

## Chapter 3 US Hegemony in World Politics

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**Q 1. Which among the following statements about hegemony is incorrect?**

1. The word implies the leadership or predominance of one State.
2. It was used to denote the predominance of Athens in ancient Greece.
3. The country having hegemonic position will possess unchallenged military power.
4. Hegemonic position is fixed. Once a hegemon, always a hegemon.

**Ans.** d. Hegemonic position is fixed. Once a hegemon, always a hegemon.

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**Q 2. Which among the following statements is wrong about the contemporary world order?**

1. There is an absence of a world government, which could regulate the State's behaviour.
2. The US is the predominant player in world affairs.
3. States are using force against one another.
4. States, which violate international law, are severely punished by the UN.

**Ans.** c. States are using force against one another.

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**Q 3. Which among the following statements is wrong with regard to Operation Iraqi Freedom?**

1. More than forty countries joined in the US led coalition of the willing to invade Iraq.
2. The reason given for invading Iraq was to prevent it from developing weapons of mass destruction.
3. The action was taken with the prior approval of the UN.
4. The US-led coalition did not face major resistance from Iraqi forces.

**Ans.** c. The action was taken with the prior approval of the UN.

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**Q 4. Give an example each of the three types of hegemony that are dealt with the chapter. Do not cite examples that are in the chapter.**

**Ans. 1. Hegemony as Hard Power:** Such kind of hegemony is related to the relations, patterns and balances of military capability between states. Tabassum was an artist living in Nigeria and was planning to join Art and Craft Academy to give proficiency to her artistic aptitude. But she lost her leg in 2003 missile attack by the US. After she overcame it, she made efforts to achieve and fulfil her dreams if the foreign armies leave her country.

**2. Hegemony as Structural Power:** Such kind of hegemony is reflected in the role played by the US in providing global public goods. Tabish is very good in his studies in the countryside of Middle East Asia and is planning to study subjects from Arts stream to accommodate himself in different aspects as per requirements. But parents want him to be a master in computers to become Software Engineer due to a flair for job opportunities in the same.

**3. Hegemony as Soft Power:** Such kind of hegemony is about the capacity to ‘manufacture consent’, means class ascendancy in the social, political and, particularly ideological spheres. Mayank is a young and energetic man of Melbourne, immigrants from Russia. His father gets upset when he puts on a black shirt with white jeans while he goes to church. He justifies that black colour signifies protest for freedom and white signifies freedom in a peaceful manner.

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**Q 5. Mention the ways in which US dominance since the Cold War is different from its position as a superpower during the Cold War.**

**Ans.** US dominance since the Cold War is different from its position as a superpower during the Cold War were as:

1. The US hegemony began in 1991 after Soviet power disappeared from the international scene. Some aspects of US hegemony did not emerge in 1991 but in fact, go back to the end of the Second World War in 1945.
  2. Second, the US did not start behaving like a hegemonic power right from 1991; it became clear much later that the world was in fact, living in a period of hegemony.
  3. In August 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait, rapidly occupying and subsequently annexing it. After a series of diplomatic attempts failed at convincing Iraq to quit its aggression, the United Nations mandated the liberation of Kuwait by force. For the UN, this was a dramatic decision after years of deadlock during the Cold War. The US President George H.W. Bush hailed the emergence of ‘new world order’.
  4. A massive coalition force of 660,000 troops from 34 countries fought against Iraq and defeated it in what came to be known as the First Gulf War. However, the UN operation, which was called ‘Operation Desert Storm’, was overwhelmingly American. The First Gulf War revealed the vast technological gap that had opened up between the US military capability and that of other states.
  5. Incredibly, the US may actually have made a profit from the war. According to many reports, the US received more money from countries like Germany, Japan and Saudi Arabia than it had spent on the war.
  6. In the area of soft power, the US became triumphant. As the example of blue jeans in the Soviet Union clearly shows, the US was able to engineer a generational divide in Soviet Society on the basis of a cultural product.
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**Q 6. Match the following:**

Operation Infinite Reach	War against Al-Qaeda and Taliban
Operation Enduring Freedom	Coalition of the Willing
Operation Desert Storm	Missile attack in Sudan
Operation Iraqi Freedom	First Gulf War

**Ans.** Operation Infinite Reach – Missile attack in Sudan.  
Operation Enduring Freedom – War against Al Qaeda and Taliban.

Operation Desert Storm – First Gulf War.  
Operation Iraqi Freedom – Coalition of the Willing.

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**Q 7. What are the constraints on American hegemony today? Which one of these do you expect to get more important in the future?**

**Ans.** The biggest constraints to American hegemony lie within the heart of hegemony itself. We can identify three constraints on American power as below:

1. The first constraint is the institutional architecture of the American state itself. A system of division of powers between the three branches of government places significant brakes upon the unrestrained and immoderate exercise of America's military power by the executive branch.
  2. The second constraint on American power is also domestic in nature and stems from the open nature of American society. Although the American mass media may from time to time impose or promote a particular perspective on domestic public opinion in the US, there is nevertheless a deep scepticism towards the purposes and methods of government in American political culture. This is a huge constraint on US military action overseas.
  3. The third constraint in the US is perhaps the most important. There is only one organisation in the international system that could possibly moderate the exercise of American power today, and that is the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). The US obviously has an enormous interest in keeping the alliance of democracies that follow the market economies alive and therefore it is possible that its allies in the NATO will be able to moderate the exercise of US hegemony.
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**Q 8. Read the three extracts in the chapter from Lok Sabha debate on the Indo-US deal. Develop any one of these into a full speech defending a certain position on Indo-US relations.**

**Ans.** The following speech has been developed based on the excerpts from Lok Sabha debate as presented by Major General (Retired) B.C. Khanduri of BJP:

Sir, I would respectfully urge this august House to recognise the changed mood of the world towards India. We should not ignore the fact that India might be next waiting in the wings to perform as a superpower to maintain its own identity. At the same time, we must also remember that India is also emerging as a world power and superpower.

We should take note of the fact that today the US is — whether we like it or not — the only superpower in this unipolar world. But at the same time, we must also remember that India is also emerging as a world power, and a superpower. Therefore, we feel that we should have good and harmonious relations with the US for mutual promotion of trade and technology. However, India should not compromise from the same on the cost of its own security and identity.

Hence, India should work in a diplomatic manner while it thinks to go hand-in-hand the US in such a manner that India could extract the best benefits from the US hegemony and find out mutual options for itself.

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**Q 9. "If big and resourceful states cannot resist the US hegemony, it is unrealistic to expect much smaller and weaker non-state actors to offer any resistance". Examine this proposition and give your opinion.**

**Ans.** It is a reality that the big and resourceful state cannot resist the US hegemony because there are differences among big countries like China, India and Russia that have the potential to challenge the US hegemony. Under these circumstances, the smaller and weaker non-state actors can offer resistance. These

challenges to American hegemony will emerge in the economic and cultural realms, and will come from a combination of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), social movements, and public opinion; it may arise from sections of the media and intellectuals, artists, and writers. These various actors may well form links across national boundaries, including with Americans, to criticise and resist US policies. We must also remember that it is a unipolar world with the US at the top, and we have no option to leave the world. Thus, we can only resist US policies and hegemony within this world.