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Current Affairs

(3)

Q: NO: 04

INTRODUCTION:

KSA and Iran engaged in rivalry for decades. The relation between two countries turned out to be normal last year with China brokered a rapprochement between Riyadh and Tehran. This normalization of ties between two countries would lead to a resumption of full diplomatic relations between two historical rivals. The Iran-Saudi deal would not only impact the regional ~~con~~ conflicts but also have far reaching implications for Pakistan as well. From stable Middle East to region to giving opportunities to Pakistan, this historical deal would pay a positive roadmap.

Historical Analysis of Saudi-Iran Rivalry

Riyadh and Tehran were engaged in fighting over

control of the Middle East region. Both were the geo-strategic rivals in the Persian Gulf. They were engaged in proxy wars in Yemen, Syria and Iraq. Both countries supported their respective groups to fight over the influence of the region. They both have geo-strategic, ethnic, and sectarian interest in the conflict, ~~for~~ this they made alliance with the groups.

Saudi-Iran deal-China at its best

Historically, their talks were reported to be held in Iraq and Oman, but did not have any fruitful results. On 10 March 2023, China brokered a deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia. In this deal, both countries agreed to restore their diplomatic relations, to reactivate their

security and economic pact, to reopen their embassies in respective countries and ag to not interfere in each other's internal matters. As a part of this deal, both countries would take advantage. This deal is a boon for Iran and win-win situation for KSA in many ways.

"This is a victory for dialogue, a victory for peace, offering major good news at a time of much turbulence in the world."

(China's Top Diplomat WANG YI)

Impacts of KSA-Iran

Approachment on the Conflicts in the Middle East

Beyond improving bilateral relations, the agreement may also help lessen tensions in the broader Gulf region.

(a) Opening the door to peace and stability

It has been noted that both the states reportedly said that they would curb their support to all the networks that agitated against each other. Iran said it would curtail arm. shipments to Houthis rebels in Yemen.

"We are ready to back any negotiations ~~which~~ would help establish peace and stability in Yemen."

Iranian F.M

(b) Reducing the Shia-Sunni Stiff in the Gulf states

As both states were also engaged in sectarian stiff, this deal would reduce the Shia-Sunni dilemma in the region. Saudi-Iran deal would promote the social status of Gulf region.

(c) Stabilizing energy markets

Iran and KSA are among the top oil and energy market in the world. With the normalization of ties between the two states, energy markets would get stable. This eventually will improve the relationships between other gulf countries which are also engaged in proxy wars.

(d) Improving Diplomatic Relations among Middle Eastern countries

As both ~~countries~~ states agreed to restore their diplomatic ties between each other, many other states also agreed to do so by ending the conflicts among them.

After more than a decade, Syria has been improved its relations with Arab league. There are also the efforts of improving the relationship between Iran and Egypt.

Implications of Saudi-Iran Deal on Pakistan

The peace deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia has obvious consequences for Pakistan. All of them are positive.

(a) Normalization of ties with both states

As both states have equal ^{importance} ~~opportunities~~ for Pakistan, spiritually, economically, socially, this deal would bring the vast opportunities for Pakistan to normalize and balance its ties with Iran and KSA.

(b) Improve the economic and Diplomatic relationship with Iran

Being a neighbour country, Iran has positive implications for Pakistan. There are security and ethnic concerns between the countries which would bring positive results by this deal. Economically both

states may start working on the TAPS gas pipeline and open their border markets to improve the security situation for Pakistan. This deal would bring win-win situation for Pakistan.

(c) Rise of OIC: Kashmir Issue can be addressed

Being a Muslim country, Iran and Saudi Arabia are the parts of OIC. With the normalization of ties between these two states, Pakistan has the opportunity to bring the Kashmir issue to the forefront which can be addressed effectively.

(d) Investment opportunities thus economic stability Stable middle eastern

region will bring investment opportunities for Pakistan. Investment in gas and trade opportunities would be beneficial for Pakistan to stabilize its economy.

As-Is-To-Be Analysis OF Saudi-Iran Rapprochement

<u>As-Is</u>	<u>To-Be</u>
Cut-off Diplomatic Relations	Diplomatic relations restored
Zero-sum game	Win-win situation
Bilateralism	Multilateralism
Military conflicts	Economic cooperation
Hostile rivalry	Socio-Political stability
Proxy conflict	Trade linkages
Geo strategic rivalry	Geo economic cooperation
Regional instability	Regional stability

CONCLUSION:

The handshake and reconciliation between KSA-Iran in Beijing are milestone. They also provide a template for the resolution of complex issues like Syria, Yemen, Lebanon, and Iraq. Moreover, this deal is a blessing in disguise for Pakistan in many ways. It is hoped that the world will see the dawn of peace and stability.



Q: Nos: 06

INTRODUCTION:

Historically, Pak-Afghanistan relationship has not been proved a friendly because of many issues between two states. Pakistan has many interest in Afghanistan including economic, ~~military~~, security, political, and cultural. After the rise of Taliban government in Afghanistan, Pakistan have to face several challenges within country. security

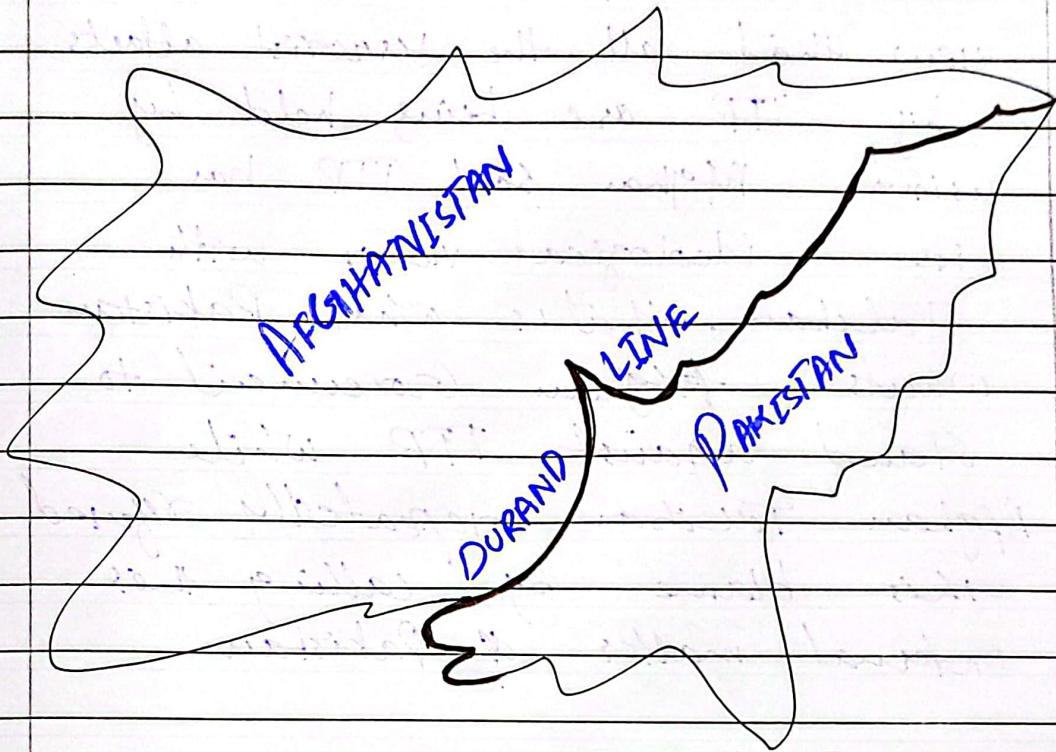
challenges are above all one of them. The recent rise of militancy in Pakistan, and Pakistan's decision to pull out Afghan refugees now paved the new concerns in the both countries' relationships.

Background of Pak-Afghanistan

Relationship

Pakistan has been engaged in hostile relations with Afghanistan since its inception mainly due to demand issue, Pashtunistan issue, and proxy wars. In 1980s, Pakistan was engaged in Mujahideen movement against the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. During 1990s, when Taliban took control over government, relations were restored because Pakistan recognized the Taliban government. Since then, after 9/11, Pakistan took active part in war in

Terror. In Aug 2021, when Taliban took control in power again, Pakistan has been facing several challenges in order to maintain a friendly relations.



Challenges in Pakistan-

Afghanistan Relations

Pak-Afghanistan relations are deteriorated in the wake of recent attacks by TTP in Pakistan using Afghan land against Pakistan and in return Islamabad decided to pull out Afghan refugees.

(a) Security Challenges

(i) Increasing terrorist activities by TTP:

Pakistan has the view that all the terrorist attacks by TTP are being held by using Afghan soil. TTP has its ideological views with Taliban, that's why Pakistan wants Afghan Government to stand against TTP while Afghan Taliban repeatedly refused this blame by calling this internal matter of Pakistan.

(ii) Border Fencing

As Taliban Government is of the view that durand line is not a border they continue to create hurdles in border fencing. Attacks on soldiers in order to curb the border fencing is being carried by Taliban Government.

(b) Refugee Crisis

Since Pakistan is welcoming Afghan refugees since its inception, it is among one of the challenges in Pakistan Afghan relations. Being a developing country with already fragile economy, Pakistan is not ready to welcome more refugees from Afghanistan. The recent policy of Pakistan government to return Afghan refugees is one of the steps country has to take in order to improve its economy and security.

(c) Increasing Conservative policies by Afghan Government and its effects on Pakistan

Afghan Government has been implementing conservative policies against women which will eventually lead to civil war in the country. In this scenario, Pakistan will be directly impacted.

Ways to Improve Pak-Afghan Relations

(a) Diplomacy & Dialogue

One of the best options for the countries is a diplomacy and dialogue. Though diplomacy can be proved a vital role in bringing friendly relations, Pakistan should engage with Afghanistan.

(b) Counter Terrorism Cooperation

Pakistan should cooperate with Afghanistan to bring peace and stability in the country. For this, both countries should engage in counter terrorism cooperation so that there would be stability in the country. Both side should take strong actions against terrorism.

(c) Refugee assistance

Refugee crisis has become one of the main concerns in Pak-Afghan relation. Pakistan should keep its policy to ~~not~~ back illegal refugee and assist only legal and registered refugees.

(d) Economic Cooperation

Both countries should engage with each other to increase their economy cooperation. Bilateral trade agreements and investment opportunities should be the case in point here.

(e) People to People Interaction

The Government of both states should increase people to people interaction so that cooperation may enhance at local level. Since there is many cultural linkages between two countries, this would be the beneficial in order to stabilize their relations.

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CONCLUSION:

Pak. Afghan Relation has not been so friendly historically. There are many issues and challenges to bring peaceful and stable ties between the two states. If there is no peace and stable government in Afghanistan would come, Pakistan's geo-strategic and geo-economic interest can not be met. Resultantly, the already deteriorated relationship would further exacerbated the situation.

It is hoped that the Pakistan will ~~se~~ bring peace and stability on its western border.