

GK (Current Affairs)Part-II

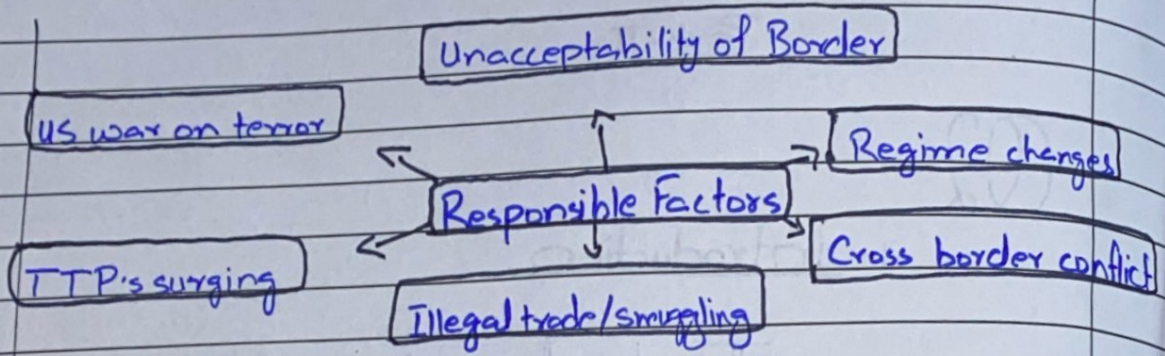
Q2-

1- Introduction

The tensed relations of Pakistan and Afghanistan despite mediation by international community including China failed to reach a uniting point. The conflict between neighbors is a complex one and needs not only military and political will to resolve but also require change of mindset. As laid down in preamble of UNESCO's Constitution that, "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that defenses of peace must be constructed." There lies various factors responsible for tensed relations from the very beginning as it is also noted that Afghanistan was the first country to oppose Pakistan's membership into United Nations. The factors responsible are unacceptability of Durand line, weapons smuggling from Afghan side and a surge in terrorism post US war on terror. Therefore, to resolve the conflict, there needs to be a holistic approach including consensus and commitment on terror control, strict border regulations and involvement of other strong nations to help reach an agreement.

II - Major Factors Responsible for Tensed Relations Between the Neighbors

There lies numerous factors responsible for deteriorated ties, that are as follows:



a- Unacceptability of border

Pakistan emerged as an independent state in 1947, it bordered with four countries including Afghanistan. The line between both countries popularly known as 'Durand Line' was demarcated long before independence of Pakistan. As the new nation emerged, Afghan side claimed that the boundary distribution between them and British that took place in 1893 was without their will and forced upon by British claiming many areas of Pakistan. This stands as a point of contention and a factor impeding friendly ties.

b- US-war on terror

After the attacks of 9/11 on US twin towers, US and NATO launched combined war against Afghanistan. The country which already had long conflict with Soviet Union stood firm against another foreign invader. It was during President Musharraf's era that Pakistan had no other option but to get directly involved in US's war against Afghanistan. This developed hatred in the hearts of Afghan people and is still observed in relations between the two nations.

c. Regime changes

With the withdrawal of US from Afghanistan, there was a sudden regime change. The forces which fought against US stood victorious and formed their government. With hate already built against Pakistan, the new regime tilted more towards India. This factor deteriorated the already strain relations and stands as a factor responsible for tensed ties.

d. Rise of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan

After US's withdrawal, there was no force to stop rising terrorism in Afghanistan. The TIP which was first believed to be different from regular Taliban regime was discovered by intelligence agencies to be part of same regime. This marked rise in terrorist attacks on Pakistani soil, the most recent example of that is the blast outside Judicial Complex in Islamabad. The Afghan regime's unwill to control these elements also stand as point of issue between the neighbors.

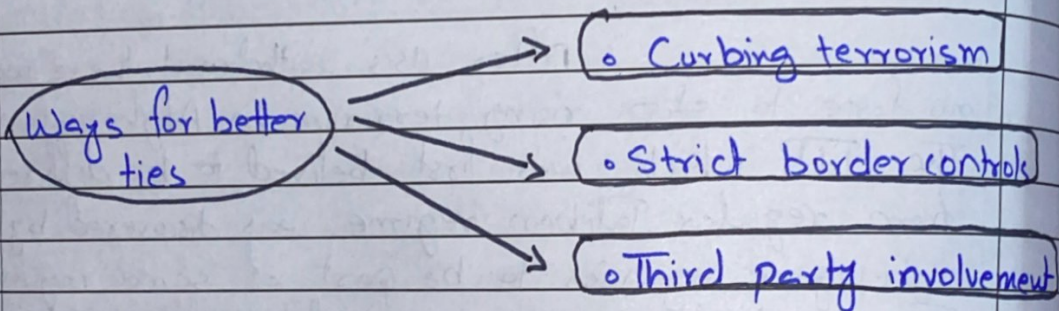
e. Uncontrolled weapons smuggling

In a recent interview conducted by Al Jazeera in KPK province. It was disclosed that the majority of weapons in the vicinity were obtained by locals through illegal means crossed through borders. This factor poses a direct threat to states security apparatus and is used against forces and is sold to local insurgents such as those of BLA (Balochistan Liberation Army). This factor is also responsible for tensed relations.

f. Cross border conflicts

with each passing day there are some skirmishes on the long 2611 km long border. The reason for it is unprovoked aggression from Afghan side along with allegations it puts on Islamabad of carrying attacks inside its soil. This factor also leads to tensed ties between the neighbors.

III. Ways to Improve Relations Between Pakistan and Afghanistan



a. Curbing terrorism

Terrorism remains a core concern for Pakistan. The Afghan soil that is used by Fitna-Al-Khwarezmi (TTP) against Pakistan should seriously be dealt. Mutual dialogues at all international and local platforms should be held to pressurize Afghanistan to take action against those elements.

b. Strict border controls

This task is difficult to be achieved individually, consensus should be made with Afghan side on fighter security and intelligence sharing so that not only terrorist elements but also

illicit products and weapons are controlled.

c- Third party involvement

Instead of bilateral engagements international organs like United Nations and strong influential countries like China and Russia should be involved to reach a mutual agreement for cooperation and controlling of terrorism. The issue pertaining the border unacceptability should be reviewed by International Court of Arbitration for a fair ruling and for clearing any doubts built in hearts of Afghan people.

IV - Critical Evaluation

Pakistan-Afghan issue needs serious concerns, this issue not only undermines public safety but is also a ground left for enemies like India and Israel to be used against Pakistan. Mutual consensus should be promoted, people to people and business to business interaction should be promoted for better ties. Moreover, international support must be sought to curb the threat of TTP against Pakistan.

V - Conclusion

Pak-Afghan relations not only impact lives of soldiers but also the common people. Various factors are responsible for these tense relations ranging from unacceptability of borders to cross border conflicts therefore steps like third party involvement, strict border controls and curbing terrorism should be given.

- priority. The relations that are tested since the inception of Pakistan should be improved for a peaceful coexistence of both neighbors.

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Q3:-

1- Introduction

With every constitutional amendment, there emerges a demand for new provinces. Pakistan being a federal state with parliamentary form of government is divided into four provinces. It is speculated that the area covered by provinces along, for instance Sindh - 140,914 km², is far larger than many European countries.

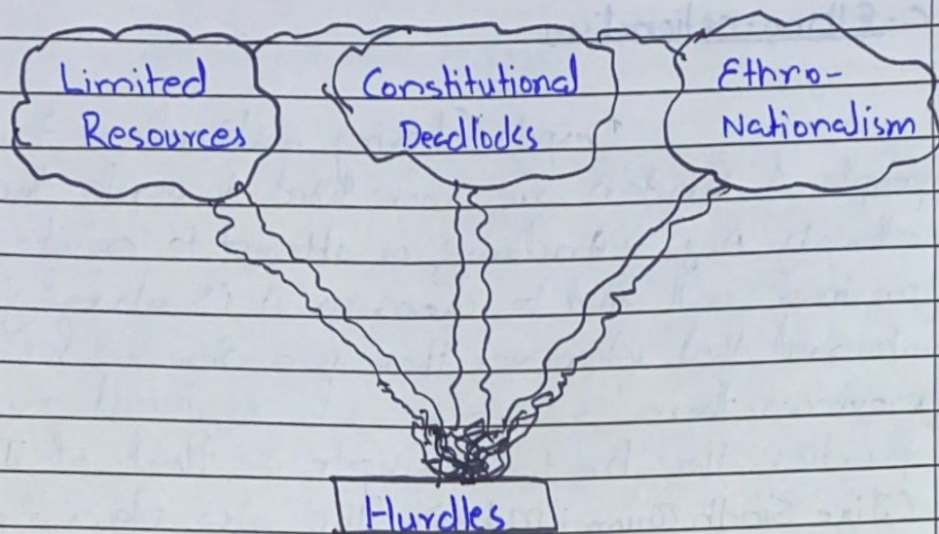
Moreover, it is argued that the formation of new provinces will improve governance, accountability and structure of state. However, critics believe new provinces will only increase burden on already struggling economy.

There are numerous hurdles faced with creation of new provinces, these include ethno-nationalism, constitutional deadlocks and distribution of resources.

The recommendations for such a confusion is that 18th constitutional amendment should be implemented in true spirit along with proper system of taxation.

II- Hurdles in Creating New Provinces in Pakistan

Continued



a- Limited resources

Pakistan is already a struggling country with its economy. The recent budget of 2025-26 shows that around 7.5 tr. Rs. out of Rs. 17.573 tr. are spent on loss making state owned enterprises. Therefore, creating new provinces will be a difficult task as it will not only require the reorganization of territories but will involve creation of its own provincial assembly, high court and salaries of all state organs separately.

b- Constitutional Deadlocks

Moreover, constitution also places restriction on any reorganization of territories. It is clearly stated in Article 1 and Article 239 of the Constitution that any reorganization of provinces will require two-third vote from not only National Assembly and Senate but also from the respective Provincial Assembly. This in current political structure is hard to achieve and clearly any try of changing boundary would pose a threat to unity of federation.

c. Ethno-nationalism

Despite having nationalism tendencies, people of Pakistan are more tilted towards their ethnicity. Any restructuring or attempt to create new provinces will lead to chaos as it is already observed that whenever there is a demand for new provinces, there is a rise of regional nationalist parties, the best example is that of JSam (Jige Sindh Quami Mahaz). This also places a block towards creation of new provinces.

III. Recommendations for Balanced Solution

Recommendations

Proper implementation of 18th amendment

Revising NFC Award

Promotion of Local Governance

a- Proper implementation of 18th amendment

18th constitutional amendment is marked as a landmark development in the constitutional history of Pakistan. This provided more powers, resources and controls to provinces by abolishing the concurrent list and devolving 47 subjects to provinces. However, even after 15 years, this amendment is not implemented in its true sense. Federal still is found playing its monopoly in many affairs as alleged by different governments. There still remains many useless ministries that need to be dissolved as they only place burden on national economy.

b. Promotion of Local Government

As implied by Ishrat Hussain in his book 'Governing the Ungovernable', half problems of Pakistan lies in effective and weak local governance. The provinces are unwilling to share resources or their monopoly. The local government that worked smoothly during Musharraf's era is found struggling and without any resources or powers to raise taxes. Therefore, instead of forming new provinces, local governance should be promoted and powers should be devolved in true spirit.

c. Revising NFC Award

The NFC (National Finance Commission) Award should be revised. The old system where population gets a share of 82% is seen to be in favor of single province by many. Therefore, to improve governance without any threat, as posed by new provinces, the NFC criterion should be changed.

iv. Critical Evaluation

The idea of new provinces is seen as a threat to unity of state however, if Pakistan manages to improve its resource collection and tax generation, these experiments can then be tried. Till that, the best possible solution is improving the system of local government and devolving all the subjects that need to be in authority of local governments. For better understanding, Local Government Act of United Kingdom can be considered as an example.

v. Conclusion

The system of local government should be promoted instead of the idea of new provinces. This stands as a balanced approach to the debate. Creation of new provinces not only puts burden on economy but when seen with legal perspective, it is much harder to be achieved. Pakistan being a federal state with large area and only four provinces seems a troubling situation, however reality is that this structure is what makes it more stronger.

Q6:-

i. Introduction

The Russia-Ukraine conflict stands as a flashpoint that has the potential of turning into world war. With the recent large scale war beginning in February 2022, the issue remains unresolved. The reasons behind failure of international community particularly NATO and US to stop the war is evidence of different interests of both. Ukraine's aim is to be part of NATO, which Russia sees as a direct threat to its security and sovereignty. Until, both sides mutually don't give up their egoistic desires, the war seems to be unstoppable.

ii. Chances of Ending the War Sooner

It is widely observed that the

conflict of Russia and Ukraine seems to be worsened with gradual time.

Following are some factors because of which conflict might continue

a- Ukraine's desire to join NATO

Ukraine wants protection from the West particularly the ~~west~~ NATO. Russia sees this as a direct threat to its sovereignty and does not want NATO anywhere near its border. Therefore, Ukraine's desire seems to be stern even after 3 years of continuous war, this proves that there are less chances of end to the war.

b- Russia's enmity against the West

Russia sees West as a serious threat. This approach combined with its vast land and resources puts it in a dominating position. It can even be observed from the recent Alaska Summit, held on 15 August, 2025 that despite meeting and requested by Trump, Russia stands firm in its approach. This proves there is no near end to the conflict.

11- Conclusion

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine dates back and there seem no any positive outcome or development from the war. Despite multiple tries by the US, the conflict is seen to be last longer.

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