

Q:6 The Indo-Pacific has increasingly become the epicenter of global politics, with major powers vying for influence in this strategically crucial area. Discuss the roles and strategies of global powers such as the US, China, India and others in asserting their influence within the Indo-Pacific region.

1- Introduction: The Strategic Importance of Indo-Pacific Region:

The Indo-Pacific region has become the world's center of gravity due to its strategic importance in economy, politics, trade, security and maritime resources. With expanding influence of China in this region, other global powers have shifted their focus and states' policies towards Indo-Pacific region. Particularly, USA is bandwagoning the local powers of this region into its maritime and economic strategies. Alliances

have been shifted to contain the emerging power of China in this region. Therefore, Indo-Pacific has become global focal point.

2- Why Indo-Pacific has Shifted the Focorum of Power To Eastward In Global Politics?

Global oil trade	Two-third oil trade
Strategic chokepoints	Malacca Street, Bab-ul-Mandab
South China Sea	11 billion oil barrels
Minerals and resources	South China Sea is enriched
Demography	60% of world's population
World GDP	50% contribution in global GDP

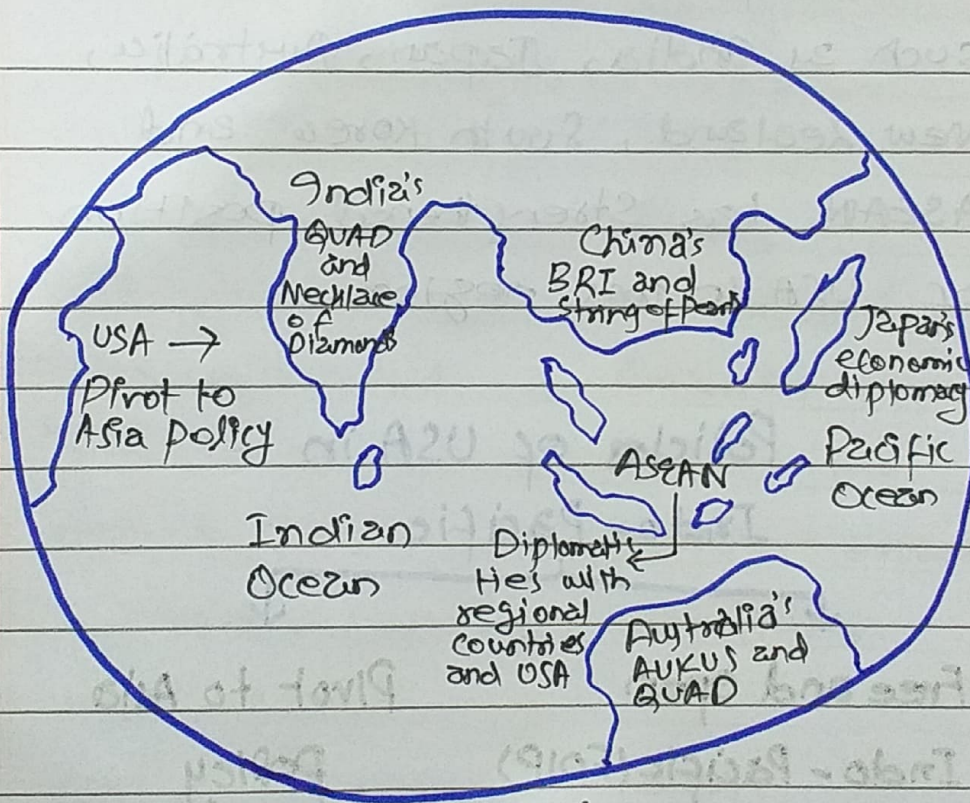
Source: United Nations

Figure: Shows strategic importance of Indo-Pacific region

3- Roles And Strategies of Global Powers In Exerting their Influence In Indo-Pacific Region:

"Whoever controls the Indian Ocean will dominate Asia"

↳ Gurmeet Kanwal, Indian Analyst

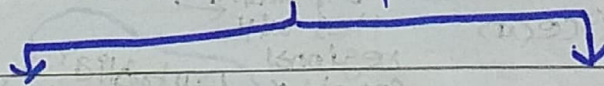


Map showing strategies of different powers in Indo-Pacific region

3a) USA policies and strategies to maintain its hegemony in Indo-Pacific:

USA has made different strategic alliances with regional powers to counterbalance influence of China. Moreover, the strong bilateral and multilateral economic and defense ties with countries such as India, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea and ASEAN has strengthened position of USA in this region.

Policies of USA in Indo-Pacific



Free and open

Indo-Pacific (FOIP)

USA wants to keep international waters free and open for trade and ensure the sovereignty of nations.

Pivot to Asia

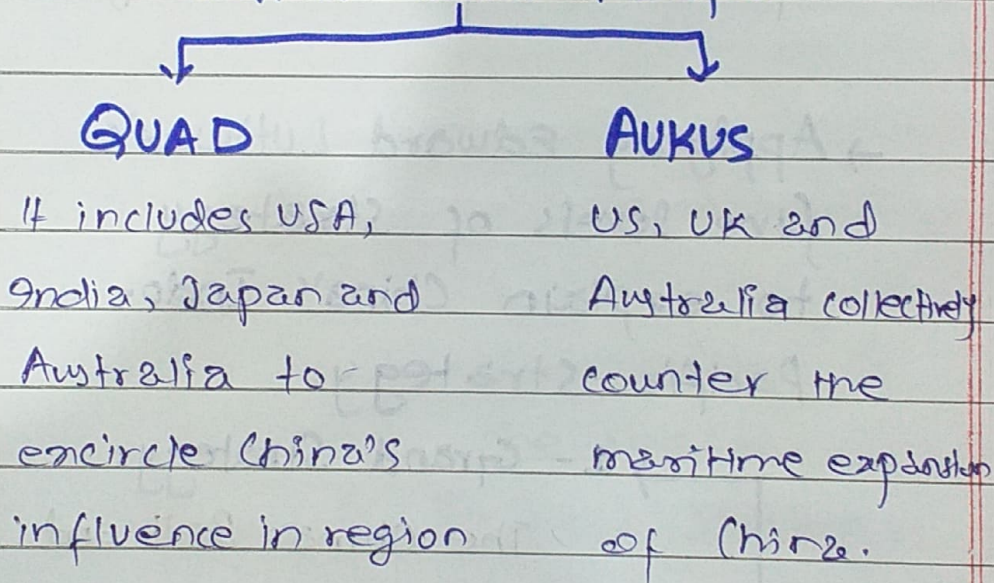
Policy

USA formed different alliances with Asian countries to maintain its supremacy.

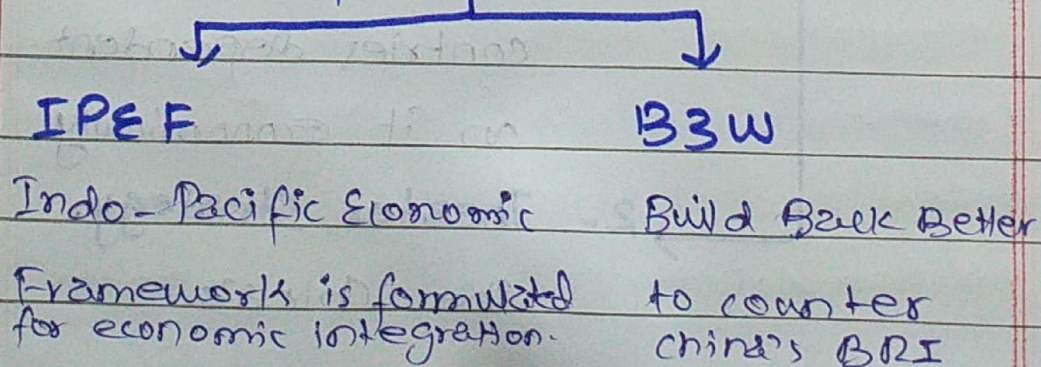
"We envision an Indo-Pacific that is open, connected, secure and prosperous. We are ready to engage with each of you to achieve it"

by Joe Biden, Former US President

Strategic alliances of USA in Indo-Pacific



Economic Strategy of USA



3b) China's expanding influence in Indo-Pacific: Shifting hegemony of USA and creating security dilemma:

The emerging economic power of China in Indo-Pacific region threatened the power of USA. China has launched economic, military and geo-political networks to expand its power in region.

→ Applying Edward Luttwak's five levels of strategy to explain China's Indo-Pacific strategy:

- 1- Grand Strategy: The China's Belt and Road Initiative is its grand strategy to make regional countries dependent on it economically
- 2- Theater Strategy:

The China's

String of Pearls is its strategy to cover important strategic chokepoints. It is making Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka and Gwadar port in Pakistan to cover the region geo-politically.

→ **3- Operational Strategy:**

China's Anti-Access Area Denial (A2/AD) strategy to counter the influence of other powers in the region.

→ **4- Tactical Strategy:**

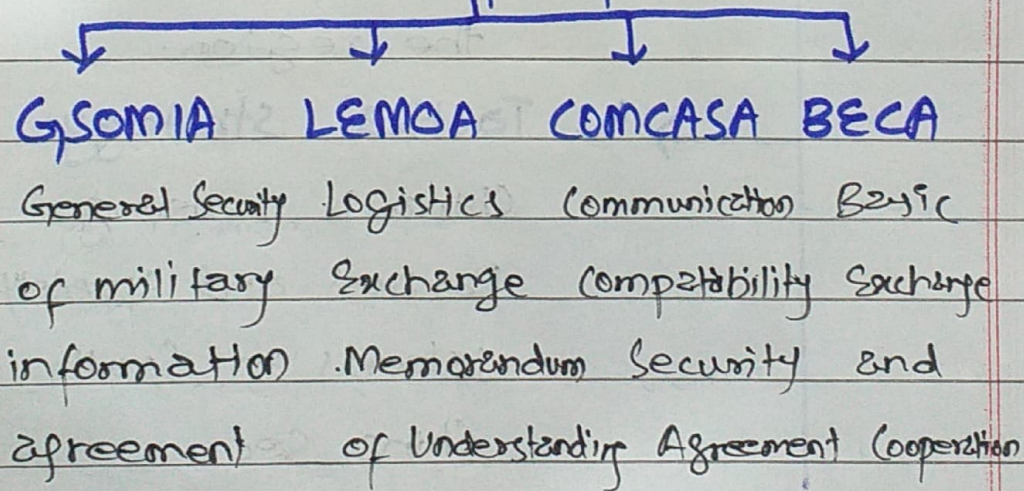
China is making Parcel and Spratly Islands in South China Sea

→ **5- Technical Strategy:**

Established its military weapons and autonomous drones to strengthened its position

3c) India's tactics to expand its influence in Indo-Pacific: Arms race and balance of power: India is a strategic ally of USA in this region to control the power of China. The US-Indo nexus has enabled India to strengthen its military and economic power in this region.

Defense agreements of India with USA to assert its influence in Indo-Pacific



USA made these agreement to increase military power of India

In order to counter China's military power.

Policy of India

Necklace of Diamonds:

India has designed its strategy to improve its naval capabilities and ties with regional countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka to counter-balance China.

3d) The bilateral ties of Australia with USA to increase geo-political power in Indo-Pacific:

Australia has formed nuclear powered submarines, which made it strategic ally of USA. The AUKUS is formed particularly to enhance military power in Indo-Pacific and to counter the expansion of military power of China in the region.

3e) ASEAN countries strategies to balance their power in Indo-Pacific:

ASEAN countries have designed balancing act to remain neutral in great power rivalry. It has maintained bilateral economic ties with China and security ties with the USA. Moreover, Asean Regional Forum (ARF) ensures the sovereignty of these countries in the region.

4. Conclusion:

Indo-Pacific has significant strategic importance, which made it essential for global powers.

The major powers of the world such as USA and China have enhanced their influence in this region by making strategic ties and multilateral alliances with regional countries.