

'Current Affairs'

Q.No.4 How do you see the water politics in the region " " " " " "

Introduction

Water, an essential resource, has played an important role in South Asian region's politics. It has been a source of both cooperation and conflict over the past many years. Recent developments in this regard (as India's intent to withdraw from Indus water Treaty and China's decision to build the world largest hydroelectric dam on Brahmaputra River) are shaping and rewriting the power politics in the region. The implications on the region will be far-reaching as these developments will surely impact region's peace and security.

India's position on the IWT

The Indus water Treaty is considered a most successful water treaties between two hostile neighbors- Pakistan and India. The treaty was signed in 1960 with ~~World~~ World Bank's mediation, in which Pakistan got control over western rivers and India over Eastern. In recent incidents in Pahalgam, India accused Pakistan of the attacks and indicated it's withdrawal from the long-held treaty. Pakistan in response

considered it "an act of war". India is upper riparian to Pakistan and Pakistan's relies on Indus River system for over 80% of its irrigation.

If India formally exits the treaty which is a bilateral agreement, then it

- a) can threaten Pakistan's dependence on its agriculture sector that is already not performing well as overall growth is recorded 0.6% in the recent **Economic**

Survey of Pakistan:

- b) The already deteriorating relations between both countries will surely become worse, resulting in geo-political tensions.

ad China's Brahmaputra Dam:

A strategic shift

China's announcement to build a mega-dam on upper stream of Brahmaputra is a great strategic shift towards holding great control over region's hydro-political dynamics. China as an upper riparian, would influence downstream countries like Bangladesh and India.

Broader Regional Implications:

These two recent developments mark a dangerous shift in regional power politics.

a) Geopolitical Rivalry Intensifying:

Water is a great resource but is recently seen as a weapon

against rivals. This shared resource has been militarized which can result into regions' threatened peace and development. India's withdrawal and China's mega-dam projects will surely add complexities to the countries' overall economic progress.

b) Shifting Alliances:

These recent developments have also caused a major but subtle shift in regional alliances. Pakistan and China have always been good friends, but there can be seen a ~~shift~~ India's tilt towards Afghanistan. Kabul announced plans for a major hydroelectric dam on the Kunar River. India's attempt to involve Afghanistan as an external partner and an upper riparian to Pakistan is more to threaten Pakistan than to make an ally long-term ally in the region. Calculating Afghanistan's major role in regions' hydro-political dynamics, China has also sought out negotiations with Afghanistan. Beijing has secured assurance with Afghanistan that Afghan territory will not be used against Chinese interests. Also, China is moving towards extending CPEC ^{into} Afghanistan too.

c) Risk of water wars:

Water is undoubtedly a major resource

for any country. Such developments are intensified by the great climate changes occurring over the recent times. These tensions can lead to border clashes, diplomatic hostilities and proxy conflicts if not a full-fledged war in the short-term.

d) A Threat to Other Treaties:

India's withdrawal and China's mega-dam including other developments from other countries in the region may cause a undermining of regional co-operations especially India's withdrawal will raise questions on India's treaties with Nepal and Bangladesh.

Conclusion:

Water resources being politicized, is not a good sign in wake of shifting regional hydropolitical dynamics. Such initiatives may strengthen some alliances but it is quite threatening for overall regional cooperation and peace. Urgent steps should be taken to rebuild trust, strengthen legal frameworks, and promote collective stewardship of shared rivers.

Q. NO. 6 How do you see the challenges and opportunities for China "

Answer

Introduction:-

The global trade scenario has largely shifted after US started imposing Trade Tariffs on both allies and adversaries. Trump's attempt at securing trade in the US, did not only target adversaries like China but also its allies such as Japan, Canada and European Union. For China, as a major player in global trade, this brings a lot of challenges as well as opportunities.

Challenges for China:

1) Export and Economic slowdown:

The US has been one of China's largest export markets. China's export in QoQ were more than \$3.6 trillion. This will impact China's economy as it would contribute to slower GDP growth, especially in export-heavy provinces.

2) Technology Restrictions:

China will face tighter investment restrictions especially in semiconductors and AI. Also, restrictions on technology transfer and licensing will delay China's innovative progress. This will undermine China's ambition in becoming a global tech leader.

3) Strategic Isolation:

US' tariffs are also a part of efforts to build anti-China coalitions that is why China US imposed tariffs on allies too. This is an attempt on US' part to isolate China economically and politically.

Opportunities for China:

1) Regional Trade Partnerships:

China has responded by deepening regional integration. China has recently signed the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). China has also applied for membership in CPTPP, aiming to fill the vacuum left by US withdrawal.

2) Boosting Domestic Consumption:

Because of tariffs, China is working more towards restructuring its economy. China has largely focused investing in sectors like semiconductors, biotech, and green energy.

3) Deepening Ties with Non-Western Economies:

China has expanded trade and investment in Africa, Latin America and Russia. China is making new

alliances outside the western bloc.

4) Soft power and Global Perception:

US tariffs on allies have created resentment and uncertainty. China has used this opportunity to project itself as a defender of globalization and free trade.

Conclusion:

US tariffs poses serious short-term challenges for China's export-driven economy. Yet, it also creates strategic opportunities for China to reshape its economic model.