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Q8(c)

Discuss India's vision of a New World order in the 21st century

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2022 · PSIR GS 2 · 15 marks · Recent developments in Indian Foreign policy

Recent developments in Indian Foreign policy: India's position on the recent crisis in Afghanistan, Iraq and West Asia, growing relations with US and Israel; vision of a new world order.

Core demand of the question

- Discuss India's vision of a New World order in the 21st century
- Write at 15-mark length

Revision summary

India wants a multipolar order with a reformed Security Council.

Multi-alignment replaces single-camp Cold War maps.

The Indo-Pacific and the **Quad** sit beside BRICS and NAM memory.

NIEO justice claims return as WTO, climate, and digital rules.

The vision mixes realist balancing of China with institutional rule-shaping.

Introduction

India's 21st-century vision is a multipolar, reformed multilateral order in which the Global South has voice and India has a seat at the high table. It is not a call to smash the UN. It is a call to update 1945.

Body**What the vision contains**

- Reformed UN Security Council, with India as a permanent member, as the political centrepiece.
- **Strategic autonomy and multi-alignment:** work with the **Quad** and with BRICS, with the US and with Russia, without a NATO treaty.
- **Rules that are not only Western, yet not a Chinese hierarchy:** a free and open Indo-Pacific plus Panchsheel language of coexistence.
- **Economic order:** WTO reform, climate justice, digital public infrastructure as a Southern offering, and NIEO-like policy space inside globalisation.
- Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and yoga-era public diplomacy as the cultural dressing of the same claim, which Nye would call soft power.

How it differs from 1974 and from NAM purity

- India now wants to shape rules as a rising power, not only to denounce them as a have-not.
- It accepts globalisation's markets while demanding fairer fisheries, food, and finance outcomes.

- It treats China as a rival to be balanced, which 1950s coexistence did not have to do in the same way.

Realist and institutional mix

- Waltz and Mearsheimer explain the China-balancing half.
- Keohane's institutions explain why India still invests in the UN, G20, and WTO rather than in pure self-help.
- The vision therefore is a concert of several poles, not unipolarity and not a revolutionary anti-system.

Flow diagram

Indian vision -> Multipolarity autonomy

Indian vision -> UNSC reform G20

Indian vision -> Indo-Pacific Quad

Indian vision -> Global South NIEO spirit

Conclusion

India's 21st-century new world order is multipolar, UN-reformed, economically more equal, and Indo-Pacific in geography. Autonomy is the method. A permanent Council seat and Global South voice are the tests of whether the vision is succeeding.

Facts & figures

Reformed multilateralism

Indian official phrase for updating the UN and other 1945 bodies to present power and population.

G20

Premier economic forum India used, including in 2023, to seat Global South concerns.

Quad

Indo-Pacific consultative set that India treats as compatible with autonomy, not as NATO.

NIEO 1974

Older Southern demand whose spirit India still cites on voice and fairness inside globalisation.