

{ Current Affairs }

Question #1

Analyze the evolution of Pak-China relations since 1947, highlighting key strategic economic and diplomatic milestones. Discuss how CPEC has transformed bilateral ties and its implications for regional geopolitics.

{ Solution }

Pakistan and China relations are based on mutual interest and economic cooperation. China has stood by Pakistan in the hour of need. Pakistan has also supported China on every diplomatic platform. It is often said that Pakistan and China relation is higher than Himalayas, deeper than Ocean, sweeter than honey, and stronger than steel. The 21st Century brought a transformative phase in Pakistan-China relation due to Pakistan's involvement in "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI) and CPEC.

China lies in the North of Pakistan. It is one of the largest and most populous country. China is also on its way to become a super power. Pakistan and China are tied together due to their mutual rival India. Pak-China relationship is time tested and has evolved over the period of time. No major economic, military, or diplomatic issue occurred between ~~the~~ these two neighbours.

Evolution of Pak-China relations since 1947 to 1970

Pak-China relations initiated in 1950 under the leadership of Chinese premier Mao

a) Pakistan recognizes China

Pakistan recognize China soon after its independence in 1950.

b) UN membership for China

Pakistan helped china to become a member of United Nations. Pakistan also supported China in becoming a permanent

member in United Nations security council.

c) Pak-China Airlink established

An agreement was signed between Pakistan and China according to which air link was established between the 2 countries. Pakistan international airline (PIA) assumed its operation in China.

d) Border Settlement

Pak-China border demarcation agreement was signed to settle their border disputes. Under this agreement, Pakistan had to give some ~~of~~ area of Gilgit Baltistan to China. Both India and USA protested against it and declared it illegal.

e) China's role in Indo-Pak war 1965

During Indo-Pak war 1965, China stood by Pakistan and provided it military, economical, and diplomatic support.

Pakistan - China Relation From 1970 to 2000

During the period of 1970 to 2000, Pak-China friendship was tested again and again. This era witness a number of events from Indo-Pak war to terrorism etc.

a) China's role in Indo-Pak war 1972

During the Indo-Pak war 1972, China stood by Pakistan. China provided economic support after Pakistan lost its area and west Pakistan became Bangladesh.

b) Pak-China relation during cold war

During cold war era, China and US both provided economic and military aid to Pakistan. The growth of Communist Soviet Union was against the interest of US and China. During this time, Pakistan also served as a bridge of diplomacy between these two countries. It was due to the efforts of Pakistan that president Richard Nixon visited China.

c) China's support to Pakistan against terrorism

After cold war, Pakistan had to face threat of terrorism. During this time China provided military and economic aid to Pakistan. Both countries reaffirmed their commitment to fight against terrorism.

Pakistan and China relation from 2000 to 2025

The 21st Century marked a transformative phase between Pak-China relation. Their relation strengthened as a result of military, economic and infrastructure deals.

a) Chasma nuclear power plant

In April 2005, the ground breaking of Chasma nuclear power plant took place. It was estimated that the project would produce 340MW of energy. It was a joint venture of China National Nuclear Cooperation (CNNC) and Pakistan atomic energy Council (PAEC) under the monitoring to International atomic energy association (IAEA).

b) Pak-China Pact for warships

A contract was signed between Pakistan and China for the construction of F-22 P Submarines at Rawalpindi. The construction of these ships provided a technological superiority to Pak Navy.

c) Pak-China Pact for fighter jets

A contract was also signed between China and Pakistan for joint construction of JF-17 Thunder. It is a light weight plane and has a speed of 1.6 Mach.

d) CPEC :- A game changer

One of the major infrastructure projects between Pakistan and China is CPEC. This project, once completed shall change the trade dynamics globally. It aims to provide short trade route for China, Afghanistan, Central Asian countries, and Russia. CPEC has transformed bilateral ties and it has a number of benefits for Pakistan as well as regional geopolitics.

i) Benefits of CPEC for Pakistan

Following are the few benefits of CPEC for Pakistan.

a) Economic revival project

CPEC is a major economical as well as infrastructure project. It is part of China's belt and road initiative. Once completed it shall revive the weak economy of Pakistan by generating employment and providing infrastructure upgrades.

b) Pakistan becomes centre of trade

CPEC shall help Pakistan become a centre of trade. The route of CPEC shall be used by China, Afghanistan, Russia, and Central Asian countries, thus increasing the importance of Pakistan in the region.

c) People to people contact

CPEC shall also increase cultural ties and people to people contact between Pakistan and China. A number

of Pakistanis are being employed in Chinese companies. Similarly a number of Chinese companies are investing in Pakistan. It has also resulted in student exchange between Higher education Commission in Pakistan and Chinese Scholarship Council in China.

Conclusion

Pak-China has left an impact on whole region. According to professor Li Xi Guang "Pakistan is the closest political, cultural, military, and economic ally of China. Similarly, Pakistan also gives importance to it's relation with China. In the words of former Ambassador Maleeha Lodhi "Ties with China remains an overriding priority for Islamabad. China stood with Pakistan in every hour of need. It has given it's utmost effort for stability in Pakistan. A former Pakistan diplomat commented that "China is the only super-power genuinely interested in stability of Pakistan"