

Q) Explain how Pakistan and Russia Relations developed over the course of time and further highlight the benefits associated for Pakistan in case of better Pak-Russia Relations?

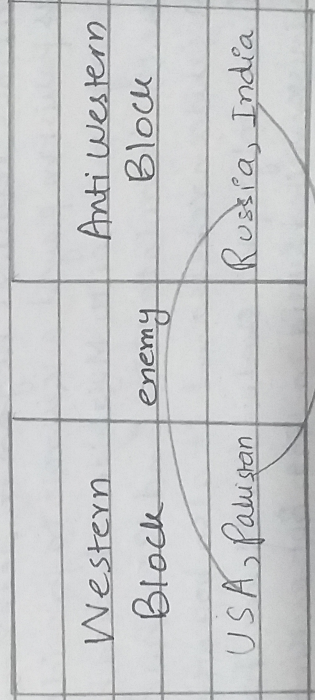
Introduction: Pakistan and Russia Relations

The Soviet Union and Pakistan first established the diplomatic and bilateral relations on 1 May 1948. Throughout the cold war, the Russia's relations with Pakistan saw ups and downs. From 1948 to 1958, the Soviet Union enjoyed relatively healthy and strong relations with Pakistan when it was under civilian control. But they went ultimately cold soon after the US-backed 1958 military coup. Although, attempts to warm relations were made after 1965 Indo-Pakistan war. However in 1980s relations began to deteriorate again, as Pakistan played a key role in providing FIM-92 Stinger missiles to Mujahideen backed by the aid of the US. So in late 1970s and 1980, Pakistan supported Mujahideen rebels and it also boycotted the 1980 Summer Olympics scheduled in Moscow. Former Prime Minister visited Russia in 1999. But as the relations were getting better, soon 9/11 attack happened, so Pakistan again, became the part of US block. Once again the military attack in Sadrabad reveals the true colours of the United States. At this time, Russia relaid to wave off the arms embargo. Since then, there happened visits of Russian's foreign minister and Pakistan's Prime Minister in respective countries. And in the recent years ties between Russia and Pakistan have warmed as a counter-measure to warming ties between India and United States.

Major developments in the history pertinent to Pakistan-Russia Relations:

1) Division of countries in two blocks after the Cold war:

After the world war II, there was huge loss of property and lives. So there started an era of cold war, in which there was not direct military conflict. So, after cold war the world divided into two blocks. The western block and the Eastern block. Historically, Russia was declared as the second biggest enemy of Pakistan after India. So Pakistan joined western block. Thus Pakistan-Russia relations always remain cold throughout their histories major portion.



∴ Friend's enemy = Enemy; Friend's friend = friend
Two Blocks formed

2) Pakistan Preferred Western block to anti western block:

Pakistan had invitations from the Russian as well as the US block during the cold war, but due to Pakistan's inclination towards the English culture, understanding of English language, understanding religious perspective e.g. Abrahamic religion. Also, India was joining the USSR block initially were the primary reasons to join the western block.

US → USSR

English Language
English culture

Abrahamic religion

familiar

Russian Language

Russian culture

Different religion

unfamiliar

3) Russia's continued efforts to engage Pakistan with them in perspective of better relations:

Even though, Pakistan was part of the CENTO and SEATO, USSR continued to engage in better relations with Pakistan. e.g. due to the efforts of Coasegen, Pak-India signed Tashkent declaration and Russia also supported Pakistan in the Pakistan's steel mill project.

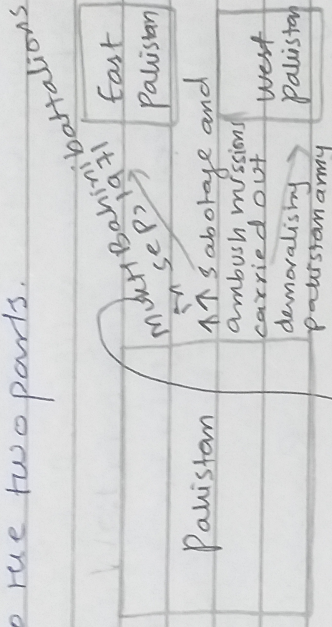
SEATO in 1954

CENTO in 1955

Tashkent Declaration in 1966

4) Downward Curve in Pakistan-Russia relations:

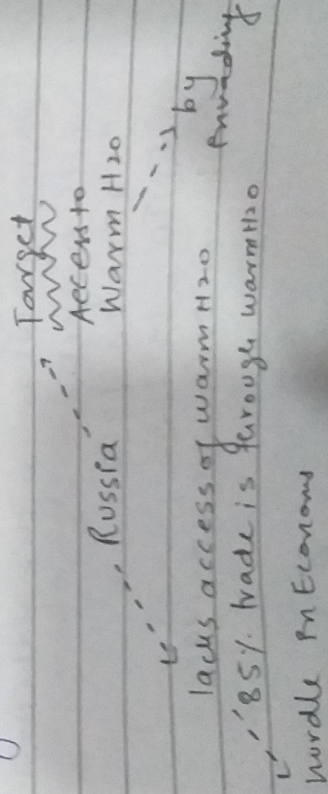
Pakistan-Russia relations saw downward curves when Russia supported the intelligence activities for Mukti Bahinis in East Pakistan which helped India disintegrate Pakistan into the two parts.



Helped by the Russia's thus disintegrated Pakistan into 2 parts.

5) Pakistan helped in the Afghan war

USSR's quest for warm waters brought it to the Afghanistan and the cold war doctrine of countering each other brought US to Afghanistan and Pakistan joined the Afghan war. Resultantly, Russia imposed arms embargo on Pakistan for siding with the US.



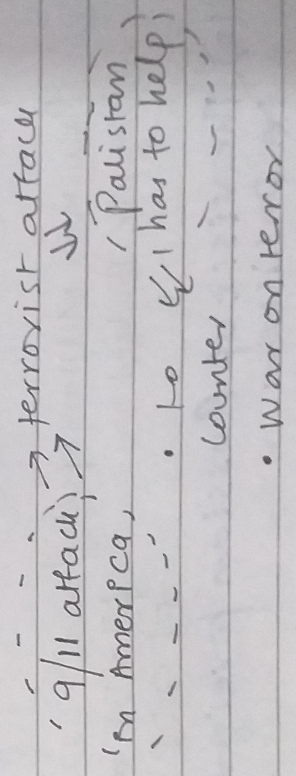
6) Former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's visit to Russia

Former prime minister Mr. Nawaz Sharif tried to bridge the gap by visiting Russia in 1999. But was over within few months later.

Civilian Era → Tried to have → therefore cordial relations with other countries visited Russia

7) Pakistan again became the part of US Block!

After the 9/11 incident happened in America in 2001. To fight war on terror Pakistan had to give support to USA. Therefore, it again became the part of US Block, which brings Pakistan-Russia relations down once again.



8) Salala Check post incident in Pakistan:

After 2011 Salala check post incident happened. Military officials of Pakistan were martyred. Thus Pakistan stopped the NATO supply line and US imposed its

arms embargo on Pakistan.

Salala Incident (Location Tehsil Bayzai Area)

On 26 Nov 2011 by NATO → It killed
at 24 security personnel & injured 12 soldiers
on Pakistan check post in Salala.

9) Russia waved off arms embargo on Pakistan:

In 2013, Russia realized that the
5th most populated country in the world
and one of the largest spender on defense
and military equipments was without
an arms supply. Hence, they voluntarily
waved off the arms embargo on Pakistan.
This was the starting point of better
Pakistan-Russia relations.

Pakistan's Military Spending/ → In 2013
Defense Budget \$7.65B and 3.47%
of GDP

10) The visit of Russian foreign minister in Pakistan:

Sergei Lavrov, foreign minister of
Russia visited Pakistan in 2014 and 2021
were the reasons of melting ice between
both states. The last visit of Pakistan's
Prime Minister Imran Khan to Russia's
seen as a cool breeze in the hot desert
of Pakistan-Russia relations.

Benefits of Better Pakistan Russia Relations

Benefits can be divided into 3 portions

- 1) Political
- 2) Economic
- 3) Security

1) Political Benefits of Better Pakistan Russia Relations:

Better Pakistan - Russia relations will help Pakistan counter Indian plans of isolating Pakistan internationally.

2) Economic Benefits of Better Pakistan Russia Relations:

Russia is

2.1) Largest Energy Exporter in the world

As Russia is the largest energy exporter in the world. Better Pakistan - Russia relations can help Pakistan fulfil its energy demands. For eg. recently two oil containers were supplied to Pakistan on low cost.

2.2) More foreign direct investment in Pakistan

As Pakistan has moved towards the geo economic foreign policy, better relations with Russia, which means more FDI will

come in Pakistan.

2.3) Russia Created its own International North South transport corridor

As Russia still desires to get access to the warm water, resolutely, it has created its own International North South transport corridor (INSTC) which currently passes through Afghanistan and Iran. Hence can be joined with CPEC.

3) Security Benefits of Better Pakistan-Russia Relations:

Russia's military equipment is considered one of the finest in the world which can fulfil Pakistan's security demands. In case Pakistan's neighbour beside to go rouge.

Conclusion:

The Pakistan and Russia relations kept fluctuating over the past. Initially there was cold relation, but it got better with the passage of time. There were ups and downs. But now there have been different projects of Russia and Pakistan which is bridging the gap between these countries. Now, Pakistan is taking steps in terms of foreign policy. Moreover a slight tilt of India toward US block created space which is tried to be filled by Pakistan. In near future Pakistan is going to share

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more good ties with Russia.

According to Arif Rafiq:

"We may be entering a period in which India's tighter embrace of the United States brings Russia closer to Pakistan, and Russia's bolstering of ties with Pakistan brings India closer to the United States."