

RESEARCH ARTICLE

India's Increasing Influence in UAE and its Implications for Pakistan

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Abstract: For several decades, India's footprint in the UAE has risen, with economic, diplomatic, and cultural footprints all increasing in size and scope. Report: Significant Growth in UAE-India Trade Partnership In the wake of this rapid economic progress, the growing UAE-India trade ties have been strengthened between the two nations, as UAE is one of the largest trading partners of India, resulting in increased investments and joint ventures in various sectors along with bilateral cooperation. Another pillar is the homegrown Indian expatriate community in the UAE, millions of whom help fill the UAE workforce and add to the cultural interchange. Due to its expanding ties with India, the UAE has taken a more pro-India approach to political relations and defense cooperation. The Indo-UAE relations have consequences for Pakistan, that was always thought to be Pakistan's counterbalancing partner especially for India under previous regimes. The escalating closeness between UAE and India has upset Pakistan because it is a strategic rival of India. Pakistan has been worried about its shrinking influence in the Gulf region, where it used to have considerable leverage. Besides, Pakistan's relations with the UAE have at times soured more historically with UAE's progressive political and economic rapprochement with India upsetting the balance of power in the region. Because of this new geo-strategic relationship between the United Arab Emirates and India, Pakistan has had to adjust its geo-political stance and rethink its foreign relations and economic agreements in the region.

Keywords: India, UAE, Pakistan, Diplomatic Footprints, Economic Progress

Introduction

The diaspora of Indians in the United Arab Emirates has been a significant turning point in the economics of both countries. With nearly 3 million Indian expatriates now living in the UAE, their culture, language, traditions, and festivals have helped both countries embrace pluralism, even as the UAE attempts to be more secular religiously. The diaspora has proven valuable as an economic point of view for the countries, and the increased influence of Indian expatriates in the UAE laid out a number of important points for Pakistan to consider: Pakistan may now need to consider the ramifications of its long-standing enemy's growing influence into another Islamic state (Ahmed & Abbas, [2021](#)).

Beyond merely guaranteeing its energy security, India's attempts to increase its influence in the Middle East seem to be a component of a multifaceted strategy that also involves Pakistan. The primary goal of India's policy is to strengthen ties with the Gulf region and prevent Pakistan from complicating its foreign policy by engaging in diplomatic activities that run counter to the region's narrative (Khan, [2024](#)).

Pakistan must therefore take steps like involving Gulf countries in CPEC projects and offering them opportunities for international investment. This is a major step in the right direction, as Pakistan's economic situation in the Middle East continues to worsen. Furthermore, India can no longer be stopped at this time. Therefore, Pakistan should focus on strategies to return with a stronger and more powerful presence in the Middle East rather than ways to keep India out.

This would result in a game that is not a zero-sum game, which means that the success of one party would not mean the failure of the other (Ahmed & Abbas, [2023](#)). Even though India is making strides in the

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Middle East, there is one matter that is extremely important: India's interests that underpin its balanced stance with Israel, its persistent inclination towards Saudi Arabia, and its support for the Palestinian cause. The main and most significant factor driving economic growth in the Middle East is India's demand for oil and hydrocarbons, while Pakistan is a cause that is regularly overlooked (Rehman et al., [2023](#)).

India

India Three million expatriates, who come from various areas of India and have settled in various UAE states, primarily Dubai and Abu Dhabi, make up a sizable portion of the nation's population. In both the host and the country of origin, the diaspora of Indians has made significant contributions to the socioeconomic sector. In particular, the remittances that Indians send home are a significant source of funding for the majority of Indian families. Indian expatriates have played a significant role in advancing the two nations' diplomatic and political relations (Singh & Kumar, [2022](#)). These initiatives have helped create various organisations and networks serving various purposes such as culture preservations, community support and diplomatic relations.

India has overused its soft power to influence the United Arab Emirates through its customs, culture, and most notably Bollywood, which has strengthened the two nations' bilateral ties. As a soft power tactic in international relations, India employs cultural diplomacy to strengthen its relationship with the United Arab Emirates.

Regarding India's imports and exports to the United Arab Emirates. India accounts for 19.4% of the UAE's exports, followed by Turkey, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, and Oman, among others. When it comes to commodity imports, India accounts for 10.6% of all imports, followed by the United States, China, Germany, and so on. 11.55% of India's exports go to the United Arab Emirates, and 5% of its imports come from the same country (Ahmed and Abbas, [2021](#)).

India's liberalization agenda following the crises of 1991 contributed to its current state. Although this program initially caused India a lot of difficulties, it seemed to have significant long-term effects. Agreements on bilateral trade interdependency between India and the United Arab Emirates as a result of the liberalization period.

Since the UAE is India's second-largest exporter after the US and India is its second-largest trading partner after China, both nations have signed a number of trade agreements, including the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), to increase trade in 2022 (Singh & Kumar, [2022](#)). Both the countries signed the trade of 100\$ in these 5 years and under this CEPA tariffs is being cut, fast track approval for businesses and trade zones access. And this agreement resulted in touching heights for both the countries from \$72.9 billion in fiscal year of 2022 to \$84.5 billion in fiscal year of 2023 registering the year-on-year increase of 16% (Boni, [2023](#)).

UAE

The UAE's state policy toward India has improved over the years, with a focus on building diplomatic, cultural, and commercial ties. The two countries' bilateral trade increased from \$72.9 billion in FY 2022 to \$84 billion in FY 2023. The report explains that this equity fund will support start-ups, mid-sized businesses, and the nation's economic growth, even though export revenue is only expected to reach \$5 billion in FY 2023, primarily due to the CEPA signed in 2022. India can now see the UAE's long-term economic partnership because the UAE has made significant investments in the nation's infrastructure, real estate, and information technology sectors (Gul, [2022](#)).

Honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 2019 visit was one of several recent leader visits that have improved diplomatic and political ties. The UAE has also created labor rules to defend the Indian expatriate community, as a substantial number of individuals from India dwell in the region.

The scope of this alliance can be illustrated by cooperation in such areas as space exploration and collaborative health activities during the COVID-19 epidemic. However, Pakistan may not be immune to this newly forming strategic partnership between India and the UAE which may increase the economic competition and affect the strategic stability of the area. To put it another way, Pakistan may need to strengthen its labor market policies, economic initiatives, and diplomatic efforts in order to effectively respond to and manage these developments while preserving its strategic alliances with the United Arab Emirates and India (Syed & Khan, [2021](#)).

Pakistan

Pakistan has a comprehensive state strategy in place that aims to enhance bilateral communication between the two nations in a number of ways. With visits like those made by Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan in 2019 and 2020 to promote political and commercial ties, diplomatic engagement has been one of the key components of the approach. According to the framework of the 2019 Pakistan-UAE Investment Conference, the Pakistani government promotes the nation's economic potential in a number of areas, such as infrastructure and energy, in an effort to get the UAE to consider investing in the Pakistani market (Hussain & Shahzad, [2023](#)).

Activities in the trade have been conducted with the goal of expanding exports and improving access to both new and existing markets. By supporting and participating in cultural events and establishing Pakistani schools and cultural centers, Pakistan thereby emphasizes its historical ties to the United Arab Emirates. Another similarly emphasized sector includes labor welfare where in bilateral talks reached in 2020 measures for the protection and betterment of living conditions of Pakistanis living abroad has been made. In this sense, Pakistani citizens are respected and society values their contributions (Lawale, & Ahmad, [2021](#)). The overall goal of Pakistan's policy is to uphold and strengthen its strategic alliance with the United Arab Emirates while also making sure that its interests are protected in the face of emerging shifts in the region (Hussain, & Shahzad, [2023](#)).

Research Questions

- ▶ How has the growing Indian diaspora in the UAE influenced the economic and diplomatic relation between India, UAE and Pakistan?
- ▶ In what ways can Pakistan adapt its foreign policy and economic strategies in response to India increasing influence in UAE to ensure its own economic stability and regional cooperation?

Political Relationship

Regular high-level visit exchanges between India and the United Arab Emirates have contributed to the development of stronger bilateral ties between the two nations. The following are examples of significant visits at different levels:

Visits by High-ranking Officials

Smt. Indira Gandhi, the Indian prime minister, visited the United Arab Emirates in May 1981. The Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, visited India twice, in March 2007 and March 2010. The Deputy Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Saif Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, visited India in November 2011 (Rahman et al., [2021](#)).

Representations of Foreign Ministers

Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs and Overseas Indian Affairs, travelled to the United Arab Emirates from November 10th to November 13th, 2014.

The EAM Shri Salman Khurshid made a visit to the United Arab Emirates on March 13, 2013, and on February 5, 2014, he had a telephone chat with the Foreign Minister of the United Arab Emirates during his transit visit. From the 30th of April to the 3rd of May, 2014, the Minister of State Shri E. Ahmad travelled to the United Arab Emirates (Fatima et al., [2024](#)).

It was in June 2007, June 2011, May 2012, and December 2013 when the Foreign Minister of the United Arab Emirates travelled to India.

Other significant visits at the ministerial level include Visits from the Indian side include the following

The United Arab Emirates was visited by Finance Minister Shri Jayant Sinha in April 2015. The Minister of New and Renewable Energy visited the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for IRENA General Assembly meetings in 2011, 2012, and 2014.

In November 2012 and April 2013, respectively, the Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs visited the United Arab Emirates (Abbas, & Kazmi, [2022](#)).

The Minister of Commerce and Industry led an Indian delegation to the first-ever High-level Task Force on Investment, which was held in Abu Dhabi on February 18, 2013.

The Minister of Finance traveled to Dubai for a day on March 23, 2013, to attend the Bank of Baroda branch's opening ceremony. During his second visit on May 26, 2013, he met with the Deputy Supreme Commander and the Minister of Finance of the United Arab Emirates, among others.

The Minister of Civil Aviation participated in the Dubai Global Convention on Business Excellence, which was held from April 28 to May 2, 2013, while he was in Dubai.

India across the Sea

At first sight, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's trip to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in February 2024 could have appeared to be no different than any other bilateral visit he has made in the past. Nevertheless, the fact that this is Mr. Modi's eighth trip to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) since 2014 is evidence that the administration is motivated to highlight the significance and importance of the Emirates, which is more than it has done with any other nation in the Gulf are. It is possible that the date was connected to an invitation to speak at the "World Governments Summit" in Dubai and to inaugurate Abu Dhabi's first Hindu temple; nevertheless, the ten bilateral agreements that were signed require a more in-depth examination (Siddique et al., [2022](#)).

The Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) that was signed by India and the United Arab Emirates this week is comparable to the rapidity with which India and the UAE reached an agreement on the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) in 2022. This not only makes the United Arab Emirates the first country with which the Modi administration has signed these accords, but it also makes it the only country with whom India has both a trade and an investment agreement: the United Arab Emirates. India presently has the United Arab Emirates as its third major commercial partner, its second largest export destination, and its fourth largest source of foreign direct investment (FDI) (Hashmi et al., [2023](#)).

It is anticipated that the opening of the Bharat Mart for Indian micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) will help boost commercial connections. The second set of agreements addresses technological ties, which include the construction of digital infrastructure, research and development for energy security and commerce with a particular emphasis on green hydrogen and energy storage, and digital cross-payments are also included. Third, the Agreement for an Intergovernmental Framework on the India-Middle East Economic Corridor paves the way for multilateral cooperation between the two countries; there is already coordination over the I2U2 initiative with the United States and Israel, and beginning in 2024, there will be cooperation within the BRICS framework given that the United Arab Emirates is a member.

Finally, the discussions on the Israel-Gaza operations and the Red Sea attacks indicate that India considers the United Arab Emirates to be a stable interlocutor in a region that is rife with conflict (Siddique et al., [2022](#)).

A bedrock of historical and cultural engagement is also the foundation upon which India-UAE connections are established. This bedrock includes maritime trade that dates back hundreds of years and a diaspora that provides around 18% of India's global remittances of money. In spite of the fact that India's technical strength and the United Arab Emirates' status as a commerce and industrial hub bring about complementarities, the changes that have occurred in their respective polities and civilizations may bring about disagreements. The United Arab Emirates (UAE), which is a theocratic monarchy, has voiced alarm about the emergence of majoritarian and sectarian movements in India. This is because the UAE is working towards democratizing its administration and having a more pluralistic system, an example of which is the decision regarding the temple in Abu Dhabi. In light of this, it is possible that the words said by Mr. Modi in Abu Dhabi, when he expressed his joy in the common principles of tolerance and diversity, as well as the "shared heritage of humanity," are the most significant links that exist between the two countries that are divided by the Arabian Sea.

Urgent Worries about Pakistan

Since attaining its independence, Pakistan has maintained its historical connections with the Middle East. Pakistan's relationship with the Middle Eastern states is based on three main pillars: first, Islamic unity; second, Pakistan's economic support from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC); and third, security assurances and Pakistan's ability to act as a mediator between the GCC and Iran. Remittances from Gulf nations grew by 54.1%, bringing a total of 16.95 billion dollars into Pakistan's economy in the fiscal year 2022. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states are very important to Pakistan because they give the country the financial and energy resources it sorely lacks.

The GCC countries have continuously stood behind Pakistan in times of financial and economic adversity. For example, in 2019, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia gave Pakistan a total of \$30 billion in investments and loans. Furthermore, Qatar had donated three billion dollars to Pakistan in June of the same year. Nearly 80% of Pakistan's total petroleum consumption comes from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, which use more than 21 million tons of petroleum a year. Qatar is the source of 29% of Pakistan's gas imports. A fraction of Pakistani troops are also deployed in several Gulf nations, particularly in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar, for security and training reasons (Khan, [2023](#)).

The second issue that has weakened Pakistan's relationship with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is India's growing influence in the Middle East. As previously mentioned, the GCC saw India as having enormous market potential, which led Pakistan to consider other Muslim nations like Iran, Malaysia, and others. Despite their historical ties, relations between Pakistan and the GCC have remained difficult in recent years. The rift was further widened in 2015 when the Pakistani parliament refused to approve the sending of Pakistani forces to fight the Houthis. Additionally, Saudi Arabia withdrew three billion dollars from Pakistani banks as a result of Pakistan's covert opposition to the GCC's silence on Indian crimes in Kashmir and Cyprus (Hussain, & Shahzad, [2023](#)).

In addition to formally condemning India's actions in the Kashmir valley, these nations have offered Pakistan diplomatic support on the matter. On the grounds that it jeopardizes the Kingdom's hegemony in the Muslim world, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has also discouraged Pakistan from going to the Malaysian Summit, which is being organized in conjunction with Turkey, Iran, and Malaysia. These incidents, however, also demonstrated Pakistan's efforts to broaden its global network in an effort to counterbalance India's advancements within the Muslim world. India's relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) significantly

improved as Pakistan looked for other Muslim states. For instance, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi received the highest civilian award from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 2019 (Fatima et al., [2024](#)).

India's involvement in the Middle East could potentially jeopardize not only Pakistan's historic position but also its security interests in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, as India has a wider operational reach in the marine sector due to its membership in both the Quad and the I2U2. This comes after the UAE revoked Articles 370 and 35A, which dealt with Kashmir's unique status. Additionally, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has announced that it will invest fifteen billion dollars in Indian chemical and oil refineries. To increase its worldwide recognition, India is working to fortify its maritime defense. The marine defensive system is being reinforced to counter China's dominance in South Asia. The fact that India was able to build an aircraft carrier on its own shows that it wants to compete with China. Additionally, Israel and India are collaborating closely to strengthen India's naval power. For example, India acquired the Barak-8 missile system and the Integrated Underwater Harbour Defence and Surveillance system in 2017 to protect and defend its territory against potentially hazardous situations (Abbas, & Kazmi, [2022](#)).

The existence of economic opportunities the mediation of regional conflicts is a key part of the United Arab Emirates' strategy to export its soft power. In October 2020, as Pakistan and India were on the verge of a full-scale military conflict over Kashmir, Abu Dhabi began backchannel talks with both countries, aiding them in reaching a ceasefire in March 2021. Despite this, the UAE has been very reluctant to help resolve the Kashmir dispute, as it may jeopardize the UAE's long-standing trade relations with India. Additional worries about human rights abuses and open violence throughout the disputed territory were raised by India's steps in August 2019 to remove Kashmir's autonomy under Article 370 of its constitution and split the region into the two territories of Jammu and Kashmir. These actions were taken in response to Pakistan's decision to divide Kashmir into two parts. Even though the skirmishes between the two countries, which culminated in the downing of an Indian fighter jet over Pakistan at the beginning of 2019, did not escalate into a full-scale military conflict, commercial relations between India and Pakistan have been effectively frozen for the past five years. Pakistan broke off diplomatic relations with India, its eastern neighbor. when Kashmir was classified by the latter (Karim, [2023](#)).

Pakistan declared that because it could not tolerate India ruling Kashmir, it has cut diplomatic ties with that nation. When the Pakistan-based terrorist organization Jaish-e-Mohammed assaulted an Indian military convoy in Kashmir in 2019, India accused Pakistan of facilitating extremist activities on its side of the border. This accusation was made by India. Refusing to comment on the controversy, the envoy of the United Arab Emirates to India described New Delhi's downgrade as a "internal matter." In addition, New Delhi has sent an additional 80,000 troops to the region in an effort to put an end to the ensuing unrest. The highest honor in the country, the "Order of Zayed" medal, was presented to Indian President Narendra Modi by Mohamed bin Zayed, the crown prince of Abu Dhabi at the time. This gesture demonstrates the United Arab Emirates' tacit support for the status quo (Gul et al., [2022](#)).

Abu Dhabi has increased the amount of money it has invested in Kashmir in the years since the tragedy. Several United Arab Emirates ministers have openly expressed their support for closer trade relations with Jammu and Kashmir, essentially an agreement to conduct business on India's conditions. An agreement to upgrade infrastructure in the area was reached in October 2021 between the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the Indian-administered governmental body of Jammu and Kashmir (JAM&K). The arrangement covered real estate development, industrial parks, information technology towers, a medical college, and a specialized hospital. During the January 2022 Dubai Expo, the Indian government of the territories negotiated a number of investment deals with companies based in the United Arab Emirates (Ahmed & Abbas, [2021](#)).

These companies included Al Maya Group, MATU Investments LLC, GL Employment Brokerage LLC, Noon Group, and LuLu Group. The LuLu Group made the decision to build a food logistics center in Srinagar, the largest city in the area. In Kashmir, many of these businesses had already established themselves as

prosperous enterprises; the LuLu Group, for instance, had begun exporting Kashmiri goods to the United Arab Emirates. Building a dry port in Jammu and Kashmir would connect the region to the rest of India, according to hints made by Dubai Ports World (DP World), the state-owned port developer of the United Arab Emirates. Authorities from India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) inked a free trade deal at the same time that the UAE was expanding its interests in Kashmir. This agreement reduced tariffs on almost 90% of the goods exchanged between the two countries. Following MBZ and Sharif's meeting on January 15, India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) announced an agreement on the interconnection of renewable energy sources. The project's completion date, however, has not been established (Boni, [2023](#)).

A Possible Win-Win Situation

Even though India is currently the United Arab Emirates' second-largest commercial partner after China, the two countries have much deeper economic links than just trade. Good labor connections with India are essential to Abu Dhabi's economic stability. This is due to the fact that Indians make up a significant portion of the migrant labor force in the United Arab Emirates, which accounts for about 30% of the country's overall population. With the goal of replicating India's explosive economic growth over the past two decades, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is becoming closer to India (Gul et al., [2022](#)).

The United Arab Emirates' connections to India demonstrate this developing intimacy. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which includes \$154 billion in commerce and \$14 billion in services, is one of India's most significant commercial partners.

As the economic relations between these two nations deepen, free trade agreement negotiations are still going on. Unlike Pakistan, India has developed strong business and strategic ties with the United Arab Emirates and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations. Consequently, this provides New Delhi with a substantial edge over its adversary in the war arising over Kashmir. In actuality, Abu Dhabi and New Delhi's bilateral defense cooperation expanded along with India's dominance over Kashmir, especially in the maritime sector. Joint exercises between the two nations' air forces have been conducted since 2018 in an effort to safeguard the West Indian Ocean's security (Boni, [2023](#)).

In previous crises, such as the one in Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates has demonstrated its ability to strike a delicate balance. It has maintained relations with Russia while condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine and offering Kyiv humanitarian assistance, even in the face of Western sanctions against Moscow. To bolster its position as a regional power in the Middle East, Abu Dhabi is trying to strike a balance between its relations to Islamabad and New Delhi, but this could be challenging if India and Pakistan ever clash.

Furthermore, given its reliance on its ties with India and its substantial interests in Kashmir, Abu Dhabi's capacity to act as an unbiased mediator over the disputed area may soon erode. It has been difficult for Islamabad to convince Abu Dhabi to change its position of maintaining the status quo, endangering its capacity to serve as an impartial arbiter. Abu Dhabi's position hasn't changed despite Islamabad's best attempts. As seen by its previous attempts at backchannel diplomacy, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) wants to help India and Pakistan resolve their issues and encourage a decrease in hostilities on both sides. Abu Dhabi is hesitant to spend political resources on a convoluted solution to the conflict in Kashmir (Karim, [2023](#)).

Abu Dhabi wants to maintain relations with both sides, especially India, which is why this is the case. The adversarial relationship between the two nuclear powers is therefore unlikely to change.

Theories:

Realism

highlights the hostile and combative nature of international processes, such as conflict. Therefore, a structural realist viewpoint can explain India's decision to increase its power and security investments in the UAE,

possibly at Pakistan's expense. Pakistan might believe that India's growing dominance threatens it, therefore it would need to strengthen its ties and capabilities in a strategically unstable area (Siddique et al., [2022](#)).

The statement highlights the example of including the Gulf countries in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects and praises the use of realism methods to protect national interests.

Liberalism

emphasizes the value of collaboration and communication amongst the economy's participants. With regard to the sizable Indian emigrant population in the United Arab Emirates, the economic implications of liberal concepts of reciprocal advantages arising from economic interdependence through bilateral economic connections can be highlighted against this backdrop. In this regard, the UAE's future might be interpreted as a shift toward a more secular and multicultural society as a component of broader liberal tendencies (Karim, [2023](#)). For example, Pakistan might use liberal principles to improve relations with the GCC members by fostering cooperation and lowering regional tensions through diplomatic and other economic initiatives.

Constructivism

The ability of the Indian Diaspora to manage cross-cultural interactions and the UAE's transition to a more liberal and ethnically diverse society appear to be constructivist elements. The idea that India is gaining strength in Pakistan is a result of fears and perceived dangers rooted in history and social constructs. This emphasizes the need for attitudinal changes to improve regional integration and diplomacy (Siddique et al., [2022](#)).

Neo Marxism

This highlights how integration functions within the global capitalist framework and how the UAE economically integrates the Indian labor force. The issue of regional economic policymaking with regard to both India and Pakistan, as well as the reality that India is the country most affected by the large number of Indian expatriates in this global capitalist system, can be understood in terms of the exploitation of Indian labor abroad (Bukhari et al., [2024](#)).

Game Theory

As a result, this is quite similar to non-zero-sum games in that wins are not always obtained at the expense of the opposing player. The acts of India and Pakistan in the United Arab Emirates suggest that they are engaging in a lengthy game of strategy, conveying the idea that a win-win scenario is better than a win-lose one for both nations, or else they would be utilized in a strategic game (Fatima et al., [2024](#)).

Conclusion

Rather than being restricted to ensuring its energy security, India's attempts to expand its influence in the Middle East appear to be a part of a larger strategy that includes Pakistan. India's agenda primarily aims to deepen its Gulf relations and participate in diplomatic counter-narratives that would make Pakistan's foreign policy more difficult. Indians will also take part in these exchanges. Therefore, Pakistan needs to do something, like allowing Gulf nations to participate in CPEC projects and providing them with chances for foreign investment. Given that Pakistan's economic position in the Middle East continues to deteriorate, this is a significant step that will help to improve the situation. At this time in history, India is also unstoppable. Therefore, instead of concentrating on ways to keep India out of the Middle East, Pakistan should consider ways to return with a more powerful and assertive presence there. As a result, the game would not be zero-sum, meaning that one side's victory would not determine the other's loss. Unquestionably, the power dynamics in the Middle East have changed significantly. A greater focus is currently being placed on the states where a major power, such as the United States, has resorted to offshore balancing, rather than

actually solving the problems in the region. Additionally, as the threat of terrorism has significantly decreased, the region's security characteristics have changed from being".

"Land-based" as opposed to "maritime-based." India is being given a significant role in the US strategy to oppose China on a global scale. India aspires to be a great power. India wants to strengthen its presence and collaborate more in the Indo-Pacific and Middle East regions by joining a number of alliance networks in these regions. Over the past decade, India has strengthened its reestablished ties with the Gulf States. This is due to the large market potential of India. After eliminating the final obstacle—the separation of Israel and the GCC countries—India can now pursue regional hedging in a similar way. It is up for debate whether India wants to counterbalance China and if it can.

However, the policy ramifications for Pakistan from this situation cannot be avoided. Pakistan's reputation in the Arab world was declining, especially after the Yemen War, at the same time that India's connections with the Middle East were strengthening. Furthermore, Pakistan's foreign policy issue was exacerbated by Iran's and Turkey's regional ambitions. These two governments are competing for hegemony in the region alongside Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. However, in the field where Pakistan's relations with China are extremely important, it is essential to have a solid understanding of the resurgence of the global power struggle. Pakistan can only challenge India's hegemony in the Middle East by forming a partnership with China. Iran is among China's most significant friends, might allow Pakistan more flexibility in the area. For this objective to be accomplished, normalization of relations between Iran and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), in which Pakistan may play a significant role, is essential. Given that peace negotiations between Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are already in progress in Iraq, Pakistan might expedite the peace process by taking on its traditional role as mediator. In conclusion, Pakistan should place a high priority on forging partnerships with China and acting as a mediator between Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This will protect Pakistan from competition from other superpowers and reduce India's influence in the Middle East.

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