

Mock Exam

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Batch: 369

Question No: 01

The HTS has toppled down Bashar ul Assad regime in Syria. Critically evaluate the reasons and implications of the unprecedented change in Syria?

1) Introduction

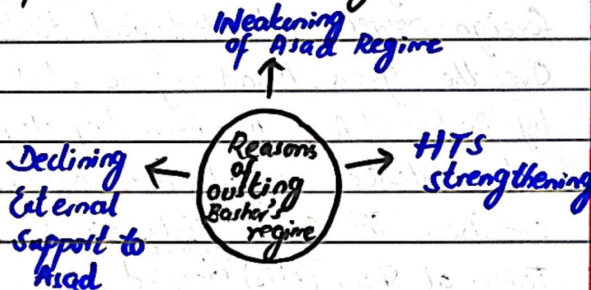
The Syrian conflict, started in 2011, has been a complex and multifaceted war involving various internal factors, foreign powers and ideological divides. Over the years, Assad regime, led by Bashar ul Assad has been key player with substantial support from Russia and Iran. The Syrian rebels ^{now able to} Hayat Tahrir al Sham (HTS) ^{new able to} topple down

Barbar ul Asad Regime on December 8, 2024, due to various reasons such as weakening of Asad Regime, HTS strengthening and declining external support for Asad. This toppling would have serious implications including political instability, humanitarian crisis and sectarian violence.

"You can not make war in Middle East without Egypt and you can not make peace without Syria."

Henry Kissinger

2) Reasons that led to toppling of Bashar Ul Asad Regime



(2A) Weakening of Assad's Regime fueled by prolonged conflicts

(i) Exhaustion from Prolonged Conflicts

Bashar al Assad Regime had been engaged in a brutal civil war for over a decade, facing military, economic and social challenges. This led to weaken the regime by war fatigue, and lack of morale among fighting forces.

Reports from Human Right watch and UNICEF have documented severe depletion of Syrian military resources

(ii) Economic Decline of Syria

Syria's economy had been declining for past few years. With sanctions imposed by West, combined with

dwindling support of Russia and Iran, Asad Regime failed to provide basic services to its population and maintain control over it.

"Syria's GDP dropped by 60% since conflict began and over 90% Syrians live below poverty line"

World Bank

(2B) Strengthening of HTS - A major setback to Asad Regime

HTS, former affiliate of Al Qaeda, strengthened its military power over time. Its ability to gain control over territories and manage local governance led to increase its legitimacy among Syrian population.

"HTS has integrated local governance structures and established degree of order, which increased its legitimacy in certain regions"

Al Jazeera

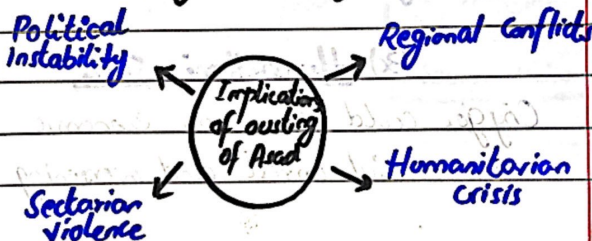
(2c) Declining External Support for Asad - Disruption of Status Quo

Russia and Iran had been Asad's allies throughout the conflict, providing military, financial and diplomatic support. However, the declined support from these countries for past few years put Asad in a vulnerable position and ultimately led to his ousting.

Russia's strategic interests in Syria are more focused on military bases and less on maintaining Asad's Regime.

Reuters Report

3/ Implications of Ousting of Asad's Regime on Syria



(3a) Political instability

The toppling of Assad would not necessarily result in unified Syria. Instead it could deepen existing division between regime loyalists (Alawites) and HTS rebels.

(3b) Sectarian violence

HTS's role may exacerbate sectarian violence and tensions especially against the Alawites and Christian communities leading to violence and displacement.

Reports by Amnesty international highlight how sectarian violence has already been a major factor in the Syrian conflict, with Alawites, Sunnis and Christians facing major violence.

(3c) Humanitarian Crisis

Syria could face deeper economic collapse, social unrest and worsening

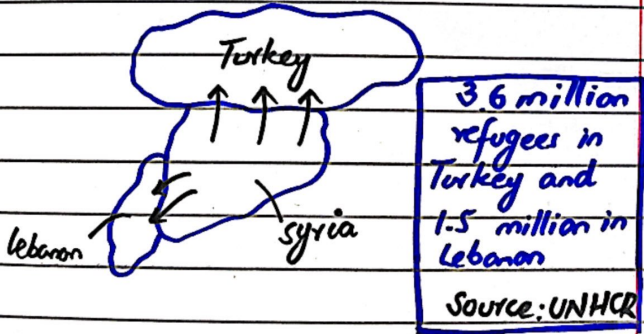
living conditions especially for civilians.

"Syria has experienced one of the worst humanitarian crises, with million of refugees and over 500,000 deaths."

Syria Direct

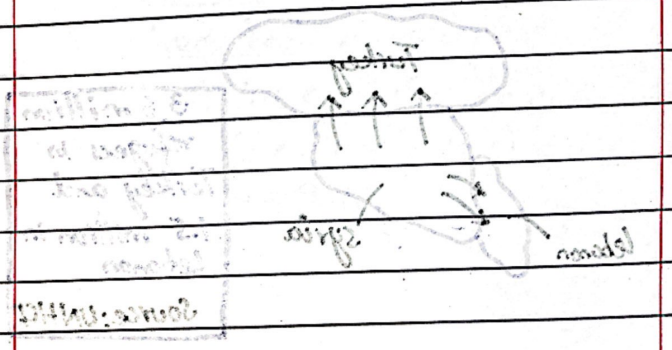
(3d) Regional Conflicts

Neighbouring countries like Turkey and Lebanon would be affected by increased instability and potential refugees flow.



4) Conclusion

The HTS rebels toppled Assad regime which was contributed by various factors including declining external support for Assad, HTS strengthening. However, there could be political stability, humanitarian crises and regional crisis due to this regime change.



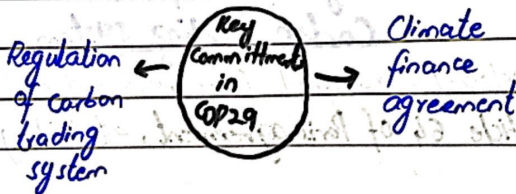
Question No: 6

COP 29 Summit ended in Baku?
Critically evaluate its failures and
commitments?

4 Introduction

The 29th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29), held in Baku, Azerbaijan, concluded with a mix of progress and setbacks. Despite some progress on climate finance, and carbon market frameworks, key issues such as fossil fuels phase out, sufficient financial support for developing nations and concrete adaptation strategies remained unsolved.

2) Key commitments made in COP29



(2A) Climate Finance

Agreement - A major progress made in COP29

Developed nations pledged to mobilize \$300 billion annually to support developing countries in addressing climate change. This commitment aims to replace unmet \$100 billion annual target for 2020.

Let's dispense with the idea that climate finance is charity. An ambitious new climate finance goal is entirely in self interest of every single nation, including the largest and wealthiest.

Simon Stiell

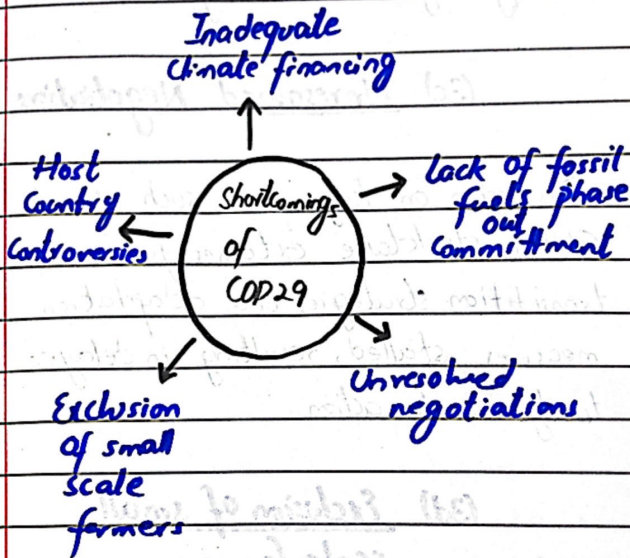
- UN climate chief

(2B) Regulation of international Carbon trading system

Delegates ratified framework under Article 6.4 of Paris agreement, establishing

a UN regulated international carbon trading system. This mechanism is expected to channel significant climate finance to developing nations

3) Failures of COP29



(3A) Inadequate climate financing

The \$300 billion annual pledge falls significantly short of \$1.3 trillion demanded by developing countries to combat climate change.

(3b) Lack of fossil fuel phase out commitment

The Conference failed to secure an agreement on transitioning away from fossil fuels, a critical component in mitigating climate change.

(3c) Unresolved Negotiation

Discussion on key issues such as Global stocktake outcomes, just transition strategies and adaptation measures stalled, resulting in delayed timely climate action.

(3d) Exclusion of small scale farmers

Despite their vital role in global food production, small house holder farmers received minimal support, with only 14% of global financing reaching them.

"The neglect of small scale farmers undermines efforts to build resilient food system."

Reuters

3d Host Country Controversy

Azerbaijan faced criticism for promoting fossil fuels interest during conference.

4/ Conclusion

While COP 29 achieved certain milestones, such as establishment of new climate finance goal and advancement in carbon market, it fell short on fossil fuel reduction, and financial commitments.

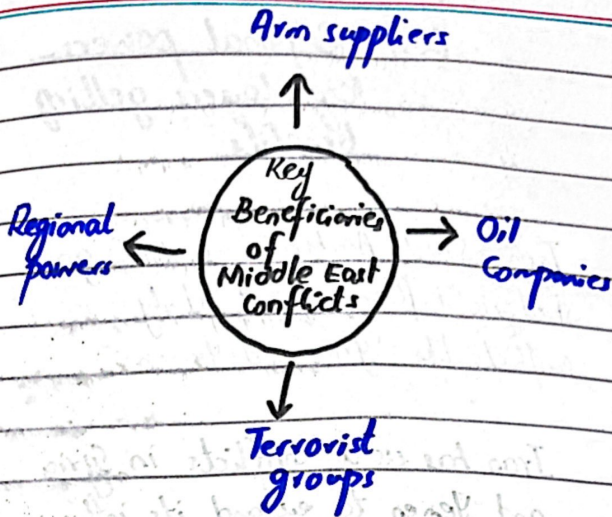
Question 07

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

1/ Introduction

The ongoing conflicts in Middle East have clear beneficiaries and losers. Regional powers like KSA, Iran, along with arm suppliers and oil companies, gain strategic, economic and military advantages. Extremist group like ISIS also exploit the chaos. However, the primary losers are civilians, refugees and fragile state facing widespread destruction, displacement and economic hardship. The global economy is also impacted.

2/ Key Beneficiaries of conflicts in Middle East



(2A) Arm suppliers - benefiting from wars

Countries like US, Russia, and China profit from high demand for weapons in Middle East.

In 2019, US supplied \$10 billion worth arms to the region.

SIPRI, 2020

(2B) Regional powers - Key players getting benefits

Iran, Saudi Arabia and UAE gain strategic influence, particularly in conflicts like Syria and Yemen.

Iran has used conflicts in Syria and Iraq to expand its influence by supporting militias and allied governments.

Al Jazeera

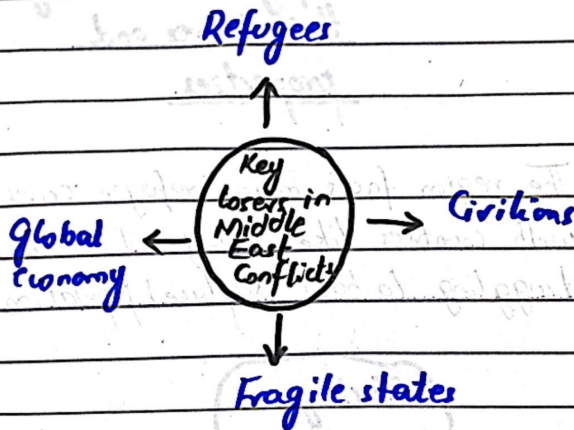
(2c) Terrorist groups

Despite suffering significant territorial losses, groups like ISIS and Al Qaeda benefit from chaos of regional conflict. Kurdish forces have gained political leverage especially in Syria and Iraq.

(2d) Oil Companies benefiting from wars

International oil companies have accessed oil fields in Syria and Iraq, despite ongoing conflicts.

3/ Key Losers in Middle East Conflicts



(3A) Civilians suffering the most in Middle East instability

Millions of civilians are suffering in Middle East. People suffer violence.

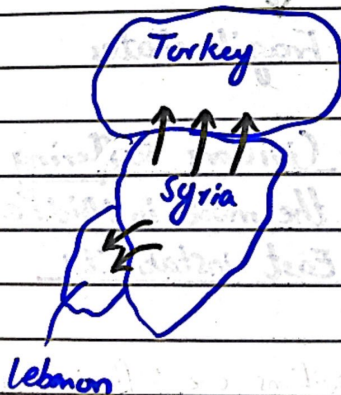
displacement and humanitarian crises.

"Syrian Civil war resulted in over 500,000 deaths and 13 million people displaced."

UNHCR

(38) Refugees - leaving their homes and properties

The region faces major refugee crises with countries like Turkey and Lebanon struggling to hold displaced populations.



3.6 million
syrian refugees
in Turkey
and 1.5
million in
Lebanon

UNHCR

(3c) Fragile states

Countries like Yemen and Syria have experienced collapse of state institutions resulting in widespread poverty, lack of basic services.

“
Over 80% of Yemen population is on the humanitarian aid”

UN

(3d) Global Economy

Conflicts in middle east disrupt global oil market. For instance, In 2019, attack on Saudi Oil facilities caused 20% spikes in oil prices

4/ Conclusion

The key beneficiaries of Middle east conflicts are arm suppliers, regional powers while losers are civilians, refugees and fragile states.