

Q No 2:

Russia-China growing economic, strategic and geo-political collaboration is an effort to potentially challenge the US led world order. Discuss.

Introduction:

The US led world order is often characterized on the expansionism, military projection and its allies promoting democratic government. This order has faced significant challenges in recent years, particularly by China and Russia. which contest the US's hegemonic influence through collaborations in economic, strategic and geo-politics. Their partnership based on mutual interest and shared skepticism of US global dominance has deepened across multiple dimensions.

1. The Growing Economic Collaborations between China and Russia:

Both the nations China and Russia part of BRICS and.

SCO, the growing regional organizations having the capability to counter the West-NATO alliance.

a- The BRICS-led New Development Bank :

The BRICS-led New Development Bank offers an alternative to the Western-dominated institutions like IMF and World Bank. It provides funding without political conditionalities often imposed by western leaders.

b. Trade Expansion between both countries :

The bilateral trade between Russia and China has grown significantly reaching a record \$190 billion in 2022 and plans to further increase it.

After the Western sanctions on Russia following the Ukraine war, the Russian energy exports oil, gas and coal to China have surged.

c- Exacerbating the De-Dollarization Process:

Both nations are working to

reduce the reliance on the US dollar by conducting trade in their national currencies yuan and ruble. In 2008 BRICS summit, discussions centered to around creating a BRICS currency for the trade between BRICS countries.

d) The Infrastructure Projects of China and Russia boosting their Economies:

The Infrastructure Project of Russia
The International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) seeks to facilitate trade between Eurasia and South Asia, providing an alternative to traditional sea route. It is a 7200 km long network of railways, roads and shipping routes connecting Russia, Iran, India and other countries.

A similar project of China is CPEC which is 3000km long network of railways, roads and shipping routes connecting the Gwadar port of Pakistan to the Xinjiang Province of China. Both the projects are of high economic value, elevating the socio-economic conditions of related countries as well.

2. Enhancing military and security ties through strategic cooperation:

Both the countries conduct joint military exercises and drills such as Joint Sea and Vostok exercises. These exercises project power in sensitive regions like Pacific, Atlantic and Arctic, Europe showcasing an ability to counter NATO and US military influence.

The arms cooperation between the two countries also project their strong strategic ties. Russia has been a supplier of advanced military equipment to China, including S-400 air defense system and Su-35 fighter jets.

Both the countries have their coordination on multilateral forums like UN Security Council and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to challenge U.S led world order. Furthermore SCO provides a platform for member states to challenge the U.S policies, particularly in Central Asia, a region where both Russia

and China seek to limit the Western influence.

3. Geopolitical Collaboration between both countries:

As US wants to maintain its hegemonic influence through out the world. So, he tries to interfere in every conflict round the world. But China and Russia oppose the US interference in their internal affairs such as China does not want US interference in Taiwan, Hong Kong issue and its interventions in the South China sea is highly discouraged by China.

a) Common Vision of both countries for a multipolar World:

Russia and China advocates for a multipolar world where no single nation dominates the global affairs.

Initiatives like BRICS expansion and partnership with countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America aim to promote the alternative centre of power.

b) The Economic Connectivity between EAEU and BRI:

China and Russia are working together for the integration of Russia's Eurasian economic Union with China's Belt and road initiative creating a massive economic and logistical system. It aims to improve connectivity through better transportation, trade routes, and infrastructure across Eurasia which stretches from Europe to Asia.

4. The Point of Convergence and Divergence between Both Nations:

a-Points of Convergence:

Both the nations benefit from the economic, strategic geopolitical collaboration with one another.

They also benefit ~~from~~ to resist US led sanctions, military alliances and global institutions dominated by Western powers.

Both are ^{trying to} gain the shared

interest in gaining sovereignty over their key issues, Russia and Ukraine and china over Taiwan.

D. Points of Divergence:

The long-term competition between both the countries for influence in Central Asia could strain their relationships. ~~Russia~~

Furthermore, the Russia's declining economy and growing dependence on China could make the partnership asymmetrical favouring China's interest more.

CONCLUSION:

Based on China and Russia's mutual partnership and their shared skepticism of U.S. global dominance, US led world order could face multiple challenges. The US led world order is often characterized on military projection, expansionism. This order could face significant challenges in recent 0. years. China and Russia are trying to contest the US's hegemonic influence in the region through collaborations in

economic, strategic and geopolitics. This alignment between US and China may lightens the risk of confrontations with US and its allies. Particularly in areas like Taiwan, Ukraine and South-China sea.

QND 1:

Introduction:

The Middle East's geopolitical landscape transformed by swift collapse of Syria's Assad dynasty by Hayat Tahrir al Sham organization. The lightning offensive by HTS militia took all of Syria's neighbours and everyone else by surprise. The Oct 7, 2023 attack that Hamas carried out against Israel triggered earthquakes across middle east.

The reasons for the fall of the House of Assad are due to the exhaustion of Syrian Arab Army (SAA), the weakened and distracted allies (Russia and Iran), and Hezbollah being out of action. The implication it carries out could shift the geopolitics of Middle east and international actors.

Reasons For Fall Of Bashar Al Assad regime in Syria:

Syria's civil war began in 2011 when the Assad regime crushed peacefully "Arab Spring" protests. But the fighting largely subsided after 2015, when Russia's intervention together with assistance from Iran and Hezbollah turned the war in Assad's favour. But with the passage of time, the geopolitical and geostrategic situations changed of their allies that resulted in the toppling of Assad's regime in Syria.

a) The exhaustion of Syrian Army after multiple wars:

Asad's army due to multiple wars had been exhausted. The army reduced to little more than a hollow shell after 14 wars. The wars killed more than half a million people, displaced half of Syrian population and devastated the country's economy and infrastructure. In war's early years, experts said a combination

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of casualties of 300,000-
Strong force and defections.
led to weakening of
Syrian Army. Corrupt and
demoralized army caught un-
awared when rebel suddenly
burst out in Idlib province
on Nov. 27, 2024. meeting little
resistance.

"Since 2011, Syrian army
faced attrition in man-
power, equipment and
morale."

(Said Syria expert at the
French Institute for
Intl and Strategic Affairs)

The underpaid, demotivated and
exhausted Syrian army could
not fight the rebel.

b) The weakened and distracted
allies (Russia and Iran) of
Syria :

Over the years, Assad has
relied heavily on military,
political and diplomatic support
from key allies Russia and
Iran, without whom the
regime would almost certainly
have collapsed much earlier
in war.

However, when the

rebel war-fighting offensive came as Russia's capabilities drained by its Ukraine quagmire, the rebel saw their chance and Russian air strikes could not hold back the HTS.

"The Russia would have liked to help the Syrian regime more, but their military resources in Syria are much reduced as half as a result of ongoing war in Ukraine."

(Said FRANCE 24's Middle East expert Nassim Nass.)

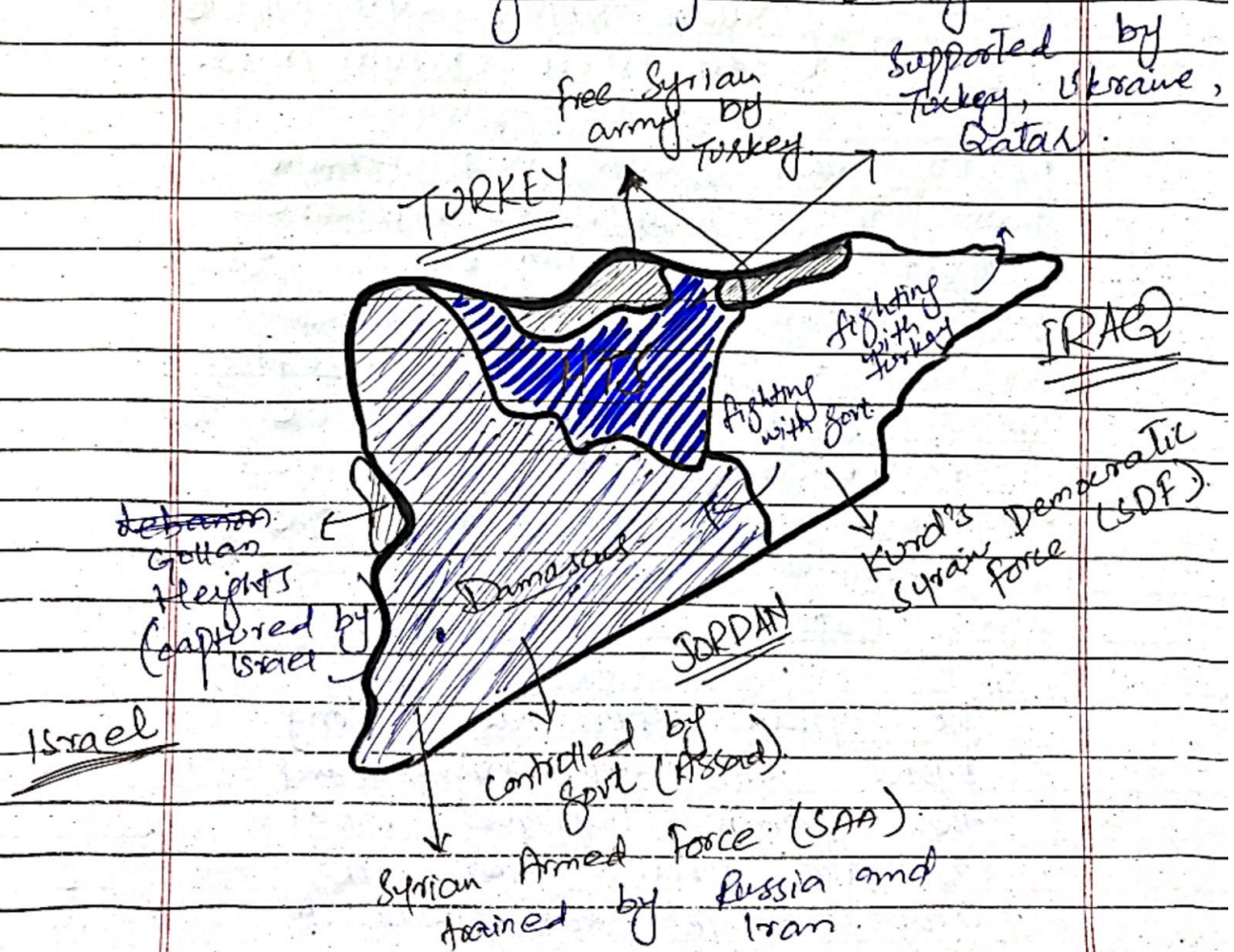
Asad's other key ally Iran has long provided military support to Syrianⁿ armed forces. But Iran and its allied groups suffered huge setback in fighting with Israel this year and this presented Syria's insurgents with the opportunity to strike at an isolated Assad.

"The Syrian rebels have a long blood debt with Iran and the offensive happened now because Iran and its allies were too weak to keep bolstering the Syrian regime."

(Said FRANCE'S Nass)

c) Hezbollah shifted its fighters from Syria to South Lebanon to face off with Israel.

Hezbollah the Lebanese proxy force has openly backed Assad since 2013. But the rebel launched their attack when Hezbollah was busy fighting with Israel. Hezbollah had shifted its forces from Syria to South Lebanon to fight against Israel, weakening its presence in the neighbouring country.



d) Turkish and Qatar's assistance of HTS in toppling Bashar regime:

Implication:

a) Turkish's role in HTS support and Kurdish Tension.

b) Israel see the collapse as an opportunity to extend confrontation in Iran's influence

c) Geopolitical shift in Middle East

Conclusion: