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18th Non-Alignment Summit

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Recently, the Vice President of India attended the **18th Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) Summit** which was held in **Baku, Azerbaijan**.

- The theme for the 18th NAM Summit is **“Upholding the Bandung Principles to ensure concerted and adequate response to the challenges of the contemporary**



- The theme relates to the forthcoming **65th anniversary of Bandung Principles (2020)** and the **60th anniversary of the establishment of the Non-Alignment Movement (2021)**.
- Bandung principles promote world peace and cooperation which were formulated at the **Asian-African Conference in 1955**.
- This **NAM Summit** majorly focussed on contemporary issues such as Terrorism, threats to peace and security, UN reform, climate change, sustainable development, economic governance, and south-south cooperation.

India and Non-Alignment Movement (NAM)

- India is a founder member of NAM. It participated actively in NAM meetings till 1970s but India's inclination towards erstwhile USSR created confusion in smaller members. It led to the weakening of NAM and small nations drifted towards either the US or USSR.

- Further India's New Economic Policy and inclination towards the US raised questions over India's seriousness over non-alignment.
 - The disintegration of the USSR led to the unipolar world order dominated by the US.
- Moreover, NAM continued losing relevance for India in a unipolar world, especially after the founding members failed to support India during the crisis.
 - For instance, during the 1962 War with China, Ghana and Indonesia adopted explicitly pro-China positions.
 - During the 1965 and 1971 wars, Indonesia and Egypt took an anti-India stance and supported Pakistan.
- Recently, the Prime Minister of India **skipped the second NAM summit in a row** (17th and 18th NAM Summit).
 - It had been the customary practice ever since the inception of NAM that India had always participated in the summit meetings through its prime minister, with the single **exception of the 6th NAM Summit** when Chaudhury Charan Singh was the caretaker PM and hence missed it.
- Moreover, India has started to actively **engage with new and old global powers**. India joining the **Quadrilateral Security Dialogue**, a coalition seen by many as a counter force to China's rise in the Indo-Pacific and **Shanghai cooperation organization** led by China shown India's balancing approach in the new world order.

Source: PIB