

# International Relations:

Paper: II

Part: II

Q. 2:-

## Introduction:-

In contemporary international relations the role of supra-national actors has become increasingly significant. Supra-national actors are essential entities that operate beyond the control of individual nation states holding the power to influence and shape global political economy and social landscape. These actors are central to the evolution of international law, trade and diplomacy, as they transcend national borders to address issues that require collective action. Their growing influence challenges the traditional state-centric paradigm in international relations, especially in areas like security, human rights and economic development.

## Defining Supra-national Actors:

Supra-national actors refer to organisations or entities whose authority surpasses that of individual states. These actors are vested with certain powers that allow them to make decisions and enforce policies that bind member states. They function based on collective ag-

agreements among sovereign states but are empowered to make decisions and implement policies that extend beyond their authority of individual states. These actors typically include international organizations, regional blocks and global governance bodies that possess the ability to affect political, economic or social change across multiple nations.

## Types:

### 1. International Organizations

The most prominent example of supra-national actors are international organizations, such as UN, WTO, and IMF. These organizations possess power to set international rules and regulations that member states are required to adhere to, and they often act as mediators in disputes.

### 2. Regional Blocks:

Another critical category of supra-national actors is regional organizations such as EU, AU, and ASEAN.

These have significant political and economic influence. The EU for instance has its own legislature and judicial branches and laws are binding on all member states.

### 3. Global Bodies:

Global governance bodies such as the WHO and World Bank represent another form of supra-national influence. They focus on managing global public goods.

and tracking transnational issues such as pandemics, poverty and climate change.

## Role of Supra-national actors:

The impact of supra-national actors on global politics is undeniable. Through organizations like the UN, decisions made at the supra-national level can affect international peace and security, environmental standards, and trade agreements. For instance, the Paris Agreement on climate change, negotiated under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is a supra-national accord aimed at tackling global warming. Countries are required to adhere to specific carbon emission targets, and failure to do so has international implications.

Furthermore, regional organizations like the EU have significantly altered the political landscape in Europe, with decisions on economic policies, immigration and human rights often being made at the supra-national level rather than by individual governments.

## Conclusion:

Supra-national actors have undeniably become pivotal players in global politics and international relations, functioning as central hubs for co-operation, conflict resolution, and regulation in an increasingly interconnected world. The concept of supra-national

actors reshapes the traditional state-centric model of IR, empowering organisations and bodies that transcend national borders. As such, supra-national actors are integral in shaping the trajectory of 21<sup>st</sup> century international relations, often playing a decisive role in global political arena.

Q-05:

## Causes of War:

The study of war and its causes is a central concern in international relations, and the level of analysis framework - individual, state and systemic - provides comprehensive lens to analyze conflicts. Each level offers a unique perspective on the factors leading to war, which are interconnected and can manifest simultaneously.

### 1. Individual level:

Individual level examines the role of leaders, decision makers and human psychology in driving conflicts. Personal ambitions, miscalculations, or ideological motivations of leaders can act as catalysts. For example, egoistic and expansionist ambitions of leaders, have historically escalated tensions. Misperceptions, emotional bias or over confidence in military

strategies often exacerbate conflicts.

- **Middle-East Context:** In ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict, the decisions of individual leaders such as hardline policies of Benjamin Netanyahu have entrenched hostilities. Leaders' rhetoric and inability to compromise perpetuate cycles of violence and mistrust in the Middle East.

## 2. State Levels

At this level, domestic factors like regime type, economic conditions, and internal political dynamics are analyzed. Authoritarian regimes, fragile democracies, or states with economic instability are often more prone to war. Nationalism and internal ethnic or sectarian divisions can also lead to state aggression.

- **Middle East Context:**

The Saudi-Iran rivalry exemplifies state level causes. Sectarian divides between Sunni-majority Saudi Arabia and Shia-majority Iran fuel proxy conflicts in Yemen, Syria and Lebanon. Domestic legitimacy concerns also push both states to adopt aggressiveness in foreign policies, using external conflict as means to unite internal factions.

### 3. Systematic Level:

Systematic level looks at international system's structure, emphasizing anarchy (the absence of a central authority), power distribution and alliances. Realist theories often attribute war to competition of powers and security. The rise of regional or global hegemons can disrupt the balance of power, leading to war.

#### • Middle East context:

The region's conflicts are heavily influenced by great powers, civilizing the US and Russia in between backing and opposing sides in the Syrian Civil War, with the US supporting anti-Assad forces and Russia bolstering the Assad Regime. The external interference have prolonged the conflict & increased its complexity. Furthermore, the growing influence of China in brokering regional diplomacy, such as mediating USA-Iran talks, reflects a shift in the global power dynamics that underpin systematic causes.

### Application to ongoing war in ME:

#### 1. Israel - Palestine Conflicts

• Individual level; Hardline policies and ideological rigidity from leaders on both sides perpetuate the stalemate and cycles violence.

- **State level:** Deep seated nationalism and domestic political need for strong stances on both sides drive aggressive policies.
- **Systemic level:** U.S. unwavering support for Israel and limited international enforcement of resolutions have emboldened the unilateral actions.

## 2. Yemen War:

- **Individual Level:** Leadership dynamics, pragmatism, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Sulaiman's assertions on foreign policy, catalysed Saudi intervention in Yemen.
- **State level:** Yemen's internal divisions between Houthis and internationally recognised government have escalated conflict.
- **Systemic level:** Proxy warfare between Iran and KSA, with international arms support from western powers, has prolonged the humanitarian crisis.

## Q.6:

### Introduction:

Protectionism, a model of IPE, emphasises reconstructing free trade through measures such as tariffs, quotas and subsidies to protect domestic industries from foreign competition. Historically, protectionism surfaces during economic crisis, geopolitical rivalries or periods of economic nationalism. The statement under-

scores the resurgence of protectionism as a response to shifting global economic order, particularly in face of trade wars and changing power dynamics between major economies like US and China.

## Concept and Principles:

Protectionism aims to shield domestic industries like controlling imports and fostering local production. Its goals include safeguarding jobs, ensuring economic independence and maintaining favourable trade balances.

### Key Principles:

**Tariffs and Duties:** Imposing taxes on imports to make foreign goods more expensive and less competitive.

**Quotas:** Limiting quantity of specific goods that can be imported.

**Subsidies:** Providing financial aid to local industries to enhance their competitiveness.

**Non-Tariff Barriers:** Employing regulatory standards, licensing requirements, or embargos to restrict imports.

**Economic Nationalism:** Prioritising domestic economic growth over global economic integration.



# Protectionism in Contemporary Global Politics:

## US - China Trade War:

US - China rivalry has been a significant arena of modern protectionism. The Trump administration imposed tariffs of \$360 billion worth of Chinese goods, citing unfair trade practices, & intellectual property theft. In response, China retaliated with its own tariffs. Although subsequent administrations have adjusted these policies, protectionist measures persist as both nations seek to bolster domestic industries like semiconductors and green energy.

## EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM):

The EU's CBAM is a modern protectionist tool aimed at taxing imports based on their carbon footprint. The policy ensures competitiveness for EU industries while pushing global partners to adopt greener practices, reflecting a merging of protectionism with environmental priorities.

## India's Self-reliance Initiative:

India's "Atmanirbhar Bharat" (Self-reliant India) strategy includes tariffs on electronics, chemicals, and textiles to reduce dependency on imports particularly from China.

## Prospective Trade war scenarios and Implications:

Protectionism risks escalating trade wars, which can disrupt global supply chains and stoke inflation. The US and EU's efforts to decouple from Chinese supply chains have fuelled economic fragmentation, with nations forming exclusive trade blocks. For instance, the US ban on chip exports to China alongside the CHIPS Act, underscores efforts to maintain technological hegemony. China in response has ramped up investments in self-reliance, particularly AI and semiconductor technologies, leading to a bifurcated global tech ecosystem. These policies may yield short term domestic gains but often exacerbate geopolitical tensions, slow global economic growth, and harm smaller economies dependent on free trade.

Q.7:

## Nationalism Vs. Globalisation: A Comparative analysis:

Nationalism and Globalisation represent contrasting forces in global politics. Nationalism is rooted in loyalty to one's nation, emphasising sovereignty, cultural identity and self-determination. It often manifests in policies prioritising national interests.

over international co-operation. Globalization on the other hand, champions interconnectedness, promoting economic, cultural and political integration across borders.

## Comparison:

### 1. Philosophy:

Nationalism is exclusive, centering on preserving unique national identities. Globalization is inclusive, aiming to transcend borders for collective progress.

### 2. Economic Approach:

Nationalism supports protectionist policies such as tariffs, and trade restrictions to safeguard domestic industries. Globalization advocates free trade and liberalized markets, fostering interdependence.

### 3. Political Framework:

Nationalism reinforces the idea of state sovereignty, often resisting supranational entities like UN or EU. Conversely, globalization relies on multilateralism, empowering institutions like WTO to mediate international co-operation.

### 4. Cultural Dynamics:

Nationalism emphasizes cultural preservation, sometimes at the expense of multiculturalism. Globalization encourages cultural exchange but risks homogenizing unique identities.

## Dominance in Global Politics today:

In recent years, nationalism appears to be gaining momentum. Examples include US's "America First Policy" under Trump, Brexit and the rise of far right parties in Europe, all reflecting a retreat from globalization. The Covid-19 pandemic amplified this shift, as nations prioritized vaccines nationalism over global distribution. Similarly, economic decoupling, particularly between the US and China, signifies nationalist turn in trade policies.

However, globalization remains critical. The digital economy, climate change initiatives and global supply chains underscore the necessity of international co-operation. Platforms like Paris agreement and G20 highlights globalization's enduring relevance.

## Conclusion:

While globalization underpins many modern systems, nationalism's resurgence in political rhetoric and policy reverts its current dominance. The future of global politics likely hinges on a delicate balance between these forces where neither entirely displaces the other.