

The Tight rope Walk between the geo economic implications of Trans Pacific Partnership and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership: India Responds

Manan Dwivedi * Gayatri Dixit*

Abstract

The paper aims to delineate upon the theme of Regional trade agreements such as RCEP and TPP in the larger context of the regional and international system. The tenet of Regime theory of IR serves as an ideal buttressing on the idea of RCEP. Then, the paper dwells upon the theme of whether New Delhi ought to become a member of the RCEP or the TPP in the larger light of regional and global geo economics. The rationale of India pulling out of the RCEP, the Chinese and the Oriental perspective of the Asian space are also elaborated upon in the paper. The paper thus strives for enumerating the Indian choice in the larger setting of Regime and interdependence.

Introduction

A nation needs to respond to a multifarious array of challenges in the context of the larger ecosystem of geo politics and geo economics. In a Regime led international firmament, Globalization segmented by regional multilateralism is the accepted order of the day where-in nations coalesce together for the sake of trade partnerships and geo economics oriented fulfillment of national interest.

In the context of the China factor, the RCEP (Regional Cooperation and Economic Partnership) and TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership) subsist with their own significance in the Asia Pacific and the Indo Pacific chain of events in the region. It is common knowledge that RCEP is influenced by the People's Republic of China while the grouping of TPP has been lead and nurtured largely by the United States of America. Thus, a Regime of Regional trade has been much in the offing as an offshoot of the larger block of ASEAN, (Association of South East Asian Nations) since its inception.

* Dr. Manan Dwivedi, Assistant Professor, International Relations and International Organizations, IIPA, New Delhi, India

* Dr. Gayatri Dixit, Assistant Professor, Center for African Studies, School of International Studies, JNU, New Delhi, India

It can be very well ascertained that the twin nations of the order of United States and India, are, the first runners in the rigmarole to dominate and lord over the Asia Pacific in order to spawn and develop their respective *Dominos*, all as a part to curb and contain the larger influence of PRC in the sub region. US under the presidency of Donald Trump, had, already made it clear to India that New Delhi can count on the American pelf and stealth to serve as a bulwark to be utilized against China through there are no permanent enemies and friends in the world of International Politics. India is a member, interestingly of both the regional economic groupings and thus has to carry on its deft balancing tight rope walk in the region divided into spheres of influence between arguably the most powerful nation state on the face of the Planet along, with, the rise of the Chinese Dragon.

In the context of TPP and RCEP, the tentacles of geo-politics and geo psychology, are, too attached with a greater role for India in the Maritime space of the Indian Ocean and the controversy laden, South China sea, keeping in view the high volume of trade passing through the Malacca straits. Robert Keohane argues that in order to subsist in the arena of World Politics and the larger International system, a, rules based order and the *nom de plume* of norm setting is what the IR doctor ordered for the day. Regimes gained popularity during the 20th century as states began increasingly to get involved in international agreements and rules. Globalization has aided interaction in the international realm and greatly contributed to their establishment and mass popularity. Regimes have created a framework within which states and NGO's follow the same rules and norms, which in turn facilitate interstate relations. There are different definitions of the term regime, but the one formulated by Stephen Krasner in the 1980's has prevailed as standard. He defines them as "sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations" (Little, 2001). Thus, Robert Keohane asserts that a regionalism oriented and convergence inclined geo political and geo economic system needs to be the order of the day. Thus, the quintessential essence of both the present day Delhi dispensation is standing for in the form of norm setting in the global

sphere imbued with the concern of a collective security is an entity which gets a practicalisation in the general format of RCEP and TPP.

Noted International Relations theorist Strange asserts that. “The term “regime” has a wide range of meanings and applications. This prevents it from having instant recognition and widespread significance. Furthermore she acknowledges that treaties in large part are for those who can afford them and not necessarily for those who need them. An example of that is the establishment in 1980 of an agreement by INMARSAT for the creation of the Future Global Maritime Distress and Safety System. It operates by utilizing a satellite to locate a ship when a distress call is made and automatically sends that distress signal to any vessel in that area. For the large part, only big ships and tankers could afford the installation of that system on their ships. In comparison, due to the lack of effective regimes that could solve the problem of famine that same year millions died due to lack of nutrition” (Strange, 1987). Thus, Robert Keohane who initialized the nomenclature of Regime theory, vows for the idiom of interdependence, convergence within the ambit of neo liberal Institutionalism. The author posits that arriving at a consensus for international cooperation and camaraderie along with gelling together for the Global commons happens to be the order of the day in a post September 11 Global geo-politics and global geo-economics. International agreements and treaties are the order of the day as both the Neo Realists and Neo liberal Institutionalisms support the theme as advanced by Robert Keohane and the entities such as RCEP and TPP are nothing but a regional geo economic avatar of the proposed Regime theory.

The idiom of global commons is not the latest theoretical approach to have emerged out of the portals of International Relations matrix but still the consonance approach premised upon unifying the various binaries happens to be the order of the day. As is evident in the collective security theme of the North Atlantic Treaty Association, the conjoined strivings of the larger international system in tackling global issues and geo strategic and geo political challenges has become the *nom de plume* of the day. Thus, Regime is about a globally consensual theme which becomes a driving light and beacon of the day in the larger context of

Global politics. NATO has become a prime strategic and political mover in the larger context of the Ukraine Russia war which has nearly posited the NATO and the west on a literal war pathway with Kremlin. Thus, engendering a confrontationist veneer to the real of International Organizations and International Institutions.

The notion can be safely proposed that “While the precise definition of a regime is debated, a regime is most commonly understood to refer to a set of ‘principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors’ expectations converge in a given area of international relations’, as Stephen Krasner has suggested. A regime creates convergence of expectations, establishes standards of behavior, and cultivates a general sense of obligation. Regimes mitigate anarchy that would otherwise prevail in international relations and thereby facilitate co-operation among states and other potential actors. International regimes should not be seen as quasi-governments (Governments), the purpose of which would be to create a centralized authority to govern world politics” (Bradford, 1998). The scholars further contend that, “It is more accurate to think of regimes as institutions involving States—and increasingly also non-state actors—who seek to realize their long-term objectives and structure and stabilize their relations to the benefit of all the members of the regime” (Bradford, 2021).

Regimes need to be delineated adequately so that their difference in origin and their nature of explanation can be stoutly underlined. It has been posited that, “Regimes should also be distinguished from formal international organizations (International Organizations or Institutions, General Aspects). While many regimes are accompanied by formal organizations, they can also consist of a looser set of norms, principles, and procedures that shape states’ expectations, capacities and guide their behavior. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for instance, is an international organization that forms part of a more broadly understood nuclear non-proliferation regime, which again belongs to a broader collective security regime” (Bradford, 2021). The scholars contend further that, “Similarly, the WTO is a part of a larger trade regime that encompasses rules, norms, and principles in addition to the procedures and the organizational capacity that the WTO provides for the

regime. Trade regime, on the other hand, is nested within a broader international economic regime. International regimes can also be distinguished from international organizations by thinking of regimes as being restricted to a particular issue-area of international relations (eg collective security, economic relations) whereas an international organization (including, for instance, the UN), can have a sphere of activity that spans various different issue areas. However, the studies of regimes and international organizations are closely related and often overlap” (Bradford, 2021). Thus, it appears that the codification and the definitional oeuvre of the Regime theory and International Organizations is slightly premised on different groundings but it overlaps too and there are ample instances of consonance between the twin constructs of Regime theory and the larger collectivities of national interests and nation centric global objectives of respective foreign policies. Also, realism happens to be the theoretical order of the day where-in, the idiom of pessimism differentiates the tenet of realism from the collectively conjoined approach of the Regimes. Realism too portends a kind of norm setting but the excessive insistence on power and national interest places it into a slightly different context and meaning.

We have had a precursor look at the myriad perspectives of the Regime theory along with its hybridity and diffidence in interpretation with other IR theory constricts. But, lets zero in now on what the theme means in the perspective of Robert Keohane. He posits that, “Previous work on this subject in the rational-choice tradition has emphasized the, "theory of hegemonic stability": that is, the view that concentration of power in one dominant state facilitates the development of strong regimes, and that fragmentation of power is associated with regime collapse. This theory, however, fails to explain lags between changes in power structures and changes in international regimes; does not account well for the differential durability of different institutions within a given issue-area; and avoids addressing the question of why international regimes seem so much more extensive now in world politics than during earlier periods (such as the late 19th century) of supposed hegemonic leadership” (Keohane, 2022). Keohane further suggests that, “The argument of this article seeks to correct some of these faults of the hegemonic stability theory by incorporating it within a supply-demand

approach that borrows extensively from microeconomic theory. The theory of hegemonic stability can be viewed as focusing only on the supply of international regimes: according to the theory, the more concentrated power is in an international system, the greater the supply of international regimes at any level of demand. But fluctuations in demand for international regimes are not taken into account by the theory; thus it is necessarily incomplete. Thus one can focus upon on the demand for international regimes in order to provide the basis for a more comprehensive and balanced interpretation” (Keohane, 2022). Thus, once again the Regime theory dabbles in upon the theme of pessimist realism and the related hegemonic Stability theory. All in all, the concentration and unification of power is considered to be the order of the day in relation to the larger construct of a conjoined approach of International relations theory.

Scholars have further contended that, “Regimes are more like contracts, when these involve actors with long-term objectives who seek to structure their relationships in stable and mutually beneficial ways. In a discussion of "spontaneous," "negotiated," and "imposed" regimes, see Oran Young's contribution to this volume” (Harsanyi, 1962). For a lucid and original discussion based on this obvious but important point, regimes resemble the "quasi-agreements" that Fellner discusses when analyzing the behavior of oligopolistic firms (Fellner, 1949). In both contracts and quasi-agreements, there may be specific rules having to do with prices, quantities, delivery dates, and the like; for contracts, some of these rules may be legally enforceable. Keohane further posits that, “The most important functions of these arrangements, however, are not to preclude further negotiations, but to establish stable mutual expectations about others' patterns of behavior and to develop working relationships that will allow the parties to adapt their practices to new situations. Rules of international regimes are frequently changed, bent, or broken to meet the exigencies of the moment. They are rarely enforced automatically, and they are not self-executing. Indeed, they are often matters for negotiation and renegotiation; as Puchala has argued, "attempts to enforce EEC regulations open political cleavages up and down the supranational-to-local continuum and spark intense politicking along the cleavage lines" (Lowry, 1979).

Shintaro Hamanaka argues in an Asian Development Bank's Working Paper that, "The formation of regional integration and cooperation frameworks can be best understood as a dominant state's attempt to create its own regional framework where it can exercise some exclusive influence. In this context, it is important to observe not only which economies are included in a regional framework, but also which economies are excluded from it. The distinct feature of TPP is that the PRC is excluded, and that of RCEP is that the United States is excluded" (Hamanaka, 2014). Thus, the *nom de plume* of great power intervention is the *de rigueur* order of the day as far as International Geo Politics and Geo-economics is concerned. It is the policy of prestige and a zero sum game which is characterized by the formation of RCEP and TPP, wherein, the balance of power equations with the great powers in the fray form a significant pedestal in the garb of BOP concerns and the related tenet of the dominance in the maritime space in the Indo Pacific where-in, alliance making and counter alliance spawning happens to be one of the key IR lenses through which the entire debate about RCEP and TPP can be visualized and imagined objectively.

What is the RCEP Quandary?

The facet which has been raised by the Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott, raises the theme of Indian concern about joining RCEP in the light of the Chinese sway over the regional economic grouping. The Hindu Reports that through TCA Sharad Raghavan, that, "The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement looks like an extension of China's Belt and Road initiative, former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott said, adding that he understood India's reluctance to join the pact. He also said he was keen to see an India-Australia bilateral deal being signed" (Raghavan, 2019). The author further writes that, "I think we were quite right to focus on China for the 30 years or so, from the Deng reforms until quite recently, but I think the neglect of India is a pity. Mr. Abbot said, One of the things I was able to do as PM was to end the neglect of India. Let's ensure that in the years to come there is at least as much Australian focus on the relationship with India as there was in that 30-year period on the relationship with China" (Raghavan, 2019). In the current context, with the Australian Government embracing the US led idea of Indo Pacific, the confrontation

has been attempted in order to expose the Chinese guilt over the origins of COVID-19. India too harbors the dream of being a world leader and not a mere balancer state and in order to achieve that the present New Delhi denomination is aligning with the United States ingrained with the larger global collective strategy of containment and sequestration of China.

The RCEP necessitates it that both India and Australia need to bridge their age old thaws and embrace the nation down under. Even the American President in his 2017's National Security Strategy, has, contended that India needs to take on the role of a Global leader and strive for influence in regions such as South China Sea along with in the badlands and the twilight zone of Afghanistan, thus, underlining the rising name and pelf of New Delhi. Thus, India intends to partner anew with nations and carve out alliances and *Telling Bilaterals* with the regional nations in order to carve out a niche for itself as well as a conducive market for its Industry and corporate stratosphere. The impact of these groupings on the North Korean Quandary, too, cannot be overlooked in the context of the South Korean struggle against the North Korean blackmail.

India Today has beautifully narrated the reasons why New Delhi stayed out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. The excerpt from India Today as a secondary source argues that, "India's economy is passing through a difficult time. The rate of GDP growth has been slowing down for five consecutive quarters, that is, since January-March 2018. The GDP growth figures have been a topsy-turvy curve since the roll out of goods and services tax. Combined with demonetization move in November 2016, the GST rollout proved to be a double-disrupter of the economy, which is yet to fully come to terms with these two key decisions. As the industry is reeling under pressure and the government is grappling to deal with the domestic economic situation, a massive free trade pact like RCEP would have exposed the Indian businesses and agriculture to unequal competition from countries which are lurking like giant sharks in the export arena. India, as a whole, is a 'bad' business entity" (Dutta, 2019). Due to the limitations of a slow Indian economy, the Prime Minister took an approach of constraining of staying out of the

Chinese reach and influence by not being a party of the RCEP alliance and sided with the counter alliance in the form of TPP (Nobel, 1995).

Prabash K Dutta further writes that, “India's trade deficit with these countries has almost doubled in the last five-six years - from \$54 billion in 2013-14 to \$105 billion in 2018-19. Given the export-import equation with the block, a free trade agreement with the grouping would have increased it further. At present, India ships 20 per cent of all its exports to the RCEP countries and receives 35 per cent of all imports from them. China is the ringmaster of this export-import circuit. It is the largest exporter to almost all countries of the group, including India. Of India's \$105 billion trade deficit with RCEP countries, China accounts for \$53 billion. Widening trade deficit would empty foreign exchange reserve of India at a faster rate. And, a depleting foreign reserve is never good for any economy and is least desirable for the one trying to recover” (Nobel, 1995). Thus, it's this racket and rationale of trade deficit along with the trade imbalances with the RCEP nations and PRC which has been instrumental in making Prime Minister Modi decry the utility of the Regional Comprehensive Economic partnership (RCEP). Other themes of the order of the fate of domestic industries and farmers, too, persist as a spanner in the works of India joining RCEP apart from the China factor.

It can be further cited that the services sector and the other important factors too made PM Modi to opt out of RCEP such as the attendant manufacturing output and agriculture. India Today further informs us that, “Services sector is also not doing well, of late. It has seen, in the NPMI=ECI survey, first back-to-back monthly slowdown since July-September 2017 in October. China and ASEAN countries have robust service sector, and a free entry to these players may damage the lone savior of Indian economy in these times of crisis. In agriculture, domestic players dealing in dairy products, spices -- chiefly pepper and cardamom, rubber, and coconut would face dumping from the South Asian spice majors. Sri Lanka is already giving a tough time to Indian spice growers” (Nobel, 1995). Thus, its akin to Indian protectionism like Trump's America First Inward Outlook that certain set of sectors have been protected and taken away from the brunt of South East Asian giants where their governments too protected them as an initializing trend

towards a convergent amalgamation. India is doing the same and taking the road to protectionism to a geo economic national interest orientation.

Economic Times had argued in the favor of India joining RCEP. Devasish Mitra contends that, “Unlike unilateral trade liberalization that results only in trade creation, an FTA leads to both trade creation and trade diversion, the latter being diversion of imports from more efficient FTA non-members to its members that now face lower tariffs within this group. This latter element is the protectionist part of an FTA, while the former is the free trade component. Overall, an FTA will lead to freer trade if trade creation is greater than trade diversion. When initial tariffs are low, with the exception of a small number of industries, trade diversion should be relatively small” (Mitra, 2019). Indian horticulture, floriculture and sericulture would too, will be harmed if New Delhi had decided to join the much-vaunted RCEP (Krishnan, 2019). New Zealand, too, competes with our resource-strapped farmers. Both these countries, are, eyeing the huge market in India. It is notable that New Zealand exports 93.4 per cent of its milk powder, 94.5 per cent of its butter and 83.6 per cent of its cheese production. Removal of tariffs, which at present are 60 per cent for milk powder and 40 per cent for fats, will allow dumping of these products (Krishnan, 2019).

Thus, one can delve inside India’s trade deficit with RCEP nations and the trade balance with the ASEAN nations, to, arrive at a certain and standard perspective. It can be gleaned from the tabular statistics that India has a mammoth trade deficit with the People’s Republic of China and a smaller but yet ignoble trade imbalance with countries such as South Korea and Japan which has made New Delhi move the other way towards the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) in the context of the regional trade and its attendant balance of trade. All these trade factoids have a stark and telling impact upon the political and Diplomatic substratum of this geo economic base, to utilize a Marxist terminology and comprehension over here in the presented narrative.

The economic times informs us that it’s beneficial for New Delhi, not to join the RCEP grouping for a slew of reasons which have been internalized by the Indian trade strategists. The ET report runs as thus, “The government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi no longer needs to make difficult concessions on agricultural trade. Other members of the

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership group, or RCEP, won't need to open their home markets to India's thriving, and low-cost, services sector. China, the linchpin of a zone that also includes the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand, will be able to move forward faster with an agreement that was at risk of being jeopardized by India's foot-dragging." (Newspaper Correspondent, 2019)

The Economic Times Report further contends and informs that, "The US, meanwhile, can take satisfaction from the fact that its key regional ally in New Delhi is remaining outside of Beijing's orbit. A stronger RCEP that included India would almost certainly have revived politically fraught question of whether Washington should rejoin the rival Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement or TPP, which died in Congress under the Obama administration and was formally killed off by President Donald Trump." (News Paper Correspondent, 2019) Any nonchalance and geo economic obstructionism or a regional waiting game would have been construed by various regional and global countries and actors as quintessential foot dragging by India so thus one reaches the idiom of co-existing in collaboration with the Trans Pacific partnership (TPP.) This would please the ears and eyes of President Trump as the Indian decision would make India part ways for a certain distance from the hegemonic ides of the People's Republic of china and navigate closely with the America led TPP block with its own strategic and geo economic ramifications. What remains to be seen is the idiom that what does the new American President Donald Trump does in the context of realigning the United States with the Trans Pacific Partnership as it was the key percept of his campaign trail in 2020 that the ides of protectionism imposed upon US will be reversed if he enters the portals of the White House.

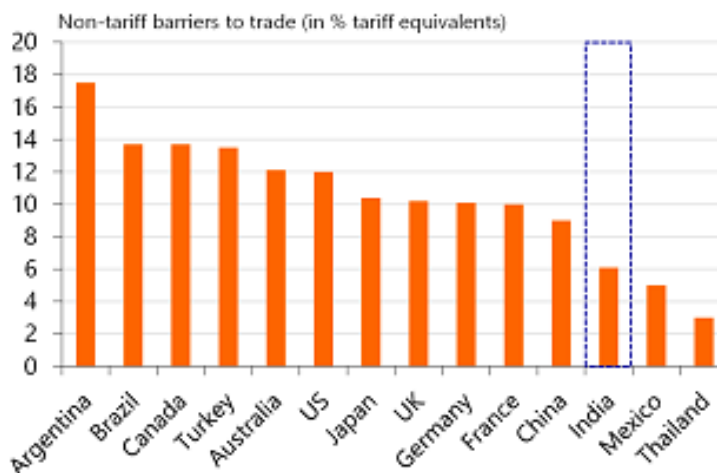
The Trans-Pacific Partnership (or the TPP as it is generally known) is a free-trade agreement being negotiated between 11 countries of the Pacific rim including Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States of America and Vietnam. Japan is the 12th country that has entered into the negotiations to join the TPP. The US administration under President Barack Obama seems to have prioritized the TPP as the economic component of its "rebalancing" to Asia strategy. Rukmanini Gupta writes in the Institute's of Defense Studies reportage and commentary that, "There is clearly an

overlap in the membership of these two trade agreements. However, this does not necessarily imply that the goals of the two agreements are antagonistic. The TPP seeks to vastly reduce tariff levels among member countries and standardize policies on various issues including safeguarding intellectual property rights. The ambit of the RCEP is not quite as vast. The two can therefore be seen as different rungs on a free-trade agreement ladder. Although some American officials have stated that the US would welcome India's participation in the TPP, India has not made any official statement on the issue suggesting such a move. It may be reasonable to expect that it will take some time before India would be amenable to joining a trade agreement such as the TPP, whose scope extends well beyond other trade agreements India has partnered in" (Gupta, 2019). Thus, both the agreements of the order of TPP and RCEP are part and parcel of regional geo-economic and trade Diplomacy to stitch together a much efficient and somber regional trade ecosystem but something which has to belabor under the shadows of the Great powers such as United States, People's Republic of China and India. At least, the flavor and rare practice of Free Trade is being inserted in the Asian Space with Great power interventions along with the aspirations and statute of a rising New Delhi in the aftermath of the strivings since May, 2014 under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

But, jarringly, akin to the unpredictable policy nature of President Donald Trump, United States of America has withdrawn from the TPP way back in 2017 placing a spanner in the works of a new and rising, New India. A Brookings Report contends very pithily about the allegations that pit nations such as India and China against the founding principles and stand points of the Trans Pacific Partnership but with the TPP's denial by the American President the pitch has generally been ruined for new risers such as, New Delhi. The Brookings Report can be quoted here verbatim, "There are several common misconceptions about TPP. One is that it is simply a trade agreement, when it is actually much more than that. Not only does TPP slash tariffs, it contains anti-corruption measures, intellectual property obligations, human rights and child labour conditions, and environmental commitments. As a result, neither India nor China would have been ready to sign on. Comparisons that are often drawn in India with the proposed Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) – which includes China and India, but excludes the United States – are not entirely apt. Countries that are party to both negotiations –

Japan, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Vietnam, and New Zealand – do not see one as a replacement for the other” (Jaishankar, 2019). The Brookings report further furnishes the information and analysis that, “A second misconception is that TPP is directed against China and India. This is only partly true. Officials from TPP countries would often reiterate that China and India were hypothetically welcome to join TPP at a later stage, as long as they meet its conditions, knowing full well that this could not happen in the short-term, if ever” (Jaishankar, 2019). Thus, another *novae* and balanced approach might be the order of the day where-in, the rationale of TPP being against the nations of the order of China and India can be looked into. As we also need to keep it in our minds the aspect and the fact that there are a few nations which are part and parcel constituents of both the groupings that is, TPP and RCEP. Both these agreements are not merely trade agreements but they also ensconce within their rubric other snippets of intellectual property rights and other aspects which move beyond a bland and simpleton tariff regime. Also, it should not be borne in mind that RCEP and TPP can serve as ideal replacements of each other if any of the constituent conditions of both RCEP and TPP do not gel with the arguments of the respective tenets of foreign policy aims and national interests for individual nations.

Hugo Erken and Marken Every contend that, “If it joined the RCEP, India would also have access to a new playing field. Participating would offer Indian firms new markets and technologies and new sources of foreign capital to drive economic transformation. This is the line of reasoning Bloomberg has presented” (Mekel & Every, 2022). One further rationale for India not joining RCEP happens to be that of India realised that the RCEP agreement was more externally oriented than internally posited and placed and RCEP members were responsible for furthering India’s trade deficit since the last few years. Thus, the internal economic weakening of New Delhi augments the negative precedents and the growing creditworthiness of the country and its attendant economics. Further on, India’s surge of industrial one-uppance could have been hampered by joining the RCEP in the light of the RCEP induced volley of imports and any ways, New Delhi is not a tariff imposing regime and system which can embolden our incorporation into the rubric of RCEP. They further contend that, “

Figure 4: Where is the level playing field for India here?

Source: OECD

“Yet, it would also introduce enormous amounts of additional foreign competition – and the RCEP playing field is not exactly level. For example, lower tariffs within the RCEP is a step towards a Ricardian optimal outcome, but again, reality is more complex. Trade barriers are not just about tariff rates. Non-tariff barriers (NTBs) to trade, ranging from administrative burdens to outright quantitative restrictions, have become increasingly important. Furthermore, OECD data on NTBs indicates that India is hardly the most protectionist country, being outflanked by RCEP members Australia, Japan, and China (Figure 4). Importantly, the RCEP has not made any arrangements on lowering NTBs” (Mekel & Every, 2022).

The poser of state support to Indian corporates can be further mentioned over here. “How can Indian firms compete with Chinese state-owned enterprises that have access to all kinds of official and unofficial support and all that excess capacity to boot? One possible outcome of India joining the RCEP could be a failure to industrialize in the face of a surge in imports, which would leave its economy dominated by agriculture and services. That kind of Ricardian comparative advantage would mean a larger number of lower-wage jobs, which would bring a halt the economic aspirations of

campaigns like "Make in India" and "Atmanirbhar Bharat" intended to boost local manufacturing” (Mekel & Every, 2022).

Conclusion

Thus, the entire TPP and RCEP debate and deliberation is about the idiom that India need not worry too much about inviting the antagonism of either United States or the People’s Republic of China as far as its balancing act between RCEP and TPP, is concerned. Every maneuver which China and United States might indulge in, goes by a canny adherence to the notion of nation’s national interest which is always how the Political leaders and Diplomats respond to any balancing act between twin treaty choices, so that way the TPP and the RCEP debate too follows the lines of the national interest argument which cannot be given the sobriquet of selfish national interest as its argued by the cabal of left liberals and Progressives in the larger regional and international firmament. The purity and domestic sovereignty of regionalism is made impure with Great power interventions as is the case with the regional Asia Pacific jostling between United States of America and People’s Republic of China. The argument which contends that regionalism is the ideal solution and geo strategic and geo economic panacea for the international system gets strengthened with the consternations and contestations caused in the micro alliance context of RCEP and TPP which once again reiterates the larger idea and tenet of the Regime theory and how it actualizes itself within the ambit of great powers and the states and their individual economies under contestation and great power legerdemain.

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