



Passage Based Questions [5 Marks]

1. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions:
During the Cold War years, India found itself on the opposite side of the divide from the US. India's closest friendship during those years was with the Soviet Union. After the collapse of Soviet Union, India suddenly found itself friendless in an increasingly hostile international environment. However, these were also the years when India decided to liberalise its economy and integrate it with the global economy. This policy and India's impressive economic growth rate made the country an attractive economic partner for a number of countries including the US.

Questions:

1. Name the country which was India's closest friend during Cold War years.
2. What was India's policy during post Cold War years?
3. What made India an attractive economic partner for the countries like the US?

Answer:

1. Soviet Union.
2. India decided to liberalise its economy and integrate it with global economy.
3. India's policy of liberalisation and its impressive economic growth rate.

2. Read the following passage (NCERT Textbook, page 47) carefully and answer the questions:

Some people argue that it is strategically more prudent to take advantage of the opportunities that hegemony creates. For instance, raising economic growth rates requires increased trade, technology transfers and investment, which are best acquired by working with rather than against the hegemon. Thus, it is suggested that instead of engaging in activities opposed to hegemonic power, it may be advisable to extract benefits by operating within the hegemonic system. This is called the bandwagon strategy.

Questions:

1. What is prudent during a period of hegemony?
2. What benefits can be acquired within the hegemonic system?
3. What is the bandwagon strategy?

Answer:

1. To take advantage of opportunities that a hegemon creates.
2. Increased trade, technology transfers and investment.
3. To extract benefits by operating within hegemonic system in place of being engaged in the opposed activities.

Long Answer Type Questions [6 Marks]

1. Examine any three factors responsible for the US hegemony in the world politics.

Answer: Three factors responsible for the US hegemony in the world politics are

(i) The US power lies in the overwhelming superiority of its military power. American military dominance today is both absolute and relative. In absolute terms, the US today has military capabilities that can reach any point on the planet accurately, lethally and in real time, thereby crippling the adversary while its own forces are sheltered to the maximum extent possible from the dangers of war.

(ii) No other power today can remotely match them. The US today spends more on its military capability than the next 12 powers combined. Further more, a large chunk of the Pentagon's budget goes into military research and development, or, in other words, technology. Thus, the military dominance of the US is not just based on higher military spending, but on a qualitative gap, a technological chasm that no other power can at present conceivably span.

(iii) The US invasion of Iraq shows that the American capacity to conquer is formidable. Similarly the US capability to deter and to punish is self-evident. More than forty countries joined in the US-led 'coalition of the willing' after the UN refused to give its mandate to the invasion. Thus, no country can deny the US superiority in the world politics.

2. Explain the three types of US hegemony and give examples for each.

Answer:

(i) Hegemony as Hard Power:

(a) This hegemony signifies military status of America to be both absolute and relative. In absolute terms, it has military capabilities to reach any point on the Planet accurately and no other power today can remotely match them.

(b) The US military dominance is based on both the higher military expenditure and on a qualitative gap i.e. technological know-how.

(ii) Hegemony as Structural Power:

(a) It signifies 'Economic Prospects' of hegemon power to possess both the ability and the desire to establish certain norms for order and sustain global structure even including goods to be consumed by one person without reducing the amount of goods available for someone else.

(b) A classical example is academic degree MBA (Masters in Business Administration) to presume business as a profession to be dependent upon skills that can be taught in a University which is uniquely American.

(iii) Hegemony as Soft Power:

(a) US Hegemony has its cultural dimensions also which implies class ascendancy in social, political and particularly ideological spheres to shape the behaviour of competing and lesser powers. Here, the consent goes hand in and more effective than coercion.

(b) For example, most of the dreams of individuals and societies across the globe, are dreams churned out by practices prevailing in twentieth-century America. All these are about the capacity to manufacture consent.

3. What are different natures of hegemony? Explain.

Answer: Hegemony is an international system to dominate world by only one superpower. The natures of hegemony can be found out as follows:

(i) Hegemony as Hard Power:

(a) It is based on the military capability between the states.

(b) The US military dominance is based on their higher expenditures on military as well as the technological know-how.

(c) The US bears military dominance in both the terms i.e. absolute and relative. In absolute terms the US military capabilities can reach any point on the planet and no other power can be a match to them.

(ii) Hegemony as Structural Power:

(a) It is based on economic factors of the world dominated by the hegemonic power.

(b) Hegemony must sustain global structure to establish certain norms for order and the US has set up Bretton Woods System.

(c) The US hegemony has provided the global public goods to be consumed by one person without reducing the amount available

for someone else as SLoCs and the Internet, MBA degree.

(iii) Hegemony as Soft Power:

(a) To dominate world even in reference of cultural dimensions i.e. class ascendancy in social, political and ideological spheres.

(b) The US hegemony has the capacity to create 'manufacturing consent' by the class to be dominated by the hegemon.

(c) The 'blue jeans' from the US is capable to engineer even a generational divide.

4. How can the US hegemony be checked?

Or

How long will hegemony last? How do we get beyond hegemony?

Answer:

(i) The US hegemony has been symbolised as the global village and other countries as its neighbours.

(ii) If the headman of global village becomes intolerable, neighbours do not have any choice of leaving it, but develop a resistant.

(iii) Though there are some rules and norms called laws of war that restrict but do not prohibit war.

(iv) No single power can challenge the US militarily. Still, to overcome the US hegemony, the following strategies have been found out:

(a) Bandwagon strategy emphasises not to oppose hegemonic power, instead take advantage of opportunities that hegemon creates i.e. increased trade and technology transfer and investments to extract benefits by operating within hegemonic system.

(b) To hide strategy implies to stay as far removed from the dominant power as possible as China, Russia and the European Union. This strategy is applicable to small states but states may not be able to hide for substantial length of time.

(c) Non-state actors as writers, artists and intellectuals have no boundaries to work with. They can reach beyond the limits of the states to mould the minds of people through their expressions.

5. What is meant by Operation Iraqi Freedom? Mention its main and hidden objectives. Give any two consequences of this operation.

Answer:

Operation Iraqi Freedom was the code name given by the US to launch invasion on 19 March 2003. More than 40 countries joined in the US led coalition of the willing after the UN refused to give its mandate to the invasion.

Main Objective: To prevent Iraq from developing Weapons of Mass Destructions (WMD). Since no evidence of WMD has been unearthed in Iraq. Hidden Objective: It was motivated by controlling Iraqi Oilfields and installing a regime friendly to the US.

Consequences of this Operation

1. Although the government of Saddam Hussein fell swiftly but US has not been able to pacify Iraq.

2. A fully fledged insurgency against US occupation was ignited in Iraq.

3. Conservatively estimated that 50,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed since the US-led invasion.

4. It is widely recognised that the US invasion of Iraq was, in some crucial respects, both a military and political failure.

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