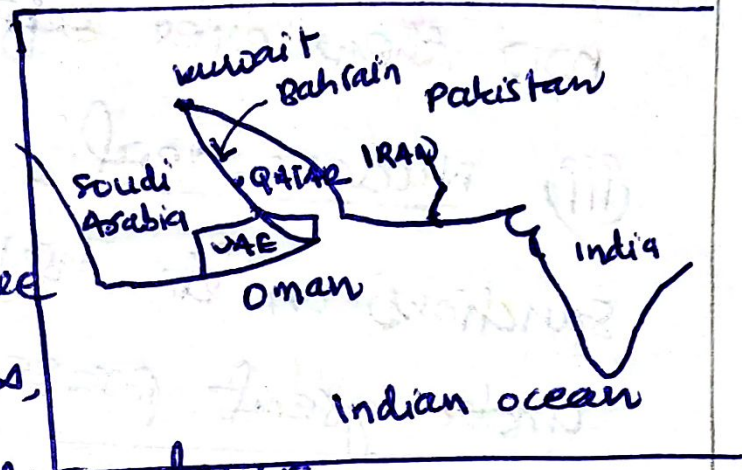


The relation between India and Gulf countries has blossomed in recent years, which need to be enhanced further with respect to new strategic interests.

India and Gulf countries share traditional relations, however since independence



India looked the region largely from

- (i) source of energy since the region hold huge oil & gas resources

- (ii) To deal with Pakistan

- (iii) As a balancing wheel between Iran-Iraq, palestine & Israel.

But the time has come to adopt broad vision because

(i) upliftment of us from the region can disturb the stability.

(ii) energy Needs of India is greater now than ever before.

(iii) Nuclear deal with Iran and sanctions on it has placed India under great pressure to loose strategic ties with Iran and rising chinese threat as well with new \$400bn deal between china - Iran.

(iv) oil price crash has destabilise OPEC and oil-economy of India have close link.

(v) Saudi Arabia is a fading power while Iran, UAE are new states so engagement should be realistic.

(V) Indian Diaspora - The region holds 9mn Indian diaspora who contribute \$ 50bn as remittances and any security threat will hurt India's needs.

(VI) Indian Ocean - Indian navy dominates as well as ensure security to all in the region through 'SAGAR' initiative, and the cooperation of Gulf is necessary for the vision.

(VII) Trading Interest - The trade lies near \$121bn with the region, far lower than the potential. While the region provides ready-made market for defence equipment and merchandise.

Hence, India needs to utilise the changing scenarios to better its engagement - economy, strategic as well as cultural.