

General Knowledge - III (Pakistan Affairs)

Part - II

Q NO: 2

Introduction:-

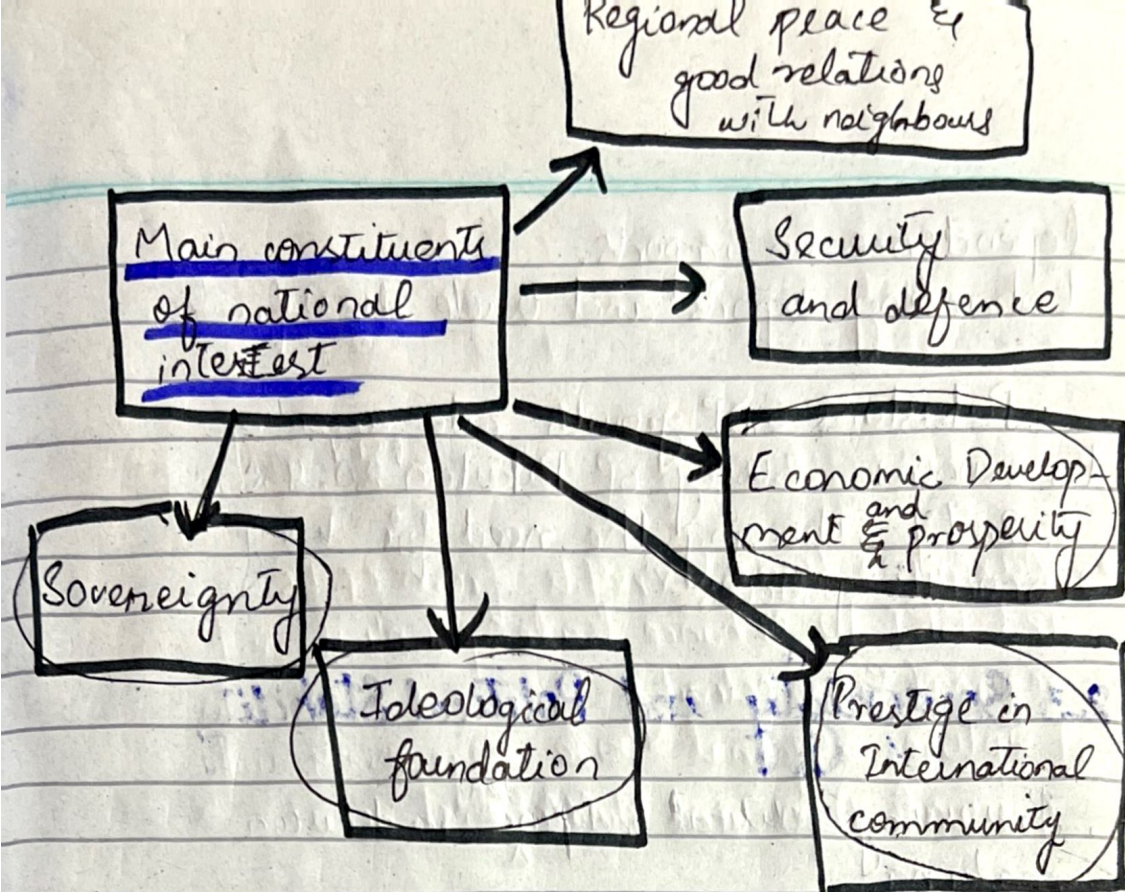
National interests refers to the set of objectives that a state aims to achieve in order to ensure its survival, prosperity, stability and security. For Pakistan, national interests are shaped by geopolitical location, economic security, security interests and ideological basis. In the contemporary world, where regional dynamics are rapidly changing due to shifting alliances, emerging economic blocs and security challenges, aligning Pakistan's national interests with the changing regional apparatus is essential for substantial growth and economic prosperity.

1 National Interests:

It is the guiding principle for the foreign policy and domestic policy of any state. It includes security, economic development, security and prestige in the international community.

“The meaning of national interest is survival - the protection of physical, political and cultural identity, against encroachments by other nations - states.”

~ Hans Morgenthau



2- Main constituents of national interest of Pakistan

2-1 Security and Defense

- Ensuring territorial integrity and protection against external aggression.
- Maintaining a credible nuclear deterrence against India.
- Strengthening internal security to curb terrorism and extremism.

According to economic survey of 2025-2026, Pakistan allocates 2.5% of its GDP to defense including pensions.

2.2 Economic Development and Prosperity.

- Sustained economic growth, industrialization and investment
- Achieving energy security and reducing

dependence on imports.

- Enhancing exports and Trade diversification

Pakistan's GDP growth rate according to economic survey of Pakistan ^{for FY} 2024-2025 is 2.7%, showing the need for strong economic policies.

2.3 Sovereignty and Political Stability

- Preserving political independence^{den} in decision making.
- Avoiding over-dependence on foreign power and loans
- Enhancing internal cohesion and political harmony.

2.4 Ideological Foundation and Islamic Identity:

- Protection of Pakistan's Islamic identity as envisioned by the Objective Resolution 1949.
- Promotion of Islamic solidarity and close ties with Muslim countries (OIC).

2.5 Regional Peace and good relations with neighbours

- Friendly ties with China, Afghanistan, Iran and central Asian states
- Peaceful resolution with India including disputes over Kashmir Issue (UNSC Resolution

water issue (Indus Water Treaty)

2-6 Prestige in International Community

- Active participation in UN, OIC, SCO
- Building a soft image to counter negative perceptions of terrorism.

3. Changing Regional Apparatus and its Impact on Pakistan

The regional environment is transforming due to:

- US withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021) → emergence of Taliban-led regime and TTP in Pakistan and rise in terrorism
- Rise of China and Belt and Road Initiative → CPEC as its flagship project in Pakistan
- India's strategic partnership with US and growing role in Indo-Pacific → threat to Pakistan's security, economy and diplomacy
- Middle-East realignments (Saudi-Iran Rivalry and Israel's attack on Iran) → threat to Pakistan's national security and global peace
- Russia's growing influence in the region due to Ukraine war sanctions → create both opportunities and challenges for Pakistan
- Iran inclusion in BRICS and SCO → increasing multipolarity

These changes create both opportunities and challenges for Pakistan.

4. How can Pakistan align its national Interest in This Changing Regional Apparatus?

4.1 Strengthening Economic Diplomacy

- Maximize trade benefits from CPEC and BRI to enhance trade potential and regional connectivity
- Explore regional trade agreements with Central Asia and Middle East

4.2 Balanced Foreign Policy

- Maintain strategic partnership with China, with improving ties with USA for trade and technology.
- Avoiding part of any bloc-politics (USA-China Rivalry, Iran-Saudi Arabia-Rivalry)

4.3 Improve relations with Neighbours

- Facilitate Afghanistan stability through trade and humanitarian support
- Seek dialogue based approach with India on IWT and Kashmir issue, avoiding war

4.4 Regional Security Co-operation

- Collaborate with SCO members for counter-terrorism
- Enhance border management with

Afghanistan and Iran

4.5 Focus on Internal Security:- Stability

- Political harmony and strong democratic institutions for policy continuity
- Reducing dependence on IMF by broadening the tax base and export led growth

4.6 Practical Recommendations

- Adopt Geo-Economics as the core policy (as per Pakistan 2021 policy shift)
- Engage in regional connectivity projects like TAPI pipeline and CASA-1000.
- Strengthening soft image through cultural diplomacy and climate initiatives

Conclusion:-

Pakistan's national interests depend upon economic stability, security, sovereignty, ideological identity and international prestige. In the face of rapidly evolving regional dynamics, Pakistan must base its foreign policy focusing on geo-economics, regional connectivity and diplomatic balance to safeguard its core objectives. Only through economic strength, political stability and regional co-operation, Pakistan can achieve its national goals in this changing world order.