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Subject : Current Affairs

## Subjective Part

Q. no. 1

The HTS Islamist change in Syria

### Introduction:

Syrian insurgent groups lead by HTS Hayyat Tehreek Al-Sham toppled down the 50 years of Al-Assad family rule in Syria. It escalated due to the two weeks offensive by HTS capturing major cities of Syria until the ruler Bashar Al-Assad fled to Moscow and rebels captured the capital, Damascus without any major resistance by the left-behind army of Assad.

## Background:

All of this: didn't happen in the blink of an eye but it took fifty years of anger and fourteen years of conflict that ultimately turned into a civil war. Bashar Al-Assad left his home secretly on Nov 23, 2011 seeking political asylum in Moscow; from his stronghold. His family was already shifted there months ago. It seems like he has been planning it for a while it's not an abrupt and emotional move.

Syria is a Sunni majority country with a population of 25 million reported by UN data. Its area expands 186,180 square kilometres and its known in history of Arabic literature as Al-Sham. Fifty years back the forefather of Bashar Al-Assad took over the Syrian empire, being recognized from a Shia sect he was not

welcomed by Syrian sunni majority public they protested and resisted his rule over their holy land. These revolts kept on taking momentum day by day. To control these rebels the ruler had to adopt a strict army deployment over masses for his safety and safety of his rule over Syria. But time passed and certain organized groups developed in Syria with the help of Al-Qaeda and that group ultimately made fall of Assad regime an irreversible reality.

● Reasons behind the fall of Assad's regime:

Following are some major reasons behind the fall of Al-Assad regime.

- 1- Assad's brutal crackdown:
  - Special jail in Sydnaya was established to capture the civilians and rebellions in the outskirts of

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Damascus to keep their fear among Syrians and to contain them from future rebellious activities. People were arrested since forty eight to fifty years in Sidnaya jail before they were set free on 29 Nov by the HTS's (Hayyat Tehreek Al-Sham) leader Abu Muhammad Al-Jolani.

## 2. Prolonged - uncontrolled civil war:

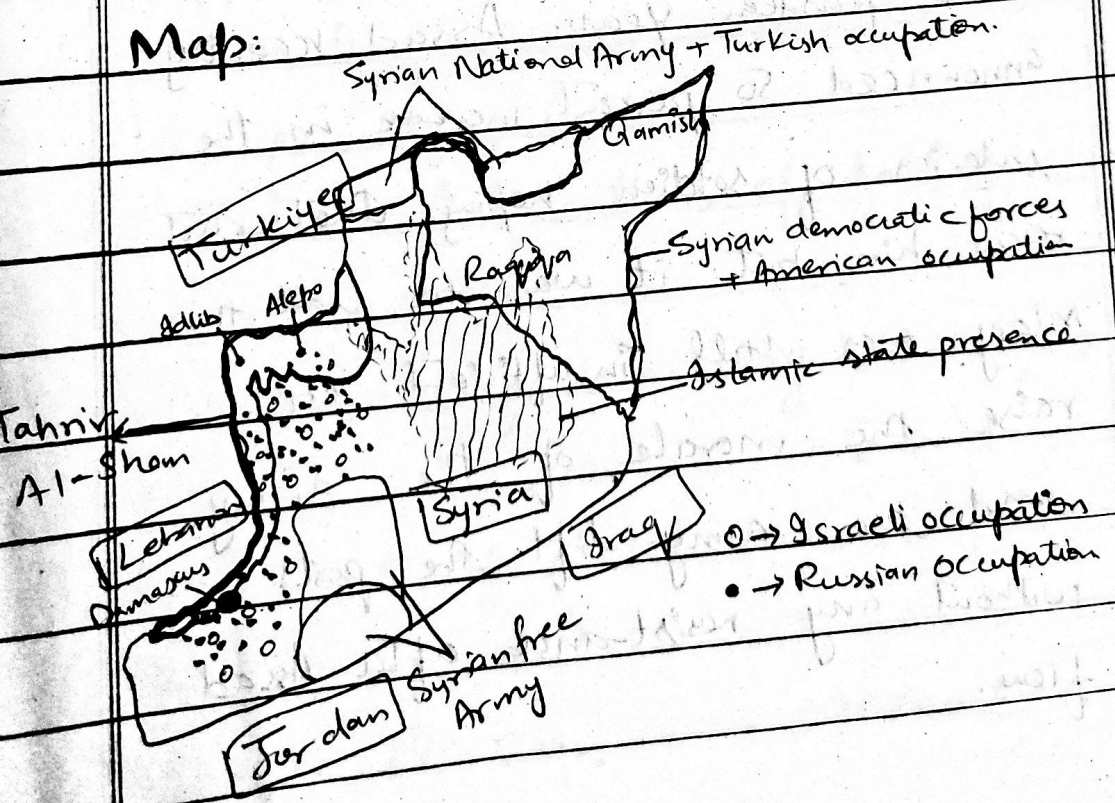
Civil war escalated in 2011 during the peak of Arab Spring. Since 2011 Assad government was fighting and controlling rebels ~~and~~ ~~using~~ its economic and military resources with ~~time~~ that lead to lack of resilience against the HTS opponents during two weeks offensive; AFP (Agency France Press)

## 3. Assad's: reliance on Iranian and Russian support only;

Syria had been facing

an economic setback since years.  
 The economy was struggling to survive and was only standing on aid received from Russia Assad's biggest ally and Iran that had geographical interest in the Syrian territory to keep communication with other countries in Middle east. In the need Russian army was occupied in Ukraine and Iranian army was already facing war against Israel; both of them couldn't rescue Assad and fall of Syria happened.

Map:



Q. no. 6  
COP. 29. Failures and Commitments

Introduction:

Global climate action has been clearly recognized under (UNFCCC) United Nations Framework for Convention on Climate Change and Paris Agreement. After 28 conferences of Parties the 29<sup>th</sup> conference held in Baku which discussed the throughout progress made in 2024.

In COP-29, 61 supporting countries participated, comprising 80% of the global emissions and prioritizing action to cut carbon in coming year.

Commitments made at COP. 29.

1- Energy sector:

- 1- Launch of COP-29 Green Energy Pledge, green energy zones and corridors
2. Global renewable alliance (GRA)

#### 4. HTS seeking charge of Syria:

The only rival of HTS in Syria is Baath Party which is openly declaring itself as secular while HTS being a sunni coalition is expected to be taking charge from the current PM of Syria Al-Jalil who has not left his place yet. US and UK declared that they had talked to HTS leader but HTS taking charge of Syria is still negotiable considering its background of a militant group nurtured under Al-Qaeda.

#### 5 Risk of ~~HTS~~ to patch up with Al-Qaeda:

If Al-Qaeda seeks reapproachment with HTS then it would be again a risk for the peaceful and prosperous world to prosper. HTS currently claims that it parted ways with Al-Qaeda and will behave like an Islamist not

a militant group.

Conclusion:

Considering the facts, it can be summed up as if HTS would not bound itself to government actions only then another Arab state would be destroyed and human rights violations would further escalate in Arab countries.

Another major fact is Israel and US claiming fall of Assad as victory against Iran is surprising.

Israel:

"These are the direct results of the blows we have inflicted on Iran and Hezbollah, Assad's main supporters"

(Netanyahu)

US:

"Our approach has shifted the balance of power in



## Middle East"

(Joe Biden)

It shows that HTS must be backed by US and Israel and this fall doesn't seem to be a Syrian revolution but a warning to Iran from West.

## G. no. 4

Russia - China ----- Discuss.

### Introduction:

Modern World is not determined by Unipolar World Order but it is best defined by Multipolar World Order where US, China and Russia contest for being World super-power and the sole determinant of future of planet Earth and space. Where Russia and China collaborated to develop a continental order to counter their biggest rival "US hegemon" which has occupied the major decision making

power of the world.

### Background:

US has been ruling the World since decades right after World War II. US started to inculcate its troops in multiple countries, became the sole peacemaker and decision maker for most of the developed and almost every developing countries including Pakistan via its monetary organization and peace keeping missions. China took freedom from its British colonizer approx. 7 decades ago and fought with major economic crisis in 2008 and major epidemic (COVID-19) in 2020. It survived as a nation and emerged as the biggest economy of the world followed by India. Russia after broken down of Soviet union in 1980's reemerged in 2014 after its invasion in Ukraine that was about to join NATO and Crimea being part of Soviet

union entitles extreme importance for Russia and the invasion was majorly done to prevent Ukraine from becoming a NATO ally of US. Russia - Ukraine war somewhat established the fact that Russia is the emerging great power along with China and US.

### Recent development in Russia-China collaboration.

#### Economic:

- 1 - The total Trade of Russia and China has grown significantly since 2002. from \$12 billion (2002) to \$130.1 billion in 2021 reported by International trade center.
- 2 - Russia and China signed a gas deal for 10 billion cubic meters.
- 3 - After the ban on Russian oil import in European countries. China increased its purchases at bargain prices.
- 4 - De-dollarization strategy adopted.

by Russia and China is a major set back for US and put a pressure on stability of dollar in International market while competing with Chinese Yuan and Russian Rubel.

### Strategic:

- 1- Russia becoming an active participant with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). It supports the idea of converging BRI with Eurasian Economic Union.
- 2- The recent summit of SCO in Astanabad where heads of the states met on 16, 17, 18 October 2024 was another step forward in Sino-Russian collaboration where two main strategies were presented "external interference resistance strategy" and "new centers for power strategy" for SCO members.
- 3- Iran joining SCO being an oil and gas rich country and foe of

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Israel, US ally. It puts a pressure on western world which has already stopped imports from Russia and if Iran will join Russian block Europe will strive for oil and gas reserves. While Chinese routes are best suitable for mobility of Iranian oil to west.

## Political

- 1- It is expected that Moscow and Beijing are going to enjoy a brotherhood forever. Historically, Mao was not a supporter of Soviet Union and was the biggest reason of Sino-Soviet split in 1950s.
- 2- Both Russia and China currently align on number of foreign policy objectives, considering both of them are communist in nature.
- 3- Russia and China raised their military spending where China announced 7.1% increase in military

speeches:

4. Xi and Putin complimenting each other at international forums declares the bilateral relationship has no limits.

US counter strategies:-

1- US strongly criticize the peacemaking activities of Beijing and Moscow referring towards the human rights violations in Taiwan and Ukraine respectively.

2. US expanding its NATO network and strength along with its geographical expanding. Ukraine is the best example.

3. US developing its unilateral, uninterrupted missile defense system, to counter China and Russian missiles.

4. US is following policy of dual containment by containing China in South China Sea and challenging its territorial occupation on 9 dash line.

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and countering Russia in Ukraine with heavy arms.

~~Conclusion~~ (P.S. 90)

It can be suggested on the basis of the given arguments that Russia should rely less on China for economic and strategic decision making. On the other hand China should be aware of Russia's interest and <sup>its</sup> ~~its~~ seeking opportunities in Western World and it will abandon China once settled in West as a super power. Conclusively, all three states have different capabilities and resources they must co-operate for a prosperous future or at least lay for "A just world order."

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Q. no. 6

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In COP 29, 61 supporting countries participated, comprising 80% of the global emissions and prioritizing action to cut carbon in coming year.

### Commitments made at COP. 29.

#### 1- Energy sector:

↳ Launch of COP-29 Green Energy Pledge, green energy zones and corridors

2. Global renewable alliance (GRA)



call to action by 2030.

3. Latin America Energy Organization;  
to meet the regional target of  
energy efficiency.

4. Launch of African Union's African  
Energy efficiency programme.

## 2. Hydrogen:

1- Hydrogen Declaration; to scale up  
renewable sources, zero emission and  
low carbon hydrogen production.

2- Green hydrogen and green shipping;  
for zero and near zero emissions  
investment leaving no country behind.

## 3. Methane

1- Reducing methane from Organic  
Waste.

## 4. Industry:

1- Launch of green purchase toolkit,  
for industrial transition acceleration  
supporting business to purchase green  
commodities. reported by economist

## 5. Built environment:

- 1- Low carbon definition for cement and concrete;
- 2- Inter-governmental Council for building and climate (ICBC) for green construction, energy efficient buildings, recommendations and follow ups.
- 3- Blueprint for platform based on solar impulse foundations, 12 member countries are part of it with 7 NGO's and 8 private partners.
- 4- Sub-national cooling project by 2030.

## 6. Transport:

- 1- E-fuels in marine sector to reduce emissions of CFC's (Chloro fluoro carbons) from fuel driven vehicles.
- 2- Launch of zero emission vehicles.

## 7. SME's (Small and medium enterprises)

- 1- Inviting private partners and small and medium enterprises to invest in green energy projects.

8. Water:

- 1- Declaration of Water for Climate Action
- 2- Report on Urban Water Resilience

9. Food:

- 1- Transforming food systems for people, nature and climate
- 2- Agricultural Innovation Mechanism

10. Peace:

- 1- Presidency Trust Appeal; climate financing is peace positive and conflict sensitive

11. Tourism

- 1- Declaration of Enhanced Action in Tourism

12. Youth:

- 1- COP-29 Business, investment and Philanthropy Climate Platform
- 2- Support for Youth Pavillion at COP 29.

These were the key commitments made in COP-29 for a sustainable and prosperous future but it failed to achieve the

real goal.

## Failures of COP-29:

- 1- The statement of Azerbaijani President calling oil and gas a "gift from God" indicates exactly in opposite direction to the NDCs of COP-29.
- 2- COP 28 and 29 taking place in major oil producing countries with extensive representation from global oil industry, reported by Al-Jazeera.
- 3- Most of its members have yet to achieve the phase out of fossil fuel.
- 4- COP-29 made way big commitments and took unrealistic pledges as well keeping in mind its track record.
- 5- The gap in financial and diplomatic requirements is way big and hard to bridge reported by AFP.

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6- No sub-offices made at regional or state level to monitor, follow up, report and lead for regional support.

7- "Loss and damage fund"

which was supposed to be \$100 billion has been hardly achieved by

COP-28 in Dubai, pointing towards the negligence of participating countries. sourced from Economist.

**Conclusion:**

COP-29 is a major step towards a green and peaceful future. It highlighted almost every domain of life that needed attention for climatic cause but big pledges and unrealistic expectations can become a big obstacle. But hope should be retained in humanity keeping in mind: "Journey of thousand Miles starts with a single step." (Keter)

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