CH : 6

# POWER

## Intro and holistic concept:

- **Varying amount of power** at the disposal of states.
- In one form or another → **all international disputes tend to become power struggle.**
- Since **states agree with each other** → **only when their interests coincide or when forced to do so by superior power**, → it follows that any particular dispute will be resolved generally in terms of the **commitments of power** made by the disputing parties.
- All states **have some power with which they back their policy**, and unless one state completely crushes its opponent in a war, most disputes and in some form of compromise based upon the **investment of power** made by each side.
- **Statesmen** in planning and executing a foreign policy → are eternally **preoccupied with questions of powers**.
    - always must be having a realistic picture of capabilities
    - He must know his state's strength, weakness, and vulnerabilities and
    - be aware of its military, economic and psychological position with regard to other states.

Policy must be backed by adequate power to attain the desired end or objective

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## Aspects of Power:

- National power in international affairs **is not a simple and automatic regulatory mechanism, but is instead a complex and imprecise motion** requiring much intense and constant application to make it.
- Analysis and evaluation of the concept of power are based on *some aspects*:
  - **Relative character of power**
  - **Changing nature of power**
  - **Variable relationship b/w actual and potential power**

## Relative character of power

- **Power is not an absolute**; there is no such thing as a 'powerful' state in a vacuum.
- Power is the means by which a state accomplishes its objectives in dealing with other states.
- So to weigh the amount of power of a state → **Theory of Relativity**
- **Is a state as Russia is powerful?**
- States make a constant attempt to keep the power balance tipped in their favour as regards those particular states that they are competing with.
- **Under-commitment and Over-commitment of Power:**
  - A state should apportion its power according to its objective.
  - ……else will fail in its policy and all the power it did invest will be wasted.
  - Overcommitment often involves…… **pursuit of worthless objectives**…… taking away of power from the support of another policy……. any such overcommitment means that some other policy must of necessity suffer.

## Changing nature of power

- ***Power – non-permanent:***

Power is not a permanent and unchanging entity……BUT → is instead in a **process of constant change**……. greatest policy blunders in history….. statesman's assumption that a given power relationship would endure indefinitely.

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- The **United States**, enjoying a power **superiority over the USSR** at the end of World War II because of the **'monopoly' of atomic weapons**……then immediate reversal by USSR in 1949…so, USA had to improvise policy.
- A miscalculation of the permanence of power is furnished by the **Nazi** belief that **blitzkreig tactics** that were so **effective against the West in 1940** would be equally as **devastating against the Russian armies in 1941.**

- ***Pace of Change:***
  - No state can stand still in terms of power.
  - No two states are developing in power in the same way or the same rate.
  - As a result of this highly dynamic situation……power situation varies even with a change of five minutes.

- ***Policy Safeguards against Change in Power:***
  - any power calculation in international affairs is out of date as soon as it is made……..because of rapid march of events.
  - So the policy makers ……..for the future…….keeps open the **'escape routes' @ alternative policies with adequate power support** are held in reserve to be used in case sudden shifts.

**Irrevocable power commitments are avoided whenever possible**, being entered into only under extreme compulsion or when significant change in the over-all situation is unlikely

## Actual and Potential power

- Another special aspect of the relativity of power is the varying relationship among the total potential of a state, is actual available power, and the **proportion of its available power → it is willing and able to commit in support of any particular policy.**

- **Only in wars of survival** do states seek to put everything they have at the service of a single policy.
- To say that disputes are settled generally in terms of the **relative power commitments of the states** involved is not to say that the more powerful state always gains……..e.g. USA and Afk war
- *Time factor:*
    - Has to calculate power that is available for commitment….policy adjustments
- *Variations from state to state:*
    - One state may have vast potential but may be unable or unwilling to gain, or uninterested in maintaining, a high level of actual power. Such was the condition of the United States during invasion of Afk.

> It is clear that there is at best a great discrepancy between the theoretical potential of a state and the practical maximum of power it can bring into being.

## Factors of National Power

### Tangible and Intangible Factor:

- The factors of power are both tangible and intangible, and **each contributes to the over-all power of a state in a manner unique for that state.**
- **Power defies exact analysis**;
    - the most that policy makers can do is to make their judgments reflect as completely as possible reliable information and objective analysis.
- The **factors of power** involve many aspects of state life, and power comparisons are, therefore, very difficult.
    - One state may have great resource endowment but little military strength; another may have poor resources but great industry; a third, poor industry but a highly mobilized military machine. Which is the most powerful and which is the least powerful?

↓

**No general answer can be given**.

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Each government in the world has made such an estimate long ago to the power of every other state, and it keeps all of them in **a state of constant revision** as new information keeps coming to light.

- No single 'all-important' power factor.

## Tangible factors of Power

### 1) *Geographic situation:*

- ***Size and Shape***
  - .....previously small area states were great powers.....now the opposite trend.
  - Ideally the perfect state is compact, with the minimum frontier commensurate with maximum area.....e.g. France

- ***Location***
  - .....insular, peninsular, coastal, landlocked or continental
    - **insular and peninsular** states naturally must give great concern to their **sea defences**;
    - the **landlocked state** can concentrate upon **land armaments.**
    - The **coastal** state must operate in **both areas.**
  - The histories of both Great Britain and Japan have definitely been affected by their insular location;
    - the virtually landlock situation of Russia has governed much of the policy and limited the effective power of successive governments.

- ***Topography***

| Frontier formation | Internal formation |
|---|---|
| 1) **Natural** (rivers, mountain ranges, oceans): easy to defend<br>2) **Artificial** : hard to | Relatively easy access....efficient and economic means of transportation |

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**The topography of the United States** is generally thought to be **favourable** in this regard, while that of China, where mountains, deserts, valleys and rivers cut the country up into many smaller parts, is detrimental.

Sometimes a broken terrain is a source of power advantage if the state is small and under constant threat of invasion.

- ***Climate and Neighbours***
  - …….extreme weather……trouble to mobilize……best @ moderate and varied climate
  - A state's neighbours affect its power position directly.
    - ↘ If a state is **surrounded by large and more dynamic states**, it is in a much **less favourable** position in terms of power than
    - ↘ it would be with weak and passive neighbours.

- ***Permanence of Geographic factor***
  - ….previously was crucial for
  - ……now with scientific development …….changes happened in the physicality and accordingly the due dynamics therewith:
    - ↘ **Water frontiers** were formerly viewed as extremely strong; **today many consider them a weakness**.
    - ↘ The sea is now more of a **highway of aggression** that it is a bastion.

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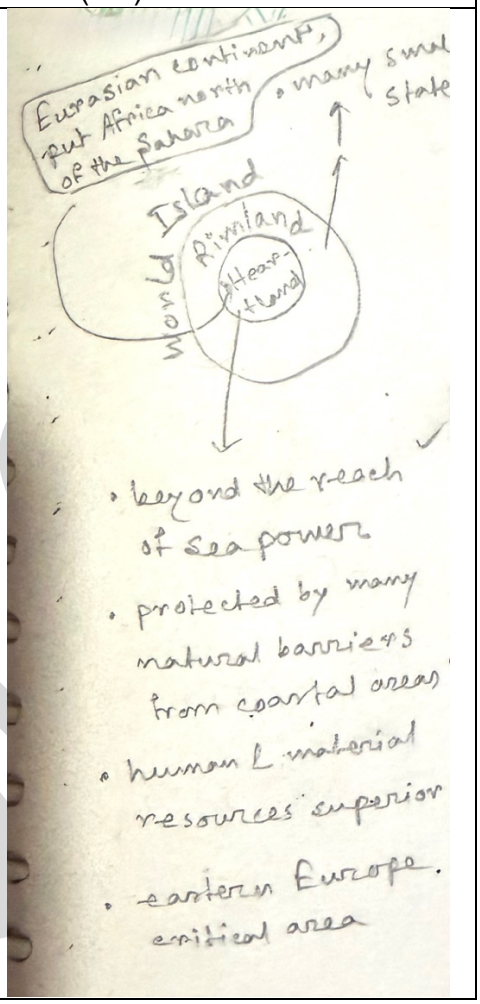
- ***Geopolitics:***

| **Mahan and Sea power** (USA) | **Mackinder and Heartland** (UK) |
|---|---|
| ▪ Admiral Alfred Mahan….1890…….owing to the greater mobility and economy of sea transportation……the states enjoying mass supremacy<br>▪ ……<u>eclipsed as a theory because of **inception of engine technology**</u> |  |

## 2) Population and Manpower

- ***Number***
  - Atleast a minimum required size should be there….else industrial production or manning military machine wouldn't be possible.
- ***Quality of Population***
  - …women, children, aged @ less of a source of strength
  - The efficiency of population in terms of technical and educational training, contact b/w the societies, harmony between communities and races
- ***Trends in population development***
  - Demographic dividend @ estimation…..e.g. China

## 3) Resources

- ……of great importance……access to resources more important
- ***Coal***
  - principal source of energy……. but if atomic energy should become a major source of industrial power many contemporate political judgments would have to be revised.
- ***Iron and Steel***
  - If a state lacks either coal or iron it seeks to acquire adequate supplies by one means or another, if it lacks; if it lacks both it is likely to be doomed to inferior power status.
- ***Food***
  - ….able to feed itself
- ***Impact of technology***
  - Petroleum
  - Fissionable raw materials:
    - Uranium
    - Plutonium
    - Thorium

| |
|---|
| The rate of consumption of industrial raw materials in time of war is so rapid that certain states of the world today (including the United States) face early disappearance of a large part of their proved resource endowment as an outcome of the two great world wars. |

## 4) Industrial and Agricultural Production

- **Modern war is a struggle of machines**, and a state without the means to produce the machines of war is under a major handicap.

## 5) Military Organization

- The most obvious and immediately available manifestation of national power is military power……**serves most important policies**.
- No state remains permanently in total mobilization every goverment seeks to keep immediately available that portion of total military power which would protect it while it organized its potential reserve.
- The sliding relationship between actuality and potentiality and the time required to go from one to the other are constant modifying factor that all military power analyses.

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## Intangible factors of Power

The nonspecific and non-qualitative aspect of power, however, constantly intrude upon and upset any judgment based purely upon measurable phenomena; in order to make any power analysis as realistic and valid as possible it is necessary to evaluate and make due allowance for the **effect of less visible but real influence.**

### 1) *Political, Economic and Social System*

- ***The Political System***
  - refers to the structure and functioning of the government and its relating to the people.
    - Whether the government is **autocratic or democratic, totalitarian or limited, mild or ruthless**, is in the strictest sense irrelevant.
    - a lack of concern with whether a government is morally good or evil.
  - Efficiency:
    - ↘ **Dictatorships** and other authoritarian governments → **efficiency**
    - ↘ **Democratic → lacks in**
      → delayed decision as is to be Ratified

Democratic govt @ consent → is able to withstand stress and defeat with much more elasticity than a dictatorship.

Dictatorial efficiency is not that great as painted → fear, suspicion, hostility, and **bureaucratic inertia** at the lower levels vitiate effective decision-making at the top.

This was certainly the case in **Nazi Germany**, and a strong suspicion exists that it is true within the Soviet government.

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- ***The Economic System***
  - ..... group of fundamental principles which govern the conditions of production and distribution.

> - Some states are more efficient under a vigorous system of government control of all aspects of the economy,….e.g. China
> - while the United States @ blended government control with private initiative

- ***The Social System***
  - Transitional period of shifting values….**conflict b/w the old and new orders**…..a point of **weakness for state**.

## 2) Level of Technology and Education

- ***Literacy***
- ***Tool skill***
- ***Scientific and Technological knowledge***
- ***Specialized non-Scientific knowledge***

## 3) National Morale

- ***Good and Bad morale***
  - Any indication of popular morale may often be found in the subjects and quality of public discussion.
  - When public discussion ceases to confine itself to the debate of the wisdom of the moves taken in implementation of policy……..**popular morale is at low ebb**.
- ***Government morale policy***
  - ..taking people into confidence
  - General principle → **"nothing succeeds like success"**
  - Diplomatic or military offensive are often undertaken for no reason other than the need or desire to prop up sagging morale.

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## 4) International Strategic position:

- ***Military significance of allies***
  - Many relatively weak states have driven very hard bargains when their aid was being sought by greater powers in a time of crisis.
- ***Allies as a source of weakness***
  - Very probably the Nazis had many occasions to regret the fate that threw their destinies in with Mussolini's Italy during World War.

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