

# G20 Summit – 2023 in Delhi

– **Dusyanth**

In the routine course, under the presidency of India the 18<sup>th</sup> G20 Summit will take place on September 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> at New Delhi. Taking this occasion handy the PM Modi and his government have been incessantly harping that the prestige of India internationally has increased and that people of India shall be proud for India's G20 presidency. Modi even boasts that India's G20 presidency will work to promote the universal sense of "oneness". With vague and unrealistic slogans of theme of "one earth, one family, Our future" he announced that India's G20 presidency will be made a presidency of healing, harmony and hope and he called on the people to join together to make India's G20 presidency for the success of the theme announced by him. All around the country, there were 100 G20 meetings in progress.

With such claims the BJP government led by Modi, through its so-called foreign policy had grown into a "world leader" representing global south stating that "countries wanted to talk to us because there is a belief that we are in touch with key players and we can influence them, we can shape the thinking, we can contribute, sometimes we are prepared to say things which may not be possible for everybody to do so". It is clear that with such claims, Modi and the BJP government intend to impress people. Modi's recent foreign visits to Japan attending G7 meeting and QUAD to Papua New Guinea attending FIPIC (Forum of Indo-Pacific Island Countries) and discussing with Heads of States of those island countries to Australia to the USA acting as proxy as well as scout in the interest of maintaining hegemony of the US imperialism over the Indo-Pacific region against the challenge of China. Particularly middle-class claims– that India's prestige has increased internationally due to the foreign policies adopted by Govt and thus to gain goodwill and electoral advantages from the people in the coming general elections of 2024.

The role played by India in the context of Russia-Ukraine war claimed by the BJP rulers that India's stand was guided by its national interests holds no water; neither such stand had enhanced the prestige of India in international affairs nor India is capable of helping in depolarizing the world. Such a claim belies the actual situation of India and the reality.

If India really wants to play a key role and help to depolarize the World in international affairs, it should sincerely strive to oppose imperialism and create a world with open opportunities that guarantee conditions of peace and security which permit all countries to grow and flourish safe from foreign exploitation, loot and military aggression.

Such principles of foreign policy of India will make people of India proud, but pretensions of non-alignment policies will not be useful but will be understood as the tricks played by BJP to attract voters for its success to governmental power in 2024 general elections!

India has lost all friends in South Asia for its big brother like attitude. Modi had to travel to Egypt and Saudi Arabia to ensure their attendance in G20 meeting at Delhi. In fact as an active member of QUAD and being partner of the US global strategy to maintain hegemony on Indo-Pacific region India has turned out to be a willing proxy in US strategy to contain China. It has lost its prestige as a nonaligned country and got isolated from neighbours in South Asia.

### **Ukraine War:**

The ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine is set to be a significant topic of discussion at the upcoming G-20 Summit in New Delhi. India, as chairman of the Group of 20 (G20) economies hosted a meeting in the city of Bengaluru on 25<sup>th</sup> Feb 2023, was reluctant to raise the issue of the war but Western nations insisted they could not back any outcome that did not include a condemnation and at the same time release the joint statement condemning Russia for its war on Ukraine. China and Russia declined to sign.

The outcome was similar to that of a G20 summit in Bali last November when host Indonesia also issued a final declaration acknowledging differences. On other hand all G20 nations are agreeing to work within their limits on "End the War" between the Russia and Ukraine at this summit.

The US words are different from its actions. NATO summit was held on 11<sup>th</sup> July to 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at Lithuania. In that NATO leaders agreed on Tuesday to allow Ukraine to join "when allies agree and conditions are met," the head of the military alliance said, hours after President Volodymyr Zelenskyy blasted the organisation's failure to set a timetable for his country as "absurd". Although many NATO members have funnelled arms and ammunition to Mr. Zelenskyy's forces, there is no consensus among the 31 allies for admitting Ukraine into NATO's ranks. Instead, the alliance leaders decided to remove obstacles on Ukraine's membership path so that it can join more quickly once the war with Russia is over.

The next day US President Biden released press statement that "We're going to help Ukraine build a strong, capable defence by providing weapons and ammunition to fight Russia." Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy welcomed fresh commitments from US and he expressed disappointment over the lack of a clear path for his country to join NATO.

US seeks to sustain US leadership, counter China as its strategic competitor and Russia as a disrupter and boost US competitiveness and defend 'democracy'. It seeks to invest in the "tools of American power and influence". It seeks to build "the strongest possible coalition of nations". US strategists want to weaken Russian capabilities as they see Russia especially when in alliance with China or any other country as dangerous to US geopolitics. US is using the conjecture of Russia-Ukraine war for global primacy.

## **Biden Administration Approves \$180 Million Arms Sale to Taiwan:**

Early this year U.S. State Department approved on Wednesday (28/12/2022) the \$180 million sale of vehicle-launched anti-tank systems to Taiwan. The Pentagon said, the latest weapons deal between the self-governed island and its main ally. Taiwan would receive Volcano anti-tank munition-laying systems, ammunition, logistics support packages and other services, according to Pentagon. It was the violation of Washington's "One-China policy".

Northrop Grumman and Oshkosh Corporation are the prime contractors for the potential sale. US law requires the executive branch to notify Congress of potential arms sales that are more than a certain amount. But these notifications are usually not made unless lawmakers have given the State Department and the Pentagon informal approval to move ahead.

The potential deal comes as China ramps up military, diplomatic and economic pressure on Taiwan to assert its sovereignty claims, including almost daily Chinese air force missions near the island during the past three years. Tensions spiked earlier this year after US Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan despite China's opposition to the trip. Beijing views Taiwan as a part of China.

On 28<sup>th</sup> July 2023, Again the United States has announced \$ 345 million worth of aid to up support for the self-ruled island that is claimed by China. The package will include "defence articles", military education and training, US President Joe Biden's administration said in a statement on Friday.

The White House announcement did not elaborate on the weapons or equipment that would be provided, but media outlets citing unnamed officials said the supplies would include portable air defence systems, small arms munitions and reconnaissance equipment. The announcement prompted a swift rebuke from Beijing, which has promised to "reunify" democratically ruled Taiwan with the Chinese mainland by force if necessary.

The US does not officially recognise Taiwan, which has just 13 diplomatic allies but has sought to boost its defences amid Beijing's increasingly aggressive stance towards the island, including regular incursions of war planes and naval vessels.

In a statement, Liu Pengyu, a spokesman for the Chinese embassy in Washington, said the US should stop selling arms to Taiwan and "stop creating new factors that could lead to tensions in the Taiwan Strait."

Earlier in month of July, China conducted major military exercises around Taiwan for the second time this year, sending dozens of warships and planes close to the Taiwanese coastline.

While Washington supports Taiwanese independence under its "One China" policy, US law requires it to support the defence of the island, whose disputed status stems from the defeated Kuomintang's retreat to the island at the end of the Chinese civil war. Washington

has approved billions of dollars of military aid for Taipei in recent years, including an \$8bn deal to deliver 66 F-16 fighter jets by 2026. Biden's backing of Taiwan and the independence-leaning administration of Tsai Ing-wen has added to mounting tensions between Washington and Beijing, which has accused the US of turning the island into a "powder keg".

Washington's latest aid package comes after the US Congress authorised Biden to draw aid for Taiwan from American military stocks, a fast-track method of providing equipment that mirrors Washington's assistance to Ukraine since Russia's invasion.

### **Taiwan says the Sale will Boost the Island's Capacity for 'Asymmetric Warfare' Amid Escalating Tensions with China':**

Taiwan's defence ministry said in a statement that the sale of the Volcano would take effect in about a month and that the system would help boost the island's "asymmetric warfare" capacity to make its forces more agile. "The Chinese Communist Party's frequent military activities near Taiwan have posed severe military threats to us," the ministry said, adding that "continuous US military sales are the cornerstone of maintaining regional stability and peace". Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence also expressed its appreciation in a statement that thanked "the U.S. for its firm commitment to Taiwan's security."

### **Not Prolonged Discussions and Lofty Declarations but Immediate Action is the Need of the Hour for Conservation of Bio-Diversity :**

The Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) is held in Montreal, Canada after one month of COP-27 held in Egypt. China and Canada have jointly hosted this convention from Dec 6 to 19 at which official representatives of 196 countries and more than 10,000 delegates were present. Since CBD largely continues to be framed as an 'environmentalist' concern no world leaders nor the heads of the state attended this convention.

Biodiversity loss is not visible like the climate crises. It is invisible but its victims are being extremely visible. Based on the current trends of biodiversity loss, UN reckons an estimated 34,000 plants and 5,200 animal species, including one in eight of world's bird species face extinction; about 30% of breeds of main farm animal species are currently at high risk of extinction. While forests are home to much of the terrestrial bio-diversity, 45% of the earth's original forests are gone, cleared mostly during the past century. Due to this deforestation on a grand scale, the lives of the people of many indigenous tribes throughout the world were shattered. They are displaced and dispossessed of their forest land and habitats. Their cultures ruined. Their rights dishonoured. Capitalist greed for profits is the sole cause for the loss of bio-diversity and the human destitution of the forest dwelling indigenous tribes. The capitalist countries have been cutting of Amazon forests, for their animal husbandry needs – a result of their food habits and needs for meat consumption.

With an intention to arrest the biodiversity loss and to recoup the bio-diversity by 2030 to its natural levels this Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is held.

India which approving and implementing deforestation of large tracts of forest lands in north-eastern states in the name of defence necessities and development of giant hydro projects and spacious high-roads. Large tracts of forest land in Andaman and Nicobar Islands are being deforested for the construction of giant container project in the name of development. The use of abnormal quantities of pesticides in its agricultural sector is causing untold ecological and biodiversity loss. But it is now posing as the champion of conservation of bio-diversity. Along with Japan it raised its voice for not having hard targets on proposals such as reducing the use of pesticides, arguing that different nations have different levels of responsibility towards biodiversity of conservation and succeeded in not reducing the pesticides consumption to the advantage of big agri-business and pesticides corporations and to the detriment of bio-diversity. Such has been the hypocrisy of the Indian governments and its rulers who posture to be champion of conservation and living in harmony with nature.

The convention has resolved to conserve 30% of land and sea by 2030. Thus, the wish that the negotiation of CBD shall result in a "Paris moment for nature", of the executive secretary of the CBD has not happened. The countries have agreed on preparing concrete road-maps by 2024, and the richer countries committed \$30 billion annually by 2030.

But, it has to be seen whether these commitments will be fulfilled or not. Now it is not the discussion and declaration but the action for tangible outcome is the necessity which seems to be a long way to go.

4<sup>th</sup> Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG) and Environment and Climate Ministers meeting under India's G20 Presidency was held in Chennai on July 26-28, 2023. This G20 meeting comes at the halfway point to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They are seriously off-track in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and they know that the ongoing loss of biodiversity accentuates inequality and jeopardizes further progress.

David Cooper, Acting Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity releases the press statement that "Alongside climate action and efforts to combat land degradation, pollution, and waste, we must halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity. Last December, in Montreal, the world community came together and adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework with a mission to do just that. This was a major success for multilateralism. I would like to acknowledge in that regard the efforts of all G20 countries, and China and Canada, in particular. The G20 and its members must now play a leading role to build upon the success of Montreal and ensure that we move from agreement to action."

India is one of the recognized mega-diverse countries of the world, harbouring nearly 7-8% of the recorded species of the world, and representing 4 of the 34 globally identified biodiversity hotspots (Himalaya, Indo-Burma, Western Ghats and Sri Lanka, Sunda land). India is also a vast repository of traditional knowledge associated with biological resources.

So far, over 91,200 species of animals and 45,500 species of plants have been documented in the ten bio-geographic regions of the country.

Another crucial ecosystem for India is its forest, covering 23.39% of the geographical area of the country (of which 75% occurs in the northeastern states) and counting over 16 major forest types and 251 sub-types. Now Governments at the central and state levels have been working within the framework of imperialism and its corporate entities to exploit and drive Indian tribal groups out of the forests. On the other hand, govt. is implementing the welfare schemes for the tribals as an eye swap action. By making lame excuses even these schemes are not implemented full-fledged by the govt. Finally, they suppose that tribal people wanted to migrate as migrant workers from the forest to the plains. Then they can plunder the forest wealth unhindered. As part of that Central Govt. introduced the Forest Conservation Amendment Bill 2022.

This type of Bill and Act being introduced by the government of India, which is hosting the 18<sup>th</sup> G20 Summit, is not opposed to biodiversity. How we can understand the slogan of "one earth, one family, Our future"? Maybe we should understand it like "One Capitalism, One Imperialism, and Our Profits". India has become a subservient to the American imperialism. So, we can only expect such anti-people actions from the government. India's actions in any international forum are always aligned with imperialists interests.

India has done precious little to stand with the developing countries to press the developed countries like the US in bearing the expenditure for preservation of bio-diversity by extending assistance of 2000 Cr. dollars a year up to 2025 and 3000 Cr. dollars a year up to 2030 agreed upon in Montreal. Silence on this will not only be harmful for India but also would mean isolation with the developing countries.