

## 1.2. understanding International relations (IR)

- International relations is not merely a field of study at university but is an integral aspect of peoples everyday lives. Eg, Suez canal, Arab- Israeli conflict.
- Studying international relations enables students and professionals to better comprehend the information we receive daily from newspapers, television and radio eg. Oil price,
- international relations (a term first used by Jeremy Bentham in 1798) was seen largely as a branch of the study of law, philosophy or history.
- the first university chair of international relations was founded at the University of Wales in 1919. The objective was how to prevent future world war?
- There is no accepted way of defining or understanding international relations, and throughout the world many have established individual definitions.
- Today, international relations could be used to describe a range of interactions between **people, groups, firms, associations, parties, nations** or states or between these and (non) governmental international organizations.
- events such as **international conflict, global warming, infectious diseases, terrorism, international crime** play a fundamental part in the study of international relations.
- Participation in international relations or politics is also inescapable. Hence, understanding IR is imperative since the world is socially, politically, economically and emotionally interconnected.eg. The spread of global pandemic, covid -19.
- IR can be understood as “**who**” gets “**what**” and “**how**” which indicates the actor, the objective and the means, respectively.
- The governing principle of international relation is “**there is no permanent enemy or friend, but permanent interest**”

## Difference between international and domestic politics

### International politics

- Internal law rests on competing legal systems, and no common enforcement.
- no one has a monopoly of force, and international politics is **anarchy** and **self-help. No government**
- Anarchical
- No sovereign body
- No shared loyalty but sense of global citizenship is being emerging
- Actors are not sovereign
- No borders. No beginnings no ends

#### Similarities

- Power struggle
- Conflict of interest
- Power
- What is international could be domestic

Eg. International financial crisis could affect even the small economies of a country.

These force countries to have accepted international financial policies and measures.

### Domestic politics

- law is generally obeyed and the police and courts enforce law.
- a government has a monopoly on the legitimate use of force- hence stability.
- Hierarchical
- Government is sovereign within its legal jurisdiction
- Loyalty is shared among the people
- Actors are sovereign
- Limited borders

#### Similarities

- Power struggle
- Conflict of interest
- Power

What is domestic is international

eg. The spread of disease – Covid-19 from China to all countries or the globe

Terrorism and international crime

Which force the global community to have the same policy towards these global issues

# The nature and evolution of International Relations

## 1. The Treaty of Westphalia, 1648

- Ended the “thirty years’ war between France and Austria and their aides to control Europe.
- Since Westphalia treaty international politics was a matter of relations between states and no other political units i.e the **pope** or **church** or the **emperor**
- All states were sovereign, meaning that they laid claims to the exclusive right to rule their own territories and to act, in relation to other states.
- All states were formally equal and they had the same rights and obligations.
- However, sovereignty and formal equality led to the problem of anarchy and future alliance systems which led to WWI and WWII.
- European model of statehood and the European way of organizing international relations that eventually came to organize all of world politics.

## 2. Industrial revolution

new productions → new markets → natural resource → Colonization → new states after WWII based on European terms and interest

## 3. The end of WWI

- Contributed for the emergence of new independent and sovereign state through the principle of self-determination.
- League of Nation was also established

## 4. The end of WWII

led for the establishment of UN many international organizations

## 1.4. Actors in International Relations

“The world is a stage and the men and women merely players” William Shakespeare

There are two types of Actors in IR: **state actors** and **non-state actors**

### 1. State Actors

- States are the basic and the only sovereign actors of IRs
- international politics is a ‘world stage’ on which the states are the leading actors
- There is **asymmetrical** power relation among state actors in terms of **political** and **military**, **economy**, **diplomacy**, **influence** and **persuasion**

Eg. UN’s voting system and veto power in UNSC

### 2. Non –state Actors

- Are non-sovereign actors of IRs. These include
- International Governmental Organizations UN,AU,EU,AL, IGAD, WB, IMF,NATO, WTO
- International Non –Governmental Organizations Red Cross, Red Crescent
- Multinational Corporations (MNCs) Toyota , coca cola
- Religious institutions eg The Vatican
- Terrorists
- Individuals eg, ex- US presidents, the Catholic pope, Bill gates, Warren Buffet, Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg

All these are the players and potentiaries in international relations that challenge the traditional actors of IRs, the state.

- the increased focus on **non-state actors** and cross-border issues has marked a revolutionary turn in IR; something that could be interpreted as a shift away from the inter-national (‘between-states’) to the ‘trans-national’ (‘across/beyond-states’ and their borders).

That is why according to Robert Keohane recently stated that ‘International Relations’ is no longer a suitable label and that we should instead refer to the discipline as ‘Global Studies’ or ‘World Politics’ (Keohane 2016).

## 1.5. Levels of Analysis in International Relations

- Kenneth Waltz's 'Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis' (1959) introduced an analytical framework for the study of IR:
- According to Waltz there are three analytical frameworks or levels of analysis for the study of international politics. These are **individual**, **state** and **systemic** level. The group level is considered as the fourth.

### The individual level

- International relations can be analyzed from the perspective of individuals
- It analyzes the behaviors, motivations, beliefs and orientation of the individual in affecting a particular international phenomenon.
- It sees the psychology and emotions behind people's actions and decisions, their fears and their visions as well as their access to information and capacity to make a difference while making decisions.

### The group level

- Sees the role of lobbying groups and the way they influence national decision making on an issue. Eg. The role of trade unions, lobbyist, pressure groups, voters

### The State Level

- it is the dominant level of analysis which is known as '**state-centrism**'
- the state acts as the arena in which state officials, politicians and decision-makers operate.
- the state remains the main location of power- monopoly on violence-within the international politics. I.e., the state has the legal right to use the means of violence

## the systemic level

- Looks and analyzes the global system as the structure or context within which states **cooperate**, **compete** and **confront** over issues of national interest.
- It analyzes the distribution of power among states internationally.
- Internationally there are three types of power distribution that influence and condition the behavior of states viz-a viz their national interest. These are **unipolar**, **bi-polar** and **multi polar** structure.
- The systemic level conditions the ability and opportunity of individual states and groups of states to pursue their interests in **cooperative** or **competitive** ways.

## Important IRs Terms and concepts

- **Polarity** :i.e., unipolar (since 1991);Bi-polar (since 1945, Britain and France), multipolar (historical since the Westphalia Treaty to WWII).
- **Power**: power is the currency of international politics. According to Hans Morgenthau international politics is “is a struggle for power”
- **Anarchy**: is a situation where there is absence of authority
- **Sovereignty**: refers a state’s ultimate authority within its territorial entity (internal sovereignty) and, (ii) the state’s involvement in the international community (external sovereignty).