

Q#2:

Political discourse of Corridor

~ BRI vs IMEC

1. Introduction

With world global politics and order is witnessing rapid changes and competition, development or emergence of any group, bloc or initiative is bound to cause some turbulence for few nation. China's BRI has pushed the west to compete and regain its global dominance, the development of India Middle-East Economic Corridor (IMEC) alarmed China. The IMEC born from collaborative efforts between US, India and their allies, seeks to redefine trade routes between India, Gulf States and Europe. While two projects primarily focus on the connectivity for economic development, the directionality and geographical coverage gives comparative analysis.

2. The Global Arena of Economic Corridors

In the landscape of global

geopolitics, economic corridors have emerged as strategic chess pieces, shaping the intricate moves of nations. At the forefront, there are two projects; BRI and IMEC, where one is a project of emerging global power china and other is the initiative of US and allies. Both are the manifests of geopolitical maneuvering.

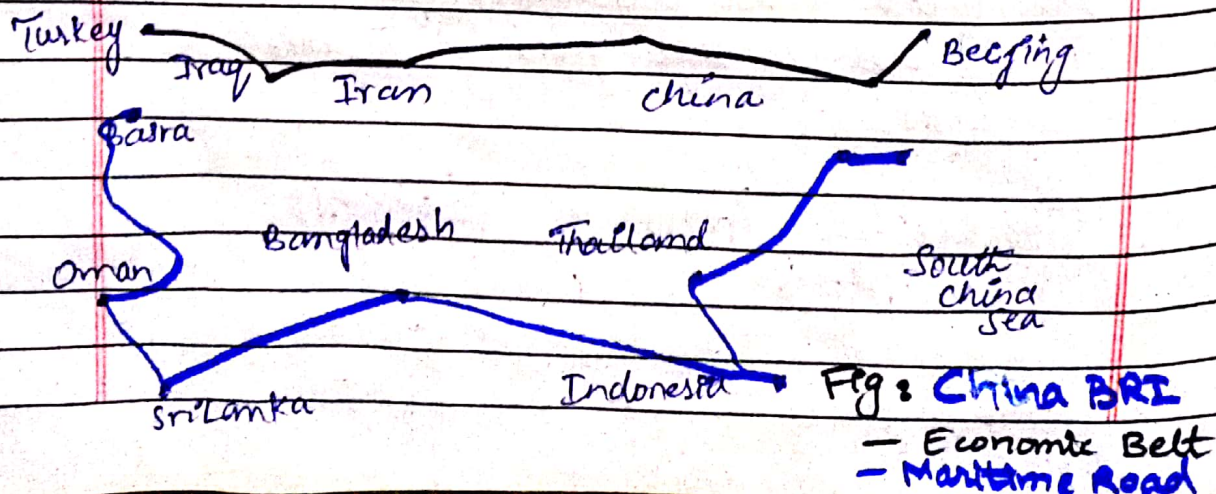
3. IMEC's Strategic Significance:

India's Response to BRI

India is seen by the west as the counterweight to china in Asia.

By strengthening trade and investment with Europe and Middle East, India aspires to counter BRI and china.

IMEC could provide India with advantages, ranging from energy security to increased political coverage.



4. Comparative Analysis of BRI &

IMEC

Both of the economic projects can be compared across various aspects. The BRI launched by China is well underway while IMEC is still in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) stage.

i) Initiation and Progress ~ one decade old and other on MOU stage

BRI was initiated in 2013 and is actively in progress. Its flagship project CPEC in Pakistan has been celebrated as decade old project. On the other hand, IMEC is on MOU stage, indicating it is in preliminary planning.

ii) Scale of Investment ~ trillion vs billion dollar investment

BRI has an estimated value of around \$8-trillion whereas IMEC's investments are projected to be smaller. IMEC

will possibly have few billion dollars.

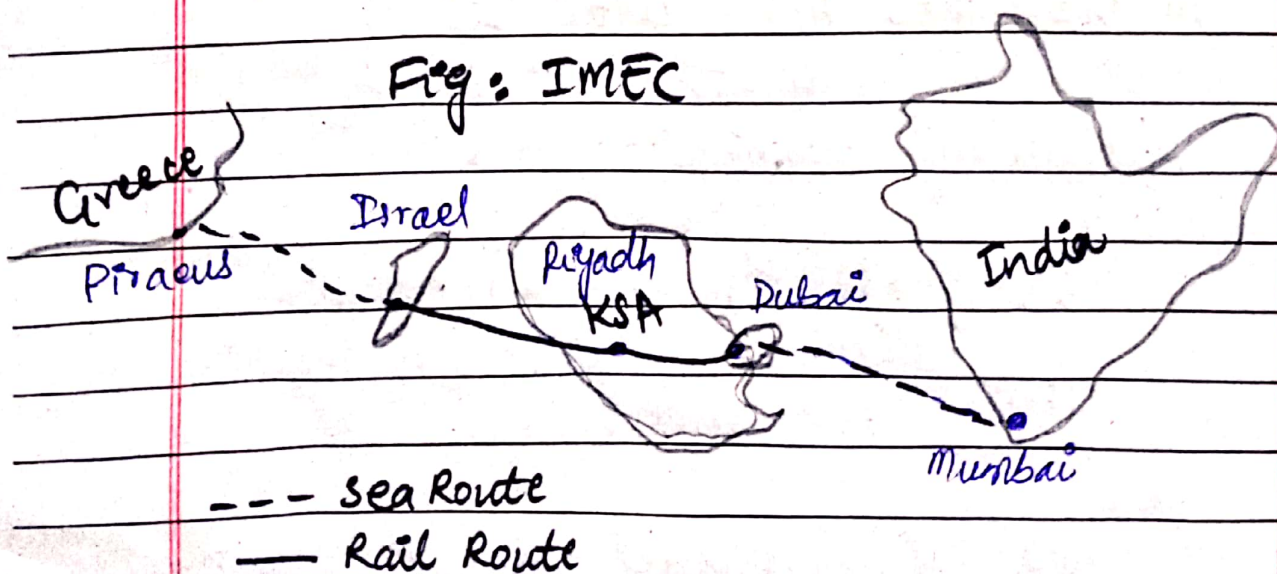
iii) Geographical Coverage ~ a dominating factor

BRI spans approximately 150 countries, primarily developing and emerging economies. However, IMEC is planned to cover around 20 countries, mainly in the Middle East and Europe, with generally higher economic development.

iv) Directionality

BRI is multi-directional, connecting China with Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas. On the contrary, IMEC is unidirectional, primarily connecting India to Europe.

Fig: IMEC



v) Scope of Project ~ energy,
agriculture, industrial zones
vs shipping lanes and rail
road infrastructure

BRI includes a wide range of projects from infrastructure to energy, agriculture, and industrial zone. While IMEC scope appears more limited to rail road infra-structures.

v) Transportation Modes ~
Land Based Routes
dependency

BRI has a diverse network, with 70% focused on land-based routes. IMEC emphasizes sea transportation, envisioning shipping lanes and rail-road infrastructure.

4. Prognostication Regarding IMEC

i) Prospects of IMEC

IMEC is 90% complete or

or operational with advanced stages in sea lanes and railroad zones. Moreover, Financial viability is enhanced by the participation of wealthy countries. Furthermore, robust private sector involvement and economic benefits which include regional integration and enhanced energy security.

ii) Prospects of BRI

BRI is a win-win situation for all the countries partnered with the initiative. Despite BRI receiving criticism, it is having increased interest due to its involvement of developing countries which would thereby increase economic opportunities for developing nations.

iii) Challenges for IMEC and BRI

Geopolitical and security risks in Middle East can hinder the project progress of IMEC. Furthermore, technological integration and infra-structural gaps are challenging.

Similarly, BRI especially CPEC is under threat due to repeated attacks and insurgency. Also, there remain concerns about debt sustainability. Srilankan port, Hambantota, which has been leased to China for 99 years is a question to China's debt conditions with countries. Moreover, the slowdown of economic progress of China pose challenge to the future of the project.

5. Conclusion: Navigating the future of Economic Corridors

As the nations maneuver their pieces on geoeconomic chessboard, the future of the corridors remains uncertain. It represents struggle for global influence. BRI and IMEC present distinct approaches with BRI having larger scale, IMEC offers economic benefits and places India at a centerstage in global geopolitical interplay. Pakistan being the part of flagship project of BRI, IMEC has alienated it. Pakistan significance to extend it to the central Asian Republics cannot be denied.

Q# 5

Factors Needed for an Organization to be successful ~ BRICS, its Future Despite Hurdles

1. Introduction

Amidst the escalating bloc politics, BRICS summit defied the negative assumptions. Member states agreed on currency swap agreements. Furthermore, the addition of new members from middle East and Africa has broaden the scope of the organization. The organization aims to promote Global South and aspire be a replacement of Group of seven (G7) countries which are predominantly west centric and has members of west only.

The newly expanded BRICS has a combined population of about 3.5 billion people, with a combined economy worth \$2.85tr or about 28% of the global economy.

(BRICS Expansion, Africa news)

2. Factors Needed for Success of an Organization

i) Strategic focus ~ A

Cornerstone for Success

Successful organizations have strategic focus and have a definite vision and mission. Successful organizations start out small but manage to enhance influence afterwards.

ii) Fostering Development through

Collaboration and Reconciliation

Successful organizations foster development through collaboration and reconciliation. They have strong conflict resolution mechanism.

iii) Setting Aside of Personal Grievances for Greater Success

Organizations offer productive environment for the members so that bigger aspects and objectives may be achieved rather

than wasting time on personal grievances.

iv) Devising policies which serve the interests of all parties involved

Organizations must develop strategies that prove beneficial for the parties in the long run.

v) Respecting international norms and standards

Successful organizations follow the international standards and avoid contradictory statements. Likewise, organizations consider the values of parties involved.

3. BRICS ~ An Organization with Bright Future

i) BRICS Expansion ~ A step further to strengthen it

BRICS started off with four countries Brazil, Russia, India and China. Afterwards, it got 5th member

South Africa - Now in Aug 2023, BRICS has expanded its membership by adding Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, Ethiopia, Argentina and Iran. This has further strengthened the prospects of organization.

a) BRICS ~ Setting Aside Grievances and Focusing on Larger Interests

Despite concerns of US after Russian invasion of Ukraine, India kept itself balanced on the stance. Similarly, China-India standoff on border, did not affect the membership. Likewise, KSA Iran rapprochement is one step further to stabilize the region and revive the organization.

ii) Encouraging local currency over Dollar for Trade

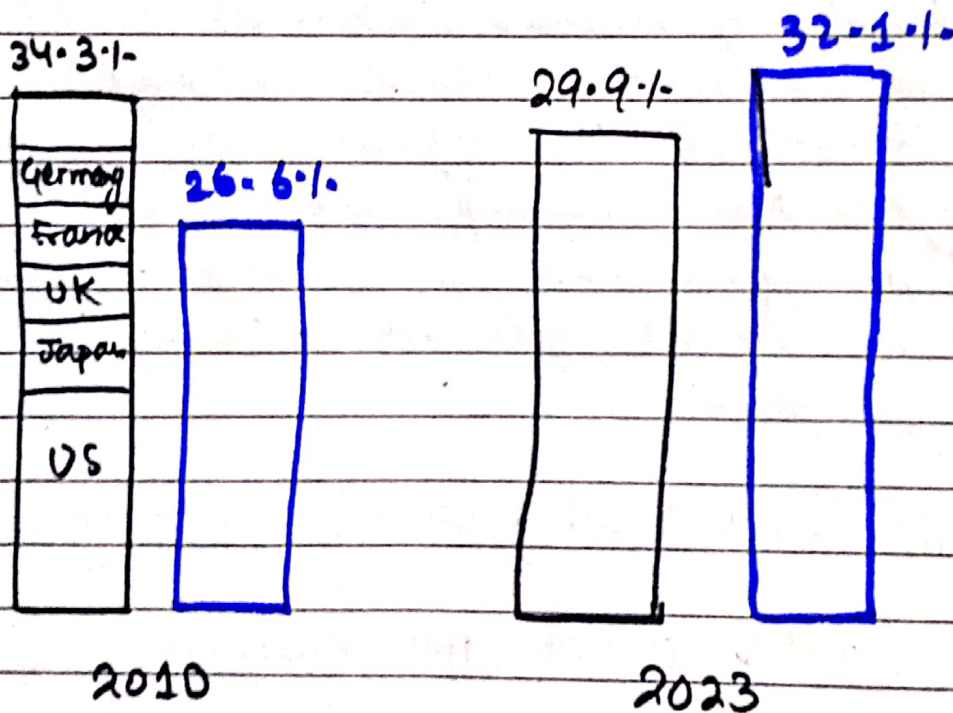
The comprehensive document of BRICS states the use of local currency for trade and financial transaction.

This would give the organization space and reduce the dependency on dollar. Case in point is of Iran and Russia, whose sanctions by US repeatedly affect

the financial transitions. Local currency will help boost the trade bilaterally and with the members of organization.

III) Regular Dialogues for Economic Cooperation

BRICS has assured the hosting regular Political Parties Dialogues to enhance economic cooperation.



- G7 countries
- BRICS nations

Source: IMF World Economic Outlook

(iv) Alternative World Order Reducing West dominated Arrangements

BRICS expansion signifies an effort to establish an alternative world order. It can reduce reliance on west-dominated arrangements. BRICS aims to reduce dollarization of trade and seeks to advocate Global South in the world.

v) BRICS Bank ~ An alternative to IMF and WB

BRICS bank can provide loans on lenient conditions to the nations rather than falling prey of debt trap scheme of IMF and WB.

4. Conclusion

BRICS+ is a significant step towards strengthening Global South in the changing geopolitical landscape. BRICS being a platform of Global South presents policies which are Global South centric, for the reason, it has gained success. The effort to reduce dollarization of trade gives space to the dwindling economies of developing

countries. BRICS members hold significant voting shares in WB and IMF. From geopolitical, economic and diplomatic perspectives, BRICS offers a competitive platform.

Q#7:

Pakistan increasing tensions with 3 neighbors, Failures and Hurdles in the Foreign Policy

1. Introduction

Pakistan is in trouble, its facing one crisis than another. There are attacks surging on Pakistan's security forces.

(DW Analysis)

Pakistan is faced with security threats from its three fronts. On one front, India is disturbing the strategic balance of the region by procuring weapons from west, on other front, Taliban government is giving loose hands to the insurgents which are infiltrating into Pakistan, on third front, Iran

has attacked unprovoked in the Balochistan threatening Pakistan's sovereignty. Furthermore, the security issues of Pakistan are exacerbating the progress of CPEC. These challenges demand a foreign policy shift which is already security centric since the inception of Pakistan.

2. Pakistan and its neighbors

a) Pakistan and its eastern neighbor ~ India disturbing the strategic balance in the region

India as part of Indo-Pacific, QUAD and IMEC has gained presence in the western bloc. It repeatedly acquire weapons and disturbs the strategic balance of the region. Furthermore, India's revocation of Art 370 and 35A from Kashmir and then Supreme court upholding the decision presents a signal to Pakistan. Moreover, India has hosted G20 PM meeting in Srinagar giving Kashmir issue another dent.

b) Pakistan and its western neighbor Afghanistan ~

Insurgency and deadly attacks

Pakistan has strained relations with Afghanistan due to its (former) involvement in WOT and ~~also~~ behaving as non-NATO ally of US since the withdrawal of US and NATO from Afghanistan, the terrorism has surged to alarming level.

30 police personnels martyred in attack on police line in Balochistan on February, 2024.

(Dawn)

Pakistan's rank in terrorism Index has also fallen due to the surge in attacks.

c) Pakistan and Iran ~

Relations with Brotherly nation and skirmishes

Relations with Iran got strained when Iran attacked unprovoked on Pakistan's south-western province.

The country retaliated for tit for tat. However, the condition got calmed when foreign minister of Iran visited Pakistan.

3. Foreign Policy Hurdles and Failures

- i) To maintain friendly relations with Muslim countries
(Foreign Policy of Pakistan)

Foreign Policy of Pakistan has always been a policy to build relations with Muslim countries. However, due to Afghan Taliban's loose hold and soft corner for TTP, the policy needs to be revisited.

- ii) Revitalizing SAARC and gaining membership in BRICS and IMEC

Pakistan can play a significant role and increase its say in the global world by attaining membership of IMEC and BRICS and revitalizing SAARC. Pakistan's geopolitical importance is a factor which could give Pakistan a card to enter.

- iii) Increasing bilateral trade with India, Iran, Afghanistan
Pakistan can use its neighbors

by involving them in trade. TAPI project is on hold due to the terrorism insurgence in region. Similarly, visa Regime challenges at Afghan border are further deescalating the conflict.

(v) Strengthening of border with Afghanistan and fencing ~ Training the security forces including paramilitary forces

Pakistan must fence the border with Afghanistan to avoid infiltration and paramilitary forces must be given proper training and equipment to counter terrorism.

India ~ presenting counterweight to China in Asia ~ A foreign Policy Hurdle for Pakistan

West and allies see India as a power to counterweight to China in Asia, so Pakistan's space is getting narrow. For Pakistan to get space on world forums and to

increase its say, to strengthen its stance on Kashmir Issue and terrorism, need a strategic entry into forums like BRICS and IMEC.

4. Conclusion

Pakistan is facing issues of security, economy, politics and climate change. It needs a comprehensive foreign policy to involve all the actors and take them aboard to resolve the issues at large. Pakistan needs to build negotiations with Afghanistan and Iran to secure its borders from terrorism and unprovoked attacks. Further, it needs to secure place in Indian dominated platforms to place its stance in stronger value.