Q:- Discuss the recent deterioration in US-India relations what are the main causes and implications of this development for regional and global geopolitics?

Introduction:

The special relationship b/w the United States and India, once hailed as a **"mega partnership"** under prime minister Narendra Modi and former president Donald Trump, has rapidly deteriorated within a matter of months in 2025. The swift unraveling highlights the fragility of alliances built on transactional interests rather than enduring strategic trust. The partnership which has shown promise in counterbalancing China's rising influence, now faces unprecedented strain primarily due to trade disputes, divergent geopolitics calculations, and mutual misjudgments. As the former Pakistani Ambassador to the US, UK, and UN Maleeha Lodhi notes **"with in less than six months, the Strategic Partnership between the two countries had plunged into a series crisis driving it towards a meltdown"**. This development not only complicates bilateral ties but also has broader repercussions for regional stability and global power dynamics.

Causes of deterioration:-

The deterioration of US-India relations can be attributed to three major miscalculations by New Delhi compounded by president Trump's unconventional and transactional foreign policy approach

1) Misplaced Strategic and Assumption VS. Trade priorities:

India assumed that its strategic importance to the US as a counterweight to china would shield it from tensions over trade tariffs. However, Trump's administration prioritized trade issues over strategic partnerships. Before Modi's Feb 2025 visit to the white house, Trump criticized india for its "obnoxious" trade practices and imposed reciprocal tariffs of up 25% escalating to 50% later.

2) Mishandling the India-Pakistan Crisis:-

Another key sources of friction was New Delhi's refusal to acknowledge Trump's claimed role in mediating the May 2025 India-Pakistan conflict ceasefire. Trump repeatedly asserted that he played a pivotal role in defusing the crisis, portraying himself as a "Peacemaker". Modi's outright denial and rejection of any US mediation antagonized Trump, injuring his ego and hardening his stance.

3) Failure to Anticipate Shifts in American foreign policy:

Trump's foreign policy diverged from traditional US approaches, prioritizing a "grand bargain" with china over supporting india as a counterbalance. Frustrated with Russia and Ukraine, Trump took a tougher stance on countries trading with Russia, including India.

Implications:

The collapse of 'US-India' strategic alignment carries significant implications.

- **Economic Impacts:** The imposition of up to 50% tariff threatens to damage India's export sector and overall economy, while also jeopardizing its access to the lucrative US market.
- **Geopolitical Repercussions:** India's strained relations with the US complicate its efforts to maintain "strategic autonomy" amid growing Sino-American rivalry. The rift may push India closer to China and Russia, altering regional alignments.
- **Global Trade and Alliances:** The episodes reflects broader challenges facing global trade cooperation amid rising protectionism and unilateralism, exacerbating uncertainty in international relations.

Conclusion:

The rapid fraying US-India relations in 2025 underscores the precariousness of alliances based on expediency rather than enduring strategic interests. India's over confidence in its geopolitical indispensability to Washington, coupled with misreading's Trump's transactional approach and mishandling of sensitive diplomatic issues like the India-Pak ceasefire, led to a dramatic downturn. The resulting trade war and diplomatic chill threaten to reshape regional geopolitics, forcing India to recalibrate its foreign policy amid growing uncertainty.