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ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION (OIC)

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details " Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)". This topic has relevance in the International Relations section of the UPSC CSE exam.

GS 2: International Relations

Why in the news?

India has dismissed a statement from the OIC regarding the Supreme Court's verdict affirming the revocation of Article 370, which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

Background:

India strongly rejected remarks by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) expressing concern over the Supreme Court's verdict on Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir.

The External Affairs Ministry spokesperson termed the OIC's statement "ill-informed and ill-intended," questioning its alignment with a human rights violator and promoter of cross-border terrorism. It was emphasized that such statements undermine the credibility of the OIC.

The OIC had expressed concern over the Supreme Court's verdict and reaffirmed solidarity with the people of Jammu and Kashmir. The Supreme Court's decision to uphold the revocation of Article 370 includes ordering the restoration of statehood by September 30, 2024.

Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC): An Overview

- **Establishment:** Founded in September 1969 after a summit in Rabat, Morocco, prompted by the criminal arson of Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem.
- **Size and Population:** Second-largest organization globally after the United Nations. It represents over 1.8 billion people.
- **Collective Voice:** Acts as the collective voice of the Muslim world, advocating for their interests in economic, social, and political domains.
- **Objectives:**
 - Aims to preserve Islamic values.
 - Safeguards and defends national sovereignty and independence of member states.
 - Contributes to international peace and security.
- **Membership:** Comprises 57 member states spanning four continents.
- **Headquarters:** Located in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
- **Official Languages:** Recognizes Arabic, English, and French as its official languages.



Historical Background:

- In 1969, India, with the world's second-largest Muslim community, was invited to the founding conference of the OIC but was ejected at Pakistan's insistence.
- India stayed away due to concerns about joining a religiously founded organization and potential strain on bilateral relations, particularly on issues like Kashmir.

Observer Status and Ongoing Relations:

- In 2018, Bangladesh proposed India for Observer status at the 45th session of the Foreign Ministers' Summit, but Pakistan opposed it.
- India advocates for a more inclusive approach within the OIC, expressing reluctance to join an organization built on religious foundations.
- Despite reservations, India, with strengthened ties to influential OIC members like UAE and Saudi Arabia, remains confident in managing statements from the grouping.

Kashmir Issue and OIC Statements:

- The OIC has, at times, expressed concerns and called for resolutions aligning with the wishes of the Kashmiri people.
- In 2018, the OIC General Secretariat condemned the killing of Kashmiris by Indian forces, a stance consistently rejected by India.
- India maintains that J&K is an integral part of the country, and the OIC has no standing on the issue.

Diplomatic Milestones:

- In 2019, India made its first appearance at the OIC Foreign Ministers' meeting as a "guest of honour," marking a diplomatic victory.
- This move was significant during heightened tensions with Pakistan post the Pulwama attack.

Recent Developments and Criticisms:

- In 2022, the OIC called on the UN Human Rights Council regarding the hijab issue in Karnataka schools.

- The OIC urged India to ensure the safety and well-being of the Muslim community, criticizing the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, and the Babri Masjid verdict.

Source: 'Ill-informed, ill-intended': India rejects statement by Organization of Islamic Cooperation on Supreme Court verdict on Article 370 (msn.com)

Q.1 Regarding the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:

1. India is one of its founding members
2. Recently OIC has intervened in Kashmir issue on India's behalf

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

ANSWER: D

Q.2 Examine the evolving relationship between India and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Assess the impact of India's rejection of OIC statements recently and its efforts to navigate the organization, highlighting key diplomatic challenges and achievements.

Rishabh

