

SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation)
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What is SCO?

- The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, also known as the **Shanghai Pact**, is a **Eurasian political, economic, and military organization** which was **founded in 2001 in Shanghai**.

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- **Founding SCO members** : China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The **cooperation was renamed to Shanghai Cooperation Organisation after Uzbekistan joined the organisation in 2001.**
- **Goals of SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) are:**
 1. Strengthening mutual trust and neighbourliness among the member states:
 2. Promoting their effective cooperation in politics, trade, the economy, research, technology and culture, as well as in education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental protection, and other areas:
 3. Making joint efforts to maintain and ensure peace, security and stability in the region: and
 4. Moving towards the establishment of a democratic, fair and rational new international political and economic order.

Members of SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation)

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1. Presently, the SCO comprises eight member states, namely the Republic of India, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan.
2. India and Pakistan joined the SCO as full members in 2017.

The SCO counts four observer states, namely the Islamic Republic of **Afghanistan**, the Republic of **Belarus**, the Islamic Republic of **Iran** and the Republic of **Mongolia**.

The SCO countries has six dialogue partners, namely the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Armenia, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, the Republic of Turkey, and the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Summits of SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation)

1. 2019 Summit - **Bishkek**. Kyrgyzstan
2. 2020 Summit – St. **Petersburg**, Russia. Theme- Reformed Multilateralism
3. The 2021 Summit will be chaired by Tajikistan in **Dushanbe**.

How does membership of the SCO help India?

- In a world riven by geopolitical contestations, SCO membership provides India a vital counter to some of the other groupings it is a part of, balancing out its stated policy of pursuing “multi-alignments”. It is a platform also for alignments on issues such as energy security, connectivity and trade. With India indicating that it sees little use for SAARC, the SCO provides the only multilateral platform for it to deal in close proximity with Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- For India, two important objectives are counter-terrorism and connectivity. These sit well with the SCO's main objective of working cooperatively against the “three evils”.
- India wants access to intelligence and information from SCO's counter-terrorism body, the Tashkent-based Regional Anti-Terror Structure (RATS).
- A stable Afghanistan too is in India's interest, and RATS provides access to non-Pakistan-centred counter-terrorism information there.
- Connectivity is important for India's Connect Central Asia policy.
- Energy cooperation dominates its interest – and it's in China's neighbourhood. But India will also have to deal with an assertive China, which will push its Belt and Road Initiative during the summit.
- SCO membership also bolsters India's status as a major pan-Asian player, which is boxed in the South Asian paradigm.



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About Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)

- The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) is headquartered in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. It is a permanent organ of the SCO.
- It serves to promote cooperation of member states against the three evils of terrorism, separatism and extremism.
- The Head of RATS SCO is elected to a three-year term. Each member state also sends a permanent representative to RATS.

Dushanbe SCO summit 2021

- The event will bring together leaders from eight SCO member states—India, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.
- National Security Adviser Ajit Doval is expected to attend a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in Dushanbe, Tajikistan next week, which Pakistan's NSA Moeed Yusuf will attend as well.

SCO JtEx

- The 2019 edition of SCO JTEX i.e. Shanghai Cooperation Organization Joint Exercise on Urban Earthquake Search & Rescue was held in India.
- It was hosted by NDRF (National Disaster Response Force).
- The aim was to rehearse the disaster response mechanism, share knowledge, experience, technology & also for mutual coordination, etc.
- Main focus shall be to test the region's preparedness and resilience towards effective activation of Inter-governmental interaction for immediate response.