Q3(c)

Global South-sensitive model of globalization would prevent the danger emanating from overcentralized globalization. Discuss

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2025 · PSIR GS 2 · 15 marks · India and the Global South

India and the Global South: Relations with Africa and Latin America; leadership role in the demand for NIEO and WTO negotiations.

Core demand of the question

- Define overcentralised globalisation (Washington Consensus, dollar, Northern rule-making)
- Define a Global South-sensitive model (voice, S&DT, climate finance, digital and food policy space)
- **Show how the latter reduces danger:** inequality, backlash, fragmentation
- Use G20, BRICS, WTO and India's Voice of Global South as illustrations

Revision summary

Overcentralised globalisation concentrates rules, capital and the dollar in Northern centres and exports risk south.

A Global South-sensitive model shares voice, WTO policy space, climate finance and digital/food buffers.

G20, Voice of Global South, AU membership of G20 and BRICS are incomplete pluralising moves.

Trump tariffs show the core can revolt against its own system; Southern grievance is not the only crack.

The aim is embedded liberalism with a wider membership, not autarky.

Introduction

Overcentralised globalisation is a system in which rules, capital and reserve-currency privilege sit in a few Northern centres, while risk is exported south. A **Global South-sensitive** model would keep openness but spread **voice, policy space and buffers**. The claim of the question is preventive: without that shift, globalisation dies of its own political reaction - tariffs, WHO walkouts, and democratic backsliding fuelled by left-behind regions.

Body

The danger of overcentralisation

John Williamson's Washington Consensus, IMF conditionality, and TRIPS-era intellectual property produced growth for some and crises for others (**Stiglitz**, UNCTAD). Dollar dominance means U.S. interest-rate turns become emerging-market shocks. Standard-setting in tech, green tariffs (**CBAM**), and health rules can look like regulation without representation. COVID vaccine hoarding was overcentralisation in a moral key. **Trump's**

2025 reciprocal tariffs are the core's own revolt against the system it wrote - proof that the danger is not only Southern grievance.

What 'sensitive' would mean

It would mean **special and differential treatment** at the WTO that is real, not rhetorical; a repaired dispute system that the strong cannot ignore; climate finance and technology transfer that match Paris promises; reform of IMF quotas; and digital public infrastructure that is not only Silicon Valley's. **G20** under India's 2023 presidency, the **Voice of Global South** summits, **African Union** in the G20, and **BRICS** expansion are incomplete attempts to pluralise the table. **UNCTAD**, South-South trade, and regional value chains (ASEAN, African Continental FTA) are the economic geography.

Sensitivity is not autarky. It is **embedded liberalism** with more than North Atlantic members. Food public stockholding, energy transition pathways, and data localisation debates are where India actually fights. A model that tells Lagos and Lucknow to wait for trickle-down will feed both Southern populists and Northern protectionists.

Prevention, not poetry

- **Overcentralised globalisation produces the** twin **of Q2(a):** elite-driven openness without domestic buffers, then nationalist backlash. A Southern-sensitive order would still have conflict - China is not a charity - but it would reduce the sense that multilateralism is a club. WHO reimagining, WTO salvage, and India-EU talks after tariff threats are all tests of whether rules can be recentred without a 1930s smash. The alternative is blocs, weaponised interdependence (**Farrell and Newman**), and a smaller world.

Flow diagram

Overcentralised globalisation -> Dollar rules TRIPS

Overcentralised globalisation -> Backlash and tariffs

Global South-sensitive -> Voice finance Sustainable openness&DT

Voice finance Sustainable openness&DT -> Sustainable openness

Conclusion

A Global South-sensitive globalisation keeps trade and science but shares rule-making, finance and policy space. That is the practical answer to overcentralisation. Without it, openness collapses into tariffs and clubs.

Facts & figures

Washington Consensus

John Williamson's 1989 list of fiscal and market reforms that became shorthand for IMF-Treasury orthodoxy.

Voice of Global South

Indian-hosted virtual summits (from 2023) to feed Southern priorities into G20 and UN debates.

AU in G20

African Union joined the G20 as a member during India's presidency era - a symbol of table-widening.