

QUESTION

Evaluate the impact of the war in Afghanistan on Pakistan's security and foreign policy in the post-2014 era. Discuss the challenges and opportunities facing Pakistan in this new context.

INTRODUCTION

The post-2014 era of the war in Afghanistan has influenced on Pakistan's security and foreign policy. The era has significance for two reasons: the change of government from Hamid Karzai's - a pro-Pakistani government to Ashraf Ghani's - a pro-Indian government, and reduction in NATO and US troops. This impacted the security in form of cross-border terrorism, military operations and refugee crisis. The foreign policy with Afghanistan and India changed with Pakistan shifting its geopolitical alliances. Moreover, the new context poses challenges to Pakistan in the form of extremism and militancy, economic strain and continued border disputes. The opportunities that the country gets is an enhanced geopolitical role, regional connectivity and counterterrorism cooperation. With the concerned stakeholders onboard, Pakistan and Afghanistan

can cooperate to strengthen border security, engage Afghanistan's government and revive and establish good trade relations.

THE LASTING IMPACTS OF THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN ON PAKISTAN'S SECURITY

The security of Pakistan in the post-2014 era has been hugely impacted by the war in Afghanistan first by Taliban against the Western forces, then the internal wars from 2021 onwards after complete withdrawal by the West.

A. Cross-Border Terrorism: An Upshot of the war in Afghanistan

A surge in terrorism attacks have been witnessed as terrorism seeped into Pakistan's side of the border. Various major terrorist activities like the APS attack, the Mastung attack of 2023 and then 2024 are the vices of proscribed actors of TTP and IS-K.

B. Military Operation: Countering Terrorism At The Cost of Instability

Major military operations such as Zarb-e-Azb and Radd-ul-Fasaad although did eliminate terrorism to a great extent, there were other consequences too. The death of civilians in the name of collateral damage further alienated communities like the Pashtuns.

Add and highlight references/examples against these arguments.

3. Refugee Influx Exacerbating Instability

The refugees that came to Pakistan not only put an economic strain on the already struggling country, but it also facilitated covert militant saturation in Pakistan.

INFLUENCE OF THE WAR ON THE FOREIGN POLICY OF PAKISTAN IN THE POST-2014 ERA

The foreign policy of Pakistan underwent a major shift in the 2014 Afghanistan regime change.

A. Pakistan's Changing Dynamics with Afghanistan

This relationship can further be divided into two phases:

1. 2014 - 2021 : An era of non-cooperation.

This was the period under Ashraf Ghani with a nexus with India and proxy war with Pakistan.

2. 2021 - present : A Taliban government yearning for recognition.

A government without recognition, the Taliban government is struggling for acceptance. Thus it has a softened stance towards Pakistan.

B. Pakistan and India on The War in Afghanistan

During the Ghani government, Indian involvement in Pakistan's internal matters. The 2015 parliament speech by A.P.J. Abidhan, referred to as 'Doval Doctrine' where he indirectly referred to proxy wars in Pakistan, proved this point. This happened from the land of Afghanistan increasing the conflict between the two nuclear states.

C. A Shift in Pakistan's Geopolitical Alliances

Since 2014, the foreign policy of Pakistan has shifted from geostrategic to geoeconomic. For this reason, a change in association has been seen in Pakistan from drifting away from being US's allied ally to being China's economic partner.

THE AFGHAN WAR POSING CHALLENGES TO PAKISTAN

Pakistan has been facing the following challenges as a result of the Afghan war:

A. Extremism and Militancy Infiltrating in Pakistan

This is the worst cross-border exchange that Pakistan had in recent history. A surge in extremism and militancy both sectarian and secessionist have been on the rise in recent times.

B. Economic Strain Due to Refugee Influx and Strategic Employments

The incoming refugees and the cost of terrorism has strained the economy of an already economically ailing country. Moreover, the recent move of refugee repatriation by the government of Pakistan is a response to this strain.

C. Continued Border Disputes

The Durand Line demarcated in 1893 in the colonial era is disputed till day. This conflict persisted in every government that came.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PAKISTAN IN CHANGING EQUATIONS

Although the situation is concerning, there are opportunities for the country as well.

A. Pakistan Gets an Enhanced Geopolitical Role

In 2020, Pakistan played a positive and constructive role in the negotiation process between the Taliban and America. What came to be known

as Doha Agreement, this even brought about a positive image in the global image stage as a peace mediator.

B. Regional Connectivity Along With An Ally

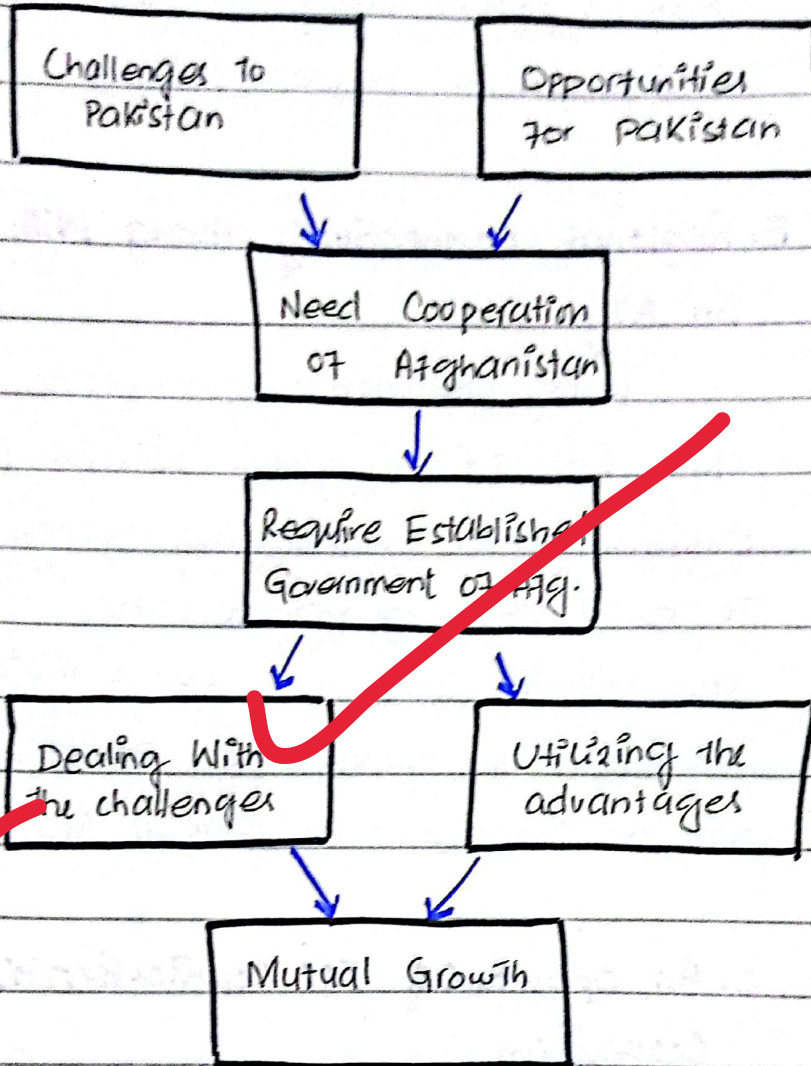
Today, the Taliban government stays isolated in global politics. If Pakistan works in bringing recognition to the Taliban government, the state of the latter will be a major strategic ally connecting Pakistan to the Middle East and Central Asia.

C. An Opportunity For Counterterrorism Cooperation

Terrorism in Pakistan is a deep rooted issue with the problem strongly connected with Afghanistan. Pakistan alone cannot eradicate terrorism because the base of many terrorist organizations roots back to Afghanistan. With the proper cooperation of Kabul, both can work together to end the common enemy which is terrorism.

Add more arguments

CRITICAL ANALYSIS



CONCLUSION

In Pakistan, the post-2014 era in relevance to Afghanistan war has had direct implications on Pakistan's foreign policy and national security. With this, there came multiple challenges for Pakistan and relevant opportunities both at regional as well as geopolitical level. With mutual cooperation, the hurdles can be handled and opportunities best utilized.