


GS Advanced Program 2023
Generic Booklet

 Test Name/Code/No. : 69202-1

Name			
Email ID.			
Roll No.			
Mobile No.		Date	

Allotted Time : 60 Minutes
Instructions to Candidates -

- There are 7 Questions in this Question paper.
- All Questions are Compulsory.
- For all updates, please visit the noticeboard -
<https://noticeboard.forumias.com/gsap-2023/>

Important -

- Answers must be attempted in the QCA Booklet only.
- To upload the Answer Copies please visit to "My Course" section on -
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- Only those copies will be evaluated which will be submitted before the next class.

Q. No.	Grade/Score
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
Overall Grade/Score	

Start Writing Here

Q.1) The African continent has been abundantly blessed with all resources under and over land needed to create a growth success story. In the past few years, the continent has given up the cloak of colonialism, formed the African Union and is poised to claim the next few decades.

In line with this, India has wisely pivoted towards Africa.

Growing influence of India is noted by

- Starting from early 2000s, India has become the 3rd largest trading partner of Africa
- India is 7th largest source of FDI in Africa

- India - Africa Forum Summit → adopted Delhi Declaration and India-Africa Cooperation Framework.
- High level visit to Africa in 2002 → MoU on health, agriculture, science, education.
- Phase II of CEBT → Centre for Entrepreneurship, Business and Technology.
- ITEC English proficiency and training of Senegalese diplomats.
- Easy lines of credit for agriculture, health, irrigation, education.
- Asia - Africa Growth Corridor
India needs to leverage its presence in Africa as it can be the next big market and economic-political partner that India needs. India must:-
 - Ensure timely completion of projects.
 - Expand from just a few pockets of Africa.
 - Confidence building and people-to-people contact.

Overall Grading (✓)

Poor			Average			Good		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Q.2)

The WHO is a UN Associate organization that has played a remarkable role in globalization of health. Its wide membership allows it to coordinate and guide world's health response and healthcare needs.

A Pandemic like COVID-19 rendered a siloed, uncoordinated approach of countries useless. In light of this, WHO played an important role:-

- Brought the world's needed attention to COVID-19 → highlighted the gravity of the situation.
- Instrumental in sharing of health equipment, medical teams, vaccines and therapeutics among countries through initiatives like COVAX.

- Promoted joint development of vaccine and medicines through its joint research facilities.
- Currently creating a database of potentially harmful pathogens that can cause pandemics.
- Maintained database of vaccinated persons, infected persons, cured and mortality across countries.

However, WHO has also been criticized for certain gaps in its response:-

- Failed to alert the world on time.
- Accused of favouring China → one of the largest donors to WHO.
- Failed to ensure equitable distribution of drugs and vaccines → Africa still deprived.
- Could not decipher origin of the virus → still shrouded in ambiguity.

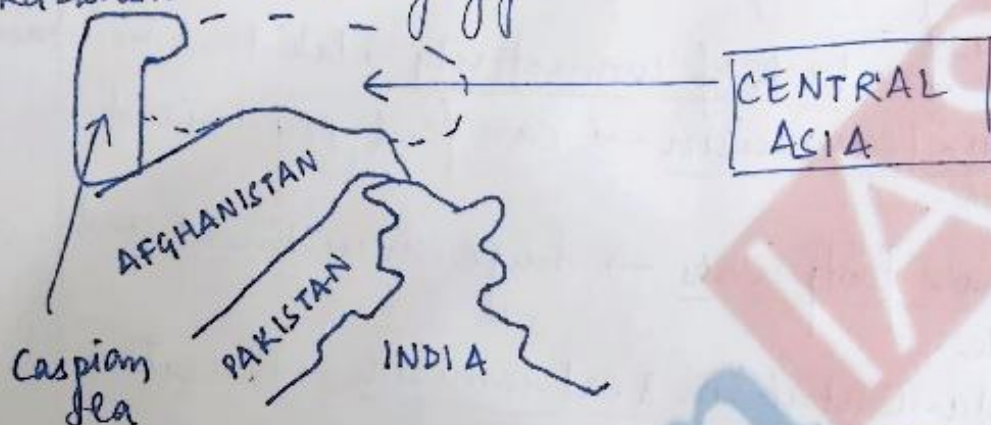
Hence WHO's response has been a mixed bag at best. There is a need to reform WHO to make it more accountable and democratic.

Overall Grading (✓)

Poor			Average			Good		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

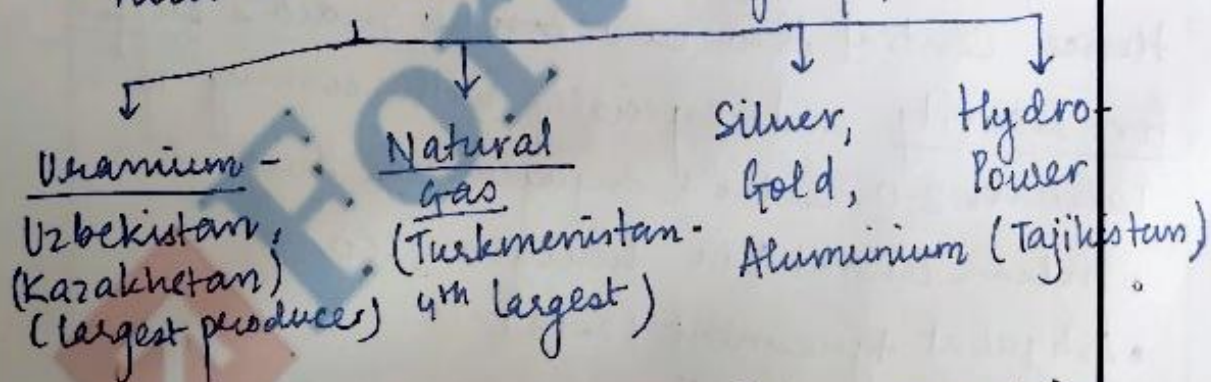
Q.3)

The Central Asian Region comprises of 5 landlocked central Asian countries of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.



The region offers many opportunities

- Rich in resources → TAPI gas pipeline



- large cultivable area and low population density → opportunity for agro industries.
- low technical know how → need support in engineering and ICT.
- Food security challenge → India can fill the gap.

- Connectivity to Eurasia ^{INSTC} (Caspian sea surrounding oil rich countries) and Persian Gulf (Ashgabat Agreement).

However, the region is also fraught with challenges:-

- Lack of connectivity → Pakistan's resistance
- Narco-Terrorism → can fuel organized crime.
- China's footprints → huge investment and trade.
- Fundamentalism & extremism → threaten stability.
- Anti-West Bias in the region.
- Region of big game due to strategic location.

Hence Central Asia can ~~can~~ be India's buffer for security and especially with coming of Taliban 2.0. India's engagements through:-

- India - Central Asia dialogue, SCO
- Ashgabat Agreement (2018).
- INSTC, TAPI pipeline
- MOUs for space, energy, food security.
- HICDPs.

Are vital for India to keep a China-nexus in check while ~~ex~~ fulfilling its strategic objectives in the region.

Overall Grading (✓)

Poor			Average			Good		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Q.4) The I2U2 grouping is a minilateral formed in 2020 comprising India, Israel, UAE and USA.

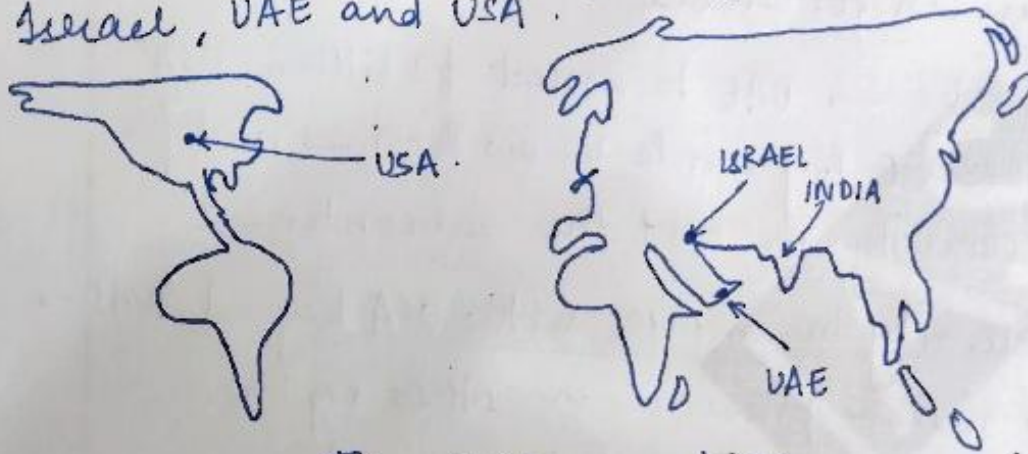
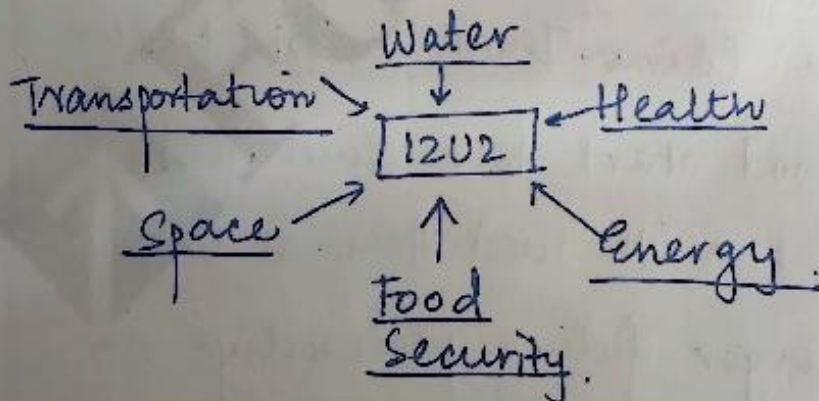


Fig- I2U2 countries.

It has been called the West Asian Quad by Ahmad Albana (UAE's ambassador to India).
The main areas of cooperation are:-



Transformative for India

- As important pivot to West Asia where

Western IOR has important SLOCs →
Bab-Al-Mandeb and Suez Canal → vast
opportunities for India.

- Food parks → UAE to invest \$2 billion, USA
and Israel to provide know how → vital for
food security in ~~cent~~ the subcontinent.
- Opportunity to engage with USA beyond QUAD →
assert Indian presence in other regions.
- Connectivity to Central Asia

Thus, I2V2 asserts India as a global player.
It serves India's strategic and economic
interests. India needs to ensure:-

- Not to isolate Iran in the process.
- Prohibit a China-Iran-Russia Nexus.

I2V2 is a good start to a diversified
engagement with West Asia. It will
propel stronger future partnerships in
the region.

Overall Grading (✓)

Poor			Average			Good		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

- Q.5) The Middle East comprising 12 countries of West Asia is an important region for India for its energy security (60% of oil imports), economic prosperity (50% of the \$85 billion remittances) and strategic security.



Fig. India and Middle East

However, presently the region poses challenges due to its multipolarity and

- Arab - Israel Conflict → emanating from Israel - Palestine issue. Arab world has long nursed grudges against Israel.
- Saudi - Iran Conflict → Essentially a religious Sunnis (of Saudi) v/s Shias (of Iran) issue and a struggle for

dominance.

- Fissures in GCC → accentuated since 2003 US-led Iraq invasion. Divided into pro and Anti Iran blocks.
- Houthi rebel issue → Iran backed militias against Saudi Arabia operating from Yemen.
- Conflicts in Yemen and Somalia.

Hence, 3 power centres Saudi Arabia
with serious differences. Israel  Iran

India's Approach.

- India should follow 'Peace with all, conflict with none approach'.
- Rightfully find common ground with players individually.  technology, defence, startups with Israel, regional connectivity with Iran and energy security with Saudi Arabia, UAE, Iraq.
- Partner with Gulf countries as they seek to ~~invest~~ diversify by investing in renewable energy, science and tech →

leverage cheap solar energy production capacity of India.

- Sign FTAs with countries individually →

Eg CEPA with UAE has already boosted trade by about 25%.

- Leverage soft-power → promote Indian culture, cuisine, cinema → leverage the 11 million+ diaspora

- Follow de-hyphenation policy → successfully working with Israel-Palestine

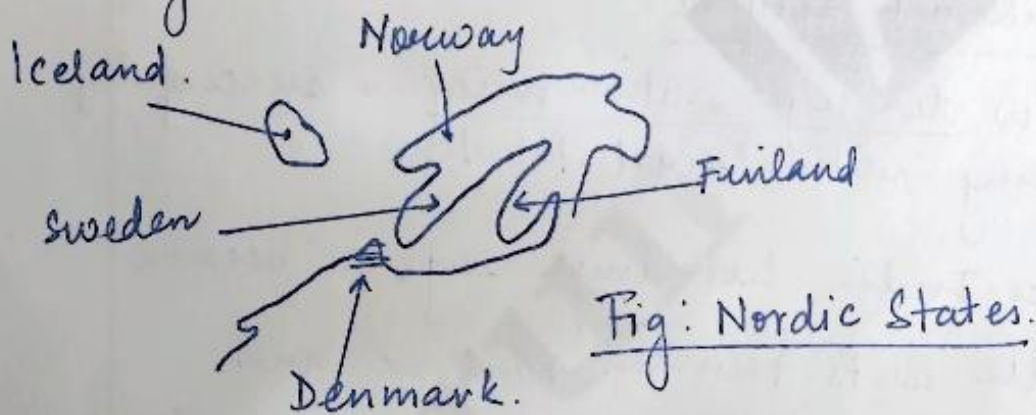
Hence India has ample scope to become Middle East's trusted partner and 'next best friend'. The regions complement each other → India has the manpower and ICT while Middle East has the capital. Recent food parks under I2U2 prove that such regional grouping are desirable and necessary.

Overall Grading (✓)

Poor			Average			Good		
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Q.6)

The Nordic States comprising Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Norway, Denmark, autonomous regions of Faroe Islands, Åland and Greenland are located in northern Europe and ~~are~~ ^{is a} developed, high HDI region.



These countries have shared democratic values, and institutional affinities with India. Off late there has been increased engagement through the India - Nordic Summit.

India-Nordic relations are promising and offer immense potential

- Strategic Wealth Funds of nordic countries invited to invest in India.
- Lead IT → Sweden-India Initiative for most polluting heavy industries → membership of 17 countries and 9 companies.
- \$59 million support of Swedish govt. for smart, sustainable Indian cities.
- Support India's ^{permanent} membership to an expanded UNSC.
- Potential of nordic partnership in Clean Ganga, Make-In-India, Swach Bharat etc.
- 70+ Indian companies present in Nordics.

However, there are challenges that need to be overcome:-

- India's neutrality in Russia-Ukraine war → Nordic countries want India to take a stand against Russia.
- Finland and Sweden have applied for NATO membership → will make India's

neutrality w.r.t. to Russia-Ukraine war more difficult.

- The trade at only \$13 billion dollars is much below par in light of India's large economy.
- China already has a strong presence → \$70 billion of trade.

India can well complement the nordic states which need manpower. They are pioneers in dairy technology, clean energy, sustainable cities and precision agriculture and thus have much to offer to India. The way ahead for India is:-

- Sign FTAs → boost bilateral trade.
- Improve people-to-people contact.
- Leverage soft-power.
- Generate consensus among Nordics that India's neutrality in the Russia-Ukraine war is exercise of strategic autonomy and does not imply support to aggression.

Overall Grading (✓)

Poor			Average			Good		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

- Q.7) The International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) is a multi-modal connectivity project signed between India-Iran and Russia in 2002 and seeks to connect India (Mumbai) with Russia (St. Petersburg).



While successful completion of the project will bring manifold benefits for India like 30% reduction in freight transport cost and reduction of 40 days time to less than half. India cannot rely completely on the project as:-

- The PAKAFUZ → proposed 573 kms long rail line connecting Tashkent - Kabul - Peshawar reduces relevance of INSTC for Afghanistan
- Envisioned as India's counter to BRI but Chinese influence over participant countries itself has become a threat to the project.
- The sanctions on Iran by the US have already delayed the project
- The extreme time over-run (envisioned in 2002 itself) has disillusioned participating countries.
- Membership to the project has expanded to 17 countries making coordination difficult.
- International projects require policy continuity, peace and stability in participating countries → currently missing in both Iran and Russia.
- Sanctions on Russia has complicated matters.

Alternatives for India

- Chennai-Vladivostok
maritime corridor → connectivity
access to resource rich
Russia's far east.
- Israel's proposed TAC → Trans Arabian
Connectivity Corridor → India can give this a
rethink.
- Focus on Indo-Pacific and Afro-Eurasia →
carry greater potential than INSTC.



Connectivity is the key to shared economic
prosperity in today's globalized world. There
is need to :-

- Provide policy attention and expedite INSTC.
- Keep aside differences
- Streamline coordination.

A connected world is a future oriented
world and all affirmative actions on these
lines need to be taken.

Overall Grading (✓)

Poor			Average			Good		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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