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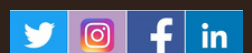
EMERGING CONTOURS OF GEO- POLITICS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

BY

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ORGANISED BY CENJOWS
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Overview

The post-Cold War unipolar system is transforming into a polycentric one, making it more complex and less predictable. The ongoing Russia-Ukraine War, the Hamas-Israel conflict, and the tensions mounting in East China and South China Seas highlight that the polycentric international system is characterized by polarisation and hybrid threats.

Introduction

The polarised global environment suggests the emergence of a world where great powers will compete for maximising their power - replacing the existing western-led system by a world of 'multi-alignment', akin to a multipolar world order with uncertainty and insecurities. Russia's invasion of Ukraine, "a NATO aspirant, has not only challenged the post-Soviet security architecture of Europe to go down in History as one of the turning points of the 21st Century geopolitics, but also has highlighted it as a sharp manifestation of the changing global order" and is reshaping the world order in more than one way.

Global Strategic Environment

The current global strategic landscape is marked by a growing polarization among the major powers and global groupings; such as China, Russia, the US, the EU, and all G20 members. While the ongoing Russo-Ukraine conflict may have consolidated the Euro-Atlantic ties, countries like India have rejected the American and European pressures at the United Nations to condemn the Russian invasion, turned Moscow into its largest oil supplier and dismissed the perceived hypocrisy of the West.

The Contours of Emerging World Order

The war in Ukraine has clearly demonstrated that the world has changed. It is no longer a world of two superpowers, but neither has it become a world with only one centre of gravity, nor one of multiple poles. The collapse of the bipolar system after the end of the Cold War turned the world, briefly, into a monopolar system. However, the strength of the American pole rapidly lost its absolute quality. The new and growing

centres of power suddenly appeared, each hoping to become a new pole, the concept called a “polycentric” world. Therefore, calling the USA, the EU, China, and Russia as poles may not be entirely correct as each one of them is devoid of absolute influence of being a pole.

Emerging Global Order: Western Blocs

Transatlantic Ties

The changing Transatlantic ties are at the core of the fundamental restructuring of the global order in the wake of the Russia - Ukraine war. The EU and the NATO, G8/G7 and G20 are a few relevant groupings which play an important role in the emerging world order.

Blocks in West Asia

The Abraham Accords and the I2U2 add a new dimension to contain and counter China’s expanding dominance.

Non-Western Blocs

Russia and China continue to draw closer. East Asian countries are getting closer because of shared concerns over China. BRICS is expanding and has 12 members as of now with a GDP of 37.5% of the global economy while that of G7 countries stands at 30% now. SCO has expanded to include 10 members as of now.

Conclusion

Multipolar orders have triggered large-scale conflicts in the world in the past. It was one of the major factors precipitating World War I and World War II. The various power nodes constantly compete and maximize their Comprehensive National Power and influence by cynically switching sides and changing power alignments. The emerging contour of Geopolitics in the 21st Century is possibly heading in the same direction.