

Question no: 2

Introduction:-

Afghanistan is located on the eastern side of Pakistan. Both share similar religion and culture. Relations between both countries have always faced upheavals. There have been long periods of downs than highs. Starting from 1947, Afghanistan did not recognize durand line and claimed NWFP to be its part. Border skirmishes between both countries have always been present. But ~~the~~ recently these relations have taken an even more tense turn. In Oct 2005, after Afg-
^{certain elements from} ~~hamistan was~~ found to be committing illegal acts along the border, Pakistan also retaliated. Their relations remain tense even after china mediated a ceasefire. There are some root standing issues without which the relations cannot take positive turn permanently.

Factors behind long standing tense relations:-

1) Historical claims of Afghanistan:-

In 1893

Well durand and Amir Abdul Rahman signed an agreement. According to this agreement a clear boundary was drawn between Afg.

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hamistan and British India. In 1947, the subcontinent was partitioned and Pakistan came into being. Afghanistan refused to recognize NWFP as part of Pakistan and claimed it. Pakistan, being the rightful owner of the region with the consent of Pushtoons, did not agree to the demand. It sowed the seed of conflicts and misunderstandings which have been going on till now.

2) Russian invasion of Afghanistan and Talibanization of Pakistan:

When USSR invaded Afghanistan in 1979, Pakistan being a bordering country was also at threat. USA and Pakistan collaborated and trained the Mujahideen in Pakistani madrassas. During the 1980s many Afghans moved to Pakistan and settled in Balochistan and FATA. It was the beginning of the Talibanization and the consequences of it is faced by Pakistan till now.

3) 9/11 and WOT against Taliban:

In 1993, Taliban under Mullah Omar came to power. Pakistan recognized the Taliban government. But during the same time, Taliban started providing safe heavens to Al-Qaeda and in 2001 Twin Towers were attacked. The whole world got into USA's block to fight against terrorism. Pakistan

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being an economically fragile country and also obliged to align with America. Pakistan provided routes for NATO military to enter into Afghanistan. It was due to support of Pakistan to USA against Taliban that the enmity started. During the war, many Taliban ^{crossed border} ~~free~~ into Pakistan and settled into KPK and FATA. Many Taliban had almost occupied FATA. According to Anatol Lieven in his book "Pakistan a hard country", Taliban had established parallel justice and governance system in these areas.

Birth of TTP and its revival:-

When Pakistan started its operations against Taliban in 2002, the Taliban militancy against Pakistani state was increased. In 2007, different militant factions got together and TTP was formed. Its main aim was to support Taliban in Afghanistan and impose Shariah law in Pakistan. It declared Jihad against Pakistani state. Its attack on Karachi Naval base in 2011 and Army public school in 2014 compelled Pakistan army to conduct operations against them. Due to operation Zarb-e-Azb & operation Rah-e-Fasad the attack of TTP were decreased. In 2018, only 18

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attacks were claimed by TTP. But in 2021, Taliban came into power and since then revival of TTP has been observed. Pakistan claims that Afghanistan is supporting the TTP. Despite countless request from Pakistan government, Afghanistan is not ready to take action against them. TTP has once again wreaked havoc in FATA, especially Bajaur region.

Steps that can be taken to improve these relations:-

1) Resolution of Border Issue:-

First and foremost is the resolution of border issue. Several international actors should be involved to mediate this issue between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Afghanistan should be persuaded that Pakistan is the rightful owner of this area because Afghans had given this area to subcontinent out of their free will. Through negotiations only this issue can be resolved.

a) Border fencing.

Afghanistan government should not provide hurdles in the fencing of border. It would be benefi-

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al for the establishment of positive relations between both. Secure borders will reduce the infiltration of militants on both sides.

Afghanistan withdrawal of support from TTP :- The main bone of contention between both sides is that TTP. TTP is attacking on Pakistan from Afghanistan. Pakistan is rightful in its demand that Taliban government should withdraw its support from TTP and let Pakistan take care out all of their hideouts. If the issue of insurgency in Pakistan is resolved, relations will automatically take the right path.

Conclusion:-

Both the countries share cultural and religious ties. If the root issues of borders, militancy and TTP is resolved, then their relations can take a positive turn.

Question no: 3

Formation of New provinces in Pakistan:-

Introduction:-

Formation of new provinces in Pakistan has become a hot debate. The proposal of division of provinces is on administrative basis & not for lingual and cultural identities. There are many groups that are supporting it, but on the other hand there are many segments of officials in government that would not be in favour of it.

Hurdles in the formation of new provinces:-

1) Financial Burden on Central government:-

According to a renowned researcher and analyst Zahed Hussain, the formation of new provinces would only add to the financial burden of centre. More provinces means more Ministries, Governors, Chief ministers and civil servants. The already debt ridden centre would not be able to handle it.

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2) Cultural divide will worsen:

Pakistan is culturally a very diverse country. Demand for new provinces on the basis of cultural and lingual identities have always been present. Formation of new provinces will lead to increase in demand for more provinces on cultural basis. It will further divide a country and Pakistan will become a mere confederation.

3) Interest of political parties:

Political parties are proving as hurdle in the formation of new provinces. Large province means control over huge area. The division of area into multiple provinces will weaken their control.

Recommendations:

1) Strengthening of Local government:

The present local government system is not empowered. According to a famous economist Ishaat Hussain, Instead of creation of new provinces, the already existing local government should be

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It would empower the local government and the demands of people would be fulfilled.

Conclusion:-

The demand for the creation of the new provinces has arisen out of need to cater to the needs of population. But, Pakistan, being a financially weak country cannot bear the burden of new provinces and it will also further the ethnic and cultural divide. Only true empowerment of local government in financial and pol spheres is the best solution.

Defence Pact Between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan:-

Saudi Arabia and Pakistan share a long history of cordial relations. The defence cooperation between two countries started in 1960s and since then many troops of Pakistan has been stationed there. In 1979 their relations strengthened in the backdrop of Iranian

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revolution. In the same year Holy Kaaba was attacked and Pakistan troops were on fore front to help Saudi Arabia. Both countries have transactional relationship. Saudi Arabia helps Pakistan economically, while Pakistan helps Saudi Arabia in its defence needs.

The defence pact:-

The strategic mutual defence agreement between the two countries was signed in ~~Dec~~ Sep 2025. This defence agreement is one of its kind is unique because of the special clause added to it. i.e

"Attack on one partner will be considered an attack on another partner."

This clause resemble the clause four of Nato. For this reason it is called Muslim Nato.

Causes of the deal:-

1) Inadequate defence system:-

while Saudi Arabia is economically a powerful country. But with regards to defence it

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has always remained weak. Previously it was completely dependent on US for its security, but now the complete tilt of USA towards Israel has compelled it to look towards other partners.

Israel attack on Qatar:-

The recent attack of Israel on Qatar was an eye opener for Saudi Arabia. So it had to look for a reliable defence partner. Pakistan being the only nuclear power of muslim world and economy with strong defence was top priority.

Changing dynamics of Saudi relations with USA:-

As already being said, USA has always been defence partner of USA. But considering the constraint relations between Saudi and Israel and Israel being the top priority of US in middle east, Saudi had to look for another ally.

Implication:-

Enhanced image of Pakistan:-

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Foreign policy of Pakistan have taken a turn after its recent episode with India. Now being chosen as the defence partner by most powerful economy of middle east will enhance the image of Pakistan in geopolitics.

Chances of formation of Islamic Nato:- With Saudi Arabia and Pakistan having become the defence partners other Islamic countries will try to become part of this block. The security of all Muslim countries will be ensured.

Impact on Saudi-India relations:-

Saudi Arabia and India share cordial economic relations. The clause "Attack on one will considered be an attack on other" also gives rise to question that will Saudi help Pakistan in case India attacks. If these elements will have significant impact on their relations.

Conclusion:- The defence pact is the institutionalization of already cordial military ties between India

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Saudia Arabia and Pakistan. Pakistan
will get immense benefits from it.
It can get loans from Saudia on easy
term and oil cheaper than the market
price.