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What are the main determinants of Pakistan's Foreign Policy? How current National Capacity has become major challenge before independent Foreign Policy of Pakistan.

1) Introduction

Foreign policy is a collection of many things. It includes policies, decisions, think tanks and actions used by one country in its relations with others in the words of "Joseph Frankel".

"Foreign Policy consists of decisions and actions, which involve to an appreciable extent relations between one state and others."

Foreign policy is based on objectives, which a state wants to achieve and determinants. Owing to current political and economic situation, Pakistan is finding it very hard to pursue its foreign policy independently.

2) Determinants of Pakistan's Foreign Policy

Determinants are the factors which shape a country's foreign policy.

Following are important determinants of Pakistan's foreign policy

a) Ideology.

Pakistan was conceived by Ideology of Pakistan. This ideology refers to fact that Muslims are a separate nation. This ideology has led to Pakistan's brotherly relations with all major Muslim countries. Pakistan is an active member of OIC. Pakistan is the only nuclear power in Islamic World.

b) National Security

Pakistan faces security threats from its Eastern and Western fronts.

Pakistan has shaped its foreign policy to cater this issue. Infiltration ^{of terrorists} from Afghanistan into Pakistan is a major

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issue these days. Even in early days of Pakistan's independence Afghanistan was supporting separatist movements in Pakistan. Similarly, India has fought three wars with Pakistan. These threats made Pakistan sign defence agreements like CENTO and CEATO.

c) Kashmir Conflict

Kashmir conflict is a major determinant of Pakistan's foreign policy. The stance of a state on Kashmir issue is indicative of its relationship with Pakistan. For instance, Turkey and China's support of Pakistani stance on Kashmir.

d) Geo-strategic Location

Pakistan not only serves as a gateway to Central Asia to East Asian countries, but also its proximity to Persian Gulf make it very important player in the region. In during cold war, it played the role of a

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Frontline state to halt Soviet expansion. These days it is ~~pre~~ preparing to provide China with an easy access to Energy Persian Gulf Region, and other ~~mas~~ markets. This has resulted in to China's ~~more~~ increased ^{interest} influence in Pakistan.

e) Public Opinion

Public opinion, or will of the populace is a major determinant of Pakistan's foreign policy. Pakistan's stance on Palestine conflict ^{and} its relations with countries like KSA and Turkey ~~are~~ immensely influenced by public opinion.

f) Climate change: the newest determinant

In recent years climate change has emerged as the newest and arguably one of the most crucial determinant of Pakistan's

Foreign policy. As per Global
Climate Change Risk Index Pakistan
ranks 8th in the world. This indicates that
Pakistan is one of the most adversely affected
countries from climate change. Its impact
on Pakistan's Foreign policy appeared
when Prime Minister of Pakistan advocated
for Loss and Damages Fund in COP
27 to help the victims of climate change.

3) Challenges before Independent Foreign
Policy of Pakistan due to current
National capacity.

The current National Capacity
of Pakistan is hampered by several factors.

Economic crunch and political instability
appear to be such factors which have
hampered it the most. Following challenges
have emerged due to this situation.

a) India's Growing Influence in Gulf Region

Traditionally, and historically
Pakistan has enjoyed cordial relations

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with Gulf countries. However, in recent times India has emerged as one of the largest trade partners of these countries. India's invitation to ^{India's} 46th conference of Foreign Ministers in OIC is reflective of this.

b) Stagnation of Pak-Isan Gas Pipeline

Pakistan and Isan have signed a Gas-Pipeline project. It was assumed that After JCPOA, Pakistan would be allowed to complete it, but it was not able to do so due to fear of American sanctions on Isan after it pulled out of it. However, India did not face any opposition like Pakistan, when it was investing in Chabahar Port. As it did not have economic capacity issue like Pakistan.

c) Diminishing Influence in Islamic World

As Pakistan's economy is in trouble. Bail-out packages of UAE and U.A.E are helping Pakistan to sustain

its economy. This has resulted in an increased influence of these countries. For instance Ex-Pak-Army COAS was appointed as ^{the} chief of an Islamic Alliance against terrorism. Pakistan's neighbour Iran had grave concerns about this new force. So, Pakistan is no more the state to lead Ummah.

d) The Afghanistan challenge

A stable Afghanistan is imperative for a prosperous Pakistan. Current situation in Afghanistan has impacted law and order along with the economy of Pakistan. To resolve this issue, consensus of global and regional powers is required. Although Pakistan is doing its best to achieve this goal, capacity is a big problem.

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e) Access to latest Technology and Weapon Systems

Due to economic constraints and reduced interest of west in Pakistan, Pakistan's only option left, to acquire latest technology and weapon system, is China. Induction of J-10C ^{fighter jet} in Pakistan Air Force is one such example as American or other European options are either too expensive or they are unwilling to sell their systems to Pakistan.

Conclusion

For a country to survive and prosper effective and efficient foreign policy is a must. Pakistan's foreign policy has ^{been} doing a fine job according to resources available. However, instability in politics, and of economy has put national capacity under stress. Serious challenges have emerged as a repercussion of this issue. So, it is necessary to improve national capacity to tackle these challenges.