A Turkish Foreign Policy Treading on Ottoman Footprints

What is the issue?

Turkish presence across the former Ottoman realm seeks to reshape the modern nation with the imprint of its earlier Islamic and military glory.

What interventions by Turkey stirred regional chaos?

- **Azerbaijan -** Turkey supported Azerbaijan against its arch-rival, Armenia and secured a victory that gave Azerbaijan a large part of the territory from its neighbour.
- **Iran –** Azerbaijan's demand over the **Zangezur corridor**, if conceded, would cut off Iran's direct link with Armenia, while giving Turkey a direct route to Azerbaijan and Central Asian republics, bypassing Iran.

- This has divided the region with Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan on one side and Iran and Armenia on the other side.
- **Mediterrranean -** Turkey's plans to obtain a naval presence on the Libyan coast and in the Red Sea has led to a new defence agreement between France and Greece.
- **Russia**- Turkey's rejects Russia's illegal occupation of Crimea and is providing Ukraine with military drones.
- Turkey has begun the construction of "**Canal Istanbul**", a new link from the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara, raising concerns about Russia's free movement.

How is Turkey's relation with the global powers?

- Turkey violated its status as a **NATO member** by purchasing the Russian S-400 missile defence system in 2017.

- Turkey was expelled by the U.S. from the development of America's F-35 jet fighter project and was put into sanctions.
- Turkey and Russia are on opposite sides in Syria, Libya, Ukraine and in the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict, the bilateral relation is is ease.
- Russia has adopted 'strategic patience' in order to detach Turkey from NATO.
- Russia has even promised Sukhoi Su-57 aircraft and a second battery of the S-400 defence system to Turkey.

What is the status on resetting of relationships?

- Turkey has reached out to both Egypt and Saudi Arabia to improve their relations.
- Turkey has also signalled a new approach in Libya that would accommodate its rivals — Egypt, the UAE and Russia.
- Turkey is pursuing a dual-track approach with Iran by confronting it in the Caucasus while building substantial bilateral energy and economic ties.
- Turkey insists on asserting its strategic autonomy and independence of action, and enjoys sitting at the global high table.
- The domestic divisions and economic fragility such as unemployment, inflation, currency collapse, and capital flight will finally determine the regional influence of Turkey.

Source: The Hindu

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