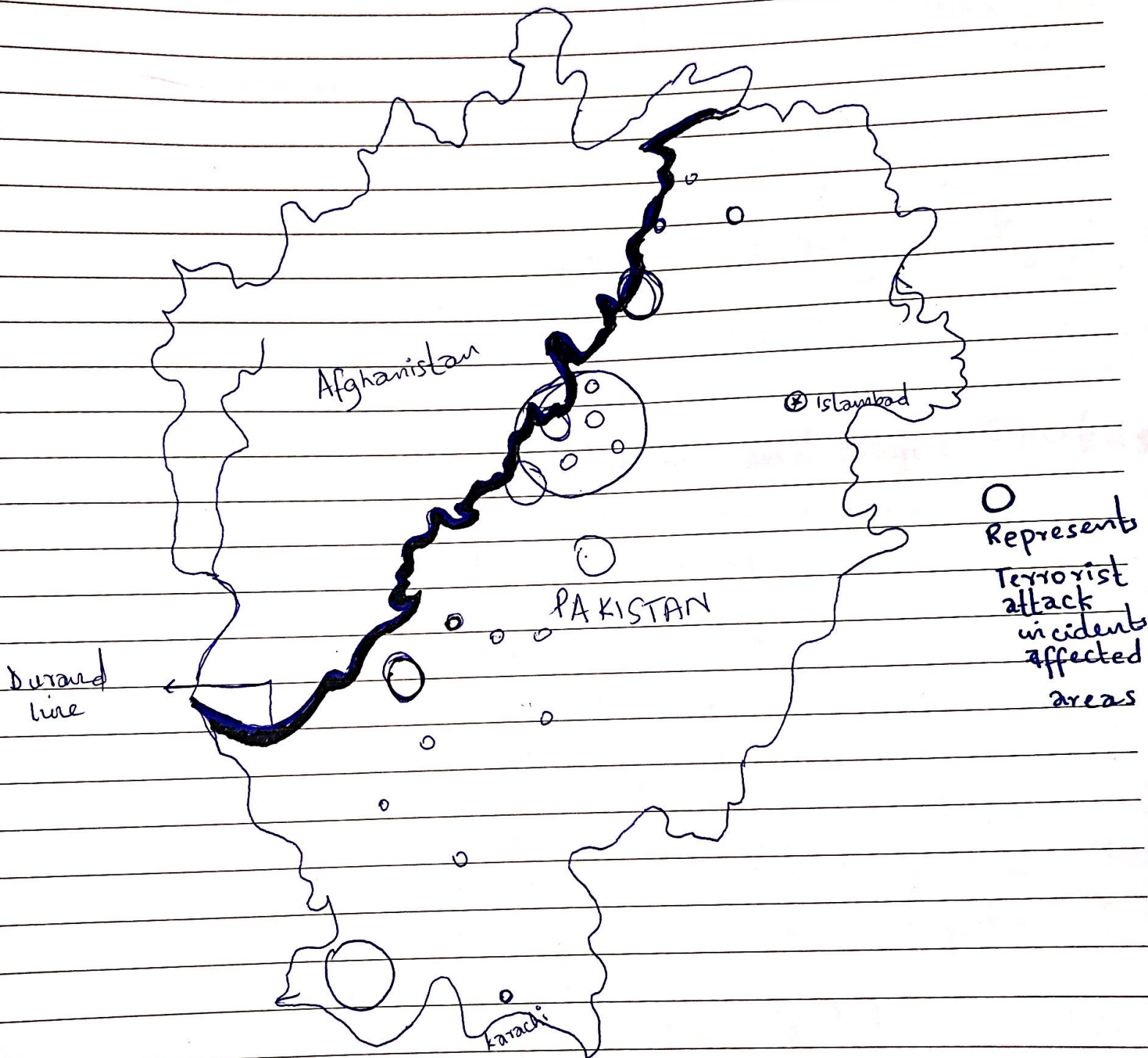


Date

Pakistan Affairs Mock Exam:

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Most Terrorist Attacks in Pakistan Near Agha
Border

Date

Introduction :

~~Success~~

The Taliban's return to power in August 2021, Pakistan-Afghanistan relations have moved from guarded pragmatism towards increasing volatility. Initial Pakistani hopes for a Kabul amenable to Islamabad's security concerns gradually gave way to disappointment as cross-border militancy, episodic clashes and refugee politics strained ties. At the same time, Afghanistan's expanding diplomatic outreach, notably to China, Iran and India, has eroded Pakistan's historical leverage.

Border Security: Escalation and Fragile Ceasefires:

Border security quickly became the defining fault line after 2021. Islamabad accused Kabul of tolerating sanctuaries for the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other Anti-Pakistan militants, prompting Pakistani cross-border strikes, closures of key crossings (Torkham, Chaman) and periodic exchanges of heavy fire. These confrontations intensified in 2024-25, producing casualties on both sides and repeated disruptions to trade and local livelihoods. Al-Jazeera's coverage documents the pattern of strikes and counter-claims and highlights how border posts and local communities have borne the brunt of the violence.

External mediation (Qatar, Türkiye) has been necessary to broker temporary ceasefires; Islamabad has publicly tied

any durable truce to Kabul's willingness to act against armed groups. Pakistan's defense leadership insisted the ceasefire depended upon Afghanistan "curbing armed groups", reflecting deep mistrust. The frequency of clashes and the reliance on third-party mediators illustrate that border management mechanisms and institutional confidence between the two states remain weak.

Refugee Politics: Humanitarian Stress and Strategic Leverage :

Refugee flows have been both a humanitarian issue and a lever of statecraft. Pakistan hosts millions of Afghans; waves of displacement since 2021 plus longstanding populations led Islamabad to accelerate deportations and tighter controls from 2023 onwards. Recent reporting notes mass expulsions and intensified drive-ups in 2025, with Pakistan moving to close refugee camps and deport large numbers, actions that drew strong UNHCR concern about humanitarian impacts in Afghanistan. These forced returns strain Kabul's fragile economy and generate popular resentment, while also eroding Pakistan's international standing and complicating bilateral goodwill. Politically, Islamabad's deportation measures serve dual purposes: signalling domestic control and pressuring Kabul to act against militants. But the tactics risks backfiring by inflaming Afghan public opinion and creating instability inside Afghanistan that can rebound across the border.

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Regional Realignments: Pakistan's Eroding Monopoly on Kabul:

Post-2021, Kabul deliberately diversified partners. China, Iran, Russia and more cautiously India have all deepened engagement, offering economic links, mediation and humanitarian assistance. India's recent warming towards Kabul (including upgrading its diplomatic presence and aid packages) symbolizes this shift and dilutes Pakistan's traditional influence. Al-Jazeera and Reuters describe how Pakistan's "Strategic depth" assumptions have been tested as Kabul pursues multi-vector diplomacy. This multipolarity reduces Islamabad's capacity to dictate Afghan behaviour and compels Pakistan to compete with other regional actors for influence..

Muttagi's India visit and India's ~~High~~ Stern Messaging on Sir Creek:

Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttagi's October 2025 visit to New Delhi, the highest-level Taliban trip to India since 2021, signalled Kabul's intent to broaden diplomatic options and seek development ties. Muttagi declared that "Afghanistan will not allow Afghan Territory to be used against any country," a line meant to reassure neighbours while underlining

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Pakistani" accusations; nevertheless his presence in Islamabad as diplomatic signalling that weakens Pakistan's leverage.

Concurrently, Indian officials notably the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh issued stark warnings to Pakistan over sensitive maritime sensitive maritime and territorial issues, including Sri Lankan, threatening a "decisive response" to perceived misadventures. Although the Sri Lankan dispute lies between India and Pakistan, such Public Indian rhetoric amplifies Pakistan's security anxieties at a time when Islamabad already feels encircled by diplomatic shifts involving Kabul and Delhi. Indian outreach to Kabul plus tough language on Sri Lankan combine to heighten Islamabad's strategic unease and risk further securitisation of regional politics.

Implications and Recommendations.

Overall, Pakistan-Afghanistan ties have trended from tentative cooperation towards episodic confrontation driven by cross-border militancy, refugee expulsions and a crowded regional marketplace for influence. To stabilise relations, pragmatic measures are needed:

- Establishment of permanent, jointly staffed border managements and hotlines to reduce accidental escalation.

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- Coordinating refugee repatriation with UNHCR and provide phased humanitarian support to avoid destabilising results.
- Institutionalization of regional security dialogues (including China, Iran and mediators Qatar/Turkiye) to manage militant-related claims and de-escalate tensions
- Limiting diplomatic signalling that exacerbates Pakistan's National security anxieties by promoting transparency and confidence building between Kabul, Islamabad and New Delhi.

Q2//

Phase/Era	Major Political Events	Key constitutional Developments	Impact on Democracy
1. Military regime (1999-2008)	1999 coup, LFO 2002, controlled elections, Lawyers movement 2007	Centralization of power under President; National Security Council created	Military dominance behind facade of democracy; rise of civil society activism
2. Democratic transition (2008-2013)	PPP rule, Charter of Democracy 18th Amendment, 2010	Restored Parliamentary Sovereignty abolished Article 58(2)(b)	Strengthened provincial autonomy; initiated judicial activism.
3. Institutional Consolidation (2013-2018)	PMLN government, Panama Papers verdict; civil-military tensions	Strengthened FCP and judiciary; political accountability	Civilian continuity but military oversight, polarization intensifies
4. PTI Hybrid Regime (2018-2022)	PTI victory, governance, reforms, no confidence ouster 2022	Continuity of constitutional democracy	Civilian form under military influence; accountability politicized.
5. Coalition Hybrid Setup (2022-2025)	PDM and caretaker rule, political engineering delayed election.	18th 26th amendment	Second generation hybrid regime; democracy formal but hollow.
Cross-Cutting Issues	Centralization vs. federalism media control, judicial activism, weak parties	18th amendment under pressure	Hybrid culture persists weak democratic norms.
Way forward	Civilian supremacy, participatory federalism, institutional reform	strengthen role of law & provincial autonomy	Sustainable democratic governance.