

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q3(a)

Critically examine the rise of People's Republic of China (PRC) as a great power and its implications on Asian Political order

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2022 · PSIR GS 2 · 20 marks · Changing International Political Order

Changing International Political Order: Rise of super powers; strategic and ideological Bipolarity, arms race and Cold War; Nuclear threat; Non-aligned movement; Collapse of the Soviet Union; Unipolarity and American hegemony; relevance of non-alignment in the contemporary world.

Core demand of the question

- Critically examine the rise of People's Republic of China (PRC) as a great power and its implications on Asian Political order
- Write at 20-mark length

Revision summary

China's rise is economic, military, and institutional, from BRI and AIIB to the **SCO**.

Waltzian capability and Mearsheimer's warning both fit the regional reaction.

The South China Sea, Taiwan, and the Himalaya are the sharp edges of the new order.

- **Neighbours hedge:** trade with China, security with the United States, Japan, and the **Quad**. Ageing, technology denial, and a still-plural Asia block a simple Chinese hegemony.

Introduction

The People's Republic of China has moved from a revolutionary outsider to a great power in wealth, arms, and diplomacy. Asia's political order is being recast around that rise. The change is not a completed Chinese hegemony.

Body

The rise

- Reform after 1978 produced decades of growth, a manufacturing core, and a claim to the world's second-largest economy.
- Military modernisation, a blue-water navy, and nuclear and missile forces support great-power status in Waltz's capability sense.
- The **Belt and Road** Initiative, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and a larger IMF and UN voice show order-shaping, not only catching up.
- The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, partnership with Russia, and a claim to Taiwan as a core interest mark a security posture beyond Deng's hiding of strength.

Implications for Asian order

- **East Asia:** the United States alliance net (Japan, South Korea, Australia) has tightened. The **Quad** and AUKUS are balancing replies in Mearsheimer's offensive-realist reading of a rising China.

- **South China Sea:** island building and nine-dash claims collide with UNCLOS and with ASEAN claimants. Hierarchy threatens the older ASEAN-centred diplomatic process.
- **South Asia:** the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and Himalayan border crises, including 2020 in eastern Ladakh, pull India toward the Indo-Pacific and away from a purely continental freeze.
- Central Asia and the **SCO** give Beijing a continental club that is not NATO and not a US-led order.
- **Economic order:** trade dependence on China sits beside security fear, a classic interdependence trap that Keohane and Nye described in other regions.

Critical limits

- Demographic ageing, debt, and technology controls from the United States qualify linear rise.
- **Asian order is still multipolar at the second tier:** India, Japan, ASEAN, and Russia are not satellites.
- A Chinese-led hierarchy would need consent that many neighbours refuse. The result is a contested dual order: economic gravity toward China, security insurance toward the United States and minilateral groups.

Flow diagram

PRC great-power rise great-power rise -> BRI AIIB trade
 PRC great-power rise -> Navy missiles SCO
 BRI AIIB trade -> Asian dual order
 Navy missiles SCO -> Asian dual order
 Quad US alliances -> Asian dual order

Conclusion

The PRC is a great power by capability and by institutional reach. Asian political order has become a dual structure of Chinese economic weight and counter-coalitions such as the **Quad**. The implication is rivalry and hedging, not a settled Beijing Concert.

Facts & figures

Belt and Road

PRC infrastructure and finance network across Asia and beyond, a tool of connectivity and influence.

SCO

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, a China-centred Eurasian security and political club with Russia and Central Asia, later India and Pakistan.

Quad

Australia, India, Japan, and the United States as a maritime balancing consultative set, not a NATO treaty.

UNCLOS / South China Sea

Coastal claims and the 2016 arbitral award that Beijing rejected, a legal-political flashpoint of the Asian order.

WRAP Exams · Write. Read. Analyse. Practice. · <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/psir-gs-2/2022/critically-examine-the-rise-of-peoples-republic-of-china-prc-as-a-great-power-and-its-implications-on-asian-political-order/> · ask@wrapexams.com · wrapexams.com

WRAP Exams