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CURRENT AFFAIRS:-

Date: _____

SUBMITTED BY:- 31154 - Momina Naveed - 056

QUESTION NO # 3:-

OIC remained _____

_____ Muslim world?

⇒ INTRODUCTION:-

OIC, abbreviated as Organization of Islamic Cooperation, is an international organization that was established to represent and unite the Muslim world. But, it has been consistently failed in its objectives. Since its foundation, it had faced many challenges but no proper solution had been employed. Different incidents and events occurred such as Arab-Israel wars, Yemen crisis/civil war, and Syrian civil war, but nothing led the members of the organization to unite in a true sense and represent and save the Muslim world. Just like those historical events, the current scenario in the Middle East, such as Hamas-Israel war and Iran-KSA reappro-

achment would not be able to reform the organization. These two major events could be an opportunity but the contemporary world and its major players won't let that happen. The Muslim world and OIC will remain scattered and non-functional unless strict actions, commitments and reforms are employed.

⇒ OIC AND ITS FAILURES:-

→ DEFINING THE OIC:-

According to the official website of OIC:
 "The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is the second largest organization after the United Nations with a membership of 57 states spread over four continents. The organization is the collective voice of the Muslim world. It endeavors to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world."

→ DISCUSSING THE FAILURES OF OIC AND REASONS OF THESE FAILURES:-

The OIC is one of those organizations that runs in an opposite direction from their objectives. According to the above mentioned definition, it was established to unite the Muslim world. But

it ~~does~~ is not visible till now. Secondly, it aimed to safe and protect Muslims, but it failed to save the Muslims in Yemen, Iraq, and Syrian crisis, and now in Gaza too.

The major reasons of these failures are internal rifts, lack of a conflict resolution mechanism and unprecedented influence of US on the member countries. Other factors include lack of resources and financial constraints, limited political influence, regional conflicts and crises, and limited active participation of members. The major reasons are discussed as below:

1. INTERNAL RIFT - A DIVIDE BETWEEN MUSLIM WORLD:-

There is a major divide called the Shia-Sunni or Iran-KSA divide in the Muslim world.

^{Sunni} Muslim world is led by Kingdom of Saudi Arabia while Shia Muslim world is led by Iran.

This is ^{also} the major reason behind the civil wars of Yemen and Syria and other Muslim countries. This divide is a major hurdle ~~betw~~ in the unity of Muslim world. The Iran-KSA reapproachment would be considered as a ray of hope to overcome this divide, but there are still many factors that is

making the situation even worst.

→ LACK OF

2.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISM:-

As Muslims and followers of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the first and foremost mechanism to be followed should be conflict resolution. Because Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had always taught about resolving conflicts between Muslim brothers. But the only representative organization of Muslim world lack this mechanism. Due to which, there is a continuous instability in Middle East, comprising most of the Muslim countries. OIC should adopt the conflict resolution mechanism.

3.

THE UNPRECEDENTED INFLUENCE OF US ON MEMBER STATES:-

US, as a superpower, had always tried to influence the whole world. In these efforts, it had a greater influence on Muslim world too. Among the member states of ~~the~~ OIC, Saudi Arabia, the leader of Muslim Ummah, is now under the greater influence of US. Other countries such as Pakistan, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain etc are also under US influence. The influence is another

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major hurdle in the unity of Muslim world. Due to which the OIC remained unfunctional since its inception.

⇒ HAMAS-ISRAEL WAR: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR UNITY OF MUSLIM WORLD OR STIMULUS FOR FURTHER DIVIDE:-

→ THE HAMAS-ISRAEL WAR

The on-going Hamas-Israel war that was started after the attack of Hamas on Israel on October 7, 2023. This was the only major attack carried out by Hamas in the ongoing war. Soon, after the attack, Israel declared war on Hamas and is still attacking the civilian and military infrastructure in Gaza. The war has caused millions of occupations and casualties of Muslims in Gaza strip.

This war, in the Middle East, had the potential to unite the Muslim world but the Muslim world is not in a position to avail this opportunity. This war also had the potential to divide the Muslim world further that is already on the eve of breakup. So, the Hamas-Israel war is the unavailable/unattainable opportunity for unity of Muslim world and is also a precursor for the further division of Muslim world.

There are different reasons for these both situations.

Hamas-Israel War

An opportunity but could not be availed due to following reasons

Influence of West

Influence of other countries

National interests over Ummah's interests

A precursor for further divide due to following reasons

Pro-Anti Israel countries

Geopolitical tensions

⇒ Reasons Why The Hamas-Israel War Could Not Let The Muslim World Unite:-

The reasons that could not let this war to unite the Muslim world are as follows:

1. Influence Of The West On Muslim World Is Still In Peace:-

Muslim world is still under the influence of West, particularly US. Due to the impact of US on policy making of Muslim countries, no war would be able to unite them.

2. INFLUENCE OF OTHER COUNTRIES:-

The influence of other countries, such as Israel on Muslim countries is another hurdle in their unity. Due to their ^{illegal} occupation of Israel on $\frac{1}{4}$ Palestine, Muslim world did not recognize Israel initially. But now in this century, the Muslim countries had started to recognize Israel as an independent state, such as the Abraham Accord between Israel and some Arab countries. Although, after the ^{initiation of} war, these countries had ~~withdrew~~ ^{withdrawn} and ~~strained~~ ^{broke} their relation with Israel, but Israel still impact their policies and they are unable to unite and fight against Israel.

3. NATIONAL INTERESTS OF MUSLIM COUNTRIES

3. SURPASSED THE UMMAH'S INTEREST:-

Due to the national interests, every country make decisions to facilitate and promote their own interests. In this contemporary world, the Muslim countries are also following their national interests, instead of Ummah's interest. For example, the 2030 vision of Saudi Arabia. Due to this vision, Saudi Arabia ~~could~~ ^{can't} not break its ties with West.

⇒ REASONS FOR HAMAS-ISRAEL WAR AS
PRECURSOR FOR FURTHER DIVIDE:-

Instead of looking it as an opportunity, this war can further divide the Muslim world. Following are some of its reasons:

1. PRO-ANA-ANTI-ISRAEL COUNTRIES WITHIN THE MUSLIM WORLD CAN FURTHER EXPAND THE DIVISION:-

Although, many Muslim countries are anti-Israel, specially after and during its war with Hamas, but there are still some Muslim countries that could be considered as Pro-Israeli. However, their Pro-Israeli stance ^{is not} as visible as their ^{stance of} Anti-Israel countries, ^{such as} including the attack on Israeli ships in Red Sea by Yemen and Iran-backed Houthis. Due to this ^{another} divide ^{within} between Muslim world can cause hurdle in the unity.

2. GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS - REGIONAL INSTABILITY:-

Regional instability, that is being consistent from decades, had further increased due to on-going Hamas-Israel War. The involvement of Yemen in the war by attacking Israeli ships could further increased the geopolitical tensions. So, due to the pro-and-anti-Israel divide between Muslim countries and the geopolitical tensions, the Hamas-Israel war would further ^{the Muslim world} divide rather than unite.

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⇒ IRAN-KSA REAPPROACHMENT - ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY BUT COULD NOT BE AVAILED TO UNITE THE MUSLIM WORLD -

The successful Iran-KSA Reapproachment by China in 2022 could not be considered as an opportunity to unite the Muslim world in contemporary situations. Despite reapproachment, both countries are still not involved in any ^{active} deal and collective effort to save and represent the Muslim world. Due to the following reasons, the KSA-Iran reapproachment ~~would~~ ^{can} not be considered as an opportunity to unite Muslim world:

1. THE SHIA-SUNNI CONFLICT IS STILL ON FIRE IN YEMEN AND SYRIA -

The civil war between Shia and Sunni groups backed by Iran and Saudi Arabia respectively is still going on in Yemen and Syria. Despite the reapproachment, they both are not willing to resolve the Shia-Sunni conflict and unite the Muslim Ummah under the flag of Islam.

2. HAMAS-ISRAEL WAR AND PRO-AND-ANTI ISRAEL STANCES -

With Shia-Sunni conflicts in Muslim world, the Hamas-Israel is like "a pimple grown on a pimple".

Due to this war^{and}, the anti-Israel stance of Iran and alleged pro-Israel stance of Saudi Arabia is making another bridge between both countries and hence in the Muslim world.

3. IRAN'S ALLEGED NUCLEAR DEAL PROGRAM AND SUSPICIONS ABOUT LONG-TERM CONTINUITY OF REAPPROACHMENT DEAL:-

The Iran's alleged nuclear program is considered as a threat by Saudi Arabia. Despite rapprochement, they both are actively involved to deter each other.

After the circulation^{of news} of Iran's nuclear deal, the King of Saudi Arabia ~~respond~~ M. Bin Salman said if Iran were to get a nuclear weapon "we will have to get one." in an interview (Riad Katwaji, In nuclear Push, Saudi Arabia could play US, China off each other October 2023). This statement clearly shows the hidden rivalry between both countries. This can also raise suspicions about the continuity of the rapprochement deal and hence^{the dream of} the unity of Muslim Ummah.

⇒ Conclusion:-

The failure of OIC, the ongoing Hamas-Israel War and the KSA-Iran rapprochement, all are facing challenges to unite the Muslim world due

to western influence, Israel's influence, internal divide and national interests of Muslim countries. These challenges could be overcome, if all Muslim countries commit to bring changes in the Muslim world and follow the path of Holy Prophet (PBUH) and Holy Quran. As according to Quran:

"The believers are but brothers"

(Surah-Al-Hujraat : 10)

So this is the true identity of Muslims. Instead of fighting and deterring each other, Muslim world should unite and deter and fight for the safety of Muslims all over the world.

QUESTION NO 4:-

India-Middle East Europe -----

----- two projects.

⇒ INTRODUCTION:-

India-Middle East Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) is projected as a competitor to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China, but it could not compete with the multi-billion project of China. There are some similarities between both projects

such as: both demonstrate the power struggle of India and China as emerging superpowers, both are economic corridors, both involve multinational partnerships, and both involve transportation infrastructure to increase trade. There are ^{also} some differences between both, such as: ~~so~~ scope of investment, geospatial coverage, and direction of corridor. But despite these ~~similarities~~ and differences, IMEC also faced many challenges due to which it cannot compete BRI.

⇒ UNVEILING THE IMEC AND BRI:-

⇒ BRI: A DECADE OF TRANSFORMATION:-

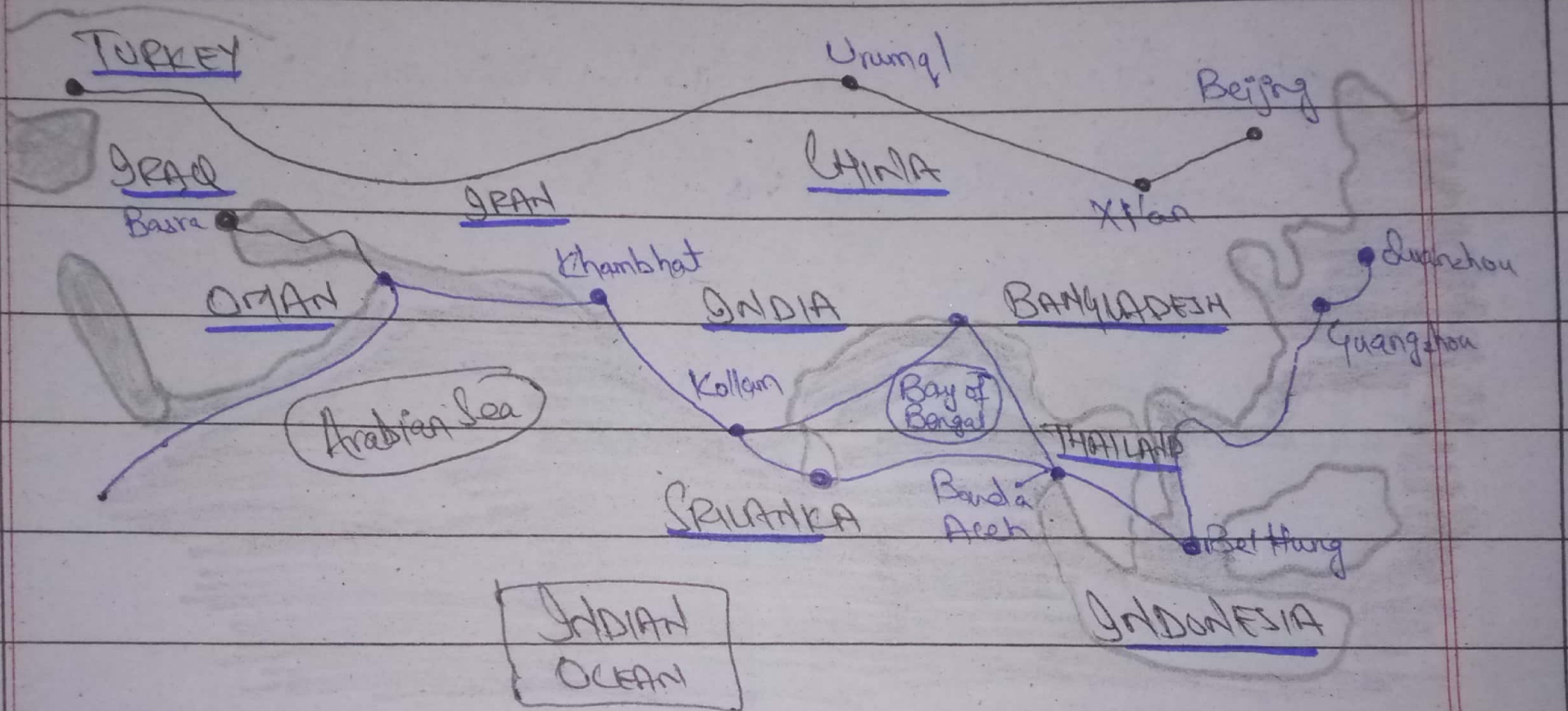
BRI is a multibillion infrastructure project, initiated by China in 2013. But now after the completion of its 10 years in 2023, it has been unfolded as a multi-trillion-dollar global cooperation platform. Although, it had faced challenges such as ^{debt crisis,} conflicts in the Middle East and other geopolitical tensions, but it had continued its expansion. Due to the successful expansion of BRI, the world leaders, US, and emerging powers, India, Australia, Japan etc, always tried to counter the project. Therefore,

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recently in G20 summit, they came up with another project, the IMEC, to counter the growth of BRI.

→ DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF BRI:-



Key: — (Economic Belt), - - - (Maritime Belt).

⇒ IMEC: THE POTENTIAL AND CHALLENGES:-

GENESIS:-

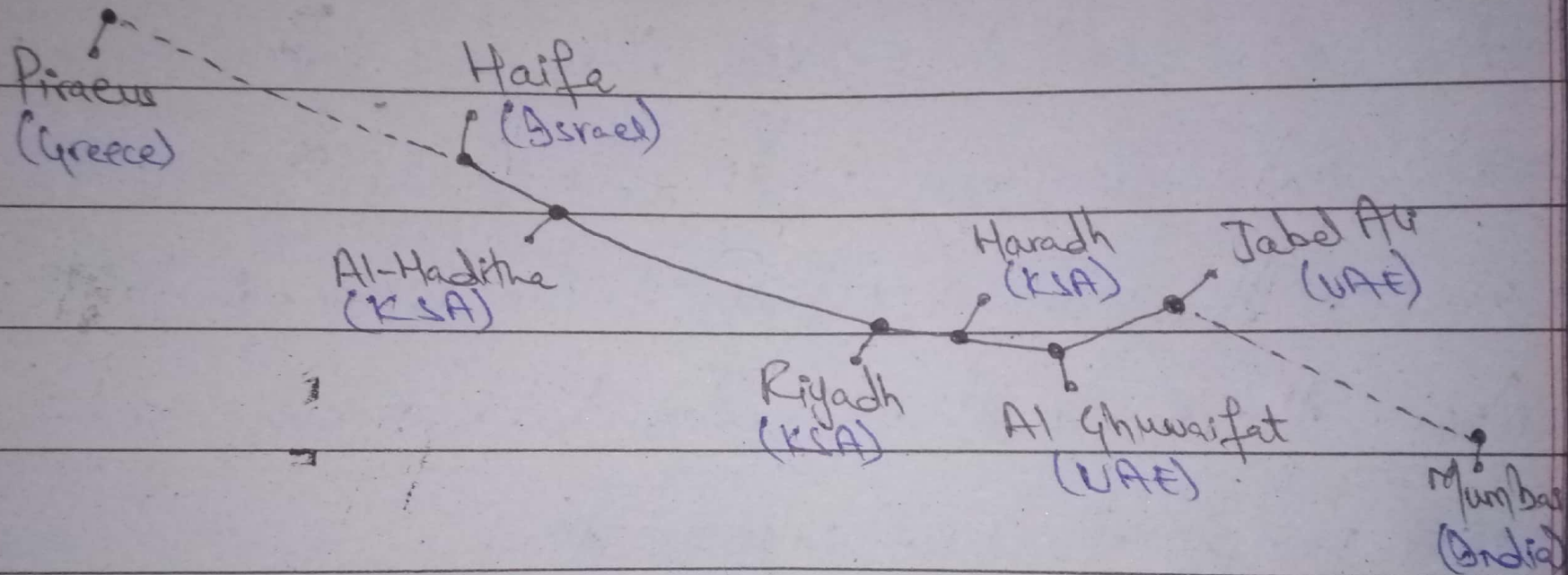
→ THE GENESIS AND PURPOSE OF IMEC:-

The IMEC is the result of collaboration between USA, India, and their allies that seek to redefine trade routes between India, the Gulf States, and Europe. Its purpose, ^{as} shown to the world, is to enhance the movement of goods, data, money, and foster people-to-people connection.

→ INDIA AND THE STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF IMEC:-

For India, the IMEC represents a strategic move to counter China's influence and create its economic and strategic corridor. By strengthening trade and investment ties with the Middle East and Europe, India aims to diversify its trade partners, reduce dependence on China, and enhance its global influence.

→ DIAGRAMATIC REPRESENTATION OF IMEC:-



Key: UAE (United Arab Emirates), KSA (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), - - - (Sea route), — (Rail route)

⇒ IMEC Could Not Compete BRI:

Although IMEC is projected as competitor of BRI, but it could ^{not} compete with this project of China. There are different challenges that would be faced by IMEC, which can hinder its growth and expansion. Moreover, by comparing it with the multi-trillion-dollar project of China, it cannot look like a strong competitor.

⇒ CHALLENGES FACED BY IMEC THAT MAKE IT AS NON-COMPETITOR OF BRI:

Some of the major challenges that IMEC can face include: complex coordination among 20 countries; financial hurdles and debt burdens of participating countries; geopolitical and security concerns in Middle East; current environmental and regulatory issues; and infrastructure gaps and technological integration across borders. These factors can halt the progress of IMEC. These challenges ~~compared~~ ^{coupled} with the comparative analysis between both projects could reveal the incompetent nature of IMEC.

→ COMPARISON BETWEEN IMEC AND BRI
AND REASONS FOR BEING IMEC AS NOT-
COMPETITOR TO BRI:-

BRI

IMEC

1)

INITIATION AND PROGRESS:-

BRI was launched in 2013 and is actively progressing.

IMEC was launched in 2023, and is still in its embryonic (NOW) stage.

2)

SCALE OF INVESTMENT:-

BRI has an estimated value of around \$8 trillion.

IMEC's investments are projected to be smaller, possibly a few billion dollars.

3)

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE:-

BRI spans approximately 130 countries.

IMEC is planned to cover around 20 countries.

4)

DIRECTIONALITY:-

BRI is multi-directional, connecting China with Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas.

IMEC is unidirectional, primarily connecting India to Europe.

5)

SCOPE OF PROJECTS:-

BRI includes a wide range of projects from infrastructure

limited, focusing on shipping

to energy, agriculture, and industrial zones.

lanes and rail and road infrastructure.

⇒ Conclusion:-

The IMEC, as a project to counter China's BRI by ~~the~~ ^{its} rival nations, the US and India, has the opportunity to develop close ties and trade relations with Europe and Middle East. But it cannot compete ^{with} the China's BRI project. The challenges faced by IMEC and its comparison with already expanded and near to completion project of China is world only be known as a mere effort to counter China's progress. China is gripping its influence over the world and the project, BRI, would not only help China to increase its influence, but will also help the developing countries in ^{their} path ^{towards} of development. Therefore, it is impossible to counter China at this stage with any kind of project.

QUESTION NO # 5:-

How do you see

Afghan refugees?

Ans:-

PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS:-

⇒ INTRODUCTION:-

Pak-Afghan relation refers to the relationship between the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Islamic ^{Emirate} of Afghanistan. The relation between these both countries had always seen ups and downs, mostly downs. But today, there is again a deteriorating relation between two countries. The two major irritants in Pak-Afghan relations in current situations are the attacks of TTP and ISKP on Pakistan using Afghan soil against Pakistan and ^{the} pull out of Afghan refugees by Pakistan. The former reason remained ^{as a} consistent irritant between ^{the} ^{relationship} two of two countries ^{since War On Terror (WOT)}, but the later one is unprecedented.

These relations will continue to deteriorate unless both countries came up with solutions. Historically, Pakistan and other countries, particularly China, had tried their best to normalize the relations but failed. Therefore,

It is now necessary to come up with more efficient solutions. The normalization of relations between these countries will not only stabilize the region, but will improve the development of both countries.

⇒ THE REVIVAL OF TTP ^{AND RISE OF} JAI ISKP ATTACKS IN PAKISTAN: THE DETERIORATION OF RELATIONS:-

There is an increasing presence of TTP and other organizations in the merged districts of KPK. Secondly, there is an increasing number of attacks on security forces, specially in merged districts and DI Khan on both military and para-military forces and increase of attacks on police. Pakistan has repeatedly provided evidences to Afghan Taliban government of TTP involvement in attacks in Pakistan, using Afghan land. But, Afghan Taliban had consistently rejected the claims. For example, in a recent interview in December 2023, the Islamic Emirate's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid, noted that the crime is a personal matter and therefore, this issue should not be linked to Afghanistan. Due to these attacks and non-cooperation from Afghan government, the relations

between Kabul and Islamabad are deteriorating more and more.

⇒ REASONS OF THESE ATTACKS AND HOW ARE THEY DETERIORATING THE RELATIONS:

Some of the major reasons that could prove the role of attacks on Pakistan and the deteriorating relations of both countries are as follows:

1. THE VICTORY OF AFGHAN TALIBAN ENCOURAGE TTP TO CARRY OUT ATTACKS IN PAKISTAN:-

During the WOT, US, NATO, and ISAF (International Security Assistance Forces) failed to defeat the Afghan Taliban. Resultantly, the government was handed over to Afghan Taliban in 2021. This encouraged TTP to challenge the writ of the state of Pakistan once again by increasing their attacks across the country. Moreover, TTP and ISKP is using Afghan land for launching attacks on Pakistan. Therefore, due to the security concerns of Pakistan and the involvement of Afghan soil in the attacks on Pakistan had strained the relations of two countries.

2. THE FLAWED NEGOTIATION PROCESS OF ISLAMABAD

WITH TTP RESULTED IN THE DANGEROUS REVIVAL OF TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS:-

The government authorities are silent whether civilians or the military ~~also~~ is responsible for flawed negotiations. But the negotiations held in 2011, after Taliban took over in Afghanistan, between Pakistan and TTP did not conclude on a positive or efficient note. Certain demands that were put forward by Taliban (TTP) were unacceptable by Pakistan. These demands are: reversal of the 25th Amendment/FATA merger bill, administrative control ^{ex} of FATA and Malakand division, reinforcement of FCR and the imposition of 2011 kind of Shariah system in ex-FATA. Due to the rejection of Pakistan to these demands and the flawed negotiations, TTP increased their attacks and hence deteriorating the Kabul-Islamabad relations further.

3. WEAK POLICING SYSTEM IN MERGED DISTRICTS AND OTHER PARTS OF COUNTRY GAVE SPACE TO TTP AND OTHER TERRORIST GROUPS TO LAUNCH ATTACKS:-

The untrained and unequipped police force of Pakistan is not able to fight with the trained and equipped terrorist groups like TTP and GSKP. Due to the weak police force of Islamabad, TTP and

other such groups are easily carrying out attacks throughout the country. Now, this is the ^{internal} drawback of Pakistan, but the involvement of Afghanistan in the training and provision of equipment of TTP is deteriorating the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

⇒ PULL OUT OF AFGHAN REFUGEES FROM PAKISTAN: FURTHER DETERIORATION OF RELATIONS:-

In the wake of increasing attacks on Pakistan by TTP that use Afghanistan soil for launching attacks, the decision of Pakistan to pull out Afghan refugees from country raises suspicions. Many ~~would~~ believe, including Afghanistan, that this decision was made by Islamabad in retaliation of the increasing attacks from ~~Pakistan~~ Afghanistan soil. But, Pakistan had its own reasons for the pull out. Whatever the reasons could be, this decision had created a gap between the relations of Kabul and Islamabad and had strained the relations that could have long-lasting impacts.

⇒ REASONS GIVEN BY PAKISTAN ABOUT THE PULLING OUT OF AFGHAN REFUGEES:-

The reasons given by Pakistan are as follows:

1. A SERIES OF AFGHAN REFUGEES FOUND INVOLVED IN TERRORIST ATTACKS IN PAKISTAN:-

Many of the Afghan refugees are un-documented and that are believed to have been entered Pakistan illegally. The involvement of some of these non-registered refugees is a security threat of Pakistan when Islamabad is already entangled with ^{increased} terrorist attacks. Therefore, it is necessary to pull them out.

2. WOT^{HAS} OFFICIALLY ENDED IN AFGHANISTAN AND NOW THERE IS STABLE GOVERNMENT IN AFGHANISTAN:-

Afghan refugees migrated to Pakistan when the United States initiated War on Terror on Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks. So, due to instability and war-like conditions in Afghanistan, people of Kabul migrated to Pakistan. But, now the Wot has officially ended and there is a stable government in Afghanistan, so they should go back to their country.

3. THESE REFUGEES HAVE BEEN A BURDEN ON THE ECONOMY OF PAKISTAN:-

There are total more than 3.5 million Afghans

in Pakistan, among which 1.7 million are non-registered. Due to the deteriorating conditions of Pakistan's economy, and ^{as a} country on the brink of default, Islamabad cannot support this huge number of refugees. Moreover, they have curtailed the daily wages jobs for the locals which is a setback ~~for~~ Pakistani labors. Therefore, the decision was the need of the time.

⇒ HOW THE RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES COULD BE IMPROVED:-

In such deteriorating relations, it is necessary to improve the relations between both countries.

There are different solutions that could be employed but all solutions are bilateral i.e., both countries should participate equally to normalize the relations. Some of these relations are as follows:

1. KABUL MUST DEVEER A QUESTION ON TTP:-

As Pakistan had ^{consistently} provided evidences of the use of Afghan soil in TTP attacks on Pakistan; therefore, ^{Afghanistan} Pakistan should take the matter seriously.

On 28th November, 2023, Pakistan's Foreign Office (FO) summoned head of the Afghan diplomatic

mission to convey four explicit demands to Afghan government ~~and~~ after the attack on DI Khan by TTP (Anam Ul Haque, Pak-Afghan Relations - DI Khan attack and TTP, December 2023). Kabul should meet and fulfill the demands of Islamabad to improve the stability in region and also the relations between both countries.

2. PAKISTAN SHOULD NEGOTIATE WITH KABUL AND TTP:-

Pakistan should conduct ~~bilateral~~ ^{trilateral} talks with both Afghanistan and TTP to address the root causes of attacks. The previously flawed negotiations should be reconsidered and new conditions should be set that would be easy to accept for both.

3. PAKISTAN MUST INCREASE ITS BORDER SURVEILLANCE-

Due to the porous border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, different things, from weapons to people, cross the border easily. So, Pakistan should increase and improve its border surveillance to prevent the flow of illegal materials and refugees. Afghanistan, on the other hand, should also increase its border surveillance.

4. PAKISTAN MUST CAREFULLY DEAL WITH REFUGEE CRISIS / CASE AND AFGHANISTAN SHOULD COOPERATE IN THE MATTER:-

Although the decision of pulling the Afghan refugees was good decision, but Pakistan should not do this by force. Because this will turn these refugees against Pakistan. Moreover, Afghanistan should also support this decision by understanding the current economic situations of Pakistan.

⇒ CONCLUSION:-

The deterioration of relations between Kabul and Islamabad is not a new thing. But, the strained relations at this time, at which Pakistan is struggling with economy and Afghanistan is struggling with its stability and international recognition, are not affordable by both. Both countries should address the main irritants that deteriorate their relations. These irritants include rise of TTP attacks on Pakistan using Afghan soil and the pull out of Afghan refugees by Pakistan. These issues could be the cooperation of Kabul in TTP and refugee cases, increasing border surveillance and trilateral talks between Pakistan, Afghanistan, and TTP.