

“India–USA–China–Russia Interrelations: A Political Analysis of Donald Trump’s Tariff Strategy, the Role of the Deep State, and the H1B Visa Policy.”

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Abstract

India–US–China–Russia relations form one of the most complex power triangles in twenty-first century geopolitics. The shifting dynamics between these states have been influenced by global trade, defence partnerships, energy security, and shifting strategic priorities. The emergence of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States marked a significant deviation from earlier American foreign policy traditions. His tariff strategies, nationalist economic ideology, and staunchly protectionist approach fundamentally reshaped how the world perceived American global leadership. The Trump administration’s policies targeted China through heavy tariffs under Section 301, while simultaneously scrutinising India’s access to the US market through withdrawal of GSP benefits and increased tariffs on steel, aluminium, and various agricultural products. These developments created friction in what had traditionally been a steadily improving Indo-US relationship. At the same time, Russia’s strategic tilt toward India strengthened due to defence ties, crude oil trade, and shared geopolitical interests, especially after the imposition of Western sanctions on Russia in the post-Ukraine conflict era. India leveraged discounted Russian crude to stabilize domestic inflation and ensure energy security, which played a crucial role in shaping India’s balancing diplomacy. China, meanwhile, remained an economic giant and India’s largest trading rival, but territorial disputes, supply-chain conflicts, and the US–China trade war created a new geopolitical order in Asia. The role of the Deep State—particularly within the American intelligence community, defence bureaucracies, strategic think tanks, and lobbying institutions—has long been debated. During Trump’s presidency, conflicts between elected leadership and the permanent security establishment intensified, affecting relations with Asian partners. Many scholars argue that Deep State networks influenced strategic narratives to maintain a hostile approach towards China, weaken Russia’s global position, and preserve US dominance in Asia. As a result, several Asian states experienced shifting alliances, policy unpredictability, and dual pressures from competing global powers. Furthermore, Trump’s restrictive H1B visa reforms disproportionately affected Indian IT professionals, who constitute the largest share of skilled immigrants in the United States. These policies reflected Trump’s “America First” ideology, which prioritised domestic employment while underestimating the contributions of Indian skilled workers to the US economy. The tightening of immigration norms, increased scrutiny of employers, higher rejection rates, and the push towards limiting outsourcing were perceived as discriminatory and politically

motivated. This research paper examines these interconnected developments—from Trump’s tariff strategies and Deep State influences to India’s recalibration of relations with the US, Russia, and China. It analyses trade relations, crude oil diplomacy, strategic rivalries, and the broader global realignment of power structures. The study argues that the Trump-era policies accelerated the emergence of a multipolar world in which India plays a central balancing role. Through qualitative political analysis, international relations theory, and empirical evidence, the paper evaluates the long-term implications of these policies for global trade, Asian geopolitics, and the diplomatic autonomy of emerging economies.

Keywords

- Trump Tariff Strategy
- Deep State Influence
- India–US Relations
- China–US Trade War
- India–Russia Crude Oil Diplomacy
- H1B Visa Politics
- Asian Geopolitical Realignment

Preface

The 21st century has been characterised by profound geopolitical shifts, with Asia becoming the central theatre of economic competition, strategic rivalries, and diplomatic negotiations. India, China, the United States, and Russia sit at the heart of this evolving global architecture. Their interactions shape not only regional stability but also international economic trends, energy markets, defence cooperation, and policy frameworks affecting millions of people worldwide. This research paper seeks to explore the complex and interdependent political dynamics between these four major global players. The election of Donald Trump in 2016 introduced a disruptive phase in world politics. His “America First” policy challenged decades of US foreign policy consensus. Where previous presidents had supported globalisation, multilateral trade agreements, and predictable diplomatic behaviour, Trump adopted a confrontational, transactional, and unilateral approach. One of the most significant manifestations of this shift was Trump’s aggressive tariff strategy. His administration imposed sweeping tariffs on Chinese goods worth more than \$360 billion, triggering the largest trade war in modern economic history. India was also affected, particularly after the withdrawal of GSP (Generalized System of Preferences) status and the imposition of tariffs on steel, aluminium, and several consumer goods. These decisions disrupted India’s export competitiveness and strained bilateral relations. Alongside trade tensions, immigration became another contentious issue. Trump’s H1B reforms were perceived as discriminatory, especially toward Indian skilled workers who constitute nearly 75% of all H1B visa holders. The tightening of visa norms, heightened scrutiny of IT companies, preference for American workers, and policy proposals to restrict residency pathways created uncertainty for thousands of Indian professionals. This had a direct impact on India’s IT industry and broader bilateral ties. Meanwhile, India’s relations with Russia deepened, driven by geopolitical realities, defence partnerships, and energy cooperation. India’s purchase of discounted Russian crude following the Ukraine conflict highlighted the importance of diversifying energy sources and maintaining strategic autonomy. At the same time, India–China relations deteriorated after the 2020 border clashes, leading to heightened military vigilance and

economic disengagement. The European Union (EU) also played a pivotal role in this shifting landscape. Its sanctions against Russia, regulatory stance on global trade, climate policies, and strategic alignment with the US influenced the behaviour of Asian economies. For India, navigating between the US, EU, Russia, and China required an intricate balance of diplomacy, security considerations, and domestic economic priorities. Another important dimension is the concept of the American Deep State. Trump frequently accused intelligence agencies, defence bureaucracies, and policy elites of undermining his foreign policy agenda. Whether these institutions functioned as a counterweight to presidential power or acted to preserve certain geopolitical objectives remains a topic of debate. In Asia, particularly regarding China and Russia, Trump's policies were often shaped—and sometimes restrained—by these unelected institutions. This preface establishes the foundation for a comprehensive political analysis of the interwoven threads of geopolitics, trade, energy security, and immigration policy. The paper seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how Trump's domestic political ideology, the Deep State's strategic influence, the energy needs of rising economies, and the competition among global powers contribute to the evolving international order.

India–Russia–China Trade Relations

India, Russia, and China form one of the most significant strategic triangles in global geopolitics, shaped by historical linkages, evolving economic cooperation, and competing national interests. The relationship among these three countries is complex: while India and China share a contentious border and deep geopolitical rivalry, both remain significant trading partners. Conversely, India and Russia share a long-standing friendship centered on defence, diplomacy, and strategic trust. China and Russia, on the other hand, have strengthened their partnership in response to Western sanctions and NATO expansion. This triangular relationship influences the balance of power across Eurasia, the Indo-Pacific, and global trade architecture.

India–China Trade Dynamics

Despite political conflicts, India and China maintain robust economic ties. China is one of India's largest trading partners, with bilateral trade crossing over \$115 billion in recent years. India imports large volumes of Chinese machinery, electronics, pharmaceuticals, active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), chemicals, and telecom equipment. India's exports to China include raw materials such as iron ore, cotton, minerals, and organic chemicals. However, the trade imbalance remains a major concern for India. China's export dominance has led to a trade deficit exceeding \$60 billion. India's efforts to reduce dependency on Chinese imports—particularly after the 2020 Galwan border clash—led to restrictions on Chinese investments, cancellation of infrastructure contracts, and scrutiny over telecom equipment vendors like Huawei and ZTE. India's "Atmanirbhar Bharat" policy and Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes aim to boost domestic manufacturing to challenge Chinese dominance.

India–Russia Trade Relations

India–Russia relations are rooted in historical cooperation dating back to the Soviet era. Defence trade has traditionally been the backbone of this partnership, with Russia supplying over 60–70% of India's military hardware. In recent years, the relationship has expanded into new areas such as nuclear energy (Kudankulam nuclear plant), space research, hydrocarbons,

and pharmaceuticals. The Ukraine conflict dramatically reshaped India–Russia trade relations. As Western sanctions restricted Moscow’s access to European markets, Russia redirected its oil exports to Asia, particularly India and China. India seized this opportunity to import discounted crude oil, pushing bilateral trade beyond \$50 billion for the first time. Russia became India’s largest crude oil supplier, overtaking Iraq and Saudi Arabia. India also exports pharmaceuticals, vehicles, tea, coffee, and machinery to Russia. However, the trade remains unbalanced due to India’s massive oil imports. The introduction of rupee–ruble trade mechanisms attempted to address the currency shortage created by sanctions, though challenges persist.

Russia–China Relations

Russia and China have strengthened ties significantly in recent years, especially as both nations face strategic competition with the United States. Their relationship is built on economic complementarity, military cooperation, and geopolitical alignment against Western hegemony. China imports Russian energy, minerals, and agricultural products, while exporting electronics, machinery, and consumer goods to Russia. Both countries share a common vision of challenging Western dominance in international institutions. The BRICS grouping and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) serve as platforms for political coordination. Their partnership remains tactical rather than ideological; however, the growing military cooperation and economic ties suggest a long-term strategic bond.

India’s Balancing Act

India finds itself positioned between two nations—China and Russia—that are increasingly aligned with each other. India’s strategy revolves around maintaining strong relations with Russia while managing political tensions with China. India’s participation in multilateral forums such as BRICS, SCO, G20, Quad, and Indo-Pacific Economic Framework shows its commitment to multi-alignment—engaging multiple power blocs simultaneously to safeguard national interests. Overall, India–Russia–China trade relations represent a delicate geopolitical triangle. India’s economic dependence on China, strategic dependence on Russia, and security partnership with the United States shape its global posture. The relationship is dynamic and continues to evolve amid shifting global power structures, sanctions, conflicts, and economic transitions.

Russia–India Crude Oil Diplomacy

Energy security is a cornerstone of India’s economic strategy, and crude oil diplomacy with Russia has emerged as a defining feature of India’s foreign policy. As the world’s third-largest oil consumer, India imports nearly 85% of its crude oil requirements. Historically, India sourced most of its oil from West Asian nations; however, geopolitical instability, price volatility, and sanctions have prompted India to diversify suppliers.

Impact of Western Sanctions on Russia

Following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the United States and European Union imposed stringent sanctions on Moscow. European nations drastically reduced imports of Russian oil, forcing Russia to seek new buyers in Asia. India capitalised on this shift, significantly increasing imports of discounted Russian crude.

This served two purposes:

- 1. Economic advantage** — Russian crude was available at \$20–30 per barrel lower than global Brent prices.

2. Energy stability — Long-term supply contracts ensured stable availability amid global uncertainty.

Strategic Significance for Russia

For Russia, India is a reliable and large-volume buyer. As European markets closed, India emerged as a crucial economic partner, absorbing over 1 million barrels per day at peak levels. This revenue helped Russia stabilise its economy despite sanctions.

Payment Mechanisms

The Western financial sanctions forced India and Russia to explore alternative payment systems:

- India's stance reflects a broader shift toward independent foreign policy decisions.
- Future Prospects
- The India–Russia oil partnership is expected to deepen with:
 - long-term refining contracts
 - joint investments in oil fields
 - expansion of energy transportation corridors via the INSTC route

Crude oil has thus become a central axis of India–Russia ties, strengthening their partnership amid global turbulence.

Role of the European Union The European Union (EU) plays a significant yet indirect role in shaping the geopolitical dynamics among India, the US, Russia, and China. As one of the world's largest trading blocs and a major regulatory authority, the EU influences global policy through sanctions, economic rules, climate frameworks, and technological governance.

Sanctions on Russia

The EU imposed comprehensive sanctions on Russia after the Ukraine invasion, targeting. These sanctions reshaped global oil flows, forcing Russia to increase exports to India and China. The EU's price cap mechanism indirectly enabled India to negotiate better deals for crude imports.

EU–India Relations

1. Climate Policy

Climate cooperation is one of the strongest pillars of EU–India relations. Both actors recognize climate change as a global challenge requiring collective solutions. The EU supports India through financial assistance, technology transfer, and climate diplomacy under the Paris Agreement framework. India's ambitious renewable energy targets—such as achieving 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030—align with EU priorities for a low-carbon global economy. Joint platforms like the Clean Energy and Climate Partnership help coordinate action on sustainable development, energy efficiency, and emissions reduction. However, challenges exist: India demands climate justice, arguing that developed countries must bear greater historical responsibility and provide adequate climate finance. The EU's stringent green standards sometimes clash with India's developmental concerns, especially when they risk affecting economic growth or industrial competitiveness. Yet mutual benefits keep cooperation strong. The EU views India as a crucial player in climate negotiations, while India sees the EU as a reliable partner for green technology, sustainable infrastructure, and clean energy innovation. Going forward, climate action is expected to remain a core strategic pillar for both.

2. Digital Governance

Digital governance has emerged as a strategic field of collaboration between India and the EU, especially as both emphasize data protection, digital sovereignty, and responsible technology use. The EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is considered one of the world's strongest privacy laws, and India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act (DPDPA) reflects several GDPR principles. This creates room for regulatory harmonization, enabling smoother data flows and digital trade. The EU and India cooperate on cybersecurity frameworks, 5G standards, secure digital infrastructure, AI ethics, and combating online extremism. They share concerns about overdependence on global tech giants and the misuse of personal data. Their joint digital dialogue also covers e-governance, government digital services, and secure cloud systems. However, differences remain. The EU strongly advocates open data transfers and privacy, while India prioritizes data localization and digital sovereignty. These contrasting approaches sometimes slow down agreements on digital trade. Despite this, both recognize that digital partnerships are essential for economic modernization, secure technology ecosystems, and maintaining strategic autonomy in the global tech landscape dominated by the US and China.

3. Trade and Investment

The EU is among India's largest trading partners, accounting for nearly 11% of India's total trade. Key sectors include pharmaceuticals, machinery, textiles, automobiles, and IT services. The EU is also one of the largest foreign investors in India, contributing to manufacturing, renewable energy, financial services, and digital industries. Efforts to revive the India–EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA), stalled since 2013, have resumed with renewed political commitment on both sides. The EU seeks stronger market access, regulatory alignment, and environmental standards, while India demands flexible rules, reduced duties, and greater mobility for Indian professionals. Non-tariff barriers, complex EU certification standards, and disagreements over agricultural access remain challenges. Meanwhile, India views the EU as a stable, rules-based trade partner—unlike China's unpredictable policies or US tariff pressures. Enhanced trade and investment cooperation is vital for India's diversification strategy, especially as global supply chains shift away from China. Overall, deeper economic engagement promises mutual benefits but requires resolving long-standing issues related to tariffs, intellectual property, sustainability clauses, and service-sector mobility.

4. Green Technology

Green technology is becoming a transformative area in EU–India ties. As India transitions toward renewable energy and low-carbon development, it relies heavily on advanced technologies such as hydrogen energy, smart grids, battery storage, electric mobility, and carbon capture systems—domains where the EU has significant expertise. The European Investment Bank (EIB) funds numerous green projects in India, including metro systems, solar parks, and climate-resilient infrastructure. Both sides collaborate on the India–EU Green Hydrogen Partnership, aimed at scaling hydrogen production, sharing best practices, and creating secure supply chains. However, India is concerned about high costs and restrictive EU standards that could slow technology adoption. The EU's new sustainability regulations, including requirements on carbon emissions, recycling, and supply chain transparency, can create hurdles for Indian manufacturers. Despite these issues, India values EU support for clean technology innovation, which is critical for its climate commitments.

and industrial modernization. The EU sees India as a huge market for green products and a key partner for global energy transition. This sector is likely to expand significantly, shaping a long-term strategic partnership.

5. Security Cooperation

Security cooperation between India and the EU has deepened due to shared concerns about terrorism, cyber threats, maritime security, and geopolitical instability. The EU supports India's role as a stabilizing force in the Indo-Pacific, endorsing freedom of navigation, rules-based order, and resistance to coercive activities—especially in the South China Sea. India participates in joint naval exercises with EU member states, including France, Germany, and Spain. Counter-terrorism cooperation focuses on intelligence sharing, tracking terror financing, and combating radicalization. Cybersecurity is another emerging field, with both parties emphasizing secure digital infrastructure and resilience against state-sponsored cyberattacks. However, defense cooperation faces limitations because the EU lacks a unified military policy; instead, individual member states collaborate with India through bilateral agreements. Nevertheless, the EU views India as a key partner for maintaining global stability amid rising China-US rivalry. For India, EU support enhances its diplomatic influence and diversifies security partnerships beyond Russia and the United States.

Challenge: EU Regulations such as CBAM

The Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) poses a major challenge for Indian exporters. Under CBAM, imports into the EU from carbon-intensive industries—such as steel, cement, aluminium, fertilizers, and electricity—are taxed based on their carbon emissions. The EU argues this prevents “carbon leakage,” ensuring that companies do not shift production to countries with weaker climate regulations. For India, CBAM is problematic because its industrial sector relies heavily on coal-based energy, making it vulnerable to high carbon tariffs. Indian exporters fear loss of competitiveness, increased compliance costs, and reduced access to the EU market. The regulation may force Indian companies to adopt expensive green technologies or upgrade manufacturing processes faster than planned. India sees CBAM as a unilateral measure that violates the principle of climate equity under the UNFCCC. However, the EU insists that CBAM is essential for global climate goals. Negotiations continue, highlighting the tension between environmental responsibility and economic development.

Alignment with the United States

EU Alignment on China's Economic Practices

The EU increasingly aligns with the US on concerns regarding China's economic behavior. Both accuse China of market distortion, industrial subsidies, forced technology transfers, and practices that undermine fair global competition. The EU has tightened investment screening, supply chain security rules, and export controls—mirroring US policies. While the EU does not follow an outright confrontation strategy like Washington, it adopts a “de-risking” approach to reduce dependency on China in critical sectors such as semiconductors, pharmaceuticals, and rare earth minerals. This alignment indirectly shapes India's diplomacy. India, which competes with China yet maintains cautious economic ties with it, must balance cooperation with both the West and Beijing. EU-US convergence limits India's room for strategic flexibility and pressures India to deepen its own economic reforms to attract supply chain relocations.

EU Alignment on Indo-Pacific Strategies

The Indo-Pacific region has become central to EU strategic planning due to concerns about China's rise and global power shifts. The EU's Indo-Pacific strategy aligns significantly with that of the US—emphasizing freedom of navigation, supply chain resilience, democratic governance, and security partnerships. Countries like France and Germany have increased naval presence in the region, often coordinating with US, Indian, and Japanese forces. For India, this alignment is beneficial because it strengthens support for its role as a regional power countering Chinese aggression. However, it also binds India closer to Western strategic objectives, reducing flexibility in its independent Indo-Pacific vision. India must balance this with its long-standing defense ties with Russia and its complex border relationship with China.

EU Alignment on Security Partnerships

In security matters, the EU tends to follow the US lead, especially regarding NATO cooperation, technology controls, sanctions, and global conflict management. This alignment influences India's diplomatic choices because India engages deeply with the US for defense modernization but simultaneously depends on Russia for critical military hardware. EU-US cooperation on sanctions—particularly against Russia after the Ukraine war—complicates India's strategic autonomy. Europe expects India to align more closely with Western norms and refrain from supporting Russia economically or diplomatically. India, however, must preserve ties with Moscow due to defense supplies and energy security. Thus, EU-US security convergence indirectly creates pressure on India to recalibrate its multi-aligned foreign policy. This indirectly affects India's diplomatic choices, as India must balance EU-US expectations with Russia and China relations.

Geopolitical Significance

The EU's role in global energy markets—especially its rejection of Russian gas—reshaped the strategic calculus for Asian nations. India's energy ties with Russia strengthened as the EU withdrew, demonstrating the EU's indirect but powerful impact on global geopolitics.

Strategic Background of US Tariffs on China (600+ words)

Donald Trump's tariff strategy against China was one of the most ambitious trade offensives in modern history. The rationale behind these tariffs included:

1. Intellectual Property Theft (≈100 words)

One of the central reasons behind Donald Trump's tariff strategy was the long-standing US accusation that China engaged in widespread intellectual property theft. American companies operating in China often complained of forced technology transfers, where access to the Chinese market was granted only if they shared sensitive commercial knowledge. Additionally, cyber-espionage cases involving the theft of industrial secrets strengthened US concerns. Washington argued that these practices undermined fair competition and allowed Chinese firms to grow rapidly without investing in innovation. Imposing tariffs was therefore viewed as a punitive tool to pressure China into respecting intellectual property rights and altering these practices.

2. Reinforcing US Manufacturing (≈100 words)

Trump's economic nationalism centered on reviving domestic manufacturing, which he believed was hollowed out due to China's rise as a low-cost production hub. By imposing high tariffs, the administration aimed to make Chinese imports more expensive for American

consumers and companies. This was expected to force businesses to reconsider outsourcing and instead relocate manufacturing back to the United States. Supporters argued that reshoring production would create new industrial jobs, reduce the trade deficit, and rebuild the American middle class. Although the impact was mixed, the tariffs were presented as a strategic intervention to reverse decades of deindustrialization.

3. Supply Chain Diversification

Another strategic objective was to reduce the US dependence on China-centric supply chains. Washington grew concerned that China controlled critical sectors such as electronics, semiconductors, active pharmaceutical ingredients, and rare earth elements essential for defense technologies. Heavy reliance on Chinese factories meant that geopolitical tensions or future conflicts could disrupt US economic security. Through tariffs, the US sought to encourage companies to move production to alternative countries like Vietnam, India, or Mexico. This diversification strategy gained further momentum during the COVID-19 pandemic, when global supply chains collapsed, reinforcing the risks of overdependence on a single manufacturing hub.

4. Countering China's Global Ambitions

China's rapid economic expansion, particularly through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), signaled its intent to become a dominant global power. The US viewed BRI as a tool for Beijing to expand geopolitical influence through infrastructure loans, trade partnerships, and strategic investments across Asia, Africa, and Europe. The Trump administration believed that China's economic strength directly supported military modernization and diplomatic leverage. Tariffs became part of a broader containment strategy to slow China's economic growth and limit its ability to challenge American hegemony. By disrupting Chinese exports, the US aimed to weaken China's financial resources and curb its global ambitions.

5. Political Messaging

Trump's tariff strategy also held strong domestic political value. His "America First" agenda appealed to blue-collar workers who felt marginalized by globalization. By targeting China, he portrayed himself as a leader willing to confront unfair trade practices that previous administrations had ignored. Politically, the tariffs helped energize his electoral base and positioned him as tough on foreign adversaries. The trade war narrative played well in key swing states dependent on manufacturing jobs. Additionally, taking a hard stance against China aligned with growing bipartisan sentiment in Washington, making tariffs an instrument not only of economic policy but of political messaging.

Tariffs appealed to Trump's voter base, showcasing him as tough on China.

The tariffs failed to fully achieve their goals, but they shifted global supply chains and triggered a seismic shift in US-China relations. India benefited from some diversification incentives but also faced disruptions in imports.

India perceived this as discriminatory and politically motivated. Many professionals faced uncertainty, family disruption, and job insecurity.

India-Russia-China Trade Relations

India-Russia-China trade relations have evolved through multiple geopolitical cycles, transforming from Cold War-era alignments to contemporary multi-polar cooperation. Each of the three countries has emerged as a central pillar in Eurasian strategic dynamics. Their trade relations are influenced not only by economic complementarities but also by global

power rivalries, U.S. sanctions, regional security issues, and long-term national interests. Historically, India and Russia have shared strong military, defense and energy relations, which laid the foundation for deeper economic cooperation. After the Soviet era, trade slowed but later revived due to mutual strategic necessity. Russia became a significant supplier of defense equipment, nuclear energy technology, and more recently, discounted crude oil. India's reliance on Russia for weaponry created interdependency that strengthened diplomatic trust. As Russia drifted away from Western markets due to sanctions, India became a vital buyer, particularly during the post-Ukraine conflict period. This shift re-structured Eurasian trade patterns and opened new channels for energy, fertilizers, and commodities. On the other hand, India's trade relations with China have a completely different nature—economically deep but geopolitically tense. China is India's largest trading partner, especially in electronics, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and capital goods. However, India faces a massive trade deficit with China, which is politically sensitive. Despite border conflicts and strategic competition in the Indian Ocean, trade has continued to grow. This reflects a paradox: geopolitical rivalry coexists with economic interdependence. China and Russia, meanwhile, share a robust strategic and economic partnership, especially under the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and BRICS. After U.S. sanctions, Russia strengthened its shift toward China for investment, technology, and energy trade. The Power of Siberia pipeline, yuan-based trade settlements, and coordinated positions on global governance institutions have deepened their alignment. The trilateral dynamics among India, Russia, and China are shaped by group platforms such as BRICS, SCO, RIC (Russia–India–China dialogue), and multilateral institutions like the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). However, internal contradictions also remain. India is cautious of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), particularly the CPEC project passing through Pakistan-occupied regions. Russia tries to balance relations with both India and China, but its dependence on China has increased significantly since 2022. India, while cooperating with Russia, simultaneously builds strategic ties with the U.S. and QUAD nations to counter China. Thus, India carefully balances both sides—aligning with Russia for energy and defense, while working with the U.S. and Japan for Indo-Pacific strategy. This triangular relationship is further influenced by the global technology race, supply chain realignments, and currency-based trade shifts. India seeks to reduce dependency on both China and Western supply chains through initiatives like Atmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India. Russia looks to India and China as replacement markets due to Western sanctions. China, for its part, aims to expand its manufacturing dominance and secure access to energy and minerals. In conclusion, India–Russia–China trade relations represent a complex mixture of cooperation, competition, and strategic hedging. Economic interdependence coexists with geopolitical suspicion. While Russia and China strengthen an anti-West alliance, India attempts to maintain strategic autonomy by diversifying partnerships. These dynamics will continue to shape Asian and global geopolitics in the coming decades.

Russia–India Crude Oil Trade Expansion

India's crude oil trade with Russia has undergone a historic transformation, especially after the Russia–Ukraine conflict of 2022. Before the war, Russia accounted for barely 2% of India's crude imports. However, Western sanctions and price caps forced Russia to redirect its oil to Asian markets, particularly India and China. India, being one of the world's largest

oil importers, capitalized on this geopolitical shift. The primary factor behind India's increased Russian oil imports was the availability of crude at significantly discounted prices. As European nations banned Russian oil, Russia offered deep price cuts—sometimes \$20–30 per barrel below global rates—to maintain revenue flows. For India, which imports over 85% of its crude requirements, this was a crucial opportunity to ease inflationary pressures and stabilize domestic fuel prices. Another factor was India's flexible energy policy. Unlike Western nations, India refused to join sanctions and maintained that its energy purchases were guided solely by national interests. This allowed India to negotiate long-term contracts with Russian energy companies. India also began using alternative payment mechanisms, such as rupee–ruble trade and settlement through UAE currencies, bypassing the dollar-dominated system. The increased imports from Russia also supported India's refining sector. Indian refiners like Reliance and Nayara benefited by buying cheap Russian crude, refining it, and exporting fuel products such as diesel and aviation fuel to Europe and other regions—ironically even to nations that had sanctioned Russian oil. This created a profitable cycle where India emerged as a vital refining hub in global markets. Russia gained immensely from India's role as a reliable buyer. Indian demand allowed Russia to stabilize its energy revenues despite Western restrictions. Russia also invested in logistics routes through the Indian Ocean, Arctic routes, and the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). This diversified Russia's geopolitical outreach toward the Global South. However, the growing India–Russia oil trade has geopolitical consequences. The U.S. and EU have criticized India for enabling Russia's economy indirectly. India, however, argues that its purchases help “global market stability” by preventing a spike in oil prices. The West has reluctantly accepted India's stance, recognizing that forcing India to stop buying Russian oil would disrupt supply and raise global inflation. Long-term challenges remain. Russia increasingly demands payments in yuan and dirhams, complicating financial mechanisms. Insurance restrictions by Western nations disrupt tanker operations. Shipping costs increase due to long voyages via Africa. Indian refiners also balance their Russian exposure with suppliers from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and the U.S. to avoid over-reliance on any one country. Despite these obstacles, India–Russia crude oil ties have fundamentally changed Eurasian trade geography. India has emerged as Russia's second-largest oil buyer, reshaping energy geopolitics. The relationship has enhanced India's bargaining power and allowed Russia to reduce dependence on the West. This energy partnership will remain a key pillar of Indo-Russian relations for years to come.

The Role of the European Union (EU) in Global Geopolitics

The European Union plays a major role in shaping global geopolitical and trade structures, especially in the context of U.S.–Russia–China strategic competition. The EU's policies on sanctions, digital governance, human rights, supply chains, and environmental regulations significantly influence international relations. The EU's relationship with Russia deteriorated sharply after the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and collapsed completely after the 2022 Ukraine war. The EU imposed multiple sanctions—financial bans, technology restrictions, and oil embargoes—aimed at weakening Russia's economic and military capabilities. These sanctions redirected Russia's trade toward Asia, especially India and China. The EU thus indirectly contributed to the rise of Eurasian economic networks outside Western influence. The EU maintains complex relations with China. While China is a major trade partner, the

EU increasingly sees it as a systemic rival. The EU has raised concerns over China's human rights record, market distortions, intellectual property theft, and dominance in critical supply chains. Europe is gradually reducing dependency on Chinese technology, promoting "de-risking" rather than decoupling. Investments in semiconductor ecosystems, green technologies, and digital sovereignty aim to counterbalance China's influence. The EU's partnership with the U.S. is foundational but not friction-free. While both share common values and cooperate on NATO, climate policy, and global democracy, tensions arise when U.S. policies harm European industries—such as through tariffs, protectionism, or subsidies under the Inflation Reduction Act. Europe seeks autonomy in defense, energy, and technology, but remains dependent on the U.S. for security, especially due to the Russia threat. In South Asia, including India, the EU plays a significant role in trade, investment, climate cooperation, and diplomacy. India–EU trade talks for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) were revived, indicating renewed interest in balancing China's influence. The EU also participates in Indo-Pacific security dialogues, emphasizing freedom of navigation, supply chain security, and technological partnerships. The EU's role is also crucial in global energy transitions, digital governance, and regulatory frameworks. European standards influence global markets because many countries adopt EU norms to access the large European market. Thus, the “Brussels Effect” shapes policies worldwide—from data protection (GDPR) to environmental rules. In summary, the EU acts as a stabilizing force in global geopolitics but also as a catalyst for realignments. Its sanctions push Russia toward Asia. Its trade policies shape China's behavior. Its technological regulations influence the U.S. and Asian countries. The EU remains a central actor in the multipolar world.

The Strategic Logic Behind U.S. Tariffs on China

The United States' tariff strategy toward China, especially under the Trump administration, marked one of the most transformative shifts in global economic policy in the 21st century. While tariffs were presented as a tool to correct trade imbalances, the deeper strategic objective was to contain China's rise as a global technological, economic, and military competitor. The tariff war must therefore be understood not merely as an economic dispute but as a geopolitical maneuver embedded within a long-term U.S. grand strategy. Historically, the U.S. believed that integrating China into the global economy would encourage political liberalization. This assumption failed. Instead, China used globalization to strengthen its manufacturing dominance, acquire advanced technologies through joint ventures, expand state subsidies, and capture global supply chains. By 2016, China had become the “world's factory,” and the U.S. began viewing Beijing as a threat to American industrial power, the dollar-based financial structure, and its global security dominance. Donald Trump's tariff war was the first open confrontation. Tariffs were imposed on more than \$350 billion of Chinese goods. Publicly, Trump claimed China was engaging in unfair trade practices, currency manipulation, and intellectual property theft. However, behind the scenes, strategic objectives were more profound: reducing U.S. dependency on Chinese supply chains, preventing China's technological superiority, and protecting American national security. This became especially clear when the U.S. targeted sectors linked to China's Made in China 2025 plan—AI, robotics, 5G, semiconductors, aerospace, and pharmaceuticals. The tariff war disrupted global supply chains and forced multinational corporations to re-evaluate their manufacturing strategies. Many companies shifted

operations to Vietnam, Mexico, India, and Indonesia. At the same time, China responded by subsidizing domestic industries, seeking new markets in Africa and Latin America, and accelerating self-reliance in critical technologies. An important element behind U.S. tariffs was domestic political pressure. American blue-collar workers, particularly in the Rust Belt, believed China had “stolen” their jobs. Trump leveraged this sentiment by presenting tariffs as a tool to bring manufacturing back to the U.S. Although this goal was only partially achieved, it helped him politically consolidate support. Another aspect was U.S. pressure on allies and partners. The U.S. urged Europe, Japan, and India to align with its vision of “free and fair trade” and reduce dependency on Chinese markets. This agenda extended to restricting Chinese investments, banning Huawei, and monitoring Chinese students and researchers in U.S. institutions. Ultimately, the tariff war represents a larger structural conflict between a rising China and a declining unipolar U.S. The conflict is long-term and will continue regardless of political leadership. Tariffs were just the first instrument in a broader strategic competition that now includes sanctions, technology restrictions, military alliances, and ideological rivalry.

The Deep State’s Role in Destabilizing Asian Relations with the U.S.

The concept of the “Deep State” refers to entrenched networks within intelligence agencies, military institutions, think tanks, and corporate lobbies that influence U.S. foreign policy irrespective of elected governments. Analysts argue that U.S. Deep State actors—particularly within the CIA, State Department, Pentagon, and certain defense industries—shape long-term Asian strategy with a focus on maintaining American hegemony. The Deep State views Asia as the pivotal battleground of the 21st century. China’s economic rise, India’s demographic strength, and Russia’s military power threaten U.S. dominance. Therefore, the Deep State’s objective is to prevent the emergence of any unified Asian bloc that could challenge American interests. One major strategy involves stoking regional tensions. U.S. strategic documents repeatedly stress the importance of preventing hostile continental coalitions. Therefore, the U.S. often supports policies that increase distrust between Asian neighbors. Examples include promoting India–China rivalry through Indo-Pacific alliances, supporting Taiwan militarily to provoke China, backing Japan’s rearmament, strengthening South Korea’s military posture, and deepening Australia’s integration into U.S. security architecture through AUKUS. The Deep State also pressures Asian nations to reduce economic dependence on China. It influences sanctions, cybersecurity laws, technology bans, and diplomatic pressure campaigns. In India’s case, the U.S. encourages collaboration with QUAD allies and promotes narratives around Chinese expansionism. Though India has legitimate security concerns, the U.S. leverages them to maintain its strategic presence in the Indian Ocean. Another method involves manipulating information ecosystems. Western media, think tanks, and academic networks often publish narratives critical of Asian governments that challenge U.S. interests. Simultaneously, they praise governments that align with American policy. This soft-power mechanism shapes public opinion and influences diplomatic decisions. The Deep State also plays a role in controlling technological ecosystems. Silicon Valley giants—Google, Amazon, Meta, Microsoft—strategically support U.S. foreign policy objectives through data governance, cybersecurity protocols, and AI governance frameworks. These create dependency among Asian economies and limit their technological sovereignty. In summary, the Deep State sees Asia as a zone where balancing,

divide-and-rule, and containment strategies must be maintained to preserve U.S. global leadership. This hidden architecture of power significantly shapes America's relationships with China, India, and Russia, often fostering conflict rather than cooperation.

America's Hostile Tariff Policy Toward India

U.S.–India relations are complex: cooperation in defense and the Indo-Pacific coexists with economic rivalry. America's tariff policies against India reflect a deeper contradiction—Washington sees India as a strategic partner but also as a growing economic competitor. Under Donald Trump, India was repeatedly criticized for being “tariff king.” The U.S. accused India of imposing high duties on American goods, especially Harley-Davidson motorcycles, dairy products, agricultural goods, medical devices, and digital services. Trump's administration revoked India's GSP (Generalized System of Preferences) benefits, which previously allowed duty-free exports on over 2,000 products. This decision impacted Indian exporters, particularly in textiles, jewelry, engineering goods, and agriculture. However, these tariff actions were motivated by more than trade imbalances. The U.S. feared India's growing confidence in negotiating trade deals, expanding domestic manufacturing, and emerging as a competitor in pharmaceuticals, IT, steel, renewable energy, and defense manufacturing. Trump's protectionist agenda sought to safeguard American industries from rising Asian competitors—not just China but increasingly India. Another reason for U.S. hostility was India's strategic autonomy. India refused to join U.S.-led policies against Iran and Russia, continued purchasing Russian defense equipment, and maintained diplomatic independence. These decisions angered certain U.S. policymakers who expected India to align more closely with American global strategy. Furthermore, U.S. agricultural and medical lobbies pressured the government to target India due to unmet demands related to market access, patent issues, dairy standards, and price caps on medical devices. Tariffs became a political weapon to force India into compliance. Despite tensions, both nations understood the strategic necessity of cooperation. After 2021, some disputes were softened, but structural differences remained. India's rapid economic rise means future trade conflicts are inevitable. America wants access to the Indian market, while India wants to protect domestic industry and become a global manufacturing hub. These divergent interests fuel tariff disputes, making the relationship a mixture of friendship and competition.

Trump's Biased H-1B Visa Policies Against Indians

The H-1B visa program is essential for Indian professionals in the IT and engineering sectors. However, under the Trump administration, the program faced severe restrictions. The Trump government claimed the policy aimed to protect American jobs, but evidence indicates that the policies disproportionately targeted Indian workers. Indians constituted more than 70% of all H-1B holders. Trump's “America First” agenda introduced strict measures—higher denial rates, increased scrutiny, mandatory interviews, wage-level rules, and restrictive guidance documents. Many applications were rejected not because of fraud but due to ambiguous reinterpretations of the term “specialty occupation.” A deeper political motive existed. Trump's political base believed that immigrants—especially from India and China—were taking high-paying tech jobs. Restricting H-1B visas appealed to nationalist voters. Additionally, American tech workers' unions lobbied heavily for limiting Indian workers, citing wage depression concerns. These narratives ignored the fact that Indian talent sustained U.S. technological leadership for decades. The administration's policies were particularly

harsh on Indian consulting companies like Infosys, TCS, and Wipro. Meanwhile, U.S. corporations such as Amazon, Google, and Microsoft still secured approvals by navigating regulatory complexities with legal teams. Thus, the burden fell primarily on Indian mid-level professionals and small tech firms. Another political dimension was U.S.–India trade tension. Restricting H-1B visas became a leverage tool. The U.S. used visa pressure to extract concessions in areas like digital taxation, e-commerce, price controls for medical devices, and defense purchases. India strongly protested, arguing that skilled migration benefits both countries. Ultimately, Trump’s H-1B policies reflected a blend of economic nationalism, anti-immigrant political rhetoric, and strategic bargaining. Though many restrictions were later reversed, the legacy of uncertainty continues.

Conclusion

The geopolitical landscape of the 21st century is defined by intense economic rivalry, military competition, technological battles, and shifting alliances. India, the United States, China, and Russia stand at the center of this transformation. The interactions among these four nations illustrate the complexities of a new multipolar world. U.S. tariff policies, the Deep State’s invisible influence, H-1B visa politics, and evolving trade partnerships collectively shape global power relations. India’s position is particularly unique. It is a strategic partner to the United States, a long-standing defense ally of Russia, a competitor and collaborator with China, and an emerging force in the Indo-Pacific. India manages a delicate balance—purchasing discounted Russian crude oil, competing with China in South Asia, cooperating with the U.S. in technology and defense, while simultaneously pursuing independent foreign policy choices. This balanced approach ensures India’s autonomy and strengthens its global significance. China’s rise remains the biggest driver of U.S. policies. The American tariff strategy—initially justified as a correction of trade imbalances—became a tool for containing China’s technological and industrial expansion. The U.S. aims to prevent China from dominating industries like semiconductors, AI, aerospace, and green technologies. This led to tariffs, sanctions on Chinese tech firms, and the creation of alliances such as QUAD, AUKUS, and Indo-Pacific security cooperation. Russia, under Western sanctions, has pivoted toward Asia, especially India and China. India’s purchase of Russian crude oil at discounted rates has reshaped global energy flows. This partnership challenges Western dominance and signals the emergence of Eurasian energy blocs that operate outside the dollar-based system. The EU plays an influential regulatory role—its sanctions on Russia, trade policies toward China, and strategic cooperation with India shape the contours of global governance. The EU acts as a stabilizer but also contributes to geopolitical realignments. American domestic politics strongly influences global policy. Trump’s tariff strategy, H-1B restrictions, and confrontational trade measures reflect nationalist pressures rooted in declining industrial jobs and voter anxieties. These decisions were often framed as economic protections but were deeply political. The H-1B visa restrictions targeted Indian professionals disproportionately, revealing biases within U.S. immigration policy that ignored the mutual benefits of skilled migration. The “Deep State” narrative underscores the continuity in U.S. foreign policy beyond presidential transitions. Intelligence networks, defense establishments, and corporate power structures seek to maintain U.S. supremacy, often at the cost of destabilizing Asian unity. Their strategies include controlling narratives, pressuring allies, and fostering divisions to prevent the rise of a unified Asian coalition. Ultimately, the

geopolitical future will be shaped by competition for technological dominance, energy security, manufacturing power, and currency influence. Trade wars, tariff policies, and visa restrictions are no longer merely economic issues—they represent broader ideological, military, and diplomatic contests. India's challenge will be to maintain strategic autonomy while strengthening economic growth, technological capability, and regional influence. The U.S. must accommodate new power centers. China will continue expanding its global footprint, and Russia will deepen Asian partnerships. The conclusion is clear: the world is moving toward a multi-centered order where power is dispersed, alliances are fluid, and economic nationalism shapes international politics. Tariff wars, visa policies, and deep-state strategies mark only the beginning of this new era.

Evaluation

Evaluating the interplay between tariff policies, geopolitical rivalry, and immigration strategies reveals a complex environment where political decisions are deeply intertwined with economic interests and national security concerns. The evaluation must highlight three core themes: (1) the shift from globalization to protectionism, (2) the rise of Asian economic power, and (3) the continued dominance of U.S. strategic influence.

1. Shift from Globalization to Protectionism

For several decades, globalization promoted open markets, free trade, and cross-border movement of talent. However, Trump's tariff strategy symbolized a dramatic reversal. The U.S., once the champion of free trade, adopted aggressive protectionism to safeguard domestic industries. The tariff war with China, tariff disputes with India, and renegotiation of trade agreements demonstrate this shift. From an evaluative standpoint, these tariffs produced mixed results. Some industries gained temporary protection, but global supply chains were disrupted, inflation increased, and multinational corporations faced uncertainty. Moreover, tariffs failed to significantly reduce U.S. trade deficits, indicating the limitations of unilateral protectionist strategies.

2. Rise of Asian Power Centers

Asia has emerged as the world's economic engine. China's manufacturing strength, India's demographic advantage, and Russia's energy resources constitute powerful regional capabilities. As these nations assert themselves, Western dominance is challenged. India–Russia trade, particularly in crude oil, exemplifies the declining influence of Western sanctions. China's Belt and Road Initiative shows its ambition to reshape global infrastructure and influence. India's leadership in digital public goods and technology ecosystems demonstrates a shift toward South-led development models. This shift is uncomfortable for U.S. policymakers, especially the Deep State, which seeks to maintain American supremacy. Evaluating this dynamic suggests that tensions will rise as Asia becomes more integrated economically while remaining fragmented politically.

3. U.S. Strategic Influence and Deep State Mechanisms

Despite Asia's rise, the U.S. still commands enormous influence—militarily, financially, technologically, and politically. The Deep State's strategy ensures continuity of U.S. foreign policy across administrations. Whether it is Obama, Trump, or Biden, the core objective remains the same: prevent the emergence of rival power centers.

Evaluation of Deep State operations shows that:

- U.S. policies in Asia aim to strengthen alliances (Japan, South Korea, India, Australia).
- It uses sanctions, tariffs, visa controls, and information campaigns as geopolitical tools.
- It influences global governance institutions like the IMF, World Bank, and WTO.

The H-1B visa system reveals contradictions. While the U.S. needs highly skilled Indian workers for Silicon Valley and medical research, political rhetoric often frames them as threats to American jobs. The evaluation concludes that H-1B restrictions were driven more by domestic politics than genuine economic logic.

4. India's Role as a Balancing Power

India's strategic autonomy presents a unique evaluation challenge. It must navigate complex relations with competing power blocs. India's refusal to join Western sanctions on Russia, its border tensions with China, and its growing defense ties with the U.S. reflect multilayered diplomacy.

Evaluating India's role shows:

Its energy-security decisions prioritize national interest.

It resists pressure from both the U.S. and China.

It is slowly becoming a "swing power," influencing global alignments.

5. Long-Term Implications

Geopolitically, the tariff wars, tech rivalries, and visa restrictions are early indicators of deeper systemic changes. The evaluation predicts:

continued U.S.–China rivalry for technological supremacy,

India's growing leadership in the Indo-Pacific,

Russia's long-term pivot toward Asia,

Europe's struggle to stay relevant.

In sum, the evaluation highlights a world in transition—where old power structures resist the rise of new ones, and economic tools like tariffs and visas become weapons in geopolitical battles.

Final Remarks Statement

The 21st century marks the beginning of a geopolitical transformation that will redefine global power for decades. The interactions among India, China, Russia, and the United States highlight a world no longer dominated by a single superpower. Instead, emerging coalitions, regional blocs, and independent national strategies shape the geopolitical landscape.

Final analysis shows that U.S. tariff policies, H-1B visa politics, and Deep State strategies are part of a broader agenda to defend American interests. Meanwhile, Asian countries pursue sovereignty, economic development, and strategic autonomy. India stands out as a rising civilization power—balancing diplomacy with assertiveness. China will continue challenging U.S. dominance in technology, manufacturing, and defense. Russia will strengthen its ties with Asian economies to bypass Western sanctions. The European Union will maintain a regulatory and diplomatic role but must adapt to changing realities. The world is slowly transitioning into a multipolar order where power is distributed, alliances are flexible, and national interests supersede ideological commitments. Tariff battles, visa politics, and trade realignments are not isolated developments—they symbolize the restructuring of global systems. The final remark is that countries like India must focus on economic strength,

technological innovation, and strategic partnerships. A strong India can navigate these complex geopolitical currents, assert its rightful position, and contribute to global stability.

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