



Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

For Prelims: Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), UN Human Rights Council

For Mains: Effect of Policies & Politics of Countries on India's Interests, India's relationship with OIC as an organisation

Why in News?

Recently, the [Organisation of Islamic Cooperation \(OIC\)](#) condemned and denounced the comments on Prophet Muhammed made by two Indians.

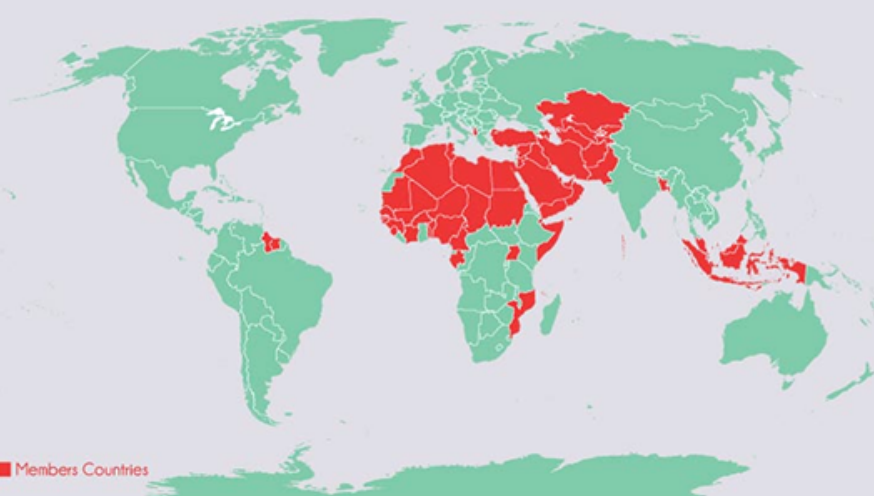
- Ministry of External Affairs rejected the OIC comments, adding that the views expressed by the individuals did not reflect the views of the Indian government.
- Earlier, India has **lashed out at the OIC for being "communal minded"** amid the [Karnataka hijab row](#).

What is the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation?

- **About:**
 - The OIC claims to be the **"collective voice of the Muslim world"**.
 - It was established at a 1969 summit in Rabat (Morocco) after what it describes as the 'criminal arson' of [Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem](#).
- **Members:**
 - It has 57 member Countries.
 - India is not a Member of OIC.
- **Objectives:**
 - The OIC endeavours **to establish solidarity** among member states.
 - To support **restoration of complete sovereignty and territorial integrity** of any member state under occupation.
 - To protect, defend and **combat defamation of Islam**.
 - To prevent **growing dissention in Muslim societies** and work to ensure that member states take a united stand at the [U. N. General Assembly](#), [Human Rights Council](#) and other international fora.
- **Headquarters:** Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
 - The organisation plans to permanently move its headquarters to **East Jerusalem once the disputed city is 'liberated'**.
 - Moreover, it aspires to hold Israel accountable for **'War Crimes'** and violations of international law.
- **OIC charter:**
 - The organisation **adheres to a charter that lays out its objectives, principles and operating mechanism**.
 - First adopted in 1972, the **charter has been revised multiple times** in line with emerging conditions in the developing world.
 - The present charter was adopted in March 2008 at Dakar in Senegal.

- It enshrines that **all members be guided and inspired by the noble Islamic teachings and values** alongside committing themselves to the purposes and **principles of the [U. N. charter](#)**.


What is OIC?



OIC- Organization of the Islamic Cooperation

It was founded in **1969**

First OIC Charter Adopted in **1972**



Key Bodies of OIC:

- ▶ Council of Foreign Ministers
- ▶ General Secretariat
- ▶ Islamic Summit
- ▶ Al-Quds Committee

Number of Member Countries **57**

Founding Members **30**

How does OIC Function?

- **Membership:**
 - U. N. members with a **Muslim majority can join the organisation.**
 - The membership is to be **ratified with full consensus** at the OIC's Council of Foreign Ministers.
 - The same provisions apply for **acquiring an observer status.**
- **Decision Making:**
 - All decision-making in the forum **requires a quorum defined by the presence of two-thirds of the member states** and complete consensus.
 - In case a consensus cannot be reached, decisions shall be made by a **two-thirds majority of members present and voting.**
 - The Council of Foreign Ministers is the **chief decision-making body and meets annually to decide on how to implement the OIC's general policies.**
 - They take decisions and resolutions on matters of common interest, review their progress, consider and approve programmes and their budgets, consider specific issues bothering member states and recommend establishing a new organ or committee.

- **Finance:**
 - The OIC is financed by **the member states proportionate to their national incomes.**
 - A member's voting rights are **suspended when their arrears equal or exceed the amount of contributions** due from them for the preceding two years.
 - The member is **only allowed to vote if the Council of Foreign Ministers is satisfied** that the failure is due to conditions beyond the member's control.
- **Islamic Summit:**
 - It is composed of Kings and heads of state, is the **supreme authority of the organisation.**
 - Convening every three years, **it deliberates, takes policy decisions, provides guidance on issues relevant to the organisation** and considers issues of concern to the member states.
- **Council of Foreign Ministers:**
 - The Council of Foreign Ministers is the **chief decision-making body and meets annually** to decide on how to implement the OIC's general policies.
 - They **take decisions and resolutions on matters of common interest**, review their progress, consider and approve programmes and their budgets, consider specific issues bothering member states and recommend establishing a new organ or committee.
- **Standing Committees:**
 - The OIC also has **standing committees for cooperation on information and cultural affairs**, economic and commercial matters, scientific and technological initiatives and for Jerusalem.

What are the Criticism of the OIC?

- **Prioritise Rights of Muslim Minorities:**
 - The OIC had become a premise for 'window dressing', more interested in the rights of Muslim minorities in places such as Palestine or Myanmar than the human rights violations of its member states.
- **Incompetent at investigating Human Rights Violations:**
 - The **body lacks power and resources to investigate [human rights violations](#)** or enforce its decisions through signed treaties and declarations.
- **Centred around Quranic Values:**
 - The organisation is largely restricted to **arbitrating in conflicts where both parties are Muslims.**
 - This is because the organisation is **centred around Quranic values**, which, it believes, makes it a qualified arbitrator.
- **Failed to Establish a Cooperative Venture:**
 - The OIC has **failed to establish a cooperative venture** among its members, who were either capital-rich and labour-scarce countries or manpower-rich and capital scarce.
 - The organization has **not evolved to become a significant player** either in international politics or in the area of economic cooperation.

What is the Status of India's relationship with OIC as an organisation?

- As a country with the world's **second largest Muslim community**, India had been **invited to the founding conference at Rabat in 1969**, but was humiliatingly ejected at Pakistan's behest.
- India **stayed away** because of a multiplicity of reasons:
 - It **did not want to join an organisation founded on religion.**
 - There was the **risk that improving bilateral relations with individual member states would come under pressure** in a grouping, especially on issues such as Kashmir.
- At the 45th session of the Foreign Ministers' Summit in 2018, Bangladesh, the host, suggested that India, where more than 10% of the world's Muslims live, **should be given Observer status, but Pakistan opposed the proposal.**
- After building close ties with powerful members such as UAE and Saudi Arabia, **India has been confident of riding over any statement** by the grouping.
 - India has consistently underlined that J&K is an "integral part of India and is a matter strictly internal to India", and that the OIC has no locus standi on the issue.

- In 2019, India made its **maiden appearance at the OIC Foreign Ministers' meeting**, as a “guest of honour”.
- This first-time invitation was **seen as a diplomatic victory for India**, especially at a time of heightened tensions with Pakistan following the Pulwama attack.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. With reference to the United Nations General Assembly, consider the following statements: (2022)

1. The UN General Assembly can grant observer status to the non-member States.
2. Inter-governmental organisations can seek observer status in the UN General Assembly.
3. Permanent Observers in the UN General Assembly can maintain missions at the UN headquarters.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (d)

Explanation:

- Non-Member States of the United Nations, which are members of one or more specialized agencies, can apply for the status of Permanent Observer.
- The United Nations General Assembly **may grant non-member states, international organizations and other entities Permanent Observer Status**. Hence, statement 1 and 2 are correct.
- The status of a Permanent Observer is based purely on practice, and there are no provisions for it in the United Nations Charter.
- The practice dates from 1946, when the Secretary-General accepted the designation of the Swiss Government as a Permanent Observer to the United Nations.
- Observers were subsequently put forward by certain States that later became United Nations Members, including Austria, Finland, Italy, and Japan. Switzerland became a UN Member on September 10, 2002.
- Permanent Observers have free access to most meetings and relevant documentation.
- Many regional and international organizations are also observers in the work and annual sessions of the General Assembly.
- Permanent Observers **may participate in the sessions and workings of the General Assembly** and maintain missions at the UN Headquarters. Hence, statement 3 is correct.

Source: TH