

Mamzr Abbasi NOA 129

Current Affairs

Q#3

Organization of Islamic Conference, since its inception, hasn't been able to leave a predominant mark in the wake of global politics. Whereas, Cold War's polarization was inherent in its birth, internal rifts, low socio-economic statuses, authoritarian regimes, lack of effective conflict resolution and foreign interventions are some of its key reasons of failure. While the chances of its revival are minute, there is still a silver lining that it might take some unanimous concrete steps in near future. De-escalation of tensions between Iran-KSA have already provided the initial push but the fuel for cooperation is still missing in the wake of Israel-Hamas conflict.

1- KSA - Iran Rapprochement and Red-Carpet Welcome at OIC:

KSA - Iran rapprochement with
the mediation of China has
been seen as a positive
way-forward in global conflict resolutions.
The deal more commonly termed
as "The New Deal" is a significant
milestone, celebrated at the
OIC summit 2023.

The common perception of
KSA hegemony was proven wrong
with KSA providing the Red-Carpet
welcome to Iran's delegation. Summit
not only sent rays of hope
in the muslim world but also
provided an initial push for
the much needed cooperation.

2- Consensus Building in case of Israel-Hamas war.

Solution to the Israel-Hamas
conflict is not yet attained
due to lack of consensus
within the muslim world. Muslim
countries have failed to agree
on a unanimous agenda.

In the wake of Israel-Hamas war, divides key causes for sub include:

- Confusion on ~~accept~~ recognition of Israel
- Economic Constraints
- Internal houses not in order
- Socio-Political divide within muslim countries
- Lack of cooperation and consensus

etc, if not all, can address some of above issues and can play its part in de-escalation of the conflict.

3) Divisions within the Muslim world — A holistic view of religious and political scenarios.

Since Afghan war, muslim world has never been at peace. The Afghan war had its effects far beyond the borders the policy of then U.S.A.'s president, George Bush, known as "Bush Pre-emptive doctrine" added fuel to the fire in the socio-political fabric. Middle

East and South Asian region were the main theatre. Civil wars, famines, terrorism and lawlessness are still a common sight in countries like Iraq, Syria, Yemen -

a) Shia-Sunni doctrine

The necessary aspect of Arab Spring was the radicalization in Middle East. The Shia-Sunni doctrine emerging from Iran-Iraq war did more worse than any good. The result of above divide within the Muslim faith had detrimental impacts on social fabric of countries.

With KSA-Iran rapprochement, this radicalization is supposed to lessen in the days to come, ultimately granting internal security to countries, so they will be able to finally focus on greater geo-political scenarios.

b) Role of 'Alleged' Proxies

Race to lead the Islamic world had Iran and

saudi - arabia in crisis. The
commitment in the middle
eastern region, allegedly by
iran is one epitome
of it.

Various military groups
backed by Iran (become one
of the key causes of unrest
in this region. A lot of
these is provided below.

- Yemen - Houthis
- Lebanon - Hezbollah
- Palestine - Hamas
- Iraq, Syria - Iranian backed right-wing nationalists

4) OIC will remain ineffective
until the house is not
in order.

As already discussed,
internal rifts within the muslim
countries and extremist ideologies
of right-wing nationalists
will never allow for a

platform of goodwill and cooperation because of their vested interests. Until, internal security is not achieved, the hope for a functional OIC is a castle in the air.

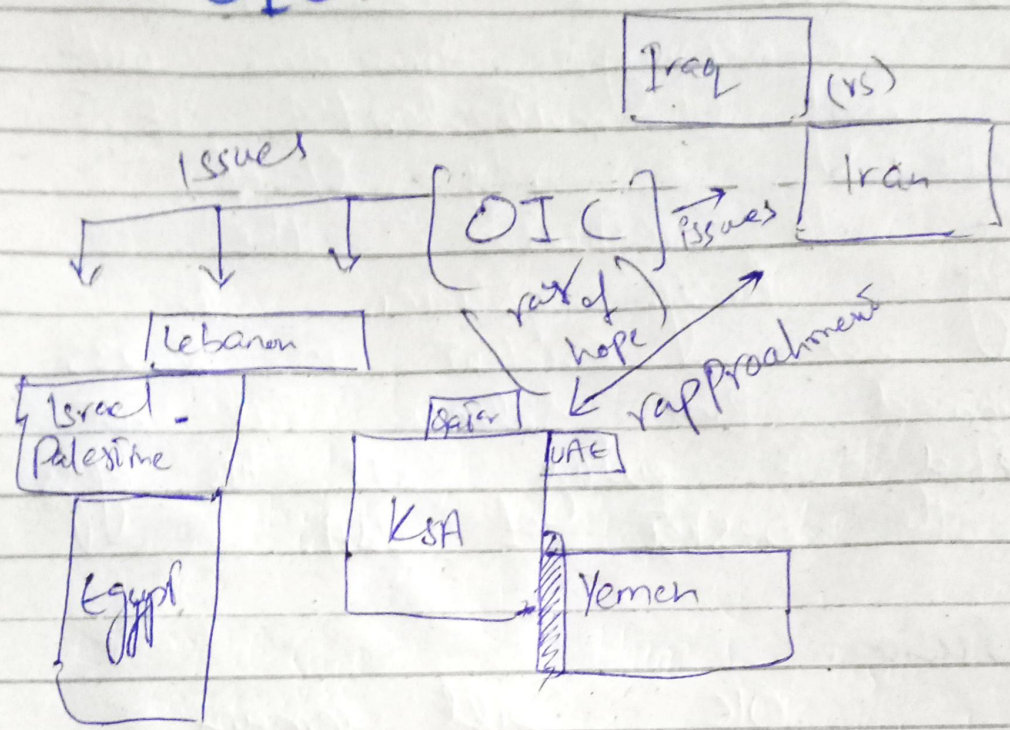
s). Economic Implications of Muslim world

Whereas several middle-eastern states have recognized "Israel," others see it as a compromise to the Palestinian cause. Greater economic interests of UAE and Oman are vested in Israel and they can't afford to go completely against it. Similarly, an armed conflict in middle east will only bring polarization rather than a solution.

A cooperative, comprehensive framework through the platform of OIC is only possible through dialogue and Qatar can

May its part.

Mapping the reconstruction of OIC.



→ Need for a two-state solution, categorically stating through the platform of OIC.

→ Qatar to play the major role as a diplomatic negotiator

→ Call for a cease-fire and working towards lasting peace through dialogue

Western Dilemma & Rising Multipolarity

The polarization within the Muslim-bloc is not new. While the countries are now re-aligning themselves with the rising multipolarity, it provides a ray of hope to restructure the existing foreign policies. It was evident in 2023, Muhammad Bin Salman is not interested in putting all his eggs in the basket of USA.

Conclusion:

OIC will remain in status-quo until the restructuring of current world order takes place. Countries will have to readjust to the rising multipolarity and establish frameworks of conflict resolution in OIC unanimously. Therefore, a wider consensus is needed at the platform of OIC, to play its role in the geo-political world.

(5)

[KSA - Iran rapprochement]
[(The ray of hope)]

↓ ↓ ↓
[De-escalation of socio-political
tensions within the social
fabric of countries]

↓
[Countries to act unanimously
at OIC]

↓
[Effective policy implementations
ultimately]

Q#5

Repatriation of Afghan Refugees and Resurgence of Terrorism

The recent uptick in terrorism in Pakistan has been the cause of unrest in the country's western part mainly KPK. In the wake of this resurgence of terrorism, government of Pakistan categorically took a decision in line with United Nations Council on Human Rights (UNHRC's) Charter to repatriate the Afghan refugees to their homeland. While the government faced criticism for such a step, ensuring peace and stability is the top priority when it comes to National Interest. Therefore, the repatriation of Afghan Refugees is a positive step in curbing Terrorism.

1 - Fall of Kabul and its Repercussions.

Apparently, unplanned and the hurried fall of Kabul had its effects in the countries within close proximity with Afghanistan. Not only Pakistan but Iran and Tajikistan has also seen an uptick in Terrorism since 2020.

Whole USA claims to have achieved its war-goals, facts and figures state otherwise.

"War on terror at its end would have eliminated terrorism; but the recent uptick in terrorism pose serious questions on the capabilities of western powers."

2 - Romanticism of TIP and TIA:

Ideologically identical, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TIP) and Tehreek-e-Taliban Afghanistan (TIA) or the Afghan Taliban, have aligned interests. Even after multiple

warnings and protests from Pakistan, TTA has not taken any action against TTP. Instead, TTP finds its safe havens in Afghanistan.

Due to the fact that TTA is indebted of TTP and other armed groups within Afghanistan, because of their alignment in the war against the west, TTA has not been able to take any concrete steps yet.

3. Cross-border Terrorism and safe-havens of TTP on Afghan soil.

TTP finds its safe havens in Afghanistan and has been targeting Armed forces and law enforcement agencies through cross-border attacks. Attacks on Mianwali Air base, APs, Quetta Police Station, and innumerable others have been claimed by TTP.

TTP is a group of more

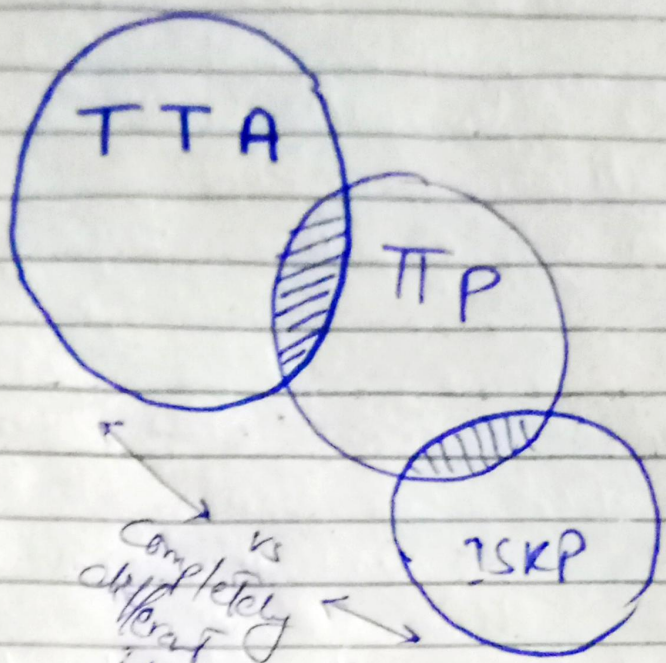
than 32 banned terrorist outfits that find their gateway through the porous Pak-Afghan border. As a result, Pakistan claims of cross-border terrorism from Afghan exit.

4 Devil's Triangle - The Dilemma of ISKP and ISIS.

TTP has its hand tied, its mouth shut and its feet chained by various armed groups that were once its allies. Although, these groups work together, they still have some differences in ideology, which could be the potential for a rift among them.

"Afghan Taliban's inability to take any concrete steps against TTP is due to the fear of unknown - the fear that if TTP turns against TTA, the alliance with ISKP

will lead to internal peace."



Completely vs different Ideologies



- Common ideologies

rest - clash in ideologies

5- Sophisticated attacks:

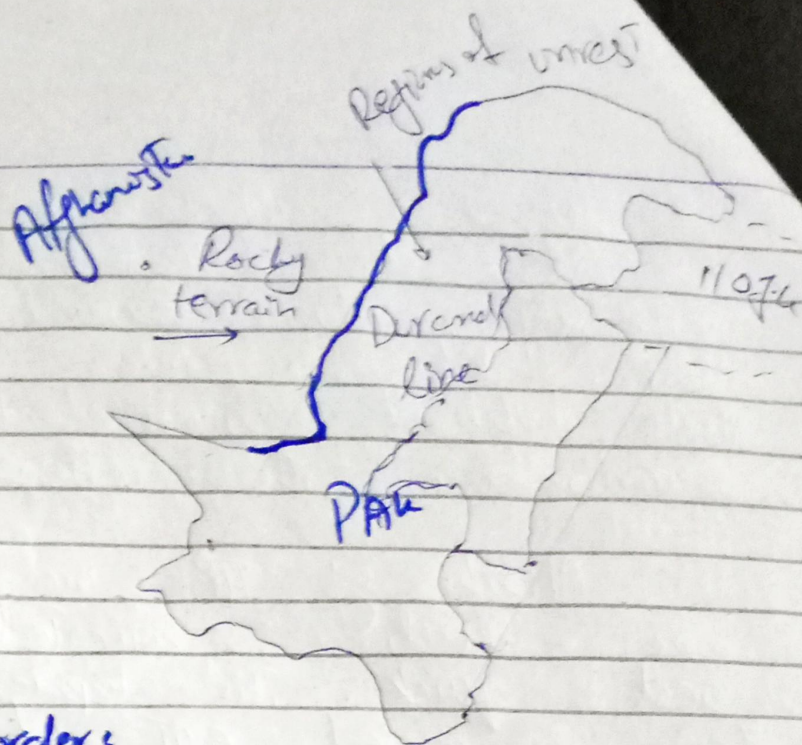
Fall of Kabul paved the way for armed groups to return once again to their grounds on Afghanistan. With this, came the ability to train themselves on advanced machinery left by the western troops.

Just as Afghanistan became a hub of unrest and instability after Russia-Afghan war, it is once again the hub of unrest and terrorism in the region.

Attacks by TTP are now more lethal, sophisticated and quick. This implies that the hurried exit of USA from Afghan soil is still costing Pakistan today.

1.- Illustration of the Conflict

Pak-Afghan border is thought of as the one most dangerous in the world. and even more difficult to guard. The rocky terrain, where cars would fail, trucks would bite the dust is guarded by law enforcement agencies of Pakistan. Despite their best efforts, this porous border is the gateway to the unrest in Pakistan.



The borders

- Rocky terrain
- Inability of modern transportation means to establish themselves
- Area of ideological and sociological convergence of the tribes.
- Post-FATA merger and uptick in armed conflicts

Conclusion

Islamabad's move to repatriate Afghan refugees to their homeland due to their alleged involvement in terrorist attacks is the need of the time to secure law and order in its own homeland. Inability of TTA to deal with the conflict will not only strain Pak-Afghan

relations but also pose a serious threat to the peace and stability of the region. Therefore, A need for concrete dialogue with the aim to re-establish peace in the region is the way forward in this regard =

Q # 4

IMEC - A castle in the air?

The G-20 summit held in New Delhi in 2023 was a series of grievances with no concrete success at the end. Except the idea of India-Middle East and European Union Economic Corridor (IMEC), countries have not presented a broader diplomatic engagement. Absence of Russia and China further raised questions as to the effectiveness of the summit. While critics have argued of IMEC as another castle in

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proponent country, that is, KSA.

1- TEN YEARS OF BRI and CHINA'S Constructive Engagement Policy:

2023 marked as a
milestone for China's Belt and
Road Initiative (BRI). The project
has, until now, laid various
webs of roads, established economic
zones and has installed innumerable
projects of civil energy. BRI
with all its flaws and demerits
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2- The Spice route and its Phases

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2- The Spice route and its Phases

IMEC is divided
into three phases. To ensure
that the reliability and
authenticity of the project is
maintained, the responsibility for
the establishment of its different

Phases have been divided -
These phases are as follows

Route ① - Naval route from India to Middle East.

② - A Network of roads within middle East - among different countries.

③ - A high-speed rail network from Middle East to Europe.

Responsibilities

a) - India will be responsible for the development of its own infrastructure with the help of USA

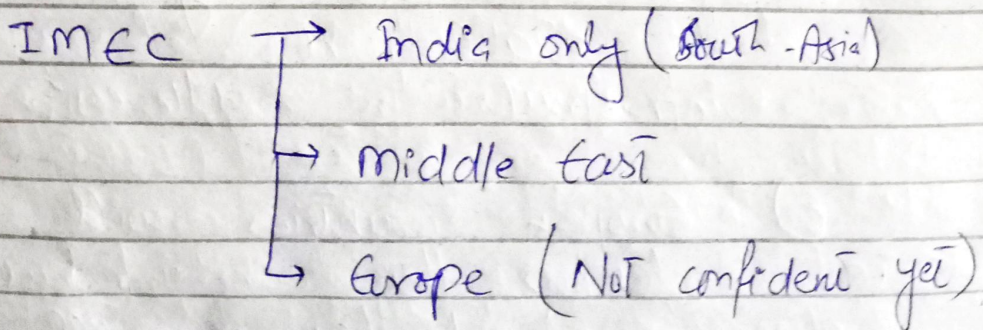
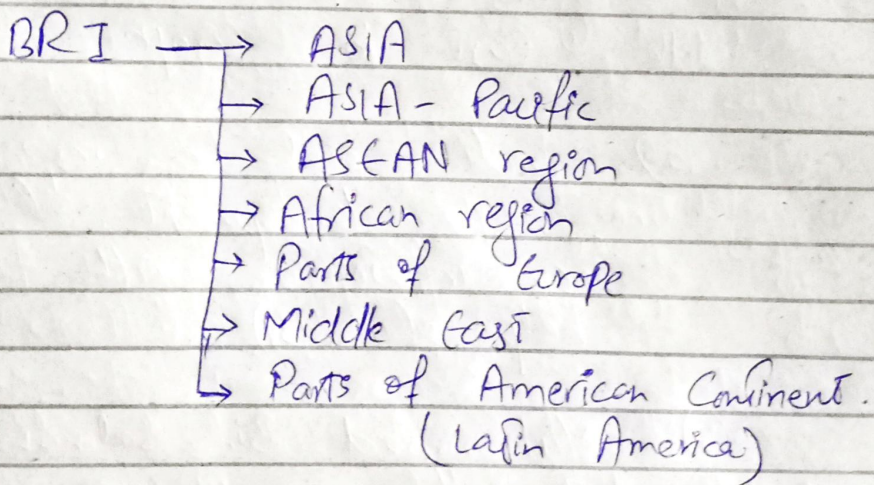
b) - Muhammad Bin Salman has taken the responsibility - for the establishment of infrastructure in middle east.

c) - European Countries will develop their own infrastructure (on which they are still reluctant).

3. BRI - A reality versus

IMEC - A non-starter

Ten years of BRI has been marked as a success by China. BRI has various flagship projects not only in Asia but far-beyond. BRI connects continents with roads as its main relying infrastructure.



IMEC, even if it becomes a reality, is comparatively a small scale

Project, while BRI has already established concrete projects & making its success.

4- Will IMEC another failed Economic corridor of the west?

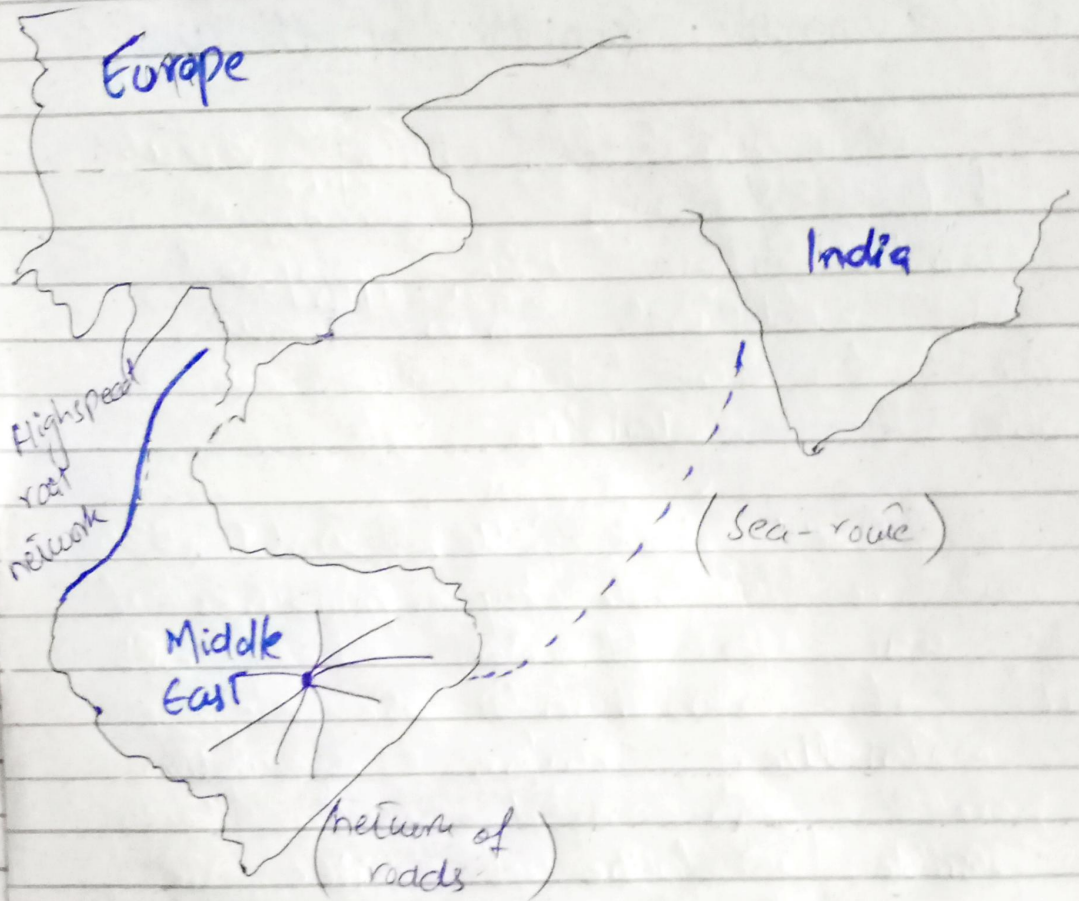
Analysis of history reveals that various economic corridors have been proposed at multilateral forums but none of them has yet been able to materialize.

Build Back Better World (B3W) was one of the key initiatives of the west to counter China's BRI but it was never able to materialize. Therefore, speculations have been made about the possible failure of IMEC in near future.

Despite the initial plan and proposal about economic responsibilities, there has, yet, no achievement in moving IMEC forward. To make IMEC a reality, requires right steps in the right direction.

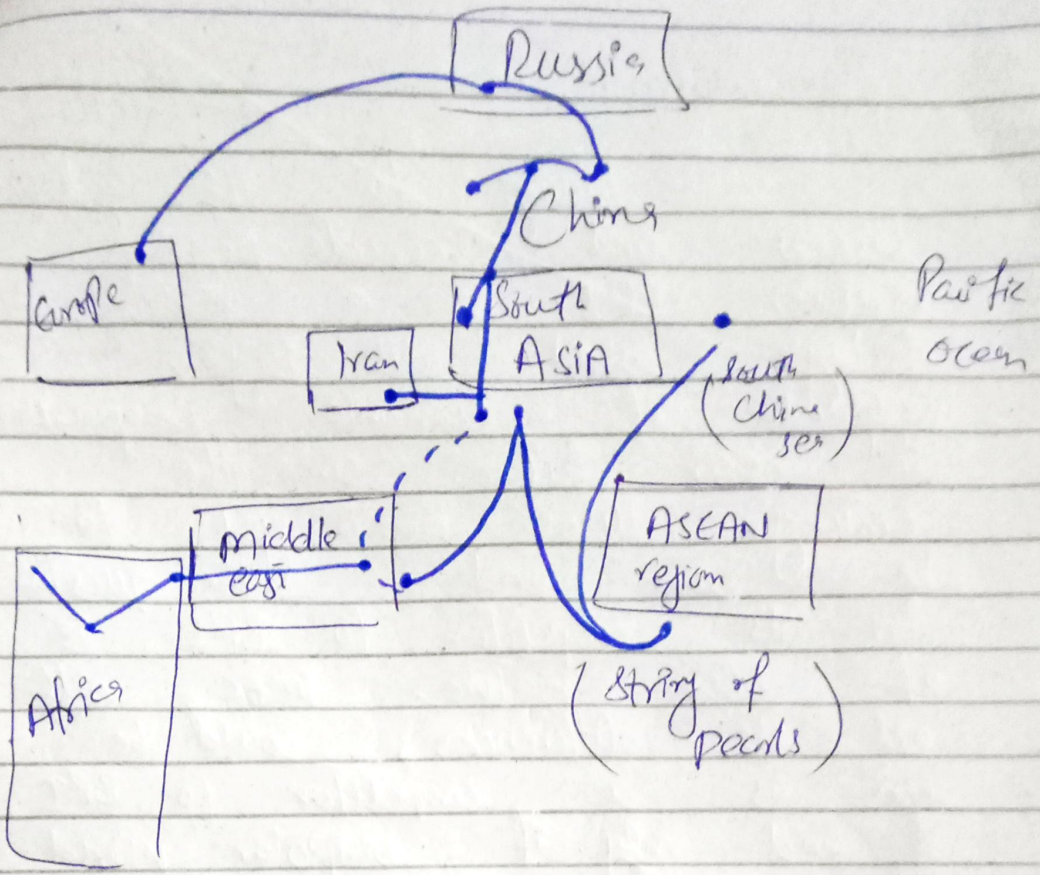
but none has come out yet.

5. Mapping the IMEC:



6. Mapping BRI

BRI is an extensive network of roads along with the sea routes. A simple illustration of BRI is as follows.



= Agenda:

While China claims to have its economic model based solely on economic cooperation without interference in any country's political domain, the agenda of IMCE has not yet been revealed. Through the establishment of its idea and the framework laid, IMCE looks more of political nature rather than economic one, but only time will reveal.

Conclusion:

Owing to its widespread success and concrete-physical nature, BRI is a reality in today's world with bright prospects of economic cooperation in near future. On the contrary, IMEC ~~has~~ is yet to be born and the question for its competition to BRI, is of blur nature. IMEC, with all its differences, could be seen as a competitor to BRI, if and only if unipolar world order persists. Rising multipolarity will further increase the differences between middle east and the west, ultimately maligning IMEC. Therefore, for IMEC to be a reality, a wider consensus-based approach will be the only way to get through.