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Q. =
'The opposite of poverty is not wealth'

Once a rich man took his son to visit poor people. They stayed in a villagers house. On his trip back to home, dad asked, 'Did you see how poor they are? What did you learn from this trip?

Son replied,

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"We have 1 dog, they have four
We have tube lights, they live under stairs
We have pool, they have whole river
We watch TV, they talk with family & friends for entertainment
We buy food, they grow their own."

"Thanks Dad for showing
me how poor we are!"

These ~~the~~ observations
from his son made rich dad realise
that "opposite of poverty is not wealth".

In this essay we will explore how
poverty is perceived and why so? Also
we will understand meaning of true
wealth to understand the adage.

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Poverty in today's world is simple absence of money to fulfill basic needs. This interpretation by man is the most shallow one of much deep concept.

In today's world, a person not having good house, vehicle, empty bank balance will be termed poor to someone with these assets. This refers to materialistic interpretation.

The cause for this can be traced to rise of 'capitalist ideology' as concept of 'ownership of assets, land, means of production' became the central parameter to assess a person's worth.

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It has led to consumerist mindset which makes people relate the absence of items as poverty. That's why the rich dad in beginning took his son to make him realise how wealthy they are!

The globalisation has made these ideas universal with interaction of societies. This narrow interpretation of poverty thus acquires transnational ~~global~~ character.

To further understand we need to explore the true meaning of wealth! The real wealth is not just satisfaction of need but satisfaction of one's soul. It is a broader term.

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It is using one's reasoning
for good purpose to acquire knowledge.

The wealth of knowledge is one which
makes life truly wonderful, meaningful
and fill in with rich experiences. This
is the reason the 'philosophers', 'Sages' are
considered the richest among men.

The 'intellectual wealth
should be complemented with good physical
health. Gandhi said, 'Real wealth is
physical health, not pieces of gold &
silver'. Hence an healthy & fit
farmer is richer than the modern
man owning Groves but suffering
from diabetes, high blood pressure, etc.

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Similarly a nation or society is not poor only if its per capita GDP is low. France despite being developed country suffers from communalism & is presently facing riots.

Bhutan a much poorer state in monetary terms is wealthier in terms of social harmony.

Social relations are also a measure as a person's greatest wealth is often his family. Thus the individualism based culture of Western society leading to high divorce rate, depression is making them poorer. This is despite them being richest in terms of economy.

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Does this mean acquiring
wealth doesnot have any meaning?

No! , wealth when acquired through
right means ensures moral wealth.

If it is not spent in wrong space
that ensures the true wealth!

In present times
all these interpretations hold great
weightage. Today society gives priority
to status over character. Thus the
criminals are elected as representatives

This is due to money given priority
over quality of a person.

The declining morality
in the society as we see increasing

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vulgarity, abuse in movies can also be related to wrong interpretation of poverty. It arises as today most of the series, reels or social media are filled with such content. The people promoting them have become stars! Thus their success gets directly related to wealth.

The declining capacity to reason & contemplate on any issue in society is due to intellectual bankruptcy, making individual & nation poor. It is a result of 'rat-rat' & 'herd mentality' based life of citizens focus only on earning by any means & spending it inconsciously.

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The need of the hour
thus lies in broadening the horizons
of our mental map. People need to
read the philosophies of Plato, Kant,
Marx, etc. to understand how society
works around us.

The teachings of Gita
and neo-Vedantism of Sri Aurobindo
-nd will make us realise how poor
we are. This realisation of the
truth will make us understand
the true wealth going beyond
monetary terms.

World today faces various

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global challenges related to climate change, terrorism, lack of resources, which makes it necessary for us to come together.

It will be possible only when just like that rich dad's kid, 'people will go beyond money & assets' to achieve wealth.

This will lead to emergence of global civil society, where even the weakest link will be as strong as the strongest!

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Q2

6 International Trade is a good indicator of national security

Dutch Empire in 16th & 17th century, British in 18th & 19th and USA since I World War have one thing in common. All three were the most powerful nations in their era and also controlled global rules of international trade.

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Their success is interli-
-nked to strong national security paradigm.
Controlling sea lanes of communication,
major markets of raw materials made
British the master of seven seas in
19th century.

In this essay we will
explore how strong international trade
strengthens a nation's security. Whether
it is always true or international
trade is not the sole parameter for
security? Relevance of this analysis
in present time? But first, ^{lets} begin
with how international trade begin?

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Even though the Indus Valley Civilisation had ties with Omman or Magan, but current era began during late 15th century. The treaty of Tordesillas made Dutch & Portugese explore the new worlds of Latin America and Asia.

Based on capitalist idea of search for profit, they started settling abroad. This marks beginning of era of Globalisation. It led to beginning of creation of 'Borderless world' and global civil society; further leading to prosperity.

The National Security can be directly linked to it. Internal

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Security requires good economic growth,
food & other resources availability,
job opportunity, etc. Similarly to
shore up defense capabilities, ^{funds due to} international
trade strengthens ^{external} national security.
Let's explore these ideas.

Internal security has
various dimensions. First is ^{controlling} civil
unrest. The cause of various social
movements like Occupy Wall Street;
Yellow Vests in France, ~~But~~ current
protests in Latin America is lack of
job opportunity. International trade ensures
better ~~more~~ job opportunities abroad or
in service sector due to globalisation.

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Second it controls the feeling of inequality which has long been the cause of revolution whether it is French or American revolution. The 'Red Revolution' or 'Naxalism problem of India' are such case studies.

Third, international trade also include transfer of food material. ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~ Food & Agriculture Organisation has highlighted 690 Mn people sleep hungry every day. The cause of unrest in Afghanistan under Taliban, current crisis in Pakistan, Yemen highlights how lack of international trade hampers their food & internal security.

Fourth, international trade is more than transfer of goods &

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services. It also includes technology transfer. Israel is a pioneer in this field and it has helped nations like India in strengthening & modernising border infrastructure, data analysis to predict crimes, etc.

In ^{context of} External security in International Sphere, Thomas Friedman in his book 'Jexus and the olive tree' gave McDonald chain concept. It says no two countries who have McDonald stores will go for war. This means that deeper economic integration makes war non-profitable. It can be seen as reason for US-China's current tensions remaining cold.

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Moreover the ability to
buy defense weapons, form regional
organisations shore up a nation's security.

The formation of QUAD, ^{for instance} even though
focuses on deepening trade among the
countries, also focus on ensuring maritime
security and free and open Indo-Pacific.

This notion of International
trade, ^{increasing} ~~strengthening~~ a country's strength
of national security although is the meta-
narrative. We should avoid monocausal
view. ~~The~~ Its impact has not remained
uniform across globe. Although the
'West' has benefitted from it, the
'Global South' has weakened its national
security in name of International trade.

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Immanuel Wallerstein
in his book 'The - modern World System' has
given 'World System Theory'. It shows the
perpetuation of poverty, inequality and
how countries in Africa & Latin America have
remained exporters of raw material and
market for finished goods.

This weakens their
internal security due to poverty, lack
of resources & job opportunity. Oxfam
report has highlighted how top 10%
population has 70% of wealth.

Now let's look at
other indicators of ~~state~~ national security.
A country's youth or demographic
dividends strengthens its security.

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The availability of natural resources allows self sufficiency. It is said that US became superpower due to its location, thus geography is another important indicator.

Further in today's world of 4th Industrial Revolution, technology is another such indicator. Israel & Japan are apt examples. Culture of a country shows its soft power, one of core indicator of India's increasing global image & also national security. China's homogenous culture has allowed it to progress & reform without civil unrests on ethnic lines.

International trade however remains the core parameter

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due to globalised world connected in a cob-web like structure. Hence today Global institutions like the World Trade Organisation, IMF need to make fair rules of international trade.

The Global South needs to transfer technology to the Global South to make sure a just, fair trade occurs & they can fight emerging global issues like Climate Change, food security, Terrorism, etc.

To sum up we traced the origins of international trade. Then we explored its importance.

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In strengthening a country's internal & external security. Finally we saw even though other parameters exist, international trade remains most important.

India in 21st century, to gain its rightful place in the community of nations; thus need to increase its share in international trade. The current leadership of G20 is a golden opportunity to establish rules of international trade and make ourselves not just 'Voice of Global South' but 'Voice of the World'. It will strengthen the global security!

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