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Why in the News?

Recently, escalation in the West Asia has reached new heights as Israel's strike on the Iranian consulate in Syria led to a retaliatory attack from Iran

## INSTABILITY IN WEST ASIA

More on the news

The attack by Iran was intercepted by Israel, which had deployed a multi-layered air defence, including the Iron Dome, the Arrow and David's Sling

Allegedly, Exoatmospheric missiles (EMs) were used to intercept the attack

Recently, attacks by Houthis in the Red Sea were also reported

Institutions such as the United Nations, IMF, and World Bank have warned about the threats these conflicts pose to the economies and politics across the regions, including India

Diplomatic and Strategic Balancing

Engaging with countries with conflicting interests (e.g., Iran-Russia-China axis)

Maritime Security Challenges

Drone strikes

Hijackings (Houthis attack in Red Sea)

Impacting freedom of navigation in India's maritime region

Safety and Security of Indian Diaspora

Concerns in the Middle East region

Threat to Energy Security

Dependence on crude oil imports (~85%)

Economic Impact

Disruption in global maritime trade and supply chain

Rise in fuel prices

Way Forward

Enhance Diplomatic Engagements and negotiations within all parties to refrain them from further violence and seek solutions through diplomacy

Building Normative Framework and Process through arms control and security negotiations declaration of regional "Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone" leading to demilitarization

Resolution of the Israel-Palestine issues based on the Two Nation Theory for long-term security, peace and stability

Safeguarding Fiscal and External Sustainability by countries by strengthening policy buffers

Opportunity for India to emerge as a net security provider and mediator for South-South cooperation

Diplomatic milestones (E.g. Abraham Accords, Israel- Saudi) may get compromised

Intensification of maritime security challenges across the Indo-Pacific region in case of attacks on ships of USA, United Kingdom

Competition between nations for arms race or possession of Nuclear weapons may lead to global instability issues

Higher oil prices may lead to higher food prices intensifying food insecurity in many countries

International Humanitarian Crisis due to loss of lives, forced displacements and instances of War Crimes

Impacts of Instability in West Asia on Global level

Impacts of Instability in West Asia on India



## INSTABILITY IN WEST ASIA

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### Why in News?

A recent escalation in West Asia occurred after Israel's strike on the Iranian consulate in Syria, prompting a retaliatory attack from Iran. These events highlight the ongoing volatility in the region, with significant geopolitical and economic consequences.

### Details on the Conflict

#### 1. Israel's Air Defense Deployment:

- Israel used a multi-layered air defense system, including the Iron Dome, Arrow, and David's Sling, to intercept attacks.
- Allegedly, Exoatmospheric Missiles (EMs) were utilized, which are advanced anti-ballistic missiles designed to intercept threats in space.

#### 2. Houthi Attacks: Drone and missile strikes by Houthis in the Red Sea further escalated regional tensions.

#### 3. Global Concerns: Institutions like the UN, IMF, and World Bank have raised alarms about the broader impacts on global economies and regional stability, including countries like India.

### Exoatmospheric Missiles (EMs)

- **Function:** Designed to intercept and destroy ballistic missiles during the mid-course or terminal phase of their trajectory.
- **Technology:**
  - Use advanced sensors (infrared and radar systems).
  - Employ guidance systems for precision targeting.
- **Types:**
  - Kinetic Kill Vehicles: Destroy targets through direct impact.
  - Directed Energy Weapons: Use lasers or energy beams to neutralize threats.

### Impacts of West Asia Instability

#### On India

1. **Energy Security:** India imports ~85% of its crude oil, making it vulnerable to supply disruptions and price spikes.
2. **Diaspora Safety:** Over 9 million Indians live in the Middle East, whose safety is a critical concern.
3. **Maritime Security:**
  - Increased risks from attacks on shipping lanes (e.g., Red Sea, Strait of Hormuz).
  - Threats to freedom of navigation in critical maritime zones.
4. **Economic Impacts:** A rise in fuel prices could disrupt India's economy, increasing inflation and trade deficits.



5. **Geopolitical Balancing:** India's diplomatic ties with conflicting players like Iran, Israel, and Saudi Arabia could face strain.

## At a Global Level

1. **Higher Oil and Food Prices:** Escalating energy costs may exacerbate food insecurity globally.
2. **Economic Downgrades:** Countries heavily reliant on oil imports could see economic and investment downgrades.
3. **Humanitarian Crisis:** Displacement, loss of life, and potential war crimes (e.g., Rafah offensive in Gaza).

## Way Forward

1. **Enhanced Diplomacy:** Foster negotiations and dialogues among conflicting parties to de-escalate tensions.
2. **Normative Frameworks:** Promote regional agreements like a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone.
3. **India's Role:**
  - Use civilizational ties for balanced diplomacy and act as a mediator in neutral spaces.
  - Leverage its naval presence through operations like Sankalp to ensure maritime security.
4. **Strengthened International Institutions:** Reinforce the role of UNSC in addressing West Asian conflicts.
5. **Energy and Economic Preparedness:**
  - Diversify energy imports and invest in renewable alternatives to reduce dependency.
  - Build fiscal buffers to mitigate global economic shocks.

## Conclusion

India's strategic interests in West Asia, from energy security to the safety of its diaspora, require a proactive approach balancing diplomacy, economic resilience, and maritime security. With the region's instability impacting global dynamics, India must act as a responsible mediator while safeguarding its interests amidst emerging geopolitical challenges.

### Do you know?

#### Major Ongoing Conflicts in West Asia

1. **Terrorism:** Groups like Hezbollah (Lebanon) and ISIS (Syria) continue to operate
2. **Civil Wars:**
  - Yemen: Houthi insurgency.
  - Sudan: Military faction conflicts.



- Egypt: Sinai Peninsula insurgency.

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