

International Relations

1) Définition :

International relations (IR) or international affairs (IA) commonly also referred to as international studies (IS) , global studies (GS) , or global affairs (GA) is the study of interconnectedness of politics , economics and law on a global level .

International relations can be defined as political activities and other kinds and aspects of interactions among two more states . The academic field of international relations is a branch of political science that is concerned with the study of relations between states , the foreign policy of nation-states , and the mechanisms and institutions (such as international organizations , inter-governmental organizations , international and national non- governmental organizations and multinational corporations) through which states interact .

The study of international relations involves many subjects such as international and regional peace and security , international organizations , nuclear proliferation , globalization , human rights , economic development , intervention , international financial relations , and international trade relations.

2) History and Evolution of IR :

- AS an academic discipline IR is not very old .

- It's systematic study started after the first world war , and universities in west Europe and the united states introduced separate courses on it from the 1920's.

- As relations among states or pre - state political systems , the subject is very old .

- As the relation among states , IR is believed to have developed with peace treaty of Westphalia of 1648 , which is considered as the creator of modern nation-states in Europe .

- Before the birth of modern nation states , pre - state political systems had developed in deferent parts of the world .

- It is believed that the treaty of Westphalia encouraged the rise of the independent nation - states by recognizing territorial sovereignty , the treaty also led to the Institutionalization of diplomacy and armies .

- The treaty of Westphalia :

The peace treaties of Westphalia (1648) established the legal basis of modern state hold , and by implication the fundamental rules or constitution of modern world policies .

-It was an agreement among Europe's rulers to recognize each other's right to rule their own territories , free from out side interference . This was codified over time in the doctrine of sovereignty state hold .

-Westphalia treaty located supreme legal and political authority within territorially delimited states . Sovereignty involved the rightful entitlement to exclusive , unqualified , and supreme rule within a delimited territory . It was exclusive in so far as no ruler had the right to intervene in the sovereign affairs

of other nations . unqualified in that within their territories ruler assumed , complete , authority , over their subjects , and supreme in that there was not legal or political authority above the state .

-The study of IR as an academic discipline evolved further , and natured , significantly after the first world war , with the process of be colonization almost complete , and the appearance of new states in Asia , African and Latin America .

Contemporary international politics assumed a new dimensions after The war , a period when IR as an academic discipline progressed . significantly Although the world became , unipolar , after The cold war with the USA remaining the only supreme power , the present international order has become more interdependent due to the spread of globalization , including international trade , information technology revolution , terrorism and environmental degradation . States are increasinly seeking cooperation from other states , as well as non state actors to adjust and compete in this world where states are largely dependent on one another .

As an academic discipline . IR is also addressing these issues with more sincerity and articulation after The cold war .

3) Scope of IR :

In modern world the scope of IR has a greatly expanded . Initially it was the study of diplomacy . Later , international law became the subject matter of IR . It became more wider with the establishment of league of nations and the study of international organizations was also included in IR . The scope of IR expanded during the second world war with emergence of USA and USSR as super power , the multiplications of nation states , the danger of thermo-

nuclear war , increasing interdependence of states and rising expectations in the people of the underdeveloped world . Greater emphasis was made on the scientific study of IR which developed methodologies and introduction of new theories

Today IR includes the study of behavior of political actors and groups and it has an extensive scope . On the other hand , the writers seem divided on the scope of IR and as Alfred Zimmern says that IR is not discipline but a combination of History and political science . It is heavily dependent on other disciplines and has so far failed to develop a coherent body of knowledge .

According to Organski “ as a science , IR today is in its infancy , it is still less a science than a mixture of philosophy and history and its theories are shockingly unstable “

4) levels of Analysis in IR :

- There are three types of levels of analysis in IR

1) Individual level : concerns about perceptions choices and actions of individual human being .

2) State (domestic level : concerns the aggregations of individuals within states that influence state actions in the international arena .

3) Interstate level (International system) focuses on the interactions of states , without regard to internal make up . and the individuals who lead them .

5) Importance of IR :

The world has become a global village due to technological advances .

Therefore , an event in one part of the world has an immediate effect on the other part . All the states in the world are now under compulsion to interact with each other .

International relations existed since long among different states like Egypt , Greece and china but they were based on morality and were not scrupulously observed . These earlier relations were among the neighbors and they may precisely be called “ regional relations ” It was only in seventeen centuries that the states established relations beyond their regions . The improvement in the means of communications , and the industrial revolution further brought the states together . At this time the study of IR was mainly concerned with the study of diplomacy , law and philosophy . Today the relations among the states are interdependence , and IR enables us to understand the motives of individual states and problems faced by the world .

IR teaches us that peace could only be achieved if the world actors subjectively solve the problems faced by the world politics like excessive nationalism and narrow national interest Modern theory of IR demonstrates that the traditional concept of sovereignty has become outdated and needs modification .