

Current Affairs

Part - II

Q. NO. 4.

India-middle East-Europe Economic corridor is projected as a competitor to the Belt and Road Initiative of China. Critically evaluate the potential and the future prospects of the two projects.

Introduction:-

India-middle East Europe Economic corridor recently launched on the sidelines of G20 summit 2023, is viewed as counter project to China's Belt and Road initiative. However, there is stark contrast between the two projects in terms of investment, ambitions, scale of connectivity and participation of member states. Nevertheless, both projects aimed general infrastructure development for increased global trade and cooperation among the global states.

India - Middle - East Europe Economic Corridor:

Its Launch: The Imeec project was launched on the sidelines of G-20 Summit 2023 in India. Chief global actors showed their interests in creation of project on the line BRI in order to counter increasing Chinese influence.

Objectives of IMEEC.

- 1) Chief objective of Imeec was to create a bloc to counter the Chinese influence at global level.
- 2) India's hegemonic motive.
- 3) Development of infrastructure for increased global trade.

Participation of member states.

The participants of Imeeec are India, UAE, S. Arabia, Israel, Italy, Japan and Turkey and other European states. This project will connect India to UAE via sea route from UAE to Middle East and through Israel's Gaza to European countries.

Trigger Behind the Launch of IMEEC

The main trigger behind the launch of Imeeec is the ~~the~~ successful strides of CPEC and increasing China influence in the middle East specially the recent reconciliation of Iran Saudi Arabia is brokered by the China. The diminishing influence of US in Asia and Middle East compelled India to create such mammoth project.

Further, the failure of US in Afghanistan has tarnished its image and emergence of soft image of China at global scale further bound US to assert its influence through India in Middle East and keep an eye on the successful ambitions of China's Belt and Road initiative.

Multifaceted motives of IMEEC:

Motives behind IMEEC are myriad. Some are given below:

1) India's ambitions:

India's long-cherished dream to assert its hegemony in the Asia forced it to form IMEEC. Further CPEC is an eyesore to it. As access to Central Asia and M. East is conditioned on the permission of Pakistan to India to its warm waters. In order to meet its interest and to avoid Pakistan

India signed Imree Project.

2) Saudi Arabia's Motives

S. Arabia's vision 2030

will be reinforced by the collaboration with other countries of Imree. It would boost its economy.

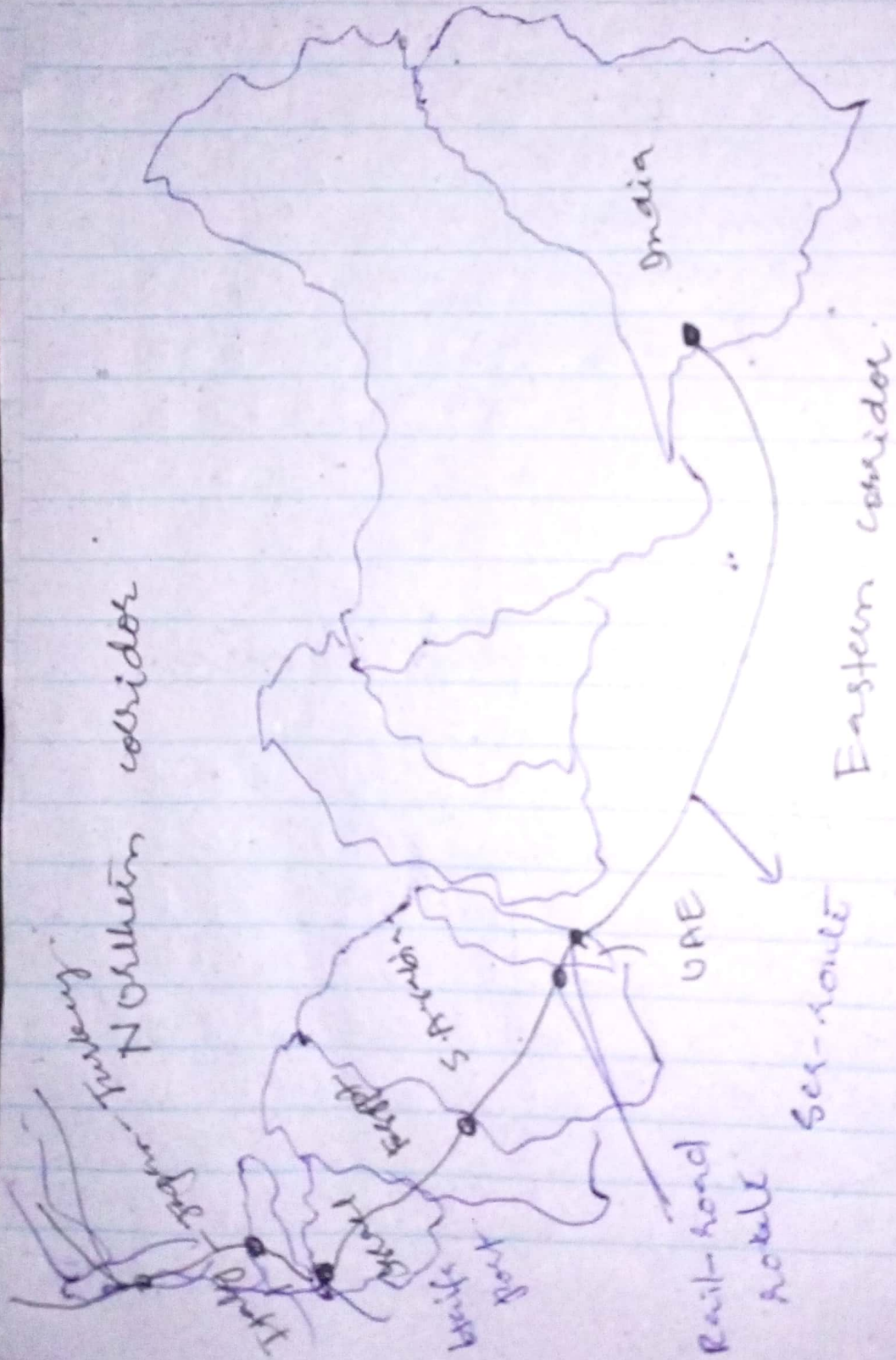
3) UAE's Interests:

UAE's considers itself a tourist and economic hub. Further, the establishment of sea and land route will aid in enhancing its tourists and ~~the~~ success in the economic development.

4) Ambitions of European Countries.

European countries after the Ukraine-Russia war were in search of new oil markets. Imree project will allow them to seek oil reserves of S. Arabia and UAE and other middle eastern countries.

Routes of IMEEC Project



Comparison of IMEEC and BRI

1) Difference in Investment:

There is sharp difference in BRI and Imee in terms of investment. Imee investment is in billions where as BRI is a colossal project of about 60 trillion USD.

2) Participation of members' States

These two projects all vary in participation of member states. Imee is a project of only 20 member states whereas ~~BRI~~ BRI includes in its fold around 150 countries.

3) Multidimensionality

Imee is restricted to rail road and sea infrastructure building. BRI invests in Energy, power, optical fibres SEZs in addition to infrastructure building.

4) Difference of Routes:

Imecc is limited to mostly sea ports development whereas BRI develops ~~at~~ not only sea ports but also, rail, road ~~and~~ motorways.

5) Chief benefitor

The chief benefitor and investor of BRI is China. On the other hand Imecc is divided ~~between~~ among 20 countries.

Prospects of IMECC Project

1) Overall Infrastructure Development:

Though there is sharp difference b/w Imecc and BRI yet they are inclined at the building of overall infrastructure development of the world.

2) Increase in Global Trade

When the infrastructure is well developed trade is going to be increased manifolds among the world countries.

3) Multilateral Collaboration:

It shows the collaboration of many countries. Hundreds of countries have come together for the good of the globe as a whole.

4) Rise in Standard of Living:

Increase in trade and economic activities are bound to raise the standard of living of the people. With increased wealth people can buy quality things and live a quality life.

5) Harmony among the states

OneC and BRI creates harmony among the countries. Countries engaged in these projects create a feeling of general good and a feeling of well-being of the world.

Conclusion:

Conclusively, it is said that though the Incees project is not in line with BRI in terms of investment, connectivity membership yet they are aimed at the better prospects of world in the future.

Q. NO. 1

Pakistan and Iran tension is on the rise as both the countries launched air strikes on each other's territories. Critically evaluate the reasons and the beneficiaries of this tension. Also find ways of de-escalation of tensions and attaining normalcy.

Introduction:

On the first fortnight of Jan 2024, Iran violated the

sovereignty of Pakistani territories by launching an air strike in Panjgur district of Balochistan, Pakistan that killed two innocent children. In retaliation, after two days Pakistan also struck on Iranian territories killing five people. This brought to diplomatic relations between the two countries to the lowest ebb. However, through back channel diplomacy both countries tried to bring relationship to normalcy. Besides, there are few actors who are direct beneficiaries of such unfortunate incident. Pakistan and Iran by exercising self-restraint can ~~being~~ keep such unholy actors at bay.

Air Strikes on Pakistan and Iranian Soil:-

- 1) Air Strike on Panjgur District:-
Iran in January launched an air strike which it says it had

attacked the Sunni separatists
organisations sanctuaries (Jash-e-Adl)
in Pakistan. This strike killed
2 innocent kids.

Pakistan's Retaliated Strike:

In retaliation Pakistan
struck down Susan - Balochistan province
of Iran which it claims that it
had attacked only Baloch
separatists operating inside the
Iran.

Reasons:

1) Separatists movement:

Separatists movements are
being operated in the Iran and
Pakistan. They are adamant to
get a separate homeland for
themselves. In order to meet their

demands may get engaged in many terrorist activities.

2) Iran's inclination towards self-assertion

Iran before striking Pakistan also attacked on US camps in Yemen, Syria and Iraq which shows that Iran is showing its inclination towards self-assertion in the region.

3) Hidden Raw-network conspiracies

Raw network of enemy India is being working inside the Pakistan and Iran and is inciting the disgruntled groups to destabilise the political ambience of respective countries.

4) Gwadar Port Development:

The development of Gwadar port is an eye sore to Iran as it is a competitor of Iran's Chabahar port.

Beneficiaries of Attacks:

1) India -

One of the greatest beneficiaries of these relations is ~~the~~ India. It would benefit from the deteriorating relations of Pakistan and Iran.

2) Afghanistan:

Afghanistan on the hand can benefit from such important events by carrying out terrorist activities without any restraint to fulfill its vested interest.

3) America

The blow of Iran-USA dealt a death blow to American interest. Such events might help her in sabotaging the Chinese CPEC.

4) Israel: Israel is the archrival of Iran when it get engaged in any war it is benefited and Israel carryout hidden agenda in Iran and on Iranian in Israel.

Recommendations to bring

Relationships to Normalcy:

1) Backchannel Diplomacy:

Backchannel diplomacy must not be shut at any cost. Diplomats of high calibre must engage in defusing the tensions.

2) Role of China

The neutral country like China can help reduce the tensions. As tensions will have counter effect on China's ambitions.

BRI.

3) US Efforts

US must come to the fore in reducing the tensions. Because any war in the world will have negative repercussions of US too.

4) One-on-One meetings of respective leaders

High level leadership from both countries must hold one or one meeting to get their respective grievances addressed.

5) Effective Role by Ulemas:

Uleme in both the countries always come in handy when it comes to the diffusion of tension. Uleme of Shia sect and Uleme of Sunni sect must engage with Iranian Govt as well the Sunni faith in Ahd ~~to~~ in order to mend fences.

Conclusion:

To sum it up, it is said that the recent skirmishes between Iran and Pakistan must be put an end in the greater interest of both countries.

Q. No. 5.

How do you see Pak-Afghan relations in the wake of repeated attacks by TTP and ISKP in Pakistan using Afghan land against Pakistan and in return Islamabad decided to pull out Afghan Refugees.

Introduction:-

In the wake of fall of Kabul in August 2021, TTP and ISKP got impetus and they found safe havens inside the Afghanistan to launch gruesome

attacks on Pakistani land. Despite repeated warnings from the Pakistan no sign of calm is seen. An irresponsible & irresponsible attitude of Afghan leadership Islamabad decided to expel the illegal Afghan immigrants from Pakistan which further strained the already deteriorated relation.

Recent Sufyani Terrorist

Attacks.

1) Attack on Mianwali Police ^{check} Point.

In December the police check post was attacked by TTP which claimed the life of a policeman.

2) Attacks on security forces
in NORTH and South
Waziristan!

There is great surge in the
intensity of terrorists attacks on
security forces in NORTH & South
Waziristan that has taken almost
287 lives of soldiers.

3) Attack on Karachi:

Tehreek-e-Taliban
Pakistan is also engaged in
terrorist attack in Karachi

4) Attacks on Islamabad:

In Islamabad the
highly barricaded area was
also attacked by TTP.

According to USIP a sharp
rise of 120% in terrorist
activities was seen in 2023.

5) Terrorist attack in Balochistan

Balochistan is not spared from the terrorist attack. A attack in the name of Chefts claimed the lives of 5 innocent citizens.

Expatriation of Afghan

Refugees:

Following are the reasons of Afghan refugee expatriation.

Reason behind expulsion:

1) Resurgence in Terrorists activities:

A rise in Terrorist activities is linked to Afghan Refugees they are carrying out dangerous attacks on the security forces.

2) Smuggling of Dollars:

Afghans are also involved in smuggling of dollars from Pakistan. Around 7-8 million dollars are smuggled daily from Pk to Afghanistan.

3) Smuggling of Goods:

Goods are also smuggled through undefended Chaman border.

4) Accumulation of Arms in Afg:

Nato's arms are also in the hands of Afghans who use them to spread fear in Pakistan.

5) Human and Goods Trafficking

Human as well as goods are being trafficked by Afghan refugees to blackmail Pakistan.

6) Involvement of Afghans in abduction for Ransom and Robbery:

Afghans are also involved in the abduction of Pakistani citizens for ransom. They are carrying out robbery in metropolitan cities especially Karachi.

Conclusion:

In concluding it is said that the coming battle of Taliban and resultant rise in TTP-induced attacks has strained the relations between Kabul and Islamabad which is further manifested in the expulsion of Afghan refugees from Pakistan.