G7 meeting – Rebuilding the West

What is the issue?

- The Group of Seven (G7) countries held its ministerial meeting in London recently.
- This comes as a signal that the West is rebuilding its unity and strength, as against the perception of a declining west.

What led to the notion of a declining west?

- The notion of a declining West has been around for more than a century.
- But its recent credibility is rooted in the dramatic rise of China and its presumed capacity to overturn prolonged western dominance of the international system.
- The following developments with China seemed to tilt the scales against the West:
    i. rapid economic growth
    ii. massive military modernisation
    iii. impressive lead in new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence
    iv. spectacular Belt and Road Initiative
    v. growing capacity to shape international institutions
    vi. enhanced political influence across the world
    vii. a deepening strategic partnership with Russia
- Reinforcing this has been the chaotic developments in the US during the four years of the Trump presidency.
- Trump trashed US alliances, abandoned America's global leadership, walked out of global institutions, and tore up agreements signed by his predecessor.

How is the U.S at present under Biden's administration?

- US President Joe Biden has brought order and purpose to governance at home.
- The US economy is roaring back on the strength of a huge economic stimulus and mass vaccination.
- Biden has brought a new vigour to American foreign policy as well.
- He has revitalised old US alliances in Europe and Asia and is building new global coalitions.
- Promising "extreme competition" with China, Biden has signalled that

America is not willing to go gently in that front.

Where does India stand?

- Britain made invitation to India, along with Australia, South Korea and South Africa, to join the G-7 ministerial meeting and the summit thereafter.
- These are rooted in the conviction that Delhi must be an integral part of a powerful coalition of democracies to shape the global order in the 21st century.
- India seemed well poised to seize the new strategic opportunities coming its way.
- But India’s disastrous handling of the second wave of the coronavirus has set back hopes for an early rebound of the Indian economy.
- The situation has raised questions about its readiness to take a larger international role.
- Seen together with global dismay at Delhi’s democratic backsliding in recent years, India’s international prospects are dull.
- Despite this gloomy condition now, India’s society is resilient enough to recover and redeem its global possibilities.

Source: The Indian Express

