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Changing Geopolitics in the Middle East

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Changing Geopolitics in the Middle East

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Silk Road vs Spice Route: India's Evolving Strategies in the Middle East

Prof. Ramakrushna Pradhan and Dr. Amit Kumar Gupta

Introduction

The Middle East with its geostrategic location and outsized abundance of oil is turning into a juggernaut that

has ensued wider involvement of greater powers in the region. India too has joined the race, and is at the pinnacle of its diplomatic engagement in the Middle East.

India's ties with UAE, Iran, Israel, Qatar, Oman and Saudi Arabia, among others have actually shown significant improvement under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's regime. Beginning with PM Modi's first

visit to UAE in 2015, to being awarded the highest civilian award, i.e., the "Order of Zayed", India has today become a major player

in the region, with real focus on business, migration and security. This shift also aims to boost foreign investments in India, which in the

long term can help India to challenge Chinese monopoly in infrastructure building and technological innovations in the region. Additionally, India's multilateral initiatives in the region are ever expanding with its widened commitments to the I2U2 initiative and the League of Arab States. The India – Middle East – Europe Economic

In contrary to the historic policy of India towards the Middle East largely rooted in a policy called Non-Alignment, rapprochement with Pakistan and ensuring stable supply of oil has increasing collided with the new reality New Delhi has been confronting only to make adjustment in India's evolving strategies towards the greater region of Middle East in recent years. In the wake of Russia-Ukraine war, Israel-Palestine conflict and Iran-Saudi competition, India's masterstroke initiative of a two-front economic corridor (IMEC) that would integrate Europe, The Middle East - and India together with an intent to bolster economic operations, and trade relations intended to have larger implications on India's strategic relations with the wider Middle East region has received unprecedented goodwill from the countries of the region. Although, the Middle Eastern countries don't consider India to be a replacement of the USA or China in the region yet India's paramount position in America's "the Pivot of Asia" policy and increasing Chinese assertiveness and the wolf warrior diplomacy certainly gives room for New Delhi for policy maneuver in the region.

Corridor is a booster in this regard. This article thus makes an attempt to analyze India's rising

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