

Examine China's strategic vision behind the Belt Road initiative.

Introduction:

The Belt Road Initiative BRI is largest project of china, creating economic corridors in different countries. China's strategic vision behind BRI is **economic expansion**, ensuring energy security, balance of power, soft power expansion, rejuvenation narrative of china (**Constructivism**), enhancing geopolitical influence (**Neo realism**), Economic imperialism, and ensuring peace and stability through creating trade dependencies (**win-win politics**). China is using carrot diplomacy to attain the strategic visions behind the BRI.

Strategic Vision behind BRI:

China's strategic visions behind BRI include:



i) Economic expansion-Neo realism:

Neo-realism is the theory of third great debate of

international relations. According to this theory: "Politics is the struggle for the pursuit of power for the attainment of national interest."

By analyzing the China's vision behind BRI through the lens of neo-realism, it is clearly visible that China aims to access the markets of BRI countries through the investment in these countries.

China has invested \$1 trillion across 140 countries to facilitate trade and economic growth.

ii) Energy security-Neo realism:

One of the principle of neo-realism stated by Kenneth Waltz in "Theory of international politics" is that

Day: _____

Date: _____

international structure is anarchic due to the absence of international sovereign. So, the states prioritize on the achieving of their national interest.

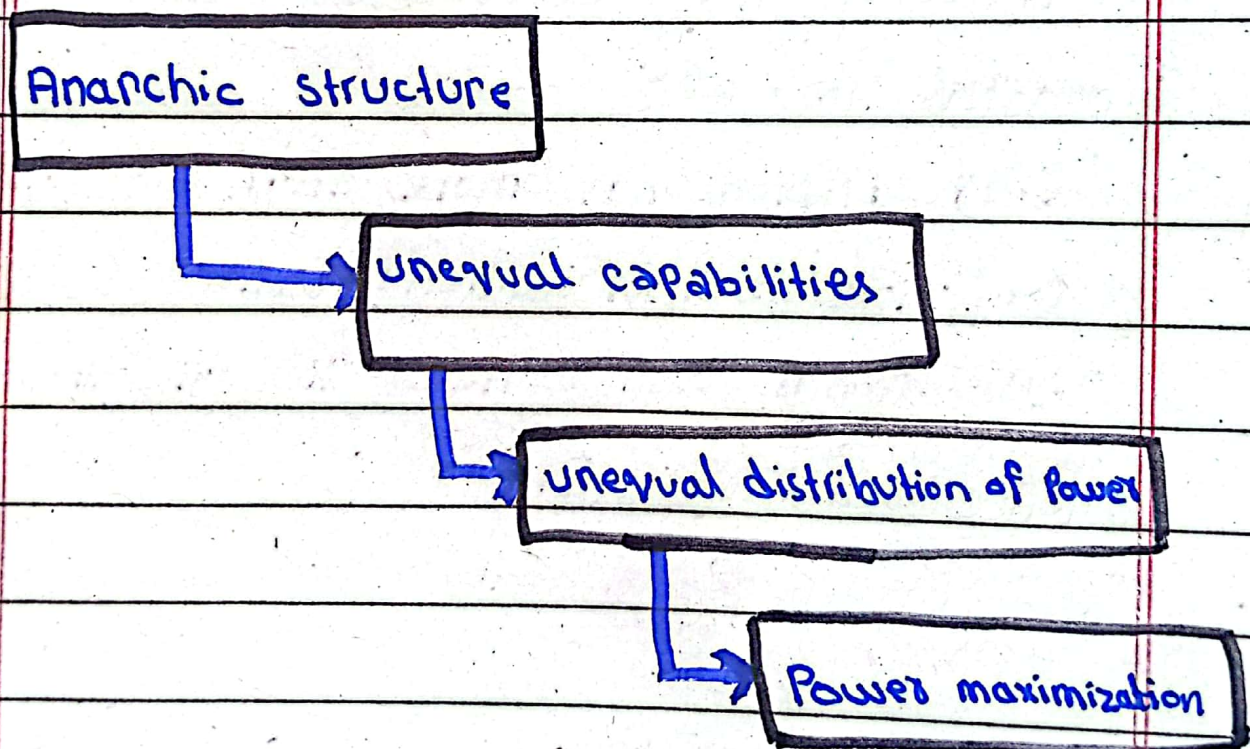
China aims to secure safest and shortest route to access the energy resources of the middle east, avoiding the already existed route through the strait of Malacca.

"China-central Asia gas pipeline which passes through Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan can supply over 35 billion cubic meter of natural gas to china annually." DAWN News

iii) Countering US-influence-Balance of power:

The rationale of balance of power is "Theory of state

behavior." This rationale deals with "why a state behaves the way it does?" The balance of power states that due to the **anarchic structure** of the world there exist unequal capabilities due to the unequal distribution of power and wealth. So, the states prioritize power maximization and alliance making.



In case of China, it wants to increase its influence in South Asia, Middle East and Africa countering US influence.

iv) **Soft power Expansion-Win-Win politics:**

Win-win politics is a game theory in the international relations used to achieve mutual gains.

One of the vision behind BRI is China's cultural and educational expansion all over the world. China has constructed 500 Confucious schools mostly in BRI countries.

"Only Africa has more than 60 Confucious school, strengthening educational and cultural ties with china."

Hence, china's soft power expansion is resulting into win-win situations.

v) **Rejuvenation narrative-Constructivism:**

Constructivism is one of the significant theory of international

relation which emphasize on the construct. These constructs are believes, norms, values and history.

US has been dominating the world trade due to the dominance of dollar. Also, it is controlling the world through IMF, World Bank. China is trying to introduced alternating banking system and currency, to reduce the dependency on the dollar. The aim is to challenge US-led global order by positioning itself at the center of the global trade.

Hence, China is trying to reclaim its historical role as Central global power.

vi) Economic imperialism:

Economic imperialism or neo-neo colonialism is a type of imperialism in which

a powerful state control the weaker one through creating dependencies and providing loans.

China is investing in the developing countries which provide leverage to the china on the foreign or economic policies of these countries.

"China's investment in the CPEC, flagship project of BRI, has given China leverage on Pakistan's foreign policy." Source: Western media.

Hence, China's influence is increasing in the BRI countries through investment and soft loans.

vii) Enhancing geopolitical influence - Neo-realism:

Neo-realism states that states are centered around their national interest.

Day: _____

Date: _____

One of the strategic vision of China behind BRI can be justified through the lens of neo-realism. China aims to increase its geopolitical influence through the use of carrot diplomacy tools. Its investment in the BRI countries and win-win model of the BRI is helping to achieve this national interest of china.

viii) Maintaining regional peace and stability-Neo-liberalism:

Neo-liberalism is another significant theory of international relations. This theory proposed that trade and diplomatic relations are the only means to achieve cooperation.

China aims to maintain regional peace and stability

Day: _____

Date: _____

for the good trade and economic growth.

"China helps to reduce Kabul's grievances towards the Islamabad in recent years." DAWN News

Moreover, maintaining peace is also necessary for the smooth running of CPEC.

Conclusion:

In a nutshell, China's strategic visions behind the BRI are multifaceted. Reducing dependencies on dollar, and making alliance to counter the US-influence are the significant vision of China. Socio-economic development and economic growth of China are successfully achieved through BRI.