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65th Anniversary of Bandung Conference: NAM

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Why in News

The year **2020** marks the **65th anniversary** of the landmark **Bandung Conference** that resulted in the adoption of the founding principles of the **Non-Aligned Movement** (NAM).

The basic concept for NAM originated in **1955** during discussions that took place at the **Asia-Africa Bandung Conference** held in **Indonesia**.

Key Points

- The milestone of the 65th anniversary is a **good time to reflect upon the philosophy** behind the movement.
- India reiterated that NAM **never was and can never be a platform for pursuits that undermine the territorial integrity** of a State by another State.
India will deploy her rich developmental experience for the peace and welfare of humanity, treating the world as one family.
- India also **emphasized** that in order to make NAM a relevant entity in the global decision making process, its **members must avoid raising issues that divide the forum**.
- **Covid-19** is a reminder of the interconnectedness and dependence of NAM members on each other.
Members must work to reduce the socio-economic impact of the pandemic on the most vulnerable sections of society. NAM's unique tradition of promoting **South-South cooperation** can provide a way out as societies look to rebuild and regenerate in the wake of this crisis.
- Apart from the global **pandemic, terrorism, climate change, cybersecurity threats** and the uneven **impact of frontier technologies (Artificial Intelligence, robotics, Internet of Things, etc.)** and **development concerns** are few other challenges which can only be tackled if all the members work together.

- The strength of the NAM lies in its **diversity**, its **shared developmental experience**, and its **youthful populations**.

Non-Aligned Movement

- **Background:**

It was formed during the **Cold War** as an organisation of **States that did not seek to formally align** themselves with either the **USA (Capitalism)** or the **Soviet Union (Socialism)** but sought to **remain independent or neutral**.

- **Foundation:**

- Six years after the Bandung Conference, the **Movement of Non-Aligned Countries was founded** on a wider geographical basis at the **First Summit Conference of Belgrade**, which was held in **September 1961**.
- It was held under the leadership of **Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, and Sukarno of Indonesia**.

- **Purpose:**

The purpose of the organisation was enumerated in the **Havana Declaration of 1979** to ensure "**the national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of non-aligned countries**" in their struggle against **imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism**, racism, and all forms of foreign subjugation.

- **Members and Observers:**

- It has **120 members as of April 2018** comprising 53 countries from Africa, 39 from Asia, 26 from Latin America and the Caribbean and 2 from Europe.
- There are **17 countries and 10 international organisations** that are **Observers** at NAM.

- **Headquarters:**

- NAM **does not have a formal constitution or permanent secretariat**, and its **administration is non-hierarchical and rotational**.
- **Decisions** are made by **consensus**, which requires substantial agreement, but not unanimity.

Way Forward

- Even if members call for effective and reformed multilateralism, they need to introspect, reform and revitalise the current arrangements of their own movement, which will enable them to pursue a focused, positive and transformative agenda going forward.

- The NAM has a glorious past but the future will depend on how the member nations perform in addressing the defining challenges of the current era, which could be solved easily with the help of the principles of solidarity and cooperation.

Source: BS