



National Officers Academy
Mock-5 for CSS-2025
October 2024
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE-II
(CURRENT AFFAIRS)

TIME ALLOWED: THREE HOURS
PART-I(MCQS): MAXIMUM 30 MINUTES

PART-I (MCQS)
PART-II

MAXIMUM MARKS = 20
MAXIMUM MARKS = 80

NOTE:

- i. **Part-II** is to be attempted on the separate **Answer Book**.
- ii. Attempt **ONLY FOUR** questions from **PART-II**. **ALL** questions carry **EQUAL** marks.
- iii. All the parts (if any) of each Question must be attempted at one place instead of at different places.
- iv. Write Q. No. in the Answer Book in accordance with Q. No. in the Q. Paper.
- v. No Page/Space be left blank between the answers. All the blank pages of Answer Book must be crossed.
- vi. Extra attempt of any question or any part of the question will not be considered.

SUBJECTIVE PART — PART-II

- Q. 2. Taiwan is a potential conflict between China and USA. Critically evaluate the reasons and why and how the two countries must avoid the conflict.
- Q. 3. Critically evaluate the unconditional support of US for Israel effects its image in the Arab countries and how it provides a space to China and Russia to penetrate into the Middle East.
- Q. 4. The turnaround of Pakistan's economy is not possible without comprehensive structural reforms in industry, agriculture, IT, power sector and Tax system of Pakistan. Elaborate the statement.
- Q. 5. Pakistan successfully conducted SCO conference in Islamabad. Critically evaluate the major takeaways for Pakistan. What measures would you recommend Islamabad to follow?
- Q. 6. Expensive agreements with IPPs, overwhelming dependency on hydrocarbons, Line and other losses in the transmission and distribution sector have caused massive hike in electricity prices having far reaching implications on industry, domestic and other crucial sectors. Analyze the statement and give possible recommendations.
- Q. 7. Critically evaluate how Israel launched terror on Gaza has become a classical example of war crimes. How do you see the decision of ICJ and response US government to it? How it would impact its relation with Arab world?
- Q. 8. UNGA passed a resolution in favor of two state solution. Three European States also recognized Palestine as sovereign state. Critically evaluate the chances of two state solution or do you think Israel would continue as an Apartheid state?

15th Jan 25

Part - II

Q.3. :-

Introduction:-

The United States' unconditional support for Israel has significantly impacted its image in the Arab world and created an opening for powers like China and Russia to expand their influence in the Middle East. This dynamic has implications for regional stability, global power politics and the future of U.S. influence in the region. Below is a critical evaluation of these effects:

Impact on the U.S.'s Image in Arab Countries:-

1. Alienation of Arab Public Opinion:

The unwavering U.S. support for Israel, particularly during conflicts like the Israel-Palestinian crises, is perceived as biased and disregarding the suffering of Palestinians. This has led to widespread anti-American sentiment in Arab countries. Public opinion polls consistently reflect a decline in the U.S.'s favourability in the region, as its policies are viewed as prioritizing Israel's interests over justice and human rights.

2. Strained Relations with Arab Governments:

Although some Arab governments, such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE, have maintained strategic partnerships with the U.S., these relationships are often strained due to popular pressure within these countries. For example, the normalization agreements under the

Abraham Accords were met with skepticism and resistance from sections of the Arab population, who view these as a betrayal of Palestinian aspirations.

Opening for China and Russia in the Middle East:-

1. China's Economic Diplomacy:

China has capitalized on the U.S.'s diminishing ~~and~~ credibility by promoting itself as a neutral and pragmatic partner. Through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China has strengthened economic ties with Middle Eastern countries, offering investment in infrastructure and energy without political conditions. Its recent mediation in restoring diplomatic ties between Saudi Arabia and Iran reflects its growing influence as a peace broker.

2. Russia's Strategic Maneuvering:

Russia has leveraged the U.S.'s perceived biases to position itself as a reliable partner for Arab states. By supporting Syria's Assad regime during the Civil war and maintaining strong ties with Iran and Gulf states, Russia has expanded its military and political presence in the region. Its pragmatic approach, emphasizing non-interference and mutual respect, appeals to Arab leaders wary of U.S. policies.

Long-term Implications :-

1. Weakening of U.S. Hegemony:

The U.S.'s focus on Israel at the expense of broader regional engagement risks eroding its long-standing dominance in the Middle East. As Arab countries align more closely with China and Russia, U.S. influence in critical areas like energy markets and security arrangements could diminish.

2. Rise of a Multipolar Middle East:

The power vacuum created by U.S. policies has fostered a multipolar regional order where no single power holds sway. This dynamic could lead to greater instability as external powers compete for influence, but it also provides Middle Eastern states with greater agency in shaping their futures.

Conclusion :-

The U.S.'s unconditional support for Israel has tarnished its image in the Arab world, alienated public opinion and weakened its diplomatic credibility. This policy has created a strategic opening for China and Russia to deepen their ties with Middle Eastern states, offering economic partnerships and diplomatic alternatives.

D.S. :-

Major Takeaways from Pakistan's Successful Conduct of the SCO Conference in Islamabad:

The successful hosting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) conference in Islamabad is a noteworthy diplomatic achievement for Pakistan. As a member of the SCO, this event provided Pakistan an opportunity to showcase its potential in multilateral diplomacy, regional cooperation and economic engagement.

Critical Evaluation of Major Takeaways:-

1. Strengthened Regional Diplomacy:

The conference allowed Pakistan to reinforce its position as a proactive member of the SCO. By facilitating discussions on shared challenges such as regional security, economic connectivity and counterterrorism, Pakistan demonstrated its commitment to fostering collaboration among member states. This even helped mitigate perceptions of Pakistan's diplomatic isolation in the region.

2. Economic Prospects and Trade Opportunities:

The SCO conference highlighted the potential of regional trade under the SCO framework. Pakistan leveraged its geostrategic location to promote projects like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a critical node in regional connectivity. Discussions on enhanced trade and investment provided an impetus for Pakistan to attract foreign investors from SCO member states.

3. Security and Counterterrorism Cooperation:

Pakistan emphasized the importance of collective action against terrorism, drug trafficking and cyber threats. The conference underscored Pakistan's role in the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) and its efforts to combat extremism in the region. This helped position Pakistan as a responsible state working towards regional stability.

Challenges Faced During the Conference:-

While the event was successful, some challenges surfaced.

1. Limited Regional Integration:

Bilateral tensions, particularly with India, hindered broader regional cooperation.

2. Economic Constraints:

Pakistan's struggling economy limited its ability to fully capitalize on the opportunities presented.

3. Geopolitical Complexities:

The evolving U.S.-China rivalry and its impact on SCO dynamics posed strategic challenges for Pakistan.

Recommendations for Islamabad:-

To maximize the benefits for the SCO conference, Pakistan should adopt the following measures:

1. Enhancing Regional Connectivity:

Leverage the SCO platform to fast-track projects like

CPEC and integrate with Central Asian economies.

2. Improving Economic Stability:

Stabilize the economic to attract foreign investment and capitalize on regional trade opportunities.

3. Fostering Bilateral Dialogue:

Engage with India and other regional states to reduce tensions and promote cooperation under the SCO framework.

Conclusion:-

The successful hosting of the SCO conference in Islamabad marked a significant diplomatic milestone for Pakistan. It demonstrated the country's potential to play a constructive role in regional cooperation and global governance.

Q.6. :-

Analysis of the Statement:-

The rapid increase in electricity prices in Pakistan is a direct consequence of structural inefficiencies and policy-level issues within the energy sector. The key factors driving these price hikes include:

1. Expensive Agreements with Independent Power Producers (IPPs):-

a. High Capacity Payments:

long-term contracts with IPPs guarantee fixed capacity payments regardless of power usage, leading to financial burdens during low demand.

b. Dollar Indexation:

The linkage of payments to the US Dollar has exacerbated costs due to currency depreciation.

2. Overwhelming Dependency on Hydrocarbons:-

a. Fossil Fuel Imports:

Pakistan relies heavily on imported oil, coal and LNG, which are subject to volatile global prices.

b. Underutilization of Renewables:

Despite significant potential for solar, wind and hydropower, renewable energy sources remain underdeveloped.

3. Line and Other losses in Transmission and Distribution:-

a. Technical Losses:

Outdated infrastructure leads to significant energy wastage during transmission.

b. Theft and Non-Recovery of Bills:

Poor governance and lack of accountability result in electricity theft and low bill recovery rates.

4. Far-Reaching Implications:

a. Industry:

Rising electricity costs increase production expenses, reducing the competitiveness of local industries in global markets.

b. Domestic Consumers:

Households face unaffordable electricity bills, leading to

public dissatisfaction and social unrest.

Recommendations:-

1. Renegotiate IPP Agreements:-

Review and renegotiate existing contracts to reduce capacity payments and eliminate dollar indexation. Introduce performance-based incentives to align IPP profits with efficient energy delivery.

2. Diversify Energy Mix:-

Accelerate investment in renewable energy sources, including solar, wind and hydropower. Encourage public-private partnerships (PPPs) for renewable energy projects.

3. Upgrade Transmission and Distribution Infrastructure:-

Invest in modernizing the grid to ~~minimize~~ minimize technical losses. Implement advanced metering systems to improve monitoring and reduce theft.

4. Strengthen Regulatory Framework:-

Empower regulatory bodies to monitor the energy sector and enforce compliance with efficiency standards.

Conclusion:-

Addressing the challenges of rising electricity prices in Pakistan requires a multi-pronged approach, focusing on renegotiating unfavourable contracts, reducing dependency on hydrocarbons, modernizing infrastructure and diversifying energy sources.

0.8. :-

Introduction :-

The two-state solution, envisioning Israel and Palestine as independent and coexisting nations, has long been advocated as a resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The recent resolution passed by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) supporting this framework and the recognition of Palestine by three European states renews focus on this possibility. However, the prospects of this solution remain contentious, influenced by political, social and geopolitical factors.

The Viability of the Two-State Solution :-

1. International Support :

The UNGA resolution and European recognition of Palestine underscore growing international consensus. Global advocacy reflects mounting pressure on Israel to adhere to international norms. However, resolutions at the UNGA are non-binding and depend on the cooperation of stakeholders.

2. Political Will in Israel and Palestine :

The two-state solution hinges on leadership in both territories. The Palestinian Authority (PA) supports this framework, but internal divisions between the PA and Hamas weaken its negotiating power. In contrast, Israel's political landscape has shifted to the right, with current leaders prioritizing settlements and security over negotiations.