

Q. What factors are responsible for the Resurgence of terrorism in Pakistan? Possible solutions?

Ans: Terrorism in Pakistan has become a recurrent issue for more than two decades. In the aftermath of America's withdrawal from Afghanistan, the menace of terrorism started knocking the door of Pakistan and several factors have contributed in its sustenance. This problem has yet to be curtailed by taking stringent and proactive steps.

Factors Responsible for the Resurgence of Terrorism:

Some of the causes of resurgence of terrorism in Pakistan are described below:-

(1) America's Exit from Afghanistan:-

The biggest fear, when America announced its withdrawal from Afghanistan, was the return of terrorism in Pakistan. Unfortunately, the fear turned into reality as the Taliban government in Afghanistan was not powerful enough to prevent the infiltration of members of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) into Pakistan.

(2) Support by Afghan Taliban:

As soon as Afghan Taliban came to power, Pakistan resorted to enter into negotiations with the TTP with Afghan Taliban acting as mediator. However, it was observed that the Afghan de facto government did not play an active role. Hence, the negotiations failed. In the seminars of academic institutions like Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad, it was argued that Afghan Taliban might use Pakistan's ex-FATA region as their strategic depth against Pakistan (by leveraging support to TTP) to get economic benefits.

(3) India's Continued Hybrid Warfare:

In 2016, Indian intelligence agency, RAW's agent was captured from Balochistan whose name was Kalbhushan Jadav, as per DAWN News. It was unveiled that he was giving training and funding to outfits like Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), which have been responsible for terrorist attacks against Chinese workers in Balochistan and other areas of Pakistan for years.

(4) Poor Economic Condition of Pakistan:

The high inflation caused by

deteriorating situation of Pakistan's economy has brought people to live from hand to mouth. The crime rate has surged and so does the anti-state feelings. This ^{could} have led to the rise in terrorism as economic incentives by terrorist outfits might have caused more recruitments.

(5) Political Instability:-

The chaos and frustration caused by political instability and deepening mistrust in the security organizations have also produced an environment that is highly conducive to terrorism.

(6) Strategic Alliances between Terrorist Outfits:-

The strategic alliances between terrorist outfits like Islamic State - Khurasan (IS-K) and TTP are actually leading to more effective networking, decentralization and coordinated attacks. The result is the increasing success rate in carrying out terrorist activities. This aspect is explored in the ^{research} studies of IPRI. There are also indications that TTP might have connected itself with BIA.

Steps to Resolve the Issue of Terrorism:-

There could be various solutions to solve the issue of terrorism that might need to be carried out simultaneously.

(1) Engage the Government of Afghan Taliban:-

While Pakistan does not like to be engaging the Afghan government, but it is true that engaging them could ensure

the restricted movement, funding and support to TTP in Pakistan.

(2) Soft Public Diplomacy with the Locals of KPK and Balochistan Provinces:-

When the needs and freedoms of the people of KPK and Balochistan will be fulfilled and proper channel of communication between them and the government will flourish, they'll be more receptive and cooperative in curbing terrorism especially in geographically challenged areas.

(3) Politico-economic stability in Pakistan:-

It is also pertinent that Pakistan brings itself back to stability so that all the involved institutions ^{would} be able to deal with the issue of terrorism with unity and primary focus.

(4) Dismantling the Terrorist Networks and Alliances:-

In this digital era with social media on the forefront, counterterrorism also has its own opportunities. The security establishment and even the law and order agencies at local (police) level, should be equipped and trained with cyber tools and technologies and physical fitness so they can dismantle the terrorist networks both online and on-ground.

In conclusion, terrorism has resurged due to both national and international factors; however, it ~~could~~ ^{will} be curtailed with the efforts of Pakistan, primarily; therefore, all institutions and public should

exhibit solidarity to resolve common issues of national interest and collective wellbeing.

Q. What is the future of Pak-US relationship? How can Pakistan balance between China and US?

The relationship between Pakistan and the United States is described as that of love-and-hate. No matter how much divergence of views and priorities exists, the geographical location of Pakistan provides it a leverage vis-à-vis America where latter finds itself having common interests with Pakistan. This view was expressed by Robert M. Hathaway in his book, "The Leverage Paradox: Pakistan and the United States". There are, when one analyzes, various common issues and interests that will keep Pakistan and the USA in close cooperation. However, Pakistan will also have to learn to balance between its strategic partner, China, and its economic saviour, United States of America.

Factors Affecting the Future of Pakistan-America Relations:

There are various factors that would determine Pakistan's future with America.

(1) Relations with China and Russia:-

The more Pakistan gets close to China and Russia, the more antagonism it will face from America. Hence, it is important to keep a balancing approach with all

three of these major powers.

(2) Threat of Terrorism:-

Both America and Pakistan are wary of the issue of terrorism. It is a common interest which could keep both working together. Whether this issue is in Afghanistan or Pakistan, cooperation on counterterrorism measures will be significant in fostering relationship.

(3) America's Relations with India:-

It is no hidden fact that Pakistan feels insecure because of its massive opponent, India. The level of strategic cooperation between America and India would determine the future of Pakistan and America.

(4) Climate Change:-

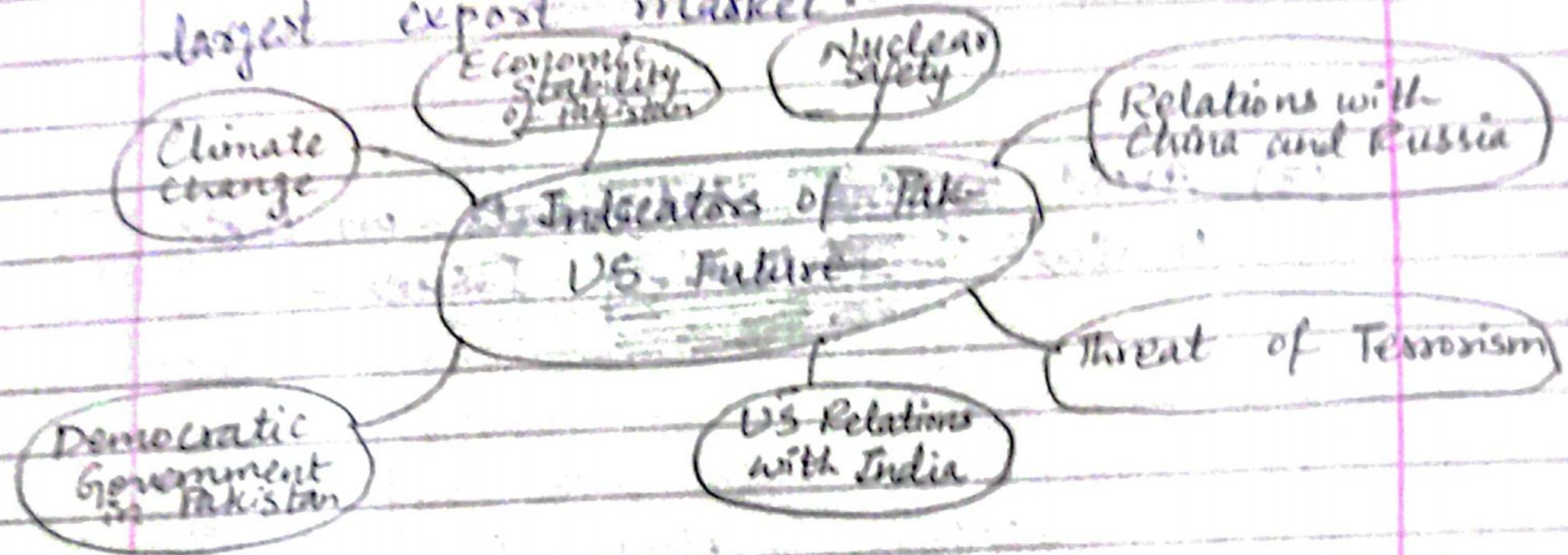
Pakistan faces huge vulnerability to climate change-induced events - be it floods, heat waves, melting of glaciers or droughts. America, being a technologically advanced and developed country, would be highly important for Pakistan to transition to climate-resilient state.

(5) Democracy in Pakistan:-

It is of highly interest for America to have a democratic Pakistan. It is evident from America and generally the west's statements regarding their close watch on Pakistan's internal politics. An elected government through a proper process is very important for America, as America sees itself as watchman of the world, especially insurer of democratic world.

c) Pakistan's Economic Stability:

Pakistan will continue to look towards America because it is the leader of the western economic institutions like IMF, WB, etc. Pakistan has taken bailout from IMF twenty three times. Therefore, for its economic survival, America's support is necessary. Latter is also Pakistan's one of the largest export market.



Forecast: By discussing the above-mentioned factors, one can predict that Pakistan and US will continue to engage and cooperate on issues like climate change, terrorism, economic situation and nuclear safety. On the dark side, this cooperation could be hindered by factors like undemocratic government and highly imbalanced relations with Russia and China.

Balancing Relations Between China and USA:-

(1) Keep Economic and Strategic Relations with Both:-

Pakistan should cooperate with both on its economic and security (terrorism)

issues to prevent any misperception on either side.

(2) Bring both Competitors on Cooperating Terms:-

As Pakistan acted as mediator when US opened to China. Again, Pakistan should increase its efforts to prevent protectionism by either state against the other. In this regard, ex-PM Shahbaz Sharif offered China and US the Pakistan's support for their cooperation.

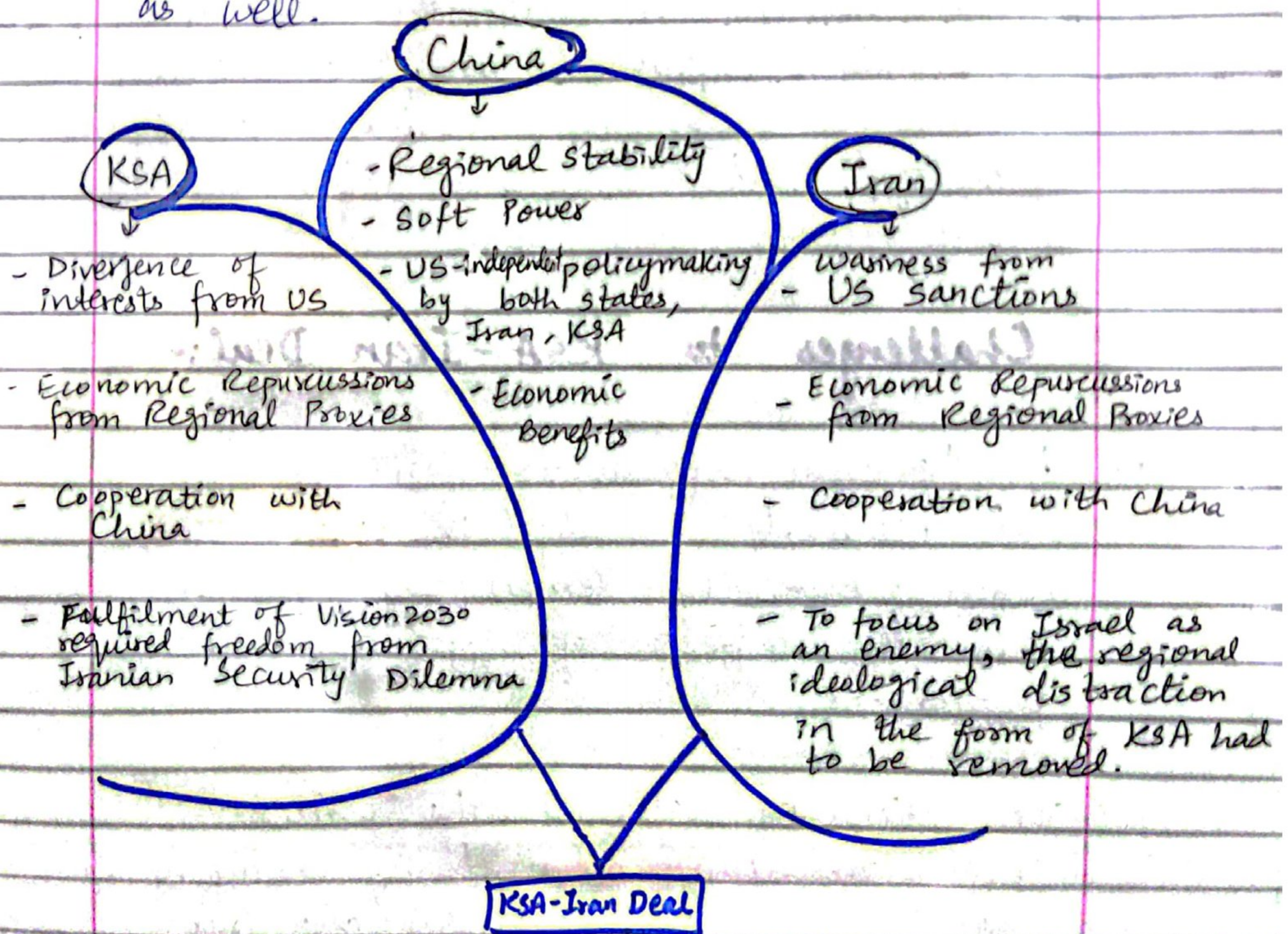
(3) Avoid Giving Statements on their Mutual Contesting Issues:-

Recently, it has been observed that China and America have contrasting opinions on issues like Ukraine War, Gaza-Palestine Conflict, South China Sea, etc. In such cases, except for pure humanitarian purposes, Pakistan should avoid taking stance that is favourable to one party.

In conclusion, Pakistan and US will continue to cooperate with the possibility of lull periods given the strategic environment or domestic compulsions. To avoid such periods, it is important for Pakistan to remain democratic and balance out between America and China.

Q. Discuss Saudi-Iran Rapprochement and opportunities for Pakistan.

On March 10, 2023, China helped brokering the rapprochement deal between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the two regional arch-rivals. There are various reasons that acted as impetus of interest for both parties to enter into negotiations. The deal also acted as a blow to long-held strategic calculus of the United States of America. Meanwhile, it opened multiple doors of opportunities for Pakistan as well.



The above chart has briefly outlined the factors that have been responsible for the parties to enter into the deal.

Deal as a Blow to US Strategic

Calculus:-

US has long been feeding^{off} the ideological rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia. It has helped flourish its weaponry market and a regional environment conducive to its ally, Israel. Moreover, the failure of the US to extinguish the regional proxies has acted as opportunity for China to pursue the same goal through a different and less intervening approach. In this scenario, US will have to rethink its regional strategy and bilateral relations with both KSA and Iran.

Challenges to KSA-Iran Deal:-

- 1) If the non-state actors continue to fuel instability in the Middle East region (especially Yemen, Syria, etc.), then the effects of deal could be jeopardized.
- 2) The intervening role of the United States presenting a mutually exclusive strategic scenario to KSA and Iran could also affect the deal negatively.
- 3) Moreover, if the follow-up steps to materialize the normalization process between KSA and Iran are not taken, the deal could, then again, be ineffective.

Opportunities for Pakistan:-

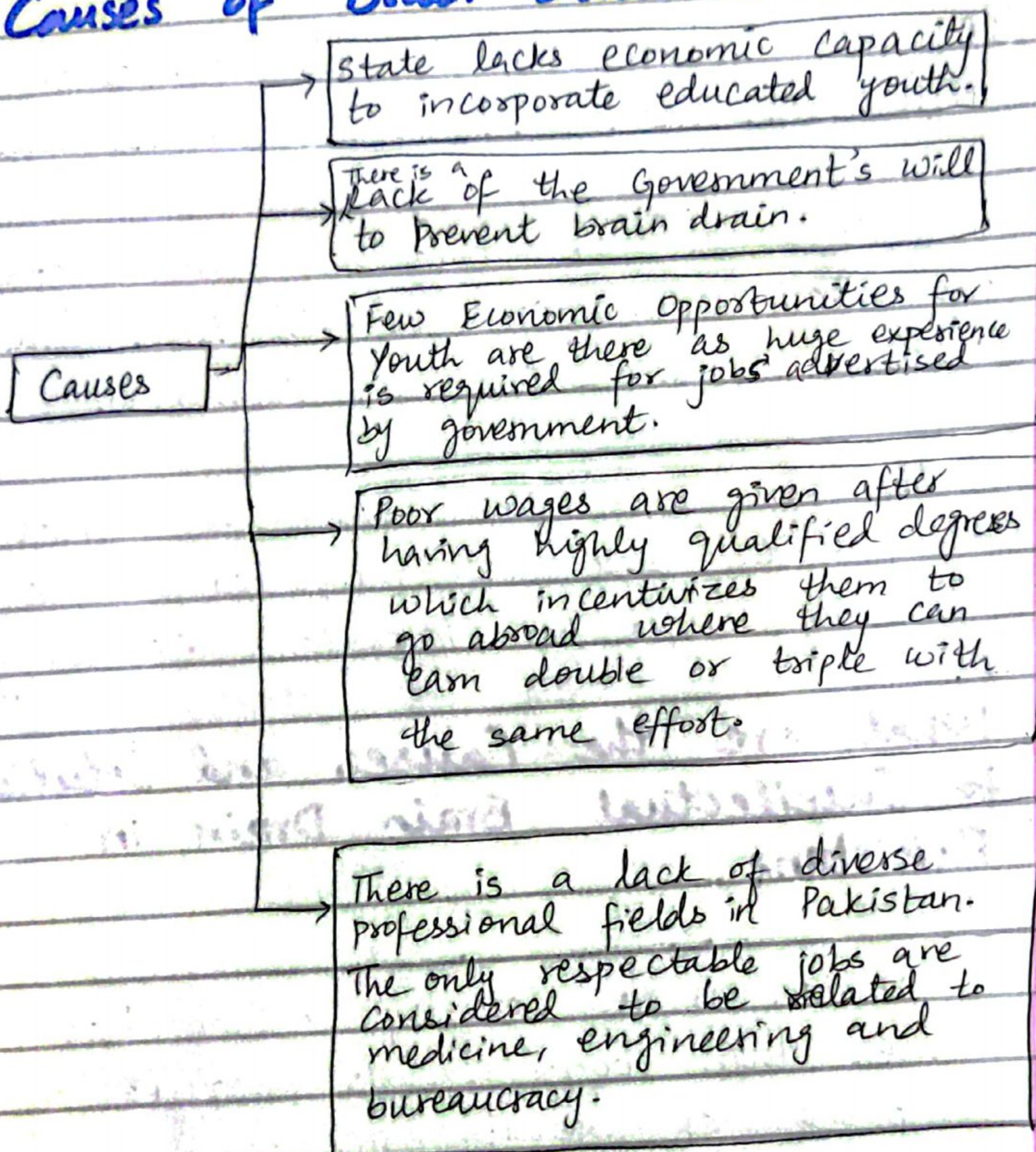
- 1- Cooperation between both KSA and Iran could be carried out by Pakistan. For instance, it could get subsidized oil from both countries.
- 2- ^{situation} The ~~the~~ could help reduce the sectarian differences and conflicts within Pakistan.
- 3- Pakistan will be able to garner support from both countries on its important national issue, that is, Kashmir.
- 4- Both KSA and Iran could be invited to CPEC that is purported to be a gamechanger for Pakistan's economy.

Q- What are the Causes and Solutions to Intellectual Brain Drain in Pakistan?

Pakistan is a country which has more than 60% of its population composed of young people. Women constitute half of Pakistan's overall population. While the literacy rate in the country is more than 60%, the socio-economically dire situation of the country raises the concern that where do these people and intellect go? The inability of the state to incorporate the educated people in the system undermines both the future of youth and the state.

In this scenario, there is a need to expand the structural capacity of the state to accommodate the educated youth bulge and prevent the brain drain.

Causes of Brain Drain in Pakistan:-



Solutions for Preventing Brain Drain:-

- 1) Expand the economic capacity of the state as well as flexibility to incorporate newly graduated students into jobs.
- 2) Make a linkage between employing organizations and universities.
- 3) Good wages should be given with emphasis on diversifying the professional fields.