

# 1. The world since 1991

In the XIth standard we studied international developments from 1945 to 1991. In this chapter we will look at the changes that have taken place in the post 1991 era.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and the eventual disintegration of the Soviet Union ended the cold war era. It also ended the East- West division of the world that was based on the rivalry of the United States and its allies and the Soviet Union and its allies.

The developments in the post-cold war period can be analyzed through five major dimensions:

**(i) End of Cold War and rise of new states :** The end of Cold War led to the end of an international order dominated by the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. It also saw the emergence of new states after the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

**(ii) Emergence of Unipolarity :** The Cold War between United States and the Soviet Union came to end signaling the end of bipolarity. This led to the emergence of a unipolar world order dominated by the United States.

**(iii) Human Rights and Humanitarian intervention :** There was an increasing awareness about human rights and also a rise in intervention for humanitarian purposes.

**(iv) Terrorism :** The nature of terrorism changed after the 11 September 2001 attacks (also known as 9/11 attacks) against the United States.

**(v) Multipolarity and Regionalism :** This phase primarily saw the rise of China and India, the growing importance of the Indo-Pacific region and also the rise of



## Do you know?

A superpower is a state with a leading position in international politics. It has the ability to influence global events and fulfill its own interests. After the Second World War, the United States and the Soviet Union were the two superpowers who confronted each other during the Cold War.

Russia under Vladimir Putin. These developments and the growth of regionalism brought in multipolarity in the world order. Regions and regional organisations started to become more important.

## End of Cold War and Rise of New States

We can see two important trends in international relations since the East European revolution of 1989. The first is the assertion of the concept of ethnic nationalism based on right to self-determination and the second is the end of bipolarity. Bipolarity existed because of the existence of the two superpowers, United States and the Soviet Union. The world was divided into two centers of power. The disintegration of the Soviet Union ended one of the centers of power. Therefore, the disintegration of the Soviet Union meant the end of bipolarity in the world.

The revolution of the East European states was a revolution of growing aspirations of the middle class. They desired more freedom and economic well-being. They rose against the communist governments that were controlled by the Soviet Union and emerged as free democratic states. Even within the Soviet Union the movement for more political and economic freedom led to the various states demanding more autonomy and eventually independence. Meanwhile, the ethnic identity of the various people of the

region became stronger. This led to the demand for the creation of independent states based on ethnic identity.

Here are some examples of this trend:

- In Europe the pattern of creation of new states can be seen as follows:
  - Czechoslovakia split into two states, Czech Republic and Slav Republic.
  - Yugoslavia split into Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia, Bosnia Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Montenegro.
- In case of the former Soviet Union the new states were as follows:
  - Armenia, Moldova, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Russia.
- The trend of creation of new states

on the basis of ethnic nationalism based right to self-determination was also seen in other parts of the world. Some of the new countries that emerged as independent states were:

- East Timor (independent from Indonesia),
- Eretria (independent from Ethiopia),
- South Sudan (independent from Sudan).
- This trend of demand for independence on the basis of ethnic nationalism is also seen in the following cases:
  - Catalonia (wants independence from Spain)
  - Kosovo (wants independence from Serbia. Its independence has been recognised by some countries of Europe)
  - Chechnya (wants independence from Russia)



Europe



Countries of the former Soviet Union

### Towards a Unipolar World

In 1990, Iraq went in for a war against Kuwait and established control over its territory. There was a global reaction against it and the matter was discussed in the United Nations. The United States took the initiative and led a multinational force against Iraq. The war ended with Kuwait becoming free from Iraqi control. The American President George H. Bush considered this as a moral victory and used the term 'New World Order' to describe the nature of the global situation. This American action had received global support, including from the Soviet Union, China, countries of the NATO, Israel, and the Arab States including Saudi Arabia. The Soviet Union which was facing internal problems disintegrated in 1991.

Not much opposition was possible against the United States and eventually the meaning of the term 'New World Order' which implied American dominance and leadership in matters of security was accepted at the global level. This was the first expression of the unipolar world order.



Map of Kuwait and Iraq



### Do you know?

American political commentator Francis Fukuyama introduced the concept of 'End of History'. He believed that after the fall of communism in Soviet Union the socialist political, economic and social system had come to its end and that the world would now have liberal democratic systems.



Francis Fukuyama

The United States emerged as a dominant country. American dominance had political and economic dimensions. Politically, the American model of liberal-democratic governance was readily accepted and adopted by several post-communist states of Eastern Europe and elsewhere. The concept of good governance was linked to democracy. In economic sphere, socialist system of economy was given up by most of the countries.

One of the other aspects about American domination was the use of American 'soft power'. Soft power is when you influence the other countries without the use of military force. The influence is spread through economic, social, cultural and other similar means.

### What is a Liberal Democracy?

Liberal democracy is a form of representative democracy. Liberal democracy is currently one of the dominant political ideologies in the world. It gives importance to individual liberty. A liberal democracy is characterized by presence of a few important features:

- Universal suffrage
- Free and fair elections
- Competitive party politics
- Rule of law



### Do you know?



Joseph Nye

American academic Joseph Nye differentiates between two types of powers, namely hard power and soft power. Hard power is 'the ability to get others to act in ways that are contrary to their preferences and wills'. This is the ability to coerce, through threats and inducements. On the contrary, soft power is the ability to get 'others to want the outcomes that you want', and more particularly 'the ability to achieve goals through attraction rather than coercion'.

### Some Examples of American Soft Power

- **Educational exchange programs** : The United States is known as a student friendly nation. In last few years, number of international students studying in the United States has increased substantially.
- **Internet** : Propagation of democracy and freedom of speech through internet has been a soft power of United States.
- **Food chains** : Food chains in the United States have a global recognition. Few examples are McDonald's, Subway, Pizza Hut, Burger King, etc.

### Human Rights and Humanitarian interventions :

The process of disintegration of states and the creation of new states was not always peaceful. In Yugoslavia, for example, there was a lot of bloodshed in Bosnia Herzegovina between different ethnic groups. Conflicts also occurred in Chechnya, East

## UN Peacekeeping



The United Nations does not have its own army. But in order to maintain international peace and security member states of the United Nations have created a peacekeeping force out of their own military resources. This force is known as UN Peacekeepers. Peacekeepers are sent to conflict-prone or war zones based upon UN Security Council recommendations often when ceasefires are established.



UN Peacekeeping Force

Timor and Eritrea. It is in response to such situations that people started to be concerned about the violation of human rights. The United Nations, an important global organisation would intervene in countries to prevent conflict from escalating. This was one of the main tasks of UN Peacekeeping.

In the post-cold war era, the United Nations continued to intervene in conflict situations to bring about a peaceful resolution of the dispute. But now the rationale for intervention was not just to stop the ongoing

war but also prevent the reoccurrence of conflicts in future, maintain peace and protect the human rights of the affected people. The United Nations intervened in Cambodia, Somalia and Yugoslavia for this purpose.

The increasing awareness about human rights and their protection in international law gave rise to a new phenomenon for protection of rights in the form of 'humanitarian intervention'. The 1990s are sometimes seen as the golden age of humanitarian intervention.



### Human Rights in the Post-Cold War World

Since 1990, there was a dramatic rise in the number of states ratifying the six main human rights conventions and covenants. Over 170 countries participated in the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights, which met in Vienna where they reaffirmed their commitment to protect human rights.

This was followed by the creation of the office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Its main task was to

coordinate the UN human rights initiatives and establish universal respect for human rights.

NGOs have been a crucial factor in the 1990s spread of human rights ideas. Organisations such as International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Medecins Sans Frontiers and Oxfam work directly in conflict zones and have campaigned to promote the observance of human rights treaties and humanitarian law.



**Do you know?**

**Humanitarian role played by India**

**United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) February 1992 to September 1993 :** India sent military and police forces in Cambodia to maintain peace and restore human rights. Maintenance of law and order, conduct of free and fair elections, civil administration were other tasks undertaken. India played an important role in repatriation and resettlement of the Cambodian refugees during the transitional period.

**UN Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM – II) March 1993 to December 1994 :**

India played an active role in United Nation's campaign in Somalia. The Indian contingent of the UN Peacekeepers successfully provided humanitarian relief. It dug a large number of wells, constructed schools and mosques, and ran mobile dispensaries and relief camps, which provided medical as well as veterinary care. It also carried out rehabilitation of thousands of refugees and assisted in their repatriation.



**Indian Police Officer in Cambodia**



**Indian Army Doctors in Somalia**

**Terrorism**

The attack on the New York Trade Centre and the Pentagon in Washington D.C. on 11 September 2001 (popularly referred to as 9/11 attack) brought in a new form of terrorism in the world. The concept of terrorism is not new. Terrorism has been defined as the use of violence or the threat to use violence with an intention to create panic in the society and pursue political, religious or ideological goals. Generally, government institutions and officials are primary targets.



**Terrorist Attack of 11 September 2001**

The first instance of modern-day terrorism is considered to be the attack on the Israeli Olympic team at Munich in 1972 by the Palestinians. Since then terrorist organisations and groups have indulged in airplane



### Do you know?



George W. Bush

The 'War on Terror' is a military campaign launched by the American President George W. Bush in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks by al-Qaeda. The War on Terror includes the Afghanistan War (2001) and the War in Iraq (2003). The US-led military offensive was supported by Britain, Turkey, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, France and Poland.

hijackings, bombings and assassinations of political leaders. Traditional forms of terrorism mainly targeted institutions of the state. The terrorists usually fought for the rights of some specific people. The terrorist activity was usually associated with separatist movements.

Modern day terrorism is different in several ways. The terrorists today are not fighting for a specific group in a specific geographic area. The terrorist organisations are motivated and inflamed by an abstract religious ideology, the fight is for abstract goals and the operations are global in nature. After the 9/11 attacks, similar attacks took place in Bali (2002), Madrid (2004), London (2005) and Mumbai (2008).

### Multipolarity and Regionalism

The world order was dominated by the United States in the post-cold war era. The American military and economic might was unchallenged during this time. This made it the only superpower. However, economic rise and military capabilities are not the only criteria to become and remain a superpower. It is the amalgamation of both hard power and soft power that shapes a country to become a world power. While hard power relies on coercion, military force and economic

sanctions, soft power includes persuasion, cultural influence, values and tradition. In recent times, the dominant position of the United States been directly or indirectly challenged. For instance, the economic and regional integration in Europe through the creation of European Union (EU); the rise of Asia through the presence of China and Japan followed by India in the global world order; the military resurgence of Russia and the growing importance of new regional organisations have come to define a shift from a unipolar to a multipolar world order.

China has posed a formidable challenge to the unipolar world led by the United States. China's rise to global prominence can be attributed to its rapid economic progress since the introduction of market reforms in the mid-1970s under Deng Xiaoping's leadership. The most dramatic phase of which began only in the 1990s.

China has increased its sphere of influence through its ambitious economic projects such as One Belt One Road and China Pakistan Economic Corridor and aims to create a sphere of influence in Central and East Asian regions. Furthermore, Chinese opening to Africa shows that their dream goes beyond neighbouring countries. Militarily, China is ambitiously building up its naval and air power in order to back up its claims in the South China Sea.

### Can you find out?

What is One Belt One Road and China Pakistan Economic Corridor policy of China?

Russia has made substantial progress in oil and gas production. Russia has emerged as an energy superpower. Economic stability has renewed the sense of national pride leading to military assertiveness in recent times. Russia continues to influence Central and Eastern Europe and it is a founding member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

Today the Indo-Pacific region is gaining importance. Economic growth in Asia, led by China and other countries like India and Japan; conflicts in the South China Sea; the importance of ASEAN and American interest in the Pacific region has contributed to the importance of this region. India is likely to play an important role in this region in the future.

### **Regionalism in the Post-Cold War Era**

Regionalism is an important issue in international relations. Countries come together to either create or join some regional organisations. These organisations may be based on geographic proximity or on common political, ideological, economic etc. concerns. While geographic linkages are important, sometimes some functional and infrastructural issues become the basis of regional cooperation. These can be in areas like transport and communication, energy, health, etc. The process of regionalism usually begins with a political dialogue amongst the participants. Similar ideological perspectives or economic concerns may help the process of dialogue. Such a dialogue may lead to the creation of an organisation.

In the 1940s and 1950s regionalism in Asia and Africa focused on a political dialogue between countries. In Europe the focus was on economic cooperation. For example, Europe created the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC, 1951), the European Economic Community (EEC, 1957) and the European Atomic Energy Agency (Euratom, 1958).

In 1960s the concept of regional cooperation spread to Asia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was created in 1967. In the 1960s we saw the growth of regional organisations that focused on economic issues. Some regional organisations like the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) focused on security issues. In the post-cold war era, the regional

organisations started to focus on issues of trade. We see the creation of Trade Blocs during this period.

### **What is a Trade Bloc?**

A trade bloc is created when a group of nations make special agreements regarding their economic relationships with each other. The agreements generally focus on the relaxation or elimination of trade barriers. The most common types of trade barriers are tariffs (taxes on imports) and quotas (limits on the quantities of various imports).

Let us take a survey of some of the important regional organisations in the post-cold war era:

#### **(i) European Union (EU)**

The Second World War followed by the Cold War gave rise to a constant instability which has always motivated the European countries to come together. It is on this basis that European Union was established. The European Union began as an organisation which wanted to foster economic cooperation. The idea being that countries that trade with one another become economically interdependent and so more likely to avoid conflict. The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and European Economic Community (EEC) were created for this purpose in 1951 and 1957 respectively.

Later these various organisations merged together and were referred to as the European Community. In 1973 an agreement was signed to create a European Parliament. The process of creating a single market for the European Union began in the 1980s and was completed in 1993. The 'Maastricht' Treaty was signed on 7th February 1992 to create the European Union (EU). This treaty led to the expansion of spheres of cooperation which now included internal affairs, judicial



Eurozone Countries

**Do this.**

Make a list of the countries who are part of the Eurozone.

The creation of the Schengen Area is one of the greatest achievements of the EU. The Schengen Agreement – covering the abolishment of the internal borders between countries was signed in 1985. The Agreement was signed by the five European countries France, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Netherlands, in Schengen, a small village in Southern Luxembourg. The Schengen visa is the most common visa for Europe. The Schengen Area is an area

matters, foreign and defence policies. The treaty led to the creation of an economic union which had a common currency, the Euro. The euro (€) is the official currency of 19 out of 28 countries of the EU. These countries are collectively known as the Eurozone.

The process of European cooperation began as a purely economic union and evolved into an organisation dealing with various policy areas like climate change, environment, health, external relations and security, and migration.

**Can you find out?**

Who are the members of the European Union?



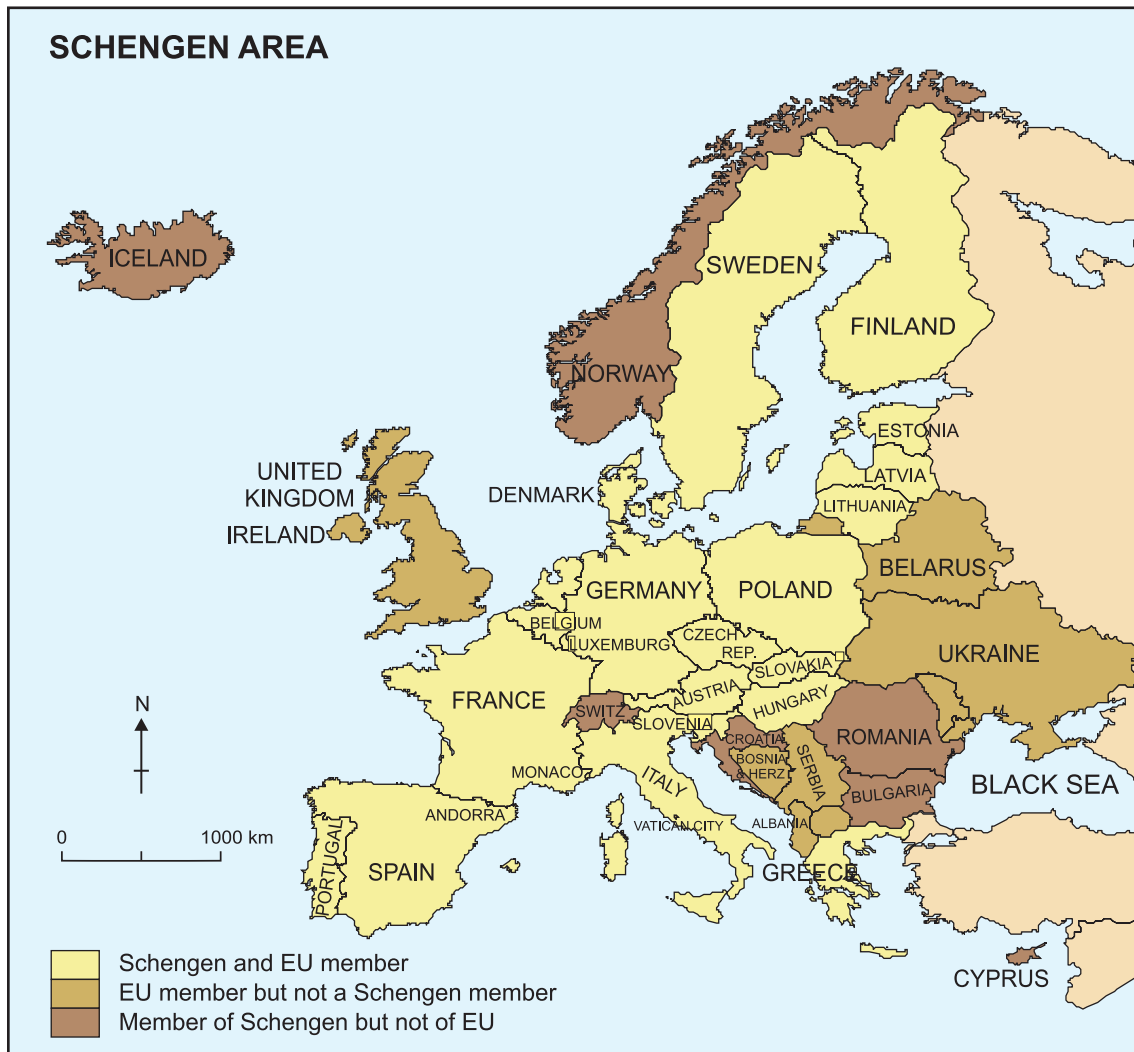
**Do you know?**



**The Euro :** The Euro was launched in the world money market on 1st January 1999; it became the unit of exchange for all of the EU states except the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Denmark. The geographic and economic region that consists of all the EU countries that have fully incorporated the Euro as their national currency is known as the Eurozone.

without internal borders. In this area, nationals of EU and even non-EU nationals including business people and tourists can travel from country to country freely and easily. They do not have to go through checks and controls

when they pass from one country to another. Today 22 out of the 28 countries of the European Union are part of the Schengen Area.



Schengen Area



**Do you know?**



**What is the Schengen Visa?**

A Schengen visa allows eligible individuals to travel freely within the 26 participating Schengen Area countries. This means travelers in Europe will not be subject to border checks at internal Schengen borders and enter various Schengen countries directly.



### Do you know?

**How does the European Union work:** There are four key institutions which work together to run the EU - the European Commission, the European Parliament, the European Council and the European Court of Justice.

**The European Commission :** The Commission is the executive-bureaucratic arm of the EU. It is mainly responsible for drawing up proposals for new European legislation, and it implements the policy decisions of the European Parliament and the Council of the EU.

**The European Parliament :** The European Parliament is composed of 751 Members, who are directly elected every five years. It is a body entrusted with legislative, supervisory, and budgetary responsibilities.

**The European Council :** The structure of the European Council consists of the presidents or prime ministers of each member state, accompanied by their foreign ministers, and a full-time President of the European Council. The European Council meets four times a year and provides strategic leadership for the EU.

**The European Court of Justice :** The ECJ interprets, and adjudicates on, EU law and treaties. As EU law has primacy over the national law of EU member states.

### Discuss the case of Brexit.

In 2016, the people of United Kingdom (UK) voted to leave the European Union in a referendum. The UK formally ended its membership of the EU at midnight of Friday, 31 January 2020. This is called Brexit. Brexit is an assertion of British sense of nationalism. This shows that the concept of State very much relevant. Have a discussion in class in this context on the basis of the following questions:

Why did Britain want to exit from the European Union?

Does the vote in favour of Brexit go against the concept of globalisation?



### (ii) SAARC

SAARC was formed in 1985 at Dhaka. Originally, SAARC had seven members, namely India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Maldives. In 2007, Afghanistan was added as the eighth member. Meanwhile, China, USA, EU along with 9 other nations have been conferred with the 'observer status'. The main aim of SAARC was to establish a dialogue in South Asia. With this context, South Asian Association for Preferential Trade Arrangement (SAPTA) came into existence in 1993. Later in 2006, SAARC's free trade arrangement was activated through South Asian Association Free Trade Area (SAFTA) which replaced the earlier regime of SAPTA.

### (iii) BIMSTEC

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional organisation founded in 1997. It comprises of seven

Member States lying in the littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal. Among them, five are from South Asia, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and two from Southeast Asia, including Myanmar and Thailand. BIMSTEC acts as a bridge between South and South East Asia and mainly aims to facilitate rapid economic development and promote collaboration on matters of common interests.

#### **(iv) Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS )**

BRICS is an association of major emerging national economies created in 2009. Its original members were Brazil, Russia, India and China. South Africa joined in 2010. BRICS members are all developing countries or newly industrialized countries. They have large, fast-growing economies and significant influence on regional and global affairs. All of them are members of G20.

#### **(v) Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)**

SCO is a Eurasian political, economic and security organisation, which was founded in Shanghai by the leaders of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in the year 2001. India and Pakistan joined in 2016. In the past few

years SCO has focussed on counter terrorism. The SCO's primary focus is on maintaining peace and stability in the region through political dialogue and economic cooperation among member states. SCO also encourages effective cooperation in trade, research and technology.

#### **(vi) G-20**

G-20 is an international forum established in 1999 for governments and central bank governors from 19 countries and the European Union. It was formed with a primary aim to discuss policies relating to financial stability. Since 2008, the G-20 Summits are attended by the heads of the government or head of the states along with their finance ministers and foreign ministers. Developed countries like United States, Britain, Germany, France, Japan among others are a part of G-20. It thus, acts as a platform for discussion between the developed and developing countries. India plays an active part in G-20.

We have seen some of the important trends in global politics since 1991. These trends indicate the major changes that have taken place in the world since the disintegration of the Soviet Union. In the next chapter we will see how these trends can be understood at a conceptual level.

#### **See the following website for additional information:**

- (1) College of Engineering, (COEP) Pune, History Club Lecture, “१९९१ नंतरचे जग आणि प्रवाह” - डॉ.श्रीकांत परांजपे World After 1991" - Dr. Shrikant Paranjpe. (On You Tube)
- (2) India and United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, By Lt Gen Satish Nambiar (Retd) January 26, 2014, Media Centre, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India  
<https://mea.gov.in/articles-in-indian-media.htm?dtl/22776/India+and+United+Nations+Peacekeeping+Operations>

**Q.1 (A) Choose the correct option.**

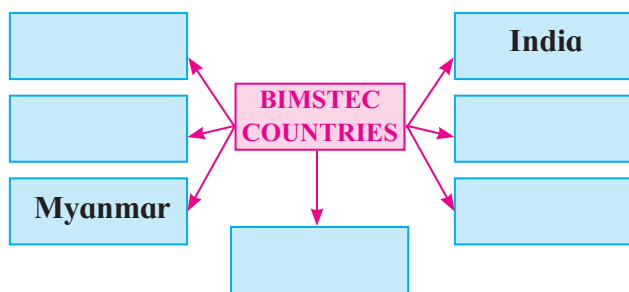
- One of the important trends in the post 1989 international relations was
  - End of bipolarity -
  - Rise of regionalism in Asia
  - End of non-alignment
  - Demand for a new international economic order
- The 'Maastricht' Treaty is with reference to -
  - United Nations Peace Keeping Force
  - European Union
  - American interventions in Kuwait
  - Creation of BRICS

**(B) State the appropriate concept for the given statement.**

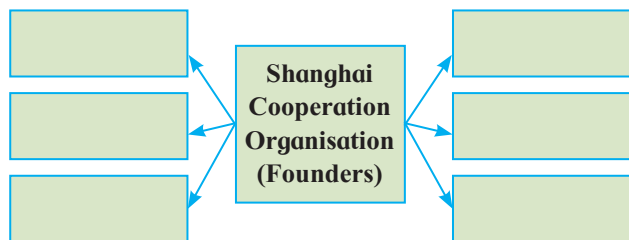
- When a state influences other states without the use of military force.
- A state with a leading position in international politics with abilities to influence global politics and fulfill its own interest.

**Q.2 (A) Complete the concept map.**

1.



2.



**Q.2 (B) Observe the maps in textbook and answer the following questions.**

- Name any four countries in the Schengen area.
- Name any two non-European Union countries within Schengen area.

**Q.3 State whether the following statements are true or false with reason.**

- SAARC is important for trade in South Asia.
- 'Maastricht' Treaty was signed for the defence of Europe.
- The decade of 1980s is seen as the golden age of humanitarian intervention.

**Q.4 Express your opinion.**

- Humanitarian intervention
- Regionalism in international politics.

**Q.5 Answer the following.**

Explain the term soft power with examples.

**Q.6 Answer the following question in detail with help of given points.**

Discuss the European Union with help of given points.

- History
- European Commission
- European Parliament
- European Council
- European Court of Justice

**Activity**

Find out the role played by India in BRICS.

