

A South Asian Vision for the Global South: The Indian Turn and Possible Entrapments

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Abstract

The process of decolonisation after the end of World War II added scores of new countries to the United Nations. The grouping of these countries was christened under headers signifying the immediate sociopolitical and economic realities of the time. From being labelled as the "*Third World*" to moving to the universalist trapping of a model of development under "*developing countries*", these countries have come a long way in terms of their 'stature' and 'instrumentality' in the international system. Away from the pejorative towards weaker states, the term "global South" stuck to represent the reality of these large swath of mostly poorer and middle-income states. South Asian region, particularly India, has been pivotal in shaping the narrative around global South wherein both have historically complimented their politics of being on the global stage. Given the contemporary geopolitical flux, the global South is back in many ways than one. The dormancy of the Cold War era having long been shrugged off, global South has been reasserting its identity and instrumentality in the international system. Pioneering this cause are the two countries, India and China, who seek to rightfully claim their seat on the global high table of diplomacy. The paper explores, in particular, how India, as a major South Asian actor is shaping or trying to shape the discourse on global South. While doing so, does it seek to create a new order, distinct from its historical vantage point of a South Asian state? And how does it differ from a Chinese prescription of global South and retains its South Asian vision? The paper also examines India's relations with other South Asian states and its attribute on the external relations of South Asia in its quest for leadership of global South amidst the intense competition with China for the same.

Keywords: China, leadership, narrative, order, Third World