

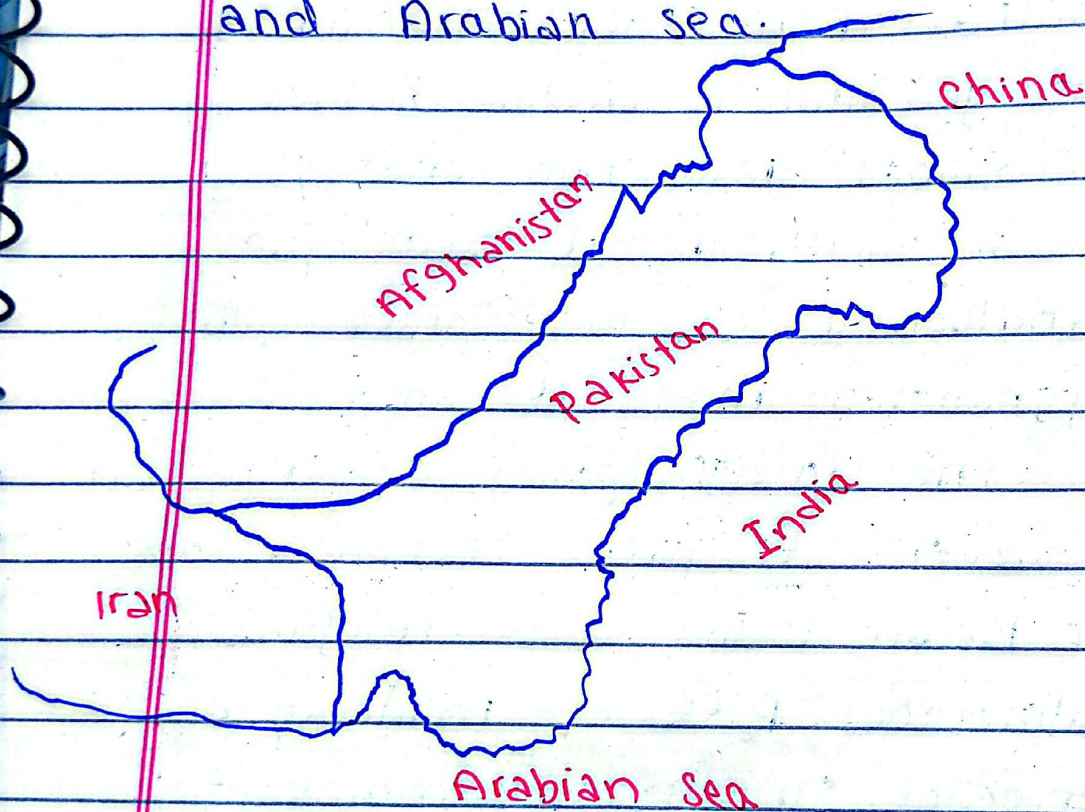
Pakistan is located on cross-road of South-Asia. Explain its geo-strategic/political importance....

Introduction:

Pakistan is located on cross-road of South-Asia in proximity with Persian Gulf, Central Asia and Arabian Sea. This geo-strategic location makes it global trade hub, energy transmission, transit route for landlocked countries. Border with Afghanistan made it important in the foreign policy of USA. However, it faces certain challenges: sectarian issues and religious intolerance, Rise of militancy and terrorism, Struggle in maintaining balance between USA and China, threat of Indian proxies, migrant issues, Climate change and environmental degradation and security issues.

(II) Geo-strategic location of Pakistan:

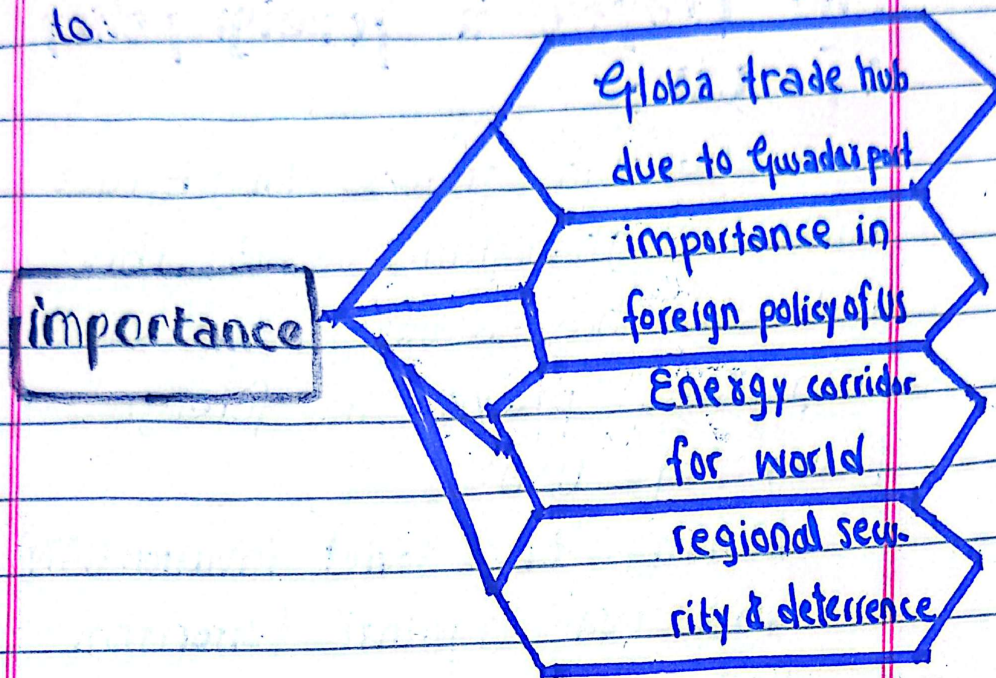
Pakistan is located on a crossroad of South Asia. Its neighbouring countries like India and China are world largest economies. It is located in proximity of Persian Gulf, Central Asia and Arabian Sea.



(III) Geo-strategic and political importance of Pakistan:

Pakistan's geo-strategic

and political importance is due to:



i) Global trade hub due to Gwadar port:

The Gwadar port of Pakistan can serve as global trade hub by providing access of Arabian sea to the landlocked countries.

Gwadar port is opportunity for landlocked countries to export and import from other countries.

Source: ISSI

ii) Influence in Afghanistan-Important player in foreign policy of USA:

Pakistan shares long-border with Afghanistan. Due to this Pakistan has always remained important player in foreign policy of USA.

During the Soviet invasion (1979) and war against terrorism, USA needed Pakistan assistance and provide military and economic aid in return. *The Modern Diplomacy*

iii) Proximity with Persian Gulf and Central Asia-Energy corridor for World:

Pakistan is present in the proximity of oil and gas resource-rich countries like Persian Gulf and Central Asia.

Due to proximity with resource-rich countries, Pakistan can

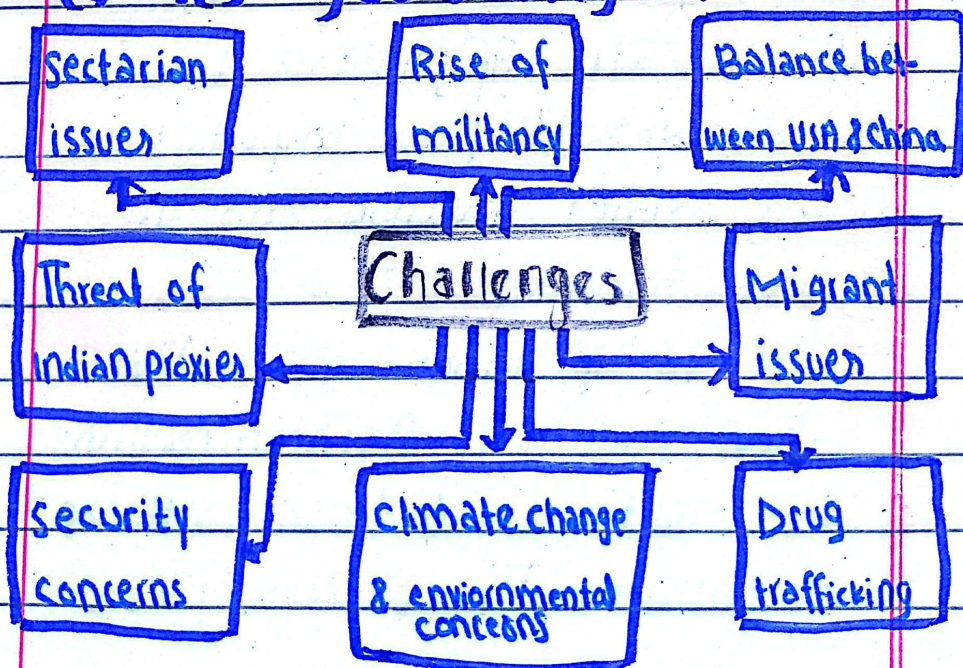
Serve as energy corridor for
World. Source: IPR1

iv) Possession of nuclear weapon- regional security and deterrence:

Pakistan is the only Muslim country with nuclear power in the region.

The nuclear possession of Pakistan help to maintain regional security and deterrence by countering India's influence. The Research Gate.

(III) Challenges for Pakistan due to its geo-strategic location:



i) Influence of Iran-Saudi War-sectarian issues and religious intolerance:

The War between Iran and Saudi Arabia also had lasting impact for Pakistan due to border with (A) Iran.

The war between Saudi and Iran resulted in Shia-Sunni conflict and religious intolerance, resulting into massive casualties. [SS]

ii) Border with Afghanistan-rise of militancy and terrorism in Pakistan:

As Pakistan hold significant influence in Afghanistan due to long border. It plays important role during Soviet invasion and war against terrorism.

Due to operations against Taliban, they fled into Pakistan, resulting into militancy and terrorist attacks in Pakistan. The Express Tribune

iii) Struggle
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iii) Struggles in maintaining balance between USA and China:

Pakistan is leading flagship project, CPEC, of BRI. USA is against this project and China's influence in the region.

USA is Pakistan's biggest export market and hostile to China's influence. Therefore, Pakistan struggles in maintaining balance. Source: SIPR

iv) India's rising influence in Balochistan - threat of proxies in these regions:

As government is unable to resolve grievances of people in Balochistan, India is widely speaking for Baloch people rights and right of separate state.

India's Intelligence agency RAW is accused of recent Jaffar Express hijack. DG/ISPR statement.

v) Role in Afghanistan invasion-
Massive flow of people in
Pakistan:

Pakistan plays an important role during the Soviet Invasion of 1979. This resulted into massive flow of people in Pakistan.

Pakistan hosted more than 3.5 million migrants from Afghanistan, resulting into economic and political instability. [SSR]

vi) Border with Afghanistan and Iran-Security concerns due to easy movements of terrorists:

Pakistan shares long border with Afghanistan and Iran. So it became easy for terrorist groups to conduct hostilities in one country and fled to other country.

The government of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan should regulate border movement to resolve security concerns.

Source: Pakistan Social Science Review

vii) Corruption and drug-trafficking due to Kalashnikov culture:

Pakistan joined US-led coalition against war on Terrorism. The side effects were the Kalashnikov culture and drug-trafficking.

The powerful elites started (Using) financing terrorist groups due to their vested interest. IPRI

viii) Climate change and environmental degradation due to melting glaciers:

Pakistan is situated in the region where World third largest glaciers are present. Due to changing weather patterns, these glaciers are melting rapidly.

The irregular rain patterns and melting glaciers are resulting into massive floods in areas like Swat and Bajaur. Source: BBC News.

Conclusion:

Hence, from the aforementioned arguments it is clear that Pakistan's geo-strategic and political importance plays important role in its economic growth and development. However, it also faces certain challenges which can be mitigated by following certain measures.