

Class:-12, Political Science Notes

Chapter:- 04

Alternative Centers of Power

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European Union

- After the end of the Second World War, there was a dilemma among many European leaders over the status of Europe.
- The Second World War shattered the structure on which the European states had based their relations.
- The Cold War aided the integration of Europe after 1945. The European economy was revived by the extensive financial support by USA under the 'Marshall Plan'.
- The Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) was established in 1948 to channel aid to the West European states. Another step forward in political cooperation was the establishment of the council of Europe in 1949.
- The disintegration of USSR led to the formation of European Union in 1992 which laid the foundation for a common foreign and security policy, cooperation on justice and creation of a single currency.
- The European Union has evolved over time from an economic union to an increasingly political one.
- The European Union has economic, political, diplomatic and military influence.
- Economically, the European Union is the world's biggest economy. It had a GDP of more than \$12 trillion in 2005. Its currency Euro, can pose a threat to the dominance of the US dollar.
- On the political and diplomatic ground, Britain and France, the two members of EU are permanent members of the UN Security Council.
- In the defence field, the European Union's combined armed forces are the second largest in the world.

Association of South East Asian Nations [ASEAN]

- Before and during the Second World War, the South East Asia suffered a lot from repeated colonialism i.e. both European and Japanese.
- There were problems of nation-building, ravages of poverty and economic backwardness and a pressure to align with any of the two super blocs.
- The South East Asian Countries established the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967 as an alternative to Bandung conference and the Non-Aligned Movement.
- On the ASEAN logo, the ten stalks of paddy (Rice) represent the ten South East Asian countries bound together in friendship and solidarity. The circle symbolizes the unity of ASEAN.
- There were five founding countries-Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

- **The objectives of ASEAN** were to accelerate economic growth, social progress, promote regional peace, stability and cultural development.
- The members of the association promoted ASEAN way, a form of interaction that is informal, non-confrontationist and cooperative.
- In 2003, an ASEAN community was established comprising three pillars, namely, the ASEAN security community, the ASEAN economic community and the ASEAN socio-cultural community.
- The member states promised to uphold peace, neutrality, cooperation, non-interference and respect for national differences and sovereign rights.
- The ASEAN economic community aims for a common market and to aid social and economic development in the region.
- ASEAN has a vision 2020 which has defined an outward looking role for ASEAN in the international community.

Rise of the Chinese Economy

- China has been growing as an economic power since 1978. It is projected to overtake the US as the world's largest economy by 2040. In 1949, the economy of the China was based on the Soviet model. It now relied on its own resources.
- During 1970's, China established relations with the USA ending its political and economic isolation.
- An 'Open Door Policy' was announced by Deng Xiaoping in 1978, which aimed at generating high productivity by investments in capital and technology from abroad.
- Special economic zones were set up. State had a centralised role in setting up of China's economy.
- Still the Chinese economy did not benefit everyone in China. The rate of unemployment has risen, working conditions and female employment is bad. However, regionally and globally, China has been in limelight economic power.

India-China Relations

- India and China had cordial relations since time immemorial. Both have political, economic and cultural relations.
- After India gained independence, both the countries shared a peaceful relation. During this period the slogan of 'Hindi-Chini-Bhai Bhai' was popular.
- Very soon both the countries involved in border dispute. The difference aroused from the Chinese takeover of Tibet in 1950.
- India suffered military reverses in the conflict of 1962. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were downgraded until 1976.
- It was during the visit paid by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to China in 1988 December, the relation between the two countries started improving.

'BRICS'

- The term BRICS refers to Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa respectively. BRIC was founded in 2006 in Russia.

- BRIC turned into BRICS after the inclusion of South Africa in its first meeting in the year 2009.
- The key objectives of BRICS are primarily to cooperate and distribute mutual economic benefits among its members besides non-interference in the internal policies of each nation and mutual equality.
- The 11th conference of the BRICS concluded in Brazil in 2019, chaired by Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro.

Sub-Unit: 'Russia'

- Russia has been the largest part of the former Soviet Union even before its disintegration. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in late 1980s and early 1990s, Russia emerged as the strong successor of USSR [Union of Soviet Socialist Republics].
- Russia's GDP is currently 11th in the world. Russia has reserves of minerals, natural resources and gases that make it a powerful country in the global world.
- In addition, Russia is a nuclear state with a huge stock of sophisticated weapons. Russia is also a permanent member of the UN Security Council, called P-5.

Sub-Unit: 'India'

- The 21st century India is being seen as an important emerging global power.
- The world is experiencing the power and rise of India in a multidimensional way. The economic, cultural, strategic position of the country with a population of more than 135 crores is very strong.
- From an economic perspective, targeting the goal of a \$5 trillion economy, a competitive huge market, an ancient inclusive culture with 200 million people of Indian Diaspora spreading across the globe impart distinct meaning and salience to India as a new centre of power in the 21st century.
- From a strategic perspective, the military of India is self-sufficient with indigenous nuclear technology making it another nuclear power. 'Make in India' scheme in technology and science is another milestone of Indian economy.
- All these changes are making India an important centre of power in the present world.

Sub-Unit: 'Israel'

- Shown on the world map with a pointer, Israel has emerged as one of the most powerful nations in the 21st century world in terms of science and technology, defence, intelligence besides economy. Situated in the middle of the burning politics of West Asian countries, Israel has reached to the new heights of global political standing by virtue of its indomitable defence prowess, technological innovations, industrialization and agricultural development.
- Sustaining against adversity is the principle with which a small Jewish-Zionist nation, i.e., Israel is placed in the contemporary global politics in general and the Arab-dominated West Asian politics in particular.

WORDS THAT MATTER

European Union: A group of European Capitalist countries established in 1992 founded for common goals of foreign and security policy, cooperation and home affairs.

OEEC: Organization for European Economic Cooperation established in 1948 to channel aid to West European states to cooperate on trade and economic issues.

Marshall Plan: It was introduced by America to provide financial help for revival of European economy.

ASEAN: Association of South East Asian Nations to accelerate economic growth through social progress and cultural development.

ASEAN WAY: An interaction that is informal, non-confrontationists and cooperative to promote supranational structures.

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF): An organisation established in 1994 to promote coordination of security and foreign policy.

Special Economic Zones (SEZs): Foreign investors could set up their own enterprises in these zones.

Open Door Policy: To invite investment of capital and technology from abroad.

Three Pillars of ASEAN Community: ASEAN Security Community, ASEAN Economic Community, ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community.