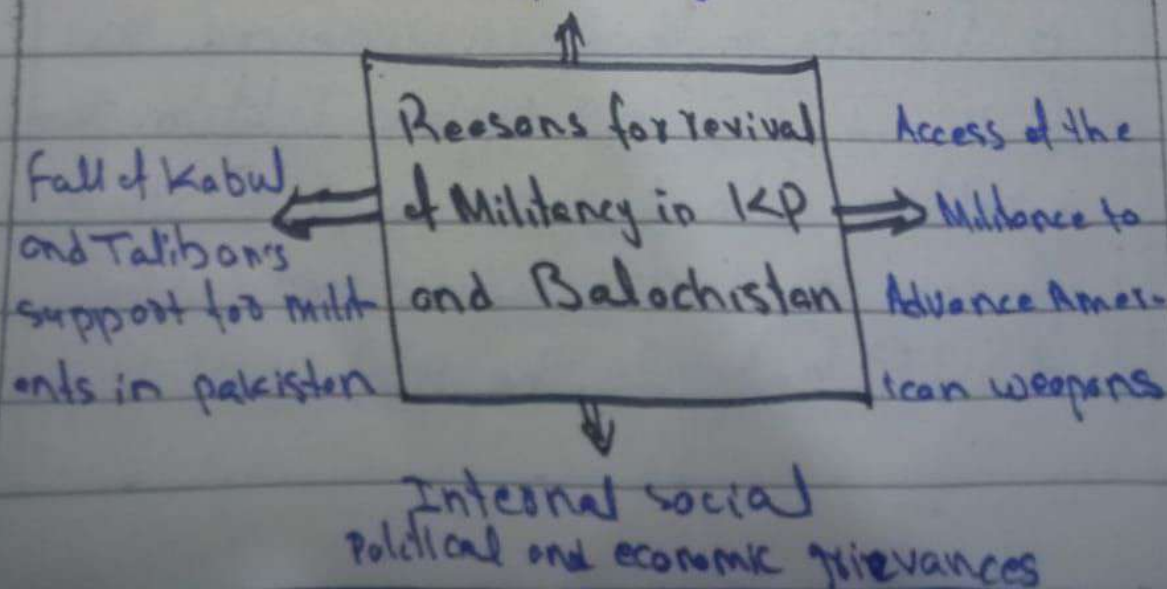


(1)
Q No 4

Introduction

In recent years, KP and Balochistan have witnessed grave violence. Following Taliban's take over of Kabul in 2021, two of the Pakistan's provinces bordering with Afghanistan saw bloodshed as UN Monitoring Report stated that 85% rise in attacks happened after fall of Kabul. Now, there are a number of external and internal factors that have and are contributing to revival of Militancy in KP and Balochistan.

India's sponsoring of proxies



1:- India's sponsoring of proxy groups

Historically, India had been sponsoring terrorists against Pakistan, therefore, now the Afghan Taliban have cordial relations and now India is sponsoring terrorists through Afghanistan and Taliban regime, so Indian factor is prominent in revival of militancy in KP and Balochistan.

2:- fall of Kabul and Taliban's support for militancy in Pakistan

As mentioned above, since the fall of Kabul, Pakistan has seen a rise in militancy that is because because the current regime in Kabul has historical ties with the key militant group that is fighting a bloody insurgency in KPK. TTP and Afghan Taliban share a relation that dates back to time of war on terror where TTP militants helped the Afghan Taliban.

(3)

and gave them safe sanctuaries when they were on run against NATO forces in Afghanistan; therefore, now Afghan Taliban are helping TTP since their rise on power in Afghanistan, thus, Afghan Taliban's support for TTP is a leading factor for revival of militancy in KP and Balochistan.

3. Militants have accessed the Advanced US weapons that NATO left behind.

Another reason for revival of militancy in KP and Balochistan is that the groups that are fighting in these provinces have accessed the advanced US weapons which gave them an edge against Pakistan's armed forces, that's why, they carry lethal attacks causing heavy casualties. Thus, advanced American weapons are also responsible for the revival of militancy in both of the provinces of Pakistan.

(4)

4. Internal factors, like Social, political and economic grievances are also responsible for revival of militancy.

Like external elements, internal ones are also contributing to the rise of militancy in KP and Balochistan. Balochistan has been declared the poorest province in Pakistan despite the fact that the province is home to large reserves of natural resources and the province is the hub of China's multi-billion dollar project BRI. Political voices in Balochistan and KP claim that other provinces specially Punjab is extracting their resources and they are not getting their due share. With this, both of the provinces are also witnessing human rights violations. According to Human Rights Commission of Pakistan over 4000 people went missing in last 3 years alone this clearly illustrates the gravity of situation in the provinces. Therefore, internal problems also have also played their part in recent

(5)

Revival of militancy in KP and Balochistan.

Even though the situation is tense, there are some measures that can help in countering militancy and violence in both provinces. Following are some recommendations

1: Convince Afghan Taliban to withdraw their support to TTP and other groups

Since the recent revival of militancy is due to fall of Kabul mainly, it is necessary that Taliban, the de facto rulers of Afghanistan, should be convinced or compelled to abandon their support for TTP and other groups. When lost support from Kabul, militants will have no other option but to restrict their activities. Thus, Taliban's support withdrawal can work instrumental in countering the militancy in the provinces. Upon withdrawal of support, TTP and other groups will lose access to advance American weapons which

(6)

is, again, advantageous for Pakistan.

2: Establish a joint forum with regional countries like China, Russia and Turkey to counter militancy as terrorism is a global problem.

As groups present in Afghanistan and active in Pakistan not only are threatening Pakistan's Security, but they are also threat for regional peace as ISKP which is active in Pakistan and Afghanistan claimed responsibility for Moscow Hall Attack which killed many people. Thus, Pakistan should advocate for a counter-terrorism forum with regional partners to root out militancy in Pakistan and the region.

3: work for diplomatic isolation of these countries that sponsor terrorism

At international platforms, Pakistan should actively work to isolate India

(7)

and Afghanistan. This will pressure these countries and they might be compelled to comply to international norms and avoid using terrorism as a tool against other countries. This will also lead to banning of terrorist outfits as recently US listed MB (Majeed Brigade) of BLA as a terrorist group which was a great diplomatic victory for Pakistan. Likewise, Pakistan should continue its diplomatic war against terrorism, as this will compel the terrorists and their masters to back down.

4: Address the genuine grievances of the people of KP and Balochistan.

Lastly, state of Pakistan need to address the ~~grev~~ grievances of the people of these provinces to discourage any kind of violence as many people are genuinely grieved and hostile forces use their grievances for their own benefit, therefore, it is necessary that human rights violations should be

(8)

investigated properly and those involved in misuse of power, extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances should be punished. And, state should compensate the ~~war~~ militancy victims. Thus, this will bring true and long term peace in the provinces.

Conclusion

People of KP and Balochistan have long been suffering, but the recent revival of militancy has doubled their ~~sup~~ sufferings. As mentioned above fall of Kabul, the India sponsoring of militancy, US advanced weapons and internal public grievances have greatly contributed to the revival of militancy, but peace can still be maintained if Taliban are convinced to withdraw their support, terrorists and their masters are internationally isolated and a joint mechanism is formed with regional powers. And, last but not the least addressing of public grievances can help establish permanent peace.

(9)
Q No 3

Introduction:

The Debate of new provinces in Pakistan frequently resurfaces due to poor governance and management issues. However, there are a number of hurdles that might make it impossible to go for new provinces at this stage due to economic, political and social fragmentation in the society. Following are some major hurdles in creation of new provinces in Pakistan.

Major hurdles

Economic cost
of New provinces
is too high

New provinces are demanded
on ethnic base which can
create more divide in society

Changing existing
structure needs a
Constitutional Amend-
ment in the polarised
Times

NFC award will ne-
ed to be revised
if new provinces emerged

(10)

1:- Economic Cost of new province is very high for a country with a struggling economy like Pakistan

New provinces mean new administrative setups in each new province. It means establishment of high Courts, PAs Assemblies and other official buildings in all new provinces which can be very much costly for Pakistan given its already struggling economy; therefore, at this stage it is not feasible to go for new provinces.

2:- New provinces are being demanded on ethnic base which can widen the already gap between ethnicities in Pakistan

The current provinces are based on ethnic identity like Balochistan has majority population of Balochs, similarly Punjab has Punjabi population. These have time and again ignited provincialism which weakened the federalism and trust between provinces with each other.

(11)

Now, that new provinces are being demanded on ethnic bases, this can widen the trust gap between ethnicities and ignite another wave of provincialism and polarization in the country.

3: Changing existing boundaries needs Constitutional Amendment in such a polarized political env.

As mentioned in 1973 Constitution, any changes in the existing boundaries need a Constitutional Amendment with $\frac{2}{3}$ majority. In such a polarized environment when leadership of all major political parties are engaged in blame game, so it does not seem possible that any one can get consent of all those warring leaders on a Constitutional Amendment.

4: NFC award need to be revised in case of new provinces

National Finance Commission (NFC)

(12)

which was signed in 2010 distributes revenue on provinces on a fixed formula. Now, the problem is that it has been written that no share of any province can be reduced, but if new provinces are created then this need to be revised and again a long debated formula will have to be reached. This can affect the already backward provinces as their share might may decline.

Thus, these are some of the hurdles that make it hard for establishing new provinces in Pakistan, however, other than creating there are other much better options for good governance and quick service delivery. Following are some recommendations.

1. Devolving powers to local government

The rationale given in favor of new provinces is that big provinces are hard to control and govern, so small province can better be governed. However, empowering local bodies can do much

(13)

more better as it did in UK where the Unitary Setup empowered local government which are effectively serving the people. That's why, instead of new provinces, it is better that local bodies should be devolved powers as mentioned in the 18th Constitutional Amendment.

2: Complete Implementation of 18th Amendment

As 18th Amendment, passed in 2010, stated that except matters of national interest all the Subjects should be handed over to provinces, but there are still many Subjects which are managed by Central government which hinders service delivery in the provinces. For instance Disaster Management is a provincial subject which is dually done by Central and provincial government which causes delay and ambiguity during times of crisis. Thus, to enhance the efficiency of existing provinces, it is necessary that 18th Amendment be enforced fully in its true

(14)

Spirit and shape.

Conclusion

The debate of new provinces has always been part of national discourse whenever country faced natural disasters or any other crises as this time it sparked on poor service delivery and response during floods in 2025. No doubt creation of new provinces worked in many cases, but in Pakistan there are many challenges to formation of new provinces. However, the empowerment of local governments and enforcement of 18th Amendment can serve the purpose of good governance and service delivery better.

(15)

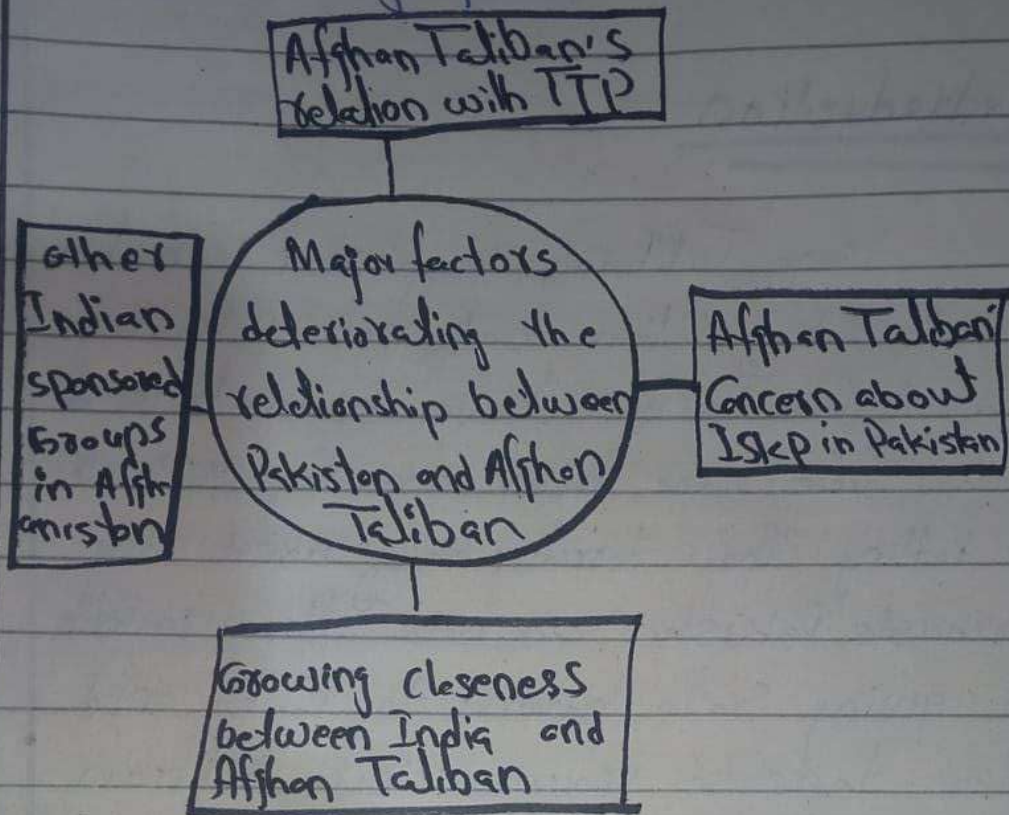
Q No. 2

Introduction

Since Taliban's recapture of Kabul in 2021, the relation between Pakistan and Afghan Taliban have been tensed. Both Side have been accusing each other for letting their territory being used by terrorists. Pakistan accuses Taliban regime for giving safe havens to TTP and other terrorist groups, while Taliban blame that ISKP is launching terrorist attacks from Pakistani territory. Since Taliban's rise to power Pakistan witnessed a great surge in terrorist activities in two of its provinces KP and Balochistan which border Afghanistan. According to Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), in 2024 Pakistan witnessed 521 terrorist attacks that claimed 852 lives. There are a lot of other factors as well that are contributing to deteriorating relations

(16)

between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Following are some key factors.



1: Afghan Taliban's relation with TTP

Afghan Taliban and the banned TTP had a long historical relationship. Their relation dates back to time of War on Terror when Afghan Taliban were only a rebel group. So the militants of TTP gave refuge and other support to Afghan Taliban during their tough

(17)

times. Now that Afghan Taliban are in power in Afghanistan and they no more need Pakistan's support, so the Taliban are giving every kind of support even manpower as a UN Monitoring report 2024 stated that Afghan Taliban are supporting the TTP and have given safe sanctuaries to many regional terrorist groups. Therefore, due to Afghan Taliban's support of TTP and the TTP's growing terror in KPK, the relationship between Afghan Taliban and Pakistan are worsening day by day.

2. Afghan Taliban's Concern over ISKP's presence in Pakistan

Similar to Pakistan's concerns, the Afghan Taliban are also facing deadly attacks from ISKP be that 2021 Kabul Airport bombing or assassination of key Taliban leaders. Taliban have time and again claimed that ISKP is present in Pakistan and from there it is launching attacks inside Afghan

(18)

territories, however, Pakistan denied such claims. Now, the ISKP factor is also pushing determinant in Pak-Afghan relations.

3. Other Indian Sponsored Militant groups in Afghanistan

Other than TTP, Pakistan has also been claiming that other groups like Baluch Separatist groups Baluch Liberation Army (BLA) and others are present in Afghanistan. To prove this, Pakistan has recorded communication between militants and their commanders and Indian handlers in Afghanistan. More importantly, in all the major attacks militants used the American weapons that they left in Afghanistan during their hasty withdrawal, thus, this factor is also contribution in deteriorating relationship between Pakistan and Afghan Taliban.

(19)

"Growing Closeness between Afghan Taliban and India"

Historically, Afghan Taliban and India had hostile relation, therefore, when Taliban took over Afghanistan, then India closed its embassy and all attached offices in Afghanistan. However, since then, their relations are gradually growing stronger. Recently, on Afghan Foreign Minister's visit to India, New Delhi announced that it is upgrading its office & Mission in Afghanistan to a full pledge Embassy which shows clearly how strong the relations have grown between the two countries. Now, Pakistan is insecure as Islamabad had always wanted a Islamabad friendly government in Kabul to make its western border secure. Through its historical policy of "Strategic Depth" Pakistan aimed at countering Indian influence in Afghanistan and enhance Pakistan's influence. That's why, the growing

(20)

relations between Kabul and New Delhi are adding Salt to the injuries.

Strategies for Improving relations between Pakistan and Afghan Taliban.

1. Engagement with Kabul through Regional and International Stakeholders.

One of the very first strategy should be engaging of Afghan Taliban diplomatically as long term peace is only possible through dialogue. Pakistan can utilize the platforms, like Moscow Format which was established by Russia, China and Pakistan to engage Taliban in post-US withdrawal Afghanistan. Similarly, there are also friendly Arab countries who can play a crucial role in easing the tension between the two muslim countries.

(21)

2:- Economic engagement between the Afghan Taliban and Pakistan

Given Afghanistan's fragile economic status, Pakistan can work as a leading factor as enhanced trade activities between the two countries can lead to peace.

Economic integration can promise long term peace as the formation of European Union integrated the European Continent and resultantly calmed down the warring European Continent, so economic integration can be a contributing factor in improving relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

3:- Integration of Afghanistan in the Multi-billion dollar project of China:

BRI

Isolation can push Afghanistan into anarchy, therefore, it needs to be integrated in China's multi-billion project Belt and Road Initiative which will not only integrate Af,

(22)

Afghanistan in the global Community but also give a boost to its falling economy. Thus, it will also compel Afghanistan to not let any terrorist outfit using Afghan soil for attacking other States, so ultimately Pakistan-Afghan relation will improve in the absence of any terrorist activity in Pakistan.

Conclusion:

Although Pakistan and Afghan Taliban enjoyed cordial relations during War on Terror; however, Taliban's support for TTP and other groups that fight against Pakistan and their growing relations with India caused a negative in the relationship of both States. But it is never too late, the relations can improve through multilateral engagements and economic cooperation between the two States. Lastly, integration of Afghanistan into International Community can improve Pakistan-Afghanistan relations.