

(Q2) Saudi-Iran negotiations brokered by China shows that Beijing is ready to adopt the role of mediator. Critically evaluate the statement and analyze why China could be better mediator than U.S.

Ans)

Introduction

Saudia-Iran negotiations were brokered by China recently and this has led to diplomatic mission reopening in both states. This brokered deal came as a shock to the United States because U.S wanted to isolate Iran and force Saudia to increase the oil production through OPEC. China ended a seven year proxy war between the two states, which would lead to a peace in the region. However, whether Beijing is ready to play the role of a peace maker in the future remains a question.

Saudia-Iran Relation

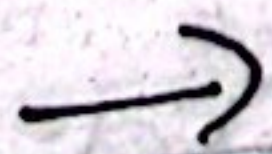
Saudia Arabia is a sunni state with
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majority of its population Sunni, whereas Iran is a state with majority of Shia population and this has caused sectarian disputes between them since along time. However, these relations got worse back in 2016 when Saudi Arabia executed a Shia cleric (Sheikh Al-Nimr) despite the protest of Iran and this led to attack on the Saudi Embassy in Iran and worsened the relations.

Why a Deal Now?

Saudi Arabia is shifting its economy from fossil fuels and is looking towards another form of making its economy grow and for this purpose it wants stability and peace in the region. Similarly, Mohammad Bin Salman has changed its foreign policy towards Iran. Moreover, Iran also does not want to get more isolated in the region. All these factors have led this deal to happen now.

How China is a better mediator than U.S?



① China wants to expand its economy

China wants its economy to grow and not just its own it wants economies of other countries to grow along with it too. For this reason China has launched its BRI project which has caused huge investment in host countries and would lead to prosperity all over. Whereas, U.S had no project like this that could also benefit the economy of other states too and not just others. It has always donated money to a state that too to only promote its hegemonic aims.

② No Interventionist Policy

United States from the start has intervened in internal matters of states and has become a major infiltrator of regime change across the world. Moreover, it intervenes to protect its own aims and when it has been achieved leave other states to solve their own problems. Similarly, China has no interventionist policy and has never been a part of regime change in any country. China also has a better →

reputation than the United States.

③ Can Put U.S. Hegemony to an End

China has become one of the biggest economies of the world and by 2030 would beat U.S. in terms of total economic strength. This benefits many nations across the world as now they don't have to give up on demands of U.S. and all developing states now have another option instead of U.S. U.S. now cannot force other countries to do as they ^{are} told.

④ China Promotes Globalization and is Against Favouritism

China wants to promote globalization around the world as its economy is still growing and has still a lot of potential. China is against favouritism and it does not protect a single state like United States. U.S. has been protecting Israel since a very long time, despite knowing the atrocities caused by Israel worldwide and specially in Palestine. China's current foreign policy is to promote peace and

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stability which further explains that it would not promote favouritism even in the near future.

⑤ China's growing energy need.

China's growing energy needs also puts China in a favourable position as compared to the United States. China wants to expand import of oil to grow its economy and for this reason it has developed a friendly policy towards middle east. It also puts China in a favourable position because China is promoting friendship, whereas U.S. was threatening the OPEC countries when they decided to cut their oil production.

⑥ China's negativity due to BRI

China is also a better option than U.S. because China wants to improve its acceptability and image in the region. China's BRI is negatively portrayed by the U.S. that it would lead to a debt trap and all states eventually be serving to the needs of China. China became a mediator in this deal to →

improve this image whereas, U.S if had brokered this deal, would have put its own conditions to this deal and more likely it would have still lead to Iran being isolated.

Conclusion

The deal brokered by China between Iran and Saudia is very beneficial for Middle East. It would lead to more stability in the region and more stability means economic growth. This growth would eventually benefit Iran and Saudia both as Iran will not be isolated and Saudia would successfully built its economy. China is a better mediator than U.S for many reasons, but its non intervention policy is the most significant.