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Q. No. 2.

Critically evaluate . . . to the evolving situation.

ANSWER.

1. Introduction and overview of Trump's Gaza Peace Plan:

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict, originating in the late 19th century Zionist movement and 1948 Nakba, remains the longest running conflict in modern international relations. The Gaza Peace Plan given by President Trump was given in Oct 2025, two years after brutal air and ground military campaign by Israel in Gaza with over 60,000 casualties (Gaza Health department), triggered by Hamas attack on Israel on 7th Oct, 2023. The plan ^{brings} a comprehensive ceasefire and political-economic restructuring blueprint for Gaza. It envisaged phased Israeli withdrawal, demilitarization of Hamas, and creation of a transitional governing authority called "Board of Peace".

2. Critical Evaluation:

2.1. Political Legitimacy and Inclusivity:

Critics argue that the plan, owned and brought into effect mainly by US with negotiations from ^{its} allies, has weak Palestinian representation.

Hamas and major Palestinian stakeholders were largely sidelined from ~~non~~ meaningful negotiation processes.

Furthermore, the transition body driven by external actors proposed by the plan is viewed to lack grassroots legitimacy, undermining political acceptance.

2.2. Strategic and Security Dynamics:

Consistent violations from both sides, especially Israel being ^{an} asymmetrically powerful military suggests that the plan may be failing to deliver sustainable peace. The continued military dominance of Israel and lack of ~~its~~ a verified withdrawal of

its forces undermines assertions of sovereign space necessary for two states.

2.3. Two-State Solution Prospects:

The plan has departed from 1967 consensus, a divergence from long-standing international norms on pre-1967 borders and East Jerusalem. Furthermore, the risk of potential legitimization of occupied territories persists. The plan has failed to implement, let alone reverse, settlement expansions, which along with high security control over territory risk cementing territorial fragmentation.

2.4. Regional and International Reactions:

The Muslim World was divided in its response to the plan, with some supporting US mediation while others rejecting exclusion of key Palestinian voices. ^{Nevertheless} ~~Moreover~~, many Arab States still remain committed to

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established two-state frameworks anchored in UN. resolution.

3. Potential Impacts on the Two-State Solution:

3.1. Political Fragmentation from multiple governance structures:

The plan legitimizes separate governance structures, with a transition period governed by external actors. This fragmentation of governance can solidify geopolitical realities which are completely antithetical to contiguous Palestinian sovereignty, eroding the practicality of two-state solution.

3.2. Diplomatic Norm Shifts: US-centric Plans vs. Multilateral Frameworks:

Analysts view the enforcing of US-centric peace frameworks as an eroding force for multilateral processes which have historically been

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established two-state frameworks anchored in UN resolutions.

emphasized by the U.N. resolutions and Arab Peace initiatives. It is viewed as weakening of international norms, among which is the UN proposed two-state solution.

3.3. Humanitarian and Governance Risks

The plan links Gaza reconstruction to technocratic oversight of external actors. Critics view this as a method with high, inherent corruption risks. This could potentially marginalize Palestinian economic empowerment, weakening the realistic achievement of two-state solution.

4. Policy Framework for Pakistan:

4.1. Principle-Based Diplomacy:

Pakistan must reaffirm UN Charter and 1967 borders as basis

for political settlement as it has done in the past. This aligns with Pakistan's Kashmir policy against Indian occupation. Furthermore, it should maintain vocal support for Palestinian self-determination and statehood recognition at international forums.

4.2. Inclusive Peace Advocacy:

Pakistan should champion inclusive negotiations involving Hamas, PLO, civil society, and regional actors to strengthen the plan's legitimacy.

4.3. Multilateral Engagement:

Pakistan should leverage OIC, NAM, and UN General Assembly forums to push for building enforcement mechanisms and implementation monitoring so that a sustainable ceasefire and peace can be achieved.

4.4. Strategic Outreach: 1.2

Pakistan should engage key powers like EU, China, and Turkey to build alternative counterweights to unilateral frameworks.

4.5. Humanitarian Support:

Pakistan should advocate for robust civilian protection and reconstruction assistance which is independent of conditional political frameworks.

5. Conclusion:

Trump's Gaza Peace Plan was a landmark achievement of his administration, putting an end to violent hostilities, however, the sustainability of the Plan is questioned over the long term. as the plan legitimizes frameworks that weakens the UN recommended two-state solution. Pakistan should continue its support and advocacy for Palestinian statehood achievement.

Q. No. 4.

Examine the . . . South Asian geopolitics.

ANSWER.

1. Introduction and Background:

The May 2025 India-Pakistan military exchange marked the most significant bilateral confrontation since 1971. Triggered by April 22 Pahalgam terrorist attack, India launched Operation Sindoor by engaging in cross border ~~air~~ aerial strikes. Pakistan responded with Operation Bunyan-ul-Masoor with cross-border strikes on military assets. Later, a ceasefire was agreed on May 10 with US mediation.

Experts suggest that this was an instance of "escalation gone meta" with sophisticated modern weaponry (drones, precision ~~at~~ missiles) under the nuclear umbrella. This confirms the stability-instability paradox, where nuclear deterrence prevented

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full escalation but not conventional war. The brief conflict has several consequences on bilateral relations and broader implications for the region, as examined below.

2. Immediate Consequences on Bilateral Relations:

2.1. Diplomatic Breakdown:

Immediately after the conflict, the diplomatic missions were called back to the home states ^{with} halting high level ~~diplomacy~~ and closure of borders. Furthermore, core treaties like Indus Water Treaty was suspended by India, however, it had no legal basis under "Pacta sunt servanda of VCLT".

2.2. Military Escalations:

The brief kinetic conflict in May 2025 redefined modern warfare among two advanced nuclear armed.

countries, providing a case study for asymmetric and hybrid warfare that extended into narrative and cyber domains.

2.3. Economic and Connectivity Disruption:

The closure of airspace and trade suspension followed by the conflict affected regional commerce and connectivity. Furthermore, the use of hydropolitics and hydrowarfare, threatening water insecurity by IWT suspension poses great risks for agricultural and industrial supply chains.

3. Redefinition of Regional Power Dynamics:

3.1. Security Dilemma Intensified:

Decline of confidence-building measures and dialogue mechanisms has entrenched hostility. Militarisation of Kashmir Area has made nuclear

risk calculus more accentuated. Moreover, the battle of narratives has intensified with India's framing Kashmir as a counter-terrorism problem rather than a territorial dispute narrative, presenting its military response as right to self-defense under international law. On the other side, Pakistan's invitation to conduct an Enquiry and maintaining its right to proportionate self defense established it a responsible actor ~~in~~ under international law.

3.2. Shifts in Strategic Alignment:

China bolstered support to Pakistan, providing military technology and increased troop capacity on its border with India to divert its focus. India has been inching closer to the Taliban government in Afghanistan via ~~economic~~ development investments, marking the alignment of their ^{security} interests against Pakistan.

3.3. Extra-Regional Actor Positions:

Western powers like US and EU have hesitated to fully endorse India's aggressive stance. Neutrality has dominated despite strategic ties among these countries. However, the calculus has shifted in Pakistan factor owing to US's frustration with India's continued economic ties with Russia and Pakistan's minerals and counter-terrorism driven increased relevance. Smaller SAARC countries, however, have expressed concerns over regional instability and calls for mediation.

4. Broader Implications on South Asian Geopolitics:

4.1. Erosion of Regional Institutions:

SAARC's effectiveness have been further eroded by bilateral antagonisms. India continues to push multi-lateral regional engagements without Pakistan.

4.2. Economic Fallout and Investment

Climate:

Diplomatic tensions and narrative attributions undermine cross border cooperation on business and peoples level. Furthermore, FDI prospects in energy and infrastructure sectors perceive risks due to hostile relations, decreasing development pace.

4.3. Identity and Social Polarization:

Rise in anti-Pakistani narrative, and communal tensions within India complicates people-to-people engagement. Indian media was particularly identified to spread hostile narratives, identified by a report on Aljazeera. Furthermore, this war of narratives have seeped into sports, with Indian team's refusal to accept Asia Cup's Trophy by the PCB chairman, something that was seen as a historical normalizer and safety valve for tensions.

5. Conclusion :

India's post-Pahalgam misadventure has thinned chances of normalization of bilateral insecurities and relations between the two neighbours more than ever. The brief conflict had reverberations across the region and even beyond it with major powers shifting and being neutral where otherwise they would have taken sides.

The prospects of South Asian cooperation remain dimmer after this conflict.

Pakistan should build on the momentum ~~by~~ of its being perceived as a responsible player under international law, its strategic alignment with China, and thawing relations with Trump 2.0. ~~as~~ US, to build credible deterrence in the hybrid warfare regime.