

## How Geopolitics Redraws The Map For Students

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The term 'geopolitics' conjures an image of stern officials in crisp suits, debating global hierarchy over a cup of tea. However, it's not confined within the walls of parliaments. Whether in classrooms or dorms, geopolitics is truly redefining student lives around the globe. Prevailing uncertainty about student visas, scholarships, or even campus safety, it unfolds beyond the halls of power into everyday student experiences.

### War that rewrote student lives

The Ukraine-Russia conflict serves as a constant reminder of how nation-wide tensions can impact student fraternity. Since the beginning of the Russian invasion in 2021, approx 20,000 Indian students under 'Operation Ganga' were evacuated from the warzone, while globally 79,000 students were relocated. Unfortunately, their home universities have been reluctant to offer them seats, while heightened immigration rates have only exacerbated the situation, forcing some students to go back to Ukraine to finish their degrees despite the conflict.

### The game of policies

Government laws play a key role in controlling student mobility. The Trump administration has remodeled the rules of the game, where excessively stringent immigration laws have made the previously heralded nation an unwelcoming destination for students. Statistics claim that the admission rates of the US have decreased by 13% nationwide. Shockingly, these policies of the US government essentially negate the effect of previously established initiatives like the Fulbright programme and the Rhodes scholarship, which were in-

troduced to bring in talented individuals from around the world.

### Joint collaborations

Geopolitical tensions create barriers in student exchange and research programmes too. Increased political tensions especially between the US and China have led to

heightened scrutiny of researchers, limiting collaboration in fields like AI, biotechnology, and quantum computing. This has led to clampdowns in joint research, reducing global collaboration opportunities. Growing economic factors such as high housing costs in university



cities like Dublin, where there's a 30% rise in student rental prices (2020-23), limit student participation in exchange programmes.

### Security and safety

In this ever-changing era of technology, internet fraud and tech espionage have posed serious threats to global superpowers. In 2020, the US revoked thousands of visas of Chinese students due to 'national security' complications. Thus, forcing the Chinese students to look for safer havens in countries like Singapore. Moreover, student safety is compromised in countries like Australia and the US where anti-immigrant protests have displayed hostility. Hence, nations like Canada and Germany have become the most sought after due to policies like the ESOS act and DAAD scholarship.

### A new world

The era of western supremacy is concluding, while the east is now continuing the story. Asian countries such as India, China, and Singapore are now becoming a hub for higher education, attracting students across the globe by offering lucrative educational programmes, security, and attractive scholarships. This includes the expansion of prestigious colleges such as Amity and BITS, along with the plethora of scholarships available for students to grasp like the ASEAN programme, and China's Belt and Road scholarships.

The nature of geopolitics is like two sides of the same coin. It's not black or white; neither good nor bad. But the fact that's crystal clear is that the effect of geopolitics on student life is inevitable. GT

# Caught in the crossfire



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### THE GT @ POLL

Following the IndiGo flight cancellation crisis, what long-term changes should airlines and authorities prioritise?

- a) Better crew planning
- b) Stricter passenger rights
- c) Improved communication

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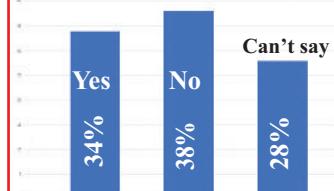
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### @ POLL RESULT

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From December 10, under-16s in Australia will be banned from using social media apps like X, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube. If India proposed a similar rule to protect teens, would you support it?



Results as on December 13, 2025