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# TODAY'S ANALYSIS

## (07 April 2024)

### TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- NATO @ 75 YEARS
- HOW ARE SYMBOLS ALLOTTED TO POLITICAL PARTIES?



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## **NATO @ 75 YEARS**

At an event marking **75 years of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)** on April 4, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said **“NATO is bigger, stronger, and more united than ever.”**

With **32 member-states** – the most it has ever had – that may be true in one regard. However, the grouping also **faces significant challenges**. Its expansion is believed to be a **key factor behind Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine and the continued conflict**.

On the anniversary, **Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov** spoke to reporters about Russia’s ties with NATO, saying relations have now **“slipped to the level of direct confrontation.”**

### **WHY WAS NATO ESTABLISHED?**

NATO is a Western security alliance founded on **April 4, 1949**, with **12 founding members** – Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States.

### **THE UN NATO CONNECTION:**

They signed the **Washington Treaty**, which gets its power from **Article 51 of the United Nations Charter**, “which reaffirms the inherent right of independent states to individual or collective defence.”

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## WHAT IS COLLECTIVE DEFENCE?

At the very heart of the alliance is the concept of “collective security” – **an attack on any of the members is seen as an attack on all of them and demands collective action.**

## WHAT WAS THE NEED FOR SUCH A TREATY TO BE ADOPTED?

This was deemed necessary in 1949 amid the **Cold War rivalry** between the then USSR and the US, over ideological and economic superiority.

## WHICH PROVISION OF WASHINGTON TREATY ENTAILS COLLECTIVE DEFENCE?

**Article 5** of the Washington Treaty, on collective security, was added “to counter the risk that the Soviet Union would seek to extend its control of Eastern Europe to other parts of the continent.”

## DOES IT NECESSITATE DIRECT MILITARY INTERVENTION BY ALL THE MEMBERS?

It **doesn't necessitate direct military intervention** constituting all members. The scale of action is dependent on each member country “**as it deems necessary**”.

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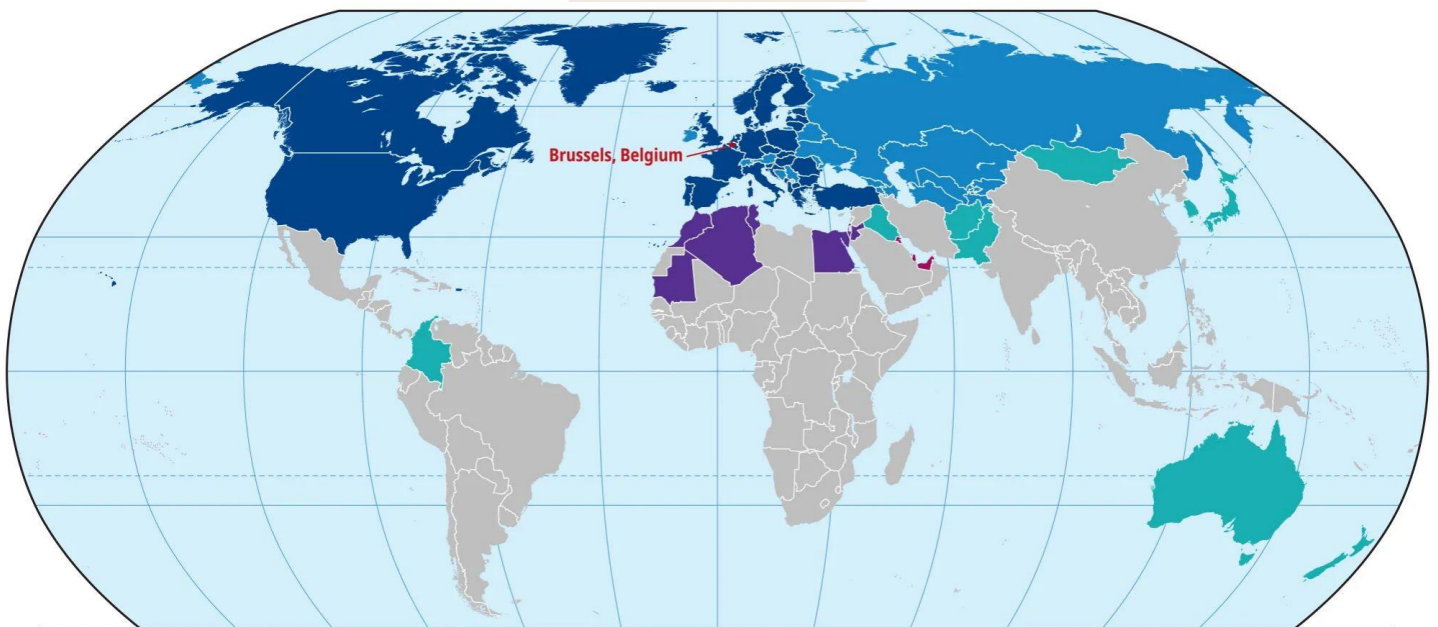
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## HAS ARTICLE 5 BEEN INVOKED TILL NOW?

The **only time** the article has been invoked so far was following the **September 11, 2001 attacks on the US.**

**NATO forces** were sent to **Afghanistan** and deployed for **nearly 20 years.**



### NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

- Member countries
- Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council\*
- NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue
- Istanbul Cooperation Initiative
- Partners across the globe
- NATO headquarters

#### MEMBERSHIP TIMELINE



\* EAPC includes all NATO members in addition to these partner countries. NATO has suspended all practical cooperation with and support for Afghanistan, Belarus, and Russia.

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## CHALLENGES FACED BY NATO

- **Unequal military spending by the members:**

- In 2014, NATO members pledged to spend at least 2% of their GDP on defence after **Russia annexed Crimea**.
- In 2019, there were clear tensions between members. US President Donald Trump argued that countries needed to raise their military spending.
  - Trump criticised this, saying it was unfair to countries like the US, who doing the requisite spending.
- As of 2023, of the **30 countries member countries then, 11 spent more than the limit**.

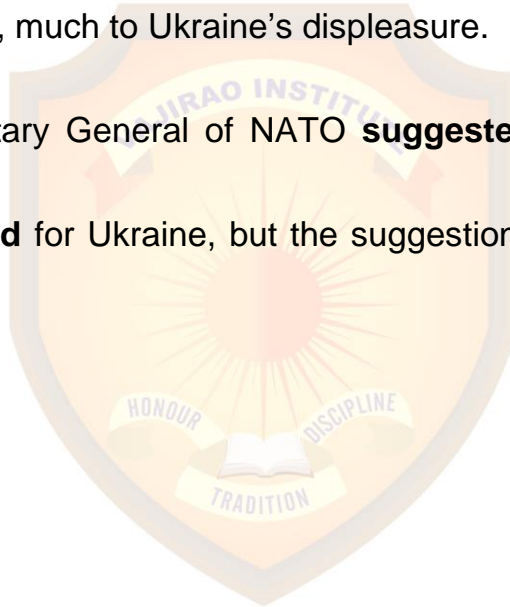
- **Differences between the member countries:**

- While NATO has a liberal “open door” policy for membership, all members need to ratify the entry of a new applicant for it to become a member. **Turkey** held off **against Sweden and Finland** for long, as the two countries’ politicians had criticised Turkey in the past over human rights violations. Turkey also claimed the countries gave refuge to “terrorists”.

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- In 2019, French President Emmanuel Macron said there was **“a lack of strategic coordination between European allies on the one hand and the United States and Turkey, on the other”**.
- **Funding the Russia-Ukraine war** has again become a source of disagreements among members, much to Ukraine’s displeasure.
  - The secretary General of NATO **suggested creating a five-year, \$107 billion fund** for Ukraine, but the suggestion **drew mixed reactions from members**.



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## HOW ARE SYMBOLS ALLOTTED TO POLITICAL PARTIES?

- The Naam Tamilar Katchi (NTK) that secured **3.9%** and **6.5%** votes in Tamil Nadu in **2019** and **2021** respectively, has been **allotted a new symbol (Mike)**.
- The Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) that secured **1.09%** and **0.99%** votes in **2019** and **2021** has been **denied a common symbol (Pot)**.

This has raised questions about the allotment of symbols to 'registered unrecognised parties'.

### WHO ISSUES SYMBOLS?

Election Commission of India. A party is recognised as a 'national' or 'state' party under the provisions of the **Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968** (Symbols Order) by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

### WHAT IS THE CRITERIA TO BECOME A STATE PARTY?

A registered party is **recognised as a state party** only if it **fulfils any one of the five conditions** listed below:

- A party should **secure at least 6% of valid votes polled** in an election to the **state legislative assembly** and **win at least 2 seats in that state assembly**.

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- A party should **secure at least 6% of valid votes polled** in an election to **Lok Sabha** and **win at least 1 seat in Lok Sabha**.
- A party **should win at least 3% of the total number of seats** or a **minimum of three seats in the Legislative Assembly**, whichever is higher.
- A party **should win at least one seat in the Lok Sabha for every 25 seats or any fraction thereof allotted to that State**.
- Under the liberalised criteria, one more clause that it will be eligible for recognition as state party **if it secures 8% or more of the total valid votes polled in the state**.

## WHAT IS THE CRITERIA TO BECOME A NATIONAL PARTY?

A registered party is recognised as a national party only if it fulfils any one of the three conditions listed below:

- The party **win 2% of seats in the Lok Sabha** from **at least three different states**.
- At a general election to **Lok Sabha or Legislative Assembly**, the **party polls 6% of votes in any four or more states** and **in addition it wins four Lok Sabha seats**.
- The party gets **recognition as a state party in four states**.

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## WHAT ARE THE RULES FOR ALLOTMENT OF SYMBOLS?

- As per the **Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968**, the Election Commission allots symbols for anyone contesting in polls.
- A person contesting on behalf of a **recognised political party** will inherit the party's symbol.
- An **independent candidate or someone contesting on behalf of an unrecognised political party** has to approach the Commission and **get a symbol allotted from the list of 'free' symbols available**.
  - A candidate will have to provide three symbols from the free list at the time of submission of nomination papers, one of which will be allocated to him/her.
  - Any choice other than from the EC's list will be summarily rejected.
- In the case of a **recognised political party**, the Commission **allows it to 'reserve' a symbol**.
  - For example, if a political party recognised in a particular State wishes to contest in elections in another State, it can 'reserve' the symbol being used by it.

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- The Commission will oblige, provided the symbol is not being used by anyone else.
- **Two or more recognised political parties can have the same symbol provided they are not contenders in the same state or Union Territory.**
  - Both Federal Party of Manipur and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) use 'Rising Sun' as their symbol.
  - But if one of the parties wish to open their account in the other State, it will have to contest on a different symbol.

## WHAT IS THE CRITERIA FOR DERECOGNITION OF A PARTY?

The ECI may also **derecognise a political party** if it has:

- Not polled at least 6% of votes or
- Won two seats in the State elections.

In case of a national party:

- It should have polled minimum 6% votes and 2 MLAs in at least four States.

**Until 1997, unrecognised parties would lose their symbols. Later, the EC modified its order to allow them to retain its symbol.**

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## WHAT HAPPENS IN CASE OF A PARTY SPLIT?

In case a recognised political party splits, **the Commission decides which faction can use the symbol.**

The **Commission may also choose to freeze the symbol** and ask both factions to contest in fresh symbols.

## WHAT HAPPENED IN THE CURRENT CASE?

**Rule 10 B** of the Symbols Order provides that the **concession of a common free symbol** shall be available for a **registered unrecognised party for 2 general elections.** Furthermore a **party shall be eligible** for a common symbol in any subsequent General Election **if it had secured at least 1% votes polled** in the State in the previous elections.

Such **unrecognised party** will have to **apply for a symbol every time.** The symbols are allotted thereafter on **First come first serve basis.**

- Although NTK secured more than 1% votes, but the symbol on which it contested earlier (Ganna Kisan) has been allotted to Bhartiya Praja Aikya Party on first come first serve basis)
- The VCK was denied allotment of a common symbol because it failed to secure 1% of votes polled in the previous elections to legislative assembly.

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## MCQs

1. Which of the countries were the founding member of NATO?

1. Denmark
2. Norway
3. Germany
4. Switzerland
5. Belgium

(A) 1, 3, 4 & 5

(B) 1, 2 & 5

(C) 2, 3 & 4

(D) All of the above

**Ans. (B)**

2. Consider the following statements and mark the correct one:

1. NATO is a system of collective defence where all the member nations are under obligation to contribute equally wrt troops & budget.

2. NATO derives its power from UN Charter.

(A) Only 1

(B) Only 2

(C) Both 1 & 2

(D) Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans. (B)**



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3. Which of the following is the criteria for a party to be labelled as a state party?
- (A) A party should **secure at least 6% of valid votes polled** in an election to the **state legislative assembly** and **win at least 4 seats in that state assembly.**
  - (B) A party should **secure at least 6% of valid votes polled** in an election to **Lok Sabha** and **win at least 2 seat in Lok Sabha.**
  - (C) A party **should win at least 6% of the total number of seats** or a **minimum of three seats in the Legislative Assembly**, whichever is higher.
  - (D) Under the liberalised criteria, one more clause that it will be eligible for recognition as state party **if it secures 8% or more of the total valid votes polled in the state.**

**Ans. (D)**

4. Consider the following statements and mark the correct statement:
- 1. Two or more recognised political parties can have the same symbol provided they are not contenders in the same State or Union Territory.
  - 2. In case a recognised political party splits, the Commission can freeze the symbol.
- (A) Only 1
  - (B) Only 2
  - (C) Both 1 & 2
  - (D) Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans. (C)**

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5. Consider the following statements wrt registered unrecognised party and mark the correct one:

1. The concession of a common free symbol shall be available for a registered unrecognised party for 2 general elections.
2. Unrecognised party will have to apply for a symbol every time.

- (A) Only 1
- (B) Only 2
- (C) Both 1 & 2
- (D) Neither 1 nor 2



**Ans. (C)**

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