

DATE: 03/11/25

DAY: M. AWATS

CSS MOCK
GK II (CURRENT AFFAIRS)
TES - 2

Q1 PAKISTAN'S BALANCE WITH US AND CHINA

(I) Introduction

In the continued escalatory paradigm of great power rivalry between China and the U.S, Pakistan has placed itself in at the center-stage. Pakistan's recent engagement with the U.S in the post-Trump era, and its long-term strategic partnership with China requires the country to strike a well-maintained balance. Pakistan can do so by focusing on areas of mutually aligned interests between the two great powers. In addition, the key to maintaining a healthy relationship with both partners also lies in targeted ~~are~~ focusing on targeted areas of engagement. Both China and the U.S require specific things from Pakistan, which thereby allowing Pakistan ample room for maneuverability.

(II) Areas of mutually aligned interests between US and China within Pakistan

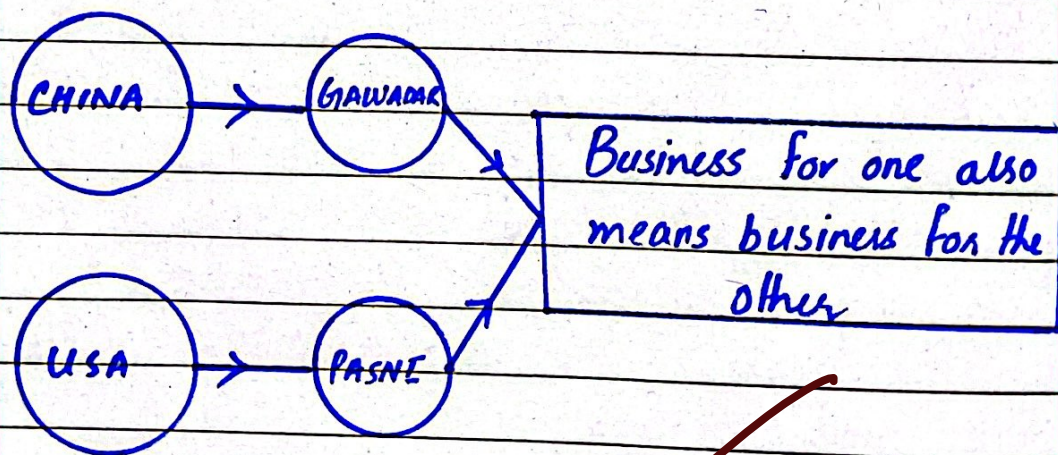
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(A) Stable security situation in Pakistan

Both the U.S and China need a stable security situation in Pakistan. China needs it due to ~~the~~ its large investments in Pakistan and its aim to further progress CPEC. The US requires it if it wishes to ~~capit extract~~ ^{extract} rare earth elements and capitalise of Pakistan's large mineral sectors. Subsequently, both powers require Pakistan in a stable security position.

(B) Complimentary trade logistics



Both the US and China stand to benefit from the increased enhanced logistical capacity of Pakistan. Critically positioned at the Strait of Hormuz, overlooking the Indian Ocean and Arabian sea, and in-between Central Asia, South Asia, and Middle East, Pakistan has enough traffic to satisfy both China and Pakistan.

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(c) Historical parallels of ^{approachment} ~~re-approachment~~ between China, US, and Pakistan

In the past, Pakistan has served a role of uniting China and the US. A distinct possibility exists here as well, that Pakistan can serve as the bridge between the two powers. Pakistan has close ties with China and is developing ties with the U.S. as well. As the common between both, Pakistan can serve a key role.

(III) Maintaining a balance between China and U.S.

(A) Engagement areas with China

1. Trade and Economy:

Pakistan and China must maintain and deepen their trade and economic engagement. China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (CPFTA) must be expanded. Currently, China is Pakistan's largest trading partner. Further engagement should focus on this area.

2. Anti-India Alliance:

Pakistan and India & China share a common enemy vis-a-vis India. As such

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The Indian Factor must be capitalised upon to strengthen and further deepen the relationship. As a core area of engagement, China and Pakistan's relationship can bear the brunt of any ~~to~~ fusmoil.

3. Providing China with diplomatic assurances:

Owing to the structural alignment with China, any new change of circumstance must be communicated to Beijing. By keeping China in the loop, Pakistan can ensure that its signals and relationship with other countries are not misinterpreted. So far, Pakistan has been successful in accomplishing this task.

(B) Engagement areas with Beijing the US

1. Security and anti-terrorism cooperation:

Both the US and Pakistan are interested in a stable security situation. The US is keen on eliminating or at the very least mitigating the ~~USK~~ (Islamic State) factor. ^{By F} Focusing on the security paradigm, Pakistan and the US can strengthen ties.

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2. Mineral access and resource development:

Pakistan has vast mineral resources, with which it needs help to extract and utilise. According to a 2024 report by Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) the country holds vast mineral resources reserves spanning 600,000 square kilometres, with 92 identified minerals. US can play a significant role in their extraction, consequently helping both countries in earning.

(c) ~~Strict~~ ^{focused} areas of engagement

By maintaining focused areas of engagement, making an overlap and competition less likely, Pakistan can strike a balance between the two powers.

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(1r) Conclusion

In essence, owing to the deepening of ties with the US and Pakistan's long-held strategic partnership with China, Pakistan must walk a fine line to not upset any actor. With both China and the US the great powers of contemporary times, the balance takes on a whole new flavor. As such, Pakistan must ensure to prioritize areas of mutually aligned interests. Furthermore, Pakistan must maintain a strict focus and bifurcation of areas of engagement to ensure no competition of great powers.