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1 Act East Policy and Look East Policy (Source: The Hindu)

Act East Policy

It is a diplomatic initiative to promote economic, strategic and cultural relations with the vast Asia-Pacific region at different levels.

- The 'Act East Policy' announced in 2014 is the upgrade of the "Look East Policy".

Objectives

- It aims to promote economic cooperation, cultural ties, and develop a strategic relationship with countries in Indo-pacific region with a proactive and pragmatic approach, thereby improving the economic development of the North Eastern Region (NER), which is a gateway to the Southeast Asia Region.

Key Pillar

- It involves intensive and continuous engagement with Southeast Asian countries in the field of connectivity, trade, culture, defence and people-to-people contact at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

Look East Policy

India's Look East Policy was launched in 1992 by Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao to develop stronger economic, cultural, and strategic ties with Southeast Asian nations following the Cold War.

Objectives

- Promoting economic cooperation with countries in East Asia through trade, investment, and technology transfer.
- Strengthening security cooperation with countries in the region to address common challenges, such as terrorism and piracy.
- Fostering cultural exchange and people-to-people ties with countries in East Asia.
- Promoting regional integration in East Asia through initiatives such as the ASEAN-India Free Trade Agreement.

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2 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Source: The Hindu)

ASEAN

Association of Southeast Asian Nations



Regional organisation of Southeast Asian countries for economic cooperation, political stability and socio-cultural integration.

At a Glance

- **Established** : 8 Aug 1967 (Bangkok Declaration)
- **Headquarters** : Jakarta, Indonesia
- **Members** : 10
- **Nature** : Regional intergovernmental organisation

Member Countries (10)

Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam

Objectives

- **Promote** economic growth, social progress and cultural development.
- **Maintain** regional peace, security and stability.
- **Enhance** cooperation in economic, political, security, socio-cultural and other fields.
- **Strengthen** solidarity and unity among member states.
- **Promote** a rules-based, people-centred and inclusive regional community.

Three Pillars (ASEAN Community)

- **ASEAN Political–Security Community (APSC)** → regional peace, security and stability.
- **ASEAN Economic Community (AEC)** → deeper economic integration and a single market.
- **ASEAN Socio–Cultural Community (ASCC)** → people-centred, inclusive and sustainable development.

Major Initiatives

- **ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA)** – regional free trade.
- **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)** – broader economic integration.
- **ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF)** – dialogue on maritime issues and cooperation.
- **ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre)** – regional disaster response.
- **ASEAN Green Agenda for Sustainability** – cooperation on climate, environment and green growth.

Key Mechanisms

- **ASEAN Summit** – highest decision-making body.
- **ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC)** – coordination.
- **ASEAN Community Councils** – for the three pillars.
- **ASEAN Secretariat** – administrative arm (Jakarta).

India–ASEAN Relations

- **Dialogue Partner:** since 1992.
- **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership:** 2022.
- **Focus:** connectivity, trade, maritime security and Act East Policy.