

(Test 3) Current Affairs

Question No: 01

Analyze the expansion of BRICS and SCO, emphasizing the transition from "old" to "new" multilateralism. How can Pakistan capitalize on these organizations to enhance the multilateral dimension of its foreign policy.

1) Introduction:

In the words of UN secretary General "Antonio guterres"

"Without trust we cannot face the difficult challenges in our world today."

So, it is dire need of time that countries in the world should develop strong relations with each other based on mutual interests. BRICS as a multilateral forum and Shanghai Cooperation Organization is world's largest regional cooperational organization is doing the same. BRICS transition from demographic expansion and developing connectivity via trade routes is evident. Moreover, BRICS

finances developing economies and provides diplomatic support to its member countries. SCO emerge as largest regional Organization, ensures border security and counter terrorism through RATS. Pakistan can enhance its foreign policy multilateral dimension by establishing new alliances, effective for balancing relation between US and China. Moreover, by playing role in revival of SCO-Afghanistan contact group militants activities can be minimized.

2) ~~Geographic and Demographic Expansion of BRICS:~~

2) BRICS & SCO transition from "Old" to "New" multilateralism:

BRICS and SCO made significant transition over a period of their foundation till to date that are described as follow:-

a) Geographic and Demographic Expansion of BRICS:

At its inception BRIC was an alliance of four emerging economies (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) in 2009, joined by

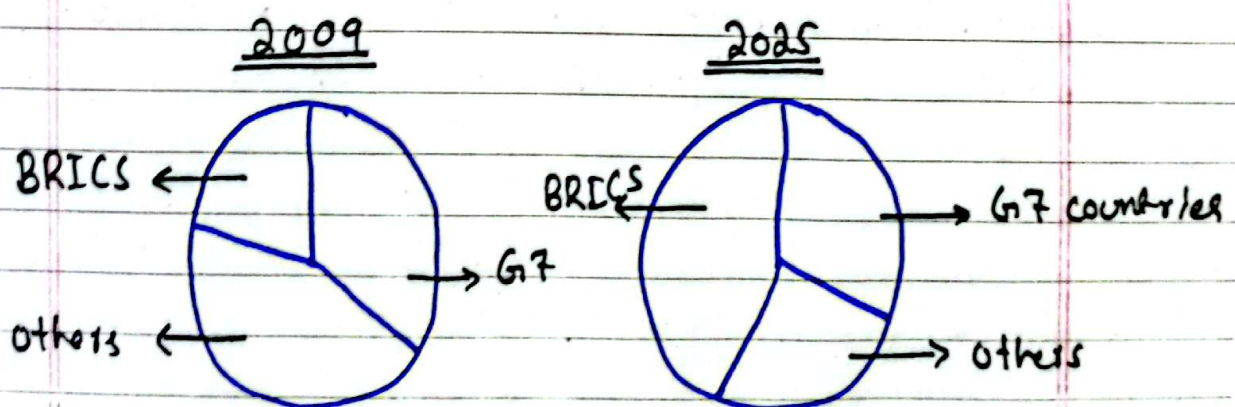
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South Africa in 2010 forming BRICS. Now many new countries are in this multilateral forum. Till date it includes Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, UAE and Indonesia. Many countries including Pakistan, Malaysia, Thailand, Turkey have applied for its membership. It increases its geographic breadth and demographic depth. It accounts for **40%** of world GDP and **56%** of world's population, indicating huge potential of this group. (International Monetary Fund, 2025)

b) Competing strong western alliance like G-7:

BRICS countries share to global GDP was quite low in year 2009 but they gradually developed their economies and have now surpassed from the G-7 (which is group of developed economies) countries.



(IMF, Bloomberg Economic Projection) 2025

Global Share of GDP (purchasing power parity)

c) Enhancement of connectivity via trade routes:

China being the leading member of BRICS connects with 150 countries of the world through its "Belt and Road Initiative Project". It extends from South Asia, to Central Asia to Eurasian region that enhances trade connectivity in future.

d) Strong Diplomatic Support to its member countries:

BRICS member China, in the past mostly remain neutral on major international issues. But now it extends its support for its member countries. For example China condemns US strikes on Iran, supports Russia in UN for war on Ukraine and plays its role as a mediator in normalizing tense relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

e) Establish robust alternatives for financing developing member states:

Through creation of "New Development Bank" as an alternative to World Bank and "Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)" as an alternative to IMF, China supports its member countries. Any country

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that is United nation member can apply for loan in New development bank and CRA is only for member countries. In this way it reduces dependence on World Bank and IMF where US has hegemonic policies. Moreover, loan returning process is easy as member countries can return loan in their own currencies.

f) Increasing Ties with NATO Countries:

NATO countries like Turkey are willing to join BRICS. This shows that expansion of BRICS is at a very high pace. Countries are joining this bloc to promote their interests.

g) Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) expansion from Shanghai 5 to Shanghai 26:

Founded in 1996, SCO comprises of 5 member states (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan), but now it contains eight permanent members (Shanghai 5 plus India, Pakistan, Iran) and rest of the observer states. It covers the whole Eurasian region comprising 41% of world's population.

Thus it became the largest regional organization of Global South that is competitive to NATO.

h) Comprehensive Approach of SCO to ensure regional security through Regional Anti-terrorist organization:

SCO provides a platform through which effects / threats of counter-terrorism can be minimized. It effectively deals with ensuring security of its member states through joint cooperation of member states.

g) Role in Climate Diplomacy as an effective platform:

As South Asian countries are worst affected by climate change, SCO provides a forum through which climate related issues can be raised and discussed. It is playing this role through climate diplomacy by highlighting the climate related issues of developing countries.

3) How Pakistan can enhance multilateral dimensions of its foreign policy through these forums:

There are a number of ways through which multilateralism of

of Pakistan foreign policy is enhanced through these forums.

a) Increasing Diplomatic Clout by building / establishing new alliances.

Pakistan is a country, that is economically struggling. In order to be heard on such large forum Pakistan should develop alliances with different countries.

b) Developing balanced approach of relationship with US and China through these forums:

Pakistan when develop significant diplomatic clout, can use these forums for gaining benefits from both US and China. By preventing the politicizing of BRICS and SCO and portraying them non-western instead of anti-western organization. Pakistan can portray the image of these forums as for regional cooperation for protecting mutual benefits. In this way Pakistan will be able to balance its ties with US and China.

- c) Pakistan can ensure its border security by revival of SCO-Afghanistan Contact group:

Border security is most important. Pakistan can play its role in revival of SCO-Afghanistan Contact group which was built to discuss mutual interest issues. It is inactive for last 3 years. By its ~~to~~ revival threat of militant attacks from Afghanistan can be significantly minimized. It will ensure peace and stability in Pakistan.

- d) Permanent Membership in BRICS helps Pakistan Economic Revival:

The Contingent Reserve Arrangement of BRICS provides loan to its member countries. These loans can be returned in the country's own currency. If Pakistan gain permanent membership, it will benefit the country as the loans ~~of~~ from IMF have to be returned in dollars and it put strain on country's foreign reserves.

- e) Trade Deficit be reduced through more trade to Forum's members:
Trade deficit of Pakistan

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increases due to less exports and more imports. This trade deficit can be minimized through enhancing trade with member countries.

For example India's trade to CARs countries is 64% greater than Pakistan trade. So it is very important to enhance trade with our immediate neighbours.

4) Conclusion:

Building of bilateral and multilateral ties are very important for protecting mutual interest with time regional Organization like SCO and ~~it~~ multilateral forums like BRICS are expanding their ties in different areas from expansionism, to trade, diplomacy, security, climate diplomacy, agreements all are the different ways through which these forums enhance their influence in global stage.