



CAPITALISM VS SOCIALISM

IASBABA'S

FRONTLINE

& IDSA

BI-MONTHLY

GIST

NORTH KOREAN CRISIS

NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

COMMUNISM & IMPACT ON
NATIONAL STRUGGLE

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Self-Respect Movement

GS 1

- Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present- significant events, personalities, issues
- Political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.- their forms and effect on the society
- Salient features of Indian Society

Intro

- One of the earliest propagandists of socialism from the non-Left camp in southern India was the patriarch of the Dravidian movement, **E.V.R. Periyar**, a staunch nationalist and Gandhian who literally walked out of the Congress protesting against its refusal to accept his demand for communal representation and many of its leaders' socially reactionary outlook.
- This radical phase of Periyar's political trajectory began with his formal association with the leaders of the nascent trade union movement in the Madras Presidency during a railway workers' strike in Nagapattinam in 1925.
- Periyar was arrested for his support to the strike. He found an ally in M. Singaravelu, one of the founders of the Communist movement in this part of the country, to take forward his movement for social justice.
- **Self-Respect Movement** was founded by **S. Ramanathan in 1925**.

Periyar thoughts on socialism in India

- Socialism has been brought into practice first time in Russia because the tsar's rule was the most tyrannical of all the governments in the world then. Going by this logic, it was in India, rather than Russia, that socialism must have come into practice. However, there have been many conspiracies in India to prevent that eventuality.
- The conspirators have very carefully kept the people of India in a barbaric state by blocking their ways of acquiring education, knowledge, worldly wisdom and self-respect and, in the name of God and religion, instilling in them the idea that it was God's will that they remain slaves and attain moksha.

Erode programme

- Periyar and Singaravelu chalked out a new programme for the Self-Respect Movement, which was adopted at a conference in Erode despite stiff opposition from a section of leaders, including Ramanathan.
- The “Erode Programme” demanded, among other things, complete independence from the British and other forms of capitalist governments, cancellation of national debts; public ownership of all agricultural and forest land, waterbodies, railways, banks, shipping and other modes of transport; cancellation of the debts of workers and peasants; bringing all native Indian states into a federation to be ruled by workers and peasants.
- The adoption of the programme marked the birth of the Samadharma Party of South India as the political wing of the Self-Respect Movement.

Caste and socialism

- In other countries, the crucial contradiction is between the capitalist (the rich) and his worker (the poor). However, in India, the concept of upper caste and lower caste is primary and dominant and that contradiction serves as a fort that protects the rich-poor divide. It is because of the twin opposition that the socialist sentiment has not acquired strength in India.
- The movement had all along been indulging in mere rhetoric against popular Hinduism and the ruses of Brahmans without paying any attention to the economic and political interests of non-Brahman masses. They could improve their social status only by promoting their economic condition and not merely by rejecting Brahmans’ ritual status.
- The economic interests of non-Brahmans could be improved not by the present democratic system of government dominated by capitalists, but by a socialist government formed by workers themselves.

Why Self Respect movement lost?

- The British government banned the Communist Party of India in 1934.
- It is realised that the government was determined to repress the Self-Respect Movement
- The movement had already suffered [as a consequence of the government’s surveillance and interference]
- Even the Congress had retreated into indirect action, not able to countenance government repression
- It was then decided to put a halt to socialist propoganda by the Self-Respecters

Connecting the dots

- Caste is intricately linked to the class envisaged in the theory of communism. Analyse.

Russian Revolution Impact on Indian freedom struggle

GS 1

- Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present- significant events, personalities, issues
- Freedom Struggle – its various stages and important contributors /contributions from different parts of the country
- Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country
- Political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.- their forms and effect on the society.
- Decolonization

Intro

- The Great October Socialist Revolution and the subsequent establishment of the Soviet Union marked the first advance in human history of the creation of a society free from class exploitation.
- The rapid strides made by socialism, the transformation of a once backward economy into a mighty economic and military bulwark confronting imperialism, have confirmed the superiority of the socialist system.

Indian freedom struggle

- The October Revolution has impacted the people's movement in India in a dual fashion.
- It impacted the leaders of the Indian national movement in terms of **radicalising the movement and moving towards the mass mobilisation** tactics of the Indian people's struggle.
- **Rabindranath Tagore (1930)**: "I am now in Russia... had I not come my life's pilgrimage would have remained incomplete.... The first thing that occurs to me is: what incredible courage! They are determined to raise a new world. They have no

time to lose because the whole world is their opponent. If I had not seen with my own eyes I could never have believed that lakhs of people sunk in ignorance and humiliation could not only be made literate but given the dignity of manhood.”

- **Lala Lajpat Rai, presiding over the first session of the All India Trade Union Congress in 1920**, said: “Imperialism and militarism are the twin children of capitalism; they are one in three and three in one. It is only lately that an antidote has been discovered and that antidote is organised labour. The workers of Europe and America have now discovered that the cause of the workers is one and the same all the world over, and there can be no salvation for them, until and unless the workers of Asia were organised, and then internationally affiliated.... European labour has found another weapon in direct action. On the top comes the Russia workers, who aims to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat....”
- **Mahatma Gandhi**, writing on Bolshevism, stated: “...It is my firm conviction that nothing enduring can be built on violence. But be that as it may, there is no questioning the fact that the **Bolshevik ideal has behind it the purest sacrifice of countless men and women**, who have given up their all for its sake; an ideal that is sanctified by sacrifices of such master spirits as Lenin cannot go in vain” (*Young India*, November 5, 1928).
- **Bhagat Singh** and his fellow revolutionaries were deeply influenced by the October Revolution when they gradually learnt about it.
- **Jawaharlal Nehru** was fascinated by his visit to Russia in the late 1920s which remained a lasting influence. In the midst of the intensification of the Indian people’s struggle for freedom, **Nehru, in his Presidential Address to the Lucknow Congress, early in 1936**, stated with firmness and conviction: “I am convinced that the **only key to the solution of the world’s problems and of India’s problems lies in socialism** and when I use this word I do so **not in a vague, humanitarian way but in the scientific, economic sense**. Socialism is, however, something even more than an economic doctrine; it is a philosophy of life and as such also it appeals to me. I see no way of ending the poverty, the vast unemployment, the degradation and the subjection of the Indian people except through socialism. That involves vast and revolutionary changes in our political and social structure, the ending of vested interests in land and industry, as well as the feudal and autocratic Indian princely states system. That means the ending of private property, except in a restricted sense, and the replacement of the present profit system by a **higher ideal of cooperative service**. It means ultimately a change in our instincts and habits and desires. In short, it means a **new civilisation**, radically different from the present capitalist order.

Energized social movements

- Soon after the October Revolution, **working class struggles broke out in India in 1919 and 1920.**
- Thousands of workers went on strikes in various working class centres such as Calcutta, Bombay and Ahmedabad.
- The **All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) was, thus, established in March 1920** giving shape to organised working class trade union movement in India.
- Both the AITUC and, after 1936, the AIKS played an important role in galvanising the exploited sections of Indian society, particularly workers and peasants, drawing them into the mainstream of the freedom movement.
- While the Indian bourgeoisie was mostly engaged in dealing with the leadership, that is, the exploiting sections of various princely states and feudal structures and drawing them into the struggle for independence, it was the communists that played the vital role of drawing in the vast mass of the exploited sections into the struggle.
- In fact, the **struggles over the land question**, against the exploitation of the peasantry by landlords, the highlight of which was the **armed Telangana peasant struggle in the late 1940s** along with the struggles in many other parts of the country, brought on to the agenda of the Indian freedom movement the question of abolishing landlordism in independent India.

Post-Independence India and Soviet Union

- The impact of the building of socialism in the USSR continued to be an inspiration in the process of building a modern India.
1. **Planning model**
 - Nehru emulated this building process by establishing the Planning Commission in India that drew up plans for the foundations of a self-reliant Indian economy.
 2. **Capital and technology support**
 - When the countries of the imperialist West refused to provide aid and assistance for India's independent industrial development, arguing that India should import the needs for its industrial growth from Western countries, the Soviet Union stepped in to provide both capital and technology for establishing our steel plants and other factories, laying the foundations for a self-reliant economy based on infrastructural development.

3. Defence support

- The aid and support provided by the Soviet Union to India's defence capabilities is a well-established fact that not only strengthened India's defence capabilities but also contributed to peace in the region and to the liberation of Bangladesh.

4. Independent foreign policy

- This selfless Soviet aid to independent India led also to the establishment of the emergence of the Non-Aligned Movement in the world, with India playing a major role.
- India's emergence as one of the leading countries championing the interests of the developing countries, thus, emerged as a consequence of following an independent foreign policy.

Revolutionary groups and communism

- At another level, the October Revolution **motivated various revolutionary groups** operating both within India and from abroad owing to British persecution to come together and form the Communist Party in India. These Indian revolutionaries were operating from various locations in Canada, the U.S., Afghanistan, Germany, Singapore and some other places.
- In Kabul, a provisional government of Free India was formed in December 1915.
- Soon after the October Revolution and the third Anglo-Afghan war in 1919, Afghanistan was declared an independent country. These revolutionary groups established contacts with the Bolshevik leaders in Russia. A delegation met Lenin at the Kremlin in Moscow in 1919.
- The various streams of Indian revolutionaries, important and powerful tendencies in Bengal's revolutionary groups such as Anushilan and Jugantar, the emerging working class leaders from Bombay and Madras Presidencies who forged links with the rural peasantry's anti-feudal struggles, etc. after the founding of the CPI in Tashkent in 1920, eventually came together at the then industrial city of Kanpur in the year 1925 and established the unification of these streams with the Communist Party of India. This was further consolidated to exert a powerful influence on our freedom struggle.
- The group that was operating from Berlin established independent contacts with Russia. And, along with those in Afghanistan and others, they were instrumental in the Communist Party of India being founded in October 1920 in Tashkent.
- Soon after its formation, on behalf of the Communist Party, **Maulana Hasrat Mohani and Swami Kumarananda moved, in the Ahmedabad All India Congress Committee (AICC) session in 1921, a resolution demanding complete independence** from

British rule. Gandhiji then rejected this. The resolution for “Poorna Swaraj” was adopted a decade later by the AICC at the Karachi session in 1930.

- So profound was the impact of the formation of the Communist Party under the direct inspiration of the October Revolution that the British Crown panicked at the possibility of a Bolshevik revolt in India! British colonialism sought to nip in the bud the infant Communist movement by launching a series of conspiracy cases—the **Peshawar conspiracy case (1922-23)**, the **Kanpur conspiracy case (1924)**, the **famous Meerut conspiracy case** later and a host of other such cases to persecute the Communists.

Conclusion

- The October Revolution, therefore, must be seen as an event that profoundly changed the character of the Indian people’s struggle for freedom and for carrying forward the **struggle of transforming the political independence of the country towards the economic independence** of its people, that is, the establishment of socialism in India.

Connecting the dots

- **Russian Revolution has deep imprint on the freedom struggle of India against both colonialism and internal deficiencies. Examine.**

Capitalism vs Socialism and Planning model

GS 1

- **Political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.- their forms and effect on the society**

GS 3

- **Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment**

Capitalism theory

- The “**decentralised**” mechanism, viz., **commodity production in a world of private ownership** of the means of production is the essential element of all social formations in history.

- It is declared that there was no alternative to the market mechanism
- In the view of these advocates, the specifically capitalist form these features had taken since the 17th century marked the end of history.

1. Waste of resources

- Those advocating the merits of the market mechanism tend to underplay the fact that market economies are socially wasteful in multiple ways.
- The source and nature of appropriation of profits made the system prone to crises.

1.1. Wastage of resources due to overproduction

- The capitalist employs labour by paying the labourer the cost of reproducing labour power, but receives in return the use value of labour power in production, which contributes more to the produced commodity than its own exchange value. When the commodity so produced is sold, the capitalist realises the surplus value as profit.
- Once this circuit is in place, the dominant objective of the capitalist becomes the production of commodities and services that yield surplus value, which is deployed again to generate and appropriate more surplus value.
- This requires enlarging the surplus embodied in commodities relative to the wages paid to workers, resulting in the constant expansion of production at a rate faster than the growth of workers' consumption. The process renders the system prone to crises of overproduction or underconsumption.

1.2 Chronic Unemployment and thus waste of human resource

- On the other hand, if the expansion of production is accompanied by a substantial increase in employment of workers, the shortage of labour could lead to a rise in wages that squeezes profits and cuts off accumulation and growth.
- In sum, the antagonistic nature of a system based on private property, reflected in the antagonism between profits and wages, perpetually generates a reserve army of unemployed workers and makes the system prone to crises. Crises result, in turn, in unemployment and waste.

2. Atomistic decision making

- The second reason capitalism was prone to crises was the anarchy associated with the atomistic decision-making characteristic of systems based on private property.
- In such systems, the **level and allocation of investment gets determined by the "guesses or expectations of a large number of independent decision-takers (entrepreneurs), in the long run 'revised' by ex post movements of market prices"**.

- Since investments embodied in fixed capital are not reversible, decision errors are costly in individual and social terms.
- Without an anchor, there is no reason to expect that expectations of entrepreneurs will actually be realised, leading to overinvestment, unutilised capacity and closure.

Russian Revolution - a challenge to capitalism

- The Russian Revolution challenged this ideology in two ways.
- First, it established over time social or state ownership of the means of production in large parts of the economy.
- Second, it altered the structure of the economy, providing a major role for centralised decisions.
- As a result, the economy's operations and the trajectory they generated were no more determined by unpredictable production and consumption adjustments to surpluses or shortages that demand and supply responses to prices elicited. Rather, clear objectives were to be set in advance and investment allocations determined to ensure growth along the lines desired.

Planning - forthcoming result of the Revolution

- The transition to a planned system of this kind took time and followed the special periods of "**war communism**" (1918-20) and the "**new economic policy**" (1921-28).
- Planning began with the **First Five Year Plan in 1928**. Once put in place, it marked a major transformation in the design and operation of economic systems, liberating them from the needs of feeding the profits of capitalists at the expense of all else and making them meet the needs of society as perceived by the political leadership and the planners.
- As the Soviet economist and **planning theorist S. Strumilin** argued in 1927, "targets and advanced directives are the central focus of any plan", and the process must be based on "what can be indicated in advance, by positing it as a goal".

Planning model

- The case for economic planning had emerged out of this *critique of capitalism*. The critique suggested that a system that seeks to address the crises and social waste characteristic of capitalism must both do away with private ownership of the means of production and use the anchor of social ownership to coordinate investment and arrive at *a priori* decisions on the total volume of investment, its allocation to sectors and particular projects and the technical forms in which it would be embodied.
- The benefits from such coordination were twofold.

- First, by overcoming the uncertainty inherent in a regime where investment was based on atomistic decisions, it reduced the waste and unemployment characteristic of capitalism.
- Second, by ensuring the incorporation of appropriate inter-temporal judgments in the choice of the investment ratio, the allocation of investment and the technical forms in which it was embodied, it permitted the realisation of *a priori* objectives such as rising growth and determining how the benefits of growth were shared.
- This conceptual case for a system of social ownership combined with planning was transformed into a reality in the Soviet Union and proved to be immensely successful in many senses. The system registered rapid growth with full employment and access to basic services such as education and health.
- It also accelerated technological change in crucial areas ranging from defence to medicine. In the process, it created the material basis for the Soviet Union to become the force that ensured the final defeat of fascism, albeit at the cost of a huge number of lives.
- Planning pushed the system to (and some would say beyond) its limits, with **extremely high investment rates** that not only **built a large and strong industrial sector** but ensured that the **available surplus labour was absorbed** into employment by the time of the Second World War and that **a minimum access to education and health was available to all**.
- Central to the Soviet planned development model was the decision to raise the investment rate and allocate a larger share of investment to the machinery-producing sector. This allowed the system to produce the machines needed to employ the available surplus labour force.
- In time, it also **allowed for the deployment of machines in the consumption goods sector, with increased productivity providing the basis for an increase in consumption** after a lag.
- The adoption of this strategy resulted in **high rates of growth** of gross domestic product (GDP), at around 5.3 per cent per annum, and of industrial output, at 11 per cent per annum, during 1928-40. And if we exclude the War years, growth stood at between 5 and 6 per cent during 1928-70. The GDP per person in the USSR in 1990 US dollars rose from \$1,370 in 1928 to \$2,144 in 1940, \$5,569 in 1970 and \$7,078 in 1989.
- This implied that after Japan during 1928 to 1970 and Japan, South Korea and Taiwan during 1928 to 1989, Russia was the other underdeveloped country that managed to close the gap with the erstwhile advanced economies, making it the second global superpower during the Cold War years. In 1928, the GDP per person in Western Europe was 3.1 times that in the USSR. That ratio fell to below two times by 1970.
- This Soviet success inspired many post-War leaders in the underdeveloped world, including Jawaharlal Nehru in India, to opt for some form of planning as the means to overcome economic backwardness.

Why Planning model failed?

- These advances made by the Soviet Union under its planned system, during the period of extensive growth, could **not be sustained in practice when all labour resources had been absorbed and growth entered the intensive phase after the 1950s when it was dependent on increases in productivity.**

1. More emphasis on defence production

- One reason was that despite much sacrifice of consumption, productive outcomes were limited by the fact that a large part of the surplus was dissipated in expenditures on defence, given the fact of “socialism in one country” and the reality of capitalist encirclement.

2. Control of the state on production not holistic

- The area of control of the state was limited even in a society with extensive social ownership of the means of production, leading to distortions.

3. Failure in data collection

- While coordinated investment decision-making had an element of logical elegance in theory, its operation required full access of the planners to the required information on production, capacity utilisation and costs to plan investments and set prices.
- Inasmuch as the chain of communication that transmitted this information to the planners included agents who could privilege their own interests over societal ones, the purely formal organisational structure of the system did ensure the near-perfect transmission of relatively correct information.

4. Lack in tapping consumer preferences

- The centralised system, while successful with innovation in some areas, ran into difficulties when dealing with uncertainties about the likely evolution of consumer preferences and product and process innovations.
- Since **socialism was a system in which investment in R&D and in capacity** was coordinated and planned *a priori* **over a relatively long period**, these kinds of uncertainties were implicitly being treated as predictable. The unexpected **innovative dynamism of capitalism** after the Second World War and the inability of socialist regimes to insulate their populations from the “needs” generated by that

dynamism rendered this assumption of the predictability of trends in consumer preferences and technological requirements wrong.

- This not only **affected productivity increases adversely in some sectors** but **resulted in distortions in consumer markets.**

Way forward

- An alternative often proposed is a system that is more flexible or is run in a manner that makes it less taut and centralised than the command economy in the Soviet Union was.
- Both theory and the experience with socialism in practice suggest that the assumption of the possibility of an omniscient state underlying the “planning principle” is extreme.
- An ambiguous **structure of functioning institutions, in societies with social ownership.**
- That is, the design of a **flexible system based on the planning principle must specify the set of decisions that are centrally planned, the institutions that would make decentralised decisions and the fallout of central decisions on the operational functioning of lower units of command.**
- This must be done without subjecting the system to the instability and waste of capitalism.

Connecting the dots

- **Give a critical comparative analysis of communism and capitalism.**
- **What do you understand by planning? Why has it failed? What changes should be brought in the planning to make it compatible with contemporary realities?**

Communism and its impact on national struggle across the world

GS 1

- Decolonization
- Political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.- their forms and effect on the society

Intro

- The Bolshevik Revolution cast an instant spell on oppressed people all over the world, especially in Africa and Asia which were then under almost total colonial domination.

Communist thought for the colonial countries

- Lenin's "Theses on National and Colonial Questions" sharply brought out the integration of the struggles of the colonial people for freedom with the global struggle for emancipation against imperialism.
- Lenin paid a good deal of attention to the task of moulding the national revolutionaries from the then colonial countries into proletarian revolutionaries.
- He told the young revolutionaries from the colonial countries that they have to:
 - (a) **organise themselves as an independent revolutionary party of the working class**, even though the elements of such a class party were then extremely weak in these countries;
 - (b) have relations of **united front with other anti-imperialist classes, including the bourgeoisie**;
 - (c) that **worker-peasant unity** is the axis of the national liberation struggle.

Impact on colonial countries

- The October Revolution had a profound impact across the world, inspiring new revolutionary movements radicalising people's struggles, particularly on the struggles in the colonial world for freedom and liberation.
- The October Revolution **underlined the need for a mass mobilisation**, particularly organising the most oppressed classes in the societies of the colonial world, i.e., the

peasantry and the working class as an important element in the intensification of the struggle against colonial exploitation.

- Soon after the October Revolution, the colonial world saw a massive spurt of mass actions across the globe—the **1919 uprising in Egypt, the 1919 March 1st movement in Korea, the 1920 revolt in Iraq, and the 1921 Mongolian uprising** leading to the establishment of the second socialist state in the world in Mongolia in 1924.
- The **May 4th movement that began in China in 1919** played an important role in the emergence of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921.
- In the Portuguese colony, in **Brazil and Latin America, the Communists**, formed under the inspiration of the October Revolution, played the role of a catalyst in galvanising people's struggles.
- In Africa, in countries such as **South Africa, Namibia, Mozambique, Angola, Cape Verde, Congo** and in almost **all other countries in northern Africa, influential Communist parties** emerged in countries like Sudan, Iran, Iraq and Egypt.
- In **India**, too, big **working class** actions broke out in **1919-20**.

Role of Communist International in anti-colonial struggles

- In **1919**, the Russian Communist Party created a new body called the **Comintern (Communist International)**. It was tasked with the job of coordinating with organisations around the world that had also embraced socialist and progressive ideology.
- The Comintern was also a **response to the Second International**, which had let down the working class in the First World War by supporting the war efforts of the imperialist countries.
- The Comintern, under Vladimir Lenin's guidance, took the **decision "of supporting every liberation movement** in the colonies not only in words but also in deeds, of demanding that their imperialist compatriots should be thrown out of the colonies".
- Lenin observed that "the capitalist powers of Europe cannot maintain their existence for even a short time" without control of their vast colonies for exploitation.
- At the first Comintern conference, the Indian revolutionary **M.N. Roy** argued that unquestioning **support to all anti-colonial movements by communists could give nationalistic and reactionary leaders credibility at the expense of workers' and peasants' movements** in the colonies. Roy's "supplementary draft thesis" was given serious consideration by Lenin when the Comintern formulated its policies.
- Communist parties were soon formed in many countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa.
- The Russian Revolution and the creation of the Comintern had an immediate impact on intellectuals and others who were in the forefront of the anti-imperialist

movement at the time. The **Comintern had called for complete independence of all African countries.**

- The Comintern's call was hailed by radical African-American intellectuals such as W.E.B. DuBois and Marcus Garvey. DuBois was the head of the Pan-African Congress. Lenin organised the Congress of the East, which was held in 1920 in the Azerbaijani capital, Baku. The goal was to build a revolutionary Marxist movement of the exploited and oppressed people living under colonialism.
- The **Comintern was wound up in 1943 after the Soviet Union entered into an alliance with the U.S. and England** during the course of the Second World War. The Comintern had described the Second World War as "a people's war".
- Many leading communists in the colonies were not happy with Moscow's decision. Some left the party.

After Communist International - support to developing world

- Under Stalin, Moscow provided direct military aid only to countries that were contiguous to the boundaries of the Soviet Union. After Nikita Khrushchev took over, the policy changed.
- The Soviet Union started providing **arms and financial assistance to "neutral" countries such as India** while promoting the idea of a "zone of peace".
- Unlike the West, the Soviet Union **welcomed the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)**. The Cuban leader Fidel Castro described the Soviet Union as a "natural ally" of NAM.
- The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was no longer isolated globally after the liberation of Eastern Europe. The communist victory in China saw the further consolidation of communism.
- Communist parties set up during the Comintern era were now in the forefront of the liberation struggles in many countries of Africa and Asia.
- Most of the nationalist leaders who came to power in Anglophone and Francophone countries could be described as proponents of a centre-Left ideology inspired by Marxism Leninism. **Nkrumah (Ghana), Julius Nyerere (Tanzania), Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia) and Sekou Toure (Guinea)** are examples.
- Most of the leaders who were in the forefront of the independence struggle in Africa and Asia were determined that the state would play the key role in the economic transformation of these countries.

Africa's anti-colonial struggle

- The Comintern had adopted a **pan-African perspective at its 1922 Conference emphasising the key linkage between colonialism and racism** and, therefore, the

need for the communist movement to build strong relationships with the struggles of the black people in the United States, the Caribbean and the African continent.

- Lenin's successor, Joseph **Stalin**, in his report to the 17th Party Congress, said that the Soviet Union "must be true to the end to the cause of proletarian internationalism, to the cause of the fraternal alliance of the proletarians of all countries".
- During its existence, the Comintern did play a significant role in fostering solidarity between the black diaspora and the people of the African continent who were struggling to free themselves from the yoke of colonial rule. Almost all the leaders of liberation movements and prominent intellectuals on the African continent either were communists or were inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution.
- **Nelson Mandela, Amilcar Cabral, Frantz Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah and Jomo Kenyatta** drew inspiration from the October Revolution. Kenyatta, the leader of Kenya's independence struggle and its first President, in fact studied in Moscow's Communist University of the Toilers of the East in the 1920s. **Nkrumah was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize in 1962** for his efforts to unite the African continent against continued plunder by the West.
- In the Horn of Africa, dramatic changes were witnessed. The **pro-Western monarchy in Ethiopia was overthrown** and replaced by a left-wing government. Soviet military help, coupled with the presence of Cuban soldiers on the ground, helped the Ethiopian army stave off an invasion from Somalia. Somalia, under Siad Barre, had shifted to the Western camp after initially embracing a socialist ideology.
- In **Mozambique, the left-wing Frelimo took power** after waging a protracted guerilla war against the Portuguese colonisers and their regional allies at the time, which included the apartheid regime in South Africa.
- The **African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party** had a long-standing relationship with the Soviet Union. From the early 1960s the Soviet Union had provided military aid to the Umkhonto wa Sizwe, the armed wing of the ANC. The October Revolution had a profound impact on the developing world.
- Cuba also played a big role in the decolonisation struggles raging in different parts of the world, in tandem with the Soviet Union and the Socialist bloc. In the early **1960s, Che Guevara** went to the Congo in an abortive attempt to unite the progressive forces in their fight against the puppet regime installed by the West.
- **Che Guevara, who had gone to Bolivia** to mobilise a guerrilla force to organise the peasantry to rise up against the U.S. supported right-wing governments in the region, was captured and killed on the orders of the CIA in 1967. His death was not in vain. Che Guevara's dreams about Africa were partially coming to fruition in the 1970s.
- The USSR stepped in to support many mega projects on the African continent, like the building of the Aswan dam in Egypt.

Vietnam imperialist struggle

- It was under **Ho Chi Minh's** leadership that a colonial power, France, was first defeated in the famous battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954. Ho Chi Minh became a communist at a young age. The Vietnamese under communist leadership, then went on to defeat the U.S., the most powerful nation in the world. Losing the Vietnam War has been the most humiliating military defeat the U.S. has suffered so far.
- The material help provided by the Soviet Union played a big part in the historic victory of Dien Bien Phu and consequent triumphs of most of the liberation movements in the developing world.

Arab struggle

- The Soviet Union was the main ally of the Arabs in all the major wars they fought against Israel.
- Within the Arab world, **Communist parties were gaining wide acceptance, with those in Iraq and Syria** among the strongest in the region.
- Various **Palestinian groups, including the Fatah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), got strong support** from Moscow.
- In **South Yemen, communists were in power for more than a decade** soon after the country became independent in 1967. Factionalism destroyed the party and its hold over power.
- **In Iran, communists under the banner of the Tudeh Party** had played an important role in the politics of the country since its founding in 1941. The Tudeh was a special target for American and British intelligence agencies during the Cold War. Thousands of its members and supporters were either tortured in jail or killed.
- In neighbouring **Afghanistan**, the Soviet Union was **invited to send military help after the "Saur" revolution of 1978.**

Helping Cuba

- Soviet help was invaluable for Cuba as it withstood the impact of the U.S. economic blockade. **Fidel Castro** had said that "without the existence of the Soviet Union, it would have been impossible for the Cuban revolution to exist".
- The **Cuban missile crisis of 1962** had brought the world to the brink of a nuclear war. But that crisis, and the strong military and political relations with the Soviet bloc, guaranteed that U.S. would not contemplate another invasion of the island. It was after the failed 1961 "Bay of Pigs" invasion by Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)-backed mercenaries that the Soviet Union gave iron-clad guarantees for Cuba's security.

Military interventions

- In Asia and Africa, the Soviet Union intervened only when it was invited by the governments of the region to do so.
- Meanwhile, the Soviet Union was helping other more radical movements in Africa with funding, training and arms. One of the earliest beneficiaries of Soviet aid was the **National Liberation Front (FLN) in Algeria**.
- By 1965, the Soviet Union had given more than \$9 billion in aid to developing countries.
- Cuba, Vietnam and other countries that had become part of the **socialist camp were given preferential terms of trade** by the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was quick to step in when countries were subjected to military attack.
- Its intervention was critical in **thwarting the imperialist game plan in the Korean peninsula and Vietnam**.
- It played an important role in the **1956 Suez crisis**, which had pitted Egypt against two old imperial powers, England and France, along with their ally in the region, Israel. For the next decade and a half, the socialist bloc helped Egypt to stand up to the West in many ways.

Conclusion

- The heroic sacrifices made by the Soviet Union to defeat the fascist forces laid the groundwork for a new world order after the Second World War. Colonial powers had to retreat after the socialist bloc came into existence.
- The people of the global South could look to Moscow for support in their struggle to get rid of their colonial chains and be masters of their own destiny.

Connecting the dots

- **Discuss the significance of Soviet Union in the anti-colonial nationalist struggle in Africa.**
- **The ideology of communism was the harbinger of the decolonization process that occurred throughout the world. Critically assess.**

Solving North Korea Crisis

GS 1

- **Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate**

Intro

- The fresh round of economic sanctions imposed unanimously by the UN Security Council on North Korea is a predictable response to mounting international frustration over the nuclear stand-off.
- The sanctions include an 89% curb on refined petroleum imports into North Korea, stringent inspections of ships transferring fuel to the country, and the expulsion of thousands of North Koreans in other countries
- The stated aim of the sanctions regime has been to force North Korea to halt its nuclear programme and start disarmament negotiations.

Why diplomacy is the only solution

1. North Korea military and nuclear capabilities

- Pyongyang now has the capability to hit parts of mainland America and its intermediate-range missiles can easily target U.S. military bases in Japan and Guam
- North Korea asserts that it will root out the United States threat and blackmail of nuclear war and solidly defend the peace and stability of the Korean peninsula and the region
- In September, North Korea detonated its sixth underground nuclear device, which it claimed was a hydrogen bomb.
- The development has served as a reminder to the U.S. that the scope for military options may be increasingly narrowing.
- The old carrot and stick policies will not work.

2. Avert nuclearisation of Japan and South Korea

- Military action may lead to nuclearisation in Japan and South Korea.

3. North Korea trade dependent on China than US

- Sanctions have limited utility because China accounts for 90% of North Korea's foreign trade

4. **China hesitant**

- For China, a nuclear North Korea is a lesser threat than a regime collapse that could lead to a unified Korea allied to the U.S.

US hard stance

- U.S. has also charged the North Korean government with the world-wide 'WannaCry' cyberattacks in May.
- Trump warned that the U.S. would be willing to take unilateral action if China was not able to rein in its neighbour

China and Russia approach

- As on previous occasions, **Beijing and Moscow** were able to impress upon the Security Council the potentially destabilising and hence counterproductive impact of extreme measures.
- However, even as China and Russia approved the latest measures, they continued to state their **preference for diplomatic engagement**.
- The last thing that China, which shares a long border with North Korea, wants is a war on its doorstep and U.S. troops on its borders.
- This is significant given the intercontinental ballistic missile that Pyongyang launched in November, which could deliver nuclear warheads anywhere in North America.
- China and Russia have been critical of North Korea's missile and nuclear tests, proposing that if the U.S. and South Korea were to suspend their joint military exercises, North Korea could agree to suspending its tests, opening the way to a dialogue

Way forward

- The old objectives of 'denuclearisation' and 'reunification' have to be set aside. North Korea's nuclear capability will have to be accepted, at least for the foreseeable future.
- Mutual recognition will have to precede reunification and for this, the two Koreas need to begin a dialogue in due course. Managing this requires closer understanding between the U.S. and South Korea than is currently on display.
- For Mr. Kim, the stakes are existential and parallel negotiations on political and nuclear tracks are needed if the current crisis is to be averted.

- Against this backdrop, a **revival of stalled peace negotiations between the P-5 nations and North Korea** may be the only realistic alternative on the horizon.
- The successful conclusion of the 2015 civilian nuclear agreement between the P-5 plus Germany and Iran affords a constructive template to move ahead with North Korea.

Connecting the dots

- **The crisis in North Korea can only be solved through comprehensive diplomacy and not sanctions.**

Nuclear Disarmament Movement

GS 2

- **Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate**
- **Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests**

Intro

- The very **first resolution of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) First Committee on international security from 1946** called for proposals for “the **elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction**”.
- Nevertheless, there has **not been an international treaty that legally prohibits nuclear weapons.**
- That **changed in July 2017, when 122 countries voted at the United Nations (UN) to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons** (or the Ban Treaty)
- **Nobel Peace Prize** has been awarded to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, in recognition of its work over the past decade to make this treaty possible.

1990s

- During the 1990s, there had been some developments aimed at furthering nuclear disarmament, most notably the negotiation of the **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban**

Treaty (CTBT), the international agreement banning explosive nuclear weapons tests, which was originally proposed in 1954 by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

- But, since the **CTBT was negotiated in 1996, there had not been a single multilateral nuclear treaty for nearly a decade when ICAN was initiated.**
- **Lack of action on disarmament by the five nuclear weapon states recognised by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty** was also an important driver for frustration amongst those seeking the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear Power states

- Through what the Swedish diplomat and **1982 Nobel Peace Prize winner Alva Myrdal (1977)** called the **“high rhetoric about the goal of disarmament,”** where great powers go on **“talking disarmament while relentlessly building up their own armaments”**

US

- The US has the longest history of such disarmament posturing.
- Despite countless commitments to nuclear disarmament since 1946, and former President Barack **Obama’s famous 2009 declaration in Prague of “America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons,”** the US **launched in 2010 a massive 30-year modernisation of its entire nuclear arsenal, currently comprising about 4,000 weapons**

Russia

- President Putin in Russia is no different.
- At the same time, Russia is engaged in **expensive modernisation efforts that seek to ensure that its nuclear arsenal of some 4,300 weapons,** already capable of massive destruction, remains usable for many more decades.
- Britain, France, and China are doing the same.

India and Pakistan

- India and Pakistan, for the two decades since their nuclear weapons tests in 1998, have continued to **build up their stockpiles of nuclear weapons and ways of delivering these weapons of mass destruction**
- The **arms race** between the two countries has involved **ballistic and cruise missiles, submarines,** and aggressive war plans.

- At the UNGA in December 2016, both countries abstained on the resolution to begin the talk on the Ban Treaty and couched it in the “high rhetoric about the goal of disarmament.”
- India attaches the highest priority to nuclear disarmament and shares with the co-sponsors the widely felt frustration that the international community has not been able to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.
- Pakistan remains committed to the achievement of a nuclear weapons-free world through the conclusion of a universal, verifiable and non-discriminatory, comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction.

ICAN effect

- The **Ban Treaty provides various mechanisms for increasing pressure on the nuclear weapon states** to get rid of their means of mass destruction. How successful this pressure will be remains to be seen.
- To start with, the treaty creates the obligation, under **Article 12, for signatories** to practise disarmament diplomacy by **mandating that “[e]ach State Party shall encourage States not party to this Treaty to ratify, accept, approve or accede to the Treaty,** with the goal of universal adherence of all States to the Treaty”.
- If Ban Treaty states follow this injunction, they must seek new kinds of official and public engagement with peace movements and civil society and governments in weapons states.

ICAN history

- This was what drove an **immediate forerunner of ICAN, Abolition 2000**, a global network of anti-nuclear, peace, and justice groups founded in 1995 in New York on the margins of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review and Extension Conference
- It grew to include over 2,000 groups in over 90 countries and among its achievements was a **Model Nuclear Weapons Convention (MNWC) that was submitted as an official UN document in 1997 (UNGA 1997).**
- Despite the widespread support for the MNWC from several countries and sections of civil society, the initiative did not translate into an international treaty. This led, eventually, to a **coalition of civil society groups forming ICAN in 2007.** The ICAN leadership included activists from Abolition 2000.
- ICAN emphasised the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons use and testing right from its early days. ICAN also drew upon the 1996 advisory opinion offered by the International Court of Justice (or World Court) that “the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in

armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law” (Burroughs 1998). The Court based this opinion on the unique destructive potential of nuclear weapons and the indiscriminate nature of their effects.

- **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)**, also turned its attention to nuclear weapons in 2010. Its president stated that the ICRC found “it difficult to envisage how any use of nuclear weapons could be compatible with the rules of international humanitarian

Nuclear debate in India and its neighbourhood

- Although persistent and long-standing, **movements opposed to nuclear weapons have waxed and waned**, usually gaining in strength during those times when the nuclear peril seems greater.
- In South Asia, for example, the anti-nuclear peace movement was **strongest in the first few years after the nuclear weapon tests conducted by India and Pakistan in May 1998**, when the region saw the first small-scale war between two nuclear armed powers over Kargil in 1999 and a massive border confrontation involving hundreds of thousands of troops in 2001–02.
- This period saw legions of **civil society groups coalescing to form the Pakistan Peace Council and India’s Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace** (Bidwai 2000).
- It saw protests, citizen activism, media coverage of nuclear issues, and, quite possibly, greater government willingness to curb some of the wilder nuclear ambitions of hawkish strategists in both countries.
- **Public attention to nuclear weapons has since declined** as other concerns, more immediate and pressing, have taken precedence.
- Details about nuclear weapons—how many there are, where they are kept, plans for using these, and so on—are held secret for the most part. Physically too, they are hidden from the public gaze.
- Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that civil society does not often engage in debates over nuclear weapons.

Connecting the dots

- **Nuclear Disarmament Movement has evolved steadily over the years, though without significant results. Critically analyse.**

Best Wishes!

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