

5/10/2024

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Day: Thursday

Pakistan Affairs

Q: Discuss the Kashmir Problem in its entirety; throwing light on its background and prospects of possible solutions to this core issue between India and Pakistan? (20 Marks)

Introduction:

The Kashmir problem is a long-standing and complex geopolitical issue between India and Pakistan, rooted in historical, political and cultural conflicts. The dispute has resulted in several wars, continued military standoffs and strained diplomatic relations between the two nuclear-armed neighbours. Understanding the background and the prospects for its resolution is crucial for regional peace and stability.

2. Historical Background:

The Kashmir conflict dates back to the partition of British India in 1947, which led to the creation of India and Pakistan as independent states.

The Primary State of Jammu and Kashmir then ruled by Maharaja Hari Singh was given the choice to accede to either nation. Despite having a Muslim majority population, the Maharaja chose to join India, leading to the first Indo-Pakistani war in 1947-48. The United Nations intervened, resulting in a ceasefire and the establishment of the Line of Control (LoC), dividing the region between India and Pakistan. However, both countries continue to claim the entire territory.

3. Key Events and Developments:

Use more elaborate, detailed and self-explanatory headings

i. Indo-Pakistani Wars:

The Kashmir issue has triggered several wars (1947-48, 1965, and 1999), numerous skirmishes between India and Pakistan.

"We are fighting for our existence and our survival"

(Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto)

ii- Simla Agreement (1972):

Post-1971 war, India and Pakistan signed the Simla Agreement which emphasized resolving bilateral issues peacefully, including the Kashmir dispute.

The Simla Agreement is a pledge by India and Pakistan to settle their differences by "peaceful means" (Indira Gandhi).

iii- Insurgency and Militancy:

Since the late 1980s, insurgency and militancy have intensified in Kashmir, involving local and foreign militants. India accuses Pakistan of sponsoring cross-border terrorism, while Pakistan views it as a legitimate struggle for self-determination.

iv- Revocation of Article 370:

In August 2019, India revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of its constitution, integrating it more closely with the rest of India. Pakistan condemned the move, escalating tensions further.

4. Impact on Regional Stability:

The Kashmir issue has significantly impacted regional stability, resulting in marginalization, human rights violations, economic hardships and cross-border terrorism. Both countries have faced enormous military expenditures, limiting their potential for development. Furthermore, the presence of nuclear weapons on both sides has made the conflict a global concern.

5. Possible Solutions to the Prospects?

Kashmir Conflict:

a. Bilateral Negotiations:

Direct negotiations between India and Pakistan remain a viable option. However, trust-building measures such as trade normalization and cultural exchanges must precede any substantial dialogue.

Bilateral dialogue is the only way forward for peace and prosperity in the subcontinent.
(Pervez Musharraf)

b. International mediation :

Though India traditionally opposes third-party intervention, international mediation by the United Nations or other neutral entities could provide a framework for peace.

Leave a line space between headings for neatness

c. Plebiscite under UN Supervision :

Conducting a plebiscite under UN supervision to ascertain the will of the Kashmiri people, as initially suggested by UN resolutions is a possibility but India has consistently rejected this proposal.

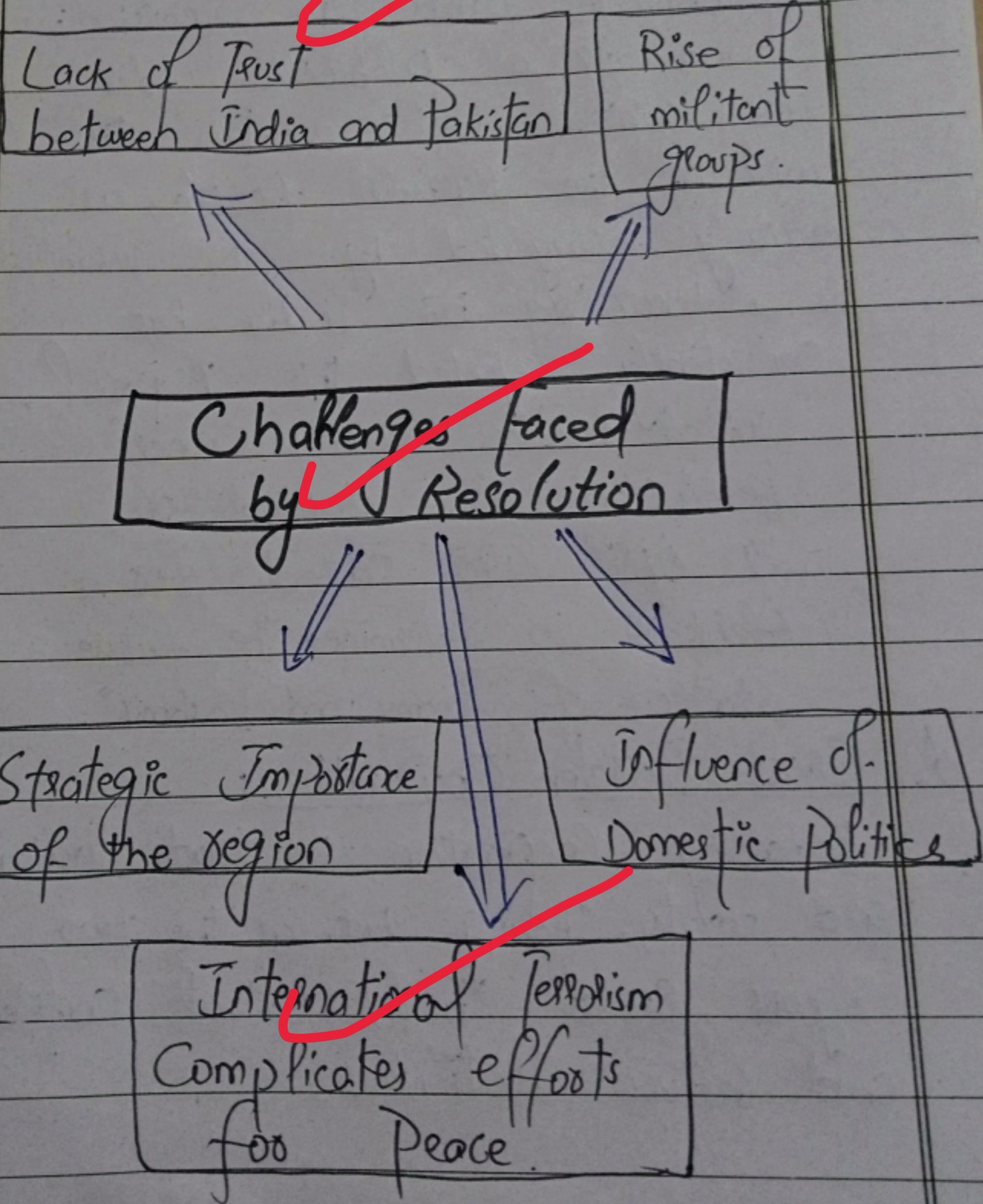
"United Nations Security Council Resolution 47, adopted on 21 April, 1948 called for a plebiscite to determine the future status of Jammu and Kashmir".

d. Cross-Border Cooperation :

Enhancing cooperation on trade, tourism and water-sharing between the two regions could build mutual confidence and reduce hostilities.

e. Human Rights Protections:

By reducing military presence in the region, alongside ensuring human rights protections for Kashmiri civilians, can create an environment conducive to dialogue.



7. Prospectus for Resolution:

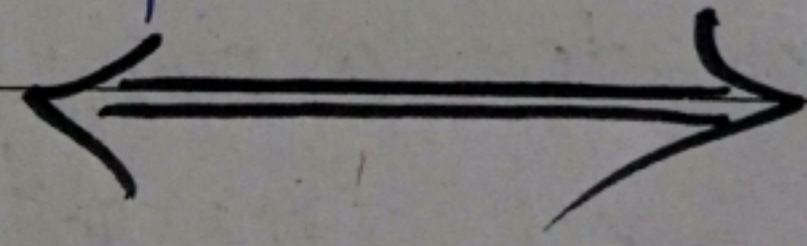
While the prospects for resolving the Kashmir conflict are uncertain, a combination of diplomatic engagement, confidence-building measures and international pressure could pave the way for a peaceful settlement. The growing global emphasis on regional stability and counter-terrorism may also push both nations towards finding a pragmatic solution.

The resolution of the Kashmir dispute will open the door to a new era of peace and cooperation in "South Asia".

(Benazir Bhutto)

8 Conclusion :

The Kashmir problem remains a core issue between India and Pakistan, affecting not just the two countries but the entire South Asian region. A peaceful resolution requires sincere efforts, mutual understanding and international support. Addressing the aspirations of the Kashmiri people and fostering bilateral dialogue will be key to resolving this decades old conflict.



THE END

Good attempt!