

Q.No.6 Foreign Policy of Pakistan: A Story of Friends Today, Foes Tomorrow

Outline

I Introduction:

Thesis Statement:

Pakistan's foreign policy seems to be ambiguous. It illustrates a recurring cycle of alliances turning into rivalries driven by changing geopolitics and its quest for security. However, by formulating a pragmatic foreign policy, Pakistan could better promote its national interest.

II Pakistan's Foreign Policy; A Story of Friends Today, Foes Tomorrow - The Manifestations:

A) Pakistan and the United States relations from a close ally to sanctions

Case in Point: Pakistan joined the US led alliances - SEATO and CENTO - during cold war and faced sanctions after nuclear tests in late 1990s.

B) Pak-Afghan relations from brotherhood to complex rivalry

Case in Point: Pakistan supported Afghan Mujahideen in war against Soviet Union, however relations became strained when Pakistan pledged its support to the US after 9/11 attacks

C) Pak-Saudi relations from most reliable allies to strained brothers

Case in Point: Saudi Arab supported Pakistan financially after the US sanctions on Pakistan in 1990s but relations became cool when Pakistan refused to support Saudi Arab led war in Yemen

D) From close Pak-Iran relations to violation of sovereignty of the states

Case in Point: Pakistan had good relations with Iran under Shah's regime, however, it became cool after 1979 Revolution due to rise in Shia-Sunni rivalry

E) Pak-India ^{from} close ~~to~~ trade relations to prevailing rivalry

Case in point: India and Pakistan gave each other Most Favored Nation (MFN) status but trade is stopped since 2019 due to Pulwama attack

F) From friendly relations between Pakistan and the United Kingdom to suspension from Commonwealth

Case in point: UK invested in Pakistan economy and Pakistan remained a member of Commonwealth nations, however UK suspended Pakistan's membership in 1999 due to martial law

G) Pak-UAE relations from strong economic ties to strained relations

Case in point: The UAE awarded Modi its highest civilian award in 2019 after Pulwama attack and Pakistan build close relations with Qatar, the UAE's rival.

H) Pakistan and France relations

from defence ties to halting of military equipment

Case in point: France sold its fighter jets, mirage, to Pakistan and helped in nuclear technology in 1970s, but halted support due to the US sanctions on Pakistan

I) Pakistan maintained good relations with Turkey but now faces complexities

Case in Point: Good friendly relations, became gloomy when Pakistan refused to join new Muslim bloc (Qatar, Malaysia and Turkey)

J) Strong Pak-China relations resulted in Indo-US nexus

Case in Point: The US signed Nuclear deal with India in 2009 and reduced financial and military support to Pakistan instead of being a non-NATO ally

III How to Secure National Interest of Pakistan - A Wayforward:

- A) Increasing the role of Parliament in decision making process of foreign policy
- B) Strengthening economy to appear as partner instead of a state to be saved
- C) Maintaining policy of non-alignment and avoiding bloc politics

IV Conclusion

Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, said, "Our foreign policy is of the friendliness and goodwill towards all nations of the world." He laid the course of Pakistan's future foreign policy. Unfortunately, after his demise, an unpredictable shift took place in Pakistan's foreign policy. In early 1950s, the first Prime minister of Pakistan, Liaqat Ali Khan visited the

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United States ~~lets~~ of America. Pakistan became an ally with the US and joined its alliances, SEATO and CENTO. Pakistan supported the US in the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan. However, later in 1990s, the US imposed sanctions on Pakistan. Similarly, Pakistan provided military assistance to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) ^{for a long time} but relations were strained when Pakistan refused to join its war against Houthis in Yemen. Furthermore, Pakistan had enjoyed good relations with Afghanistan. Pakistan supported its struggle against Soviet Union but relations became immediately low when Pakistan joined the US led war on terror. Likely, France remained a strategic partner of Pakistan, yet relations were strained after Pakistan's nuclear tests. Hence, these ups and downs in Pakistan's foreign policy made its friends become foes. due to changing geopolitics and its pursuit for security. Nevertheless, Pakistan could advance its national interest by devising a pragmatic foreign policy.