

## **Rising Powers like China and India are they influencing Global Governance?**

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### **1. Abstract**

The foundation of United Nations after the World War II was an initial step towards global governance and subsequently, with the establishment of institutions like World Health Organisation (WHO), International Court of Justice (ICJ), IMF (International Monetary Fund) and World Bank, the member states of United Nations were provided platforms where the issues like health, peace, justice, conflicts between nations, matters of trade and commerce international security could be discussed. Global Governance as a term was coined in the 1990s. It was considered necessary to have a concept involving structures not only of the UN but also of the non-state actors that could provide platforms to discuss international affairs and issues that no individual nation could resolve. The spread of globalisation; growing interdependency of nations; expansion of trade; rise in transnational and multi-national companies; growing concerns toward climate, human rights and animal rights and the rising importance of NGOs were the main drivers to push forward the concept of global governance.

The Western world has highly influenced almost all global governance structures, primarily the USA in confirming their proposals and thus to their benefits but a huge disadvantage to the third world nations. Like China, India, Brazil, and others, the rising nations started clamouring for their positive inclusion in global governance institutions rather than be at the fringes of the decision-making process. Further, the formation of inter-governmental and regional groupings and the economic meltdown of 2008, wherein China and India came out as winners. They showed their rising economies, set up the stage for these nations. Their voices could not be tamed anymore.

This essay will examine the issues such as the concept of global governance, its structures and initial dominance by the western world; how has the equation started changing after the economic meltdown of 2008? How have the Rising Nations, China and India in specific, started gaining prominence in global governance? To what an extent, their influence is in global governance and the future likely to be in this aspect.

## 2. Introduction

Global governance is a key term that originated in the 1990s primarily to bring about international reforms as also evolve a system to bring all nations on a common platform for discussion on issues of transnational and international importance and to resolve the matters causing conflicting interests amongst nations. Since then, global governance has become an often quoted and an established term of Social Sciences in general and International Affairs in particular, and today it does include not only States within its ambit but also other important players such as private businesses, transnational companies, non-state actors, regional and international organizations and even public figures who promote values like human rights, climate restoration and sustainable development among many others.

In today's dynamic and ever-changing geopolitical, economic and social milieu, the rising powers are eager to influence and transform the model of global governance. They ask for a more considerable say in the world forums rather than the lip service; demand to create new multilateral institutions and insist on level playing fields in trade and commerce. The Global South nations have become important in the political and economic world. Amongst them, China and India have greatly influenced the regional and international order after the global economic crisis of 2008. Since then, there has been a steady increase in India's soft and hard power, more so of soft power, whereas we witness the accelerated growth in both soft and hard powers of China. Both the nations have taken several initiatives at regional and global levels that can stir the international leanings, political environment and economic balance.

This essay will incisively deal with the questions - Whether China & India have influenced global governance, if yes, to what an extent? How are they influencing global governance? What is the critical relationship between these rising powers and global governance? How are the factors like domestic politics, rising economies, and international pressures determining both the countries' future in influencing global governance? And lastly, in the Covid 19 pandemic scenario, how will it affect both the countries in consolidating their positions or otherwise. The answers to these questions require an analytical look of the events, geopolitical, economic and social in nature, in last two decades; also important is to be seen is the political and economic landscape that would emerge post-Covid 19 pandemic.

**Key Words** - Global Governance, Rising Powers, China, India, Covid19 Pandemic.

## 2. Global Governance & Changing Patterns

Global governance's present structure emerged from a particular mix of power, interests, and ideology in the post-Second World War era (Ruggie 2004; Ikenberry 2005). On the one hand, power was instrumental in creating new norms and rules, on the other, norms and rules were critical for the balance of power to remain concentrated in the hands of the great powers (Mearshiemer 1994: 13). During the 1990s, many world politics students began to use the concept of "Global Governance". (Hewson, Martin; Sinclair, Timothy J., Approaches to Global Governance Theory). End of the cold war and the emergence of globalisation were the essential triggers to accepting the concept of Global Governance.

After the end of the cold war and in the era of ever-increasing global interdependence, we have seen the world shifting away from bipolar to unipolar world wherein USA was dominating the international affairs. However, that state could not remain for very long, and the world gradually started shifting to a multipolar and multilateral world.

By the end of the century, the unipolar structure paved the way for a multipolar global order (Kahler 2013). This evoked several queries from the developing nations to the international governing bodies about their Westphalian and Bretton Woods structures which suited the interests of and were beneficial to the Western world to include the USA and developed Europe countries. The developing and underdeveloped nations were treated as outsiders to be at the periphery of decision-making processes. They were never privy to, and part of the inner circle of elite and developed nations, the so-called core nations and felt themselves at the fringes of global governance. For the first time, in 2007-08 economic meltdown, the international financial crisis threatened the then prevailing global governance system as rising economies like China and India overcame and alleviated the recession and enabled many developing countries to prevail over it.

U.S. secretary of state Henry Kissinger said, “The [global] order established and proclaimed by the West stands at a turning point” (Deepak, 2016). It was only after the 2008 global financial crisis, and there was a shift in the international order. With the monopoly of USA and E.U. diluting in influencing economic and political world affairs, the diffusion of authority contributed to a crisis in the credibility and efficacy of the global governance structures with developing countries seeking greater access and voice in prominent international organisations. Subsequently, the attention shifted to the Global South Countries - China and India in Asia, Brazil in South America, Nigeria and South Africa, which started to challenge the Eurocentric and Westphalian international order (Andrew Hurrell, 2016).

The wartime United Nations may have represented the “pinnacle” of global governance till a few years back (Plesch and Weiss 2015). However, in today’s world, global governance is not only determined by International Organisations within the ambit of U.N., like International Court of Justice (ICJ), World Health Organisation (WHO) and UNICEF but also to a great measure influenced by autonomous international bodies viz International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, World Trade Organisation (WTO), as also to a certain extent by non-state actors like International NGOs, MNCs, Multilateral institutions and terrorists.

For over a decade, the grouping of countries like BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China & South Africa), ASEAN (Association of South-East Countries) as also nations like Mexico, Taiwan and South Korea. have been clamouring for more participation in economic and political affairs and a seat at the table of decision making. Globalisation, increasing interdependence among countries, regional groupings and integrations and in few cases, the rising economies and military might encourage the nations into raising their voices for more participation and involvement in the world affairs, that is, in the global governance. China and India, mainly, started impacting global affairs prominently because of the magnitude of trade and commerce, resulting in larger pies in world economics and regional and global initiatives undertaken by them.

#### 4. **Rising Powers & Global Governance**

As per Jamie Gaskarth in his book *Rising Powers, Global Governance and Global Ethics*, last decade has seen major discussions on two terms, Global Governance & Rising Powers in the realm of international relations. Global Governance is indelibly linked to globalisation: the freer movement of goods, services, people and information globally. This process has reduced the salience of borders, challenged the primacy of national governments and highlighted the existence of transnational problems that are beyond the capacity of individual states to resolve. We have entered a post-sovereign world in which the management and outcomes of the political problem are shared by state and non-state, public and private actors.

Certain states are rising in world politics challenging the structures of the international system and the normative foundation of international society. These states are referred to as Rising or Emerging Powers. Rising Power as a term is neither carved in stone nor uncontroversial. The term refers to countries where political elites may rely on economic and other power sources to exert leverage both within and outside their immediate communities and play a significant role in pushing for reform proposals in global governance. Intergovernmental groupings such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China & South Africa), BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India & China), IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa) are potential challengers to the previous groupings such as G7 and UN Security Council. A host of other nations including Indonesia, Mexico, Chile, Argentina, South Korea, Turkey, the Philippines, Thailand and Nigeria, are also emerging as aspirants. As aptly put by Andrew Cooper that, “No one acronym has the field to itself” (Cooper, 2010).

In particular, China & India due to their economic rise are certainly the force to reckon with and now cannot be whisked away. These rising powers also demonstrated their ability to promote or veto global negotiations in issues from trade to climate change (Miles Kahler, 2013). Over almost the last decade, these rising powers have shaped the architecture of global governance to a certain extent.

The conceptual change contributed to systemic changes to the frameworks of global governance. The G20 demonstrated that industrialized and developing countries could sit together at the high table. At the same time, the creation of numerous new structures such as BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB), the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the Silk Road Project, etc. suggested that emerging markets were willing to reshape or modify existing international order by making it more multilateral.

The rising powers will like to transform the global governance institutions to structures more amenable to them. Being founding members of many of the reform mechanisms, both India and China are playing a leading role and building bridges between the developed and developing countries, while adding a multitude of wealth to the global economy (Deepak. 2016). In particular, China's role is crucial, as the country contributes over 30 per cent to the G20's overall economic output. Important to note that emerging economies are contributing around 50 per cent of the world's GDP growth.

Many claims that emerging economies have undermined the post-World War II system by creating their institutions such as the NDB and AIIB, with China taking a leading role. Nevertheless, the truth remains that such organisations' existence is a result of the shortcomings of the Bretton Woods regime, which has been on the unstable ground following the financial crash of 2008-09 as well as the Euro crisis. The rise of emerging outlets is a warning that if organisations like the IMF, the World Bank, and the Asian

Development Bank (ADB) decide to bind strings on development supports and loans, alternate organisations would be in high demand. These institutions (AIIB, ADB) would facilitate infrastructural and social and economic growth and may be treated as complementary to the existing structures.

## 5. **India: Its Influence on Global Governance**

India was one of the most enthusiastic players when the edifice of global governance was laid in the post-World War II period (Bhagavan 2013). For most of the Cold War period, India practised what can be called the “universalism of the weak” evident in its stand on the Korean crisis, the Non-Proliferation Treaty and New International Economic Order to name a few (Mohan 2010). India participated in crucial international negotiations to build the post-war international order; however, its lack of economic and military weight to shape global processes was somewhat compensated by its moral leadership of the then newly decolonized world. It remained non-aligned to the two major power blocks globally despite showing keen interest in global governance apparatuses.

As a result, India was primarily confined to be a rule-taker than rule-maker in global governance (Sidhu et al. 2013, p. 6). In the last quarter of a century, India has slowly but surely embraced the liberal global order much more emphatically than ever in its history (Mukherji 2014). At the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Indian Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar said, “India looks to transform itself from a balancing power to a leading power (Jaishankar, 2015). India now wants to pro-actively shape global outcomes as there are now growing demands on India to make more contributions to maintaining the global order. Accommodation rather than revolutionary change is its objective (Press Trust of India 2016).

On the one hand, India has gained from the liberal structure of global governance. It has also voiced its concerns that the current structures of global governance are not representative enough. They have helped her rise, but as she rises in the system, she also finds some of them out of sync with the changing shifts in the global balance of power. India has been displaying its keenness to be seen as a contributor rather than be on fringes as quotes Pant, “for the liberal order to sustain, India may have to now offer its leadership rather than mere participation (Pant 2017).

**5.1 India’s Strengths.** India has increasingly become a mainstream participant from being at the periphery, a process which began with the landmark US-India civil nuclear cooperation pact. Today India’s voices are heard in global platforms due to several positive vibes viz in matters of global trade being second largest growing economy; its stance over the climate policy over the years through the prism of its broader foreign policy; an increase of its footprint in Indo-pacific region; its contribution to maritime governance in Indian Ocean region; its armed forces are now actively engaged globally in defence diplomacy; its humanitarianism and altruism reflected in its contributions to UN peacekeeping operations being one of the largest in the world; there has been a shift in its foreign policy from ‘looking east’ to ‘acting east’; it is expanding its influence beyond South Asia, and its bid for a seat in United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and to become a full member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) since long. These all are indicative of emerging strengths of India and its resultant say in global affairs. India will have to “re-define its national interest more broadly and take up a similar coalition-building role in global trade governance that it has begun to espouse in other international fora.”

**5.2 Its Challenges.** There are inherent and internal limitations to the present capabilities and capacities of India and external challenges that are roadblocks for it to be given a status of a potential game-changer at global affairs without being sceptical about it. Despite its economic strides, poverty remains a significant challenge. The growth trajectory has not penetrated the substantial proportion of its population that is still poor. It is still surrounded by hostile neighbours and fighting terrorism almost on a daily basis; hence the full weight of armed forces is tasked to be combat-ready to the traditional threats posed on its land frontiers by its neighbours and to the asymmetrical war with militants and terrorists. Therefore, it lacks in projecting its military power at distant locations. Moreover, it also lacks the appropriate institutional and bureaucratic apparatus to further its influence across its immediate frontiers.

**5.3 Way Forward** Along with India's strengths as its soft power, economic and military weight, being world's largest democracy and acknowledged for its non-imperialistic intentions, challenges come in the form of hostile neighbours, widespread poverty and lack of national will to be a global player. India has to assert itself in a more visible manner at regional and global levels exploiting its strengths and minimising its vulnerabilities. In the global nuclear order, environmental and climate debates and at the United Nations, India now views itself standing firm on its stance while in areas such a democracy promotion, global trade and tariffs, its approach remains a cautious one as it is actively seeking to manage its differences with the established powers. More ambitiously, India is also trying to build new structures in regional governance and engagement with other emerging powers in platforms such as the BRICS, IBSA. In many ways, a rising India's engagement in global governance has only just begun, and it will be sometime before its full consequences are revealed. Whatever shape it may take, India's future in global governance is likely to be significantly different from its past.

## **6. China: Its Influence on Global Governance**

The direction that China and Western-Chinese relations take may well define the world's strategic future for years to come (Bergsten, Gill, Lardy, & Mitchell, 2006, p. 1). At the beginning of the 21st century, China was making progress in almost all the spheres of economic growth and development. However, the western world arrogantly denied any importance to the rise of China. It was not considered a significant global player that could seriously challenge Western-dominated global governance architecture.

China kept growing its economic and military might over the years as witnessed by its overwhelming manufacturing sector with footprints of its products almost in all the nations across the continents; modernisation of its armed forces coupled with exploration in outer space, and its aspirations to be the world leader has led to its rapid ascent from regional to the global player. China has been the world's fastest-growing major economy, with growth rates averaging 10% over the past 30 years. By the end of 2017, its economy was the second largest in the world by nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Of late, it has started seeking to play a larger part in extant organisations, but it has also begun to sponsor its own multilateral

initiatives. The creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is the most important manifestation of this initiative.

**6.1 China's Strengths** China's multilateral approach to established global governance structures is likely to be accepted by the international community. By building new multilateral institutions, such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the New Development Bank (NDB) (Carey, Lachlan; Ladislaw, Sarah, 2019), it has shown its strong financial muscle and the expanding political clout. It is also taking an active part in international forums involving various Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) and International Non-governmental Organizations (INGOs) (Chan, Lai-Ha; K. Lee, Pak and Gerald, 2008). China's presence in international multilateral organizations has been providing developing countries with a better chance to maintain a balance of power.

China's role in the G20 and the success of the Chinese G20 presidency in 2016 show that China is moving quickly to a central position in global governance. For the last decade and a half, China has taken a prominent role in investing in and developing infrastructure projects across the continents. Its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a global development strategy adopted by the Chinese government in 2013 involving infrastructure development and investments in nearly 70 countries and international organizations in Asia, Europe, and Africa.

**6.2 Its Challenges** China lacks the knowledge of global governance and functionalities in multilateral institutions being a relatively new entrant in these fields. Though it has the aspirations of leading international cooperation, it lacks the knowledge and the trust of several countries who are sceptical of China's intentions of the common good. The ambitious BRI project aimed to achieve its aim by 2049 is not matched by the requisite governance infrastructure or institutions to support it (Carey, Lachlan; Ladislaw, Sarah, 2019). China has the economic advantage but lacks cutting edge technologies, advanced military weaponry, the goodwill of nations and is on a learning curve to understand approaches to international cooperation, the nuances of global governance, and multilateralism.

**6.3 Way Forward** At present, the global governance system is at a crucial juncture and going through transformations and reforms. To facilitate China to be a transformational leader of the global south and a bridge between the third world and developed countries, it has to gain the confidence of western world and trust of developing world, for which, it needs to keep positively promoting the reforms of international organizations to adapt to the changes in the international situation; lead world development being the economic powerhouse; achieve sustainable development goals; deepen South-South cooperation, promote the BRI and participate in international affairs more proactively. A great hurdle now envisaged is the ongoing spread of Covid19 that emanated from Wuhan and dispelling the allegations raised by developed and other nations about hiding this menace and thus jeopardizing the whole world with a pandemic that is looming large on everyone's mind, would be an uphill task.

## **7. India & China: Parallel Assessment**

China's influence on structures of global governance is likely to create immense problems for India's rise because if the US hegemony is replaced by a Sino-centric world order, the future of global governance may look drastically different from where it stands as of today. The US approach to global

governance at times appeared benevolent for India, the same cannot be said for China. Rising powers like India cannot be simply competitors or global governance stakeholders; they must also participate and contribute in the international systems. The credibility of their rising influence resides in the recommendation, creation and adoption of modern global governance systems. India's global ambitions can only be realized once it shows leadership in its own backyard (Dash 2012).

**7.1 For India,** the major challenge remains is of its poverty, lack of infrastructure, poorly developed education sector and lack of strong collective national will to be a global player. The first three limitations can be overcome if the state can tackle Agenda 2030 of UN and achieve its 17 Sustainable Development Goals as mandated.

**7.2 For China,** the major challenge will be first to clear all the allegations pertaining to origin and spread of Novel Corona virus and win back the confidence of the countries. It has to come to the grips of nuances of running multilateral institutions, honour the several multilateral assignments signed and underway, be a liberal nation and allow world media to look inside it, be cautious and responsible over human rights aspect and develop suitable diplomacy for South-South cooperation and make Western world believe that it will be a win-win situation for all in mutually accepting the transformation and reforms required in global governance structures and art of global governance per se.

## **8. Concluding Remarks**

International bodies, USA and EU are unable to accept the shift in power balance. Not only are rising nations clamouring for a larger position but they also seek to restructure certain traditions, laws and systems. Given their deepening integration into the international economy, they could become "responsible stakeholders," (Miles Khaler, 2013). Both India and China need to deepen and broaden the roles they are playing in global governance mechanisms. The economic and political clout they will exert in these mechanisms hinges upon their respective domestic drivers. Therefore, the greatest contribution they can make to the present global governance structures is to maintain robust domestic growth and regional peace and stability (Deepak, 2016).

In order to push the transformation of the global governance structure, both India and China need to become partners in each other development. There have been positive changes in the bilateral security as well as business environments; however, given the potential of both there is still huge scope for cooperation (Deepak, 2016). In order to tap this potential, both need to innovate developmental plans, policies, and initiate structural reforms.

In essence, global governance is essential but fragmented, complex and disjointed as of now. It is still very difficult to predict the turn the global governance structures will take in post Covid 19 scenario as the economies of all the countries are going to take a huge jolt, there is likelihood of another great recession to the magnitude of 1933-37. Each country would be fighting its battle to stabilize situation, stall spread of Corona Virus, find ways to kick start the manufacturing and services sector and government institutions, win over the confidence of its people and several other mammoth problems associated with unemployment, health and various other sectors such as travel, tourism, entertainment, hospitality, manufacturing etc require to be dealt with emergency. China is going to face an uphill task to win over the confidence of nations and the world organisations as it was the source of spread of pandemic and its approach to hide the menace for initial few months before it became pandemic has been seen by most of the nations and international bodies as a precursor to its suspicious global intentions and designs.

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