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INDIA INTERNATIONAL

GEOPOLITICS CONCLAVE

PAST | PRESENT | FUTURE

31ST JANUARY 2023 | 3PM ONWARDS

PHD HOUSE, NEW DELHI

REPORT



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Introduction

India International Geopolitics Conclave

The **PHDCCI International Affairs and Trade Fair Division** and **Defense Committee** in association with the **India Office of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)** organized the inaugural edition of the “India International Geo Politics Conclave” (IIGPC) on Tuesday, 31st January 2023 at the PHD House, New Delhi. Around 150 delegates including diplomats representing more than seven countries graced the occasion. We were honored to have the five-member German Parliamentary delegation also present with us, taking avid part in the conclave.

The last two years have witnessed geopolitical turbulences of a heightened and unprecedented scale. India’s unique brand in world affairs is defined by universalist notions such as “One World, One Family, One Future” which sharpen the milestones of Indian Foreign Policy, considerably, the peaceful resolution of disputes, opposition to alliances, anti-imperialist solidarity with the post-colonial world, and campaigns against apartheid and for nuclear abolition.

India will be guided by its strategic interests in various fields as it builds and strengthens ties with a range of countries around the globe.

India is committed to increasing its defence capability significantly, which can be seen from an annual average growth rate of 9% in the defence budget, to buttress its strategic autonomy. This will lead to a doubling of India's strategic weight on a global scale, emerging as a country with not only a large youth population, but strong defence forces as well. Going ahead, it wants to import less defence equipment and produce more domestically, including through joint ventures.

India International Geo Politics Conclave is a great initiative to discuss the past, present and the future of the Indian geopolitical scenario. It will enhance a global view of the future course of action, keeping the past experience into account. During the conclave, the Indian geopolitical arena as well as the development of collaborative networks and innovative multilateral institutions that can advance reform or change in different issue areas constituted the major subjects of the debate.

Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Philip Campose, PVSM, AVSM & Bar, VSM, Former Vice Chief of Indian Army & Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Syed Ata Hasnain PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SM, VSM & Bar, India Army, Former GOC Chinar Corps, Member NDMA & the Chancellor Central University of Kashmir were the Guests of Honour.

The IIGPC was comprised of four panel sessions, each concerned with the most pressing topics of the current global geopolitical scenario:

- **Panel Discussion: I**
G20 - "India's Presidency for Synergy, Security, Growth and Sustainability"
- **Panel Discussion: II**
Eurasia - "Most Deciding Factor of World's Geopolitics"
- **Panel Discussion: III**
India-China - "Countering China Through Supply Chain Resilience"
- **Panel Discussion: IV**
India's Geopolitics Scenario - "India's changing Geopolitics Scenario and its impact on World Politics"



Inaugural Session

Col. Saurabh Sanyal, CEO & Secretary General, PHDCCI in his opening remarks welcomed all the dignitaries and participants and highlighted the various geopolitics phases of independent India's foreign policies and the respective transitions associated with them. From 1947 to the 1960s, a geopolitical scenario shaped by the bipolarity of the Cold War; from the early 1960s to the mid-1980s, rapid changes in India's neighbourhood such as China gravitating from the Soviet Union towards the U.S.; and the post-Cold War world after 1990 when the U.S. emerged as the sole superpower in the unipolar world order. This was followed by an overview of India's most important diplomatic partners on the global stage. He stated that India has applied strategic autonomy as an endeavor to maximize policy space while safeguarding its national interest: striking a balance by cultivating strategic ties with both the West and Asia and maintaining a firm strategic grip on the regional geopolitical framework.

During the 1990s, India's approach towards world affairs led to its quest to safeguarding its strategic autonomy, which was a turning point for India, with the country eventually reaching out to the U.S., Israel and ASEAN countries, amongst others. Similarly, India has recently been active in formulating its organizational strategies, connecting with other economic and strategic groups from various countries around the world and finding opportunities for further economic and strategic advantage.

He concluded on the note that the motive behind organizing the India International Geopolitics Conclave is to bridge the gap of understanding of the current geopolitical scenario.



In his welcoming remarks, **Dr. Adrian Haack, Director, India Office of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung**, emphasized that the German Parliamentary Delegation will explore various opportunities for collaboration between India and Germany, particularly in the fields of trade and digitalization.



Mr. Saket Dalmia, President, PHDCCI in his presidential address, highlighted that this is an opportune time for India to establish trade and investment relations, in order to expand its global connectivity:

“India is today in the midst of a major geopolitical repositioning, as it discards its old non-aligned movement rhetoric, pursues a hard-headed national interests-based policy and builds stronger strategic ties with a wide range of countries including the United States and its allies in the region, especially Japan.”



In her opening remarks, **Ms. Laura Hopmann MdL, CDU, Political Scientist, Member of German Parliament**, addressed the scope for cooperation between India and Germany and how both can benefit from them while quoting “Together we share a commitment to protecting and promoting human rights, a rules-based order, sustainable development, and open trade.” Ms. Hopmann compared the evolution of the industries

of both countries and elaborated on how the German industrial wonder unfolded. She further emphasized the need for both countries to ameliorate their respective rank in the bilateral trade relations.



Lt. Gen. (Retd) Philip Campose, PVSM, AVSM & Bar, VSM, Former Vice Chief of Indian Army, gave his remarks on the theme: What is India’s emerging role in International affairs? He cited that despite there is a long way to go, the G20 presidency presents a golden opportunity and a great start for an emerging economy like India. Quoting from his book: “A National Security Strategy for India: The Way Forward”, he highlighted the importance of economic security for all other forms of security.

He enumerated 10 major pointers which India should emphasize upon to become a global player

1. Building comprehensive economic wealth and ramp up manufacturing capital, human capital and natural capital
2. Achieving internal peace in India’s domestic politics
3. Empowerment of India’s Youth
4. Claiming a non-hegemonic role and promote global governance/multilaterism guided by universal values
5. Progressing with the Agenda 2030

6. Claiming a leadership role in Asia and in the IOR, enhancement of pan-Asian cooperation
7. Strengthening of security partnerships with the Western partners (e.g. USA, France)
8. Strengthen strategic partnerships with leading and medium players of the G20
9. Investments in the fields of Science and Technology, STEM and AI
10. Leverage the knowledge of the Indian Diaspora



Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Syed Ata Hasnain PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, SM, VSM & Bar, India Army, Former GOC Chinari Corps, Member NDMA & Chancellor Central University of Kashmir, in his opening remarks enunciated that the global pandemic is directly related to geopolitics. He further remarked that India has proved to be a resilient economy during the pandemic indicated

by the GDP growth rate standing at 6.6% in 2020-2021 and at 8.7% in 2021-2022. It is further estimated to achieve 6.5% during 2022-2023. However, to further strengthen the economy, the public and private sectors of the economy must work in a tandem as everything is intersecting with geopolitics.

He further added that the greatest challenge in the coming times across the globe would be climate change.



Panel Discussion: I

G20 - "India's Presidency for Synergy, Security, Growth and Sustainability"



Maj. Gen. Rajan Kochhar (Retd), VSM, Indian Army, Vice Chairman National Council of News and Broadcasting, Senior Adviser-Defence Research and Studies and Member, Manoj Parikkar Institute of Defence and Strategic Analyses; Centre for Joint Warfare Studies, New Delhi moderated the panel.

In his opening remarks, he pointed out the role of India's G20-presidency and promoted inclusivity of the Global South across the world. He discussed about the issues that the world is facing today, the gravest being the ripple effects posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian-Ukraine War. These, in turn, have exposed civilian communities around the globe to the vulnerabilities of inflation, the interruption of supply chains as well as the rise in environmental challenges.

"PM Modi's motto for G20 presidency "Vasudev Kutumbakam" which means One Earth, One Family, One Future is a holistic approach to bring the world together," he added. The world as one would be able to face issues such as pandemics, recessions etc. better as one rather than individually.

The Panel consisted of **Mr. Tilman Kuban MP, CDU/CSU, Lawyer, Member of German Parliament, Mr. Partha P Roy Chowdhury, Commercial Lead India, Lockheed Martin Corporation, Colonel KV Kuber, Indian Army Veteran, Director, Aerospace and Defence, Ernst and Young LLP & Amb. Gautam Bambawale, Former Indian Ambassador to Bhutan, Pakistan and China** joined the session virtually.

Key Takeaways:

1. The Russia-Ukraine War should be a high-ranked topic within the framework of G20.
2. Suggestions were made to optimize the internal workings of multilateral institutions and forums like the G20 to engage and work optimally in assigning them a more active and leading role.
3. Digitization and skill development are the need of the hour. Empowering females and prioritizing inclusive growth and development with female representation has taken center stage of India's G20 deliberations.
4. India is one of the driving actors of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and there is an essential requirement to reform and boost policies and encourage people to adapt to digitalization.

Panel Discussion: II **Eurasia - "Most Deciding Factor of World's Geopolitics"**



Mr. Robinder N Sachdev, President, The Imagindia Institute, moderated the session. He presented his views on the current geopolitical situation and said that this is an era of co-existence.

The panelists during the session were **Mr. Roland Theis, CDU, Lawyer, Member of German Parliament; Dr. Stephan Grabherr, Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM), Embassy of the Federal**

Republic of Germany; Maj Gen AK Siwach YSM VSM & Bar, Former Head of Territorial Army, Indian Army; & Dr. Sreeram Chaulia, Professor and Dean, Jindal School of International Affairs.

Key Takeaways:

The approach towards Eurasia, with Russia and China being the major players, the resolution of the Russia-Ukraine war as well as climate change.

- a. Approach towards Eurasia, with Russia and China being the major players
- b. Resolution of the Russia-Ukraine War
- c. Climate Change
- d. Terrorism
- e. Globalization

He also stated that the G20 presidency in India is a silver lining and everyone around the world should abide by the motto “Vasudhev Kutumbakam” and leverage the opportunity by the standing together.

Panel Discussion: III

India-China - “Countering China through Supply Chain Resilience”



Major Gaurav Arya (Retd), Editor in Chief, Chanakya Forum, moderated the session.

China as the manufacturing backyard of the world is deriving its supply chain resilience from contract manufacturing. He suggested that India has the ability to overpower China’s dominance as manufacturing hub with support from the developed countries.

The panelists during the session were **Mr.**

Markus Uhl MP, CDU/CSU, Economist, Member of German Parliament, Lt Gen (Dr) Rakesh Sharma, PVSM, UYSM, AVSM, VSM, Indian Army (Retd), Mr. Tilak Devasher, Member of the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB), Former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India

Key Takeaways:

- a. Countries and enterprises relying on supply chains from China need to reorganize their international trade and investment engagements.
- b. A pragmatic approach to be adopted is the diversification of global supply chains while identifying dependencies and vulnerabilities for the creation and operation of cost-effective value chains.
- c. Reducing global dependency on China and finding reliable as well as cost-effective alternatives.
- d. India and other emerging countries need to find pragmatic ways to counter the Chinese monetary strength and revert in an asymmetric manner as China resorts to asymmetric warfare. Dr. Rakesh Sharma quoted: “Cheque for cheque, dollar for dollar, can’t win wars”.

India is well placed to achieve supply-chain resilience by undertaking the following steps:

- i. Increase of manufacturing
- ii. Changes in labor laws
- iii. Improvement in opening businesses by providing founders with the suitable infrastructure, legal aid, financial assistance to be able to function better.
- iv. Improvement of the national infrastructure for example construction of roads and highways etc.

Panel Discussion: IV

India's Geopolitics Scenario – “India's changing Geopolitics Scenario and its impact on World Politics”



Colonel KV Kuber, Indian Army Veteran, Director, Aerospace and Defence, Ernst and Young LLP, moderated the Session.

The panelists during the session were **Mr. Jan Metzler, MP CDU/CSU, Economist, Member of German Parliament, Amb. Rahul Chhabra, Former Secretary (Economic Relations), Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Syed Ata Hasnain PVSM, UYSM,**

AVSM, SM, VSM & Bar, India Army, Former GOC Chinar Corps, Member NDMA & Chancellor Central University of Kashmir, Mr. Tilak Devasher, Member of the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB), Former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat Government of India.

Key Takeaways:

- a. Post assuming the G20 presidency, India has acquired a powerful seat at the global table. “If it is India’s time, it is right now.” quoted Col. K V Kuber. Emerging countries across the globe, especially from South Asia and South East Asia look up to India for taking a stand for all emerging countries.
- b. The rapidly changing geopolitical scenario is a test of adaptability of democracies as compared to autocracies.
- c. Collective bargaining by emerging economies around the world for their economic propulsion to the level of developed economies.
- d. Risk cooperation in various fields like technology, defence, trade and investment etc. taking place between India-USA is strategically oriented, which shows the global strategic partnership between India and USA over the past years, especially during the pandemic.

- e. With the help of the G20 presidency India can shed light on the political turbulences across the globe and assist to resolve them. Considerably job growth, future management of pandemics and other types of virus outbreaks as well as further bridging the gap between the Global North and Global South.
- f. India holds a strong position to frame and shape the rules of the global order, which can serve to improve India's credibility - of its leaders as well as of its policies.
- g. The combat of terrorism is one major topic to be addressed by the G20.
- h. Due to G20 inclusivity, India gained technological sovereignty, access to global markets and better supply chains.

The Vote of Thanks was proposed by Mr. Rudra Shriram, Chair, Defence Committee, PHDCCI. While thanking all the dignitaries for their invaluable inputs, Mr. Rudra Sriram concluded with the remarks that G20 is a crucial platform for India to engage with the world's largest economies and advance its geopolitical, economic and development interests.

Glimpses







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ABOUT ORGANISER

PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) has been working as a catalyst for the promotion of Indian industry, trade and entrepreneurship for the past 117 years. It is a forward looking, proactive and dynamic PAN-India apex organization. As a partner in progress with industry and government, PHDCCI works at the grass roots level with strong national and international linkages for propelling progress, harmony and integrated development of the Indian economy.

PHDCCI, acting as the "Voice of Industry & Trade" with a large membership base of 1,50,000 direct and indirect members consisting of large, medium and small industries, has forged ahead leveraging its legacy with the industry knowledge across multiple sectors to take Indian Economy to the next level.

At the global level, we have been working with the Embassies and High Commissions in India and overseas to bring in the International Best Practices and Business Opportunities.

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