

Compulsory Papers Having

Question Answer: Current Affairs

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Q: 02

Explain the possible threats and opportunities for Pakistan created by re-emergence of Taliban regime in Afghanistan?

Introduction:

The Taliban's return to power in August 2021, after the US withdrawal has reshaped the security and political dynamics of South Asia. For Pakistan, which shares a 2611 km border and deep ethnic, culture, and religious ties with Afghanistan, the event carries both risks and advantages. While it reduces Indian influence and opens avenues for trade and connectivity, it also brings threats of terrorism, extremism, and border instability. Pakistan's approach must therefore be cautious, pragmatic and rooted in national security interests.

1. Threats For Pakistan:

@ Terrorism Revival:

The Tehreek

Taliban Pakistan (TTP) (Jihad al-Khawar) has intensified attacks since 2021. Islamabad-based Centre for Conflict and Security (CCS) reported a 73% rise in militant incidents in 2022, many from Afghani soil.

(b) Durand Line Dispute:

Taliban's reluctance to recognize the border causes clashes and instability in frontier regions.

(c) Refugee Burden:

Any Afghan instability can trigger refugee wave, straining Pakistan's economy and services.

(d) Extremism Spillover:

Taliban's rigid Shariah Model may inspire extremists elements in Pakistan, compromising internal stability.

(e) Global Perception:

close ties with Taliban may revive Western concerns of Pakistan being a supporter of extremism, affecting diplomacy and economy.

2 Opportunities for Pakistan:

2.1: Friendly regime:

Taliban's rise reduces Indian footprint, giving Pakistan strategic depth and cooperative neighbours.

2.2 Trade and Connectivity:

Afghanistan as a corridor can boost Pakistan's access to Central Asia and energy projects like Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Pipeline Project and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) extension.

2.3 Counter-Terrorism cooperation:

If Taliban curbs anti-Pakistan groups, cross-border militancy can be reduced, easing Pakistan's western border management.

2.4 Refugee Repatriation:

Pakistan hosts 3.5 million Afghan refugees; stability may enable gradual return, reducing socio-economic burden.

2.5 Islamic & culture ties:

Shared values allow Pakistan to play a lead role in Afghan reconstruction, enhancing soft power.

3 Way Forward For Pakistan:

3.1 Conditional engagement with Taliban:

Pakistan should engage the Taliban pragmatically but tie recognition and cooperation to their actions on terrorism, refugees, and human rights.

3.2 Counter Terrorism Policy:

Strengthening intelligence sharing, border fencing, and joint mechanisms to curb TTP activities.

3.3 Regional Diplomacy:

work

with China, Russia, Iran, and Central Asia to build a collective approach toward Afghanistan, reducing Western suspicions.

3.4 Economic Cooperation:

Expand trade through better agreements, transit facilities, and investment in Afghan reconstruction under international supervision.

3.5 Balanced Foreign Policy:

Maintain relations with Taliban but avoid over-identification to protect Pakistan's image at UN, OIC and global platforms.

Conclusions:

The Taliban's return has reshaped Afghanistan and altered Pakistan's security and foreign policy environment. While opportunities exist in trade, refugee return, and strategic

depth, serious threats looms in terrorism and extremism, and border disputes. Pakistan must adopt a cautious, conditional and better balanced approach focusing on counter-terrorism and regional diplomacy. As Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah said "Our foreign policy is one of friendliness and goodwill towards all the nations of the world? Guided by this vision, Pakistan must seek peace and stability in Afghanistan not as a favour, but as a necessity for its own survival and progress.