

Question:

What are the main determinants of Pakistan's foreign policy? How current National capacity has become a major challenge before an independent foreign policy of Pakistan?

Introduction:

Foreign policy of Pakistan like any other country, shapes the interaction of the state with other countries in achieving its objectives. Based upon strong attributes, there are some loopholes present in national capacity of Pakistan due to the presence of polycrisis in the country, which stems down the exhibiting power of foreign policy to some extent.

Determinants of Pakistan's foreign policy:

Pakistan's foreign policy is based upon a number of determinants, that shape the dynamics of external policy in achieving the vested interest of state. Determinants effect multiple domains of state's

affairs comprising a diverse paradigm. These are as follows:

(i) Ideology:

The ideology of foreign policy of Pakistan is based upon democracy, liberalism while extending cordial relation with all countries.

Example:

The reflection of ideology of foreign policy of Pakistan is displayed through various events. Pakistan's inclusion in multiple organisations such as Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and South Asian Association of Region Corporation, displays the receptive posture of Pakistan.

(ii) Geographical congruity defining its relation with other countries:

Pakistan can be seen at a strategic position of Asia presenting confluence between West Asia, Central Asia and South Asia. It's geo strategic position along with geographical congruity with regional players, heavily affects its foreign policy in numerous

ways.

Example:

(a) Direct implications of relation with neighboring countries:

Pakistan's border dispute at both Western and Eastern part, has propelled the state to take adherent action. Due to the presence of porous border on the western part has propelled Pakistan to compelled Pakistan to ask Afghan regime to tone down the faction of Tehreek Taliban of Pakistan present at Afghan soil. On the other hand, the contention on the Eastern border has compelled Pakistan to look toward multilateral military corporation with Russia and China.

(b) Indirect implications of rising rivalries:

The increasing US-India partnership has given an impetus to rising deterrence towards Pakistan. Positioning the state to rear look towards China and Russia, whereas, US-China rivalry has placed difficulty

for Pakistan to stay neutral for a long time, while avoiding bloc politics.

(iii) Economic compulsions shape the Foreign policy:

To strengthen the economic framework of the country, foreign policy of Pakistan plays an integral role through opening up of multiple avenues to explore in gaining competitive advantage at international market.

Example:

(a) Regional integration to enhance economic cooperation:

Pakistan's foreign policy has always look forward to strengthen regional cooperation to enhance economic framework of the country. Pakistan's inclusion in China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and Framing Turkeministan - Afghanistan - Pakistan - Indian pipeline project, displays the continuous effort of Pakistan in intergerating the regions stability.

(b) Defence alliances structuring the outlook of foreign policy:

At numerous times Pakistan was pushed to look towards defence alliances, disbursing military and economic aid. Most evident is the opting of CENTO and SEATO by Pakistan. Right now Pakistan and Russia has entered into an agreement of non-power application of nuclear technology.

(c) Strengthening the presence of Pakistani diaspora:

Pakistan is opening up its relation with countries, specifically related to visa issuances, in regards with facilitating Pakistani diaspora. Hence building up foreign remittances reserve.

(iv) Reinigorating the energy sector of state through foreign policy:

Pakistan, at the cross roads of South Asia, can harness the benefits due to its close proximity with Middle East region and considered as hub of oil sector and other regions of Asian

Example:

With recent rapprochement of Iran and Saudi Arabia, Pakistan can enhance its energy sector through import of oil from a close proximity that is Iran with exploration and investment from Saudi Arabia. Hence, foreign policy of Pakistan can shape the structure of energy sector.

(v) Global influence impacting the foreign policy of Pakistan.

With shifting global dynamics of the world, Pakistan's foreign policy is also agile to reshape itself to pre adapt to the changing power dynamics.

Example:

Increased facilitation of America with India in regards to multiple forums has pushed Pakistan to expand its strategic vision. The recent conclusion of G20 Summit has displayed the signing of agreement of economic alliance between India, Middle East and Europe. Parallel to this Pakistan is expanding

its scope of investment through signing of memorandum with Russia, to capture the market benefits of International North-South-Transport Corridor (INSTC).

(vi) **Humanitarian issues, raising the concern of foreign policy.**

Foreign policy of Pakistan from the start has been inclined to resolve any illegal occupation of land, specifically Kashmir dispute and Palestine issue.

Example:

Foreign policy of Pakistan, heavily focuses on Kashmir Saga through utilisation of various platforms that are UNSC and OIC. Along with this foreign policy of Pakistan has always focused on the resolution of issue through referendum.

Current National capacity; a major challenge for foreign policy of Pakistan:

The current national capacity of Pakistan provides a hurdle for foreign policy of Pakistan to display

its full potential. A myriad of crises comprising affecting economic and energy sector presents a difficult task for foreign policy of Pakistan, as following:

(i) **Economic crunch, resists the acceleration of foreign policy of Pakistan:**

Crippling economy of the country with continuous stagflation has decreased the expanding relation with other countries rapidly. It has restricted the inclusion of Pakistan in multiple forums.

Example:

Recent expansion of BRICS forum with addition of six new members has raised question against the foreign policy of Pakistan. However a downward spiral of current economic indicators resist its the invitation of Pakistan at any new forum.

(ii) **Energy sector's weak indicators create a huge gap for foreign policy to fill:**

The weak indicators of energy sector presents a bleak picture for foreign investors to invest in Pakistan's energy domain. This enhances the resistance to be met by foreign policy of Pakistan in engaging other states interests in Pakistan.

Example::

Iran gas - Peace pipeline is an under construction project that stand stills although due to numerous sanctions imposed on Iran but the reason of stagnation from Pakistan's side is due to ineffective economic structure that impedes the strength of regional integration. This compels Pakistan to seek help from IMF.

(iii) Security threats presents a challenge for foreign policy to overcome:

There are various forms of security threats present in Pakistan ranging from kinetic military to unconventional, non kinetic military threat. These range of security threats constraint the strategic view of foreign policy while shifting its focus on security issues mainly.

Example:

Porous border of Durand line and unstable Afghan regime gives an impetus to activities of TTP, while the presence of hybrid warfare further spoils the security framework of country. Threats spread across the various tiers of paradigm compels Pakistan's independent foreign policy while forcing it to enhance its defence alliances and defence pact. As of now, Pakistan is around 40% recipient of military supply from China to counter security threats.

(iv) Climate debilitation posits a challenge for foreign policy.

Weak and non-resilient climate infrastructure not only weakens the national capacity of state but also presents a challenge for foreign policy of Pakistan's independent position.

Example:

With one third of the country drowned due to 2022 floods, pushed Pakistan to adopt various regimes for climate diplomacy including formation of Loss and Damage

funds in COP27 and looking for assistance from IMF and UN for humanitarian assistance.

Recommendations for enhancing national capacity to provide symbiosis for independent^{ent} foreign policy.

(i) Increasing the figures of economic indicators.

Enhancing the economic framework of the state will enable its foreign policy to adopt any option of States interaction without the onerous of selecting specific bloc politics and regional projects while ensuring its presence in expanding international fora.

(ii) Energy framework strengthening.

Bolstering of energy network of the country will ensure multiple foreign investments in the country. This will ~~res~~ enhance the dynamics of foreign policy while opening up its options of interactions with other states.

(iii) Reinforcing the security paradigm of country.

With strengthened security paradigm of country, the offshoots of TTP can be aptly handled, while providing a conducive environment for other countries to interact. Regarding proxy or hybrid warfare of country tackling with enhanced lawfare can mitigate this issue and provide a soft image for foreign policy to project.

(iv) Climate resilient infrastructure.

Adaptable climate infrastructure can enhance national capacity while presenting a chance for foreign policy to overture its engagement of climate diplomacy to create a mark rather than rebuilding loss and damage.

Conclusion:

Foreign policy of Pakistan based upon strong attributes can fully untap the potential of Pakistan, if presented with strong and capable national capacity of the country to begin with.