

Current Affairs  
29/10/24

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Q2. Taiwan as a potential conflict between China and USA.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Taiwan is a prospective cause of conflict between China and USA for multiple reasons: both countries are technological giant, Taiwan holds a huge number of silicon sites; Taiwan is located in the South China Sea - a strategic location; China has a problem with Taiwanese pro-US government; Taiwan is struggling for independence and China considers the island its integral part while USA supports Taiwan; and USA's interest in the South China Sea in general. However, such a conflict must be avoided in <sup>any</sup> every condition in the possible manner.

## II: REASONS THAT MAKE TAIWAN A POTENTIAL CONFLICT

### A. The US-China Tech war

Taiwan is naturally blessed with the resources of technological

use. Of them, the rare earth element of **silicon** makes it a viable place to be fought over.

B. Taiwan's strategic location makes it a coveted area

South China Sea  
Taiwan is where China's much of China's trade passes, as Taiwan is on its crossroads



Figure: South China Sea with China's Trade Routes

C. Taiwan's pro-US attitude is a bone of contention for China

At present, US is the biggest rival of China. Taiwan, already a worry for China, will threaten

China's position if the island inches  
close to USA.

#### D. Taiwan's Quest for Sovereignty and US Support it

Since Taiwan is a part of  
China, USA's support in Taiwanese  
secessionist ambitions will threaten  
China.

#### E. US's Interest in the South China Sea due to its geostrategic importance and mineral resources

An unhappy Taiwan with China  
could win US's support and  
subsequently the involvement of  
USA in the region.

### III. Why the Conflict must Be Avoided?

The conflict between USA and  
China over Taiwan must be avoided  
for the following reasons:

## A. A Face-off May Lead To Nuclear War

Both China and USA are nuclear weapons country. Any escalation in tensions may lead to nuclear war which is bound to have destruction.

## B. A conflict over Taiwan may lead To Regional Instability

Taiwan in the South China sea has other suppliers such as the philippines and Malaysia. Any threat to it will involve these countries. Moreover, the trickle down effects of the war will be too difficult to contain.

C. Both countries <sup>if they do not</sup> ~~must~~ cooperate to maintain Taiwan's peace, The island will suffer

The highest stakes here are of Taiwan. This is because the island is not even a self-sufficient state itself.

D. As <sup>A</sup> Incumbent Hegemon and

An Aspiring Hegemon, any Decision they Take will have Global Implications.

Both China and USA have this responsibility to set cooperative instead of warring examples. As it is rightly said "power is a responsibility not a prestige."

E. It is Time to Shift From Geostrategic to Geoeconomic Policies.

The Machiavellian approach of aggrandizement needs to come to an end. Both countries ~~are~~ have their economies with USA at top and China leading the others from second position, the countries having a GDP of about over \$20 trillion.

IV. HOW THE CONFLICT CAN BE AVOIDED

The conflict must be avoided in any way because any escalation in the conflict will have colossal collateral damage.

## A. Taiwan As A mediator

Taiwan can act as a mediator to avoid any possible conflict. As a part of China and an ally of USA, it is for the interest of the three to cooperate in the global front. For this, Taiwan can play a pivotal role.

## B. Regional Actors As Arbitrators

Other countries in the region such as Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, and Thailand can cool down the arising tension. Since the conflict will be in these regions, the countries will be affected.

## C. UN Intervention

The UN has the basic objective of ensuring peace in the world. Realizing the gravity of the situation, the UN and other three members of the UNSC must pursue the two to cooperate.

#### D. The Will of Both the Countries

Both, upon mutual realization and understanding can come to resolve the arising problem.

Both can remain at their stances, however, they must avoid to interact in hostile manners such that they do not indulge in a conflict.

#### E: The Naturalist View

From a naturalist perspective, things happen how they are bound to happen. If a conflict must happen, it will be so no matter what one does to avoid it. Interestingly, this natural course of events is the favor of the world.

#### V. CRITICAL ANALYSIS

China is an aspiring hegemon while USA is the incumbent one.

Both have been working for their self-interests. Keep in mind what suits these nations. In this course,

Pakistan as an ally of China and amicable relations with USA can bring both to work towards a peaceful world.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Taiwan is a major flashpoint in the South China Sea between China and the United States. Both countries have their interests to engage in the matter of the island. Any potential conflict will be devastating for the involved actors, the region and the world as a whole. With mediators such as Taiwan and regional actors and even Pakistan this conflict can and must be avoided.



Q2. US' unconditional support for Israel and its effects on US' image in front of Arab countries, space for China and Russia to penetrate in the Middle East.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The United States have been blatantly supporting Israel in its war in the middle East. This has brought US at a questionable position in front of the Arab countries. The trust is eroding especially when Israel has begun to go beyond Palestine. In such a scenario, the space for other actors to rise in the Middle East is widening, particularly the Western foes China and Russia.

Such a shift in power politics will have significant implications given the fact - that "whoever controls Middle East, controls the world" as Mearsheimer said.

## II. THE UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT OF US FOR ISRAEL

### A. US using veto for Israel in UNSC

A report by Chicago Council on Global Affairs says that US has used its veto power in the UNSC for 46 times.

### B. The supplying of military Aid

The aid for Israel, especially military aid has been more than ever in the past year which included weapons, grants, etc.

### C. Not Condemning Israel's Genocide Against Palestinians and now other Arabs

The United States has barely condemned actions of Israel in the past and not even in ongoing war. So much so that journalists have begun to call the current US president Genocide Joe.

### III. EFFECTS OF US' SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL ON US' IMAGE IN ARAB COUNTRIES

#### A. A probable extinguishing of Abraham Accords

Following UAE, it was assumed that Saudi Arabia would follow the lead in recognizing Israel.

At present, there are nil chances as per analysts for any Muslim country to recognize Palestine.

#### B. Eroding trust of the Muslim countries on US

The United States was assumed to be a mediator on the global front. Having witnessed the global hegemon supporting Israel, the trust does not exist anymore.

#### C. The Inclination of Islamic states towards the Eastern bloc

The Muslim countries have shown an increasing affinity towards Russia and China weakening US' stronghold in those countries.

## D. talks of US hypocrisy upon human rights

The United States has always advocated for human rights. With 143,000 Palestinians dead and thousands of Lebanese involved, it seems dialectical.

## E. US as an accomplice of Genocidal Israel.

Israel's continuous genocide and United States silence, and even support have brought the <sup>muslim</sup> world to believe that US is involved in the genocidal ambitions of Israel.

## IV. US' FALTERING IMAGE AND THE RISE OF RUSSIA AND CHINA IN MIDDLE EAST

### A. The pre-October 7 scenario

The eastern countries particularly China had begun to have an influence in middle east evidenced after KSA-Iran peace deal in March 2023.

## B. Russia's Support for Iran and Inching towards middle East.

Russia has been openly supporting Iran. One such example is its provision of U-400 to Iran which had made Israel's F-35 incapable to severely attack Iran in October.

## C. China as a peacemaker in the middle East

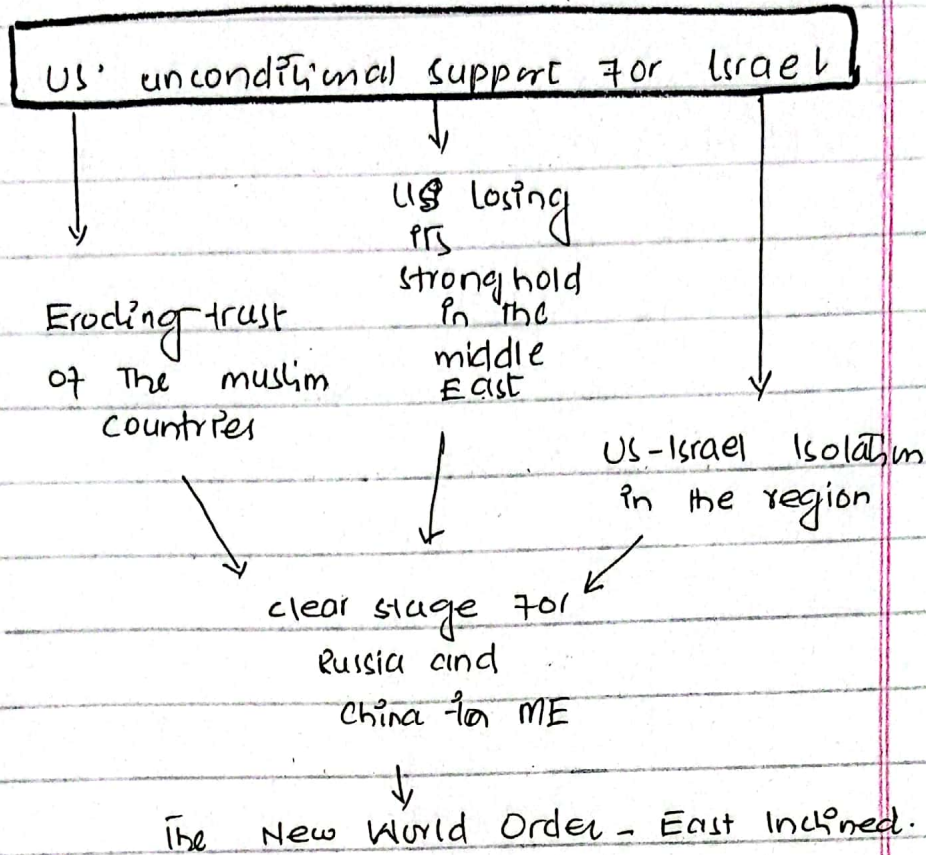
With its an accomplice - in-genocide image, China is rising as a peacemaker in the region. With initial efforts of thaw between Saudi and Iran, China now speaks supporting the ceasefire.

## D. US-Israel middle East Isolation

The duo has been constantly condemned by the muslim world and the East. Even Saudi Arabia, an ally of US, has condemned Israel even though it has not acted physically.



## V. CRITICAL ANALYSIS



## VI. CONCLUSION

Ever since the existence of Israel, United States has stood by the Zionist state though covertly. However, the support has now become open and unconditional. Following Israel's invasion in Gaza and now Southern Lebanon, the country of fifty states now faces the challenge of losing Muslim allies. This sets the stage for Russia,

and China to penetrate in middle  
East to take a strong hold in  
the region where The United States'  
influence had been reigning supreme.



## Q4. Turn-Around of Pakistan's Economy

### I. INTRODUCTION

The economy of a country will barely thrive if engrossed with structural inefficiencies. Pakistan, in order to be on the road to economic prosperity must bring structural reforms in its industrial, agricultural, technological, energy and tax systems. With these issues resolved, Pakistan can then be on a much better trajectory for the turnaround of its economy. It must be also realized that abrupt transition is not possible. There must be short-, medium-, and long-term goals for this matter.

### II. CURRENT STATUS OF PAKISTAN'S ECONOMY

In order to bring structural reforms, the current status of Pakistan's economy must be understood.

## A. Balance of payment Crisis

Although not the grassroots issue, in terms of economical structure, the balance of payment of a country decides its foundation for other development. The current Account Deficit is, at present, a grave concern.

## B. Dwindling Agriculture

Pakistan has largely remained an agrarian country with agriculture now contributing to barely 20% of the country's GDP.

## C. Tax Evasion and Low Tax-to-GDP Ratio

Pakistan's tax-to-GDP ratio stands at 8% with a globally recommended 15% minimum.

Tax evasion is the cause of it

Since the revenue particularly in private sector is high as compared to the tax given.

## D. CIRCULAR DEBT

The energy sector faces the challenge of circular debt which the government struggles at present.

## III. THE NEEDED STRUCTURAL REFORMS

### A. Improvement in the Industrial Sector

Pakistan's industry has a great potential.

- updating the industrial machinery,
- encouraging the private sector to participate (PPP's)
- export based industries.

### B. Need for Agricultural Reforms

- Awareness in farmers + updated agricultural practices



Economic Boom.

### C. Revitalizing the IT Sector

Pakistan ranked 30<sup>th</sup> 91 in Global Innovation Index. There is much room for improvement.

## D. Saving the power sector

Following initiatives may be taken.

- o settling circular debt
- o updating lines and grids to avoid transmission loss
- o Transforming to renewable energy.

## E. Resetting the Tax System

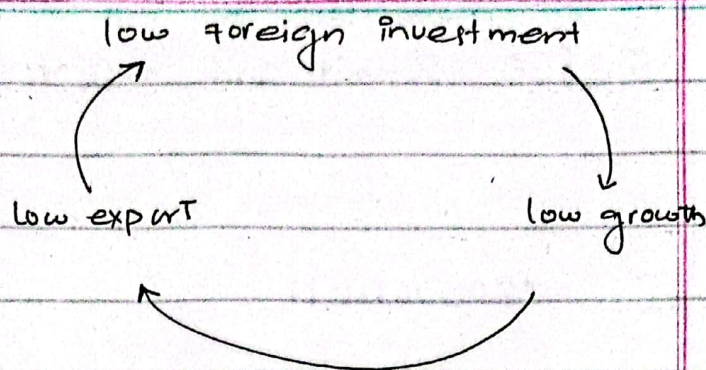
The current tax system is not strict. Tax evasion has become a norm particularly for agricultural and real estates.

The taxing of agriculture from FY-2025 is a good initiative.

Similar steps along with FBR must be taken

## IV. CHALLENGES TO BRINGING THESE REFORMS

Pakistan currently faces the vicious cycle of economic challenges:



## V. CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Pakistan needs to take itself out from economic crisis initiating with structural reforms. Also,

- Reprofitting loan deadlines
- Enhancing security to attract foreign investment.
- Resolve political instability.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the economic prosperity of Pakistan is a daunting but not impossible task. It

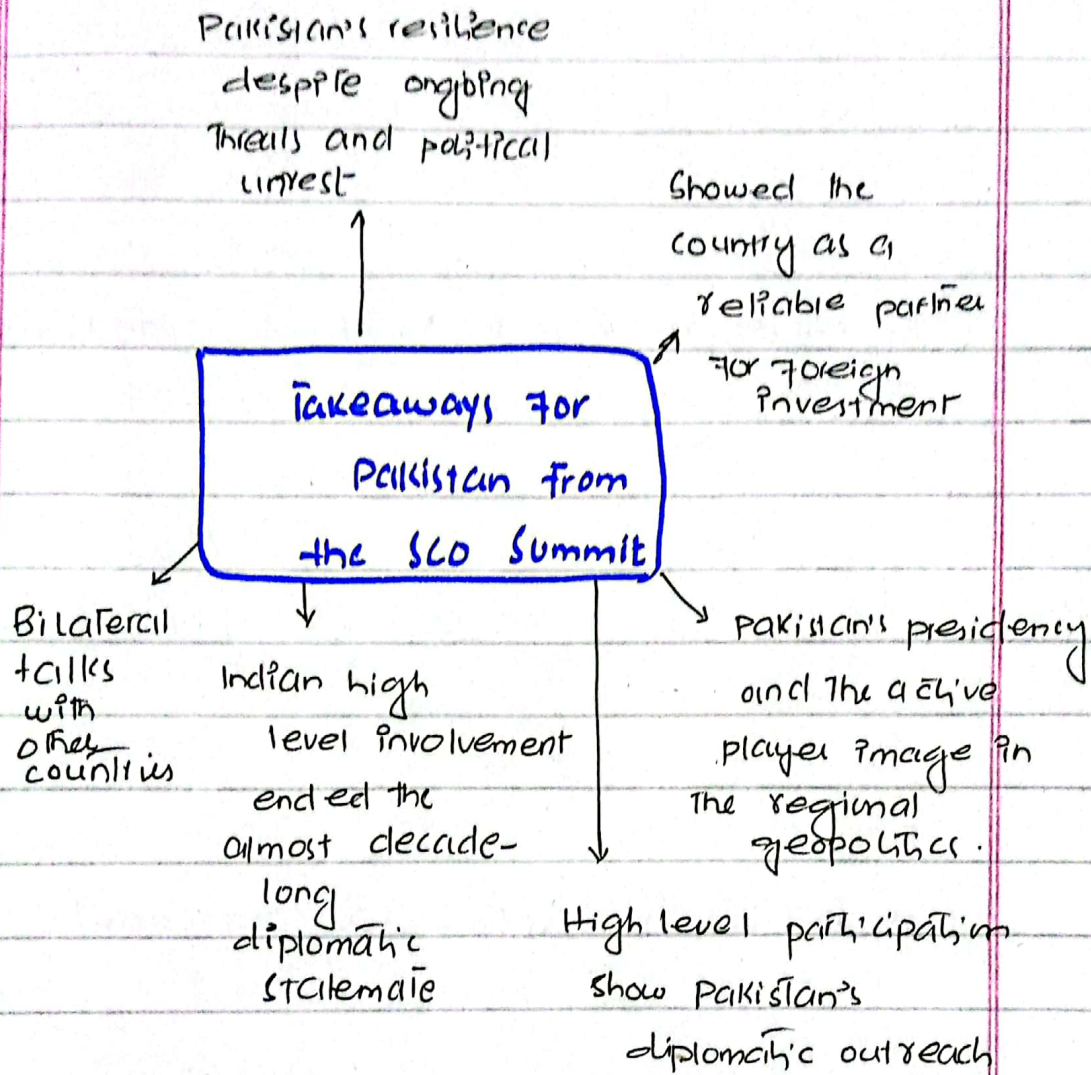
The structural reforms in industrial sector, agriculture, IT, power sector and tax systems are brought, the country can start its race of economic revival soon enough.

## Q. SCO Summit and major takeaways

### I. INTRODUCTION

On October 15 and 16, Pakistan hosted the 23<sup>rd</sup> Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Council of Heads of Government meeting. This was an icebreaker for the country as it brought global attention towards Pakistan as a responsible actor. Pakistan's resilience despite political unrest, its reliability for investment, better image in regional geopolitics, diplomatic outreach and high level involvement put Pakistan in limelight. Moreover, Pakistan can continue the race by resolving internal challenges, participate in more diplomatic relations, advocate for the revival of SPARC, <sup>and</sup> work its way towards BRICS.

### III. MAJOR TAKEAWAYS FOR PAKISTAN



#### A. Pakistan's Resilience

The conference took place at a time when there were protests and unrest. Pakistan acted very responsibly there.

## B. Open doors for foreign investment

The talks with countries like China and Uzbekistan showed a future of more foreign investment.

## C. Pakistan's Role in regional geopolitics

Pakistan showed that P+ two can lead on the global front unlike the assumption of being diplomatically isolated.

## D. Pakistan's Diplomatic Outreach

Pakistan needed a conference with high level diplomacy.

The incoming of 8 prime ministers including China's was a major diplomatic achievement.



### E. Resumed diplomacy with India

Though there were no reports of bilateral talks, the participation of Indian foreign minister was a pleasant diplomatic event.

### F. Bilateral talks and better interstate Relations

Except ~~other~~ <sup>than</sup> India, Pakistan held bilateral talks with most of the SCO members putting Pakistan's bilateral relations in goodwill.

## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ISLAMABAD TO FOLLOW

### A. Resolving Internal challenges

They include.

- political instability
- Terrorism and extremism.
- Other social challenges.

## B. Future participation in diplomatic relations

Pakistan must actively work for more such participating and hosting of events.

## C. Pakistan to Advocate for the revival of SAARC

The last SAARC event to happen in 2016 in Islamabad never happened. Pakistan must work for it just like SAO.

## D. Islamabad to strive towards membership of BRICS

BRICS is a major bloc of developing countries. With India in opposition, China can play a advocating role for bringing membership of Pakistan which will work for the country at a regional and global level.

## V. CONCLUSION

The ~~event~~ of Shanghai Cooperation Organization's summit in Pakistan was a great achievement for the country since it broke the presumption of some countries about Pakistan being diplomatically isolated. Pakistan has proved that it is a reliable actor in the regional front and can lead in future events.

"Diplomacy is a procedure,  
not an event."

— Maleeha Lodhi