

7<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2024

## 1. Visit of President of Maldives to India GS 2 (International Relations)

### • Why in News:

- President of Maldives, Mohamed Muizzu, arrived India on a State visit. This is the first bilateral visit of President Dr. Muizzu to India. He had earlier visited India in June 2024 to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers.
- Maldives is India's key maritime neighbor in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and holds a special place in Prime Minister's vision of 'SAGAR' (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and India's 'Neighbourhood First Policy'.

### • Significance of Maldives for India

- Strategic Importance**
  - Maldives is barely 70 nautical miles away from Minicoy and 300 nautical miles away from India's West coast.
  - It is situated at the hub of commercial sea-lanes running through Indian Ocean (particularly the 8° N and 1 ½° N channels).
  - It has potential to allow a third nation's naval presence in the area.
- Geo-political interest**
  - Securing sea lanes of communication; Fighting piracy and sea-based terrorism;
  - Making Ocean a conflict free zone and restoring its status as sea of tranquility;
  - Exploring blue economy and Enhancing trade; Security of Indian expatriates working there.
- China Angle**
  - The Maldives has emerged as an important 'pearl' in China's "String of Pearls" construct in South Asia.
- Internal security angle: Radicalisation**
  - In the past, the number of Maldivians drawn towards terrorist groups like the Islamic State (IS) had increased.
  - Political instability and socio-economic uncertainty are further fuelling the rise of Islamism radicalism in the island nation.
  - This gives rise to the possibility of remote Maldivian islands being used as a launch pad for terror attacks against India and Indian interests.

### • India – Maldives Bilateral Relation

- Background**
  - India was among the first to recognise Maldives after its independence in 1965 and to establish diplomatic relations with the country.
- India as a first responder and net security provider**
  - In 1988, under **Operation Cactus** the Indian Armed Forces helped the Government of Maldives in the neutralization of the coup attempt.
  - India was the first to assist Maldives during the 2004 Tsunami as well as the water crisis in Malé in Dec 2014.
    - India had swift dispatch of 30,000 doses of measles vaccine in Jan 2020 to prevent an outbreak in the Maldives.
  - India's rapid and comprehensive assistance to the Maldives during COVID-19 pandemic further reinforced India's credentials of being the first responder.
- Security & Defence Cooperation**
  - A comprehensive Action Plan for Defence was also signed in April 2016 to consolidate defence partnership.

### Muizzu to meet Modi, request India's support over looming economic crisis

The Maldivian President has said he hoped that India would be ready to ease the Maldives' financial crisis by providing a loan or a grant.



President Mohamed Muizzu of Maldives (left) and Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India (right) shake hands during a bilateral meeting in New Delhi.

President Muizzu said that his visit to India was a historic one, as it was the first time a Maldivian leader had visited India since the country's independence in 1965.

He said that he was looking forward to a meeting with Prime Minister Modi and to discuss the bilateral relations between the two countries.

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- India provides the largest number of training opportunities for Maldivian National Defence Force (MNDF), meeting around 70% of their defence training requirements. India has trained over 1500 MNDF trainees over the past 10 years.
- Annual Defence Cooperation Dialogue at level of Defence Secretary was initiated in July 2016.
- **Development Cooperation**
  - The major completed and ongoing development assistance projects executed by India are:
    - Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital
    - Maldives Institute of Technical Education (now called the Maldives Polytechnic)
    - India-Maldives Faculty of Hospitality & Tourism Studies
    - Technology Adoption Programme in Education Sector in Maldives
    - National College for Police and Law Enforcement (NCPL)
- **Infrastructure & Connectivity Projects under Exim Bank Line of Credit of US\$ 800 million**
  - The following projects are being implemented under these LoCs:
    - Water and Sanitation in 34 Islands
    - Addu Development Project (Roads and Land Reclamation)
    - Cancer Hospital
    - Gulhifalhu Port project
    - Hulhumalé Cricket Stadium: During PM visit in June 2019, it was committed that the Stadium will be built under Indian assistance.
- **Greater Male Connectivity Project**
  - The project aims to connect Male to Villingili, Gulhifalhu and Thilafushi islands through a series of bridges, causeways and roads.
  - It is funded through a separate \$ 400 million LoC and \$ 100 million grant from India.
- **Bilateral Economic and Trade Relations**
  - India emerged as **Maldives' 2nd largest trade partner in 2022 & the largest in 2023.**
  - India-Maldives bilateral trade in 2023-24 touched almost \$1billion with India's exports at \$892 million and imports at \$86.84 million.
  - In November 2022, amid the economic challenges faced by the Maldives, India handed over a financial assistance of US\$ 100 million.
  - In December 2022, the RBI signed a Currency Swap Agreement with the Maldives Monetary Authority (MMA) under the SAARC Currency Swap Framework.
  - This enabled MMA to make draws in multiple tranches up to a maximum of USD 200 million from the RBI.
- **Tourism**
  - In 2023 alone, among the tourists who travelled to the Maldives, Indians formed the largest group of tourists with over 200,000 travellers.
- **Indian Community**
  - Indians are the second largest expatriate community in Maldives with an approximate strength of around 22,000.
  - About 25% of Doctors and Teachers in Maldives are Indian nationals.
- **Visit of President of Maldives to India**
  - Muizzu's visit comes amid strained ties following his election victory last year, which was marked by an **'India Out' campaign opposing India's military presence in the Maldives.**
  - Muizzu's current stance emphasizes mutual respect, non-interference, and collaboration, signaling a significant shift from his earlier anti-India rhetoric.
  - During his five-day visit to India, Muizzu will discuss strengthening ties and addressing the Maldives' fiscal challenges, as the country faces the risk of a debt default.
  - With its **foreign exchange reserves down to \$440 million and substantial debt repayments due in 2025 and 2026**, the Maldives has received a credit rating downgrade from Moody's.
  - India has already extended \$1.4 billion in financial support to the Maldives for various infrastructure projects, and the visit is seen as an opportunity to reinforce bilateral cooperation.



## 2. How Major Powers are Seeing the Conflicts in the West Asian Region? GS 2 (International Relations)

- **Why in News:** The terrorist attacks by Hamas (on October 7, 2023) on Israel has sparked the West Asia crisis. On the anniversary of the October 7 attacks, the article tries to analyse the current scenario from the perspective of Israel, West, the Arab states in the region, and New Delhi.

### What Israel is Doing?

#### Attacks on Gaza:

- Since the October 7 attacks, operations by the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) have caused a heavy death toll in Gaza.
- While the international opinion in favour of **Palestinian statehood** has strengthened over the past year, Israeli political opinion **rejecting Palestinian sovereignty** has strengthened at the same time.
- For the time being, the initial criticism of Israel's security apparatus's October 7, 2023, failure has faded away.

#### Attacking Iran-backed "axis of resistance" groups:

- Israel has made an effort to maintain its military edge against the Iran-backed - **Hezbollah** (Lebanon-based) and the **Houthis** (Yemen-based) - by carrying out strikes in Syria, Yemen and Lebanon.
- Both (Hezbollah and Houthis) were carrying out rocket and missile attacks on Israel since late last year.
- The Houthi attacks disrupted international shipping in the Red Sea, and imposed economic costs on countries far beyond the theatre of the conflict.

#### Ignoring calls for peace: Israel has ignored a call for ceasefire by the UNSC and US advice of restraint.

- **Retaliating Iran:** Israel also retaliated after Iran launched an unprecedented cruise missile and drone barrage against it (in April), and has vowed to make the regime in Tehran pay for a second wave of aerial attacks on October 1.

### What is the Position of the Arab States on West Asian Conflicts?

#### Remained committed to the goal of geo-economic reset:

- Major Arab powers such as Saudi Arabia and UAE have **remained committed to the process of a geopolitical and geo-economics reset** in the Middle East that was underway before October 2023.
- But the **war has brought the issue of Palestinian sovereignty front and centre**, with all the regional powers beginning to see it as a necessary condition for long-term peace

#### Maintaining relations with both Israel and Iran:

- Rather than giving up on attempts to restore relations with Israel, these countries seem to be **trying to use it as leverage to resolve the Palestine issue**.
- This can be drawn from the sustenance of the **2020 Abraham Accords** despite the highest death toll in Gaza in decades.
- According to the Abraham Accords, the regional stability needed for economic development **requires peace with not just Israel, but also Iran**.
- As a result, Saudi Arabia stayed out of the US- and UK-led naval coalition to strike at the Yemeni (Houthis) group.

## A year of war in West Asia

Oct 7 marks a year of the terrorist assault by Hamas on Israel. After flattening parts of Gaza, Israel has taken its retaliation north to Hezbollah. With West Asia on the brink of all-out war, here's what the situation looks like from the US, Arab capitals, and India

**EXPERT EXPLAINS**  
RASHMI ALI ABRAHAM

THE WEST ASIAN conflict that began on October 7, 2023, is a continuation of the long-standing struggle between Israel and the Palestinians. The conflict has escalated significantly, with Israel launching a large-scale military operation in Gaza, resulting in a heavy death toll. The international community has expressed concern over the humanitarian situation in Gaza and has called for a ceasefire.

**What is the view from New Delhi?**

India's position on the conflict is clear. It has consistently supported the two-state solution and has called for a ceasefire. India has also expressed concern over the humanitarian situation in Gaza and has offered to provide humanitarian aid. India's stance is based on its long-standing support for the Palestinian people and its commitment to international law.

**THE THEATRE OF CONFLICT**

The conflict is centered in the Gaza Strip, a small coastal enclave between Israel and Egypt. It has spread to other parts of the region, including Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen. The conflict has also had a significant impact on the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, where shipping lanes are being disrupted.

**US & THE WEST**

The United States and other Western countries have expressed concern over the conflict and have called for a ceasefire. The US has also provided military support to Israel. The conflict has also had a significant impact on the global economy, with oil prices rising and shipping lanes being disrupted.

**ARAB STATES**

The Arab states have a mixed response to the conflict. Some, like Saudi Arabia and the UAE, have expressed support for the Palestinian people and have called for a ceasefire. Others, like Egypt and Jordan, have expressed concern over the humanitarian situation in Gaza and have called for a ceasefire. The conflict has also had a significant impact on the Arab world, with many countries expressing concern over the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

- **What is the Approach of the West, Russia and China Towards West Asian Conflicts?**

- **West:**
  - **Pro-Israel:**
    - Led by the US (which successfully mediated between Iran and Israel in April), the western countries have warned all actors against further escalation, and committed to humanitarian aid for Gaza.
    - However, they stand by Israel, in case it breaches any red line.
  - **Awaiting the US presidential election:** This is because the incoming administration may seek to enable (under Donald Trump) or curb (as Kamala Harris) Israel's war effort.
- **Russia:** The war in Ukraine limits President Vladimir Putin's ability to influence Middle Eastern events, despite Moscow having shown interest — including hosting Hamas and Iranian leaders in October 2023.
- **China:**
  - In the midst of the crisis, Beijing has sharply criticised Israel while concentrating on strengthening its strategic and economic ties with Iran and the Arab world.
  - However, China remains restrained in its security and military involvement in the Middle East - a long-standing position that has ensured continued US dominance in the region.

- **What is the View of New Delhi on West Asian Conflicts?**

- **Telephonic diplomacy:**
  - The Indian PM spoke to Netanyahu on the phone both in October 2023 and 2024, **expressing concern and offering solidarity.**
  - He also spoke to President Mahmoud Abbas of Palestine, **reiterating India's commitment to the two-state solution.**
- **Keeping terrorism issue and the question of Israel and Palestine separate:**
  - This has allowed New Delhi to express sympathy and support for Israel after the October 7 terrorist attacks while refraining from backing its two-state solution of Palestinian sovereignty.
  - Emphasising the close connection between sustainable peace and a two-state solution, India has continuously supported UNGA resolutions that demand Israel to leave the occupied territory
- **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor:**
  - Prior to the new crisis, India sought to spearhead the effort to capitalise on the regional reset through the planned India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor.
  - However, the success of India's connectivity ambitions hinges not just on a truce in Gaza and Lebanon but also on how the Arab governments handle the aftermath of the conflict.

### 3. Global Framework on Chemicals Fund GS 3 (Environment)

- **Why in News:** Recently, the Global Framework on Chemicals fund launched its first project, targeting the safe and sustainable management of chemicals and waste.
- **About Global Framework on Chemicals Fund:**
  - It was established during the fifth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5) in September 2023.
  - It supports countries in implementing this international agreement that guides countries and stakeholders in jointly addressing the lifecycle of chemicals, including products and waste.
  - **The objective of the Fund is**
    - To support implementation activities in developing countries, least developed countries, Small Island Developing States and countries with economies in transition.
    - This will be achieved by financing projects and programmes that will support transformative change to prevent, or where prevention is not feasible, minimize harm from chemicals and waste to protect the environment and human health,

- The **Executive Board** takes the operational decisions and oversees the functioning of the Fund. It is composed of:
  - 2 National representatives of each United Nations region
  - Representatives of all donors and contributors.
- **Financing:** The Fund provides financial support of 300,000 to 800,000 USD for an implementation period of up to three years.
- Funding for the GFC Fund is provided through voluntary contributions.
- **What is Global Framework on Chemicals?**
  - The framework is based around 28 targets that aim to improve the sound management of chemicals and waste.
  - It is multi-sectoral agreement focuses on chemicals and waste and calls for the prevention of illegal trade, the strengthening of national legal frameworks and the elimination of highly hazardous pesticides in agriculture by 2035.

#### 4. Emergency Use Listing GS 2 (Health)

- **Why in News:** The World Health Organization (WHO) announced that it has listed the first mpox In Vitro Diagnostic (IVD) under its Emergency Use Listing (EUL) procedure.
- **About Emergency Use Listing:**
  - EUL Procedure is a risk-based procedure for assessing and listing unlicensed vaccines, therapeutics and in vitro diagnostics.
  - It aims to expedite the availability of these products to people affected by a public health emergency.
  - This will assist interested UN procurement agencies and Member States in determining the acceptability of using specific products, based on an essential set of available quality, safety and efficacy and performance data.
  - **Criteria for products listing under EUL**
    - The disease for which the product is intended is serious or immediately life-threatening has the potential of causing an outbreak, epidemic or pandemic.
    - Existing products have not been successful in eradicating the disease or preventing outbreaks.
    - The product is manufactured in compliance with current Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) in the case of medicines and vaccines and under a functional Quality Management System (QMS) in the case of IVDs.

#### 5. Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary GS 3 (Environment)

- **Why in News:** Two wild buffalo calves, born in Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary in Chhattisgarh have kindled hope of the conservation of the highly endangered animal species in Chhattisgarh.
- **About Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary:**
  - **Location:** It is located in the district of Raipur in Chhattisgarh.
  - The rivers Balmedhi, Jonk and Mahanadi are the lifeline river which runs along the sanctuary.
  - River Balamdehi forms the western boundary and Jonk River forms the northeastern boundary of the Sanctuary.
  - **Flora:** The sanctuary contains major vegetation of Teak, Sal and Mixed forest.
  - **Fauna:** Cheetal, Sambhar, Nilgai and Wild Boar, Sloth Bear, Wild Dog, are commonly seen.
- **Key facts about Indian Wild Buffalo**
  - It is the state animal of Chhattisgarh (India) and is a large species of bovine native to the Indian Sub-continent and Southeast Asia.
  - **Habitat:** It is mainly found in the alluvial grasslands, marshes, swamps and river valleys.



- In India, they are generally concentrated in North East India in Kaziranga National Park, Manas and Dibru-Saikhowa National Parks, Laokhowa Wildlife Sanctuary and Bura Chapori Wildlife Sanctuary, D'Ering Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary in Arunachal Pradesh.
- **Conservation Status**
  - **IUCN:** Endangered
  - **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972:** Schedule 1

## 6. Kawal Tiger Reserve

### GS 3 (Environment)

- **Why in News:** The forest department organised its first 'Cyclothon' recently to celebrate World Wildlife Week 2024 at the buffer zone of the Kawal Tiger Reserve.
- **About Kawal Tiger Reserve:**
  - It is located in the north eastern part of Telangana State along the banks of the river Godavari, forming part of the Deccan Peninsula-central highlands.
  - Spanning over 2015 sq. km, the reserve is nestled in the Sahyadri Mountain Ranges.
  - The government of India declared Kawal Wildlife Sanctuary a Tiger Reserve in 2012.
  - It has a diverse habitat comprising dense forests, grasslands, open areas, rivers, streams, and water bodies.
  - **Rivers:** The reserve is the catchment for the rivers Godavari and Kadam, which flow towards the south of the sanctuary.
  - Geographically, the reserve is situated at the southernmost tip of the Central Indian Tiger Landscape, having linkages with the Tadoba-Andhari (Maharashtra) and Indravati (Chhattisgarh) tiger reserves.
  - **Vegetation:** Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous Forest.
  - **Flora:** Teak is found extensively, along with Bamboo.
  - **Fauna:**
    - It is home to a diverse range of animals, including Cheetal, Sambar, Barking Deer, Nilgai, Sloth Bear, Indian Bison, Panther, and Tiger.
    - Reptiles like Crocodile, Python, Monitor Lizard, Star Tortoise, and Cobra can also be found within its boundaries.

## 7. Fattah-2

### GS 2(International Relations)

- **Why in News:** Iran recently fired more than 180 ballistic missiles, including its hypersonic medium-range Fattah-2, in a major offensive aimed at overwhelming Israel's air defences.
- **About Fattah-2:**
  - Fattah, which means conqueror in Farsi, is a hypersonic ballistic missile.
  - It was developed by Iran. It is a new version of its first domestically made hypersonic ballistic missile named 'Fattah'.
  - **Features:**
    - It is equipped with a Hypersonic Glide Vehicle (HGV) warhead that can manoeuvre and glide at hypersonic speed.
    - It uses a liquid-fuel rocket propellant. The liquid fuel engine can adjust the thrust force.
    - The precision-guided two-stage missile can hit targets within a range of 1500 kilometres with a velocity of Mach 15 (fifteen times the speed of sound, i.e 18522 km/hr).
    - Measuring 12 meters in length, it can carry 200 kilograms of explosives.
    - It is capable of significant trajectory changes during flight to evade defence systems.
    - While the missile can accelerate outside the Earth's atmosphere, its aerodynamic control surfaces allow for steering within the atmosphere.

## 8. Trade not just globalised but now weaponized

### GS 3 (Economy)

#### • Why in News:

- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, speaking at the Kautilya Economic Conclave, highlighted the social and political backlash against globalisation over the past 25 years.
- He emphasised that **trade has not only been globalised but also weaponised**, prompting countries to view economic transactions through the lens of national security. This has resulted in many nations, including India, adopting protectionist policies, such as anti-dumping measures, particularly targeting Chinese goods.

#### • Weaponisation of trade

##### ○ About the concept

- Weaponization of trade is when countries use trade tools to pressure other countries to change their trade patterns and support their political or economic goals.
- This can include:
  - Embargoing other countries,
  - Selectively cutting off imports or exports,
  - Threatening to use trade tools, and
  - Exploiting a country's economic reliance on another country.
- Basically, **weaponisation of trade means using trade as a tool of foreign policy rather than as an economic goal in and of itself.**

##### ○ Not a new concept

- This concept isn't new, with trade embargoes and restrictions existing for centuries.
- Examples include the U.S. oil embargo on Japan in the 1930s, which some historians argue contributed to the attack on Pearl Harbor, and economic sanctions on South Africa, which many credit with helping end apartheid.

##### ○ Shift Towards Targeted Sanctions

- In recent years, the nature of sanctions has evolved from broad embargoes to more targeted sanctions on specific individuals or companies.
- This began in the George W. Bush administration but has escalated rapidly since then.
- It is more of financial sanctions rather than trade restrictions.
- This shift has made it easier to impose sanctions by lowering the threshold for action.

##### ○ China's Aggressive Use of Trade as a Weapon

- China has pushed the weaponization of trade to new extremes, exemplified by actions like:
  - reducing trade with Norway after the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Liu Xiaobo (2010) and
  - limiting trade with Australia after it called for an investigation into COVID-19's origins.
- China has increasingly used trade as a tool for political leverage, imposing economic sanctions on countries that oppose its policies.
- In 2021, Lithuania faced sanctions after it announced the hosting of a Taiwanese Representative Office.
- Similarly, Mongolia faced punitive fees in 2016 for hosting the Dalai Lama, whose authority over Tibet is not recognized by Beijing.
- Taiwan has also faced restrictions, with China blocking imports of citrus, fish, and other foods in 2022 in retaliation for a visit by U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

'WARS DIVERTING FOCUS FROM IMEC, MDBS' REFORMS, CLIMATE CHANGE'

## Trade not just globalised, but it's also now weaponised: Jaishankar

RAVINDRA KISHORE

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 10

AMID RISING protectionist measures in India and the West against the rapid surge of Chinese imports in several sectors, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Monday that one of the impacts of globalisation over the past 25 years has been job losses and dislocation with the quality of life in many societies, as trade has not only been globalised but also weaponised.

Speaking at the Kautilya Economic Conclave here, the minister stated that the conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia have shifted the focus of global politics away from crucial issues such as reforms of Multilateral Development Banks (IMC), climate change, and the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), which was conceptualised during the G20 meeting in India last year.

"On the one hand, the world is becoming more deeply globalised with supply chains increasingly transnational. Hardly anything significant is made entirely in one country anymore, except perhaps in very rare instances. This has led to increased interdependence. On the other hand, there is a social and political backlash against globalisation because the way it has been managed over the past 25 years has resulted in job losses and dislocation with



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar addressing the 3rd Kautilya Economic Conclave, in New Delhi.

quality of life in many societies, which has in turn influenced policies," Jaishankar said.

#### Rising protectionism

Jaishankar's comments come a week after steep US tariffs on China took effect amid concerns that a fresh wave of Chinese products in clean energy and high-tech sectors — dubbed China Shock 2.0 — could cause job losses in several regions, including India. The first shock occurred when cheap Chinese goods flooded global markets following China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, resulting in job losses worldwide.

In response to protectionist measures abroad, India has also

increased anti-subsidy measures on Chinese products. In 2024 alone, India imposed over 30 anti-dumping measures against China. The targeted products include industrial items such as plastic processing machines, vacuum-insulated flasks, welded stainless steel pipes and tubes, soft ferrite cores, and industrial laser machines, among others.

Indian businesses seeking multiple extensions of anti-dumping duties argue that China is not a market economy and harm Indian industries by employing predatory methods to eliminate competitors.

"Trade is not just globalised, it's also weaponised. When trade and finance are weaponised,

countries take defensive measures. This is one of the reasons for protectionism, at the very least, for caution regarding supply chains. National security has become a pervasive lens through which economic transactions are now viewed. As economic transactions increasingly involve tech, this national security filter will only grow stronger," Jaishankar said.

He added that countries are willing to compromise economic efficiency for the sake of national security, privacy protection, and, in some cases, keeping jobs at home as the narrative of job losses is powerful in many regions.

"So, in essence, the realities of globalisation are going to clash with the forces of protectionism," he said.

Jaishankar also reiterated that the conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia have diverted global political attention from crucial issues such as MDB reforms and climate change. "There are new markets opening up since the terrorist attacks on Israel and, as a result, the focus we expected on the IMEC has not materialised. However, this does not mean that the IMEC is dead, discarded, or even shelved. The visit of both Saudi Arabia and the UAE and our recently held negotiations with the UAE and IMEC, as well as feasibility studies launched with Saudi Arabia," he said.

He further noted that with rising risks due to the proliferation of various technologies and other factors, the IMEC has only grown stronger, and India expects the development of the corridor to accelerate.

"The reality is that in global politics, there is limited bandwidth. One or two issues tend to dominate the agenda. Over the past two and a half years, it has been Ukraine, and over the past year, the Middle East. During my meetings with G20 colleagues at the UN General Assembly (UNGA), I have to admit that the expected push for MDB reforms was lacking. Instead, the Middle East was the top priority, followed by Ukraine, and even climate change has dropped in importance," Jaishankar said.

- **China's Control Over Critical Mineral**
  - In 2023, China restricted the export of gallium and germanium, minerals essential for semiconductors and military equipment, in response to U.S. efforts to limit China's access to advanced microprocessors.
  - This highlights China's strategic use of trade to retaliate against opposing nations
- **Push for De-dollarisation and Global Influence**
  - China is advancing efforts to move away from the U.S. dollar in trade, pushing for the internationalization of its currency, the renminbi yuan.
  - This would increase its economic influence and ability to weaponize trade further.
- **Steps taken by countries**
  - **Global Pushback Against Coercion**
    - The Quad countries—India, Australia, Japan, and the U.S.—have issued a statement rejecting coercive economic practices and advocating for countries' right to determine their own futures.
    - The G7 nations echoed this sentiment, opposing any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion.
  - **Economic diversification and supply-chain resilience**
    - Creating alternative supply chains is key to countering the weaponization of trade.
    - One such initiative is the **Mineral Security Partnership (MSP)**, which includes 13 members such as India, the U.S., and the EU.
    - The MSP aims to ensure the production, processing, and recycling of critical minerals in a way that maximizes economic benefits for countries with mineral resources.
  - **Friend-shoring**
    - The practice of "**friend-shoring**," where **supply chains are limited to politically and economically allied countries**, is becoming more common.
    - However, experts warn that friend-shoring could harm global trade and undermine institutions like the WTO, reducing the legitimacy of multilateral trade.
  - **Trade Protectionism**
    - Weaponisation of Trade has resulted in many nations, including India, adopting protectionist policies, such as anti-dumping measures, particularly targeting Chinese goods.
    - E.g., **India has imposed over 30 anti-dumping duties on Chinese products in 2024 alone.**
    - Concerns over job losses and the national security implications of technology have led countries to prioritize domestic industries and supply chains over economic efficiency.
- **Key highlights of the speech delivered by EAM**
  - **Rising Protectionism and Job Losses Amid Globalisation**
    - External Affairs Minister highlighted the social and political backlash against globalisation over the past 25 years.
    - While globalisation has created deep interdependencies, **it has also led to job losses and dissatisfaction with quality of life, influencing political outcomes in several regions.**
    - This has led to a rise in protectionism, with countries imposing defensive measures against foreign imports.
  - **Weaponisation of Trade**
    - Jaishankar emphasised that trade has not only been globalised but also weaponised, **prompting countries to view economic transactions through the lens of national security.**
    - The minister pointed out that concerns over job losses and the national security implications of technology have led **countries to prioritize domestic industries and supply chains over economic efficiency.**
  - **Shifted Focus in Global Politics: Conflicts Over Reforms**



- He noted that conflicts in Ukraine and West Asia have **shifted global attention away from pressing issues such as reforms of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), climate change, and the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC).**
- **India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)**
  - Despite the diversion of attention, her reassured that the IMEC, which was conceptualised during the G20 meeting, remains a viable project.
  - India is engaged in ongoing projects with the UAE and feasibility studies with Saudi Arabia.
  - The minister stated that the need for IMEC has only grown stronger due to rising geopolitical risks, although progress has been slowed by the current focus on global conflicts.

