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Question No : 01

Critically evaluate the reasons for the slowing down of CPEC projects. What options would you recommend to Islamabad and Beijing to re-invigorate the project and make phase II a tangible reality?

Introduction :

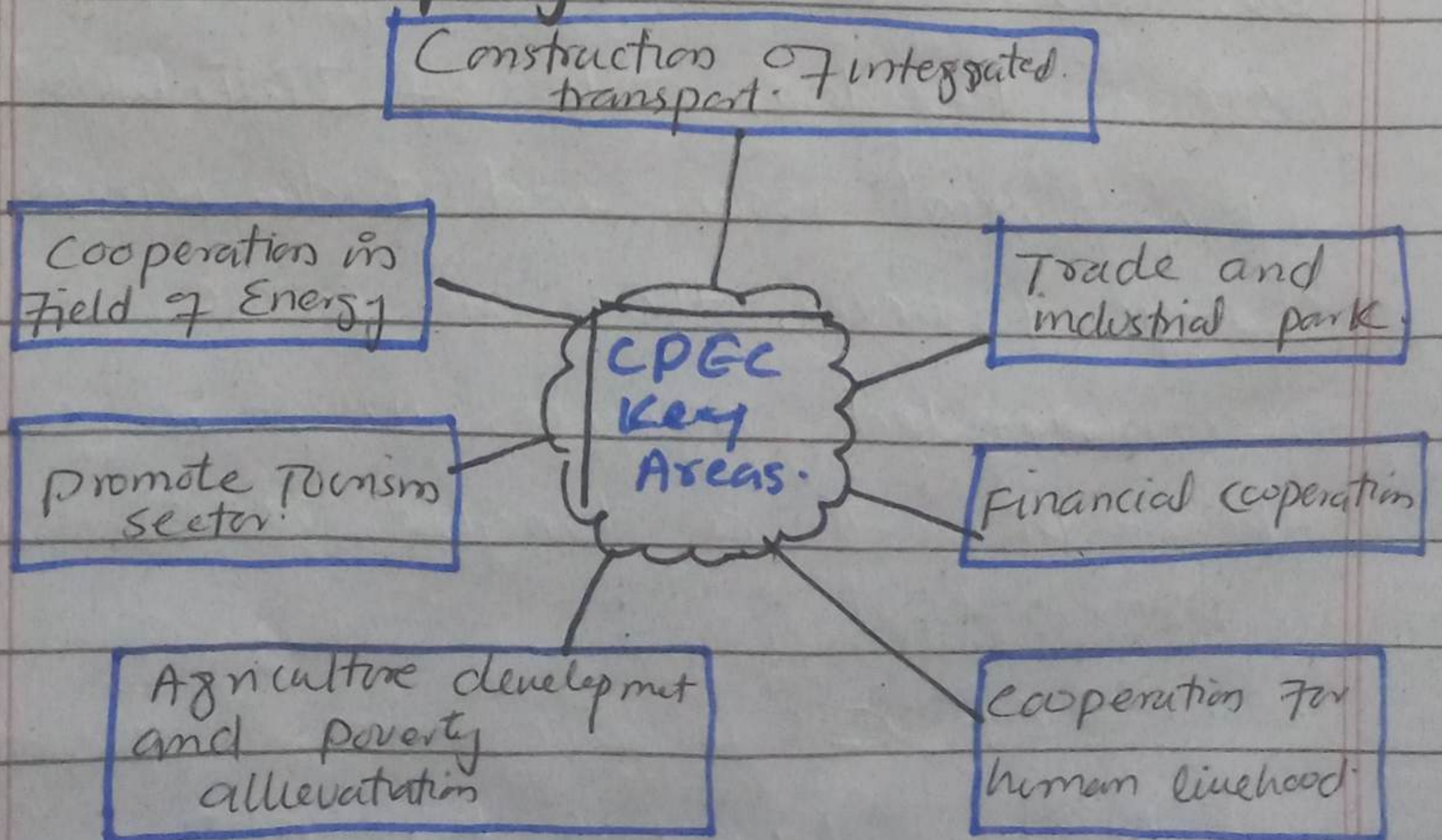
CPEC - China Pakistan Economic corridor is a flag ship project to BRI (Build and road initiative). BRI have six corridors in which CPEC are under construction. CPEC was launched in 2015, its first phase was completed 2020, which was slow due to ~~the~~ rising security issue in Pakistan, role of IMF bailout, interprovincial issues and India regional strategies. However, there are some recommended measures, which make CPEC - Phase II a tangible reality.

① CPEC: Overview :

CPEC is an economic project, which was launched by Chinese

President Xi Jinping in 2015, under BRI. BRI have six corridors which connect three continents of the globe and about 121 countries. Its aims was to create connectivity among states and provide opportunities for ease access to the global market. Only CPEC is under construction, for which \$43 billion was allocated and spend about \$25 billion over different projects of CPEC. Its first phase was completed in 2020 and second phase are under construction.

② Key area of cooperation under CPEC - projects



③ Critical evaluation of the reasons of slowing down of CPEC projects

a) Rising security threat in Pakistan;

Pakistan has facing the issue of insecurity in which the foreign investors are targeted, particularly Chinese. Many terrorist groups like BLA, ISKP and TTP are involved to do terrorist attack on Chinese.

MAHS workers. For example, Karachi university attack by women in 2021, Turbat attack 2024, Karachi airport bombing 2024. These activities conducting for the purpose to create fear among workers due to which CPEC phase one project seen to be slow.

b) Political instability in Pakistan;

In Pakistan from last five to six year, the political condition are seen to be polarized. It was further exasperate, when the previous

government was dissolved by vote of no confidence. Moreover, after 9-May, incident the condition become too worst and government are continuously change. Therefore, due to political instability the CPEC project are affected and become slow.

c) Role of IMF bailout packages:

Pakistan is dependent on IMF loan to run the state economic affairs. IMF had reduce borrowing which directly hamper CPEC project and asks Pakistan to remove sovereign guarantees in energy sector. Moreover, also demanded Pakistan for the elimination of subsidies and tax relief in existing special economic zones and no more new zone would be made.

d) Interprovincial tensions:

In Pakistan, Punjab government received most of the ~~res~~ financial

incentives to build Lahore-Islamabad motorway, Sukkar motorway, and Orange Metroline in Lahore. On other side, Balochistan and KP are grievance increased due to no project work given, inspite that have are in main focus area of CPEC.

e) Grievance of local against Chinese incursion:

Local public of Pakistan, particularly Balochistan people are too affected due to CPEC project most of them have occupation of Fisheries which was ban by the government. There grievance was exacerbate due to jobless and affect their employment sources. Economic marginalization and restriction of fishing hinder their traditional mean of earning.

7) India reparious strategies to counter CPEC:

In the South-Asian region India is the strategic ally of USA and have worst ties with Pakistan.

and China. India intervene in CPEC project to encourage terrorist activities for the purpose to ruin CPEC project. That reason also contribute in slowing down of CPEC project.

(4) Recommendations to Islamabad and Beijing to make CPEC Phase-II a tangible reality:

a) Establish Security zones around key infrastructure area:

Both Islamabad and Beijing need to establish security zones around the key infrastructure areas for the purpose to protect workers from terrorist attacks. The government of Pakistan take some step to make 12,000 CPEC police and appointed 3000 frontier corps for Chinese worker protection. That step make CPEC Phase-II more tangible.

b) Make local beneficiaries of CPEC:

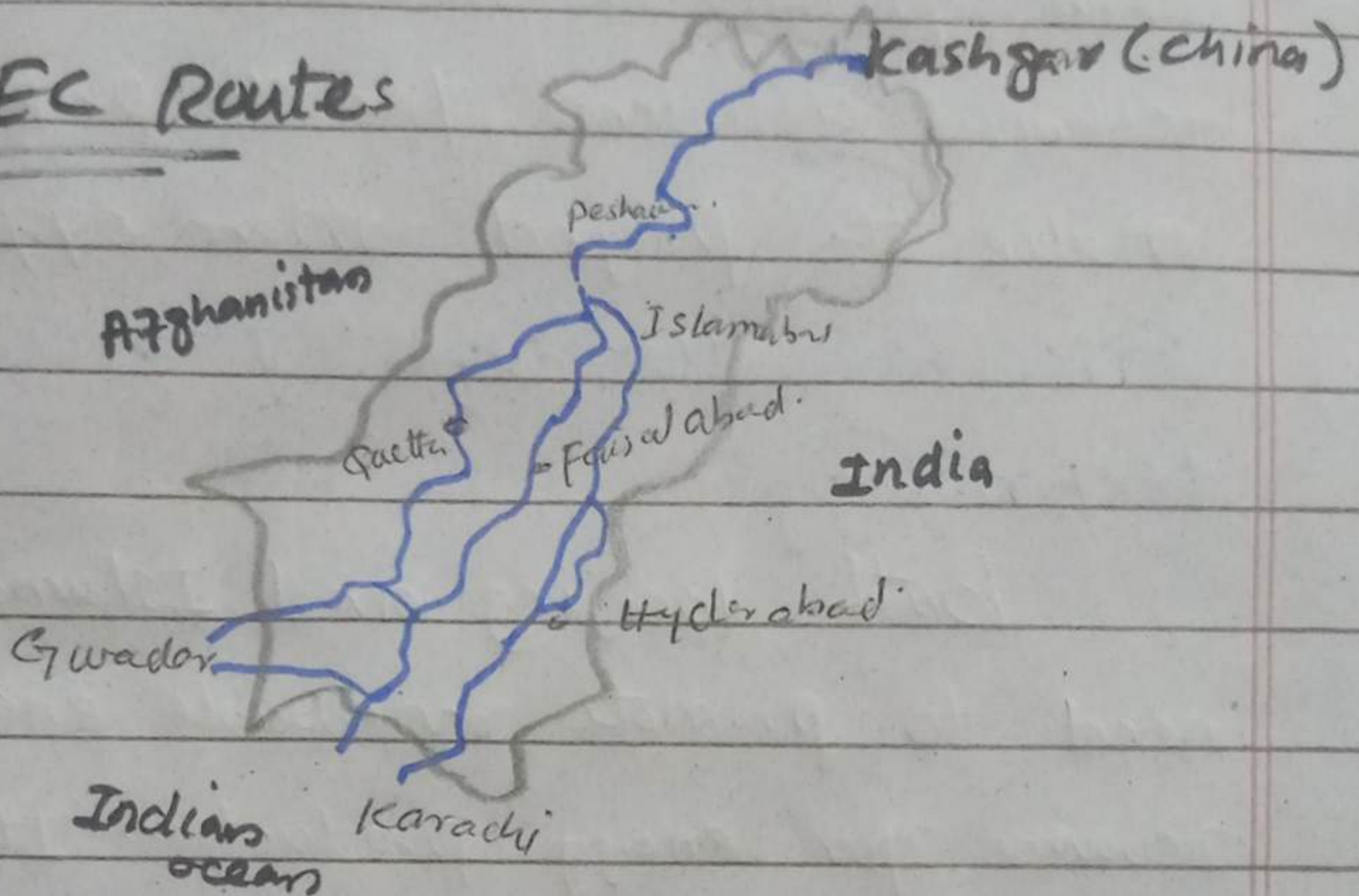
The government of Pakistan need to make the local beneficiaries

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of CPEC. Especially the people of Balochistan to address their grievances for the purpose to make CPEC Phase-II more tangible.

CPEC Routes



C) Shift to equity based financing for future project:

The government of Pakistan needs to distribute financing on equity base among all provinces. It would reduce the grievances of the provinces and make CPEC project more efficient. It has also leads to reduce Pakistan loan burden to earn from the local project and make CPEC phase II a tangible reality.

d) Federal government support, the local authority:

Federal government needs to support the local authority to provide them financial incentives and technical assistance, for the purpose to make the project more efficient.

e) Encourage the use of green technology:

Both Beijing and Islamabad need to promote renewable energy resource for energy production. It will reduce the production cost and also minimize the environmental threats.

(5) Conclusion:

CPEC Phase-I has faced many challenges due to which its efficiency became reduce. Both internal and external factors are responsible. However, Both Islamabad and Beijing need some pragmatic measures that lead the CPEC - phase II project toward a tangible reality.

Question : 02

Islamabad - Kabul tension lingers on due to TTP using Afghan land as a launching pad for terrorist in Pakistan. Critically evaluate the situation, give possible recommendations?

Introduction:

Pakistan and Afghanistan are two neighboring muslims states of the South Asia. While have closed cultural, linguistic and religious ties. From the last four decades Afghanistan became the epicenter of Pakistan political interest. Their relations are not better from the beginning and the tension between them became exasperate after NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan. It has adverse impacts on both states brotherly ties, TTP skirmishes further affects Pakistan in security, social and political affairs. However, their ties can be normalized through some pragmatic measure, that create the a peaceful and cooperative environment in the region.

① Background of Pakistan and Afghanistan tensions:

Since independence of Pakistan, Afghan government have irredentism claims over Pakistan. It made both state relations worst and Afghanistan denied Pakistan recognition. In 1970s Soviet-Afghan war started both and fought war against Soviet Union. After 9/11 the relations became too worst that Pakistan support NATO against Afghanistan. However, after NATO withdrawal 2021, Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan had started terrorist activities in Pakistan by using Afghan land, which further aggravate the tension between Islamabad and Kabul.

② Critical evaluation of Islamabad and Kabul tensions:

i) Diverged line issue between Pakistan and Afghanistan:

Kabul ~~has~~ ^{has} irredentism claims

over Pakistan, that exacerbate the tension between both neighbour states.

In 2021, Pakistan government started

fencing ~~at~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~denied~~ ~~line~~ but

Afghan government denied to

considered denied line as an

international boarder. It caused

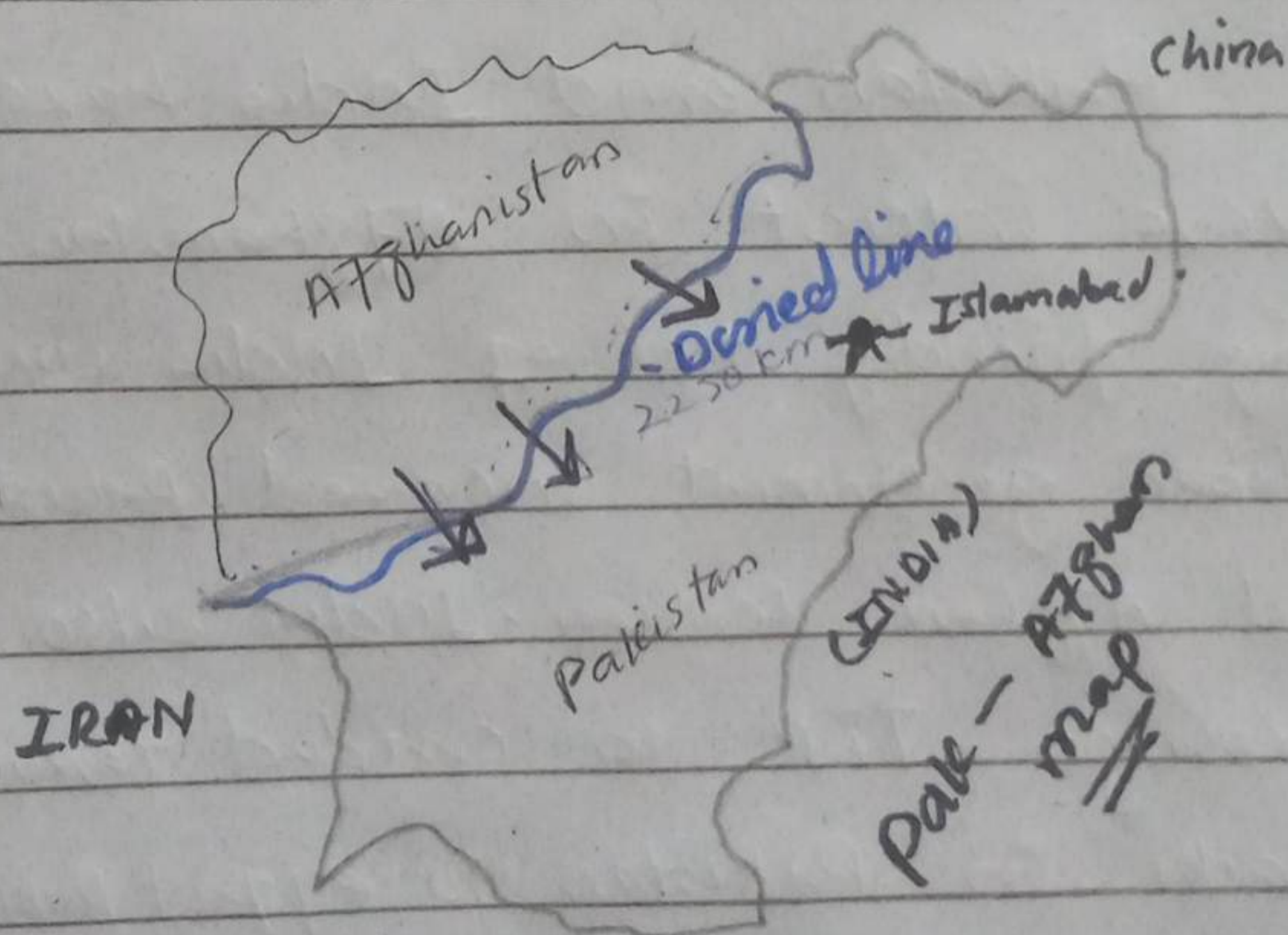
skirmishes and even some fence

Afghan ~~de~~ Taliban defence spokesmen

said, fencing is illegal and Taliban

government donot recognized denied

line as international boarder.



ii) TTP terrorist attacks in Pakistan;
TTP is an terrorist organization

which used Afghanistan land against Pakistan to involve in terrorist activities. Many terrorist attacks in Pakistan like APS - school attacks 2014, Dasu dam attack on Chinese worker and Besham bomb attack on Chinese are conducted by TTP. These terrorist activities further boost up Islamabad and Kabul tensions, which has unwanted consequences on the region.

iii) Engagement of India to encourage TTP and Afghan Taliban against Pakistan:

Pakistan and India have diverse interest in Afghanistan. The rising friendly ties of India with Taliban government increased Pakistan and Afghan tensions. India also encourage TTP to conduct terrorist attacks in Pakistan to effect Pakistan and Afghanistan relations and leads toward regional tensions.

③ Impacts of Islamabad and Kabul tensions:

i) Cross-border skirmishes:

Due to TTP terrorist activities in Pakistan and external entities intervention lead Pakistan and Afghanistan toward border tensions. Several tensions happened in the last and now in December 2024, Pakistan military launched attacks against TTP in Afghan land which further aggravate both state relations.

ii) Disturbance in cross border trades

Afghanistan is land lock country, depends on Pakistan for trade and exchange of goods. Due to TTP terrorist activities most of the time border became close, which have far dangerous consequences on both state relations.

iii) Refugees crisis in Pakistan:

Due to TTP terrorist attacks Pakistan also facing refugee crisis. In Pakistan there are about 3 million Afghan refugees in which 2.4 million are

registered. Pakistan force these refugees to back to Afghanistan, which also affect both side ties.

④ Possible recommendations to minimize Islamabad - Kabul Tension:

i) Track - one diplomacy for peaceful resolution of conflict:

Both states, Pakistan and Afghanistan need to solve the conflict through one-to-one diplomatic negotiations. The Kabul needs to ensure that Afghan territory would not be used against Pakistan and also need to solve border dispute to consider Durand line as international border.

ii) Using SCO - Platform - RATS:

Shanghai cooperation organization have RATS (Regional anti-terrorist Squad) platform, which are working for the combat of terrorism in the region. Both states should use SCO-platform to resolve tensions through peaceful negotiations.

iii) Strengthen economic interdependence bond. between Kabul and Islamabad.

The tensions between both states become rampant, they need to strengthen economic bonds to bring create economic interdependency over each other. These economic interdependency would prevent both states from aggressive behavior against each other and lead toward prosperity of the region.

iv) Open dialogue in Parliament to make counter terrorism policy:

The government of Pakistan need to make anti terrorism policy, which must be specific toward Afghanistan. These type of legislation will empower the government to protect the public from the aggression of TTP attacks.

v) Take non-kinetic measure to reduce tensions.

The government of Pakistan and

Law enforcement agencies always use kinetic means to counter terrorism, due to which it has been increased. They need to ensure the role of religious scholars to portray anti-terrorism narrative and present the real teaching of Islam. This effort will make better the ties between Kabul and Islamabad.

⑤ Conclusion:

Islamabad and Kabul tensions become rampant, which have adverse impacts on the region. Both need to use diplomatic platform and enhance economic interdependence between each other to reduce the tension. Moreover, Afghan Taliban need to start effort against TTP that should not use Afghan land against Pakistan. Therefore, these efforts lead both states toward prosperity and development.