



UPSC & STATE PCS CURRENT AFFAIRS · UJIYARI.COM

EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

West Asia Security Rethink — India's Stakes as America Steps Back

 ECONOMIC TIMES2 April 2026 · **IR** · **ECONOMY** · **GS2** · **GS3**

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

**Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

 [linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)

ALSO FROM THE CREATOR

BharatNotesFree UPSC notes, MCQs, PYQ analysis. **100% Free.**bharatnotes.com →

ADVERTISE

Advertise with Ujiyari

Reach thousands of UPSC aspirants daily.

 epicbharat@gmail.com

West Asia Security Rethink — India's Stakes as America Steps Back

 The Economic Times

2 April 2026

GS2

GS3

 The Economic Times

4 tags ▾



INTERVIEW ANGLE

"As the US-Israel-Iran conflict deepens, Gulf states are reassessing their security dependence on America. How should India position itself — as a security provider in the Indian Ocean Region, or as a neutral economic partner to all sides?"

THE CORE ARGUMENT

The escalating conflict involving the US, Israel, and Iran is doing more than disrupting oil markets — it is fundamentally reshaping the security architecture of West Asia. Gulf states, long dependent on American security guarantees, are now exploring autonomous and diversified security arrangements. This shift creates both risks and strategic opportunities for India, which depends on the region for 85% of its crude oil, \$40 billion in annual remittances, and the welfare of 9 million Indian workers.

THE CHANGING SECURITY LANDSCAPE

From Pax Americana to Strategic Uncertainty

The US security umbrella over the Gulf — built since the Carter Doctrine (1980) which declared any attempt to control the Persian Gulf “an assault on the vital interests of the United States” — is under strain:

- **US domestic politics:** Sustained military engagement in West Asia is politically costly in Washington; isolationist pressures are real
- **Iran's resilience:** Despite US pressure, Iran has maintained proxy networks (Houthis, Hezbollah, PMF) that can threaten Gulf stability
- **Saudi-Iran normalisation (2023):** Brokered by China — a signal that Gulf states hedge between US and China

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) members are now investing in:

- **Domestic defence industries** (Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 includes defence localisation at 50%)
- **Multi-polar security partnerships** (with India, China, France)
- **Strait of Hormuz bypass infrastructure** (UAE's Habshan-Fujairah pipeline bypasses the Strait)

INDIA'S STAKES

The Hormuz Chokepoint

Over **85% of India's crude** transits the Strait of Hormuz or adjacent waters. A conflict that closes or severely restricts the Strait would:

- Spike Indian crude import costs by \$20–40/bbl
- Force re-routing via the Cape of Good Hope (adding 2–3 weeks, \$1–2 million extra/voyage)
- Trigger inflationary shocks through fuel, fertilizer, and logistics cost chains

The Diaspora and Remittance Dimension

India's **9 million workers in the Gulf** are concentrated in construction, hospitality, and services — sectors directly vulnerable to regional instability. Any large-scale evacuation (like Operation Sukoon in Lebanon 2006 or Vande Bharat Mission 2020) would be a humanitarian and economic challenge simultaneously.

INDIA'S STRATEGIC OPTIONS

Option 1: Active Mediation

India has maintained diplomatic ties with both Israel and Iran (the only major democracy to do so). PM Modi's visits to both Israel and Gulf states position India as a potential mediator — building on the precedent of India-brokered dialogue between Saudi Arabia and Iran via SCO platforms.

Option 2: Security Presence in IOR

India can offer naval escorts, maritime surveillance, and anti-piracy cooperation to Gulf states — positioning itself as an **Indian Ocean Region (IOR) security provider** rather than a passive consumer of American security.

Option 3: Energy Diversification

Accelerate diversification away from West Asia dependence:

- Russian crude (already significant since 2022 Ukraine sanctions)
- Africa (Nigeria, Angola, Mozambique LNG)

- Domestic renewables acceleration

THE CHINA VARIABLE

China's 2023 Saudi-Iran normalisation brokerage demonstrated Beijing's growing West Asia influence. As US engagement fluctuates, **China is positioning itself as an alternative security patron** for Gulf states — offering investment, technology, and non-interference.

India cannot match China's Belt and Road Infrastructure investment in the region but has advantages:

- **Shared democracy values** with some regional reformers
- **No territorial ambitions** — seen as a benign power
- **Large diaspora** creates people-to-people ties that China lacks

UPSC MAINS RELEVANCE

GS2 — IR: India-West Asia relations, India's energy security diplomacy, India in multilateral forums (SCO, I2U2).

UPSC RELEVANCE

US commitment to defend Persian Gulf against external control; foundation of US West Asia military presence

STRAIT OF HORMUZ:

~34 km; ~20% global oil trade; ~30% LNG; Iran can threaten closure

I2U2:

India-Israel-UAE-USA economic partnership; focuses on food, water, energy, transport

INDIA-IRAN RELATIONS:

India imports Iranian oil (reduced under US sanctions); Chabahar Port cooperation; INSTC (International North-South Transport Corridor)

SAUDI VISION 2030:

Aims 50% defence localisation; reduces oil dependence; social reform programme

OPERATION SUKOON (2006):

India evacuated 2,280 people from Lebanon during Israel-Hezbollah war

INDIA'S IOR STRATEGY:

SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region); net security provider doctrine

GCC:

Gulf Cooperation Council — Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman; combined oil output ~25% of world

RELATED DAILY ARTICLES

2 Apr [Current Affairs Today — April 2, 2026](#)

2 Apr [Rare Earth Corridors — India's Critical Minerals...](#)

2 Apr [RoDTEP Scheme Extended — India's Export Tax Remission...](#)

1 Apr [Current Affairs Today — April 1, 2026](#)

← PREVIOUS EDITORIAL

**Kerala Must Show How an Ageing Population
Can Thrive**

NEXT EDITORIAL →

**India's Multi-Domain Deterrence — Bridging
the Gap with...**



CURATED & WRITTEN BY

Bharat Choudhary

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

[in linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)[Read Full Article on Ujiyari →](#)<https://ujiyari.com/editorials/2026/04/west-asia-security-india-energy-hormuz/>

ALSO FROM THE CREATOR

BharatNotes

Free UPSC study platform — subject-wise notes across all 4 GS papers, Prelims MCQs, Mains answer frameworks, PYQ analysis & progress tracking. **100% Free • No Login Required.**

[Start Preparing → bharatnotes.com](http://bharatnotes.com)

📌 OPPORTUNITY

Advertise with Ujiyari

Reach **thousands of serious UPSC & State PCS aspirants** daily through our PDFs, website, and social channels.

Ideal for: Coaching institutes • EdTech platforms • Book publishers • Exam prep apps

[✉ epicbharat@gmail.com](mailto:epicbharat@gmail.com)

Write to us for rates & media kit

Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs · ujiyari.com · bharatnotes.com