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TODAY'S ANALYSIS
(09 September 2023)

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- **INDIA'S LOOK/ACT EAST POLICY**

- **SANATAN DHARM CONTROVERSY**

- **BHASHINI PLATFORM**

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INDIA's LOOK/ACT EAST POLICY

THE LOOK EAST POLICY OF INDIA:

In order to recover from the loss of the strategic partner -**USSR (end of the Cold war 1991),** India sought to **build up a relationship with the USA and allies of the USA in Southeast Asia.**

In this pursuit, former **Prime Minister of India P V Narasimha Rao** launched **Look East policy in 1992,** to give a strategic push to India's engagement with the South-East Asia region, to bolster its standing as a regional power and a **counterweight to the strategic influence of the People's Republic of China.** Look East policy focused on the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries + Economic & Cultural Integration.**

THE ACT EAST POLICY:

Act East Policy focused on: **ASEAN countries + East Asian countries + Australia Economic Integration + Cultural Integration + Strategic cooperation.**

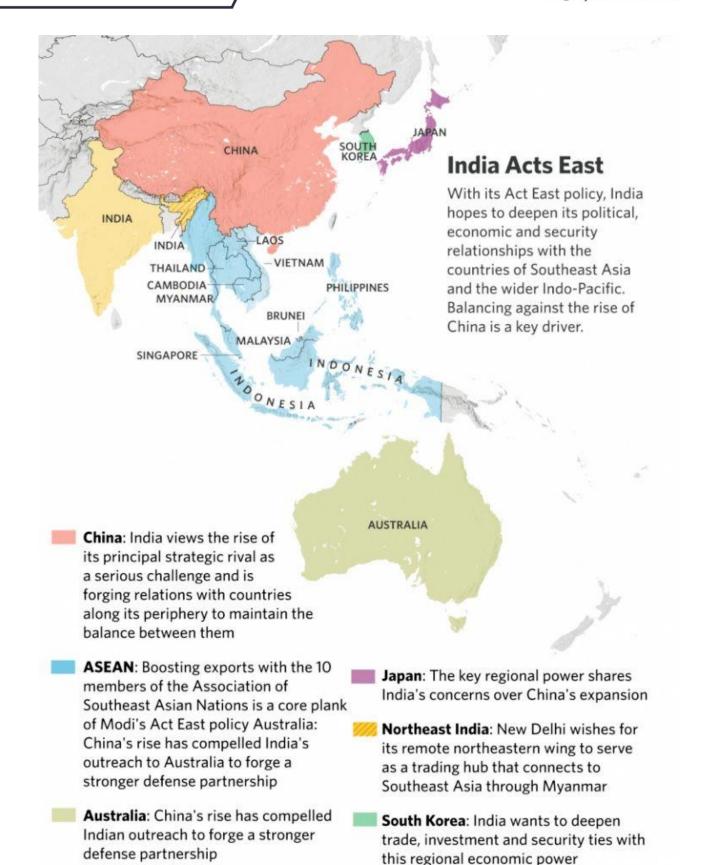Prime Minister of India highlighted **4C's of Act East Policy.**

- Culture

- Commerce

- Connectivity

- Capacity building

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India Acts East

With its Act East policy, India hopes to deepen its political, economic and security relationships with the countries of Southeast Asia and the wider Indo-Pacific. Balancing against the rise of China is a key driver.

China: India views the rise of its principal strategic rival as a serious challenge and is forging relations with countries along its periphery to maintain the balance between them

ASEAN: Boosting exports with the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations is a core plank of Modi's Act East policy Australia: China's rise has compelled India's outreach to Australia to forge a stronger defense partnership

Australia: China's rise has compelled Indian outreach to forge a stronger defense partnership

Japan: The key regional power shares India's concerns over China's expansion

Northeast India: New Delhi wishes for its remote northeastern wing to serve as a trading hub that connects to Southeast Asia through Myanmar

South Korea: India wants to deepen trade, investment and security ties with this regional economic power

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SANATAN DHARM CONTROVERSY

Udhayanidhi Stalin, Tamil sports minister and **son of MK Stalin,** is in the eye of the storm for his **remarks on Sanatan Dharma.**

He **compared the concept to diseases like Malaria & Dengue** and called for its eradication.

Sanatan Dharma is a term that refers to the **eternal Truth of Hinduism.**

WHAT DID STALIN ACTUALLY SAY?

Udhayanidhi said Sanatan is **against equality and social justice.**

The young minister alleged that Sanatan **divided people on the basis of caste**. He argued that the argued is **inherently regressive,** dividing people on the basis of **caste and gender**, and is fundamentally opposed to equality and social justice.

He then reportedly equated it with diseases like **"Dengue, Malaria and COVID-19"** and called for its eradication.

WHAT IS SANATAN DHARM?

Sanatan dharma is a term that refers to the eternal Truth of Hinduism. The roots of this phrase can be traced back to ancient Sanskrit.

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Sanatan means **"that which is without beginning or end"** or **"everlasting."**

Dharma, which has no actual direct translation into English, comes from the **word Dhri** that can roughly be translated to **"to hold together or sustain."**

Dharma is often interpreted as meaning **"natural law."**

INTERPRETATIONS OF THE MEANING

Sanatan Dharma as a whole translates into the **"natural and eternal way to live."** It is widely considered to be the original term used to describe what is **modern-day Hinduism.**

According to **ISKCON, Sanatan Dharma** is the **duties which take into account the person's spiritual identity as atman** and are thus the same for everyone.

According to **Encyclopedia Britannica,** Sanatan Dharma consists of virtues such as **honesty, refraining from injuring living beings, purity, goodwill, mercy, patience, forbearance, self-restraint, generosity, and asceticism**.

Religious experts note that following this code **allows one to reach moksha,** a state of spiritual liberation, self-knowledge and enlightenment.

WHERE ARE ITS TEACHINGS FOUND?

The teachings of Sanatan Dharma is laid out in holy **Vedic scriptures.** The **concept was first spoken by Lord Krishna** and registered in the **Atharva Veda.**

It is also included in **Mahabharata** and **Ramayana.** Of all the holy books comprising the Vedic scriptures, the sacred text of **Bhagavad Gita** is considered to contain its most essential revelations.

The **Bhagavad Gita** also confirms that **Lord Krishna** had **instructed the Science of Sanatan Dharma** millions of years ago to **Vivasvan,** (the demigod of Sun.) **Krishna** also instructed the same to **Arjuna,** once again in the **battlefield of Kurukshetra.**

NOTED FOLLOWERS OF SANATAN DHARMA

Mahatma Gandhi had proudly proclaimed to be a **Sanatani Hindu.** He had said, "Sanatan Hindu Dharma is not circumscribed like the proverbial frog in the well. It is as broad as the ocean. Thus interpreted, it is the property of all humankind, no matter by what name it is called."

Swami Vivekananda was also a fierce believer and defender of Sanatan Dharma. He advocated **tolerance towards other religions**, but held **Sanatan Dharma as supreme.** He did not advocate tolerance towards abuse of Hinduism.

Former Chief Justice of India SA Bobde has also hailed this belief, saying **Sanatan Dharma is timeless and pure.** "There is nothing in it against any kind of people. Indeed it originated when there was no other religious thought in this world… It is indeed the oldest."

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BHASHINI PLATFORM

Bhashini is an **AI based translation Platform**. It is displayed in the media house in the **Bharat Mandapam** to showcase **India's Digital Prowess.**

ABOUT BHASHINI MISSION

- It is a **local language translation mission** that aims to break the barrier between various Indian tongues by using available technology.

- BHASHINI aims to **build a National Public Digital Platform for languages**.

- This government platform **aims to make Artificial Intelligence and Natural Language Processing (NLP) resources available in the public domain** to be used by -- Indian MSMEs, startups an and individual innovators.

- This will **help developers to offer all Indians easy access to the internet** and digital services **in their native languages.**

- This online platform also has a **separate 'Bhasadaan' section which allows individuals to contribute to multiple crowdsourcing initiatives** and it is also **accessible via respective Android and IOS apps.**

HOW DOES IT WORK?

- The project is **available on this website: https://www.bhashini.gov.in/en/** and it is **aimed to build and develop an ecosystem where various stakeholders** like institutions, industry players, research groups, academia and individuals **can unite to maintain an 'ever-evolving repository of data, training and benchmark datasets**, open models, tools and technologies.

- The **contribution can be done in four ways -- Suno India, Likho India, Bolo India and Dekho India** -- where users have to type what they hear or have to validate texts transcribed by others.