

India's G20 Presidency: Leading the Charge Towards a Multi-Polar World and a Viksit

Bharat

Sujith R, Research Scholar

Department of Political Science, Sikkim University

Email: sujithrajagopal95@gmail.com

Abstract

The 18th G-20 summit in New Delhi concluded on September 8th and 9th, 2023, with India hosting the presidency for the first time. The timing of India's presidency is crucial given the ongoing tensions around various global challenges. The 21st century has seen significant transformations in power dynamics and global order, leading to a multipolar world order. The Russia-Ukraine conflict and the Israel-Hamas conflict have further exacerbated the division between the West and East. The year of 2024 also witnessed the return of Trump administration in United States. The North-South divide has already separated the globe, and neo-colonialism continues to permeate developing and underdeveloped worlds. Great Power politics has also reached new heights, with the strengthening of Russia-Chinese relations, NATO's expansion, and China's potential as a rival to the US contributing to this. India's G-20 presidency has become significant in the emergence of a new multipolar world order and the rising great power rivalry. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of 'Viksit Bharth' by 2047 is rooted in all-round, all-pervasive, and all-inclusive development. This historic presidency has allowed India to showcase its global diplomacy and establish itself as the voice of the global south. This paper analyses India's G20 presidency in the context of the emerging multipolar global order and Great Power Politics, specifically with India's ambition for growth by 2047.

Keywords: Great Power Politics, G20 Presidency, Multi-polar World Order, Viksit Bharath

Introduction

India had its Semi sesquicentennial in 2022. In the last 75 years India had gone through number of ups and downs. In the post second world war period corresponded with a proliferation of decolonisation in Asia, Africa, and South America as nations sought to liberate themselves from colonial subjugation. The development of foreign policy for these newly independent countries was notably difficult due to the continuing Cold War background. Nonetheless, India received backing from other newly established states upon the

inception of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1955. During the Cold War, India's foreign policy was predominantly based on non-alignment ideals. In 1983, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi led India in hosting the NAM conference in New Delhi, therefore reaffirming its steadfast commitment to non-alignment (Kumar, 2010). In 2023, New Delhi hosted the 18th G-20 conference, where India notably welcomed the African Union (AU) as the group's 21st member.

Over the course of the 20th and 21st centuries, India has exerted a great amount of impact on the way in which the global South is represented inside the established global institution (Aulakh & Prasad, 2023). India's standing in the international arena has seen considerable modifications throughout the course of the previous seventy-five years, which coincides with large upheavals in the order of things between countries around the world. The assumption of the presidency of the G-20 is a momentous occasion for India, as it provides the country with the opportunity to demonstrate its might, potential, and relevance in the realm of global affairs. As a result of the disintegration of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, the global geopolitical landscape went through a substantial upheaval, which ultimately resulted in the establishment of a multipolar world order in the 21st century (Peters, 2022). This transition has been brought about by a number of factors, including the fast rise of China, the downturn of the economy in the United States, the rise of developing economies, differences between East and West as well as North and South, and the growing importance of multilateral organisations such as the BRICS, SCO, and AU. The current multilateral global system has procedures that are designed to maintain the existing power equilibrium and discourage any one player from achieving hegemonic domination. The offensive realistic theory articulated by Mearsheimer draws attention to the rivalry that exists between nation-states for a preeminent position in the international system (Mearsheimer, 2001). Nevertheless, there is an ongoing power struggle between the Western and Eastern powers to secure a hegemonic position in the global political domain (Sujith, 2023).

India's rise as a global power is rooted in its burgeoning economy, growing geopolitical influence, and technological advancements. The United States of America and Iran are two of the nations that India has drawn, which has enabled it to pursue a multi-alignment strategy. India is a non-Western, developing postcolonial country with the biggest population in the world. In the context of global governance frameworks, India provides assistance to emerging countries by concentrating on the development of financial systems, the enhancement of trade

and investment flows, and the promotion of inclusive economic growth. It places an emphasis on the significance of multilateralism and collaboration, with a particular emphasis on emerging economies through the formation of informal alliances that are mutually beneficial (Peters, 2022).

The Historic G 20 Presidency of India

The historic G-20 Presidency of Indian in 2023 was an important milestone because it represented the country's assumption of leadership of the organisation, which is comprised of representatives from both industrialised nations in the North and emerging economies in the South. The G-20 was created in 1999 as a response to the Asian financial crisis. Since its inception, the G-20 has become increasingly significant, with its members now accounting for 80 percent of the world's population and 85 percent of the global GDP. The dynamic approach that India takes to addressing urgent global concerns is one of the defining characteristics of its presidency, which demonstrates the country's diplomatic dexterity and strategic leadership. The promotion of economic resilience and innovation, the promotion of digitalisation, sustainable investment, and resilient financial institutions were among the themes that India prioritised during its presidency of the G20 (Kakoti & Sing, 2023). These were all intended to strengthen the global economy against future shocks. In addition to this, it took preventative measures to combat climate change and to promote sustainable development. It placed an emphasis on partnerships that were centered on clean energy, environmental conservation, and climate resilience (Dhar, 2023).

Additionally, the presidency of India highlighted its outreach to developing nations and rising markets. The 18th presidency's decision to include the African Union expanded the diversity of the forum, which was another reason why India's presidency was so successful. With the African Union (AU) becoming the 21st entity in the G20, India's goal was to strengthen collaboration between South-South countries and to elevate the voice of the global South. The impact that India has had on international politics can be attributed, in large part, to the country's role as a democracy in the 'Third World' as well as its influence on cultures and civilisations around the world. The presidency of the G20 presented an excellent opportunity to promote ideals and conceptual understanding of equality and sustainable development, which are strongly ingrained in the culture and historical experience of the group.

During its G20 presidency, India prioritized economic resilience and innovation, promoting digitalization, sustainable investment, and robust financial systems. It also addressed climate change and sustainable development, emphasizing partnerships on clean energy, environmental conservation, and climate resilience. India's presidency also emphasized outreach to emerging markets and developing nations, including the African Union, expanding the forum's diversity and enhancing South-South cooperation. This commitment to a more inclusive and equitable world order was emphasized during the G20 meeting. During the time that it held the presidency, India was a strong advocate for the interests of developing countries and emphasised the significance of an inclusive approach to the decision-making process on a global scale. In contrast to China's aggressive behaviour, India continued its diplomatic overdrive to strengthen its ties with major global players such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Japan, France, and the European Union. This allowed India to present itself as a credible force for peace and stability during this time (Peters, 2022).

India and Emerging Multipolar World Order

In 2022, after having achieved independence for seventy-five years, India has undergone substantial changes in both its position in the global order and its global status. After centuries of struggle for liberation, the nation attained its independence in 1947. In 1955, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was established in order to provide support for India's foreign policy during the Cold War. At the 18th summit of the Group of Twenty (G-20) that took place in 2023, India welcomed the African Union (AU) as the 21st entity. Following the conclusion of the Second World War, the globe entered a period of bipolarity, which lasted until the 1990s, when the Soviet Union collapsed. A multipolar world order has emerged in the 21st century as a result of a number of factors, including the growth of China, the decline of the economy of the United States, emerging economies, and the growing influence of multilateral organisations such as the BRICS, SCO, and AU (Diesen, 2021). The post-Cold War period was characterised by a unipolar world order that was dominated by the United States. During the 20th and 21st centuries, India has actively enhanced the voice of the global South according to the existing world order (Aulakh & Prasad, 2023).

The strategy that India takes to global affairs has seen considerable changes throughout the years, including a shift from nonalignment to multi-alignment and a transition from the

Panchasheel principles to the Panchamrith policy. Additionally, India's global strategy has been shaped by the dynamics of the competition between global powers (Walton, 2007). India adopted a non-aligned attitude during the time of the Cold War; but, given the passage of time, this policy has become less significant and relevant. Since 2014, India's global approach has undergone a paradigm shift, with the new administration establishing a strong and autonomous foreign policy due to its legislative majority. This development has contributed to India's global approach (Mahida & Chauhan, 2023). The considerable evolution of India's stature in the international arena has resulted in a revolution in the country's approach to international diplomacy (Peters, 2022; Sujith, 2023).

The Modi government's foreign policy has shifted towards a pragmatic and realpolitik approach, aligning with the realistic school of thought. This approach prioritizes national interest and security, reflected in the Panchamrit policy, which emphasizes Samman and Suraksha. India's participation in the QUAD grouping, military agreements with the USA, Russia, and other countries, and increased defence budget demonstrate its adoption of the Realistic paradigm. India's presidency of G-20, which included a joint statement on the Ukraine conflict, demonstrates its diplomatic success and aligns with India's approach to the conflict. India has also announced its participation in the Europe-Middle East-India corridor, potentially challenging China's Belt and Road Initiative (Jaishankar, 2020; Kukreja, 2020; Pant, 2021). At the East Asia Summit of 2023, PM Modi discussed the code of conduct of the South China Sea in accordance with the UNCLOS agreement, demonstrating India's global strategic change and ability to make decisions independently. These activities illustrate the country's global strategic shift and capacity for autonomous decision-making (Aulakh & Prasad, 2023).

Conclusion

As a result of the COVID-19 epidemic, there has been a discernible rift between the Western world and the Eastern world. This rift has been further worsened by the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which started in 2022. The North-South gap has been further accentuated as a result of this, which has further intensified global political tensions. In the meantime, India has been able to bolster its standing on the international stage and has established itself as a frontrunner among emerging nations (Pande, 2017). As the twenty-first century has

progressed, the geopolitical landscape of the world has moved towards a multipolar world order. India has assumed a role in global events that is both distinctive and significant. There have been substantial shifts in India's foreign policy, with an increased emphasis on strategic autonomy. This is particularly relevant in light of the intensifying competition between Western and Eastern countries (Ganguly, 2004). The Modi administration has been responsible for India's adoption of a pragmatic and practical attitude, which has resulted in the country's contribution to global peace, collaboration, and security. As indicated by India's diplomatic efforts at the G20 Summit in 2023, which highlighted strategic autonomy and enlightened national interests (Aulakh & Prasad, 2023), India's new global strategy integrates realistic and liberal perspectives. This integration of perspectives is evidenced by India's new global strategy. Within the context of this developing multipolar world order, India's position in global politics unquestionably has an impact on the competition between great powers. India's chairmanship of the G-20 has provided evidence of the country's ability to navigate its global interests and interests.

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