

CA - Final
07-02-2024

Question No. 2

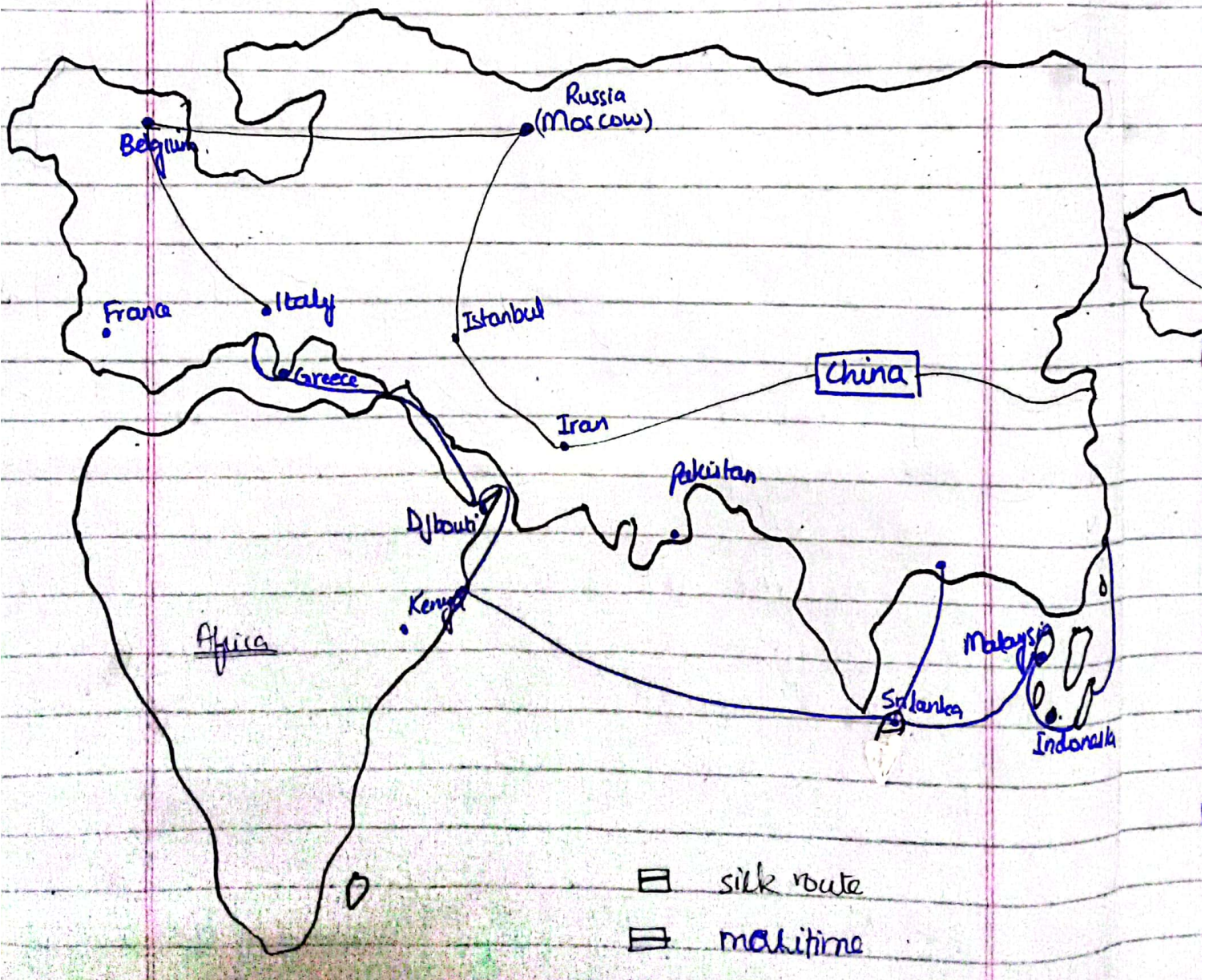
Political discourse ----- future

1. Introduction:

In the dynamic landscape of changing geo-politics, the shift of political discourse towards corridor is apparent from the new IMEC launched by G7 countries. The ambitious Belt and Road initiative and the recently introduced India - Middle East - Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) aims at manifestation of economic powers, geopolitical maneuvering and the quest for dominance. As China celebrates a decade anniversary for BRI through a launch of BRI 2.0, the West backed IMEC aimed to counter China's growing hegemony regionally and internationally.

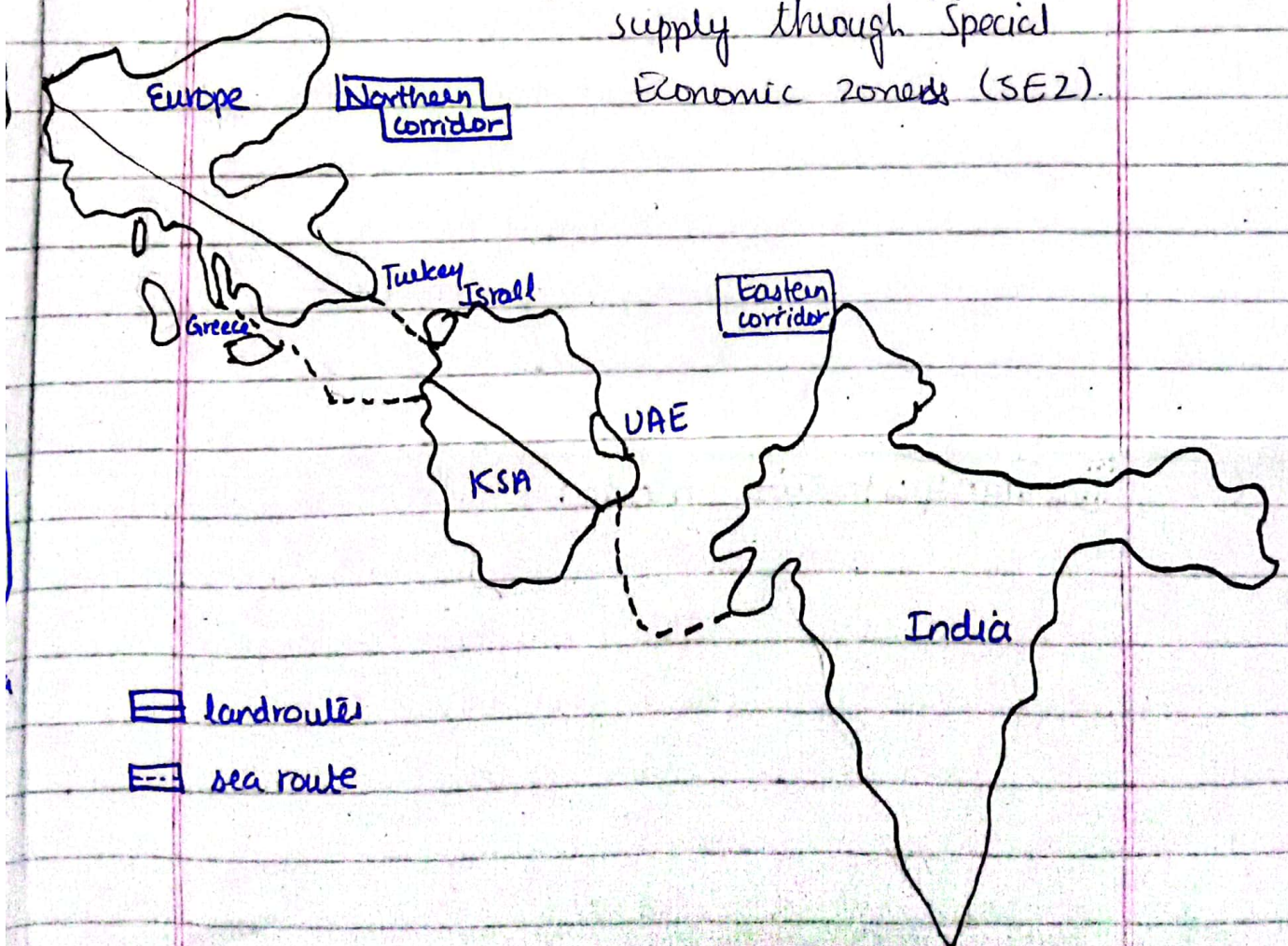
2. What is China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) :

China's BRI is a multi-dollar global project with 3000 cooperation projects expanding till Europe. Its aim is to revive "New Silk Road" and increase global connectivity with China at center through economic cooperation and global cooperation.



3. Newly launched "India - Middle East - Europe Economic Corridor" (IMEC):

IMEC is a byproduct of Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) launched by G7 to strengthen West's strategic move to counter China and BRI's reach, influence and power world wide. It connects Asia (India) to middle East and Europe. Result of collaborative efforts of USA, India, Middle East and Europe, IMEC seeks to redefine trade routes and facilitate secure energy and resource supply through Special Economic zones (SEZ).



4. China's BRI vs. KSA's IMEC : a comparative analysis :

(i) - Initiation and progress :

BRI was initiated in 2013 and completed a decade in 2023 with many projects operational. Where else IMEC is still in preliminary stage (MOU stage) and ongoing planning and negotiation.

(ii) - Scope of investment :

BRI is estimated to be around \$8 trillion worth expanding all over Asia and Europe too. However IMEC's investment is projected to be smaller and limited to few billion dollars.

(iii) - Transportation mode :

BRI has diverse transportation networks with 70% focus on land routes and rest on sea route with some dry ports too. Where else IMEC is primarily focused on sea route (shipping lanes and railroad connection)

(iv) Geopolitical and geographical coverage of both projects:

BRI expands over approximately 150 countries including developing economies like Pakistan, Malaysia, Italy etc while IMEC covers around 20 countries (mostly developed) through strategic cooperation.

(v) Directionality:

BRI connects China to Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas, hence, multidirectional. However IMEC only connects India to Europe unilaterally.

(vi) Scope of project:

IMEC, in initial stage, has limited scope focusing on shipping lanes and road infrastructure to increase trade connectivity. Whereas BRI is a vast project initiative ranging from energy, agriculture, infrastructure to economic zones and regional connectivity.

(vii) Respect for Sovereignty:

BRI is mostly scrutinized for gaining control of the projects thus disregarding sovereignty of Nations sometimes. Whereas IMEC is more of a collaboration between Nations to improve connectivity and economic development through trade.

Potential

5. Future of IMEC and BRI: An era of transformation, dash of economic vision OR a changing world order:

①. Geopolitical tussle: regional hegemony; China (vs) India:

For India, IMEC is a strategic move to counter China's growing influence in the region by strengthening trade and investment ties with Europe. This can reduce dependence on China and enhance its global influence. If successfully implemented, IMEC will provide India with unique advantages and political leverage at global stage.

(ii). Employment Generation:

BRI mostly channels Chinese companies for employment in other states. However, IMEC is strategically designed to prioritize job creation for local workforce thus alleviate poverty. It has a potential to contribute to regional development.

(iii). International Debt burden:

BRI is notoriously known as a "debt trap" for offering loans at high interest rate. This has contributed to international debt practices. Therefore, the debt burden could slow down BRI progress in future.

(iv). Regional benefit:

IMEC's focus on collective benefit of all nations within the region has the potential to gain momentum and achieve regional economic integration and mutual growth. Thus, if implemented in a transparent manner, it could bring regional prosperity. On the other hand, BRI's focus on China's interest can help China gain a hegemonic dominance in the region.

⑦. Strategic significance for India and Pakistan:

West's backing of IMEC and collaboration with India can help it gain competitive advantage in the region. However, Pakistan is at cross-roads at potentially benefiting from IMEC in the future. IMEC could help Pakistan expand its trade net and provide new investment opportunities only if IMEC emerges as a diplomatic victor.

6- Conclusion:

The political discourse of corridors is a tangled web because of uncertainty of corridor's political and economic outcome. China's BRI is a multi-billion dollar project to launch China as rising global power whereas India-focused IMEC is to counter China's hegemony in the region. In the broader context, the US-China rivalry through BRI, IMEC symbolize conflicting political interest and potential for economic development.

Question No. 4

Critically evaluate _____ politics.

1. Introduction :

The Israel - Hamas conflict is the continuation of Israeli aggression to gain control over Palestinian territory. It not only threatens the regional security i.e. Lebanon, Iran, Yemen, but also contribute to a humanitarian catastrophe leading to mass migration and impact on global power political and economy.

2. Israel - Hamas War :

Israel Hamas War is an armed conflict waged between Palestine's armed group 'Hamas' and Israel since Hamas' attack on Israeli soil on 7th October 2023.

In the name of "self defence" - as stated by Israeli President - Israel has killed more than 23000 Palestinians with 1.2 Million displaced according to 'The Guardian'.

Initially an armed conflict, the war is threatening a start of World War III.

Regional implications of expansion of Israel - Hamas war :

① - Security concerns : The Regional Ripple effects.

(a) : Rocket attacks from Hezbollah :

As Israel wages war on Hamas and thousands of innocent Palestinians die, the neighbouring countries are on edge. From Lebanon, on Israel's north, Hezbollah has already launched small rockets attacks with the leader saying ;

"All options are on the table."



(b): Iran :

To the East, there is Iran which backs Hezbollah and Hamas and has been making ominous statements about Israel.

(c): Yemen ; Houthis rebels attacks on Red sea :

Beyond Saudi Arabia, Yemen's Houthis rebels are launching missile attacks on maritime trade towards Israel to support Hamas - This has created tension between Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

(ii) - Refugee influx in Egypt :

The potential influx of refugees from Palestine to southwest Egypt is a humanitarian crisis that has put pressure on stagnant economies of Egypt and other regions i.e. Jordan, Syria etc. President Al-Sisi of Egypt said ;

" We will not allow the issue to be settled at other's expense "

③ Israeli - Saudi Rapprochement process halted :

The US backed Israeli-Saudi rapprochement process has come to a halt as the possibility of Arab world retaliation against KSA in the backdrop of Israeli support is imminent.

④ Strained relations between Israel, Egypt and Jordan :

The triangular collaboration between Israel, Egypt and Jordan is at stake - Being USA's biggest aid receiver, Egypt is in hot water over support between Israel and Palestine.

⑤ Economic jitters : uncertainty impacts tourist economy.

With economic growth still recovering from Post-COVID-19 shocks, this war has added uncertainty and lost investor interest.

"You have tourist dependant countries; uncertainty ^{"a"} killer for tourist inflow."
(Kristina Georgieva)

4- Impact of Israel-Hamas war on global power politics :

(i) - Tolerance from major power - has a threshold been crossed ?

The limits of tolerance on part of major powers i.e. USA, Europe, following the Red sea attacks has threatened their interests. This has set the commodity cycle imbalance and prices are skyrocketing. US has started air strikes on Yemen and other such states.

(ii) - Fear of global economic recession :

An escalation of Israel-Hamas war threatens global Recession according to "Bloomberg". This would be the second geopolitical jolt for global economy in less than two year. The disrupted commodity cycle has created shortage of 24% in global market with soaring oil prices and plunging risk assets due to substantial blow to economic growth.

(iii) Role of China :

With successful mediation between Saudi Arabia and Iran and clear stance of USA and Iran on Israel war, many look at China as a potential mediator to broker a rapprochement between Israel and Hamas.

(iv) A US/Iran Proxy War?

USA's unwavering support of Israel and Iran's backing of Hamas and Hezbollah can also initiate a proxy war between both states. US has repeatedly vetoed any resolution to end the conflict in Palestine.

(v) Changing Nuclear dynamics - threat of WWIII?

The renewed Israel-Hamas conflict can exacerbate the existing nuclear tension. Israeli officials have repeatedly emphasized their refusal to accept a nuclear-armed adversary and shown minimum interest in nuclear diplomacy. If Iran accelerates its nuclear program while Israel is busy in conflict, Nuclear war is possible.

(vi) - Israel losing the war of narrative:

Following the International Court of Justice lawsuit by South Africa against Israel for "Genocide", Israel has lost the war of narrative as public sides with Palestine.

(vii) - Failure of United Nation in conflict resolution:

Despite multiple attempts, no resolution can be passed to stop Israeli aggression. This highlighted the failed role of UN and need for reforms in the organization - According to Malasha Lodhi;

"UN reflects power dynamics of bygone era."

5. Conclusion:

The implications of Israel-Hamas conflicts are far-reaching and long lasting. It not only threatens the regional dynamics but also global power politics. Therefore, a collaborative and immediate ^{resolution} ~~sett~~ of this conflict is necessary.

Question No. 7

Pakistan - - - - - recommendation -

1. Introduction:

Pakistan's strategic location plays a huge factor in shaping its foreign relations. Pakistan's foreign policy is a combination of security concerns, diplomatic challenges and economic stability. The proximity to Middle East, ^{China} and central Asia has made it epicenter of world rivalries. It must overcome these to move forward.

2. Foreign Policy of Pakistan:

Foreign policy is a set of strategies, decisions and action by a government to pursue its national interest in relation to other states.

The Foreign Policy of Pakistan went through different phases i.e. era of neutrality, alliances, bilateralism and non alignment etc. Since 2018, the foreign policy of Pakistan has shifted from security to economic approach with human centric policies.

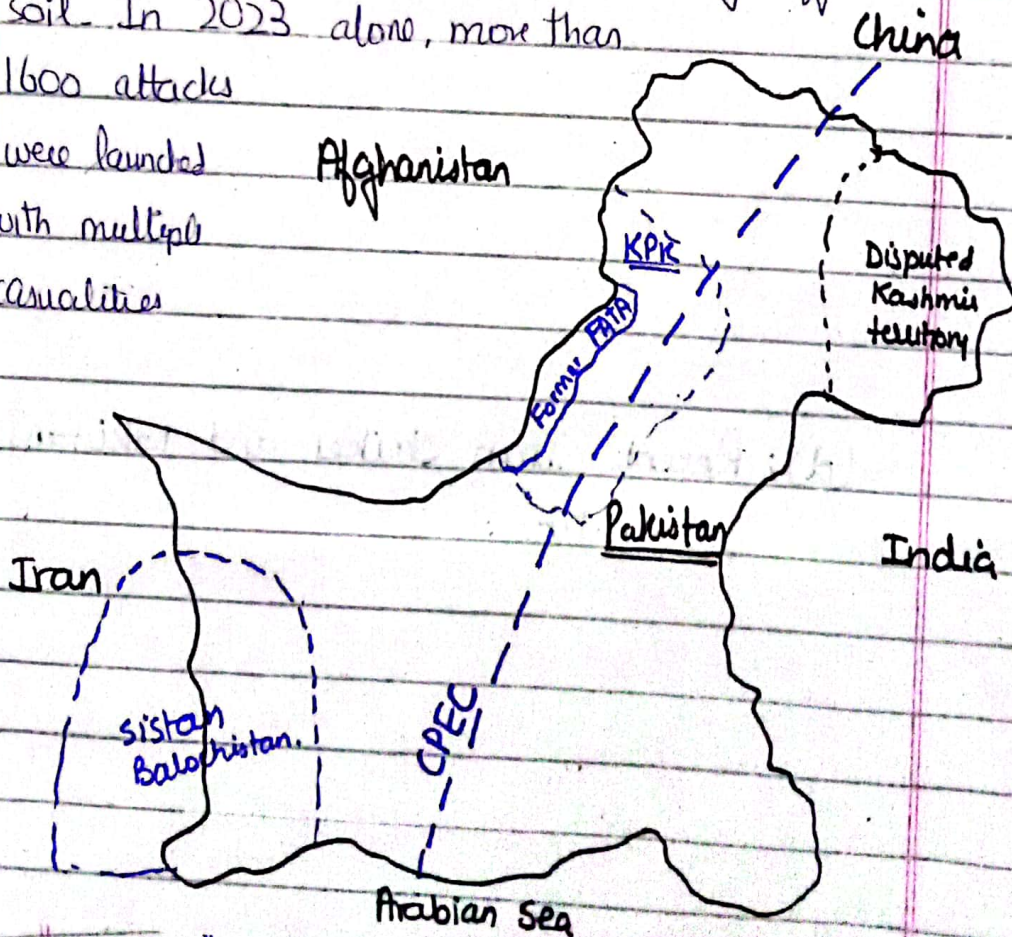
3. Failures and hurdles in the Foreign-Policy of Pakistan:

① Security concerns:

(a): Cross border attacks launched by terror outfits using Afghan soil:

After US withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, Taliban 2.0 regime has facilitated anti-state elements i.e. Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), ISKP (Islamic State Khorasan Pakistan) to launch attacks on Pakistan using Afghan soil. In 2023 alone, more than 1600 attacks

were launched with multiple casualties



(b): Slow progress of China Pakistan Economic Corridors; Chinese Nationals targeted:

The terror outfits are also targeting CPEC by killing Chinese Nationals. - The non-state actors have intensified attacks in 2023 following deteriorating ties with Afghanistan. Almost every project was halted and relations with China also disturbed.

(c): Spordic attacks on eastern border with India:

Disputed territory between Pakistan and India, and water issues are a constant source of friction between both countries.

(d): Recent Iran strikes and Pakistan's retaliation:

Unprovoked air drone attack by Iran on Pakistan in January 2024 stirred the stable relations between Pakistan and Iran.

② - Economic instability:

(a): Economic crisis of Pakistan and shift towards Middle East:

Economic stability is essential for foreign policy of any country. Pakistan on the verge of default in 2023, had a fiscal deficit of around 7.7% of GDP. The balance of payment crisis, inflation and IMF dangling tranche added pressure on the foreign policy of Pakistan.

(b): India - America Nexus:

The nexus between India and America through alliances like BECA (military pacts), drone agreements, economic cooperation and geo-spatial technological advances has posed a challenge for Pakistan's foreign policy. India's growing dominance and backing by USA can pose huge threat to Pakistan's security dogma.

③- Balancing Regional Alliances:

Without taking any side, achieving national interest is the biggest challenge faced by Pakistan's foreign policy in the wake of China-US rivalry and Middle East crisis.

④- Kashmir dispute:

"Kashmir is the jugular vein of Pakistan" (Quaid). Headworks of major water system in Pakistan lies in Kashmir, thus resolution is essential for regional peace and stability.

⑤- Image Perception:

International community stereotyping of Pakistan as an extremist and unsecure state has harmed Pakistan's foreign policy.

⑥- Bloc politics in Muslim World:

Following the Israel-Hamas war and proxy war between many Muslim states has posed a challenge for Pakistan's foreign policy dynamics.

4. Recommendations for Pakistan's foreign policy :

① - Focus on economic diplomacy :

Pakistan must focus on economic diplomacy to engage regional and international community to resolve the economic challenges faced by Pakistan.

② - Prioritising National interests in ties with neighbors and internationally :

Instead of participating in bloc politics, Pakistan must find a balance between US-China confrontation and Russia's-Europe rivalry.

③ Strengthening institutions :

Diplomacy can only operate if the institutions are strong and think tanks are encouraged to participate in formulating foreign policy.

" Domestic Policy can only defeat us, foreign policy can kill us. " (John F. Kennedy)

④ - Promote and protect human rights -
work on image building of Pakistan.

Pakistan needs to promote cultural diplomacy and tourism to build an image that welcomes investors and international communities interest to visit through a safe and secure environment.

"Our objective should be peace
within and peace without."

(Quaid-e-Azam)

⑤ - Diplomatic efforts to promote
bilateral and multilateral
cooperations :

Pakistan must encourage cooperation agreements with neighbors like China and Iran - It should engage international community in resolution of Kashmir issue and resume trade with India to promote bilateral ties - Taliban should also be engaged to stop security threats - Pakistan's biggest export destination i.e. USA must also be brought on board.

5. Conclusion:

The Foreign policy of Pakistan can play instrumental role in bringing economic progress, political stability and international engagements if national interest is prioritized.

Rethinking foreign policy in the wake of contemporary challenges will help Pakistan emerge on the global stage as a potential destination for investment, tourism and climate finance.

Question No. 8

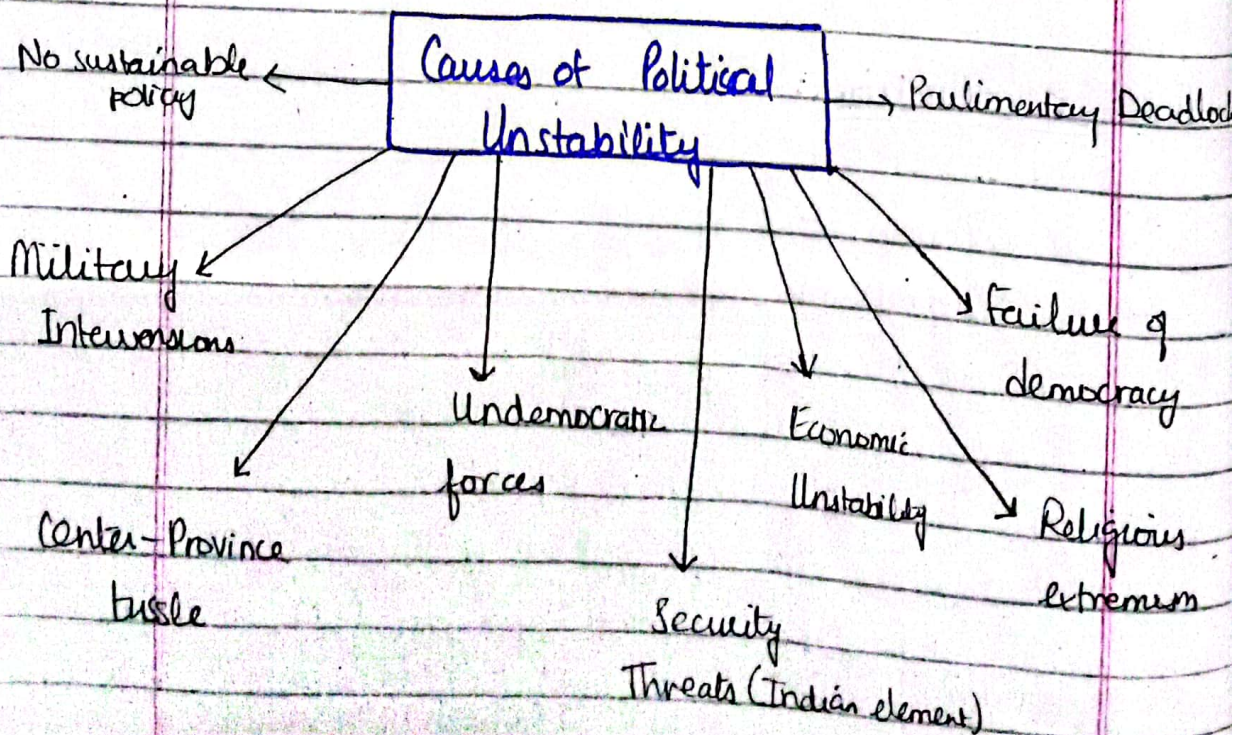
Political instability - - - - - measures -

1- Introduction:

In Pakistan, the political instability leads to socio-economic crisis like poverty, corruption, illiteracy, religious extremism, unemployment and terrorism. To improve socio-economic indicators, investment on education, health and political reconciliation will help bring political stability and progress.

2. Political Instability in Pakistan :

Since 1947, Pakistan's diverse and geo-strategic landscape ~~of~~ has contributed to political turmoil multiple times. Successive governments cumpled as corruption and weak government institutions plagued the central government. The military rule for over 35 years out of 75 years also shifted the power dynamics and caused failure of democracy. No government could complete its tenure and undemocratic forces manipulated elections. Today, Pakistan is in the grip of worst political crisis as it heads to elections 2024.



3. Socio-economic crisis in Pakistan due to Political instability:

(A): Economic crisis from Political instability in Pakistan:

①: Low investor confidence - industrial shutdown:

Political instability scares all the investors away. The stalled CPEC Program is a perfect example of how political instability can impact economic growth. The industrial shutdown due to no funding is also an impact.

② - Unemployment - law and order situation (deteriorating).

Precarious economic conditions leads to downsizing. With no employment opportunities, people resort to illegal and immoral activities to earn means or invest in activities such as theft, burglary, ultimately increasing chaos.

③ - Inflation - Increased poverty :

Political instability creates a fragile economy with increased cost of living pushing more people below poverty line. Pakistan's poverty rate in 2022-23 increased 39.4%.

④ - Debt burden - 25th IMF Programme in 2024 :

Pakistan is again in the perils of debt with a ^{total} debt of around \$223.8 bn. In order to carry out normal operations, international organizations (IMF etc) are approached. This further increases debt burden.

⑤ - Brain Drain - loss of knowledge economy :

The poor economic conditions and instability pushes potential knowledge economy into other state's pockets as ^{educated} people leave country for better life. In 2022, more than 7 lakh people left Pakistan.

(B): Social crisis from political instability,

① - Social Unrest - protests, sit-ins etc :

To counter political agendas, people take to streets to protests and sit-ins to demonstrate their rights and ask for compensation i.e Baloch sit-in in Islamabad (2024).

② : Security concerns - Increased terrorism:

The political instability also creates a vacuum for non-state actors to target innocent citizens and security agencies.

③ - Political polarization among masses:

People have divided opinions and view with increased attention towards popular rhetoric leading to a polarized mass.

④ - Radicalization and religious extremism:

Religious extremism in a society originates when religion is used to justify policies and political (selfish) motives.

4: Policy measure recommended to
to prevent socio-economic crisis
from political instability:

- ①. Revisiting security policy with national security issues in focus.
- ②. Urgent need for charter of Economy.
- ③. Technocrats and economists to be specified for devising Economic policy.
- ④. Politics of reconciliation should be followed to prevent hate speech and polarisation.
- ⑤. Need for National Cohesion and integrity over issues of extremism and terrorism.
- ⑥. Balancing act between great powers (China - USA - Russia).
- ⑦. Industry, Academia and Politics - Academia Integration.
- ⑧. Vibrant role of media.