

Multilateralism in international affairs

October 23, 2020

In news

External Affairs Minister stated that Multilateralism is in serious danger today as the bigger countries are focused on their own interest

What is Multilateralism in International Affairs?

- According to Britannica Multilateralism, the process of organizing relations between groups of three or more states.
- Beyond that basic quantitative aspect, multilateralism is generally considered to comprise certain qualitative elements or principles that shape the character of the arrangement or institution.
- Those principles are an indivisibility of interests among participants, a commitment to diffuse reciprocity, and a system of dispute settlement intended to enforce a particular mode of behaviour.
- **In other words, Multilateralism refers to an alliance of multiple countries pursuing a common goal.**
- Multilateralism, in the form of membership in international institutions, serves to bind powerful nations, discourage unilateralism and gives small powers a voice and influence that they could not otherwise exercise.

Proponents of Multilateralism

- The main proponents of multilateralism have traditionally been the middle powers, such as Canada, Australia, Switzerland, the Benelux countries and the Nordic countries.

- India also supports multilateralism which is reflected in its recent call for UN system reform

Some of the examples of Multilateralism

International organizations, such as the United Nations (UN), WHO and the World Trade Organization, are multilateral in nature.