

DATE: ___/___/___

Pakistan Affairs

DAY: ___/___/___

Name: NOOR MANAHIL

Batch: 74.

Question: 1

Pakistan's Role in the region has become strategic due to changing security dynamics for Pakistan. Critically evaluate the challenges to National security of Pakistan.

Introduction

Pakistan's regional role has become strategic due to its location between South-Asia, Central Asia and Middle East. But these advantages also bring serious challenges, from terrorism to climate change, economic instability to regional rivalries, Pakistan's national security is facing constant pressure. In recent years, recurring militant attacks, fragile economic conditions, water scarcity, regional rivalries and strained ties with neighbouring countries have highlighted that how multidimensional these challenges are. Pakistan's National security challenges need to be addressed.

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addressing the question's first part

DATE: ___/___/___

DAY: ___/___/___

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Terrorism and Extremism: A Persistent Security Threat

Pakistan has fought many battles against terrorism, operation like Zarb-e-Azb and Radd-ul-Fasaad which reduced attacks, but group like TTP have again gained ground. In 2023-25, incidents in KP and Balochistan showed that the militants are still active. According to the Global Terrorism Index, Pakistan remains among the top 10 countries most affected by terrorism. These keep people fearful, damages investment and forces high defense spending.

(2)

CPEC under Fire: Protecting Chinese Investment

China has invested billions of dollars in Pakistan through the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). But repeated attacks on Chinese workers and projects, especially in Balochistan, have created security concerns. Analyst warn that if Pakistan could not protect these projects, Beijing may reduce cooperation. This may not only affects Pakistan's

DATE: ___/___/___

DAY: ___/___/___

economy but also Pakistan's image as a safe partner.

"Friendship is a plant of slow growth"
~ George Washington

Pakistan must carefully nurture its ties with China through both security and inclusive development.

(3)

Political Instability: Weak Governance weakens security

Frequent Political crisis, The clashes between government and opposition such as the 2022 political crisis leads to change of government, which weakens state authority.

Political Polarization often results in violent protests and economic slowdown. Governance weaknesses

also surfaced in May 2023, when violent protests damaged military installation.

As Aristotle said:

"He who has never learned to obey cannot be a good commander."

(4)

Economic Fragility: Security needs a strong economy.

Pakistan's dependence on IMF bailouts is itself a security risk.

DATE: ___/___/___

DAY: ___/___/___

In 2024, Pakistan secured a new IMF Program, but growth remained low (around 2.7% for 2025). Inflation crossed 25% in 2023, creating unrest. A weak economy forces the government to cut defence and development spending for example Pakistan's defence budget has remained stagnant in dollars in terms of rupee depreciation.

"An Army marches on its stomach"
~ Napoleon.

Without a strong economy, National security cannot be sustained.

(5)

Climate change and Water stress: A Silent Security Killer.

Pakistan is among the top to around 10 climate vulnerable countries. The 2022, super floods submerged one-third country, affecting 33 million people and caused losses of \$30 billion.

In 2025, heavy monsoon rains submerged again killed nearly 950 people.

On the water front, Pakistan's per capita water availability has dropped from 5000 m³ in 1947 to 1000 m³ today, which leads to water scarce.

(6)

Balochistan Insurgency: An Internal Frontline

Balochistan has long militancy. In August 2023, militant attacked security forces in Gwadar, while repeated assaults target CPCC infrastructure. Grievances over resources e.g., locals argue that they benefit little from sui gas reserves, fuel resentment.

As Abraham Lincoln warned, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

Unless the province is integrated with fair development and dispelling unrest will continue.

(7)

Cyber and Information warfare: The New Battlefield.

Fake News and Propaganda have worsened division in Pakistan.

During the May 2023, political protest, disinformation spreads throughout social media, created chaos.

Extremists also use online platforms for recruitment. Pakistan's lack of strong cyber laws makes it vulnerable. Without cyber resilience

Pakistan risks losing this new form of war.

(8)

Nuclear Responsibility: Deterrence with Risk.

Pakistan Nuclear program provides deterrence, but carries risks.

In the 2019, Pulwama - Balakot incident, both Pakistan and India came dangerously close to escalation. Likewise in 2025, Palgham incident, whereas both the countries were on warheads.

Even a small clash can spiral quickly:

Albert Einstein's warning:

"I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones"

(9)

Sectarianism and Internal Divisions: A Threat to National Security.

Sectarian conflict is another major challenge to Pakistan's national security. Divisions between

sunni and shia communities have been exploited by extremist groups and foreign players. For instance, Parachinar in Kurram Agency has often faced violence or sectarian clashes and deadly bombings, resulting in loss of innocent lives and deep mistrust among communities. Such incidents not only weakens internal unity, but also gives space to external enemies to destabilize Pakistan.

Conclusion

Pakistan's national security is not only defined by its military security, but also economy, politics, environment and other factors included. Terrorism, economic instability, water crisis and political instability are interconnected threats. Pakistan should focus on its policies, the way forward lies in unity, and smart diplomacy. Pakistan must act wisely, so its location becomes blessing not a burden.