

## Current Affairs

Q:2 The HTS Islamist rebels have toppled down Bashar al Assad regime in Syria. Critically evaluate the reasons and implications of the unprecedented change in Syria.

### 1. Introduction:

Syria is in a state of civil war at present. This is because earlier this month, the ruling government in Syria - the Assad - got defeated. Bashar al Assad was ousted as the rebel forces launched attacks on Syria. The Jihadi Islamist rebel groups operating in Syria, which is called Hayat Tehrir al Sham's (HTS) leader got control of the country. The group is supported by Turkey; which is also called as the biggest beneficiary of it and is now regarded as a winner. Several reasons including the internal factors, the global influences and economic factors contribute to the change

in Syria, which also has long-term impacts on its national and global reputation.

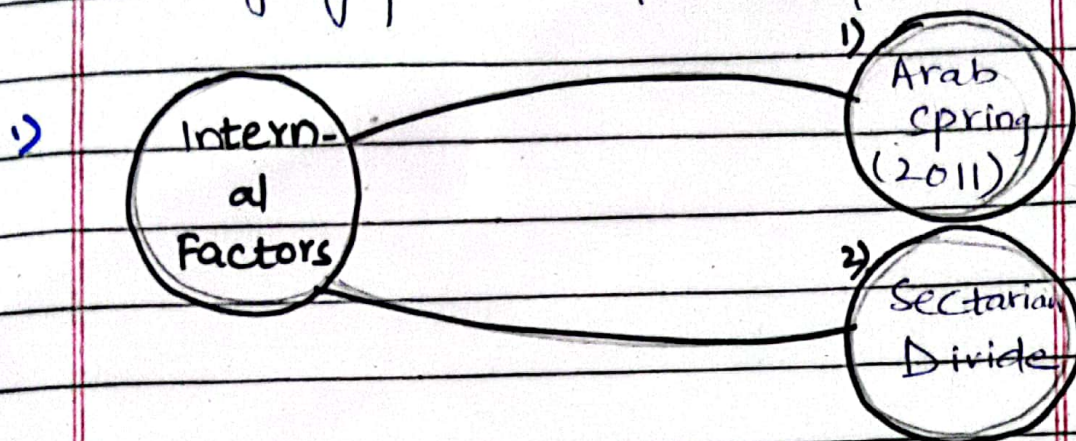
## 2. Brief Overview of the Power Shift in Syria:

As Assad family has been ruling Syria for more than 50 years, the recent attack by HTS rebel group broken ~~this~~ its backbone in just 15 days. It captured the whole Syria by launching attacks on its cities like Aleppo, Hama, Hama, and Damascus. Mohammad Jolani - a Sunni leader got control of the land and also made Bashar al-Assad leave Syria. Assad fled Moscow and is in political asylum as he had close networks with Russia and Iran.

## 3. Reasons of Unprecedented Change in Syria

Many factors contribute to the

changing power shift in Syria.



As far as internal factors are concerned, **Arab Spring** inspired Syrians to Challenge decades of authoritarian rule of Assad and demand political reform.

Moreover, **Sectarian Divisions** among Sunni majority and other ethnic groups perpetuated the war.

2) **Economic Factors:** High unemployment, rising poverty, and mismanagement of resources tri forced the public towards dissatisfaction.

3) **Geopolitical Rivalries in the Middle East:**

Syria became a focal point for

competing interests of regional and global powers. These powers include Iran, Russia, Turkey and the United States.

#### 4. Foreign Support of Rebels operating in Syria:

The Opposition groups received funding and weapons from countries like Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Qatar and western allies. This strengthened them economically so that they could make a bold move, like the one they did and captured the cities.

#### 5. Rise of Extremism due to the insurgent actors:

The emergence of groups like ISIS and Al-Nusra destabilized the country further. These steps paved way for extremist tendencies operating in Syria.

## Implications of Unprecedented Change in Syria:

There are widespread and long-term political, social, economic, regional and global implications of unprecedented change in Syria.

### i. Political Implications in the form of Fragmented Governance:

The Divided control on the Southern and Eastern regions among the Assad regime, the Kurdish forces, the opposition groups and the extremists, presents a fragmented picture of governance in Syria.

### ii. The Distorted Social Fabric of Syrian Population:

Due to multiple attacks, the infrastructure, resources and economy of Syria is in troubles. Many people are displacing and a

refugee crisis: seems to emerge.

### iii. Economic collapse in ~~the~~ Damascus:

As the country is under war since so long, the economic stagnation prevails in it. Moreover, the political uprisings and reduced foreign aid exacerbates the crisis.

### iv. The threat of Rivalries:

The Syrian conflict deepened divides between Global powers such as United States and Russia and regional actors which include Iran versus the Gulf states.

### v. The destabilization of Neighbouring countries and shifting Power Dynamics:

The refugee influx strained resources and increased tensions in Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq. Now the power shift is more tow-

and ~~from~~ United States and Turkey rather than Russia and Iran.

## 5. Conclusion:

Syria in its civil war lost its 50 year old ~~rules~~ leadership. HTS became the new ruling party in Syria and due to various economic, social, political and global reasons and regional alliances, the country experienced a wide range of implications. It caused a shift in the power dynamics and weak governance structures along with distorted socio-economic fabric.

Q: 6. COP 29 Summit ended in Baku. Critically evaluate its failures and commitments.

### 1. Introduction:

The 29<sup>th</sup> meeting of Conference of Parties (COP) held in Baku, Azerbaijan. ~~The~~ Multiple

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day: \_\_\_\_\_

- state officials participated in it. But the global leaders from many countries including United States, China and others did not take keen interest. After a long deal of discussions, a pledge of about \$300 billion annually for developing nations was procured. It left with many failures and commitments that were meant to get completed by the year 2030.

## 2. An Overview of Conference of Parties (COP 29):

COP29 is an initiative where state officials from different countries joined in Baku. They joined hand for climate safety, reducing emissions, carbon cuts and bringing the Global temperatures below  $2^{\circ}\text{C}$ . For this purpose Global North and Global South have to make certain commitments regarding their control on emissions. Furthermore,



Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_

the world would provide funding to the developing ~~nature~~ nations who have to bear the burnt of the emissions released by developed nations. They come in the form of devastating floods, increasing global temperature, draughts and wildfires.

### 3. Failures of COP 29:

#### 1. Insufficient Climate Finance:

The agreed upon \$300 billion annual pledge by 2025 was criticized as inadequate amount. It represented less than 25% of the \$1.3 trillion annual request by developing countries. According to internal displacement monitoring centre:

this shortfall raises concerns about the ~~about~~ ability of vulnerable nations to effectively address climate impacts.

ii. Lack of Fossil Fuel Phase-out Commitment

Despite discussions, COP 29 failed to ~~reiterate~~ <sup>manage</sup> a commitment to the transition of fossil fuels to other sources. This step was emphasized in previous conferences. This omission caused a hindrance to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

iii. Exclusion of Emerging Economies in Funding:

Despite great ~~em~~ ~~am~~ amount of emissions from China and some Gulf countries, they did not agree on contributions in funding. This creates a gap in ensuring equitable responsibility in climate action.

iv. Controversies and Concerns:

The conference faced controversies. It includes a report that COP29

chief Executive was found secretly ~~records~~ discussing potential oil and gas deals during the event (Saddam Hussain). Such incidents raised concerns about conflicts of interest on conference's objectives.

#### 4. Commitments in COP 29:

##### i. Climate Finance Agreement:

Developed nations agreed to pledge \$300 billion annually by 2035 to support developing countries in addressing climate change impacts. However, this amount falls short of the \$1.3 trillion annually that developing nations asked for.

##### ii. Carbon Credit Trading Framework:

The delegates accorded to a framework aimed at establishing a UN-backed body to regulate international carbon credit trading. It is aimed to open doors for climate finance for developing countries.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Day: \_\_\_\_\_

### iii - Multilateral Development Bank

#### Pledges:

The World Bank and European Investment Bank committed to increasing climate lending to \$120bn annually.

The ADB announced \$7.2 billion in new investments and \$3.5 billion for targeting glacial melting in Central Asia.

### 5- Conclusion:

The 29<sup>th</sup> meeting on conference of parties held in Baku summed up with various failures and a few commitments. Along with the pledges for climate funding and carbon cut frameworks, the ~~at~~ lack of interest of many states in either reducing emissions or procuring funding was seen as a major setback to the COP 29. It ended with multiple grants by development banks for ~~fit~~ future cuts.

Q. Critically evaluate the beneficiaries and losers of the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East.

### 1. Introduction:

Middle East is in a state of conflicts and wars on many issues. The region experiences heightened conflicts of ~~in~~ territorial conflicts, sectarian issues, global alliances and hegemonic battles. The state and non-state rivalries including Israel's attack on Gaza, which has lasted more than a year, which has now extended to Lebanon, Syria and Iran.

In the whole burning fire, many key players emerged. Along with that some proved to be losers in the whole conflict.

### 2. The Great Game in the Middle East

The Middle East is experiencing a

tough power imbalance. It is because Israel claims Palestine <sup>under</sup> its control and continues to launch repeated attacks. It has crushed more than half of the population of Palestine with women and children on its prime focus. On the other hand, it has invaded Lebanon ~~do~~ with the aim of destruction of Hezbollah's networking. ~~Whereas~~ Hamas and Hezbollah networks in Iran are also bombed by Israel. Iran and Israel are in direct confrontation also. On the other side, Syria got invaded by Hayat Tahrir-al-Sham (HTS) rebel group, with Turkey ~~as~~ as its beneficiary, and ousting Bashar al Assad's government.

### 3. Beneficiaries of the ongoing conflicts in Middle East:

→ The ongoing crisis in the Middle East yields many faces triumphed

Whereas some others are mere gain  
loss.

### 1. United States in triumph:

United States proves to be in gain as it is providing arms and ammunitions to Israel since its invasion of Gaza. In this way, it tends to block path of China, Iran and Russia which is also evident from Assad's ouster in the Syria. It is posing heavy checks on those nations which are against its axis.

### 2. Israel as <sup>apparent</sup> antiwar-winner:

Apparently, Israel is the hegemon in the Middle East. This is because it has close ties with US and Europe which are its prime source of funding. It has killed the primary tier leadership of its enemies i.e. Hamas and Hezbollah.

### 3. Saudi-Arabia as a Winner in

## - the Middle East:

X Saudi Arabia; after the Syrian occupation by Sunni forces is in a joy. This is because it can expand its network of Sunni Islamism which was hindered by Iran's influence in the Middle East.

### iv. Turkey as a Major Player:

Turkey emerged as a major player in Middle East. This is because it supported HTS a rebel group. Its support bore fruit and HTS got Syrian control in a few days.

### 4. Losers of the ongoing crises in Middle East:

#### 1. ~~Russia as a loser~~ in the on a losing end:

Russia stands on a losing end in the Middle East. After the downfall of Assad regime, which was supported by Russia aptly,



Russia holds loose on Middle East. Moreover, the sanctions and Ukraine war has also delimited Russia's strengthen to support Middle Eastern countries.

ii- Iran on the verge of a loss:  
Iran's axis of resistance in the Middle East is loosing. This is due to Israel's invasion on Iran, Lebanon, Gaza, and now Syrian debacle has further destabilized Iran's power in the Middle East.

iii. The Hezbollah and Hamas networks in Middle East:

The non-state actors Hezbollah and Hamas are burdened since their top leadership is killed by Israel. Their axis has weakened after the death of Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, Hasan Nasrullah and Yahya Sinwar's death. The Gaza, Lebanon, and other

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Page: \_\_\_\_\_  
countries are in siege and are  
burning. This creates a  
power vacuum that is filled  
by Israel.

## 5. Conclusion:

The Middle East Crisis  
is increasing its ~~gap~~ depth.  
The Israel has started the war  
game in Gaza which then  
spread like a wildfire in the  
Middle East capturing Lebanon,  
Cyria and Yemen also. It also  
revealed the faces of losers such  
as Iran, Russia and its allies,  
whereas it also shows the ~~top~~  
apparent winners such as Israel,  
United States and their allies.

Q: Critically evaluate reasons for  
slowing down of CPEC projects.  
What options would you recom-  
mend to Islamabad and Beijing  
to reinvigorate . . .

## 1. Introduction:

The China - Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was launched its Phase II in Pakistan. The phase II is aimed to <sup>promote</sup> provide industrialization, socio-economic development and regional connectivity. Despite of the keen interest of ~~the~~ both countries in the project, there are various barriers to its effective functioning in Pakistan. Multiple policy options need to be opted by Islamabad and Beijing in order to revive the project and secure their interests.

## 2. Reasons for Slowing Down of CPEC projects in Pakistan:

### 1. Terrorism in Pakistan:

Due to terrorism in Pakistan, particularly in Balochistan and KPK, ~~CPEC~~ many projects under

- CPEC cannot be materialized. Insurgent activities in Pakistan targeting Chinese workers is the biggest threat to CPEC in the region.

## 2. Political instability as a hurdle:

The frequently changing policies under governmental parties poses to a challenge to the effective functioning of CPEC in Pakistan.

The political parties and their relations with the provincial governments also pose a threat.

## 3. Economic Challenges for CPEC:

Pakistan ~~has~~ is under the burden of external debt and faces acute budget crisis. This hampers its ability to pay loans on time and carry out its projects and workings effectively.

## 4. Geopolitical Challenges

The India's opposition to CPEC, particularly its route through Gilgit Baltistan has heightened the tensions.

### 5. Lack of Administrative Control:

The inefficient resource management and poor coordination between federal and provincial governments delays project implementation. Moreover, bureaucratic inefficiencies and corruption slow the the progress of CPEC in the country.

### 3. Policy options for Beijing and Pakistan to revive CPEC:

Islamabad and Beijing should overcome the ~~to~~ political, economic, social and administrative constraints to successfully convert CPEC in to a power project. Terrorism control is also crucial in this regard.

