

Laraib RWP # 74

Current Affairs
(Mock 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.

A- Pakistan and Afghanistan relations and the continued tense friction between both the states becomes a flashpoint in the south-Asian region.

Pakistan and Afghanistan are two neighbouring states joined by long border and shared a long contentious history, overlapping identities, bifurcated tribes, border dispute, security and strategic anxieties. All these affairs give both of them the opportunities to connect with one another and these are the very factors that despite historical and current efforts of mediation

by China and other states that the tense friction is not softening.

According to famous scholar Barnett Rubin

“Both Pak-Afghan is like a conjoined twins. Neither of them survive without the other yet both are pushing away the shared body”

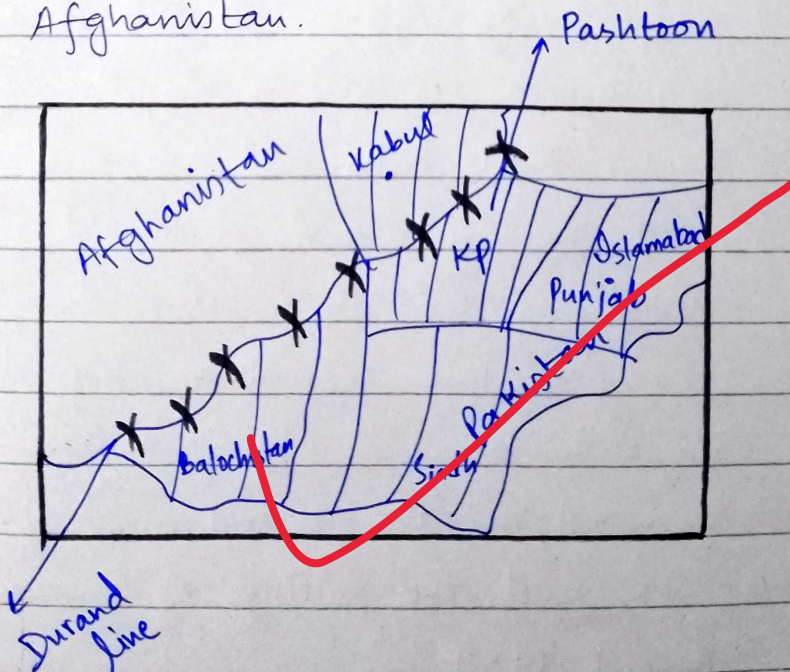
B- Historical Background and the structural realities a tail of overlapping identities and shared history:

The historic relation between both the states are not very friend since its (Pakistan) inception Afghanistan has clashes with this regional state. Before 1947, Afghanistan itself the originator of demarking the British-India Western border in 1893 later shifts its stance as it perceive the weak condition of

newly constructed Pakistan.

(i) Historic border clash with Pakistan regarding tribal Pakhtunistan issue:

The historic Durand line border clash is the major bone of contention between both the states that strain the relations between both the sharing territory states. The Afghanistan claims of Pakistan North-Western tribes as not the part of Pakistan but of the Afghanistan.



(ii) Historic crisis of war and the Pakistan's position as the front line in the war against Afghanistan is the another major factor of clash in relation of both states: **Too lengthy heading**

Afghan War 1979 and the withdrawal of USSR and its taliban alliance widen the gap of relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

In 1979 Pakistan was against the invasion of USSR through the support of Afghan Taliban in Afghanistan is also a major factor that both nations are not moving towards a sound relations. The US, Saudi and many western countries support for Pakistan and Afghan Mujaheddin resulted in the withdrawal of USSR and the setting of Geneva Accord 1989.

War on Terror in 2001 against the role of Pakistan as the front line supporter to end the terrorism in Afghanistan further fans the flame of hate for Pakistan in Afghan's :

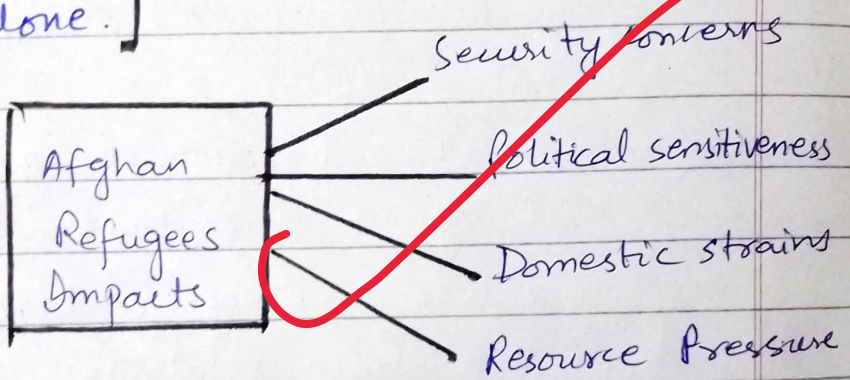
After 9/11 (2001) terrorist attack in US, the Pakistan support the US in eliminating the terror in WOT (2001-2021) and provide its base to act against terror forces. These involvements in war against Afghan resulted in strain relations.

C- The Refugees Repatriation and Border closure to halt the cross border illegal trade nexus drain the relations between both the states:

During WOT and WOA the major issues that Pakistan confronted was the refugee crisis around (four) 4 million refugee settled in Pakistan

and this huge amount put huge stress on Pakistan on domestic, security resources and political sensitiveness grounds.

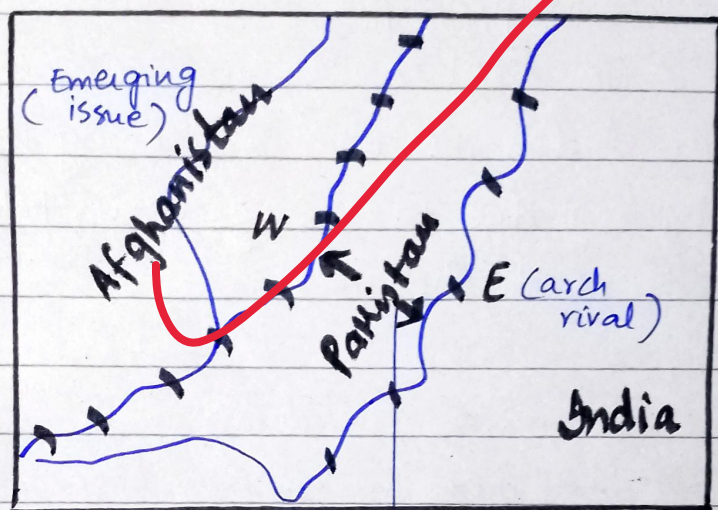
[According to UNHCR, by mid-sep 2025 Pakistan returned 662700 Afghans from Pakistan, this year alone.]



The One Document Regime and border closure at Torkham disturbs the relations between the states:

Border closure in 2024 and visa policy irritates the Afghans as they consider the Pustoon area as Afghan's territory, so for them visa policy is illegal but in the Pakistan's security issue its necessary to end the illegal smuggling of narcotics, trade and weapons transferring

D- The growing Indian Nexus with Afghan Taliban exacerbates the relations between the Pak-Afghan despite mediation:



The India - Afghan growing relations and the tensing disturb relations of both the nations with Pakistan is an increasing threat to Pakistan's strategic depth.

Recently, when the military skirmish of May end with India of Pakistan, we see the growing boost in relation of Afghanistan and India.

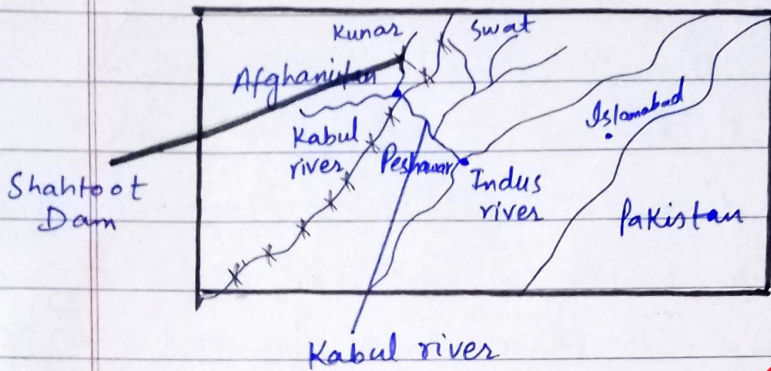
This strategic situation of

strain relation on both the eastern and western border is not good for Pakistan. Pakistan's location on its width is thin as compared to its length. The strategic depth that Pakistan have in Afghanistan in case of war with India is now weakening day by day due to rising nexus between India and Pakistan.

The Afghanistan govt. decision of building dam on Kunar river and posing a water stress on Pakistan is also non-conventional war step taken by Afghanistan by the backing of India's motive:

After, visit of Afghan foreign minister Amir Khan Muttagi in Oct 2025 in India, Afghan govt. declare a decision to built a Shatoot dam on Kunar river which ultimately disturb the water flow of Kabul river in

Pakistan that fall in Indus river from Peshawar to attbel and then land in Indus river.



E- Security Spillover Effect on Pakistan and Afghan Taliban constant denial of providing guarantee to Pakistan, to stop TTP to use its soil against Pakistan, a prime factor of friction in relations among the both:

According to Zahid Hussain security analyst

“The single biggest threat to Pak. from Afghanistan is the unrestrained space for TTP to regroup in Afghanistan”

The recent mediating efforts of China between Pakistan and Afghanistan

Of no use due to the increasing cross border militant attack on Pakistan from Afghanistan soil by TTP.

Despite Doha Agreement the Taliban government are not ready to stand against their ideological brothers TTP to halt its attack and restrain it to not use its soil against Pakistan:

September and October 2025, is the strikes month between both the states due to surging Pakistan insecurity in attacks on its border side areas and in retaliation it also strike inside Afghanistan (Kabul) that escalate the tense relations among the sharing border states.

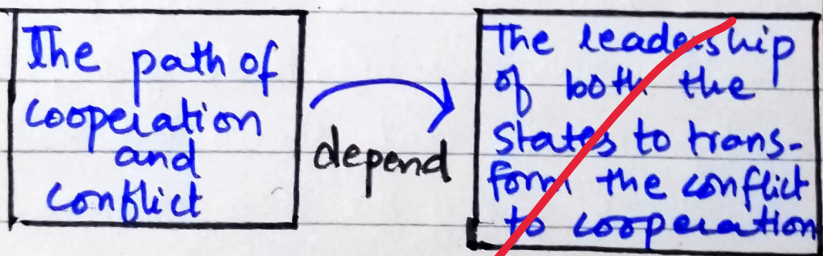
F- Future dynamics of Bilateral trade and relations pre-requisites depends on improving Security and Strategic issues:

Afghan Taliban government needs to improve its border, land and foreign matters and guarantee the neighbouring states that its soil will not be used by any non-state actors to pose any security threats for them.

Political scientist Rasul Bakish Rais argues that,

“Geography binds Pakistan and Afghanistan, the question is whether the policy makers of both the states can transform the binding to bonding.”

(i)



(ii) The modernization of trade system and developing the security dialogue among the states is a way forward to stabilize the relations.

- (iii) The development of Afghanistan-Pakistan transit trade Agreement (APTITA) to normalize the trade gap.

Acc. to Maleeha Lodhi,

"The sound relation between the Pakistan and Afghanistan is not the luxury but it is a pre-requisite for the South Asia Peace"

6- Conclusion:

Geography binds the two states in a way that they cannot escape. The various factors like security, border disputes, war anxieties, trade gaps, foreign nexus that strain the sound relations among the both despite mediation talks by China however the gaps can be filled by various improvements in border verification, trade initiatives, security dialogue, foreign agents' restraints, the relations of progress and peace can be achieved.

Link to the asked part
Add mediation part

Q3 The formation of new provinces is a recurring discourse in Pakistan. Critically evaluate the hurdles and give recommendations.

A- The Formation of new Provinces is a recurring debate in Pakistan:

Pakistan a state of 796096 km² area of land carrying four major Provinces are seen in a recurring debate of more Provinces from 4 to 12 for better funds distribution and good governance. By comparing it with its regional states like Turkey smaller in area than Pakistan has 81 provinces, Afghanistan its neighbour holds 34 provinces, India its eastern rival contains 28 states, this comparison and the growing internal fiscal, resource and governance debates pushes Pakistan towards the discourses of the formation of new Provinces to manage its Provinces grievances.

greatly but then comes the solid hurdles that again forces Pakistan to go for alternatives for better governance and decentralization of power and resources distribution.

B- Historically there is a conception that smaller states can uphold good governance and decentralization:

Eastern Wing	Western Wing
14 unit	14 unit
1 unit	3 Provinces (Pun, Sind, KP)
East Bengal	1 chief commissoner province (Balochistan)
	10 Princely States
Total = 15 units	

Dr. Yaqoob Bungish in his famous work "A princely states Affair" at Oxford University Press, discusses the very effective and exceptional Performances of princely states like Kairpur, its education, economic, social, political status and regulation processes

was widely praised in that book. Similarly, Liaquat Ali Khan was also impressed by that princely states performance at that time of 1947 spend almost 24% of its GDP on education and having free women education schemes. Same with the case of princely state Swat.

C- There is a growing demand of new provinces due to several crucial factors as given below;

Demands of new provinces due to

Large size of existing units

Disparity among units regarding resource distribution.

Government seats are far flung from remote areas creates huge gap to connect with local level grievances

No accessibility of resources and opportunities to the remote areas

Population is expanding at very high pace and governance level is decreasing too at the fast pace.

D- Forming the new Provinces is not an easy task, there are factors that are creating hurdles to establish new provinces:

i- Constitutional rigidity is the tough task to perform the amendment for new Provinces

In Pakistan constitution Article 238 states that for forming new Provinces you need to gain $2/3$ rd majority from both house.

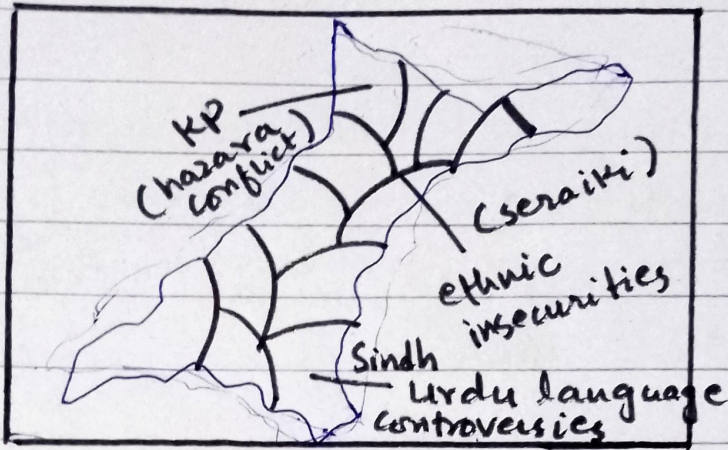
But 239 (4) of the constitution narrates that if changing boundary affect any Provinces boundary, then that respective Provinces national assembly too need to approves that amendment by $2/3$ rd majority.

Issues comes
with the lack of consensus
among political parties to
agree on changing boundaries
in Senate, national assemblies

ii- Pakistan is just starting its journey from economic destabilization towards stabilizing and still need economic strength, So economic constraints is the second hurdle to fulfill the new provinces discourse:

Forming new provinces means developing and constructing of new offices, assemblies residences, vehicles, equipments, benefits, protocols, operating cost this financial expenditure is quite impossible for Pakistan currently already struggling to stabilizing and transform its economy towards the growth.

In the renaming of NWFP to KP Pakistan faces a cost of 8bn and now its a matter of 12 provinces is not an easy task for struggling economy like Pakistan

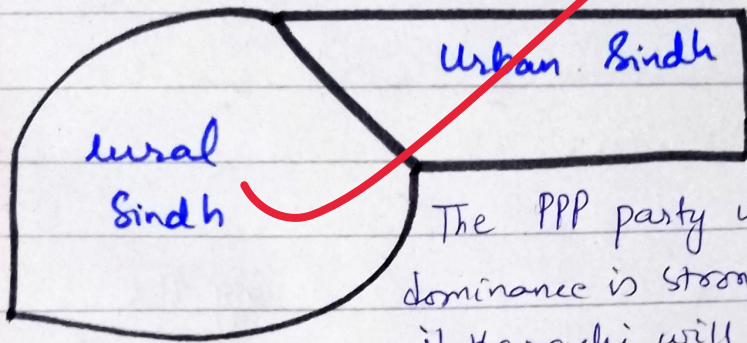


(Identity crisis)

iii- Creating new Provinces means opening a floodgate of ethnic and linguistic tension: an opening of a Pandora box :

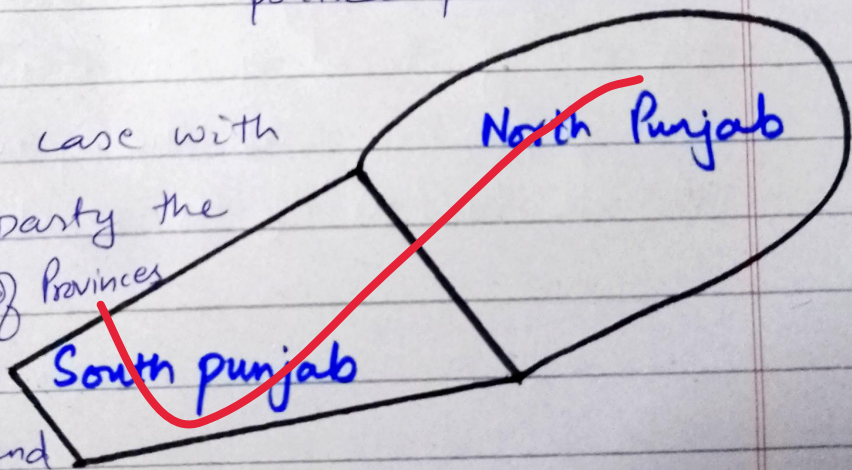
The province of Punjab can cause the issue of seraihi belt ethnic and linguistic hurdle. Second, the KP has its own grievances regarding ethnic & linguistic issue historically the famous hazaran conflict over identity crisis, similarly, in Sindh the Urdu language controversies. The division can lead to major and severe ethnic disintegration that will be difficult in future for Pakistan to deal with economic constraints.

iv- Political interest and Power divide will also become a clash in creating new provinces, as it will bifurcate the parties dominance on overall one unit:



The PPP party whole dominance is strong in rural if Karachi will bifurcate from rural Sindh whose power will rule at that province disturbs the political parties interest.

Same, in case with PMN's party the division of provinces will also divides and



weaken their dominance at one unit also a major hurdle that political parties disturbs to be loose their power.

E- Recommendations as an alternative option that Pakistan can adopt to improve its decentralization and governance:

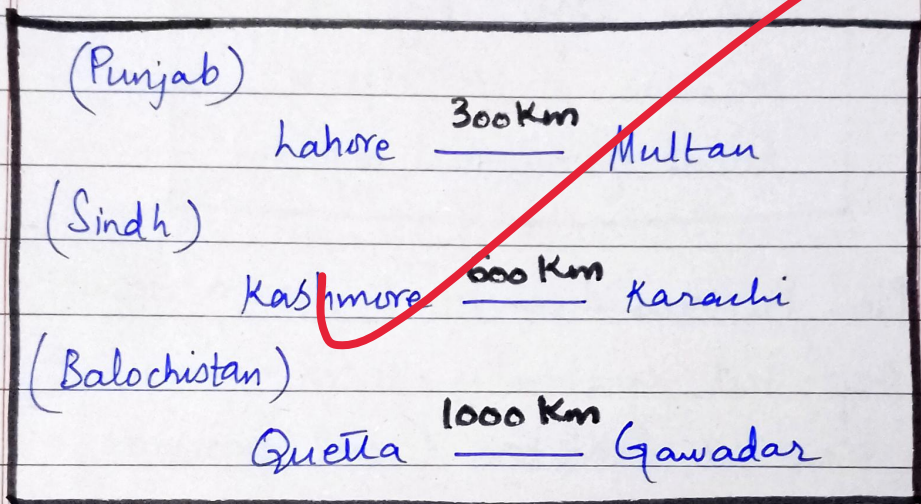
Strengthen the Local governments in accordance with the spirit of constitution:

In the short-term, considering the Pakistan current fiscal, strategic and security situations it is vital to focus on improving and developing strong local governments in every province with the spirit of Article 140(A) of the constitution.

Every Provincial government shall devolve their political, financial and administrative powers to the local governments

Article 140(A)

- (ii) Fiscal decentralization of provincial divisible pool to the local government for better treatment and addressing of the remote areas through proper resource distribution:



This vast difference ^{in distance} of the government seat to the far flung remote areas need to be address only through better and strong powerful local governments, whose prime duty of the nazims and mayors of that local office holders is to work on the ground level problems of the locals and work on their grievances and distribute the resources 30 - 40 % it

gain from Provincial power in the remote and backward areas.

⇒

UK is a unitary government has only one centre but still manages its huge empire effectively, only because of its strong local government system

New Provinces discourse is not a negative step but currently, keeping in view the Pakistan fiscal position, security atmosphere and economic status the alternative method to apply and address the remote areas grievance is possible only through strong local governments:

Conclusion:

The new provinces debate is a very recurring discourse w/ Pakistan is facing and with such an increasing population and merging of KP with FATA and remoteness of areas

Instructions to get good marks in current affairs paper

Important Note:
Marks would be given on the following parameters
a- Content 60% References 15% Subject specific language 15%. Graphs and charts 10%

Add 12-13 headings in each question and write 8-9 sides to get above 15 in each question

the questions carry 3_4 parts... each part has equal weightage so discuss all equally

Give examples from present events to justify answers

Give attractive introduction and Conclusion as well
always give headings from the question statement.
take words from the statement

link each of the argument to the asked part in the question... if you fail to do so, no matter how accurate content is, if your heading is not align with what is asked in the question, it won't be accurate

Good Luck