

With the evolving situation in Afghanistan, how does China engage with Pakistan to ensure stability in the region, ----

China-Pakistan engagement in the lens of Neo-liberalism:

One of the most significant theoretical perspective of IR is the concept of Neo-Realism. This theory profound that states are centered around their national interest, and states exist in an international anarchic structure which is created due to the absence of global sovereign authority and unequal capabilities of state which in return shape overall environment of lack of trust between states and creates an environment of security dilemma.

In the context of China's engagement with Pakistan



to ensure stability in the region, particularly in the context of post-withdrawal Afghanistan, is a multifaceted approach that includes economic cooperation, strategic partnership and diplomatic dialogue. Both countries share a mutual interest in maintaining stability along their borders and countering threats from extremist groups that could destabilize the region.

### Shared strategic interest between China and Pakistan in the context of Post-withdrawal Afghanistan:

i) Economic interest:

For Pakistan, Afghanistan is a transit route to central Asia. Pakistan wants to access resources of Afghanistan and energy supplies from the central Asia. While China also eyes on the natural resources of Afghanistan.



like gold, copper, oil, lithium etc. It also wants to expand its market. Hence both the countries have shared economic interest so they try to ensure regional stability to maximize their national economic interest. As the significant concept of IR states: "Politics is the struggle for the pursuit of power for the attainment of national interest."

ii) Regional influence:

Pakistan sees India as a rival state and it can not afford its influence in the Afghanistan. So, it always tries to counter the influence of India in Afghanistan. China also wants to enhance its influence in the region. So, both the countries are engaging to counter the influence of India and



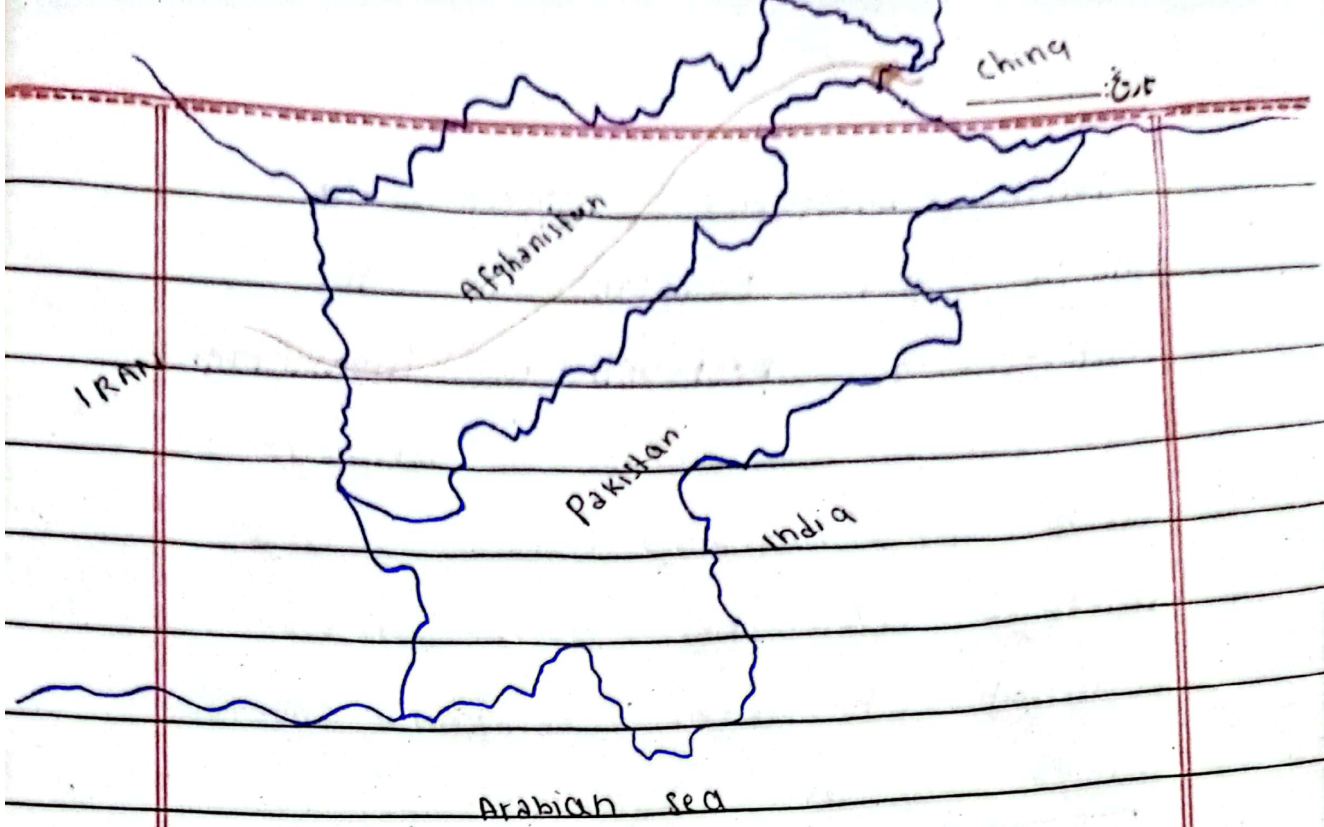
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maintain their influence in the region.

iii) Strategic interest:

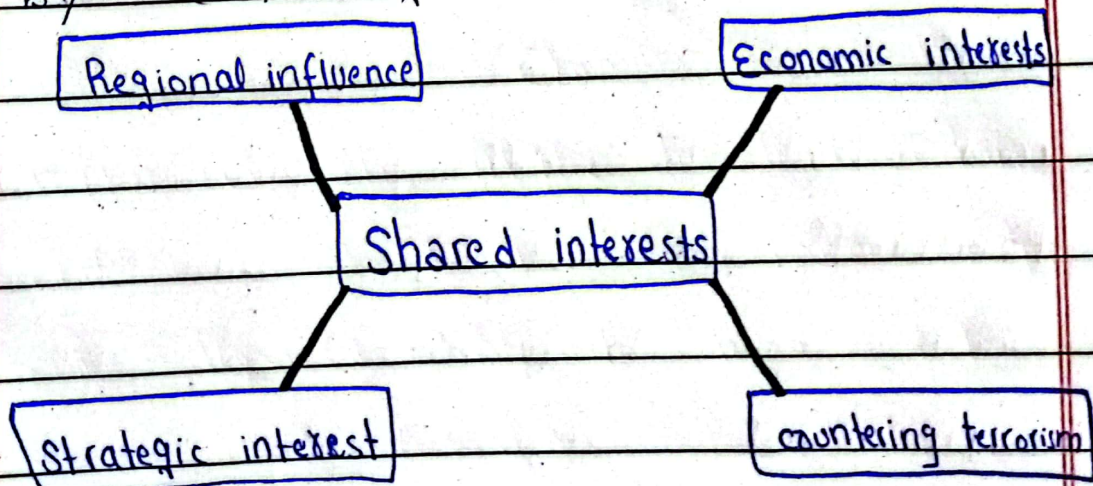
A country like Pakistan which has problem in content of with and also insecure borders needs a strategic depth in Afghanistan for security measures in case of attack by Indian authorities. Hence, Pakistan has always been in a hunt for Pakistani supportive government in Afghanistan which can protect Pakistan's interest. On the other hand, China can access to the Middle Eastern countries, Arabian sea, Indian ocean and Persian Gulf. Hence Afghanistan is of significant importance for both China and Pakistan.





iv) Countering Terrorism:

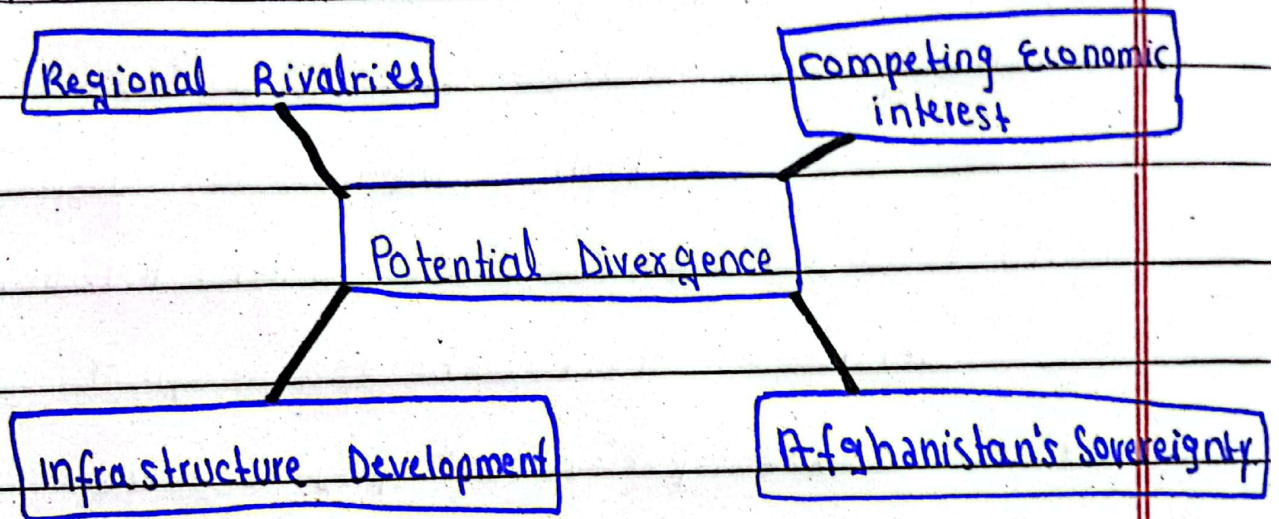
Both the countries have mutual interest to counter terrorism to secure their borders and their developmental projects like CPEC. They also aim to maintain regional peace and stability by countering extremist groups.





Potential Divergence between the China and Pakistan in the context of post-withdrawl Afghanistan:

Although both the countries share strategic interest but there also exist potential divergence between the two countries.



i) Regional Rivalries:

Pakistan's historical rivalries with India and Afghanistan may lead to differing priorities (with Pakistan)<sup>x</sup> and strategies with China, which seeks to maintain good relations with all regional players.



ii) Competing economic interest.

China's growing economic presence in Afghanistan, including the extraction of natural resources, may lead to competing interest with Pakistan, which seeks to benefit from transit trade and economic cooperation.

iii) Infrastructure development:

China's infrastructure development projects in Afghanistan, such as Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), may compete with Pakistan's own infrastructure development plans, including the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

iv) Afghanistan's Sovereignty:

China's increasing influence in Afghanistan may raise concerns about the country's sovereignty, potentially leading to tensions between China and Pakistan, which has

historically been sensitive about  
Afghan sovereignty.

Conclusion:

There is no doubt that  
China and Pakistan share mutual  
strategic interest but neo-realist  
nature of states may leads  
them toward potential divergence  
between the two countries.