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## QUESTION # 4

### PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS POST-2021:

#### 1. Introduction:

In 2021, twenty years long war on terror ended and US left

Afghanistan with Taliban taking over. Pakistan was optimistic about

Taliban government and wants to establish brotherhood relations with

Afghanistan. However, these relations moved from cautious optimism to

tensed pragmatism, shaped by

security anxieties, refugee pressures,

and shifting alliances.

## 2. Trajectory of Bilateral Relations:

### Phase - I (2021-22): Cooperation and Cautious engagement

→ Pakistan sent humanitarian aid, provided trade facilitations, and supported for inclusive governance and counter-terrorism assurances.

### Phase - II (2022-23): Emergence of frictions

→ • TTP attacks increased.  
• Pakistan faced strains over Durand Line fencing and border incidents

### Phase - III (2023-25) Deterioration and hardening policies

→ • Recurrent border closures in Torkham, Chaman  
• Deportation of Afghan refugees  
• Reduced bilateral trust and regional recalibration

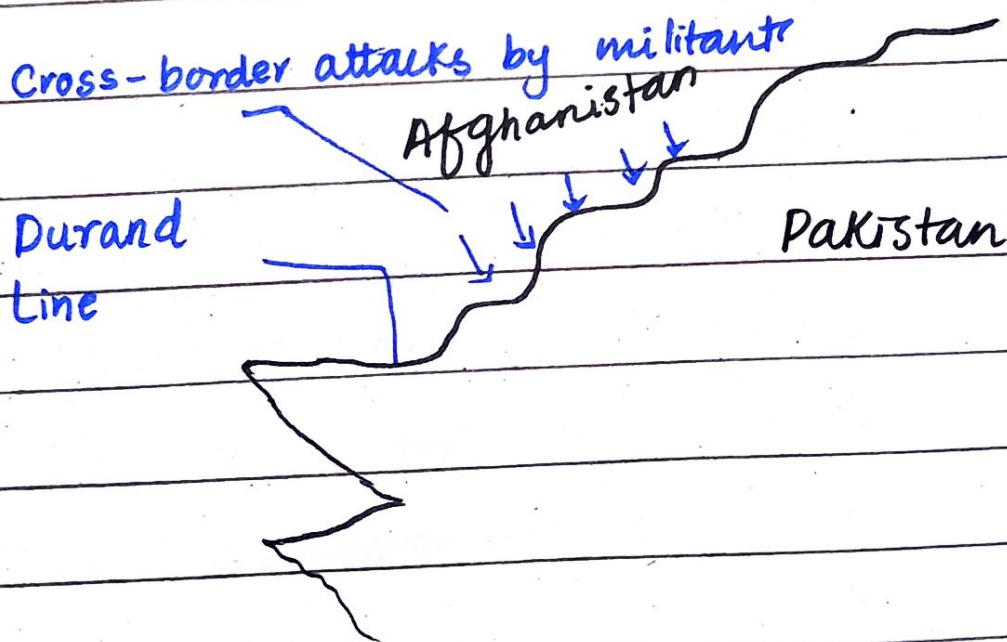
## 3. INFLUENCE OF BORDER SECURITY, REFUGEE ISSUES, AND REGIONAL RE-ALIGNMENTS ON BILATERAL TIES:

Border security, refugees crisis, and

regional realignment are the major factors that influenced the relations of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

i) Border security as the central fault line: Cross-border attacks by TTP and its factions lead to hostile relations between both countries

Pakistan and Afghanistan share a long border of almost 2600km, known as Durand Line



This border is not properly fenced that is why it is easy for TTP

attack on Pakistan's Soil.

TTP remained the largest terrorist group in Afghanistan, with an estimated strength of 6000-6500 fighters. It continues to operate at significant scales in Afghanistan to conduct terrorist operations in Pakistan from there.

~ UNSC Analytical Support  
and Sanctions Monitoring  
Team Report 2024

Pakistan has multiple times requested Taliban to take actions against these, but Kabul's resistance has forced Pakistan to take actions. In Oct 2025, Pakistan has done air strikes in various areas of Afghanistan where TTP was present — resulting into war between both.

Thus impact trade, transit, and people to people movement.

ii. Refugees issue and humanitarian dilemma: Pakistan has given refuge to many Afghans since 2001 who became strain on its resources leading to repatriation drive in 2024

During War on Terror, over 4 million plus Afghans moved to Pakistan. Pakistan provided them with food, shelter, and everything. With times, there generation got birth in Pakistan, straining Pakistan resources.

Moreover, some of these refugee camps were used to spread radicalization and smuggling drugs. This is why Pakistan started repatriation drive in 2024. However, it faced some international criticism too like UN agencies and rights groups warned of humanitarian risks and urged phased, voluntary actions.

Islamabad has used this policy to press Kabul for action against militants, however it created instability in Afghanistan further making complication in bilateral relations.

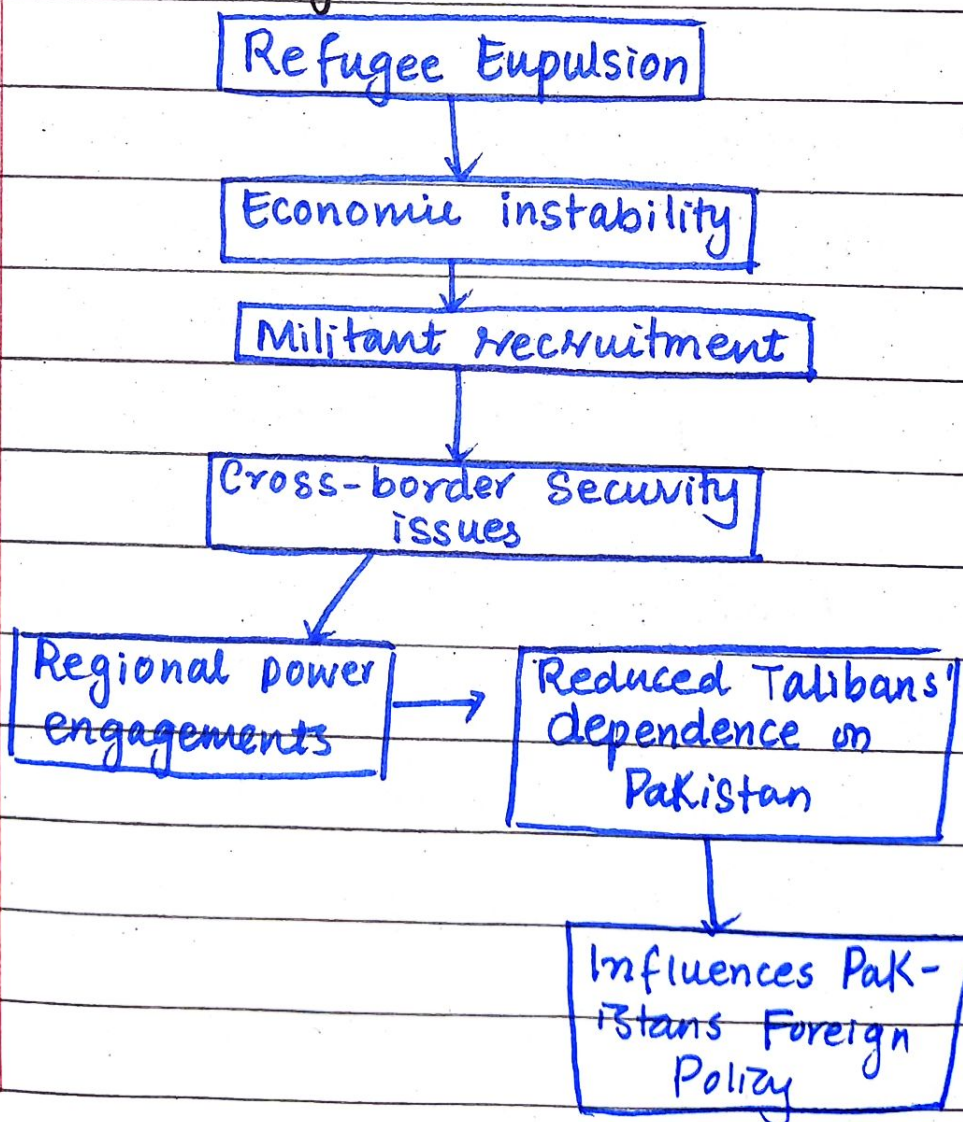
iii) Regional Realignments: China's expanding role through BRI, Iran and Russia's pragmatic relations, India reopening its embassy after four years, and Pakistan's dilemma

China's priority is stability and connectivity. China wants security in both countries, so that it could successfully complete CPEC project - that's why China tries to mediate between both several times. On the other hand, Iran and Russia have established relations with Afghanistan for trade and to tackle security threat from

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Afghanistan. But most importantly, India has announced to re-open its embassy in Kabul after 2021—marks a greater shift in security concerns of South Asia. This Strategic move is played by India to have Strategic depth against Pakistan.

#### 4. Interplay of Security, Refugee, and Regional Factors:



## 5. Policy Implications for Strengthened Ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan:

i) Institutionalized border communications to avoid miscalculation at crossings:

Pakistan and Afghanistan, both should have hotlines, joint border committees etc in order to prevent militants crossings.

ii) Targeted counter-terror operations with Third Party mediation to create political cover for Afghan action against groups that threaten Pakistan

Intelligence based operations should be done with mediation of China, Turkey, or UN.

### iii) Economic Confidence building:

Secure trade crossings with monitoring to reduce arms

and drugs smuggling:

Trade routes should be strongly monitored, so that smuggling can be avoided. to give border communities a stake in stability.

### iv) Regional multilateralism — engagement via SCO, OIC, and China led initiatives:

Pakistan should utilize multilateral platforms like SCO, OIC to put diplomatic pressure on Afghan Taliban to take actions against TTP factions.

### 5. Conclusion:

The post-2021 relations are cyclical — oscillating between cooperation and confrontation. Border insecurity, refugee politics, and regional

Realignments have strained trust.

The stability requires pragmatic engagement, multilateral mediation, and a balance between national security and humanitarian responsibility.



Feedback: ↴ (from examiners)

## QUESTION # 05

### => CHANGING DYNAMICS OF PAK-US RELATIONS

#### 1. INTRODUCTION:

Pakistan and US relations are marked by alternate phases of alliances and estrangement - Trump's return to the White House marked a new shift to relation between both countries. Under new government, Pak-US relations are recalibrating amid global power shifts - transforming from a security-centric strategic alliance into a largely transactional cooperation shaped by mutual short-term interests.

#### 2 Historical Background: Cycles of cooperation and Distrust between the United States and Pakistan

1950s  
1980s

Strategic cooperation  
during the cold war.  
and Afghan Jihad.

1990s

Sanctions and  
disengagement after  
nuclear tests

2001-  
2011

Pakistan as a  
front-line ally in  
War on Terror

2011-  
2020

Mistrust after Salala  
attack and Abbottabad  
raid.

2021-  
2024

Limited engagement  
post-Afghanistan  
withdrawal under  
Biden.

### 3. New Governments and their Emerging Priorities:

#### United-States

"America First 2.0"  
Policy of Trump  
focused on  
bilateral deals,  
trade reciprocity.  
→ Renewed China  
containment and  
Indo-Pacific focus.

#### Pakistan

- Economic  
stabilization and  
IMF-Driven  
reforms.
- Counterterrorism  
and regional  
peace.

### 4. Global Power Shifts and Strategic Realignment:

#### US China Rivalry

→ US and China both are  
fierce competitors of  
each other and Pakistan  
has deepened ties with  
China. It could create  
friction with the U.S  
in near future.

India's  
limited  
Strategic  
Role

→ US has reduced its dependence on India to contain China.

Trump has imposed 100% tariffs on India.

It creates a space for Pakistan to take benefit of this opportunity and establish good trade relations.

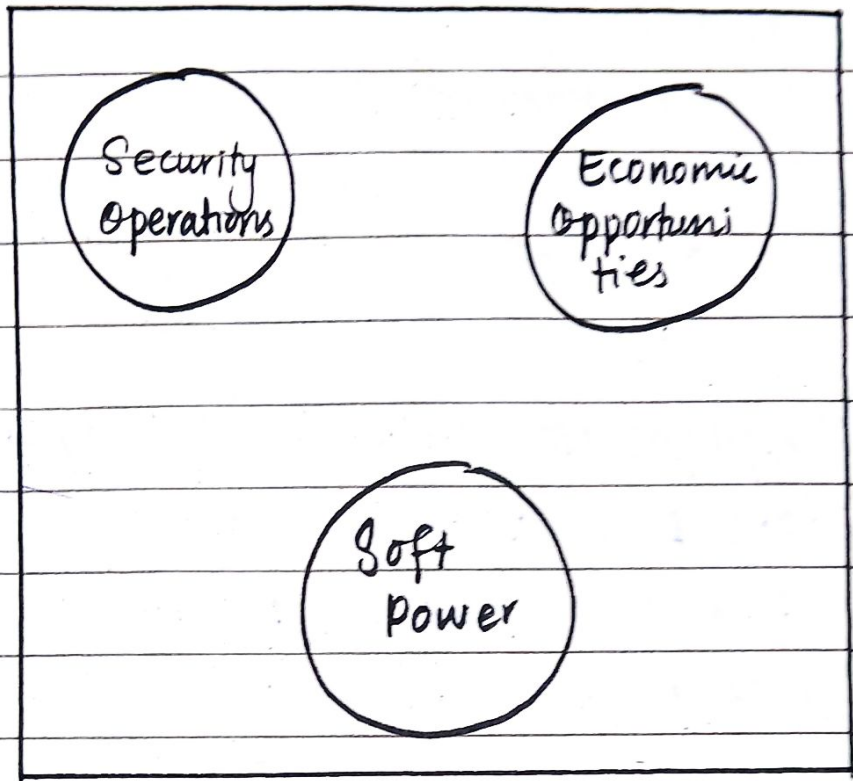
Rise of  
Multipolarity

→ World is no longer unipolar. Now China, Russia are on rise challenging U.S. hegemony. It diversifies Pakistan's options.

Middle East  
Realignments

→ Gulf States are now heavily dependent on Pakistan for security especially due to Israel. These mark shift in Pakistan's dependency pattern.

## 5. Changing Dynamics of Pakistan and U.S Relations.



i) Security and Counterterrorism Operations : US and Pakistan's mutual concerns over TTP and IS-K in Afghanistan

These mutual concerns result in counterterrorism and security cooperation.

ii) Economic and Trade Engagement: Pakistan seeks American investments and America wants Pakistan's minerals:

U.S is Pakistan's largest export

market. At present, Pakistan wants U.S FDI and on the other hand, U.S. wants Pakistan's rare earth minerals. This marks an important shift in economic relations of both countries.

iii) **Diplomatic engagement and Soft power: Shift from Strategic dialogue to issue-based talks:**

These relations need to shift towards issue-based diplomacy on climate, economy, education etc. Moreover, people-to-people and diaspora links remain strong despite political divergences.

**6. Convergences and Divergences between U.S. and Pakistan:**

#### Areas of Convergence

- Counterterrorism
- Regional Stability in Afghanistan

#### Areas of Divergence

- U.S India defense Partnership
- Pak-China Strategic closeness

## 7. Are these relations a Strategic partnership or Transactional Cooperation?

### Evidences for Strategic partnership

- Historical defense cooperation and institutional familiarity
- Continued intelligence sharing and diplomatic engagement.
- Shared interests in stability in Afghanistan and counterterrorism.

### Evidences for Transactional Cooperation

- Engagement driven by short-term needs and mutual convenience.
- Absence of long-term Strategic Framework or trust
- Trump's deal-based diplomacy.

### Assessment:

Under the Trump's administration, these relations are largely transactional, focused on deliverables, negotiation, and short-term utility rather than shared strategic vision.

## 8. Conclusion:

Pak-U.S Relations in 2025 are shaped by power politics and realignments rather than ideology. With Trumps transactional style and Pakistan's economic instability, both sides are pursuing interest-based cooperation. However, this is a necessary engagement in a changing multipolar world.



Feedback :

### QUESTION #3

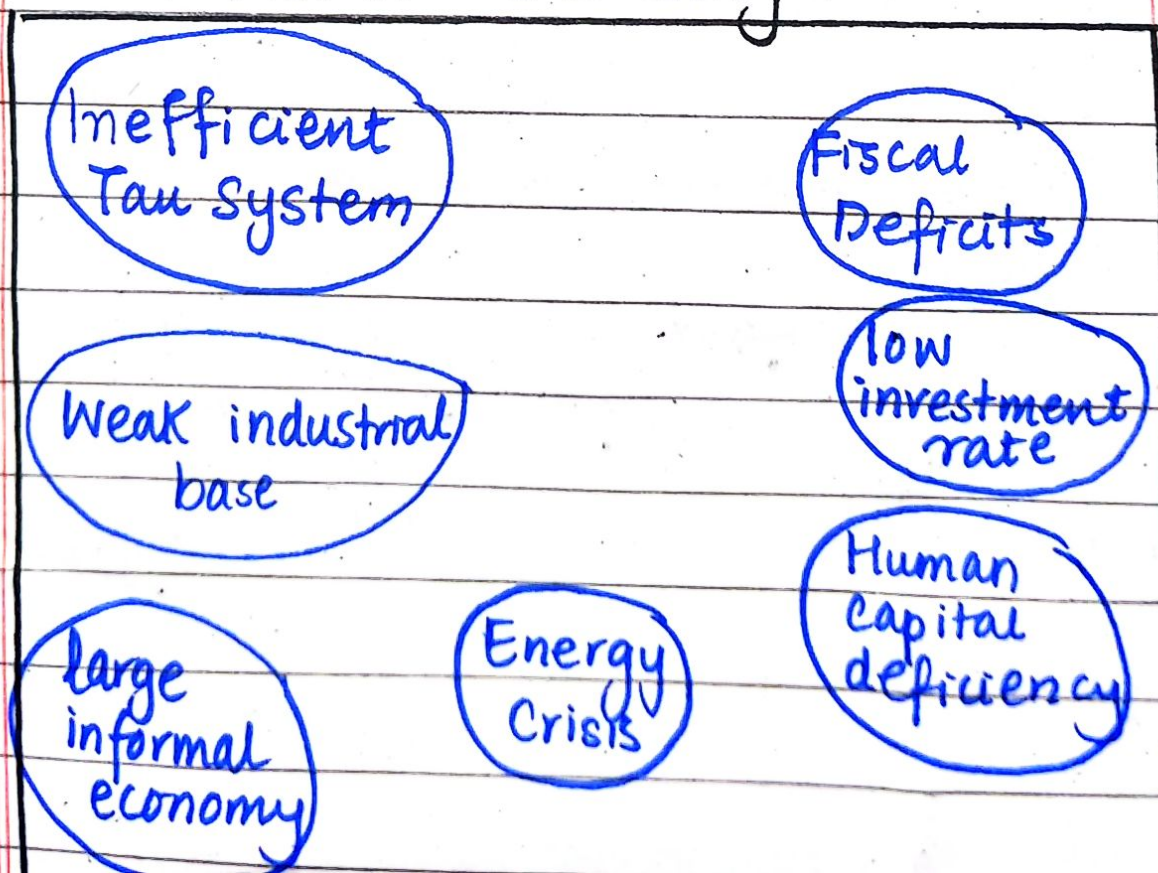
## PAKISTAN'S ECONOMIC CRISIS:

### 1. Introduction:

Pakistan is yet going through economic crisis. The core reason behind this economic crisis is primarily rooted in deep structural flaws—a narrow based tax, energy crisis, weak industrial productivity, and low exports.

Sustainable recovery requires comprehensive structural reforms.

### 2. Structural Flaws in Pakistan's Economy:

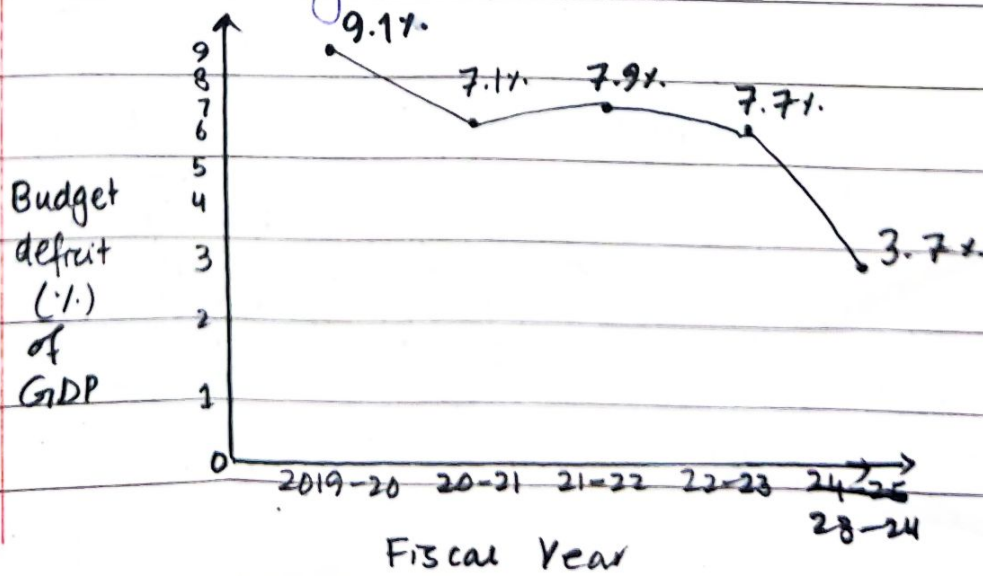


i) Inefficient tax system - narrow and regressive tax system causes economic crisis

In Pakistan, nearly 30% people pay taxes. Most of people do not pay taxes and some are exempted. This over-reliance on indirect taxes and exemption leads to economic crisis.

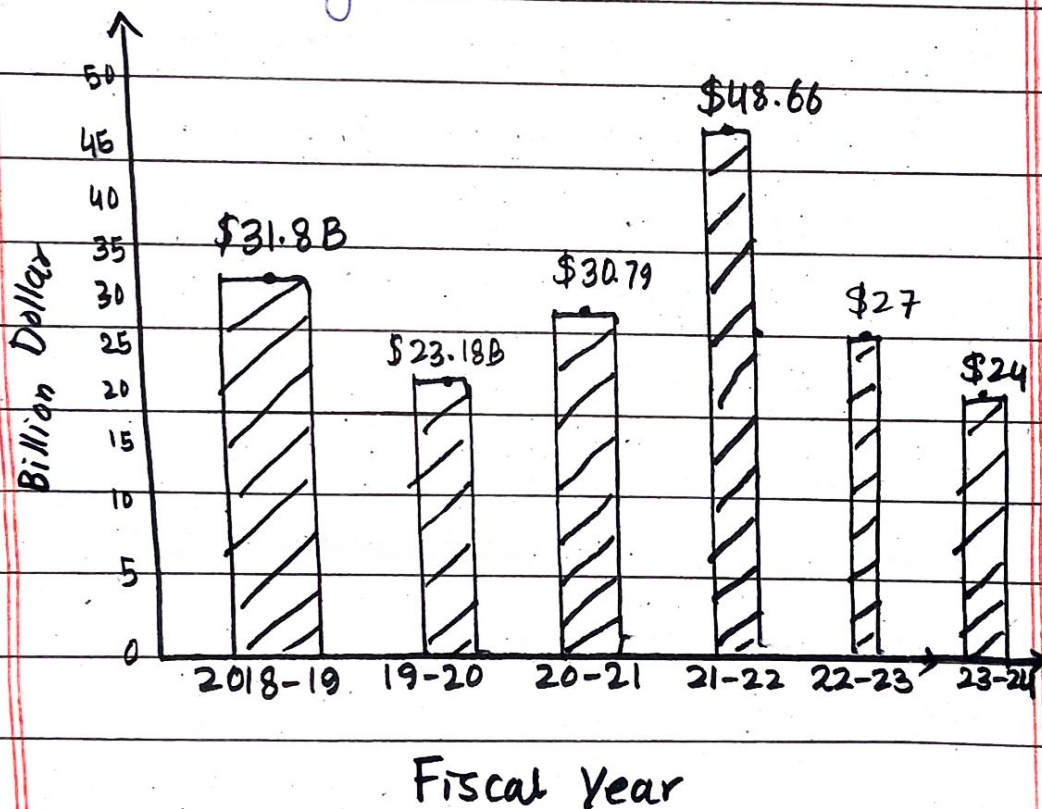
ii) Chronic fiscal and current account deficits: Dependence on IMF bailouts and external borrowing

Pakistan's expenditure is always more than its revenue, due to which it needs to have bailout packages constantly.



### iii) Trade Deficit: Weak industrial base and low export competitiveness:

Pakistan's exports are always less than imports because of poor diversification and productivity constraints.



### iv) Energy Crisis: Energy inefficiency and Circular debt

Energy crisis because of poor transmission system and tariff mismanagement is also causing economic crisis. Pakistan has to import costly fossil fuels causing

Strain on economy.

v) Low domestic savings and investment rate:

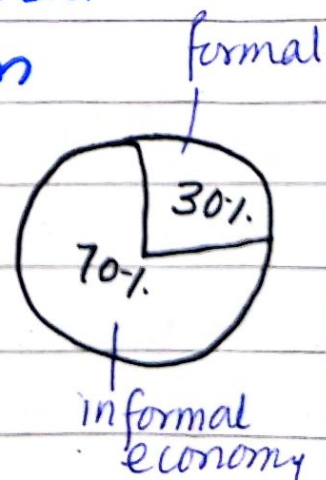
In Pakistan, there is low FDI and domestic savings - Pakistan highly rely on foreign remittances.

vi) Human Capital Deficiency: Education - skills gap and low productivity.

Human capital deficiency is another major factor behind economic crisis. There is huge gap of education and skills with market, leading to unemployment and ultimately economic crisis.

vii) Informal Economy: Poor Documentation and weak revenue mobilization

In Pakistan, more than half of economic system is informal leading to economic crisis



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### 3. Policy Measures to Address Structural Challenges:

Pakistan can address these structural challenges through short-term measures, medium-term and long-term measures.

Short-term Measures  
(Stabilization Phase)



Medium-term Measures  
(Reform Phase)



Long-term Measures  
(Transformation Phase)

#### A. SHORT-TERM MEASURES:

Pakistan can ensure stabilization through short-term measures. These measures include;

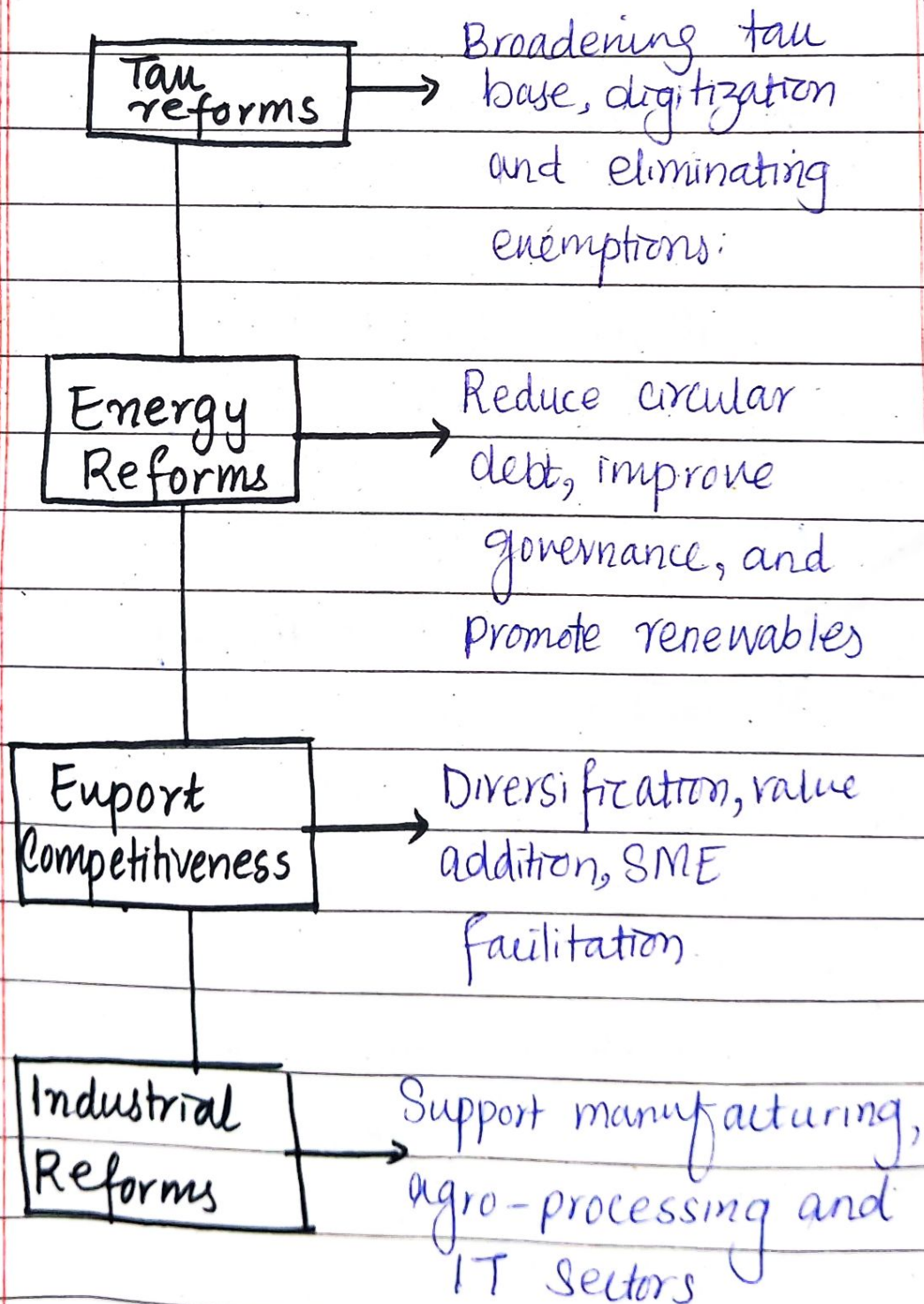
- ① Fiscal discipline and targeted subsidies only.
- ② Market-based exchange rate and reserve buildup.

③ Expanding social protection to cushion reforms.

### B. Medium-term Reforms:

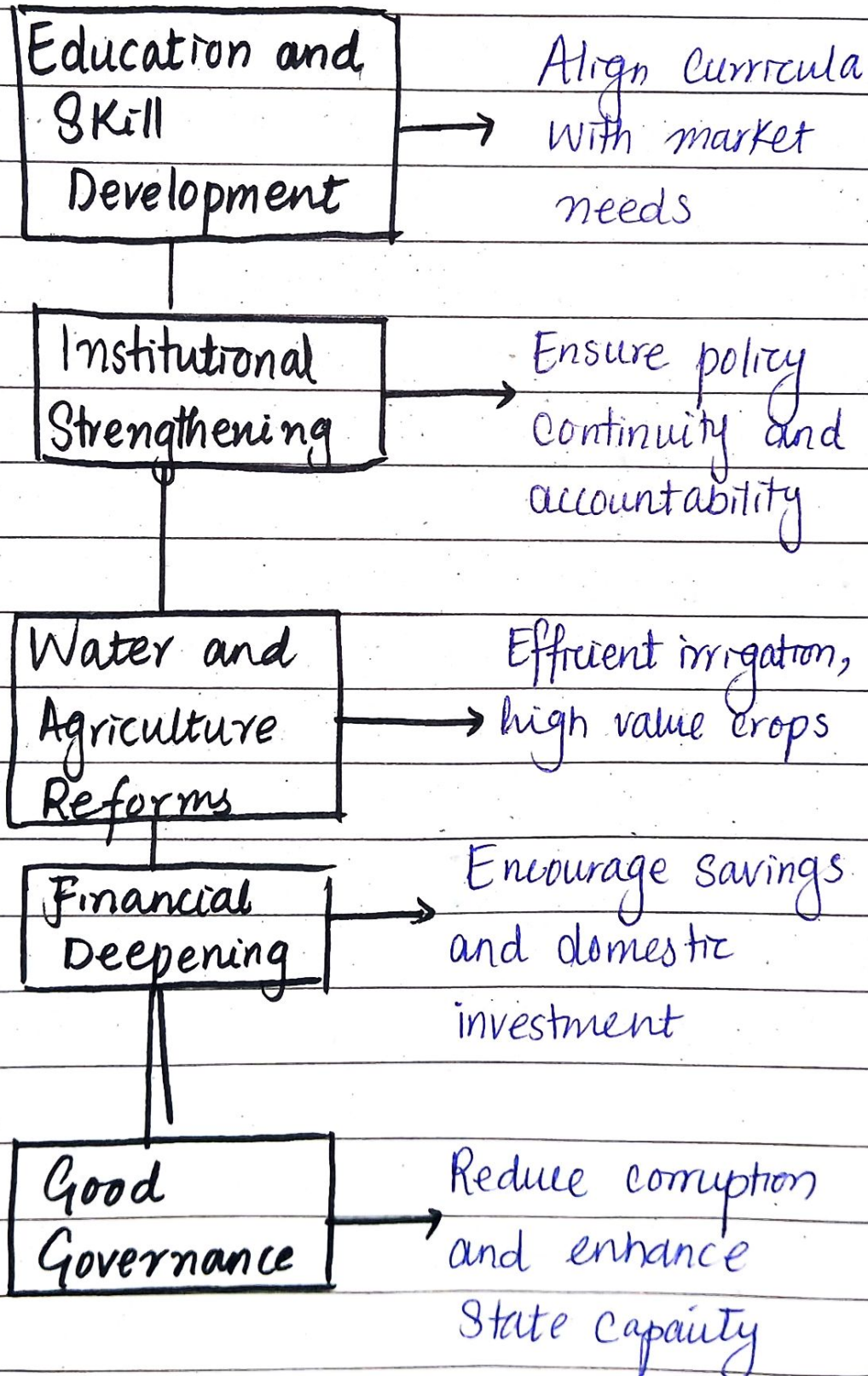
This is the reformative phase.

It includes:



### C. Long-term Reforms:

This is the transformation phase. It includes;



#### 4. Conclusion:

Pakistan's crisis is structural, not political - Political stability alone cannot fix economic decay without structural reforms. Only through sustained, long-term economic restructuring can Pakistan achieve stability and self-reliance.



**Feedback:**