



Sanskriti IAS



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SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT EDITORIALS

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TOPICS:-

1. Watch, but do not wait

(GS Paper III Science and Technology)

2. Look beyond strategic autonomy, and closer at the Quad possibility

(GS Paper II International Relations)

3. India and Italy look to the future, bound by the power of culture and a shared vision

(GS Paper II International Relations)

DELHI CENTRE:
636, Mukherjee Nagar
New Delhi-110009

PRAYAGRAJ CENTRE:
1/1/8A, Stanley Rd,
Maharana Pratap Chauraha,
Civil Lines, Prayagraj, UP - 211002

 **9555-124-124**

 **sanskritiias.com**

1. WATCH, BUT DO NOT WAIT

(GS Paper III Science and Technology)

This editorial ‘**Watch, but do not wait**’ was published in **The Hindu** on 20th May 2026, highlights the need for **swift, risk-based** international action against Ebola outbreak in Central Africa.

Early Alarm and Hidden Spread Risk

- **WHO** declared a **PHEIC** with unusual speed, despite not waiting for emergency committee advice as normally required.
- The emergency reflects uncertainty around the **Bundibugyo strain**, whose vaccine and therapy response remains less established than the Zaire strain.
- The outbreak is currently reported in **DRC** and **Uganda**, but conflict, displacement and weak care access may hide wider spread.
- As of May 16, 2026, WHO reported **8 confirmed cases**, 246 suspected cases and 80 suspected deaths in DRC’s Ituri province.
- Uganda’s **Kampala cases**, including one death without clear links, add concern over undetected transmission chains.
- High **sample positivity**, rising suspected cases and death clusters suggest a larger outbreak than current detection shows.

Disease Severity and Transmission Concerns

- Ebola demands a **risk-averse** response because mortality can reach 50%, depending on strain, care access and treatment speed.
- The virus spreads through **body fluids** and contaminated surfaces, making close-contact transmission and unsafe care practices dangerous.
- The 2014-16 West Africa outbreak in **Guinea**, Liberia and Sierra Leone caused over 28,600 cases and 11,325 deaths.

Global Response Priorities

- WHO’s emergency declaration seeks **global cooperation** for containment before local outbreaks become wider cross-border crises.
- Immediate control requires **surveillance**, contact tracing, intensive patient support, safe burials and vaccination if effective.
- Public communication must provide timely **disease information** to reduce panic, improve reporting and support community-level containment.

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One Health and Pandemic Preparedness in Fragile Regions

- **Zoonotic surveillance:** Ebola control needs integrated human-animal-environment monitoring, as West Africa's 2014 outbreak was linked to probable bat exposure.
- **Conflict sensitivity:** Outbreak response must combine health action with humanitarian access, as DRC's North Kivu-Ituri Ebola response faced violence and insecurity.
- **Health-system resilience:** Weak diagnostics and reporting can turn local outbreaks into wider emergencies, as delayed detection worsened the 2014-16 West Africa crisis.
- **Community trust:** Safe burials and isolation need culturally sensitive communication, as Red Cross burial teams faced resistance in eastern DRC.
- **Equity gap:** Vulnerable regions need timely vaccines and diagnostics, as rVSV-ZEBOV access came after the devastating West Africa outbreak.
- **Local capacity:** Community health workers, labs and referral systems matter, as Nigeria's contact tracing helped contain Ebola in 2014.
- **Preparedness ethics:** Global health security must protect vulnerable populations first, as delayed Ebola response can quickly create cross-border risk.

2. LOOK BEYOND STRATEGIC AUTONOMY, AND CLOSER AT THE QUAD POSSIBILITY

(GS Paper II International Relations)

This editorial 'Look beyond strategic autonomy, and closer at the Quad possibility' was published in **The Indian Express** on 20th May 2026, highlights India's need to move beyond **outdated strategic autonomy** debates and **engage the Quad** more purposefully amid China's rise.

Changing Great-Power Context

- India should not overread **Trump-Xi** or **Putin-Xi** moments, as major powers have repeatedly shifted between rivalry, partnership and tactical accommodation.
- The U.S.-Russia-China triangle has historically produced **fluid alignments**, so India's strategy must avoid panic-driven reactions to temporary diplomatic shifts.

China Challenge and India's Modernisation Need

- India's central problem is **China's rise**, as Beijing's economic, technological and military power has expanded rapidly since the 1980s.
- China's growing footprint in India's **neighbourhood**, global institutions and trade deepens India's strategic dependence concerns.
- India cannot match Chinese **military power** quickly, but Western cooperation can reduce the imbalance through capital, markets, technology and security support.
- Since the 1990s, India's growing engagement with the **U.S.** and Europe has supported exports, technology flows and regional security.

Limits of Old Strategic Autonomy Thinking

- India's elite suspicion of the **West** limits deeper cooperation, despite anti-imperialist and nativist traditions losing relevance in today's power structure.
- Strategic autonomy once meant distance from Western powers, but China is now India's **principal challenge** and the West its main partner.
- India's old discourse ignores **economic reality**, as India exports more to the Netherlands than to China and Russia combined.
- Russia-China dominance in Indian debates narrows options, while **European partners** remain important for trade, technology and diaspora linkages.

Quad as a Practical Strategic Option

- Hosting Quad foreign ministers reflects **multipolar logic**, as the Quad's revival was driven by intensifying Chinese pressure.
- Earlier fears of a Quad-led **military alliance** against China have weakened, with Washington itself now adopting measured consultations.
- India should use Quad engagement to understand the **U.S. approach** under Trump and shape a productive, sustainable agenda.

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From Strategic Autonomy to Strategic Agency

- **Strategic agency:** India should define autonomy as outcome-shaping capacity, not distance from powers, as seen in its G20 presidency consensus.
- **Issue-based alignment:** India can work with the Quad on maritime security and supply chains without military blocs, as Malabar exercises show.

- **China management:** Western partnerships can help India balance China through technology and resilience, as seen in iCET and semiconductor cooperation.
- **Multipolar diplomacy:** India can engage the U.S., Europe, Russia, ASEAN and Global South together, as seen in SCO, BRICS and Quad participation.
- **Policy flexibility:** India can retain independent choices while cooperating selectively, as seen in QUAD engagement alongside Russian oil imports.
- **Capability focus:** Strategic autonomy needs domestic defence, manufacturing and technology strength, as seen in Atmanirbhar Bharat and iDEX.
- **Narrative shift:** India's debate should move from alignment fear to partnership leverage, as seen in IMEC and Indo-Pacific cooperation.

3. INDIA AND ITALY LOOK TO THE FUTURE, BOUND BY THE POWER OF CULTURE AND A SHARED VISION

(GS Paper II International Relations)

This editorial 'India and Italy look to the future, bound by the power of culture and a shared vision' was published in **The Indian Express** on 20th May 2026, highlights future-oriented India-Italy partnership built on **culture, technology, trade, energy, connectivity** and shared **democratic values**.

Strategic and Economic Convergence

- India-Italy ties have moved from **cordial friendship** to a special strategic partnership rooted in democracy, cultural wisdom and shared future goals.
- The partnership seeks synergy between **Italian manufacturing** excellence and India's scale, talent, economic growth and start-up ecosystem.
- The India-EU **free trade** path can push bilateral trade beyond €20 billion by 2029 across defence, aerospace, clean technologies and agri-food.
- Rising Italian business interest and over **700 Indian booths** in Italy show expanding supply-chain integration and industrial complementarities.

Technology, AI and Digital Cooperation

- The partnership's future will be shaped by **AI**, quantum computing, advanced manufacturing, critical minerals and digital infrastructure.

- India's dynamic innovation ecosystem and **skilled workforce** complement Italy's advanced industrial capabilities, making technological cooperation natural and strategic.
- India and Italy view **artificial intelligence** as a tool for inclusive development, not as a replacement for human agency.
- Their AI cooperation stresses **human-centred ethics**, responsible innovation and protection against manipulation of public debate and democracy.
- The AI Impact Summit 2026 in **New Delhi** reflects a shared effort to shape equitable and people-centric technology governance.
- Cooperation in **cyber infrastructure** and digital capacity-building aims to create open, secure and resilient digital spaces.

Security, Space and Energy Cooperation

- Space collaboration can combine India's **satellite advances** with Italy's aerospace engineering for joint initiatives and next-generation technology.
- Defence cooperation will strengthen **maritime security** and responses to terrorism, criminal networks, drug trafficking, cybercrime and human trafficking.
- Energy cooperation focuses on **diversification** through renewable energy, hydrogen technologies, smart grids and resilient infrastructure.
- India's green hydrogen push complements Italy's **renewable technology** and strategic role as an energy gateway for Europe.
- Joint work in **ISA**, **CDRI** and **Global Biofuels Alliance** strengthens climate-resilient infrastructure and clean-energy transitions.

Connectivity and Civilisational Bond

- India and Italy connect the **Indo-Pacific** and Indo-Mediterranean through trade, technology, energy, data corridors and resilient supply chains.
- The **IMEC** vision links transport, digital networks, energy systems and clean supply chains across regions and continents.
- Cultural traditions such as India's **dharma** and Italy's Renaissance humanism place people at the centre of progress.
- The partnership rests on **civilisational depth**, shared responsibility and a people-centric vision for the digital age.

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Middle-Power Partnerships in a Fragmented World Order

- **Middle-power cooperation:** India-Italy ties show non-superpower partnerships can shape technology and climate governance, as seen in the 2023 Strategic Partnership.
- **Minilateral logic:** ISA, CDRI, GBA and IMEC show issue-based coalitions can work beyond slow multilateralism, as G20 2023 showed.
- **Economic resilience:** Such partnerships diversify trade and energy links amid supply-chain risks, as seen in India-EU Trade and Technology Council.
- **Technology governance:** Democratic middle powers can shape responsible AI and secure cyber systems, as seen in India's AI Impact Summit 2026.
- **Strategic diversification:** India's Europe outreach widens options beyond great-power dependence, as seen in India-Italy defence and migration agreements.
- **Connectivity balance:** IMEC-type corridors can link markets, data and energy while reducing route dependence, as seen in the 2023 IMEC MoU.
- **Civilisational diplomacy:** Cultural confidence can deepen strategic trust, as seen in India-Italy cooperation on heritage, museums and people exchanges.