



Mains Practice Question

Q. What were the major consequences of the disintegration of the Soviet Union for countries like India? (250 words)

30 Sep, 2019 GS Paper 1 History

Approach

- Introduce by mentioning about the formation of the USSR and the repercussions of its gradual disintegration.
- Mention the consequences of its disintegration on the global world order and India in particular.
- Conclude by mentioning about the challenges to USA's dominance in the contemporary times.

Introduction

The Soviet Union was established in 1922 by a treaty signed between Russia, Ukraine, Belorussia Soviet Socialist republics and Trans-Caucasian Federation. It later constituted fifteen smaller states. Notwithstanding its achievements, the USSR met its fateful decline in 1991 mainly due to Mikhael Gorbachev's economic and political reforms- Perestroika and Glasnost respectively.

This led to the end of the cold war between the two superpowers USA and USSR. It was marked by events like the fall of the Berlin Wall and power shift from Soviet center to the republics. The breakdown of USSR made USA the sole global power, ending the bipolarity in the world order.

Body

The major consequences of the disintegration of the USSR upon countries like India were:

- **End of ideological battle:** The disintegration of USSR showed the lacunae of socialistic model of economic governance to the developing world. It was seen as a victory of capitalism over socialism, often termed as 'end of ideology' thesis.
- **Rise of free-market economic model:** Dominance of western institutions like IMF and World Bank in the global economic governance pushed developing countries to adopt neo-liberal economic policies. India adopted free-market economic model in the form of LPG reforms post 1991.
- **Decline in financial aid to other countries:** Though a member of NAM, India had mutual strategic cooperation with USSR as per its **1971 Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation**. The financial aid from the Soviet Union to India was significantly reduced due to the disintegration of the USSR. This was also one of the reasons for balance of payments crisis of India in 1991.
- **Reorganization of Eastern Europe:** Changes in politics of Europe led to dilution of division between Western and Eastern Europe. Demolition of the Berlin wall, the unification of Germany, the end of the Warsaw Pact and rise of democratic regimes changed the politics of Europe. The membership of European Union enlarged, leading to emergence of new economic bloc -EU.
- **Rise of Central Asia:** Central Asia became a new centre of global interest particularly from Chinese expansionist ambitions in the region.

Conclusion

Hence, the disintegration of the USSR resulted in a phase of USA's dominance in world politics. Countries like India maintained good relations with Russia post-disintegration and shared the idea of having a multipolar world order.

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