

Q: What are the critical issues in Afghanistan Pakistan relations since the Taliban take over Kabul in 2021.

1. Introduction:

Afghanistan is the western neighbour of Pakistan. Being neighbouring countries, both countries never shared a healthy and friendly relations. It was due to certain clashes ⁱⁿ the respective governments and leaderships in the countries.

Both countries accuse each other of the interference in one another's domains and regions. ~~Many~~ There are multiple distorting factors in Pakistan and Afghanistan relations since Taliban takeover in Kabul. Both countries need to resolve these disputes in order to promote cooperation in the regions.

2. Critical Issues in Afghan-Pak relations since Taliban Takeover (2021):

There are multiple ~~challenges~~ in diplomatic, security, economic and humanitarian

challenges in these relations. They lead to skirmishes on border and causing disruptions in both countries.

- **Relations with USA:**

Pakistan's foreign policy is tilted ~~more~~ towards USA as both countries share strong ideological, economic and strategic ties. Whereas, Afghanistan has a long history of ~~etc~~ conflicts with US; during US ~~o~~-led government in Afghanistan, and ^{US} war on Terror. This is how both countries ~~don't~~ (Afghanistan and Pakistan) do not share healthy relations as Taliban leadership is against USA and it ~~is~~ creates disputes in the region.

- **Border Dispute:**

Afghanistan denies the physical existence of Pak-Afghan (Chaman) border or Durand line since the independence of Pakistan. Due to this factor, the relations between both countries never strengthened. Even the former Afghan leader Hamid Karzai ~~is~~ called: "It is the line of hatred and animosity." Due to this, the

fencing and border skirmishes continue to threaten the relations of both countries.

• Refugee Problem:

The refugees during Afghan Jihad and War on Terror came to Pakistan and serve as the biggest humanitarian crisis across the world. As both nations are economically underdeveloped, so these refugees are a threat to Pakistan. As a result, the country is in a state of civil war with about 4 million refugees. According to UN, there are 1.5 million legal refugees, and 1.7 million illegal refugees in Pakistan.

• Terrorism across the border:

Both regions involve the dispute of terrorism. As Pakistan is currently facing a severe wave of terrorism, it is claimed that ~~that~~ the banned Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is ~~also~~ involved in this act. Moreover, it also claims that Afghan soil is used against Pakistan. The different militias and terrorist groups use US-left weapons to create terror and

killings in Pakistan.

- **The Merger of FATA and KPK & chaos:**

The merger of Tribal Areas in to the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) also serve as a cause of violence and terror. This is because the refugees are mostly present in the western province and consider this merger and also the border illegal. Due to this, the disputes, massive killings and ~~vio~~ brutalities continue to grow at large in these areas.

- **Militarization in Pakistan:**

The supply of weapons and arsenals is a crucial issue in Pakistan. It is reported that mostly weapon is transferred through border or smuggled in Pakistan from Afghanistan. It is a great threat to the peace and stability of the country.

- **Drug Smuggling:**

The drugs or smuggled in Pakistan are produced in Afghanistan. This is why the country is facing illegal ~~and~~ issues. leading to the ~~pr~~ origination of

violence and disturbance in the region.

• Sectarianism and extremism:

Pakistan also faces the issues of sectarian violence and extremism. This leads to blasphemy and ultimately hinders the economic growth and ~~social~~ international image of Pakistan. Different sectarian groups tend to create sectarian issues belonging to Afghanistan and the Shia, suni, brahvi disputes tend to grow stronger in the region.

3. Critical Analysis:

Pakistan and Afghanistan ~~has~~ relations have been under chaos since the Taliban takeover in Kabul in 2021. Multiple issues emerged which serve as the constraints in these relations. Their diplomatic ties continue to worsen due to terrorism and violence in the region. Many militant groups continue to grow and their linkages are found with Afghanistan which leads to disruption in their mutual relations.

4. Conclusion

Pakistan - Afghanistan relations are badly affected due to certain factors including the social, economic ~~and~~ and security issues. Both have long historical disputes which are now further escalated leading to violence and terrorism in Pakistan.

Both countries need to resolve their disputes under their best interests to bring peace in the region.

