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Discuss the major areas that are required to be strengthened to deepen the cooperation in the Gulf region by India.

India's historical connection with Gulf dates back more than 500 years of trading between ancient civilisations. Over the years, it has become integral part of India's extended neighbourhood through strong relationships of energy, economy, expatriates, security.

India-Gulf engagement:- Current scenario

- Currently has seen a philip by high end bilateral visits of officials.
- Awarding highest honour 'Zayed Medal' to Indian Prime Minister by UAE
- Recognising India as a major power by inviting to be a guest of honor in etc. Gulf Cooperation Council. Acc. engagements
- Increased cooperation in energy sector in wake of Iran sanctions.

With India's non obstructive, non-judgmental, non-descriptive stand towards the Gulf seeing changes with geopolitics, India has a lot to offer for Gulf countries.

1) OIL TRADE:-

India depends on Gulf for 42% of its oil imports. In the wake of sanctions, India can rope in Gulf countries for investing in the Strategic Petroleum Reserves of India. This can eventually earn a place in OPEC list of countries giving leverage over oil prices.

2) Reformist Agenda:-

Majoritarian, authoritative, religious stand of Muslim-Arab world are moving towards liberalism, where India can act as enabler, being the home of largest secular democracy. eg. Saudi's reform policy for women

3) Modernisation:-

- unemployment is slowly rising in Saudi Arabia, such that taxes on oil have been imposed to balance its economy.
- India can extend its economic infrastructure building activities like Gulf sea lines of communication,

4) Strategic investment improvements:-

- This can range from energy to digital innovation to arms and space technology; cyber security.
- India's tardy investment profile needs ^{change} bureaucratic, policy obstacles.
- example:- Making way for Qatar Airlines request to buy stakes in Air India was thwarted due to such delays.

5) Security cooperation:-

- Gulf is the hotspot of terrorism, with several groups forming labyrinth of alliances.
- with US withdrawing its stand on net security provider, India should grab this opportunity escalating to strategic defense partners.
- Engagement with GCC can enable India to push for Terrorism Convention, while simultaneously patrolling Arabian sea frontiers to check piracy and Chinese expansion.

6) Indian diaspora:-

- Gulf countries house majority expatriates earning foreign forex for India. More engagements by easing business policy, increased air line operations, rationalising costs can be a good step.
- It can eventually bring Sovereign Wealth Fund investments into India; at a time of economic slowdown.

7) Climate change engagements:-

Roping Gulf into International Solar Alliance, present in same latitude, can see transfer of technology; improve commitments of 2nd phase of Montreal protocol for O₃ protection.

eg. Yemen's fog capturing method for agriculture can solve India's water scarcity.

Potential remains vast. Careful planning, 360° engagements can not only solve Pakistan-China axis of influence, but can reap economic benefits at a time of highly evolved terrorism and increase engagement with Iran.