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Current Affair
NOA Mock

Subjective Part - II

Q2: Pak-Afghan relations continue to remain tensed even after mediation by china. What do you think are major factors and how could it be improved

Ans:

Introduction

Pakistan and Afghanistan's relations remained due to Pakistan's concerns about border security, cross border terrorism, Durand line and Afghans with

India against Pakistan. These issues need to be dealt mutually and with regional and international help. In this way regional and global peace could be preserved.

Contemporary status of Pak-Afghan relation

Contemporarily Pak-Afghan relations are undergoing serious strain. Pakistan has closed its borders with Afghanistan and has suspended border trade.

According to trade associations, businessmen are losing 4 million dollars each day due to closure.

Moreover, negotiations have almost failed because of Afghanistan not ready to give written guarantees over cross border terrorism. For instance, multiple rounds of talks under the mediation of Turkey and Qatar have ended without achieving

anything. In addition, the Tehrik Taliban Afghanistan government refuse to acknowledge the Durand line as internationally recognised border. Instead they continuously engage Pakistan in border skirmishes. Recently, a huge border offensive was launched by Afghanistan which led to martyrdom of Pakistan's soldiers and civilian. Pakistan responded in kind. These scenarios have complicated and tangled the relationship between both the countries.

Factors Behind the Tense Relations Between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

- (1) Pakistan has security concerns against Afghanistan which cause tensions.

Pakistan has serious concerns against Afghanistan regarding the banned Tehrik Taliban

Pakistan issue. ~~for~~ Pakistan ^{asserts} ~~claims~~ that the Afghan Taliban should expel the terrorist elements reside in Afghanistan.

However, they refuse to acknowledge the presence of TIP in Afghanistan. For instance, according to the UN Security Council in August reported the presence of terror groups in Afghanistan and that the Afghan Taliban are helping them. This issue continues to haunt relations between both the countries.

(2) Afghanistan's non-cooperation on border management causes tension with Pakistan

Taliban refuse to cooperate on border management and security. According to Pakistan's DGISPR, Border Management is a mutual subject, however, Afghanistan does not act obliged. This causes

opium trade, illegal weapon and car smuggling in Pakistan which harm the economy and security.

- (3) Afghan Taliban refuse to recognise Durand line and engage in border skirmishes with Pakistan.

Afghan Taliban poses an existential threat to Pakistan by not recognizing the Durand line as international border.

For instance, Afghan officials have publicly and repeatedly claimed Pakistan's land from Bolan to Attock. These sort of claims cause serious security threat to Pakistan and deteriorate its relations with Afghanistan.

- (4) Afghan Taliban not obliging as per Doha agreement which leads its tensions with Pakistan.

Afghan Taliban have

signed the Doha agreement with the US in 2021. However, they are not acting according to the agreement. For example, the Doha government stated that Taliban would not allow its soil being used against regional countries nor it will become safe sanctuary for any terror organization. By not complying with the agreement, ~~and~~ Afghanistan has become a threat to Pakistan which causes strain in relations.

(5) Afghanistan does not prevent cross border terrorism into Pakistan which increases tensions.

The Tehrik Taliban Pakistan persistently infiltrate Pakistan's borders and attack security forces. According to Pakistan, there are 60 camp of terrorist

working against Pakistan from Afghanistan. The presence of safe sanctuaries of terrorists in Afghanistan causes the rise of its tension with Pakistan.

Improving Pak-Afghan Relations.

- 1) Regional countries should be engaged in dialogue with Afghanistan to compel it for cooperation.

Pakistan should engage regional countries such as China, Iran, Saudi, and Gulf and central Asian countries in mediation with Afghanistan. It should use its diplomatic influence to put pressure on Afghanistan for cooperation on border, security, terrorism and regional peace.

2) Pakistan should diplomatically compel the international world in resolving matters with Afghanistan.

The involvement of international stakeholder such as the Western world which has concerns with Afghanistan over the rise of terrorism in the country. In this way, Afghanistan would be pressurized to control terrorism threatening regional states.

3) Pakistan must deconstruct the misconceptions found among Afghans against it.

The Afghans have misconception that Pakistan is responsible for their dismal conditions and wars. This narrative pressurize the Taliban to act anti Pakistan to sustain

the legitimacy of their government. This should be deconstructed to give space to TIA to cooperate with Pakistan without backfiring its support base. It would help in easing the tensions.

- 4) Pakistan should use its soft power to influence the Afghan government and ease tensions.

Pakistan and Afghanistan have deep rooted ethnic and historical ties. On both side of the border, Pashtun population is in majority. Pakistan should increase cultural integration with Afghanistan and compel businessmen to invest in Afghanistan. In this way, three key issues would be resolved: preventing Afghan-India nexus, border conflicts and increasing deterioration of relations. which will definitely be beneficial to India.

Conclusion

Pakistan and Afghanistan relations are at a record break away point. It is because of Pakistan security crises and terrorism unleashed from Afghanistan. These concerns of Pakistan needs to be dealt effectively to reduce tensions with each other and regionally.



Q: There is dangerous revival of militancy in KP and Balochistan. critically evaluate the reasons and give recommendations.

Ans:

Introduction

Militancy is resurging in Pakistan. The province of KP and Balochistan are witnessing a dangerous wave of renewed terrorism. It involves the Tehrik Taliban Pakistan ~~new~~ and Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) nexus with Indian support. The situation needs a systemic response by involving kinetic and non kinetic means.

Reason for the revival of militancy in Balochistan and KP.

- 1) Afghanistan has given sanctuaries to the Taliban and causing the terrorism in Pakistan.

Afghanistan has become a warehouse of the terrorist organisation. According to the UNSC reports, numerous terrorist organisation have sanctuaries in Afghanistan including Tehrik Taliban Pakistan, Islamic State Khorasan, Baloch Liberation Army, and East Turkestan Movement. The IIP uses Afghan soil to infiltrate and attack Pakistan which has resulted in the rise of terrorism in Pakistan.

- 2) The fall of US weapons in the hands of militant have surged their attacking capability.

After the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, billions of

dollars of weaponry was left. Some of that has reached the terrorist organisation which has increased their operational capacity in Pakistan. The Washington Post and US congress reports varies the reach of US weapons in the hand of militant and its use against Pakistan.

3) India is using the TTP and BLA as proxies against Pakistan.

Indian help to the militants in Pakistan is causing the surge in terrorism in Pakistan. For instance, the state has renamed militant outfits the BLA as Firna al Hindustan and TTP as Firna Al Ikhwanij. The DG ISPR has numerous times provided evidence against India help to militants logistically and monetarily.

4) Pakistan's socio-economic conditions causes the flourishing of militancy in Pakistan.

Pakistan socio-economic conditions are dismal which make terrorist recruitment a favourable thing for the youth. According to security analyst Zahid Hussain, Pakistan's HDI is 165/193, 45 million youth is unemployed, 43% of the population is under extreme poverty. 27 million children are out of school. He says, these conditions are alone enough for the rise of extremism in Pakistan.

5) Weakness of democracy and political exclusivity make the way for militancy in Pakistan.

Pakistan democracy is

weaks and elections are rigged which prevails distrust among the areas already feeling marginalized. ~~The political~~ For instance, numerous international organisations have alleged the conduct of 2024 general elections in Pakistan. The US congress also took notice of the election conduct. These sort of situations, politically exclude marginalized communities such as the Baloch which end up in the rise of militancy.

Recommendations to mitigate militancy in Pakistan

- i) National Action Plan 2021 should be implemented in full spirit.

The National Action plan revised in 2021 contain the complete and comprehensive outline of eradicating

militancy in Pakistan. It should be implemented in totality and not the selective parts of it.

- 2) Pakistan should conduct intel based operations to eradicate terrorism.

According to the DG ISPR, Pakistan has conducted more than 7000 intel based operation. They not only reduce collateral damage but also effectively in neutralizing terrorists.

- 3) Pakistan should elevate its socio-economic condition to prevent the youth engaging in militancy. 8

According to Ali Bakht, author of the book Pakistan: In between extremism, the

country should increase its socio-economic resilience to prevent the spread of terrorism and its recruitment.

- 4) Reforms in governance should be brought and extended to non governed areas.

Bad government is the one leading cause of the rise in militancy. The government should bring good governance and extend it to undergoverned areas. The DG ISPR in a recent briefing pointed that government in vulnerable area non-existent. Despite being explicitly stated in NAP 2021, the government is still not reformed and extended to all governed areas such as Fata and Balochistan.

5) The government should educate the masses to prevent them falling to extremist ideas.

Education is the hallmark of peace and progress. However, the prevailing illiteracy is causing the young minds towards extremist and militant organisations. For instance, according to the Dawn reporting there are 27 million out of school children. In Balochistan literacy is only 42% compared to 62% in Punjab. World wide, low literacy rate is attributed to the rise of militancy, thus education should be prioritised by the government to reduce militancy.

Conclusion

Pakistan is seeing a rise in militancy, particularly,

in KP and Balochistan. This is due to regional involvement in supporting terrorism in Pakistan and the country's internal socio-economic and political condition. It needs to be dealt by implement the kinetic and non kinetic clauses of the revised National Action Plan.

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Q: The formation of new provinces is a recurring debate. Critically evaluate the hurdles and give recommendations.

Ans:

## Introduction

The formation of new provinces is an old debate in Pakistan. It is meant to improve government by reducing the size of administrative unit to ease oversight and improve governance. However, it faces multiple hurdles such as, provincial legislative consent, ethnic contention, political division and financial constraints, from happening. In order to achieve this objective, unity in center and provinces is needed over the creation of new provinces, in addition with economic growth to bear the



## Hurdles In the way of Making New Provinces

### 1) Provincial legislative approval

In order to divide and create new provinces, this needs legislative  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote from the respective assembly which ought to be divided. However, provinces are divided along ethnic lines which make it hard to achieve the majority vote. For instance, in Sindh assembly, Sindhis are in majority who have clash with Urdhi speaking minority. This makes it a hurdle.

### 2) Dividing provinces is an emotive issue.

There resides sentimental clash over the division of intraprovinces. For instance Baluch



pashtoon issue in Balochistan,  
Sindhi-Muhajir issue, Saraiki-  
Punjabi issue in Punjab and  
Hazara-Pashtoon issue in KP. These  
communal contentions make it  
hard to achieve provincial  
divisions.

### 3) Financial constraint in making new provinces.

Pakistan has recently suffered  
a default risk. Climate change  
is persistently damaging the  
economy. According to the Dawn,  
poverty is 43%, unemployment  
45 million, Out of school  
children 27 million, Debt to  
GDP percentage 80%. This  
makes it extremely hard for  
the country to build new  
capitals for new provinces and  
bearing all the administrative  
and governance formation  
expenditures on a crippled  
economy.



4) Punjab is the main constraint and all provinces lead to the segmentation of Punjab.

Punjab is the largest provinces in size and is play a major role in federal government formation. The elites of the province does not want to give away this privilege by dividing it to create new provinces and losing its political influence.

### Recommendations to remove Hurdles in Making New provinces

1- Political unanimity must be achieved prior to making new provinces.

Pakistan needs to summon a conference of all stakeholders in provincial making to



compel them about the need for making new provinces in order to improve governance. For instance, India's Dalrymple Commission about provincial making was culminated in 1953 and enforced in 1956 which led to the formation of 14 provinces.

- 2- Pakistan should overcome economic fragility in order to incur the making of new provinces

The contemporary economic condition is about survival. In addition, Pakistan bears many economic challenges such as debt, poverty, trade deficit, budget deficit, and circular debt. These issues should be resolved first to make the making of provincial functioning smooth. Unfortunately, for instance, after Fata was merged



with 1CP, but its NFC share was not given to 1CP according to the CM. And, this has caused bad governance in Baluchistan and has again led to resurgence of terrorism.

- 3- Provinces should be made along administrative lines and not ethnic to reduce any backlash.

Each province of Pakistan has a majority and minority ethnicity. This makes it hard to make new provinces due to the danger of communal clashes. If these provinces are divided in multiple units based on size instead of ethnicity, it could counter ethnic clash eruption.

- 4- Punjab should be made sole model for compelling other provinces towards division.



If Punjab is divided into four or five provinces, it would reduce the tone of ~~of~~ contention by other provinces towards the division of Punjab. In this way, other provinces could be easily compelled to vote for new provinces as a need towards improving governance.

## Conclusion

The making of new province is an old and contentious debate in Pakistan. It has remained unsuccessful due to legislative hurdle, ethnic contentions, economic weakness and political division of the elites. In order to achieve it, political conformity, economic growth, and Punjab's leading role must be ~~in the~~ achieved first to ease this process ~~of~~ and implement better governance in Pakistan.

