

CSS 2024:

Discuss the contours of Pakistan's strategic relations with India and Afghanistan in detail. Do you foresee any serious challenges from these neighbours in near future? Explain your opinion with scholarly evidence.

Answers:-

Pakistan strategic (location) Relations with India and Afghanistan:

India and Afghanistan, both are bordering countries of Pakistan. India is located in East and southeast of Pakistan. Both countries share culture & language which is rooted in pre-partition era. Afghanistan, on the other hand, located to north west of Pakistan. Relations of Pakistan with both countries have been strained since its inception, except for the short period of engagements.

Historical overview of Pakistan Relations with Afghanistan:

Pakistan wanted to establish friendly relation with all the countries on the globe. But, Afghanistan did not share the same sentiment. It opposed the Durand line which was signed in 1893 by Sir Mortimer Durand with Amir Abdul Amir. Afghanistan refused to accept this border & wanted NWFP to be merged with it. It also opposed Pakistan admission into UN, only to be withdrawn 20 day later. Despite these challenges, Diplomatic and trade relations were present between both countries. Major breakthrough came with the Soviet invasion. Pakistan along with USA, fully supported Mujahidin. Abdul Sattar in his book "Foreign policy of Pakistan" writes that Pakistan even suspended membership of Afghanistan in OIC, to keep its sovereignty intact of its Afghan brothers. Pakistan was on forefront to promote peace in Afghanistan through Geneva Accord, and the in 1992 and 1996 through Peshawar accords & Bonn accords respectively, during its civil war. In 1997, it accepted Taliban govt. at the expense of US and EU opposition. In 2001 war on terror, Pakistan supported BSF, But was accused of playing double game of supporting Taliban by USA and Afghan govt.

In 2021, upon withdrawal of US forces, Pakistan congregated Taliban. But there have been cross-border skirmishes and infiltration of terrorists which is making their relations strained.

Historical overview of Relations with

India: When partition took place in 1947, India did not accept it. Nehru stated that a part of us has been separated from us, which will soon unite with us. Many muslim majority areas were not given to Pakistan. Kashmir was the major point of contention & both have fought three wars over it. India was responsible in instilling the separatist sentiments & by training and funding the forces of Mukti Bahini forces in East Pakistan. Latest conflict occurred, when Pakistan was attacked in May '98, after which both exchanged missiles across borders. Pakistan secured the tremendous victory by shooting down Rafael air craft of India.

Challenge from Afghanistan:

→ Resurgence of TTP:
The major challenge between both is TTP. Pakistan has called out Afghanistan numerous times to not support TTP. It has been providing safe

heavens to TTP. After Taliban came back to power in 2021, it clashed with the revival of TTP as well. TTP has resurged and has killed almost 1,000 citizens of Pakistan. According to **Dawn**, TTP has leveled up its game by using sophisticated technology. It has started using drone for attacks & IEDs. Recently, an Assistant Commissioner, along with three other individuals were killed in IED blast. → It has now started targeting security personnel.

↳ **Border fencing Issue**: Pakistan has been struggling to secure its border with Afghanistan, but it is constantly opposed by Taliban. Due to which, there is more infiltration of terrorists.

↳ **Economic challenges**:

TAPI: Stands for Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India gas pipeline. This pipeline ~~passes~~ ^{starts} from Turkmenistan, passes through provinces of Afghanistan, connects with Pakistan through Quetta and through Multan, connects with Delhi. Due to these misunderstandings between both countries, this project cannot be accelerated. It has the potential to produce 6000 cubic meters of cheap gas for Pakistan.

CPEC: CPEC, if extended to Afghanistan, could provide a route for Pakistan and China to trade.

With central Asian countries. The strained relations between both countries is not allowing this project to proceed.

Challenges with India:-

↳ **Nuclear arms race**: India has been building up its nuclear stockpiles, which is a major threat for Pakistan. According to **SIPRI** report, India has ranked 5th nation that is powerful in nuclear arsenals, Pakistan has been ranked on 30th. With India increasing its nuclear arms, creating asymmetry in conventional and nuclear fields, is a major threat to Pakistan.

↳ **Funding in Balochistan**: India has been in forefront of instigating separatist movements in Pakistan. Its intelligence wing RAW has been involved in Balochistan. Prominent example is Kulboshan Yadav, RAW officer, caught by Pakistan intelligence. If it continues to happen, Balochistan could become next East Pakistan.

↳ **Water War**: India and Pakistan, both have share in Indus river. India controls the headwaters. It has the advantage of being located at upper side. So it somehow controls the flow of water. Latest example is abeyance of Indus waters treaty.

India threatened to stop the flow of Indus water
rivers to Pakistan. If not dealt with diplomatically,
there are threats looming of water wars between
both countries. It could prove disaster for the agri-
culture of Pakistan. Pakistan has 80% of econo-
mic reliance on Agriculture.

Way forward:-

- Pakistan should engage in Dialogue between
with both countries. There should be some sort
on compromise on all sides. Not putting off some
of the demands is not a wise strategy.
- Pakistan should engage in negotiations with
India on IWT and nuclear arms reduction.
- Fencing of border with ^{Afghanistan} ~~India~~ should be speeded
up.