

Topic : Rising Nationalism . A Threat to Global Cooperation

Outline

1 Introduction

- i) What is nationalism?
- ii) How is rising nationalism a threat to global cooperation?
- iii) Thesis statement

2 Increasing Nationalism as a Threat to Global Cooperation

- i) "US First" Mentality of States of America;
 - a. Promotes self interest and protectionism
 - b. US withdrawal from Paris climate Agreement
- ii) Weakening of Global International Institutions;
 - a. Dependence on Member states' Cooperation
 - b. SAARC as an example of failure
- iii) Trade Wars Resulting in Economic Isolation;
 - a. Tariffs, trade wars and economic nationalism
 - b. US-China trade war
- iv) Blocking Collective Action on Global Health Issues;
 - a. Non-cooperation and delayed responses.

b. "Vaccine nationalism" during Covid-19 pandemic

v) Rise of Xenophobia Resulting in Reduced Immigrations;

a. Anti-immigrant or anti-foreigner sentiments.

b. Harm to refugee and asylum system.

c. Reduced international mobility, cultural exchange and global labor cooperation

vi) Increased Geopolitical Tensions;

a. Fuel to militarism, territorial disputes, and hostile foreign policies.

b. South-China sea as example

vii) Erosion of Multilateralism in International Matters;

a. Preference of bilateral deals over shared frameworks by nationalist governments.

b. Brexit referendum as example

viii) Disruption of Scientific, and Academic Cooperation;

a. Reduced international academic exchange, research cooperation and science funding

b. Progress slow down due to intellectual isolation

3)

DATE: / /

ix) Nationalism Exacerbating Racism on Global level;

a. Emphasis on ethnic, cultural or racial purity, fueling xenophobia.

b. "Wuhan Virus" terms used for covid-19

x) Rise of Currency Wars due to Nationalism;

a. Manipulation of exchange rates to gain domestic trade advantages.

b. Proposals for SCO Development Bank in SCO.

xi) Undermining of Global Diplomatic Alliances;

a. Unilateral actions of states over collective commitments.

b. Suspension of Indus Water Treaty by India.

xii) Weakening of International Legal Norms;

a. Dismissal of international courts

b. Treaties seen as constraints on sovereignty.

c. Russia's rejection of ICC's jurisdiction

3) Conclusion

DATE: / /

The Essay

In an age where the world is more connected than ever, through trade, technology and shared global challenges, the idea of putting national interests above all seems outdated and dangerous. Nationalism, once a force for unity and independence, is now increasingly becoming a barrier to international cooperation. At its core, nationalism is a political ideology that promotes loyalty and devotion to one's nation, often by prioritizing national culture, identity and interests over global responsibilities. While such patriotism can foster internal unity, the recent surge in nationalist movements across the world has begun to strain international relations. Countries that once worked together on issues like climate change, terrorism and public health are now turning inward, closing borders, rejecting international treaties, and promoting economic protectionism. The rising trend of nationalism fuels xenophobia and anti-immigrant policies, undermining the principles of diversity and mutual respect. When nations isolate themselves in pursuit of sovereignty, they weaken the global system that depends on shared action and collective responsibility. Therefore, an

DATE: / /

unchecked rise poses a significant threat to global cooperation. This essay will argue that rising nationalism, if not balanced with a spirit of global collaboration, can undermine peace, weaken diplomatic ties, and hinder progress on the world's most pressing challenges.

The "US First" mentality characterized by prioritizing national interests over global cooperation, significantly undermines international collaboration. This approach can lead to a decline in global governance and ~~prote~~ cooperation, making it more challenging to address pressing global issues like climate change, pandemics, and economic inequality. The consequences of such mentality can be far-reaching, potentially leading to a more fragmented and less cooperative world order. Moreover, the "US First" mentality also manifests in protectionist trade policies, which further erode global cooperation. For example, the US withdrawal from Paris Agreement is part of a broader trend of protectionism and unilateralism, where countries prioritize their own economic and political interests over global cooperation. Therefore, this trend demands a reevaluation of

DATE: / /

priorities and renewed commitment to multilateralism and cooperation.

Furthermore, the rise of nationalism significantly weakens the international institutions. Mostly, the decisions of such global institutions are highly dependent on the member states' cooperation, but these member states, keeping their national interests over global interests, weaken the credibility of such institutions. The rivalry of member states within such global institutions further undermine international cooperation. These rival states prefer to engage ~~in~~ bilaterally due to lack of trust on member states, hindering regional cohesion and cooperation. For instance, the persistent rivalry between India and Pakistan has paralyzed SAARC's effectiveness, with the last summit being held in 2014. Ultimately, the rise of nationalism poses a significant threat to the efficacy of global institutions like SAARC, undermining regional and international collaboration and progress.

Additionally, the rise of nationalism has led to a surge in trade wars resulting in economic isolation and far-reaching consequences. Protectionist policies such as tariffs, and quotas, have become increasingly prevalent,

DATE: / /

disrupting global supply chains and altering trade relationships. Economic isolation resulting from trade wars ~~and~~ can lead to reduced economic growth, increased costs for consumers, and decreased global cooperation. As countries prioritize their own economic interest over international cooperation, the risk of further trade fragmentation and protectionism increases, potentially destabilizing the global economic order. The trade tensions between US and China have resulted in tariffs being imposed on billions of dollars' goods, affecting not only the two countries but also the global economy. Hence, the consequences of such trends could be catastrophic, highlighting the need for renewed international cooperation and a more globalized approach to problem solving.

The rise of nationalism has significantly impeded collective action on global health issues, which highlights how countries prioritize their own interest over global cooperation - can have devastating consequences. One major consequence of this trend is the exacerbation of health disparities between wealthy and low income nations. People belonging to wealthy nations have quick access to health

DATE: / /

services compared to the ones belonging to relatively poorer nations. It is because of the fragmented world due to nationalism due to which nations tend to prioritize their interest first rather than considering the global concerns. "Vaccine nationalism" at the time of Covid-19 is prominent example of such health ~~st~~ services stratification, in which vaccines were hoarded by wealthy countries, leaving the less developed countries far behind to access to such treatments. Therefore, a balanced approach in which national interest like health services provision along with international cooperation for easy access to such services for others adapted will enhance global collaboration.

Other important result of rise of nationalism is xenophobia which further results in reduced immigrations undermining global cooperation and cohesion. Xenophobia is characterised as hatred towards others culture which arises due to intense protectionism and nationalism. Such unhealthy sentiments of nationalism create anti-immigrants or anti-foreigner sentiments among public, reducing the tolerance towards other people who are not culturally or ideologically similar. This causes harm to the refugees

DATE: / /

and asylum seekers further resulting in reduced international mobility, cultural exchange and global labor cooperation. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 in USA, a xenophobic law that banned Chinese labor immigrations and was motivated by anti-Chinese sentiments. Hence, real world examples show that a rise in xenophobia due to increased nationalism leads to a significant reduction in immigration, leading to a fragmented or stratified world, despite in the era of rising ^{advanced} communication technologies.

In addition to above mentioned products of rising nationalism's threats to global cooperation, geopolitical tensions is another result of rising nationalism. Increased nationalist policies tend to raise territorial disputes and hostile foreign policies. It further leads to unrest among citizens, undermining trust between nations, making it harder to collaborate on critical global challenges. Nationalist rhetoric often fuels territorial disputes and increases the risk of diplomatic standoffs or military confrontations. The South-China Sea disputes, where competing territorial claims are driven in part by nationalist agendas is one of the examples. The erosion of international

DATE: / /

collaboration driven by nationalism leaves the world more fragmented, reflecting how nationalism can fuel regional instability and weaken international cohesion.

Additionally, rising nationalism is contributing to the erosion of multilateralism by encouraging countries to prioritize their own interests over collective global actions. Nationalist governments often see international institutions or treaties as constraints on their sovereignty, leading to withdrawals from agreements, rejection of international norms or declining support for international institutions like United Nations or WTO. This shift undermines the spirit of cooperation upon which multilateralism depends on, making it harder to address global challenges like climate change, pandemics or international security. The withdrawal of UK from European Union in Brexit Referendum to "take back control" is a clear example of how rising nationalism can erode multilateralism. Resultantly, nations turn inward, diminishing the ability to form consensus, weakening the effectiveness of international governance and collaboration.

Rising nationalism disrupts scientific and academic cooperation by fostering mistrust, restricting cross border collaboration,

DATE: / /

and prioritizing national interests over global knowledge sharing. Governments influenced by nationalist agendas may impose visa restrictions, limit foreign research partnerships, or cut off funds for international programs, fearing intellectual property theft or loss of strategic advantage. This hampers the progress on global level which requires enhanced scientific and technological collaboration to foster scientific and technological progress. The tensions between US and China led to increased scrutiny of Chinese researchers in USA and led to reduced joint scientific projects. To get advancements both in scientific and technological world, it is imperative for nations to cooperate at all levels, setting aside unheathly nationalist sentiments.

Furthermore, rising nationalism exacerbates racism on global scale, posing a serious threat to global cooperation. Nationalist rhetoric often emphasize ethnic, cultural or racial purity which can fuel xenophobia and discrimination against others having different cultures, values or norms. Rising nationalism has led to increased hate crimes, anti-immigrant policies and social polarization in many countries. This further results in strained diplomatic relations and erode

DATE: / /

trust among nations. For instance, during the covid 19 pandemic, nationalist narratives contributed to a surge in anti-Asian racism in America using terms like "China Virus" or "Wuhan Virus", according to a report of UN 2021. Such racialized nationalism undermines the principles of equality and mutual respect, making it harder to build inclusive international partnerships and respond collectively to global crises.

Moreover, rising nationalism has led to rise in currency wars further weakening of international collaboration and cooperation. Because nationalist governments prioritize domestic interest over global advantage, they tend to manipulate the exchange rates to gain trade advantages. To promote self-reliance, governments often resist global financial norms and institutions, weakening the spirit of global economic governance. In response to such trends and to reduce dependence on western-dominated systems like IMF and world Bank, regional powers have began forming alternative financial structures. A key example is the proposed SCO Development Bank by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, aimed at promoting financial

sovereignty and regional integrity. Such proposals signal a fragmentation of global economic unity, driven by nationalist agendas seeking to bypass traditional multilateral frameworks.

Also, rise in nationalism undermines global diplomacy by encouraging countries to act unilaterally and prioritize national interest over collective commitments. Nationalist leaders often question the value of long standing treaties, leading to withdrawal from international agreements, or reduce participation in global forums, weakening the trust and cohesion necessary for effective diplomacy. For example, the suspension of Indus water Treaty by India under nationalist leadership highlights how it affects global diplomatic alliances. Such actions disrupt coordination among allies, embolden rival powers, and reduce the world's ability to respond jointly to global challenges.

Another outcome of increased nationalism is weakening of international legal norms which further weakens the international cooperation. The inward looking stance of nationalist governments fosters a climate where international legal frameworks, such as treaties, conventions, and rulings from international courts are

dismissed as intrusive or incompatible with national priorities. This not only weakens legal enforcement but also emboldens other states to act unilaterally, believing international norms are optional. In turn, trust between states erodes, and international legal institutions risk becoming symbolic rather than effective. A clear example is Russia's formal withdrawal from the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2016, after the court published a report labelling its actions in Crimea as an occupation. Nationalism, thus, does not simply question international law, it actively dismantles the shared commitments on which global cooperation depends.

In conclusion, the global resurgence of nationalism poses a serious threat to international cooperation, as it often promotes inward looking policies at the expense of multilateral engagement. Nationalism prioritizes national sovereignty, cultural identity and domestic interests, frequently at odds with the principles of global collaboration, compromise and shared responsibility. In such climate, international institutions such as UN, WTO, and EU face increasing challenges, as member states began to question or defy

collective norms and agreements. Moreover, rising nationalism often leads to xenophobia, protectionism, and militarization, further straining diplomatic relations. In times of global crises, isolationist tendencies severely hamper coordinated responses. When powerful nations act unilaterally and refuse to engage in global problem solving, smaller nations are left more vulnerable, and global governance becomes fragmented. Nationalism, when unchecked breeds competition rather than collaboration, deepens divisions between nations, and encourages a zero-sum world view. Ultimately, the rise of nationalism not only challenges the effectiveness of international institutions but also erodes the spirit of mutual trust and collective action necessary to solve the world's most pressing problems. Without recommitment to global cooperation, the international system risks becoming increasingly unstable and ineffective.