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Paper Current Affairs
Batch 046

Q.2 BRI and IMEEEC
potential and future
prospects.

I. Introduction:-

China is challenging the USA global super power status and its hegemony. Its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) an infrastructure and energy project, is giving it the economic geopolitical edge to challenge the USA hegemony. The USA, the established power is doing every bit to contain and stem the rise of china. It

recently announced the India Middle East Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEEEC) to counter the China's BRI. This answer attempts to find out the potential and future prospects of both the initiatives.

Relate your headings to the qs statement

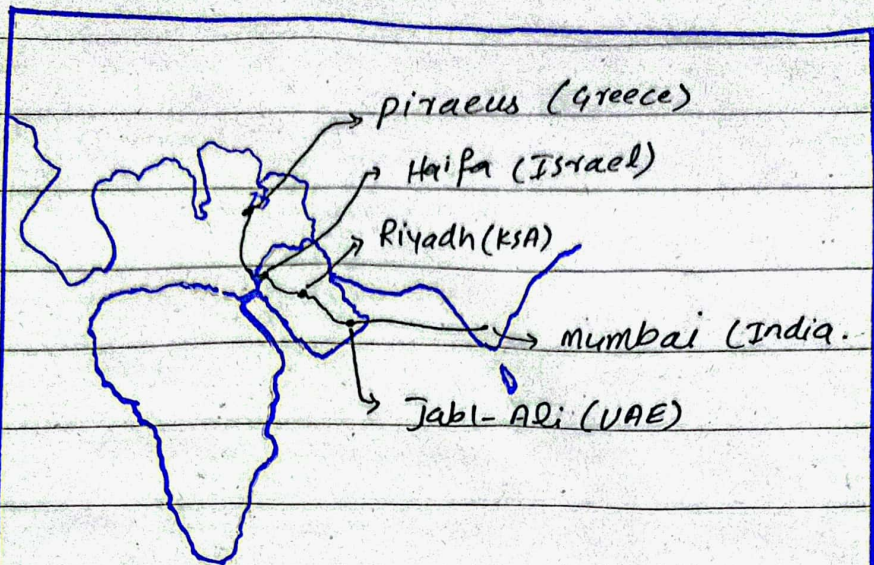
II IMEEEC

a) Introduction:-

IMEEEEC was launched during the G-20 meeting held in September 2023. It was called as the modern or new spice route.

Joe Biden, the USA President, called it a big deal.

The corridor will link India via middle east with Europe. The connection would be established through railways, roads, ports and high speed cable.



Map showing the IMEEEC route.

b) IMEEEC Implications

i) Political implications:

The IMEEEC will potentially ~~uped~~ up the political temperature both in the region as well as globally. The project is clearly an anti-China initiative. Consequently, US-China geopolitical rivalry will further get a boost. Similarly, the project has also drawn criticism from Turkey, which is being sidelined.

ii) Economic implications :-

IMEEC has the potential to boost the regional economy. Trade would be faster, safer and cheaper. For instance, the shipping time from Mumbai to Europe would reduce to 16 days through IMEEEC.

iii) Energy, particularly renewable

The corridor would give an easy access to the non-renewable energy resource market. Similarly, it will help in the transition to clean energy.

iv) Enhancement of security :-

The corridor will enhance people to people connectivity, will abate threats to trade and enhance the security of the region. It has the potential to enhance both traditional and non-traditional

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security apparatus.
The socio-economic growth will thwart non-traditional security threats. Similarly, beefed up security will ensure safety against non-traditional security threats.

C. Future prospect:

The future of IMEEEC seems gloomy. A plethora of challenges are casting doubts over its future prospects.

These challenges are:

1) The Competing Interests of partners:-

IMEEEEC has multiple partners. Each partner has his own competing interest. The USA and India aim to contain China. However, the Middle Eastern partners are part of the China led BRI. They may not toe the line with the USA.

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i) The UAE is a part of BRI, IMEEEC and the Turkey led Iraq Development Road (IDR).

ii) India and USA has a bad record with corridor:-

The USA and India have never succeeded in materializing the earlier announced project.

India for its part tried the North-South Corridor with

Russia in 2002, the Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC),

and the Arab Mediterranean Route. However, none of

these project could be materialized and remained a pipe dream. Similarly,

the recently announced Built Back Better world

(B3W) has been on the back burner. The IMEEEC

future in this regard does not seem promising.

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iii) Logistic and connectivity issue:-

IMEEC is a multimodal transport corridor. It involves rails, roads, ports and highways. Each of these is fraught with numerous challenges in the host countries. Connectivity across these is a complicated and herculean task.

iv) Potential opposition from other countries:

The corridor is facing opposition from other countries whose interests are at stake. Turkey vehemently opposed the corridor and declared its Iraq Development Road (IDR) as the only plausible corridor. Similarly, Egypt may counter for it is threatening the trade through Suez Canal. Major opposition is from China who dubbed it as

Discuss the two parts of the answer together

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anti-BRI

III.

BRI

I. Introduction:-

The Belt and Road Initiative is China led global level infrastructure project. It was announced in 2013. and is extended four continents.

II. Components of BRI.

a. New Silk Road:- Terrestrial transportation network of rail, roads and highway. They are seven in number.

b. Maritime Routes:- Ports infrastructure connecting Chinese ports with those of the partner countries. It is termed as the string of pearl.

III. Future prospects:-

The future prospects and the success of BRI is promising. However, there are some challenges

that are stifling its growth and success.

BRI future seems promising due to the following factors.

i) No competing interests:-

BRI is purely an economic energy and infrastructure project. It has no geopolitical strings attached.

It is not aimed at countering a country for instance it has invited its rival like India and countries in Europe to be part of it.

Due to its impartiality it is doomed to succeed.

ii) Continuation of policies:-

China is a one party system. It has greater political stability. This give China the edge over IMEEC countries to continue the policies. The continuation of policies would ensure

the success of BRI.

iii) BRI has already made progress:-

BRI is ten years old. It has already made significant progress. Many of the projects have been initiated with several being near their completion. This success will boost China determination to execute the rest of the projects under BRI.

Add more arguments in the potential and prospects part

iv. Conclusion

The G-20 announced IMEEEC is aimed at countering China's BRI. It is however faced with some formidable challenges that are casting doubts over its success. On the other hand the BRI led by China is progressing, making grounds and is poised to succeed.

Structure needs improvement

Q4 KSA-Iran Rapprochement Implications for regional Peace and Pakistan.

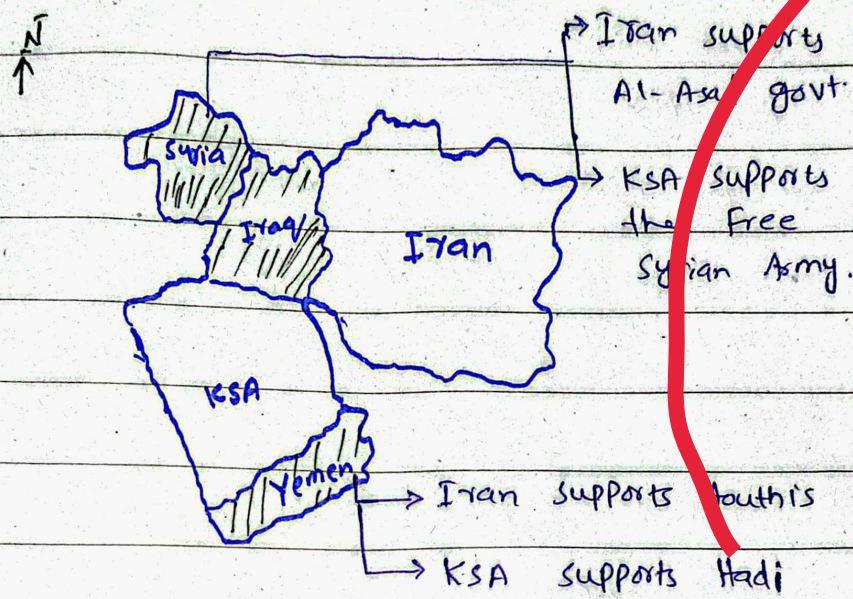
I. Introduction:


The politics of middle east is going through a major tectonic shift.

Common interests and spearheaded by ambitious global power China, archrivals are meeting half way. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and Iran signed the normalization deal in Beijing. The deal would have positive implication for the peace in the region. Similarly, Pakistan being neighbour to Iran and in proximity with KSA will also benefit from the deal.

II. Conflicts in Middle East

The KSA and Iran have been engaged in wars and conflicts through their respective proxies through-out the Middle East.



Middle East map showing countries mirrored in conflict 

III. The Rapprochement will bring peace in the following ways:

a. Reopening Diplomatic Missions:-

Both countries along with other Arab states such as UAE opened their respective embassies in Iran. The same

reciprocated by Tehran. Future diplomatic engagement will enhance greater engagement and will pave the way for peace. For instance, a peace plan has already been drawn in Yemen. The warring parties - Houthis and ~~Ab~~ Hadi Al-Mansoor - have agreed to initiate dialogues for peace and settlement of the crisis.

b. Abatement of Geopolitical rivalry :-

At the heart of conflicts in the middle East was the KSA-Iran geopolitical rivalry. The established regional hegemon and leader of the 'Muslim ummah' was perplexed by the rising power Iran. Iran for its part wanted to abate the KSA influence

Add references/examples against your headings

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consequently both states used proxies to against each other. Now with the rapprochement the threat of geopolitical rivalry will be reduced which will pacify the region.

c. Improved socio-economic condition will foster peace.

The conflicts in the region have led to a number of socio-economic problems such as diseases, poverty, famine, and unemployment. Consequently, people were forced to take up arms leading to further deterioration of peace.

With the rapprochement, the region will get access to aid in short term. In the long term agriculture and economic activities will return.

Resultantly, the socio-economic condition of the region will

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improve which will help in bringing peace to the region.

D. Reduction in Sectarianism

Sectarianism is one of the major causes behind the KSA-Iran rivalry.

The rapprochement will abate sectarian conflict in the region. Through negotiation, accommodation, dialogues and engagement - these differences could be set aside and peace could be built.

IV. Implications for Pakistan

a. Security of Pakistan:-

Pakistan has been in the throes of sectarianism since the developments of 1979.

Both KSA and Iran have been supporting their respective sect seminaries leading to further sectarian violence.

The deal would abate the funding of these sect by Iran and KSA. Similarly, it will enable Pakistan to engage with Iran regarding the border management and security situation in Balochistan.

b. Diplomatic implication

Pakistan walks a tight rope in its relations with KSA and Iran. It has been trying to maintain a balance and remain neutral. Nevertheless, due to some compulsion it on some instances, failed to maintain this posture. For instance, it pulled out of the Kuala Lumpur summit on the KSA alleged coercion. The deal will help Pakistan openly establishing ties

with both the countries. It is thus beneficial for the foreign policy of Pakistan.

c. A blessing in disguise for the ailing economy.

The deal will help Pakistan economy. The Saudi's oil company Aramco can install the oil refinery freely while earlier the reservation of Iran was a roadblock. Similarly, the deal will help Pakistan transition to geo-economy, harness the dividends of CPEC and attract foreign direct investment through the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC). All these will help Pakistan to put its economy on the right course and help it recover.

d. ~~the~~ Energy sector implications
 Pakistan unending energy
 crisis could be alleviated
 thro' with this deal. The
 Pakistan Iran gas Pipeline
~~was~~ has been objected to
 by Saudi Arabia besides
 the USA ~~sanctions~~ on Iran.
 The pipeline would supply
 775 mcf gas per day
 to Pakistan. It has the
 potential to ~~reduce~~ Pakistan
 energy crisis. With the
 deal one of the hurdles
 in the way of the IP
 gas pipeline is removed.

Add more arguments in this part

v. Conclusion:-

KSA and Iran normalized their
 relations brokered by China.
 The two archrivals reopened
 their respective embassies. The
 deal will help in bringing
 peace to the region. Similarly, it
 has the prospects of helping Pakistan

to improve its energy economy, security besides enabling it to secure its ~~own~~ interest.

Q.5 SIFC ; FDI

I. Introduction:-

Pakistan's economy is in a tail spin. It is on the verge of default. In order to spur economic growth and sail the sinking ship of the ailing economy, Pakistan announced a council: The Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC). It is set to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) particularly from the friendly countries. Pakistan holds huge investment potential. SIFC can attract

FDI using the potential investment area.

ii. An overview of FDI.

The share of FDI in the country's GDP has been on the downward trend.

In 1965 FDI accounted for 21% of the GDP.

In 1971 it dropped to 17% and reached 13%

post 2007. SIFC is established to enhance the dwindling share of FDI in GDP.

Relate your headings to the statement of the question

iii. Pakistan's potential for FDI.

a. Agriculture sector:-

Pakistan is an agrarian country. The country agriculture sector has the potential to attract FDI. About 24.1 million hectare land is cultivatable.

b. Mines and minerals sector:-

Pakistan has 6 trillion dollars worth of mineral resources as per the Geological Survey of Pakistan. It has 2nd largest coal reserves. Similarly, around 90 plus minerals have been discovered so far. The mineral sector hold the prospect of attracting FDI.

c. Energy sector:-

Pakistan is going through an energy crisis. The demand for energy is increasing.

It has huge potential of solar, wind and hydel power. The energy sector is thus another area for potential FDI.

v SIFC and FDI:-

SIFC aims to attract FDI in the above sectors.

It aims at improving the ease of doing business through overcoming bureaucratic rigmarole. Similarly, it forges vertical and horizontal synergy, greater coordination and facilitating timely decision making. It will serve as a single window platform for facilitation.

iv. Challenges.

a) Legal Challenges:-

SIFC lacks substantial contract enforcement mechanism. Investors are deterred from investment in the absence of an effective contract enforcement mechanism.

b) Security Situation:-

Most of the SIFC proposed projects are located in Balochistan. The whole minerals sector lies in Balochistan - similarly, the energy sector also lies mostly

Use elaborate and self explanatory headings

References/examples

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in Balochistan. The precarious law and order situation and rising militancy are posing threats to the execution of projects under SIFC.

c. ~~Military leadership~~
Military has the primary role in SIFC set up and its projects. Previous experience such as CPEC headed by military shows the inability and lack of military capacity in this regard. SIFC success is also hanging in the balance in this regard.

V. Conclusion:

To cope with dwindling foreign exchange reserve and the declining FDI share in GDP, Pakistan established SIFC. With it the country

aims to attract FDI from friendly countries. However, it is faced with some hurdles that might lead to inefficiency and failure. These hurdles need to be overcome.

Q6 Pakistan Afghan relation amid rising terrorism and refugees expulsion.

1. Introduction:-

Ever since the coming into power of the Afghan Taliban in August 2021, Pakistan has witnessed a surge in terrorist activities. Besides the old foe TTP Pakistan is under the target of new militant groups such as the Islamic State Khorasan

and Tehreek-e-Jihad Pakistan. The failure of Afghan Taliban to take action against TTP and allow it to operate from Afghanistan is straining the relations between the two countries.

11. An overview of rising terrorist activities:

According to the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS) there has been 29 suicide attacks in 2023. In August 2023 multiple attacks were carried out on security forces in Balochistan. Similarly, TTP attacked Chitral district in September and engaged in three day skirmish with armed forces. Thus there has been an upsurge in terrorist activities.

III. TTP and Afghan Taliban bondsmen.

Both TTP and Afghan Taliban share same ideology. TTP provided not only safety, and sanctuary to the Afghan Taliban during its war against NATO but fought alongside it. TTP sworn allegiance to Afghan Taliban Supreme leader.

IV. Afghan Taliban dubious role

Afghan Taliban are playing a dubious role. It has signed in the Doha accord that Afghan soil will not be used against any country. However, TTP and ISK are continuously using it against Pakistan. The militant terrorist groups are brazenly roaming around in Afghanistan while the Afghan Taliban are

denying their presence
in the country.

v. Impacts on relations

The failure of Afghan
Taliban to meet Pakistan
demand of taking action
against TTP is straining
the relations between the
two countries.

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