

## Sino-US Competition & Pakistan's foreign policy:

In the late 2010s, China emerged as a major power in terms of economy. This threatens the US longstanding global dominance. To avoid this threat, US is taking several policy measures to contain China. For that purpose, it organised alliances with European, South Asian and South-east Asian countries. These are the countries that surround China and thus can put China in a difficult situation. Besides these countries, the role of Pakistan can not be overlooked by the US. However, Pakistan should decide on the basis of its national interests and avoid taking sides as it can suffer by this and it did suffer in past.

To contain China, US is adopting several measures to make China's economy

and defence weak. These measures are discussed in detail.

US is banning the trade of some valuable and rare technologies and materials with China, weakening China's defence capabilities. US is also trying to cut trade relations with China. However, China and US have significant trade relations between them. According to 2022 statistics, their trading were at new record. It suggests that no country or group of countries can substitute any of them. With time, their business interests resulted in a huge bulk of trading. Therefore, it is not possible for the US to ignore China as a trading partner.

US is also pushing European countries, US allies, to put their economic relations with China to end. Like US, it is an intricate task

for them. China remained the largest partner for IEU imports in 2022 which is 21 per cent. Along with this, China exports almost 9% of its goods from IEU countries. That's why, it seems difficult, in the sense, it requires a long span of time to make themselves independent of China.

US found India as a potential growing economic power to be useful in countering China. In this regard, US developed strong strategic relations with India by including it in its Quad. This US-India strategic partnership raises concerns for Pakistan. India has been an hostile country of Pakistan since its inception. India's growing relations with US holds great repercussions for Pakistan. However, it can be witnessed that US does not want Pakistan to depend heavily

on China. Therefore, US diplomat keeps visiting various important areas in Pakistan. His recent visit to Gwadar made China upset. It is because, China is sponsoring several development projects. Gwadar has the potential to provide a shortcut for China to continue its energy supplies from Middle East in case of the blockade of Malacca Strait by the US. Consequently, any US intervention in Gwadar would be irritating for China.

Having strong political, economic and strategic relations with China is the core of Pakistan's foreign policy. Although, it does not compel Pakistan to worsen its relations with US. US has crucial role in developing Pakistan's education and health, and other infrastructure projects. Therefore, Pakistan should not take sides in the race of great powers and maintain balance between both the US and China.