

DATE: 10th / NW / 2025

PAK. AFFAIRS

Test-3

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Q. No. 2

Introduction

The Kashmir conflict lies at the heart of Pakistan-India relations and remains one of the world's most prolonged territorial disputes. Rooted in the 1947 partition of British India, it has evolved through multiple wars, legal debates and failed peace efforts. The issue embodies historical grievances, legal controversies over accession, and diplomatic struggles shaped by shifting regional and global politics. The following ~~the~~ write-up examines the historical, legal, and diplomatic dimensions of the conflict and evaluates Pakistan's policy response toward resolving it.

1- Historical Dimension

a- Partition and Accession (1947)

At Partition, princely states were given the choice to join either dominion based on geographical contiguity and the will of their people. Jammu and Kashmir, a Muslim-majority state ruled by the Hindu Maharaja Hari Singh, delayed its

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decision. Following a local uprising and tribal intervention from Pakistan's frontier regions, the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession to India on October 26, 1947, prompting the first Indo-Pak war (1947-48).

b- UN Mediation

The conflict led to the involvement of the United Nations, which passed Resolution 47 (1948), calling for a ceasefire, withdrawal of forces, and a plebiscite under UN supervision. While the cease-fire was achieved in 1949, the plebiscite was never conducted due to differences over demilitarization.

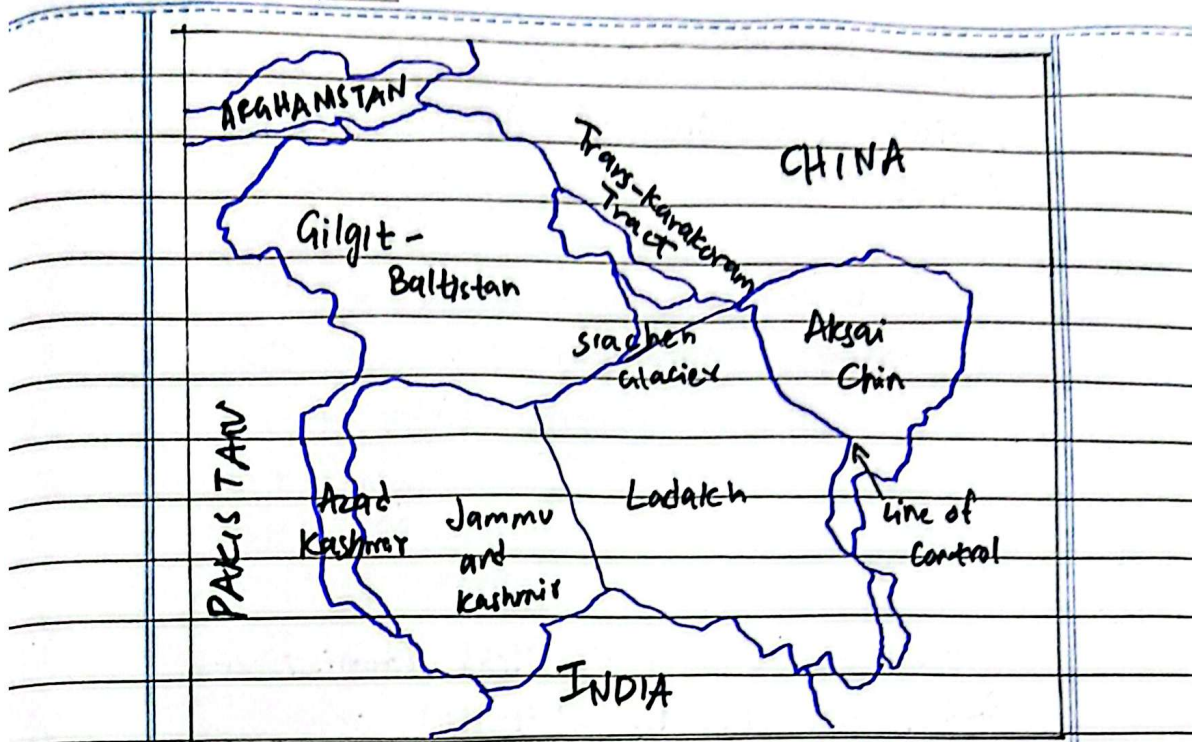
c- Subsequent Wars and Agreements.

Further wars in 1965, 1971 and the Kargil conflict (1999), reaffirmed Kashmir as the core of regional hostility. The Simla Agreement (1972), converted the cease-fire into the Line of Control (LOC), turning the dispute into a bilateral issue.

d- Post-1989 Insurgency

Widespread discontent in Indian-administered Kashmir led to an armed insurgency, intensifying repression and bringing human rights concern to international attention.

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11- Legal Dimension

a- Instrument of Accession Validity

India's legal claim rests on the Maharaja's accession, which Pakistan disputes, arguing that it was signed under coercion and against the wishes of the Muslim-majority population.

b- UN Resolutions and Right to Self-Determination

The UN Security Council resolutions (448-57) recognized Kashmir as a disputed territory and upheld the right to self-determination. Pakistan bases its legal stance on these resolutions, calling for a plebiscite.

c- India's Constitutional Measures

India's revocation of Article 370 in August 2019, which stripped Jammu and Kashmir of its special constitutional status, is seen by Pakistan as a violation of international law and UN resolutions. India, however, treats it as an internal matter of sovereignty.

d- Human Rights and International Law

Reports by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and global organizations including Amnesty International have raised concerns about excessive militarization, extrajudicial killings, and curbs on civil liberties, adding a human rights dimension to the legal debate.

III- Diplomatic Dimension

a- Bilateral Efforts

Initiatives like the Tashkent Declaration (1966), Simla Agreement (1972) and Lahore Declaration (1999) aimed to normalize relations, yet failed to produce lasting solutions due to mutual mistrust and recurring violence.

b- International Mediation

While Pakistan has repeatedly sought third-party mediation, the Indian stance remains firm on bilateral resolution only. This has limited external diplomatic leverage.

c- Post-9/11 and Global Context

The international focus on terrorism altered perceptions of the conflict. India linked Kashmir militancy to global terrorism, while Pakistan emphasized the indigenous nature of the movement.

d- Recent Developments

Since 2019, diplomatic ties have deteriorated sharply. India's unilateral action—including the revocation of Article 370—, ongoing cross-border skirmishes, suspension of diplomatic channels, and Pakistan's efforts to internationalize the issue at the UN, OIC, and other global forums have brought limited tangible outcomes but kept the issue alive diplomatically.

IV- Evaluation of Pakistan's Policy on Kashmir

a- Strengths

- 1- Pakistan consistently advocates the Kashmiri right to self-determination based on UN resolutions.
- 2- It has used diplomatic channels like the OIC and UN General Assembly to keep the issue internationally recognized.
- 3- Pakistan's support for humanitarian and political rights in Kashmir aligns with its ideological foundation as a Muslim homeland.

b- Weaknesses

- 1- Inconsistent strategies: Oscillation between military, political, and diplomatic approaches have reduced policy coherence.
- 2- Perception of Militancy Support: International narratives often link Pakistan to cross-border militancy, undermining its diplomatic credibility.
- 3- Limited Global Traction: Despite raising the issue globally, no significant pressure has been exerted on India.

4- Domestic Challenges: Political instability and economic issues have constrained foreign policy efficiency.

C- Current Policy Approach

Pakistan emphasizes on peaceful diplomacy, legal advocacy, and humanitarian engagement, aiming to build international consensus against India unilateralism, reverse post-2019 measures, and restore dialogue mechanisms.

Conclusion

The Kashmir dispute remains the cornerstone of Pakistan-India relations and a major obstacle to South Asian peace.

Historically rooted, legally complex, and diplomatically sensitive, it continues to test both nations' ~~will~~ resolve. While Pakistan's principled stance on self-determination aligns with international law, achieving tangible results requires a coherent, long-term, and globally resonant strategy. The path to resolution lies in sustained diplomacy, regional stability, and a renewed international commitment to uphold justice and the will of the Kashmiri People.



Q. No. 3

I- Introduction

Since 2001, Pakistan's foreign policy towards Afghanistan has been shaped by security imperatives, regional power dynamics, and the need to manage non-state militant actors operating along the porous Durand Line. The post-9/11 era witnessed Pakistan balancing cooperation with the US led intervention in Afghanistan while trying to maintain influence over Afghan political developments. Bilateral relations and border management have been heavily influenced by the ruling regimes in Kabul, from U.S.-backed democratic governments to the Taliban, affecting Pakistan's counterterrorism strategy. Recent escalations in 2025, including cross-border attacks and failed ceasefire talks, highlight the persistent fragility of Pakistan-Afghanistan relations.

II- Context and Background

Following the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan aligned with the US-led coalition, supporting counterterrorism operations against Al-Qaeda and the Afghan Taliban while seeking

to maintain influence in Kabul. The Western backed Afghan government (2001-2021) and the Taliban regime (2021 onwards) presented challenges. Border regions like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan have remained hotbeds of insurgency, refugee flows, and militant activity. Pakistan's policy has combined military operations, diplomacy, and intelligence, but historical mistrust and local grievances often constrained its effectiveness.

IV - Pakistan's Post 9/11 Foreign Policy Towards Afghanistan

In the early post-9/11 period, Pakistan aimed to cultivate influence in Kabul to counter India and ensure Pashtun representation in the Afghan administration. While cooperating with U.S. on counterterrorism, Pakistan often displayed policy ambivalence, supporting anti-Taliban efforts externally while maintaining ties with Taliban elements across the border. Hosting millions of Afghan refugees has been both a humanitarian obligation and a security challenge, prompting occasional deportations when militant infiltration was suspected. Pakistan's approach sought a balance between strategic influence,

counter terrorism and humanitarian management.

IV- Impact of Afghan Regimes

a- western-backed Kabul (2001-2021):

Pakistan maintained formal diplomatic ties but often faced tensions over cross-border militancy. Islamabad attempted to manage the TTP threat through intelligence operations and targeted military actions, while also relying on regional partnerships with the U.S. and China to strengthen border security.

The presence of Afghan refugees and ongoing instability in border regions further complicated bilateral engagement, requiring Pakistan to balance security concerns with humanitarian obligations.

b- Taliban Regime (2021 - present):

Since the Taliban's return to power in 2021, Pakistan initially sought to secure strategic influence by recognizing and engaging with the new regime. However, the Taliban's ideological and historical ties with TTP have limited Islamabad's leverage. The Afghan authorities have shown reluctance to take decisive action against

terrorist elements operating on the ground. Kabul's cautious engagement with India has further complicated Pakistan's strategic objectives. Recurrent attacks, including the September 2023 Quetta suicide bombing, highlight the continued vulnerability of Pakistan's border regions and the difficulty of enforcing security through negotiations alone.

V- Border Challenges and Recent Escalations

a- Durand Line Issues

Pakistan's border with Afghanistan is porous due to difficult terrain and tribal loyalties, complicating control. Militant groups like TTP and BLA exploit the Durand Line, using Afghanistan as a safe haven for attacks. This situation has led Islamabad to contemplate cross-border strikes and deportations of Afghan nationals to pressure the Taliban. The border's porosity highlights the challenges Pakistan faces in securing its frontier.

b- Surge in Violence and Military Responses

Between 2024-2025, militant attacks rose 74% in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and

Balochistan. Operations like Azm-e-Istehkam faced criticism for unclear objectives and weak political ownership, reducing their effectiveness. Military responses alone are insufficient, as punitive measures risk alienating local populations and increasing recruitment for militant groups.

c- Ceasefires and Taliban Inaction

Temporary ceasefires in Doha 2025, mediated by Turkey and Qatar, were repeatedly violated, with Afghan Taliban refusing written commitments and relying only on verbal understandings. Dialogue has often been used by the Afghan Taliban to prolong ceasefires without taking concrete steps against armed groups, reflecting deep mistrust and divergent priorities. This has left Islamabad relying on a mix of coercive measures and strategic patience.

d- Structural Threats and Local Grievances

Decades of conflict and economic underdevelopment in tribal regions fuel TTP recruitment. Addressing local grievances alongside security measures must be done to achieve long-term stability. Without addressing these

underlying ~~the~~ challenges, cross-border and security operations will have limited effectiveness.

VI - Policy Implications and Way Forward

- > Pakistan's foreign policy toward Afghanistan combines engagement with coercion, including trilateral forums with Afghanistan and China to curb TTP influence; alongside military strikes and deportations.
- > Combining Security Measures with humanitarian engagement, trade facilitation, and dialogue can enhance Pakistan's credibility while reducing the appeal of militant groups along the border. The repeated failure of negotiations underscores the need for a dual approach: strong border management backed by structural reforms in Pakistan's tribal regions.

VII - Conclusion

Pakistan's foreign policy toward Afghanistan in the post-9/11 era has remained a complex blend of security concerns, strategic depth, and regional diplomacy. While Islamabad has sought stability

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through dialogue, cooperation, and border management, persistent cross-border militancy and the Taliban's reluctance to act against the TTP have strained trust. Recent failures in peace talks and increased violence highlight that military solutions are insufficient. A successful approach requires a mix of security measures, economic cooperation, and inclusive dialogue. Through mutual accountability and regional collaboration, Pakistan and Afghanistan can move toward lasting stability and secure borders.



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