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Current Affairs:

Answer

Westernization of Eastern European Countries

Westernization of Eastern Europe was driven by the collapse of Soviet control, desire for democracy, and integration into the western political and economic system. While it brought freedom and modernization, it also posed social and cultural challenges.

1. Demographic Westernization.

(It is away from Russia towards west) Eastern Ukraine which included Crimea, Kherson, Dnubas etc all are pro Russia countries speaking Russian languages and Russian culture but western, south western and the central part of Ukraine have transformed into westernization.

2. Political Shift in Ukraine:

Ukraine would remain neutral in Russia and NATO rivalry. In 2010 president won election on the basis of the neutrality. However, in 2013 Ukraine's Prime minister signed a trade deal with EU which wasn't counter signed by the president due to which protests erupted and military took over

the country - President escaped from the situation to Russia, since then Ukraine turned into pro west.

3) Pro EU policies:

Ukraine was given observer membership of EU with free trade deal. The visa system was relaxed between Ukraine and European countries (free visa, E-visa, instant visa). Due to all these policies Ukraine applied for permanent membership to EU.

4) Increasing Relations with NATO:

Gradually, the terms with NATO abridged which resulted in application of permanent membership - Ukraine started buying weapons from US.

All this was not acceptable to Russia due to which it attacked on Ukraine.

Expansion of NATO:

NATO was formed in 1949 including 12 countries from central, western Europe and United States - Reasons for formation of NATO were on the basis of these countries which included:

- 1) Central and western European countries used to fear USSR.

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1) In 1946 after WWII, France and UK got weak and became dependant on U.S for their defense.

Now, NATO has expanded to 32 countries with 3 countries in 1949, 7 in 2004 and many in 2009 - Finland and Sweden joined in 2023 & 2024.

NATO Expansion Threat to Russia:

1) The four oblast provinces of Ukraine are neighbours with Russia, therefore, if Ukraine gets the membership, NATO would deploy on Russian border which is not acceptable to Russia.

2) Access to black sea:

Russia gets access of military and trade through Crimea (to black sea) if Ukraine becomes part of NATO then NATO would check on the access of Black Sea.

NATO's support to Ukraine:

1) Financial support:

NATO provides military and civilian aid to Ukraine - it gets almost 120 billion dollars from U.S, 100 billion Euro from EU and

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14 billion pounds by United Kingdom.

• Weapons provided:

Ukraine biggest weakness is shortage of fighters, therefore, it provides anti tank weapons, air defence systems and also NATO instructors train Ukrainian forces - NATO can't directly jump into the war as Russia would go nuclear instead they are giving indirect support.

- Technological companies:

Ukraine's resistance capacity has increased and Russia is unable to make further advancements - secondly, now Ukraine got the capacity to carry out strikes within Russia - E.g. through drone air bases were targeted resulting in loss of 15 billion.

Alaska Summit:

Trump and Putin meeting was held in Alaska for peace in Ukraine war but negotiation failed because the demands of Russia and NATO are contradictory.

Russia Demands:

Following are demand Russia has kept.

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- 1) Ukraine would adopt the policy of neutrality in Russia NATO rivalry.
- 2) Ukraine would denuclearize (return the NATO weapons) because there give capacity to carry out strikes inside Russia.
- 3) ~~Russia~~ NATO would sign an agreement that it won't expand further.

But NATO demanded:-

- 1) Russia would return the four oblasts provinces (Kherson, Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia, Luhansk)
- 2) Unconditional ceasefire by Russia - pre condition of ending war with conducive environment.
- 3) NATO must give security guarantee to Ukraine (continue giving financial & and military support).

Both the parties are opposite to each other therefore, ~~negotiations~~ failed.

Trump's stance:

Trump doesn't want to end war since day one of his presidency - and seems to have tilt towards Putin.

According to him,

- Territories captured wouldn't be returned
- Ukraine can't have NATO membership but deeper state of US (CIA, pentagon etc)
- both doesn't support Trump's stance.
- inclined with european allies.

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Moreover, European leaders oppose trump which also resulted in a foul of talks.

Possibility:

Due to this situation,

- 1) Frozen conflict may arise soon.
- 2) Russia would not like to capture more territories of Ukraine.
- 3) Russia would get nuclear to NATO and jump into the war.
- 4) Russia would keep dominating Ukraine.

Result:

War has slowed down and will further slow down but in future, the more support NATO gives to Ukraine, the more retaliation from Russia would come.

Solution:

War generally doesn't end on moral principles but on logical realism rather. Therefore, to end the war policy of neutrality should be adopted by Ukraine and in return Russia should return the oblast provinces.

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Pak-KSA Defence Act:

It is a collective defense Act between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, claiming to cover all aspects of defense between both.

Reasons of the agreement

1) Past Relations and Collaborations:

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia already have had a long informal defense collaboration and long term defense relations. Pakistan has been the protector of Hezmatullah Shariatian since 1964. Secondly, Pakistan also has counter terrorism coalition with KSA - it heads IMCTC and all its four departments.

2) Attack on Qatar:

After the attack on Qatar, from Israel and by tremors the situation was obvious that Middle East would be defended against Iran but not Israel. US was the security guarantor but played no direct role. Therefore, KSA and other MIE countries felt insecurity and needed defense partner. It couldn't trust Turkey due to history and Egypt due to limited capacity. Therefore, they had only one

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option left that was Pakistan.

Implications:-

1) Impact of US:

US wouldn't like KSA and ME countries's dependency to minimize on it. There are US military bases in the region. Also, Saudi Arabia and GCC are guarantors of Petro dollar agreement through which international trade is dollarized.

Furthermore, Trump has strong business ties in Saudi and other military countries so in future they would not attack Qatar.

This agreement will not be disclosed by Washington. It is about US and Saudi Arabia. Therefore, US will not be trying to minimize its security presence and expenditure across the world especially in Middle East. It wants to build their security capacities with the help of its allies. Then ME has only Pakistan as the option.

2) Impacts on India:

In history, Saudi has a close security relation with Pakistan and it supported Pakistan on Kashmir.

Issue. but still India succeeded in making good economic relations with Saudi. Largest Diaspora in KSA is from India and is biggest importer of oil and gas. Major shift occurred when in 2015 Pakistan refused to send its troops and Saudi soften its stance on Kashmir and become the largest investor in India.

Today, of the part is ~~as~~ potentially big and multi dimensional, economic relations may not affect but diplomatically Saudi will tilt towards Pakistan again. India, which has been attacking Pakistan and getting retaliation against it, will discourage from making such attempts in future but even if it does, Pakistan wouldn't need ~~defence~~ support from Saudi still it will condemn these attacks.

3) Impacts on Iran:

In history, Saudi and Iran remained geo political rivals, both adopted sectarian policies against each other - Saudi supported Sunni Islam while Iran supported Shia, resulting in rivalry. Pakistan struggled to maintain a balance between both the countries, it tilted more towards Saudi and ME states due to strategic realities.

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Pakistan has repeatedly received bailout packages and assistance from Saudi, UAE and Qatar but Iran due to poor economy failed to provide similar support. In 2015, Pakistan attempted to maintain neutrality in Yemen war, which displeased Saudi and GCC states, regional tension eventually led to Saudi-Iran rapprochement in 2023 brokered by China.

In 2023 Saudi approx shifted its stance by normalizing relation with Iran-Iran and its proxies (Hezbollah and Houthis) have been involved in attacks against Israel, leading to their military weakening. Despite this weakening, GCC states led by Saudi Arabia do not favor Iran's collapse, instead they prefer a functional and stable Iran.

In UNGA speech, Iran's president openly supported Pakistan and Saudi defense pact and expressed interest in forming a broader Muslim military alliance.

Conclusion:

The Iran relations up is based on mutual dependence. Saudi needs defence and military support. Pakistan needs economic assistance.

Any attack on Qatar is seen as an alarming signal for the GCC, reinforcing Saudi's need for strong defense, including with Pakistan. Pakistan needs USA to revive its economy. With all the financial support and assistance, Pakistan's economy will gradually get normal.

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Paris Climate Agreement (COP 21)

It was held in France in 2015.

It symbolized unprecedented consensus among major emitters under US leadership. However, Trump's decision in 2017 to withdraw the United States from agreement raised concerns about the future of global climate governance.

→ Erosion of global climate leadership

The U.S. historically the world's second largest emitter and a technological leader, played a central role in forging the Paris consensus - climate change mitigation relies on collective action. If one disengages, it reduces compliance incentives for others.

Trump's points:

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Populist driven US nationalism shapes
Trump's climate policies. According to
Trump:

1) climate change is a myth not a reality.
2) The rise in temperature is a natural
cycle.

3) In the past unrecorded rise in
temperature occurred but currently
is not due to more ~~from~~ emissions.
It is a Chinese ~~propaganda~~ propaganda
to hamper US economic growth.

4) Even if we agree, China and others
won't make cuts especially when
the cut increased the production cost
why should we do that alone.

Therefore, he pulled out of the
agreement - Biden ^{in 2021} rejoined
still in 25 Trump pulled out
again.

Implications:

- 1) US decarbonization process would not
only stop but recarbonize.
- 2) Due to this ban on new oil and
gas fields removed.
- 3) It allowed US companies to do
drilling around the world.
- 4) Decided to cut carbon taxes on
industries.
- 5) More increase in ~~emission~~ emission.

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2) US the world leader and every global initiatives needs US backing to get successful.

3) Cop 30 took place but us didn't participate - Although, other countries like KSA and Russia made cuts in oil and gas. Furthermore, because of us other countries also recarbonizing.

China's efforts:

China may still be the second in climate change effort.

1) China currently is the largest source of carbon emissions.

2) Furthermore, fastest grow of clean energy is in China. which seems that in 2040 China would easily meet the target of decarbonization.

3) China under Xi Jinping has decided to increase becoming global.

Europe's efforts:

1) Europe also decided decarbonization.

2) The amount of carbon gas emission would be neutralized by absorption.

3) Till Cop 26 Net Carbon target.

4) 39 states of us therefore don't follow trump rather complying with the agreement.

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GAZA Peace Plans

UNGA conference was held in Gaza New York in which world leaders participated - Trump met the leaders from Muslim countries to devise a peace plan for Gaza.

Condition of Peace Plan:

1) Israel troops will pullout from Gaza in steps:

Step 1 - 45% territory vacate by Israelis.

Step 2 - 55% vacate by Israelis

Step 3 - 15% return territory by Israelis.

But this pullout will conclude with terms like International peace troops deploy in Gaza - troops will be from Turkey, Malaysia, Iran etc but Israel rejected - It allowed troops only from Jordan, Egypt, UAE and Pakistan.

2) Hamas would ~~deweaponize~~ -
First Hamas agreed but then disarmed on disarmingly - Israel has clearly announced two state solution is not feasible, therefore Hamas will also not disarm, which shows no plan to vacate 15% area means Hamas will continue to weaponize!

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- 3) Resuming Humanitarian aid and reconstruction.
Since 2023, water, food and medicine are being weaponized. Every supply is controlled by Israel and only ^{directly} allowed. Now Israel has agreed to ^{not} resume and allowed people to go to their native areas in central and northern Gaza but more than 90% buildings are destroyed. People are living in tents. Food and water are still controlled by Israel. It is still to be decided what are contours of reconstruction and who will pay and how would they share the burden. Israel wants Gazans to move to Egypt ~~or any other country~~ but Gazans and Muslim world rejected.

Evaluation:

- Strengths:

- 1) Humanitarian Relief:- The plan's strongest feature is clearly defined ceasefire and a pathway to deliver humanitarian aid and reconstruction which is needed desperately.
- 2) International legitimacy through support:- UN security council favours and

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gives the plan political and legal backing which increases pressures on other too.

3- Multi-state Negotiations.

A coalition of countries including Muslim majority states were involved which broaden diplomatic support.

- Challenges:

1) Repeated violations:

Instead of the perception, Israel and Hamas have been violating parts of ceasefire. Continued airstrikes and raids.

2) Lack of acceptance:

Although many countries joined still lack of acceptance of all key parties especially Hamas is a big challenge.

3) Weak enforcement:-

The proposed international stabilization force remains unfunded, under resourced and result in weak enforcement of the conditions of plan resulting in violation of plan.