

OIC'S CURIOUS RECORD ON XINJIANG

GS-2:- REGIONAL AND GLOBAL GROUPINGS

PRESENT CONTEXT	In an epochal development, India became the 'Guest of Honour' at the 46th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held in Abu Dhabi in March.
ABOUT THE OIC	✓ Organisation of Islamic Cooperation is an international organization founded in 1969, consisting of 57 member states. ✓ It is the second largest inter-governmental organization after the United Nations. ✓ The organisation states that it is "the collective voice of the Muslim world" and works to "safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony". ✓ The OIC has permanent delegations to the United Nations and the European Union. ✓ Permanent Secretariat is in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
SIGNIFICANCE OF INVITATION	✓ The invitation to address the OIC can be seen as a major diplomatic victory as this is the first time that an Indian EAM was invited. ✓ This can be seen as a part of India's efforts to isolate Pakistan diplomatically. ✓ In 1969, the invite to then union minister Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed was withdrawn at Pakistan's insistence. ✓ The official announcement by the UAE mentioned, that the invitation to India was extended in recognition of India's global political stature as well as its time-honored and deep-rooted cultural and historical legacy and its important Islamic component.
OIC STAND ON BEIJING'S POLICIES IN XINJIANG.	✓ OIC commend the efforts of the People's Republic of China in providing care to its Muslim citizens although Human Rights Watch report issued in September 2018 had also criticised Beijing's policies in Xinjiang. ✓ The organisation remains mindful of how far it can go with its criticism of Beijing considering that China is a major power, a permanent member of the UN Security Council, a large market for hydrocarbons and a source of arms and investment. ✓ As China's continued import of oil from Iran suggests, countries under U.S. pressure and sanctions often turn to China for relief. In return,

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	they do their best to guard China's interests at the OIC.
INDIA & OIC	✓ The OIC offers a platform for Pakistan and India to play out their respective positions on a number of thorny issues and in the process involve the forum for de-escalation purposes. ✓ Both India and the member countries of OIC have shared an interest in blunting the edge of religious extremism and terrorism. ✓ Equally important has been the region's growing economic and energy interdependence with India, which is emerging as the world's third-largest economy and one of the biggest hydrocarbon importers and labour exporters. ✓ As the region's geopolitics enters a turbulent period, the potential for India as a military partner is also coming into view
WAY FORWARD	✓ With better engagement with the Arab countries, India should aim to expand areas of mutually beneficial cooperation, minimize areas of misperception or divergence of interests, and maximize advantages that may accrue to India. ✓ India has good reason to be pleased that Pakistan can no longer veto India's engagement with critical states of the Middle East. ✓ For the emerging forces of political moderation and social modernization in the Middle East, India is a more attractive partner than Pakistan. However, India has to carefully balance its strategy towards the Islamic world by openly form stronger and better diplomatic ties with an overtly religion-based organization. ✓ But here is a paradox: In embracing OIC, an overtly religion-based organization, Delhi reduces the salience of faith in India's strategy towards the Islamic world.

QUES:- CRITICALLY ANALYSE THE IMPORTANCE OF OIC IN INDIA'S INTEREST.