Emerging Indo-Pacific Strategy

a. Introduction

The Indo-Pacific has become the principal centre of global geopolitical, economic and technological competition. As strategic rivalry between the United States and China intensifies, many regional countries are seeking to diversify their external partnerships while avoiding exclusive geopolitical alignments. In this evolving strategic landscape, India has expanded its engagement with key Indo-Pacific partners through high-level diplomatic visits and strategic cooperation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visits to Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand, following engagements with Japan and South Korea, reflect India's broader effort to strengthen regional partnerships based on strategic autonomy, economic resilience, maritime security and trusted technology cooperation. Some strategic analysts describe this evolving approach as the "G Minus Two" framework.

b. Background Context

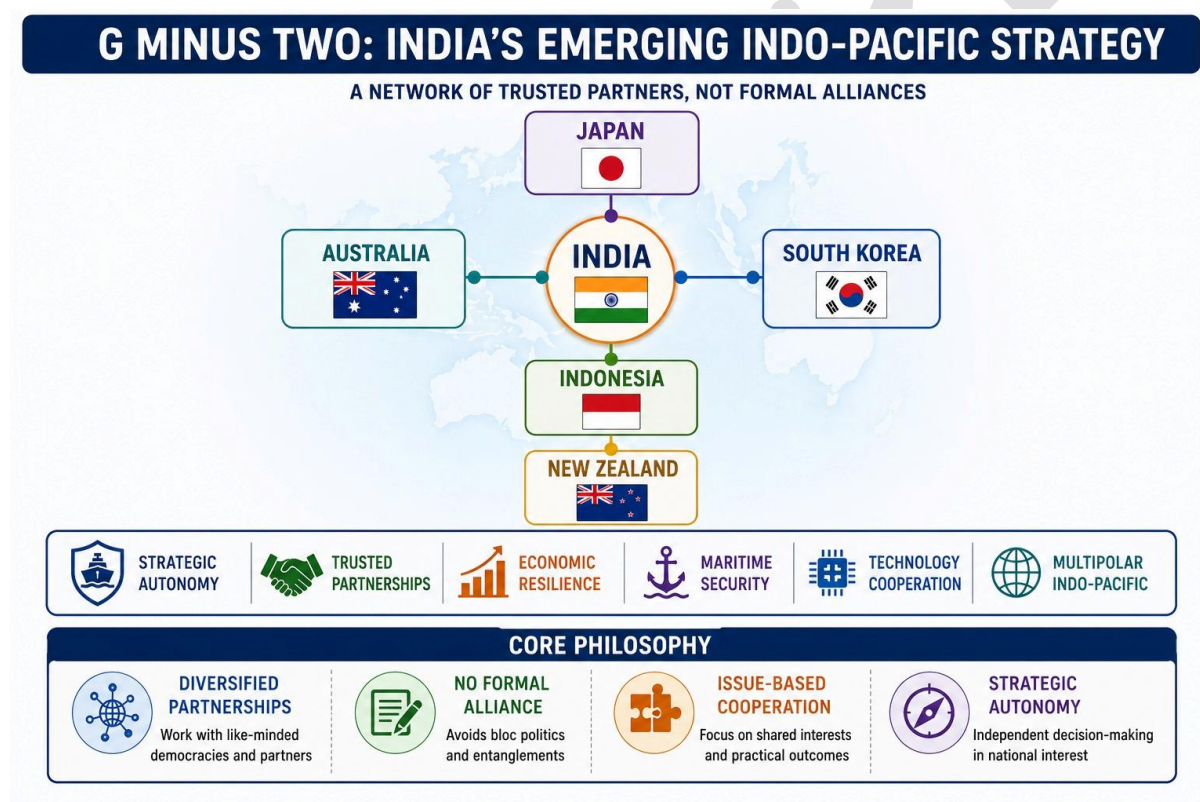
The Indo-Pacific has emerged as the world's most significant strategic theatre because of:

- Global trade routes.
- Maritime connectivity.
- Supply chains.
- Technological competition.
- Military balance.

Increasing strategic competition between the United States and China has encouraged several regional powers to pursue diversified partnerships that reduce excessive dependence on any single major power.

Against this backdrop, India is strengthening cooperation with major Indo-Pacific countries across defence, trade, critical technologies, resilient supply chains and maritime security while preserving its long-standing commitment to strategic autonomy.

This evolving diplomatic approach has led to the emergence of what some analysts describe as the "G Minus Two" framework.



c. What is "G Minus Two"?

The expression "G Minus Two" refers to an analytical framework that emphasises cooperation among major Indo-Pacific middle powers, rather than viewing Asia exclusively through the strategic rivalry between the United States and China.

Key Features

- Strengthens partnerships among major Asian and Indo-Pacific countries.
- Promotes economic resilience and trusted technology cooperation.
- Supports maritime security and regional stability.
- Preserves India's policy of strategic autonomy.

What the Concept Does Not Mean

The framework:

- Does not advocate an anti-China military alliance.
- Does not seek to replace existing United States-led security arrangements.
- Does not create a new geopolitical bloc.

Instead, it promotes issue-based cooperation among like-minded regional partners while avoiding rigid alliance structures.

The growing relevance of this approach reflects major geopolitical and economic changes across the Indo-Pacific.

d. Why is this Approach Gaining Importance?

Intensifying US-China Rivalry

Growing competition between the United States and China has increased geopolitical uncertainty across the Indo-Pacific.

Many countries therefore seek diversified strategic partnerships.

Preference for Strategic Flexibility

Several Indo-Pacific countries prefer:

- Multi-alignment.
- Strategic autonomy.
- Issue-based cooperation.

rather than choosing between competing power blocs.

Regional Security Concerns

China's expanding military presence and increasingly assertive regional posture have encouraged greater cooperation among countries committed to:

- International law.
- Freedom of navigation.
- Peaceful dispute resolution.

Economic Security

Recent disruptions in:

- Global supply chains.
- Tariff regimes.
- Critical technology access.

have highlighted the importance of:

- Trusted supply chains.
- Economic resilience.
- Technological partnerships.

These developments have increased the strategic importance of India's engagement with several key Indo-Pacific partners.

e. Key Strategic Partners

Japan

Cooperation includes:

- Manufacturing.
- Infrastructure.
- Defence technology.
- Economic security.
- Resilient supply chains.
- Indo-Pacific cooperation.

South Korea

Important partner in:

- Semiconductors.
- Shipbuilding.
- Advanced manufacturing.
- Defence production.
- Industrial modernisation.

Indonesia

Strategically significant because of:

- Location near the Strait of Malacca.
- ASEAN leadership.
- Maritime security.
- Regional connectivity.

Australia

Major partner in:

- Critical minerals.
- Maritime cooperation.
- Indian Ocean security.
- Clean energy.
- Trusted supply chains.

New Zealand

Cooperation focuses on:

- Agriculture.
- Food processing.
- Education.
- Innovation.
- Research.
- Advanced technologies.

Collectively, these partnerships significantly enhance India's strategic position in the Indo-Pacific.

f. Significance for India

Strengthening Strategic Autonomy

Expands India's strategic options without requiring formal alliance commitments.

Economic Resilience

Enhances cooperation in:

- Critical technologies.
- Semiconductors.
- Advanced manufacturing.
- Trusted supply chains.

Reinforcing Act East Policy

Deepens India's engagement with:

- ASEAN.
- East Asia.
- Pacific partners.

Promoting a Multipolar Indo-Pacific

Supports:

- Rules-based regional order.
- Freedom of navigation.
- Respect for international law.
- Inclusive regional governance.

Expanding Economic Opportunities

Creates greater opportunities for:

- Trade.
- Investment.
- Digital cooperation.
- Innovation.
- Connectivity.

Despite these opportunities, India must navigate several strategic and policy challenges.

g. Key Challenges

Balancing Strategic Autonomy

India must deepen partnerships without compromising its independent foreign policy.

Managing Relations with China

India seeks to diversify strategic partnerships while maintaining stable economic engagement with China where feasible.

Divergent Priorities

Partner countries often possess different:

- Strategic objectives.
- Security concerns.
- Threat perceptions.

which may limit deeper institutional cooperation.

Domestic Preparedness

India's strategic influence ultimately depends upon strengthening:

- Manufacturing.
- Technology.
- Infrastructure.
- Defence capability.
- Economic competitiveness.

Addressing these challenges requires both external diplomacy and sustained domestic capability building.

h. Way Forward

Deepen Economic Integration

Expand:

- Trade.
- Investment.
- Connectivity.
- Technology partnerships.

with major Indo-Pacific economies.

Strengthen Defence Cooperation

Promote:

- Joint research.
- Co-development.
- Co-production.
- Defence industrial collaboration.

Build Trusted Supply Chains

Expand cooperation in:

- Semiconductors.
- Critical minerals.
- Clean energy.
- Advanced manufacturing.

Enhance Maritime Cooperation

Strengthen engagement through:

- Quad.
- ASEAN-led mechanisms.
- Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).
- Bilateral maritime partnerships.

while respecting ASEAN centrality.

Build Domestic Capacity

Continue reforms in:

- Manufacturing.
- Innovation.
- Infrastructure.
- Defence modernisation.
- Digital technologies.

to enhance India's long-term strategic influence.

Conclusion

The "G Minus Two" framework captures an emerging strategic trend in India's Indo-Pacific diplomacy that emphasises diversified partnerships, strategic autonomy and cooperative regionalism. Rather than viewing the Indo-Pacific solely through the prism of United States–China competition, it highlights India's effort to build a network of trusted partnerships that strengthen economic resilience, maritime security, technological cooperation and regional stability. This approach reinforces India's vision of a Free, Open, Inclusive and Multipolar Indo-Pacific while advancing its long-term national interests.

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While every effort has been made to balance depth with brevity, please keep the following in mind:

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This compilation is curated primarily from the UPSC Mains perspective — with emphasis on conceptual clarity, analytical depth, and interlinkages across GS papers.

However, the PrepAlpine team is simultaneously developing a dedicated Prelims-focused Current Affairs Series, designed for:

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- data recall
- Prelims-style MCQs
- objective pattern analysis

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- visual cues

—all optimised for retention.

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