

QUESTION #5

How do you see Pak-Afghan relations in the wake of repeated attacks by TTP & ISKP in Pakistan using Afghan land against Pakistan and in return Islamabad decided to pull out Afghan refugees?

ANSWER

Introduction

"whoever wanted to stay in our country, must stay legally," reminded the interior minister of Pakistan in one of his address. The tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan have further escalated with Pakistan government's decision to deport illegal migrants living in Pakistan for decades. The decision is taken on the wake of rising militants attacks in the western provinces of Pakistan, especially on the security forces. ~~at~~ on the other hand, Afghanistan is facing one of the greatest humanitarian crisis ~~to~~ in its history. Afghanistan has condemned the decision claiming that ~~it~~ it need time to support such a huge numbers of individuals. On the issue of ^{rising} TTP insurgency, the Taliban government has said that it is Pakistan's internal matter and Afghanistan has nothing to do with it. Therefore, the once lukewarm relations between the two countries have now worsened.

The rising insurgency in Pakistan and its decision of mass deportation

The interim Prime Minister of Pakistan remarked that the TTP attacks have risen by 60% since the Taliban gained control. Furthermore, the former Foreign Minister of Pakistan said that Afghan nationals had been involved in several suicide attacks on security forces along the frontier. With the increased ~~and~~ terrorist attacks, reaching a 6 year high level, Pakistani government, on 3rd October, 2023, decided to carry out the mass deportation of illegal Afghans. The decision was triggered by the major attack that TTP launched in Chitral in ~~early~~ September, 2023. Moreover, the failure of Taliban government to cooperate ~~or~~ with Pakistan on containing TTP and saying it as Pakistan's internal matter has further infuriated Pakistan. Afghanistan is not only violating its agreement in Doha accords (i.e. to prevent militants inside Afghanistan from attacking other countries), but ^{is} also distancing itself from the whole matter.

The official statistics quoted in IPRI states that there are about 3-4 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan. 600,000 of them crossed the border (illegally) since August, 2021. out of all the Afghan refugees, 1.32 million

are registered and have the Proof of Registration cards (PoR), 850,000 have received Afghan citizenship certificate (ACC), while more than 1.7 million refugees are unregistered. Pakistan has been hosting such a large burden for about 4 decades even being a non-signatory to the Geneva convention and its clauses on refugee rights.

Afghan government's reaction on the repatriation

Afghan government is ill-prepared for the mass exodus returning there. It is already facing the worst humanitarian crisis, including destruction from earthquakes, economic crisis and sanctions by international community. In such a state, it has condemned Pakistan's decision and has demanded for some more years to get prepared to welcome their native citizens.

Moreover, it has formed a commission to deal with refugees returning home. The government is also issuing temporary SIM cards and national identity cards to the returnees. Furthermore, it has established bank accounts to receive donations for the returnees.

Implications of the decision on Pakistan and Afghanistan

• Pakistan's security situation:-

It will help to restore the security in Pakistan, especially in the western provinces. With restricted border crossings, it can control the ^{illegal} movements. ~~For this~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~ The free border crossing resulted in the highest number of militant attacks in Pakistan in the years 2023, after about 6 years. The escalated killings of security officials will be controlled by this step.

• Pakistan's domestic situation:-

It will also help Pakistan improve itself economically. With controlled border crossings, it is working strictly against dollar smuggling. This has helped improved the value of Pakistani currency against dollar for the past few ~~years~~ months. Furthermore, it will allow Pakistan to provide its own citizens with job opportunities and better living standards. Therefore, the step will improve Pakistan's internal conditions.

• Pakistan's international standing:-

This step will,

however, isolate Pakistan internally. Since the implementation of the decision, Pakistan has received much criticism from the international community, including the human rights groups. Therefore, it will undermine Pakistan's reputation as a nation.

• challenges for Afghanistan:-

It will escalate the problem of humanitarian crisis already prevailing in ~~the~~ Afghanistan. The devastation caused by earthquakes, sanctions and economic challenges will further cripple Afghan government. It will also be a problem for girls and women who will be a direct target for the conservative Afghan government. Furthermore, the anti-Taliban individuals, who ran from Afghanistan in order to save themselves from Taliban's for their support against their rule.

• opportunity for India:-

The decision will provide India with an opportunity to come close to Afghanistan and make its western border unfriendly. India is already working to gain Taliban's support by providing scholarship to its citizens and also by the ~~the~~ huge investments made in various

Sectors within the country.

Way forward: What should be done?

Pakistan should pass necessary domestic laws on ~~refugee~~ ^{legal} refugee and asylum seekers to bring clarity to the issue of immigrants. It will allow better refugee management besides curbing illegal migration and stay in the country.

Pakistan should also prevent illegal border crossings by investing in capacity building and training of border security forces and immigration apparatus of the country including FC, FIA, police and customs.

visa process should be made easy and corruption free for the Afghans who want to come to Pakistan legally. Pakistan should not let people-to-people contact and trades with Afghan be adversely impacted in the process of identification, detention and deportation of illegal migrants. Furthermore, Pakistan must also raise its inability to further sustain illegal migrants.

Afghan government, on the other hand, should openly accept Pakistan's decision as its citizens will provide benefit

to the country in long-term, by contributing in various sectors.

¶ The international community should provide financial assistance to Afghanistan and also make the sanctions lenient. Also, the developed nations must offer ~~to~~ to host some of the returnees.

Conclusion

Although, the decision of Pakistan to deport illegal Afghan is ~~a~~ difficult but it is a necessary one. It will allow ~~the~~ Pakistan to bring internal stability and will also allow Afghanistan to utilize the potential of their citizens in the nation building. As the interim interior minister of Pakistan said, "mass deportations are a sign that Pakistan is "putting its house in order".

QUESTION #8

SIFC is expecting huge foreign direct investment in Pakistan from the Middle East and China. How do you see the chance of ~~invest~~ investment in Pakistan?

ANSWER

Introduction

"SIFC is not merely a council but a vision to reshape Pakistan's investment terrain," said Sahibzada M. Usman in one of his articles. SIFC offers global outreach to Pakistan, with a chance to attract foreign and domestic investments. Its aim is to "breathe new life into Pakistan's economy by channeling investments into sectors that show ~~edse~~ immense potential." It will help in job creation, infrastructural development, technological adoption and overall elevation in global economic stature. It will shorten lengthy business processes through a collaborative and cooperative "whole of the government approach" with representation of all stakeholders. It is a welcome step amongst the crippling economy of Pakistan as it is backed by all powerful corridors of Pakistan. Additionally, it incorporates investment in various fields including ~~economic sector~~, agricultural sector, IT, tourism sector, etc. to ensure national economic development. It has been successful in attracting vast investments, ~~from~~ especially from the Gulf investors. SIFC will help materialise those

investments in priority areas of energy, IT, mining and agriculture by fixing the regulatory regime and ensuring policy consistency.

What is SIFC?

SIFC stands for "Special Investment Facilitation Council." It was developed in June 2023 by the mutual consent of all stakeholders in Pakistan. The council has five committees or subdivisions:-

- ① Appex Committee, which is headed by the Prime Minister
- ② Executive committee, which is headed by the Minister of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives and a National Coordinator representing Pakistan Army
- ③ Implementation committee, which is headed by Special Assistant to PM (SAPM) and the Director General of SIFC (DG SIFC) representing Pakistan Army
- ④ SIFC secretariat, which is headed by SAPM, DG SIFC and secretary SIFC
- ⑤ Sectorial division, or the division of each sector under the Implementation committee, which is headed by the respective secretary

Investments arriving Pakistan

Asian Development Bank	signed six deals of \$ 1.2 billion
World Bank	approved \$ 350 million for the second Resilient Institutions for Sustainable Economy (RISE - II) project
IMF	approved to release second tranche of bail-out package, which is worth \$ 700 million
Saudi Oil Giant, Aramco	will invest about \$ 100 million in Pakistan

SIFC creating win-win Paradigm

SIFC will create win-win paradigm for Pakistan as well as for brotherly countries.

• For Pakistan:-

It will help revival of economy through 'import substitution and export enhancement'; besides multi-sectorial impetus, it will contribute to Human Development and technological transformation; will add value

to our products and ensure food security; and will bring socio-economic dividends through employment opportunities and development of local communities via 'Corporate Social Responsibility'.

• For Brotherly Countries:-

Besides expanding their politico-economic engagements and good will about Pakistan, it will help diversify their economies in line with their development visions, will provide assured food supplies and will make available a pool of trained human resource for their domestic industries.

Advantages of SIFC

1- Economic Development:-

Through SIFC, Pakistan has presented 'Economic Revival Plan', to generate \$1 trillion in FDI by 2035. Pakistan is effectively taking measures to convert this plan into a reality. Since its implementation, rupee has been strengthening against dollar and the stock exchange shows positive results. Additionally, agriculture sector is also seen to show good results. For the economic revival, Pakistan has taken

stern action against the smuggling mafia; it has also started a campaign to deport illegal inhabitants. Moreover, about 464 terrorists have been arrested or killed in intelligence-based operations.

2- A Holistic Approach :-

The SIFC is a holistic approach of development. It incorporates various sectors including the agriculture sector, IT, tourism, defence sectors. All these ~~sectors~~ sectors will work collectively for national economic uplift. Sahibzada M. Usman said regarding its holistic approach, "The ~~road~~ trajectory of SIFC isn't just about individual sectoral gains; its about national prosperity."

3- Transparency in the System :-

The SIFC aims to improve taxation mechanisms, ensure clarity, fairness and ease of compliance. This is because an investment-friendly environment is not just about investing capital, it's also about creating a conducive environment.

Thus, transparency not only instills confidence among investors but also showcases government's commitment to the nation's economic uplift.

4- Contribution in Power Sector:-

The SIFC also aims to resolve issues tied to inflated electricity bills. By reducing financial burden on power sector, the initiative aims to bring down energy costs, directly benefiting industries and common populace.

5- Involvement of Military:-

The SIFC offers an integrating approach by involving military. It is also referred to as the 'hybrid-civil-military forum'. The initiative is both symbolic and strategic; symbolic, because it shows unified national vision as the pillars of the state are united under the collective objective, strategic, because it will ensure policy continuity and ~~attract~~ restore confidence of investors.

Challenges for SIFC

The council will face challenges ~~to~~ regarding:

- The intricate geo politics of the region
- Infrastructural needs
- Global economic dynamics
- Ensuring sustainable environment friendly approach
- Fostering a culture of domestic investment

along with foreign investment.

Suggestion for Economic Uplift

The Reko Dik gold and mineral reserves of Pakistan have an immense potential for its economic uplift. It is worth more than \$700 billion. It has the potential to attract foreign and domestic investors and create a lot of job opportunities as well, in the form of mining, machinery operating, etc.

Conclusion

The SIFC will ensure a conducive environment for business and investment. Resultantly, it will lead the way for a prosperous Pakistan that stands tall in global economic order. The implementation of the plan shows a clear road map guided by the nation's top leadership, as a result of which, the future of Pakistan's economy looks promising. As Sahibzada M. Usman said, "By creating an investor-friendly landscape, optimizing domestic resources, and ensuring policy continuity, SIFC can pivot Pakistan from an economy with potential to one of realized growth and sustainable development."

What is the 'Losses and Damages' concept floated on the platform of COP-27? Critically evaluate the implications of its practical materialization, COP-28. Also identify how Pakistan could benefit from it.

Introduction

COP-27, held in Sharm el-Sheikh (Egypt), added the 'Loss and Damage Fund' to climate politics. With the persistent demand of more than fifty countries, including Pakistan, the international community agreed to allocate funds for the developing nations that are the worst affected of climate change. COP-28, held in UAE last year, was the practical materialization of COP-27. It was a significant step as it led the developed countries to realise the importance of curbing climate change and contributing for the developing nations to develop climate resilient infrastructure. It acknowledged ~~the~~ fossil fuels as the leading cause of climate change and called for transitioning away from them, relying more on renewable sources. It also helped to approve finances for developed nations for various sectors that are vulnerable to climate change. COP-28 ~~is~~ is specially significant for Pakistan, which is the ~~most~~ least contributor, but still, the worst affected of climate change. The realisation of climate change as the biggest problem by almost the whole

world is a significant step towards curbing its effects.

Concept of Losses and Damages

The concept of losses and damages was an agreement made by the developed nations to provide funding for communities dealing with devastating impact of climate change. The concept was floated in COP-27, held in Sharm-el-Sheikh, when over fifty developing countries highlighted the loss they encounter due to climate change, which is mainly contributed by the developed countries. The Loss and Damage Fund recognised this injustice and aimed to help developing nations to deal with the unavoidable impacts of climate change. The LDF was significant and widely approved by developing countries because it did not burdenize the developing nations alone as the funding was also accepted from private and public investors. The efforts by developing countries, NGOs and media coverages led to the adoption of this concept.

~~Implications of Co~~

COP-28

The 28th conference of Parties (COP-28) was held in Dubai from 30th November till 12th December of last year. It provided the practical materialization

of COP-27. Many significant pledges were made at the conference which manifested the world's seriousness to address the grave nature of climate change.

Implications of COP-28

① Transitioning away from fossils:-

The COP-28 called for a 'net zero' by ²⁰⁵⁰ by transitioning away from fossil fuels. It aims for a rapid near-term shift from fossils, as well as ~~to~~ a long-term direction of travel to a zero-carbon future.

For this purpose, an agreement has been made to triple renewable energy capacity and double its energy efficiency by 2030. Additionally, the step also aims to accelerate emissions reductions from road transport to a variety of pathways, including public transport and cycling, in order to reduce emissions. COP-28 has, therefore, been a significant step in necessitating the need to reduce fossil consumption.

② LDF operationalised:-

COP-28 has been a successful attempt to operationalise the Loss and Damage Fund (LDF). It was designed to help climate-vulnerable countries deal with climate impacts that go beyond what people can adapt to. Through the platform of COP-28, the weatherier

nations along with the private investors have pledged to contribute an amount worth US\$700 billion. Although this amount is less than the loss encountered by the climate-affectedees, it is a successful attempt towards the realisation of their responsibility by the developed world.

③ Framework for Global Goal on Adaptation Established-

The global goal to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change, adopted in Paris Agreement 2015, has been agreed upon in COP-28. The countries agreed for an adaptation policy; however, the targets are yet not quantified nor did they include the financial and other support for the developing countries. These concerns have been kept for the upcoming conferences.

④ The Need of Climate Finance:-

The finance issues have been planned to COP-29, with the adoption of a new climate finance goal for the next year, that is, the New Collective Qualitative Goal (NCQG). The new goal will replace developed countries' current commitment of providing \$100 billion annually in climate finance to developing nations, and will need to take into account the developing countries' needs and priorities estimated at \$5.8 trillion to \$5.9 trillion upto 2030. Moreover, the COP-28 has ~~acknowledged~~ acknowledged the reflections on finance progress by Global Stocktake decisions,

highlighting the failure of countries to meet \$100 billion goal in 2021. Other than that, an amount of \$35 billion have been pledged for Green Climate Fund, which is the largest international fund dedicated to support developing countries in tackling climate change. The initiative is quite significant for the developing world.

⑤ Strengthening National Climate commitments:-

With the Global Stocktake Outcomes, the countries are now expected to update their 2030 targets and present more ambitious targets by 2035. For instance, the need to limit warming to 1.5°C requires reducing global greenhouse gas emissions 60% below 2019 levels by 2035. Also, the need to include agricultural sector has been addressed. 159 nations have signed COP-28 Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food systems, and Climate Action, committing to integrate food and food systems to their NDCs by 2025. Additionally, Oil and Gas Decarbonization Charter has also been signed by over 50 international oil companies with aims to achieve net zero emissions in each country's direct operations by or before 2050, to achieve near-zero methane leakage from the production of oil and gas by 2030, and to achieve routine flaring (i.e. burning excess gas) by 2030. Therefore, the strengthening of climate commitments have been an achievement of COP-28.

Benefits for Pakistan

① Loss and Damage Fund:-

Pakistan has been successful in pleading its case to acquire funds for the damage caused by climate change. Pakistan contributes less than 1% in the global pollution, still it is frequently hit by climate disasters. The nation is still reeling for the impacts of 2022 flood. In these circumstances, the pledge in the name of Loss and Damage Fund is highly beneficial for Pakistan.

② Strengthened Pakistan's commitment to Proactive Climate Initiatives:-

Pakistan has been very serious about taking proactive climate initiatives. Pakistan's commitment in this regard is manifested by the fact that it successfully accomplished its COP-26 goals of 60% reduction in projected emissions by 2030, as per the prime minister of Pakistan. The clean energy projects, including hydel, wind and solar projects in various regions of Pakistan, as well as its successful plantation drives highlights Pakistan's seriousness for the issue. The allocation of funds, although still less than Pakistan's loss, will strengthen Pakistan's commitment to continue proactive measures in this regard.

③ Benefits for health and farming:-

The fundings allocated for health and farming in COP-28 will also benefit Pakistan. A total of over \$17 billion has been announced by USA and UAE ~~to~~ to advance climate-friendly ~~to~~ farming. Pakistan, being the agricultural country, will benefit from the funds. Secondly, ~~several~~ UAE and several charities have offered \$777 million in financing for eradicating neglected tropical diseases. Therefore, COP-28 offers a chance for Pakistan to improve its health and farming sectors.

④ Benefit from Climate Fund:-

About \$30 billion of climate fund has been established by UAE for global climate solutions that could lead to \$250 billion of investment by the end of the decade. The fund will contribute ^{\$25 billion} for climate strategies and \$5 billion specifically to incentivise investment flows into the Global South. Pakistan, being one of the most vulnerable countries from climate change including frequent floods and droughts, will benefit from the fund.

conclusion

The establishment of Loss and Damage Fund in COP-28 was a major step towards realising climate crisis. Apart from the

LDF, COP-28 also brings several funds in various sectors. The generosity of the developed countries in announcing large investments may become fruitful for the Global South, which is burdened by the climate change activities of the Global North. The conference optimistically pledged to reduce global emissions, realising their faults in not being able to follow past commitments. COP-28 offers wider prospects for Pakistan, a country crippled by the climate disasters. Therefore, COP-28 is a step in the right direction for attaining global good.