

Q. Critically evaluate the reasons of insurgency in Pakistan.
How Pakistan - Afghanistan relations are affected by this?

Answer: i- Introduction:

The resurgence of insurgency in Pakistan presents a multifaceted challenge to regional stability and security. Despite efforts to combat militancy, various factors have contributed to the revival of insurgent activities within Pakistan's borders like socio-economic marginalization, weak governance and rule of law, external support and safe havens, ethnic and sectarian tensions and ideological and religious extremism. Additionally, the intricate relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan further complicates the situation, with cross-border militant activities and porous borders between the two neighboring countries. Addressing the root causes of insurgency and improving bilateral relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan are crucial for fostering peace and stability in the region.

ii- Reasons for the Revival of insurgency in Pakistan:

a. Socio-economic Marginalization:

Widespread poverty, unemployment, and lack of basic services in marginalized areas have created fertile ground for recruitment by insurgent groups. Recent examples include the continued presence of extremist organizations in economically

deprived regions such as Baluchistan and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

b- Governance and Rule of Law:

Weak governance, corruption, and ineffective law enforcement have allowed insurgent groups to operate with impunity in certain regions. Recent incidents of government corruption and ineffectiveness in addressing the grievances of marginalized communities have fueled resentment and provided opportunities for insurgents to exploit.

c- External support and safe Havens:

Insurgent groups have found sanctuary and support from external actors in neighboring countries, allowing them to launch attacks from across the border. Recent examples include the presence of anti-Pakistan militant groups in Afghanistan.

d- Ideological and Religious Extremism:

Radical ideologies and religious extremism have motivated individuals to join insurgent groups and carry out acts of violence against the state. For instance, the extremist organizations such as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Jamaat-ul-Ahram

targeting security forces, religious minorities and civilians.

iii- Impact on Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations:

a- Cross-border Militancy:

Insurgent activities in Pakistan have spilled over into Afghanistan, leading to tensions and mistrust between the two countries. Recent incidents of cross-border attacks by militants from both sides have strained bilateral relations and undermined efforts to promote peace and stability in the region.

b- Border Insecurity:

Porous borders and cross-border smuggling provide opportunities for insurgents to evade, capture and carry out attacks on both sides of the border. Recent incidents of border skirmishes and clashes between Pakistan and Afghan security forces highlight the challenges of securing the border and preventing militant infiltration.

c- Refugee Influx:

The presence of millions of Afghan refugees in Pakistan exacerbates security concerns and strains resources, leading to resentment and tensions between the two countries. Recent examples

include calls by Pakistani officials to repatriate Afghan refugees amid concerns about their impact on security and socio-economic stability.

4- Blame Game:

Both Pakistan and Afghanistan often accuse each other of harboring militants and supporting insurgent groups, further straining bilateral relations. For instance, accusations by Pakistan of Afghan support for TTP factions, as well as, Afghan allegations of Pakistani support for anti-government elements in Afghanistan.

5- Lack of Trust and Cooperation:

Mutual distrust and lack of cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan hinders efforts to address shared security challenges and combat insurgency effectively. For example both countries break down the bilateral dialogue over the issues of border management and counter terrorism cooperation.

iv- Way forward:

a- Enhanced Border Security:

Strengthening border management and security cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan to prevent cross border

b. Addressing Root causes:

Insurgency can be controlled by addressing the root causes i.e. socio-economic disparities, governance issues and poverty in both countries Pakistan and Afghanistan.

c. Counter-terrorism Cooperation:

Enhancing intelligence-sharing and coordination between Pakistan and Afghanistan to combat terrorist networks and disrupt their operations.

d. Diplomatic Engagement:

Engaging in dialogue and diplomacy to resolve bilateral disputes and build mutual trust and confidence between two countries.

e. Regional Cooperation:

Promoting regional cooperation and collaboration among neighboring countries to address common security challenges and promote stability in the region.

V- Conclusion:

The revival of insurgency in Pakistan and its impacts on Pakistan-Afghanistan relations present significant challenges to regional peace and stability. Addressing the root causes of insurgency, enhancing border security, promoting counter-terrorism cooperation are essential for building a more peaceful and prosperous future for both countries and the wider region.