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Q.3

Introduction

The world is witnessing a historic surge in armament, marking a transformative shift in global security dynamics. According to the SIPRI (2024), global military expenditure has reached an unprecedented $2.718 trillion, rising for the tenth consecutive year and growing by 37% since 2015. The 9.4% rise in 2024 (the steepest since 1988) reflects deepening geopolitical tensions, renewed great-power rivalry, and persistent regional conflicts. This answer critically evaluates the major drivers behind the contemporary arms build-up and evaluates its far-reaching implications for world peace, stability and development.

1- Reasons Behind Increasing Armament

a- Intensifying Great-Power Rivalries

Geopolitical competition, notably between the US and China and involving NATO and Russia, has sparked significant military

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modernization. According to ISSI's Issue Brief (2025), the US spent $997 billion and China $314 billion in 2024, dominating nearly 60% of global defense spending alongside Russia, Germany, and India. Advancements in hypersonic missiles, AI-enabled warfare, and space militarization are driving an escalating arms race across various regions.

b- Ongoing wars and Regional Conflicts

SIPRI highlights that Europe and the Middle East recorded some of the sharpest increase in military spending, largely due to the Russia-Ukraine war, the ongoing Gaza conflict and broader regional tensions. South Asia's persistent India-Pakistan rivalry further fuels procurement pressures. According to ISSI (2025), Europe alone spent $693 billion in 2024 - an increase of 17%, while Israel's expenditure surged by 65%, reflecting how active conflicts and regional insecurity are driving rapid militarization.

c- Security Dilemma and Strategic Insecurity

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As one state expands its military capabilities, rivals often feel threatened and respond similarly, creating a classic "security dilemma." This is evident in the Indo-Pacific naval buildup, missile defence competition in East Asia, and procurement cascades across the Midd East. According to UN report (2025), such dynamics generate self-perpetuating cycles of insecurity escalating regional tensions and fueling global arms race.

d - Rise of Non-Traditional Threats

ISSI (2025) identifies AI, hypersonics, cyber warfare, counter-space systems, and autonomous drones as key drivers of the arms race. These emerging technologies compress decision-making timelines and heighten escalation risks, prompting states to further expand defense budgets.

e - Alliance Commitments and Defence Industrial Pressures

NATO's guideline of 2%, AUKUS cooperation, and the EU's push for defense autonomy are driving member states to increase their defense spending. Additionally, defense industries are lobbying for consistent high

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procurement levels, impacting national policies. For instance, Russia's aggressive posture in Eastern Europe has compelled NATO countries to boost their defense budgets, with many reaching or exceeding the "2% of of GDP" target.

2- Implications for World Peace

a- Heightened Risk of International Conflict

Greater armament increases the probability of miscalculation, accidental escalation, and arms-race instability. The UN Secretary-General (2025) warns that "excessive military spending fuels arms races and deepens mistrust," undermining peaceful conflict resolution.

b- Escalation of Conflicts and prolonged wars

The erosion of traditional treaties such as INF and Open Skies, along with the weakening of New START and the rise of AI- and space-based weapons, has heightened global instability. SIPRI (2025) indicates that high-precision weapons have extended the Russia-Ukraine ~~and~~ conflict, while similar technologies have prolonged hostilities

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in Ukraine and Gaza. Moreover, ISSI (2025) points out that emerging technologies shorten decision timelines, increasing the risk of nuclear escalation, and highlights that militarization in the Middle East supports prolonged, intense conflicts.

c- Economic and Developmental Consequences

Global military spending, as reported by UNDP (2025), has reached 2.5% of GDP and 7.1% of government budgets. In developing countries a 1% increase in defense spending nearly matches a reduction in public health funding. The SDG financing gap, currently at $4 trillion, is expected to grow to $6.4 trillion, with militarization diverting essential resources from poverty alleviation, health, education, and climate resilience. This trend intensifies the "development-security paradox", worsening poverty and insecurity in conflict-affected areas.

d- Militarization vs. SDG 13: Climate Action

Rising armament is fundamentally incompatible with climate goals. According to CEOBS (2025), militaries are responsible for

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approximately 5.6% of global greenhouse gas emissions, making them the fourth-largest emitter if treated as a single country. Moreover each dollar spent on military activities emits twice as much GHG as an equivalent civilian investment. NATO's military buildup alone could add 87-194 million tCO_2e annually, undermining the Paris Agreement targets. The UNDP further highlights that just 15% of global military expenditure ($387 billion) could fully fund climate adaptation in developing countries, demonstrating that escalating militarization directly threatens SDG 13's goals on mitigation, adaptation, climate finance, and capacity-building.

e- Humanitarian, Social, and Environmental Costs

Wars in Gaza, Ukraine, and the Red Sea region have led to ecosystem collapse, significant carbon emissions, mass displacement, and infrastructure destruction, with military operations exacerbating environmental degradation and deepen long-term fragility.

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Critical Evaluation

Increased armament presents both defensive justifications and negative outcomes. Advocates argue that enhanced defense spending deters aggression, supports collective defense (NATO), and is essential for survival in regions facing threats. Conversely, critics highlight that deterrence can fail, leading to conflicts, and create security dilemmas that perpetuate militarization. Over-emphasis on security can weaken diplomacy and jeopardize long-term peace. Therefore, while defense modernization may bolster national security, unchecked military buildup globally threatens collective peace and diverts resources from human development.

Conclusion

The sharp rise in global armament documented by global conflict-monitoring bodies signals a world drifting away from peace and cooperative security. While states justify military buildups for deterrence and sovereignty, the cumulative effect is alarming: heightened geopolitical tensions, weakened arms control, shrinking development budgets, and a direct threat to climate goals such as SDG 13. Rebalancing priorities toward diplomacy, sustainable

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development, and human security is essential to prevent militarization from locking the world into a future of instability, inequality, and ecological crisis. Only a shift from weapons to welfare can ensure lasting global peace.

Q.6

Introduction

The recent surge in NATO defense spending marks a historic increase in military budgets among member states, driven largerly by **Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022**. For the first time, all 32 NATO members are projected to meet the 2% of GDP benchmark in 2025, with Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia exceeding the new 3.5% target. NATO has set an eventual goal of ~~5%~~ ~~of~~ 5% of GDP by 2035 for core defense and related security investments. This increase, while necessary for deterrence and alliance unity, has significant economic, political, and strategic implications.

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1- Drivers of Increased NATO Defense Spending

a- Geopolitical Threats

The ongoing war in Ukraine and perceived Russian aggression on NATO's eastern flank have created urgency for higher military preparedness.

b- Alliance Commitments

Meeting NATO's 2% of GDP defense spending benchmark addresses long-standing U.S. concerns over equitable burden sharing, ensuring that all member states contributes fairly to collective security while strengthening alliance cohesion.

c- Future Security Goals

The 3.5% target by 2035, as part of the broader 5% goal, aims to ensure investments in advanced weapons, military mobility, cyber defense, and industrial innovation.

d- Regional Proximity

Countries geographically closer to Kyiv, such as Poland and the Baltic states, are more willing to increase defense spending due to their higher exposure to regional

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Security threats.

2- **Economic Implications**

a) Fiscal Burden

Higher defense budgets may limit resources for healthcare, education, and infrastructure, potentially affecting public welfare and social services.

b) Multiplier Effects

Defense investment can stimulate industrial growth, create jobs, and promote R&D spillovers, especially in technology-heavy sectors, but heavy reliance on imports reduces the benefits for the domestic economy.

c) Inflationary Pressures

Short-term increases in government defense spending could slightly raise consumer prices: **European Central Bank estimates suggest a 0.1-0.3 percentage** point rise in inflation for every **1% of GDP** spent on defense, meaning everyday costs could go up a little.

3- **Military and Strategic Implications**

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a) Enhanced Deterrence

Higher defense spending improves the NATO's capability to respond to threats and reinforces collective defense. This makes member countries feel more secure and sends a strong message to potential aggressors.

b) ~~Capability~~ Readiness vs. Expenditure Gap

Money alone does not guarantee operational effectiveness; proper procurement, training, and modernization are critical. Without these, even high spending may not translate into real military strength.

c) Capability Gaps

Not all countries exceed the minimum spending threshold; differences in industrial capacity and technological sophistication may still persist. This means some members might still lag behind in their ability to fully contribute to joint efforts.

4- Possible Fallouts of Increased NATO Defense Spending

a) Domestic Political Pressure

Citizens may question increased defense

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budgets when social services like healthcare, education, and infrastructure, are affected, leading to public debates and political pressure on governments.

b) Alliance Cohesion

Meeting the 2% target strengthens NATO unity, but achieving the 3.5% and 5% goals will challenge countries' political will and financial capacity, possibly creating differences within the alliance.

c) Internal Perception and Regional Tensions

Strong spending shows commitment to collective security but it may also increase tensions with Russia and neighboring countries, potentially triggering a regional arms race and security dilemmas.

d) Economic Trade-Offs

Higher defense budgets may crowd out private investment and slow growth in non-defense sectors. This can reduce funding for important public services like schools, hospitals, and infrastructure, affecting overall economic development.

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Conclusion

The recent rise in NATO defense spending is a rational response to urgent security threats and alliance commitments. Economically, while there are risk's of fiscal stress, crowding out of civilian investment, and modest inflation, targeted domestic investments can generate long-term benefits through technological spillovers, industrial growth, and regional development. Strategically, increased budgets enhance deterrence, but capability gaps and efficient allocation of resources remain key challenges. While adherence to the 2% target shows unity, achieving higher goals necessitates balancing of security imperatives with domestic economic priorities. Overall, NATO's spending surge reflects both necessity and complexity, requiring coordinated policies to ensure sustainable economic and military outcomes.

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Introduction

The recent thaw in China-India Relations presents a unique opportunity for South Asia to achieve relative stability which could have direct implications for Pakistan's strategic and economic partnerships. China, as Pakistan's all-weather ally and India's rising competitor, is playing a pivotal role in shaping regional dynamics. Improved diplomatic engagement between Beijing and New Delhi can reduce India-Pakistan tensions, stabilize borders, and create space for enhanced collaboration. This analysis draws on recent developments, Chinese Foreign Minister visits to Islamabad, New Delhi, and Kabul in August 2025 and India's first ~~to Chin~~ visit to China in seven years on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit in Tianjin.

1- Strategic Implications of China-India Rapprochement for Pakistan-China Relations

a) China-India Relations

The two countries share a 2,100-mile border with disputed areas like Aksai Chin

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and Arunachal Pradesh (South Tibet). Historical conflicts include the 1962 Sino-India war and the 2020 Galwan Valley clash, which caused 20 Indian and 4 Chinese fatalities. Periodic dialogue and high-level visits, such as the recent SCO summit meeting between Modi and Xi, help reduce tensions along these border.

b) Economic Weight

Combined, they account for approximately 35% of the global population and 28% of world GDP. China remains the largest exporter globally, while India is the fastest-growing major economy, gradually expanding its industrial and technological capabilities.

c) Military Capabilities

China has a $231 billion defense budget in 2024 and advanced domestic military technology, while India spends $75 billion. China also supplies 81% of Pakistan's major arm imports (2024), strengthening Islamabad's strategic position in the region.

d) Impact on Pakistan

Reduced China-India hostility lowers

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the risk of two-front military pressure on India, indirectly stabilizing Pakistan's western and northern borders. This situation allows Pakistan to maintain closer economic and defense cooperation with China while cautiously monitoring regional shifts.

2 Diplomatic and Economic Implications for Pakistan-China Relations Amid China-India Collaboration

a) Balanced Regional Diplomacy

China has repeatedly signaled, including through Wang Yi's statements, that its relationship with both India and Pakistan are independent and not aimed against any third country. This shows Beijing's desire for a more stable and balanced diplomatic environment in South Asia.

b) Pakistan-China Partnership

Despite warming ties with India, China remains Pakistan's closest strategic partner, especially in defense, infrastructure, and economic cooperation. Key CPEC projects, along with planned expansions in agriculture, mining, energy, and industrial zones, continue to anchor this

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partnership firmly.

c) Greater Economic Focus and Connectivity

Reduced tensions with India allow China to invest in Pakistan with a stronger sense of security, free from the risk of India-related disruptions. This facilitates smoother trade corridors, protects Chinese investments, and enhance Pakistan's role as a central hub in regional connectivity.

d) Influence on Global South

As both China and India seek leadership roles in the Global South, a stable regional environment limits the chances of major power rivalry spilling into Pakistan. This stability enables Pakistan to strengthen its economic diplomacy and benefit from wider regional development initiatives.

3 Security and Strategic Calculations

a) Two-Front Dilemma for India

China's defense partnership with Pakistan poses a strategic challenge for

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India. Easing tensions between China and India allows India to focus on domestic issues and strengthen western partnerships, ~~sut~~ indirectly reducing pressure and military anxiety for Pakistan. This also provides Pakistan with more manoeuverability in security planning.

b) Border Management

Historically, political engagement between China and India has often aligned with decreased confrontations between India and Pakistan. Instances following **the 1999 Kargil conflict and the 2019 Pulwama-Balakot crisis** demonstrate that increased cooperation between China and India may foster better crisis communication and restrant in the region.

c) Military Stability

Improved relations between China and India reduce the likelihood of conflict along the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)**, thereby decreasing regional tensions. This development minimizes Pakistan's risks of being involved in a broader conflict with India and it's allies, allowing Pakistan to maintain strategic

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stability without facing simultaneous regional pressures.

4- Challenges and Caveats

a) Unresolved Disputes

China and India have enduring conflicts including unresolved border disputes in Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh, and Aksai Chin, along with disagreements over Tibet. This mistrust results in frequent military standoffs, making any cooperation between the nations fragile, as even minor border incidents can jeopardize diplomatic progress and hinder long-term rapprochement.

b) Nationalism

Strong nationalist sentiments in India and China limit governmental compromises, as leaders must appease domestic audiences insisting on firm stances regarding territorial and strategic matters. This pressure hinders concessions, thereby slowing negotiations and constraining cooperation.

c) Pakistan's Strategic Balance

While China is unlikely to abandon Pakistan, enhanced China-India

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coordination may require Islamabad to carefully manage its diplomacy to maintain influence.

Conclusion

The easing of China-India tensions represents a strategic opportunity for Pakistan to consolidate its partnership with China while benefiting from regional stability. Historical patterns indicate that China's engagement acts as a stabilizing force, reducing India-Pakistan tensions. Economically, it ensures continuity of CPEC projects and trade cooperation, while strategically, it mitigates threats along borders. By leveraging this window of opportunity, Pakistan can strengthen its geopolitical position without compromising its all-weather ~~partone~~ ~~partnership~~ partnership with China.

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Introduction

The rise of the Trump administration in the United States brought significant unpredictability in global politics characterized by trade wars, unilateral sanctions, and inconsistent foreign policies. This created strategic uncertainty for many countries dependent on the U.S., including India, Pakistan, and states across the Global South. In response, China has positioned itself as a stable and reliable partner, promoting long-term economic and diplomatic engagement through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and strategic cooperation in multilateral forums such as BRICS and SCO.

1- China's Projection as a Reliable Partner

a) Economic Stability

China has been the largest exporter since 2009 and accounts for around 18% of global trade. Initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) offer long-term investment certainty particularly in energy, infrastructure, and industry.

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b) Diplomatic Reliability

Through active engagement with both India and Pakistan, China emphasizes that its partnerships are "not targeted at any third party" (Wang Yi, 2025). This balanced approach enhances China's image as a dependable partner in a volatile ~~[illegible]~~ international system.

C) Crisis Mediation Role

Historically, China has acted as a stabilizer during regional conflicts, such as India Pakistan crises in 1999 (Kargil), 2001-02 (Parliament attack), and 2019 (Pulwama attack), urging restraint and encouraging dialogue, often quietly but effectively.

2. Strategic Capacities for a Parallel world order

a) Economic Influence

China's investments through BRI span over 70 countries, giving Beijing leverage in infrastructure, trade, and regional connectivity. It is also Pakistan's largest investor, contributing billions in sectors ranging from energy to industry.

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b) Military Power

China's defense budget is $231 billion (2024), double India's $75 billion, with advanced missiles, stealth jets, and naval assets, ensuring regional power projection.

c) Technological Edge

Leadership in AI, 5G, and advanced weaponry enhances China's global influence

d) Multilateral Engagement

China uses institutions like BRICS, SCO, and AIIB to cultivate alternative global governance structures, providing strategic space for a "parallel world order" less dependent on U.S. dominance.

3- Critical Evaluation

a) Strengths

1- Predictable long term investments contrast U.S. unpredictability under Trump.

2- Balanced diplomacy (India and Pakistan) strengthens China's regional credibility.

b) Limitations

1- Economic slow down, demographic pressures, and debt vulnerabilities in partner countries could limit influence.

2- Strategic mistrust from major powers and regional disputes (South China Sea, Taiwan) constrain full acceptance as a neutral global leader.

4- **Implications for Global Politics**

Countries in South Asia and Global South increasingly view China as a reliable economic and strategic partner, providing alternatives to the unpredictable US. A potential parallel world order is feasible if China sustains economic, military, and technological leadership, but it will complement rather than replace existing global power structures.

Conclusion

China has utilized the unpredictability of U.S. foreign policy under Trump to position itself as a reliable partner, particularly in South Asia and Global South. With robust economic, diplomatic, and military capabilities, China aims to establish a ~~parand~~ parallel world order. Nevertheless, structural challenges, regional mistrust, and international limitations suggest that China's influence may complement rather than fully support U.S-led global systems.

The End