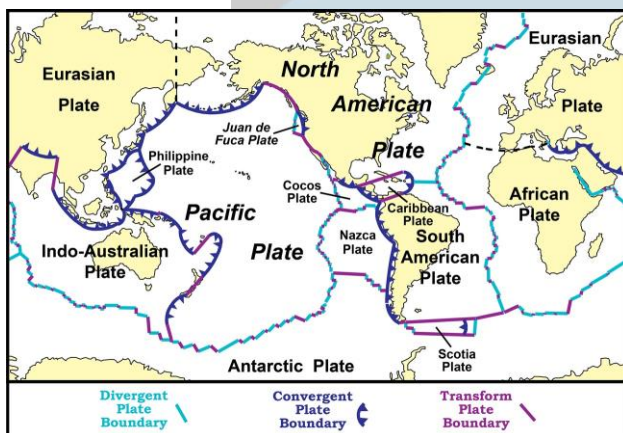


## Earthquake in Philippines



- The first involved several concrete agreements, including to restart military to military direct dialogue and to discuss risk and safety issues involved with artificial intelligence.
- The second is what both sides have described as establishing a floor to the relationship. That was the goal when the two leaders last met in Bali in 2022.

- The Bali consensus was, however, blown away by the “spy balloon” incident
- On Taiwan, both sides reiterated their stands, with China cautioning against interference, and the U.S. saying it opposed any change in the status quo.

- A longer term concern and one that underlines the limits of this modest stabilization is a basic point of difference in how they see the future of their relations

- U.S. and China are in competition” and described the immediate challenge as how to “manage it responsibly”.

- These differences aside, one crucial point of agreement is the apparent realization that high level engagement and open channels are key in preventing competition from sliding into conflict.

## The Hindu

### APEC and china –usa

- The summit, on the sidelines of APEC, yielded two significant takeaways.

## Current Affairs 18<sup>th</sup> November 2023 by Saurabh Pandey

- This offers clear lessons to the India China relationship, as the crisis along the Line of Actual Control enters its fourth winter

### ABOUT APEC

#### What is Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation?

- The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a regional economic forum established in 1989 to leverage the growing interdependence of the Asia-Pacific.
- APEC's 21 members aim to create greater prosperity for the people of the region by promoting balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative and secure growth and by accelerating regional economic integration.

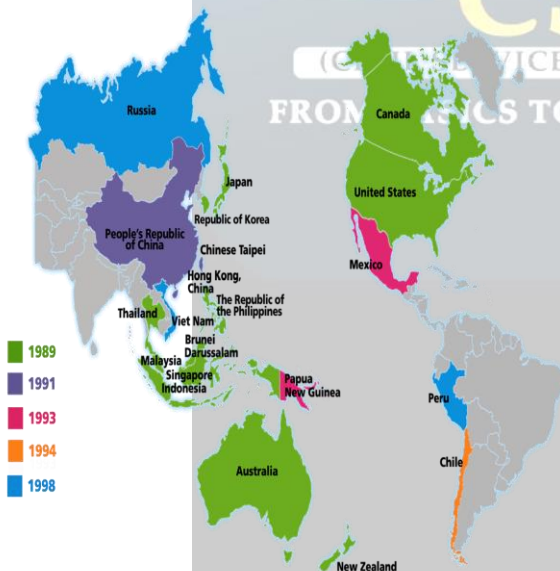
- APEC ensures that goods, services, investment and people move easily across borders. Members facilitate this trade through faster customs procedures at borders; more favorable business climates behind the border; and aligning regulations and standards across the region.

- For example, APEC's initiatives to synchronize regulatory systems are key to integrating the Asia-Pacific economy.

- In such cases, a product can be more easily exported with just one set of common standards across all economies.

The Hindu

Israel -hamas and changing geopolitics



- What Does APEC Do?

- The United States, the reigning superpower of the region since the end of the Second World War, had begun shifting its strategic focus to more conventional rivals such as Russia and China.

- But, to maintain its hold over and interests in the region, what the U.S. sought to do was to bring two of the pillars of its regional policy, Israel and the Gulf Arabs, closer.

- The Abraham Accords were a result of this policy, which was rolled out by

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the Donald Trump administration and embraced by the U.S. President, Joe Biden

- A common Jewish Arab front in a relatively peaceful West Asia would allow the U.S. to free up resources from the region which it could use elsewhere.
- On the other side, the U.S.'s deprioritisation of West Asia led Gulf Arabs to make their own tactical changes in foreign policy for a more predictable and stable relationship in the region.
- This opened an opportunity for China, which has good ties with countries across the Gulf, to play the role of a peacemaker.
- The result was the Iran-Saudi reconciliation agreement.
- The U.S.'s response to the Saudi Iran détente was to double down on the Abraham Accords.
- The Biden administration invested itself in talks between the Saudis and the Israelis.
- It was so confident about prospects of a deal that it unveiled the India Middle East Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) proposal earlier this year, which hinged on Arab Israel peace, and sold it as an alternative to China's outreach into the region.
- Both the Arabs and Israel were ready to sidestep the Palestine question and chart a new course of partnership.
- But new regional realities emerged after October 7.
- The Palestine issue has now come back to the fore of the West Asian geopolitical cauldron.
- Second, Israel's disproportionate and indiscriminate attack on Gaza has triggered massive protests across the Arab Street
- Third, there is always the Iran factor.
- Ever since the Palestine issue got re-regionalised, Iran has stepped up its pro Palestine rhetoric and called for collective action against Israel, while its proxies, the Houthis in Yemen and Hezbollah in Lebanon, have launched limited attacks on Israel
- The Saudis convened an Islamic summit on Gaza, which saw the landmark visit by Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi to the Kingdom, and reiterated its call for the creation of a Palestine state based on the 1967 borders for peace and security in the region.
- In effect, Mohammed bin Salman, the Saudi Crown Prince, has relinked the Palestine issue with peace talks with Israel

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- The U.S. might still hope that the situation would be conducive to reboot the Abraham Accords once the dust settles.
- This is entirely possible.
- But a key challenge is that it is still not clear what Mr. Netanyahu's endgame is in Gaza.
- He has already signalled that Israeli troops would continue to play an overall security role in the enclave which means, Israel would reoccupy the territory from where it withdrew in 2005
- The UAE and Saudi Arabia refused to join American sanctions against Russia after the Ukraine war. Saudi Arabia continued its Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Plus cooperation with Moscow, defying Washington's requests and diktats.
- China is playing an increasingly greater role in the Gulf, which includes secret plans to build a military facility in the UAE.
- The current crisis is expediting these changes in the regional dynamics.
- With the Saudi Israel peace plan derailed and the Iranian President having visited the Kingdom to discuss Israel's war on Gaza, what Washington is witnessing is the limits

of the U.S. brokered Abraham Accords and the widening scope of the China brokered Iran Saudi détente

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