

Q. USA-Iran's rising conflicts have implications for stability in middle east as well as India. Suggest steps that can be taken by India to secure its interests.

Ans. The US President withdrew from the JCPOA with Iran in May 2018. This was followed by imposition of economic sanctions by USA on Iran and Iran shooting down an unmanned US drone near its border. These incidents have snowballed into the imminent threat of US-Iran war.

If such a crisis emerges, the entire world would burn with skyrocketing fuel prices.

Amidst such conditions India can take the following steps to secure its interests:-

- ① India should increase its import of crude oil from the present suppliers like Iraq and Saudi Arabia.
- ② India should look for new suppliers of crude oil like Oman and USA.
- ③ Improve and upgrade Indian refineries to suit the crude from USA.
- ④ Engage in discussions with European countries to circumvent the sanctions imposed by the USA.

- (5) At diplomatic level take up the matter of Chabahar port with USA to exclude it from the imposed sanctions.
- (6) Act as a mediator to de-escalate tensions in the middle east.
- (7) Follow the golden principle of engage with everyone, align with none in such circumstances.

It is a tightrope walk for India, wherein India has to balance its strategic interests and investments made in the middle east and ~~with~~ relations with the USA.