

Current Affairs

Descriptive Part

—(Question no-3)—

1) Introduction

The ongoing war between Israel and Palestine is at its peak since the past year. It has fuel up further due to formation and involvement of alliances in this war i.e USA support for Israel and Iranian support for Palestine. Though Iran has not directly involved itself with the on going crisis, yet USA has its firm stand with Israel. Despite receiving backlash from other states and their own public, United states is not changing its stand and support for Israel. This situation can have strained relations of USA with Arab world affecting its foreign policy and economic trade. However, it provides a golden opportunity to China and Russia to increase their influence in middle east and lessen the power of America.

2) EFFECTS OF US UNCONDITIONAL

SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL ON IT'S

IMAGE IN THE ARAB WORLD

The US's support for Israel, especially during the peak of Israel - Palestine conflict can have serious implications with respect to United States' image in the arab world.

Following are the consequences of the on going situation:

(a) Perceived Bias and Double Standards

Arab nations often interpret US policy as consistently favouring Israel, sometimes even at the expense of human rights and international law. This perceived bias, especially visible during escalations in Gaza and West Bank has undermined the US's credibility as a fair and impartial actor in Regional affairs.

(b) Decline in Public Opinion

Polls and studies have shown that Arab public opinion of the US has been deeply affected by its stance on Israel. Research conducted by the Arab Barometer

highlights that many Arab citizens view US policy in the region with suspicion often associating it with exploitation rather than partnership.

(C) Strained Diplomatic Relations

Countries like Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt - though historically allied with US - face increasing domestic pressure to distance themselves from the US policies that appear one sided. For instance, recent normalisation talks between Saudi Arabia and Israel, facilitated by US, are cautious, with many in the Arab world skeptical of such arrangements under US influence.

(d) Shift in Military Alliances

Several Arab countries are now diversifying their defence partnerships, moving away from sole reliance on US arms. This shift is evident in growing defence procurements from Russia and China, who are seen as alternate suppliers without political strings attached.

3) STANCE OF ARAB LEADERS

In an impassioned speech at Cairo Summit (October 2023), the King of Jordan, Abdullah II, highlighted the double standards of US Foreign policy by stating:

"Palestinian lives matter less than Israeli ones. The application of the international law is optional. And human rights have boundaries - they stop at borders, they stop at races and they stop at the religions."

A research journalist named, Omar Rahman, at the Middle East Council on Global Affairs (MECGA) research institute also wrote about the on going situation:

"People are fed up with this (American) support in the face of what Israel's doing now. It is not only a threat to Palestinian lives but also a threat to regional stability."

4) OPPORTUNITY FOR CHINA TO PENETRATE INTO MIDDLE EAST

The US's unconditional support for Israel has created opportunity for China to increase its influence in the Middle East.

1. Capitalizing on Arab Distrust of US

China's official stance is typically "neutral" and supportive of a two state solution, appealing to Arab nations that view the Palestinian cause as central. This neutrality allows China to present itself as a balanced actor, unlike the US, making it a more favorable partner in Arab eyes.

2. Support for Palestinian statehood and Diplomatic Engagement

China has voiced support for Palestinian statehood, a stance that resonates with many in the Arab world. By offering diplomatic backing for Palestine, China differentiates itself from the US, ^{by} gaining goodwill among Arab governments and citizens. This soft power strategy not only enhances China's image but also positions it as a country willing to engage in dialogues that US often ignores.

3. Non Interference Policy as Selling Point

China's non-interference policy contrasts sharply with US interventions in Middle Eastern domestic affairs. Many Arab states value sovereignty and see China as a partner that respects internal governments without pushing for political or social reforms. This approach is attractive especially for authoritarian governments.

4. Economic Investments and Infrastructure Development

China has seized this diplomatic opening through massive investments in the Middle East as part of its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Many Arab countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and UAE are partnering with China on infrastructure projects, energy, investments and technology. This economic influence strengthens China's position and provides Arab states with an alternative US-backed development models.

4) OPPORTUNITY FOR RUSSIA TO

PENETRATE IN MIDDLE EAST

1. Political Leverage through Alliance Flexibility

Unlike the US, which aligns closely with Israel, Russia maintains more flexible alliances in Middle East, allowing to engage with a range of actors including Iran, Syria, Turkey and some Gulf states. Russia's willingness to work with countries at odds with US provides an appealing alternative to Arab states; seeking greater autonomy from US influence.

2. Engagement with Palestinian Factions

Unlike the US, Russia has consistently engaged with Palestinian leaders and factions, including Hamas, positioning itself as an alternative mediator in the Israel - Palestinian conflict. Russia's support for Palestinian interests and advocacy for two state solution appeal to Arab states and their populations, who often perceive the US as one sided.

3. Alternative Diplomatic Channels for Iran and Syria

Russia's willingness to engage with countries that the US sanctions or isolates, such as Iran and Syria has given it an important role as a counterbalancing force. By acting as an intermediary or ally to these states Russia can offer diplomatic and military support where US maintains diplomatic isolation.

4. Energy and Economic Cooperation with Russia reducing dependence on US energy partnership

Russia is one of the world's largest oil and gas exporters and its coordination with Middle Eastern oil producers particularly through the OPEC+ alliance, bolsters its economic ties in the region. Partnerships with oil rich nations like Saudi Arabia allow Russia to collaborate on oil production controls and pricing, ensuring mutual economic benefits and solidify political relations.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, it can be clearly said that the unconditional and huge support of America in supplying arms and deploying troops in Palestine is, for sure, destroying its image in Arab countries. It can have drastic effects on the diplomatic ties of US with Arab world as well as can offend the public opinion of US citizens as well. This act has the potential to leave space in middle east which will be a golden opportunity for China and Russia to enhance their sphere of influence in Arab countries and middle east. This new regime, for sure, will give to new world order and political regime.