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Current Affairs

Question Statement

"What role did the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 play in escalating the conflict b/w the two nations, Russia and Ukraine?"

Supporting Answer

- Introduction
- History of Crimean Peninsula
- Importance of Crimea for Russia.
- Ukraine and Crimean status
- Ukraine's stance on Crimea
- Role of NATO
- Crux of conflict between Russia & Ukraine
- The war waged
- Russia annexed Crimea
- Trump's stance
- Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

The Ukraine-Russia conflict has remained a hot topic of late 20th and 21st century after the cold war. The conflict has attracted the world's attention due to its geo-strategic location and support of the global powers and emerging economies to both the rivalries.

Ukraine was the part of Russia but after the integration of USSR into 15 states, it became autonomous and sovereign in its authorities. Keeping in mind, the geo-strategic importance of Crimea (an autonomous state of Ukraine) Russia does not want to let it go at any cost. On the other hand, Ukraine is strengthening its ties with

Anti-Russian powers mainly NATO countries. Ukraine itself wants to be part of NATO but Russia is opposing it. The completely opposite thinking and closure of thoughts between Russia and Ukraine is escalating the tensions and affecting the world order by creating a war like situation. Experts says that,

"If the Russia-Ukraine cannot be handled with optimistic thinking, it could lead to world war III"

Therefore, the global powers must take an optimistic action to handle the situation and keeping the world safe from war-like solution because,

"Whatever the situation may be, war is never the solution"

FLOW CHART

Role of Annexation
of Crimea



War waged

Support of NATO
to Ukraine

Weaponization
by U.S

Freezing assets
of Russia

Sanctions on
Russia

Pro-Russia
vs
Anti-Russia

1. History of Crimean Peninsula

The Crimean Peninsula holds a great geo-strategic, economic, political and global importance for Europe since it was a part of USSR.

Demographically, Crimea has Russian population but besides it shares the coast with the Indo-Pacific ocean that is the main stream of Russia in every aspect.

Russia carries its majority of trade through Indo-Pacific ocean with Europe and China. Moreover, it has its naval bases at Sevastopol and Odessa that also secures its sovereignty. Meanwhile, Crimea is the autonomous state of Ukraine and after the separation of USSR and its integrated states, Ukraine also wanted to

build its relations with western world. Ukraine wanted to become a part of NATO but this will create a huge economic problem for Russia, that's why Russia has annexed Crimea by use of force to hold its geo-strategic importance in region.

2. Annexation of Crimea:

As the Russia was observing the increasing ties of Ukraine with NATO and western world which includes increasing trade, financial aid, exchange of weapons and people-to-people relation. This created an alarming situation for Russia that if like Poland, Ukraine also announce itself a part of NATO. To be a step forward than Ukraine, Russia decided to annex the integrated states near

Russian border. Crimea was the most important state for Ukraine and Russia as well so, Russia decided to annex Crimea first to protect its geo-strategic and economic significance. The Russian army forcefully entered Ukraine on Feb 24, 2022 and annexed Crimea. Russia carries most of its trade through Indo-Pacific ocean and it carries/shares the coast with Crimea, that's why it was important for Russia to annex Crimea but this created a strong rift between Russia and Ukraine.

3 War Waged:

Despite living together for years as a part of USSR, the annexation of Crimea by Russia created a full-fledged war

like situation between Ukraine and Russia.

Russia entered Ukraine with its force of 200,000 soldiers including 50,000 mercenaries from air force, navy and infantry. The eastern Ukraine was pro-Russia due to its Russian population while western and ^{north} western Ukraine was anti-Russia and Pro-NATO.

The full-fledged war scaled between the two countries on 24th Feb, 2022 and Russia captured 20% of Ukrainian states in exchange of different missiles and fighter jets. Both countries still don't want to step-back and this is reason for on-going conflict between them. The expertise says that, "if Russia-Ukraine conflict does not resolve, it could lead them to WWII."

4. Support of NATO to Ukraine:

As Ukraine had good relations with NATO countries in terms of trade and aid and it wished to be a part of NATO countries, the NATO countries and western world provided Ukraine with full support in this war. This support included financial aid of 100 billion dollars by U.S., 100 billion euros by EU and 14 billion pounds by U.K. Moreover, it also included modernized weapons and well-trained army soldiers to fight against Russia. As a result of this aid, the resistance of Ukraine increased against Russia. This instigated the Russia that despite coming to negotiating table, Ukraine was getting aid from anti-Russian powers.

5. Weaponization by U.S.:

As a result of annexation of Crimea by Russia, U.S started its strategic movements against Russia because Russia has been a threat for U.S in terms of economy and trade. U.S and NATO extended their full support to Ukraine by putting sanctions on Russian trade and goods. This was an unannounced act of geo-political war.

6. Freezing assets of Russia:

Between the rising conflicts of Ukraine and Russia, the U.S made a cunning move on chess board and froze the 300 billion dollar assets of Russia by announcing that Russia is illegally annexing areas of Ukraine and disturbing the global peace. It must stop here.

Ever since, the assets of Russia have been a mere piece of paper but the conflict still remains unresolved.

7. Pro-Russia vs Anti-Russia:

Ever since, the Ukraine-Russia conflict began, it has become a tough situation between Pro-Russian and anti-Russian countries. As U.S and NATO decided to start an economy war against Russia, China and India stepped in to support Russia obviously, they had mutual benefits. Russia wanted a market for its oil and gas while China wanted to buy it. Similarly, Russia wanted a market for its weapons and China wanted to strengthen its airforce. Thus, China built its economic relations with Russia and saved its economy.

Conclusion:

Although, Russia and Ukraine have never been on good ties after the integration of USSR but the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 was the crux of on-going rivalry between the two countries. Russia has economic significance from Crimea & it does not want to step back while Ukraine has strong support of NATO countries and western world that's why it is standing firm on its stance. This ongoing conflict can only be resolved through negotiation because war is not the solution to this scenario. If only both countries, mutually decide to sit on negotiation table the matter can be resolved otherwise, it will affect the global hegemony and disturb the region's peace.
