# Iran Pakistan Strikes

## Why in news?

India backed Iran on its strikes on alleged terror camps in Pakistan's Balochistan Province, calling it an act of "self-defence".

## What is the issue?

- **The issue** - Iran has carried out a 3rd strike in reprisal for the January 3 terror attack in ***Kerman*** that killed over 80 people.
- Baloch people, who live in both Pakistan and Iran, are attacked by both countries leading to rebellion across the border.
- Iran struck 3 countries in one day namely Iraq, Syria and Pakistan.
- **India's stand** - India supported Iran's action in Pakistan as "self-defence" against terrorism.
- It indicates India's support for Iran despite the growing tensions in West Asia between Iran and the U.S.

- **Role of Pakistan** - Pakistan conducted a series of specifically targeted precision military strikes in Iran's southeastern Sistan and Baluchistan province as part of an operation called "***Marg Bar Sarmachar".***
- The tit-for-tat strikes are the highest-profile cross-border intrusions in recent years and have raised alarm over wider instability in the Middle East since the war between Israel and Hamas.

| Common Baloch Problem |
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| • **Goldsmith Line**- It is the 909-km ***Iran-Pakistan border*** stretches from a tripoint with Afghanistan to the northern Arabian Sea.<br>• **Population-** Ethnic Baloch live in Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan.<br>• They also nurse deeply rooted grievances against both the Pakistani and Iranian states.<br>• **Economic status-**The Baloch homeland is rich in natural resources but in Iran, 80% of the Baloch population lives under the poverty line.<br>• In Pakistan, massive investments in projects such as China's Belt and Road initiative have not improved their lives.<br>• **Baloch nationalism**- It traces its roots to the early decades of the 20th century, when new international borders came to be drawn in the region.<br>• Their marginalisation in both countries in subsequent years fuelled several separatist movements for a ***"Greater Balochistan"*** nation state. |

## Why India's role is significant in Iran-Pakistan strike?

- **Strategic location**- Balochistan is a region that spans across Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan, and has a strategic position at the mouth of the ***Persian Gulf,*** a vital waterway for global oil trade.
- **Connectivity**- Balochistan also has access to the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean, making it a potential hub for maritime connectivity and trade.
- **Geopolitical dynamics**- Balochistan is home to Baloch minority which is strategically important for the global powers that are competing for influence in Central Asia and the Middle East.
- **New great game**- It refers to the rivalry and competition among regional and global powers for influence and resources in Central and South Asia, especially in Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries.
- **China factor**- China has a strategic interest in ***Gwadar,*** a port city in Balochistan, as part of its Belt and Road Initiative and its naval ambitions in the Indian Ocean.
- **Security concerns**- Balochistan's proximity to Afghanistan, where the Taliban regime has recently taken over, adds to the complexity and uncertainty to the regional security dynamics.
- **Change in foreign policy**- India as a rising power with growing economic and security interests in the region, needs to rethink its traditional neutrality and passive approach in the Middle East and Central Asia.
- **India-Iran ties**- They have cooperated in the energy sector despite US sanctions on Iran, India has developed a meaningful dimension with Iran.
- **Chabahar port**- India is involved in the planning and building of the Chabahar port, intended to allow it to bypass the overland route through Pakistan for trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia.
- Chabahar directly competes with Pakistan's China funded Gwadar port, keeping a check on growing China's influence in the neighbourhood region.

## References


1. Indian Express- India's stake deepen in Iran Pakistan strikes
2. Indian Express- Iran, Pakistan and Baloch militancy



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