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SUBJECTIVE

PART - II

Keep length of all answers same

ANSWER-1

SINO-RUSSIA COLLABORATION

Introduction:

International Relations operate on various tactics that are considered during alliance formation. Famous proverb goes like:

"The enemy of my enemy is my friend!"

This forms the foundational basis of Russia-China partnership. Both the states are determined to challenge US-led world order; one emerging as a revisionist strategic power and the other economically competing USA.

Strategic Collaboration

Russia is one of the largest defense suppliers to China. Chinese are facing dispute in South and East China Sea. Russia is militarily involved in Ukraine challenging NATO. It simply cannot allow NATO's physical presence in its backyard (Ukraine). A scenario that

Putin dreads even in his nightmares China, on the contrary, can not afford to let go of islands like Spratleys (rich in resources) to ASEAN countries because they would come under direct US control. This convergence of strategic interests in both Asia-Pacific and Euro-Atlantic regions is what binds Russia and China together. Their unity is backed by anti-US narratives. Recently, China has supplied Russia with S-400 missiles at lower rates. What is shocking is the trade of U-35 - fifth generation jet-aircraft that it has never traded with any state.

There is no such thing as free lunch - a concept applicable even in global alliances. China, at present is the only country purchasing Russian weapons. The timing is critical since USA has imposed trade sanctions on Russia due to its invasion of Ukraine. A friend in need is a friend indeed; China believes.

Economic Partnership:

USA is the world's largest economy. It faces a tough competition from China with fluctuating GDP growth differences.

Post Russian invasion of Ukraine, it has been heavily under economic sanctions. Russia - the world's largest exporter of gas and second largest exporter of oil is repressed from trade to Europe, its largest market.

Planning a smart move, Russia decreased global prices by 35% which resulted as a huge economic blow to the Western powers.

Exactly knowing when to step-in, China signed a deal to import gas and oil, at cheaper rates, from Russia. It is a win-win arrangement between China and Russia because China can cater its ever-growing energy requirements and continue expansion of industry and infrastructural plans. Russia, found a consumer-market in times of crisis which it can effectively utilize to fund the war.

in Ukraine; crushing all US ambitions of deadlock. This economic collaboration allows Russia to consistently exert its dominance in Ukraine, against US-led NATO. This way, both of them challenge US-led global order.

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK - CURRENCY TRANSITIONS:

US economic hegemony is centred upon Dollar, its currency that is used globally for trade. SWIFT is another hegemonic system that allows USA to ban dollar trade for sanctioned countries. Over 2000 global banks are linked with SWIFT. 7+ large Russian banks along with the State Bank of Russia were used to economically corner Russia.

China and Russia, in their brain-child **BRICS** are repeatedly discussing the negatives of over-reliance on Dollar. They are trying to shift to Yuan and Rubble for trade or formulate a currency - like the Euro for Organizational Trade. Also, the

foundations of new Development Bank have been laid to counter the IMF and WB - West-led financial institutions and provide loans and support to countries. Talks are underway to establish either a new paper currency or digital currency like crypto and bitcoin.

Geo-political Collaboration:

China is diplomatically engaged in Asia and other regions where its projects under BRI are in progress. It formulates economic and diplomatic linkages to extend its influence beyond regions. This is core interest of Mao's Chinese Dragon.

Russia is trying to engage itself with countries to regain their trust. One such instance was the Russian Prime Minister's visit to Pakistan during SCO's summit in October 2024 where he showed interest in energy and defense trade. BRICS remains the centre of Russo Chinese geo-political

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agendas where they raise collective voice for the **Global South**. They are challenging the **World System Theory** against USA hegemonic agendas and focused efforts are being led by both to promote South-South Collaboration.

Geographic linkages are heart of BRI's infrastructural corridors, TIT, CPEC, China-CA-Russia, to name a few.

CONCLUSION:

Widespread debates in think-tanks all across are centred upon the BRICS+ challenging G-7 countries and how QUAD and AUKUS could practically achieve very little. With the extension of BRICS members, its expansion is validated raising concerns for USA in economic, political and strategic arenas. China's economic rise and Russia's continuous presence in Ukraine, despite sanctions make matters worse for America.

ANSWER: 6

COP - 29

Introduction:

Conference of Parties recently hosted its 29th session between 11-22 November 2024 in Baku, Azerbaijan. Since the conclusion of the COP, several controversies are associated with it.

Petro-State Venue:

For the third time in a row, a global Summit aimed at addressing the evils of carbon emissions for environmental sustainability, have been conducted at a petro-state. Baku; for instance generates two-thirds of its GDP from fossil fuel trade. The last host UAE was no different.

Opening Stance - Gift of god:

What worsened the prevalent host country dilemma was the opening stance taken by the President of Azerbaijan. He initiated COP-29 by declaring

Fossil Fuels as a gift of god.
Critics question if earth, the planet or clean air to breathe in are gifts of a lesser god.

~~Climate-cop~~ Finance-COP:

The core agenda of COP-29 was rooted in Finance for mitigation of carbon emissions in the environment. Hence, it is called Finance-COP.

The initial demand of some African states was recorded to be **\$1.3 Trillion**. The response of the developed world was rather disappointing.

The previous decade had set up financing to merely **\$100B** from **2014-2024**. Negotiations went underway but **\$1.3 Trillion** seemed like a fortune to the developed nations. Settlement happened on **\$250B** which the developing states rejected. Reports claim that some delegations even walked-out to express dissatisfaction and communicate despair.

The final deal has been locked with teeny weeny flexibility from global bigs and a large sacrifice from developing nations - indeed an ocean is reciprocated by a kind drop and climate finance amount is fixed at \$300 Billion for next decade (2024-2035)

Criticism:

This amount has been the centre of debate globally because it is fairly impossible to counter the threat of climate change at its present level with this much finance

"It depicted not just a weak commitment but betrayal...."

A 45-nation led bloc commented on COP-29.

"I hoped for a better outcome both in terms of funds and environment"

- Antonio Guterres

This was indeed a shocking statement from current secretary General of United Nations.

US Dilemma:

Another pertinent issue with COP-29 emerged about US membership. With the re-election of Donald Trump as the American President, requests are made for US withdrawal from the 2015 Paris Agreement. This move is highly criticised because USA is the second largest carbon-emitter worldwide. It is the security of US national interests at the cost of environmental insecurity of the remaining 194 nations.

Agendas Discussed:

COP-29 was centred on technicalities regarding carbon emissions such as not counting reductions twice.

Carbon Markets - arena of credibility:

Article-6 of Paris Agreement remained in limelight. With strict abidance of Clause 6.2 and 6.4, COP-29 talked about compliance to ITMOs - Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes. Simply put, every country must be

calculated about its total emissions and traded carbon-market so that total global carbon emissions can be accurately accounted for.

Transparency and Accountability:

COP-29 also shed light on mechanisms that needed to be strengthened for transparency. Some states

came to Baku with their **Biennial Transparency Reports-BTRs** while others showed negligence.

States also need to hold themselves accountable for carbon emissions.

Climate Help Fund:

COP-29 discussed the initiation of a Help Fund by mid-2025, the mechanisms for collection and disbursement vague.

COP Reforms:

Former UN Secretary General **Ban Ki Moon** demanded structural reforms in COP. He said that a criteria must be set and developed and developing countries should be re-arranged since many

countries are now developed.

CONCLUSION:

The conference concluded in a dilemma. Many term it a failure due to insufficient finances to be provided > others provide the controversies as a strong ground. India and Nigeria have even accused the host of not taking their proper consent. Despite all these shortcomings, the world is optimistic regarding COP-30, scheduled in 2025 at Belém, Brazil. No matter what, the globe needs to act now for the planet to survive.

ANSWER: 7

CONFLICTS IN MIDDLE EAST

Introduction:

The MENA Region, commonly known as Middle East is stage of various conflict, all differing in scope and nature. States, militant organisations, non-state actors, foreign delegatories are all involved in one way or

the other. The West Asian Region is operating on the maxim - "For one empire to rise, another one has to fall." This is best interpreted with recent Syrian regime change. There are various beneficiaries and losers in the region.

Middle-East and Heartland Theory:

Mackinder proposed an evergreen theory revolved around Eastern Europe during cold-war. His theory is very much applicable on the MENA Region. At present, all these involvements validate that, "Whoever controls Middle East controls the rest of the World."

Evaluating Gaza-Israel Conflict in terms of beneficiaries:

The longest and largest conflict is rooted in the happenings on Gaza; a tiny strip of land-centred between ~~Egypt~~ and Jordan and Mediterranean and suffering from the worst

humanitarian crisis. It has been in a constant state of unannounced and unaccounted for war which many term as "genocidal intent against the Palestinians." Over 45000 deaths have been reported since 7th October 2023, which includes large number of women and children. The International Humanitarian Law and Geneva Conventions stand violated and the United Nations remains silent. Are those dying in Gaza the children of a lesser God?

The war has transcended borders and escalated to Lebanon and West Bank.

Beneficiaries and Losers:

Those involved in pursuing the "Business of Death" and supplying lethal weapons to Israel are the greatest beneficiaries of this war. The US M-I Complex has benefitted the most. It has extended huge support (economically and militarily) to

Israel. So much so, that the out-going President is mocked as **Genocide Biden**. This allows US to play from the backend on Middle-Eastern soil and counter Iran. It is trying to drain all that is left of Iran.

The losers are leaders of the Muslim world - though not sure ones. This war had caused psychological trauma to the Muslims. The death

of **Ebrahim Raisi** - Iranian Premier in a controversial air crash is just one piece of the jigsaw. **Hamas** - the militant organisation that gave its all to this cause faced tragic losses of two esteemed leaders

- The founding leader - **Ismail Haniyeh**

- The well-known: **Yahya Sinwar**

Hezbollah: The Lebanon backed group that operated for Palestinian liberation faced the tragic death of **Hassan Nasrallah** earlier this

year. Apart from leaders, the loss included their ideologies that remain fragmented, the morale of people

that is now low and tragic, hopeless civilians of Gaza who are devastated by the horrors of war.

However, Israel fail even till date, to release its 250 Prisoners of War that were captured during Hamas' 7/10 escalation. The land of sacred spirits is covered in blood and the world waits in agony!

SYRIAN CONFLICT - IS This the End?

In the first week of December, Bashar-ul-Assad's 50+ years long regime was toppled in Syria by the rebellious HTS - Hayat Tahrir Sham. It was sudden, one of the few leaders that survived the lava of Arab Spring back in 2011-2012.

It appears to be too soon to pass a verdict but USA has finally managed to let go of Assad but only when he became irrelevant. Assad flew to long-old friend in Russia and Syrians remain uncertain of the future. Currently, USA appears to be a beneficiary

since Damascus is home to Russian bases and they are left uncontrolled at present.

It is deadly for everyone, in an other opinion because after Afghanistan, another country is in the hands of an militant organisation. It is a challenge to global stability, with unsupervised existence of nuclear arsenals and military bases. Only time will tell who the real beneficiary is!

Position of Turkiye:

Sultan Tayyab Erdogan desires to be a central player but is not ready to lose what it takes. It refuses to accept any refugees from Syria and Gaza but is planning for its aims.

CONCLUSION:

The MENA Region desires peace. MBS double-edged diplomacy, UAE's involvement in USA and Israel's hegemonic aims portrayed by the map of greater Israel are

all alarming signals to not hope for stability anytime soon. The on-going proxy, civil and full-scale wars accurately verify Mearsheimer's

Analysis:

"19th century is Europe's, 20th century will be marked by Americas' and the 21st century belongs to Asia."

ANSWER-8

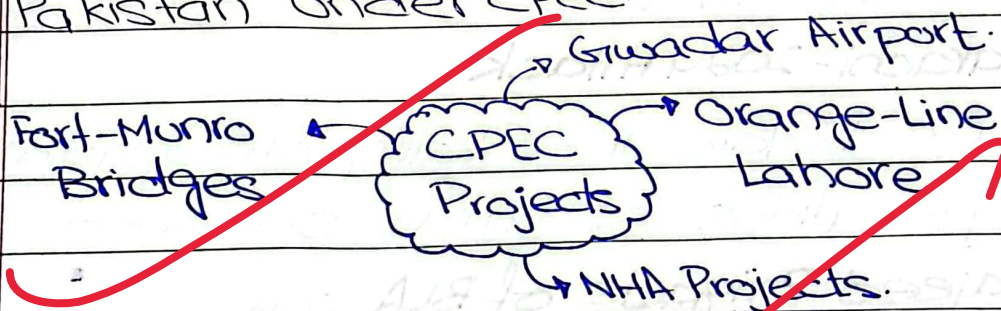
CPEC PHASE-II

Introduction:

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a flagship project of Chinese BRI that includes "Six Economic Corridors" aimed at revival of Chinese Trade Routes. CPEC is a multi-aspect investment of over \$62 Billions. It has been a corner stone in the iconic China Pakistan Friendship. There are certain contemporary challenges to the progress of CPEC Phase-II and certain measures are needed to turn it into reality.

Pakistan's Internal Issues and Hindrances to CPEC Projects:

Projects under CPEC began to be operational somewhere in 2012-13. It was on everyone's mind and then the dreams saw light; Gwadar turned into the world's deepest sea-port. The barren land in Balochistan now has a world standard International Airport in addition to other facilities. Not just limited to Gwadar, many highways, bridges, bullet train projects have been completed all over Pakistan under CPEC.



Tables turned when resurgence of terror took toll in Pakistan and separatist groups gained momentum. Security remains the biggest threat to China. VNSAs operating within the borders of Pakistan are beneficiaries of anti-China

sentiments. With Maulvi Mansoor's confessional statement against RAW, we can see that the **Indian Factor** coupled with Insurgency are the prime drivers of delay in CPEC projects.

Bisham Attack was a well-planned targeted attack on Chinese nationals.

2022 - Karachi University Attack:
Shari Baloch, BLA's first female suicide bomber blew herself up inside a Confucious Institute in KU, killing two Chinese teachers and a local driver.

Karachi - 2024 Attack:

Days before the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's summit in Islamabad, **Majeed Brigade of BLA** claimed responsibility of an attack near Karachi Airport in which three Chinese Engineers died.

Such breaches of Physical Security are deteriorating China's trust in Pakistan. Recently, this issue has been raised in the Chinese

parliament as well. This pictures a very anti-Pakistan approach.

Political and Economic Instability:

Another significant reason is the political uncertainty that leads to GDP fluctuations in Pakistan with the ouster of ex-PM through a vote of no confidence, a controversial political set-up is existant. This serves as a cause of delay to hold proper negotiations with china on CPEC.

Another important element is unsurity in GDP of Pakistan. The International Standards of investment are set at a minimum of 5% where as GDP growth rate of Pakistan is only 2.6% at present. The Chinese investor (mainly private) are not very sure about investing.

Mutual Efforts to re-invigorate the project:

Both Pakistan and china must pledge to step ahead with the projects under CPEC Phase-II.

Allowance of Chinese Security Personnel:

Pakistan must not play bargain on innocent lives and allow the Chinese employed on different projects & sites in Pakistan to bring their own security with them. This could bridge the distrust between the countries.

Diplomacy is the key:

Both countries must take the negotiation table and set out clear plan of action accompanied by practical deadlines to complete the CPEC Phase-II.

Cultural Exchanges, Student Exchange Programmes and Chinese Language centres can serve as additional diplomatic measures.

CONCLUSION:

Governments of both states must join hands for successful completion of CPEC Phase-II. This is of prime significance for both the countries. There is no need to rush as haste makes waste. Both China and Pakistan are crucial to each others' progress.