

(Mock Paper
Current Affairs) (Malalai)
(Batch = 71)

21/oct/25

Q-2. Ans: Introduction:

Pakistan and Afghanistan share deep historical cultural, religious, and linguistic ties - as well as a long and porous border known as the **Durand Line**. However, despite these connections and mediation efforts by countries like China, relations between the two neighbors remain tense and distrustful.

Major Factors Behind the Tension:

1) Border and Territorial Disputes:

The Durand Line, drawn by the British in 1893, is not recognized by Afghanistan as an official international border. Frequent cross-border firing, smuggling, and militant movement add to mutual mistrust.

2) Security and Terrorism:

Pakistan accuses Afghanistan of harboring Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan

(TTP) militants who launch attacks inside Pakistan. Afghanistan, on the other hand, blames Pakistan for supporting groups like the Afghan Taliban in the past. This mutual blame game fuels insecurity on both sides.

3) Refugee and Economic Burden:

Pakistan has hosted over 3 million Afghan refugees for decades, which has created economic, social, and security challenges. Recent refugee deportations have further strained relations.

4) Political Instability in Afghanistan:

Since the Taliban's return to power (2021), Afghanistan has faced political isolation and economic hardship. Lack of international recognition of the Taliban government complicates diplomatic engagement for Pakistan.

5) Cross Border Trade and Transit

Issues:

Trade routes are often blocked due to border tensions, smuggling, or security issues, harming both economies.

6) External Influence and Mistrust:

Both countries have been influenced by foreign powers - for example, U.S. presence in Afghanistan, and now China's mediation efforts. However, deep-rooted mistrust and regional rivalries (especially with India's presence in Afghanistan) add complexities.

How Pak - Afghan Relation can be Improved:

1) Strengthening Border Management:

Both countries should jointly monitor and regulate the Durand

Line to control terrorism and illegal crossings. Use of technology (drones, scanners, and border fencing) can help.

2) Counterterrorism Cooperation:

Pakistan and Afghanistan must share intelligence and coordinate security operations against TTP and ISIS-K. Establish a joint security commission with Chinese mediation.

3) Economic and Trade Collaboration:

Boost cross-border trade, build economic zones, and reopen transit routes to benefit people on both sides. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) could act as a bridge for cooperation.

4) People-to-people and Cultural Links:

Encourage student exchanges, sports ties,

and cultural programs to build mutual trust. Simplify visa rules for genuine travelers and traders.

5) Diplomatic Dialogue and Confidence Building:

Continuous high-level diplomatic dialogue is essential. Use neutral platforms like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) or China-Pakistan-Afghanistan Trilateral Talks.

Key Historical Phases:

Period	Events
1947-1979	Border and Pashtunistan issue dominated relations.
"	"
1979 - 1989	Soviet invasion of Afghanistan;
"	Pakistan became a front-line
"	ally of the U.S., supporting
"	Afghan Mujahideen.
1990s	Rise of Taliban (supported by
"	Pakistan); worsening ties with
"	the Northern Alliance.

2001 - 2021	U.S. invasion and the war on Terror; mutual blame over cross-border terrorism.
2021 - present	Taliban's return to power; China's mediation efforts; renewed security and refugee tensions.

China's Mediation Role:

China has emerged as a neutral peace broker between Pakistan and Afghanistan. To secure its Belt and Road projects and prevent extremism from spreading to Xinjiang. To link Afghanistan with CPEC through rail and trade routes.

Recent Development:

China-Pakistan-Afghanistan Trilateral Dialogue was revived in 2023 and 2024. China proposed joint border management and economic cooperation zone.

Current Challenge (2025 Perspective):

Continued TTP attacks on Pakistan soil. Taliban's reluctance to take action against militants. Pakistan's economic crisis and refugee deportations creating friction. Limited trust in China's mediation, as both sides prioritize domestic concerns.

The way Forward:

To build lasting peace, both countries must recognize mutual dependence for regional stability and trade. Stop using militant proxies for political advantage. Focus on economic integration rather than military confrontation.

Conclusion:

The future of Pak-Afghan relations depends on trust, cooperation, and shared responsibility. Both nations have suffered from decades of

war, terrorism, and poverty. By prioritizing economic stability over political suspicion, and with china's neutral facilitation, Pakistan and Afghanistan can turn a history of hostility into a partnership for regional peace and prosperity.

Q.5. Ans: Major Impacts of U.S Withdrawal:

- Loss of global leadership and credibility: The U.S has been the world's largest historical emitter of greenhouse gases; its exit undermines unified global action and may reduce other nations' incentives to commit.
- Weaker negotiation power and funding flows: US financial and technological support for mitigation and adaption efforts in developing countries is likely to shrink, making it harder for the global South to pursue climate-resilient development.

- Potential for fragmentation of global efforts: Without the US at the table, climate governance risks becoming more fragmented, with competing blocs and divergent standards rather than cohesive global targets.

2) Opportunity for Others to Step Up:

- Regional and sub-national leadership: The withdrawal may spur states, cities, and businesses within the US (and globally) to take independent climate action. This "bottom-up" approach can partly offset federal inaction.
- Strengthening other major players: The EU, China, India, and others may fill the leadership vacuum, pushing ambitious targets and forging new coalitions. For example, the EU has announced steps to bypass federal US obstruction by

engaging states and business directly.

- Innovative climate diplomacy and Financing: New instruments such as carbon-border taxes, private-sector climate investment, and regional carbon markets may ~~gain~~ greater prominence.

How Future Climate Efforts Could be Improved (Despite US Absence):

A. Diversified Global Leadership:

Build alliance of willing countries (e.g., EU + China + India) to set and enforce ambitious climate ~~strong~~ targets.

Promote multilateral platforms beyond the US-centric model, such as the Green Climate Fund, regional carbon markets, and sector-specific agreements (Shipping, aviation, manufacturing).

B. Strengthens Sub-national and

Private Sector Action:

Empower states, cities, and regions to make independent commitments and link with global networks (e.g., C40 cities, ICLEI).

Mobilise private finance for clean energy, electrification, carbon capture, and nature-based solutions, reducing reliance solely on national governments.

C. Institutional and Financial Mechanisms:

Establish alternative funding mechanisms to compensate developing countries (especially since US pulled out of loss and damage funds).

Use carbon-border adjustment mechanism and green trade policies to incentivise global decarbonisation even when national policies lag.

D. Adaptive Governance and Resilience Building:

Focus more on adaptation (flood protection, climate - resilient agriculture, infrastructure) rather than only mitigation, particularly for vulnerable countries.

Use technology innovation, data sharing, and capacity building to help nations implement effective climate strategies.

E. Consistent Good Dialogue and Accountability:

Even without US federal participation, ensure that major players attend COPs, report transparently on emissions (NDCs), and maintain peer-pressure mechanisms.

Strengthen monitoring, reporting and verification, frameworks to maintain credibility.

Effects and Response pathways:

Effects of US withdrawal

Leadership vacuum and weaker ambition

" " " " " "
Funding shortfalls for adaptation

" " " " " "
Fragmentation of global regime

" " " " " "
Slower decarbonisation.

Trust and policy instability

Conclusion:

While the US exit from the Paris Agreement is a serious blow to global climate efforts,

Response pathway

" " " "
Coalition leadership among EU, china, India.

New funding and finance mechanisms (private, regional).

Sector-specific agreements (shipping, aviation, industry).

Private sector and sub-national action.

Transparent NDCs + independent verification + peer accountability.

it is not a terminal one. The climate challenge compels action regardless of one nation's stance. The vacuum left by the US can be partially filled by other major emitters, by regional coalitions, and by non-state actors. However, the path forward will be harder and riskier. Achieving the 1.5°C target requires greater coordination, stronger institutional mechanisms, and accelerated innovation—precisely at a time when trust in global agreements is weakened. In this new era, collective leadership, diversified financing, and persistent grassroots action become indispensable.

Q.7: Ans: Introduction:

Balancing relations between Pakistan's recently re-energised engagement with the United States and its long-standing strategic

partnership with china is a delicate diplomatic tasks.

Why Balancing Matters:

- Pakistan has historically been deeply aligned with china, especially via the china-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and larger Belt and Road infrastructure ties.
- More recently, Pakistan has sought to revive and expand ties with the United States, for economic, security and technological reasons - even as US-china competition intensified.
- A strong tilt toward one side risks alienating the other, reducing strategic options and increasing vulnerability.

Key Dimensions of Pakistan - USA and Pakistan - China relations:

With China:

Pakistan and China continue to describe the relationship as an "all-weather strategic cooperative partnership."

Economic cooperation is deepening: new phases of CPEC, mining, technology, ~~arigir~~ agriculture.

Security linkages (defence cooperation, counter-terrorism coordination) are strong.

With the US:

While less visible in recent major headlines compared to China, Pakistan's renewed outreach towards the US makes sense for diversifying foreign partnerships. For instance, reports suggest discussions on "critical mineral assests" with the US alongside Chinese investment.

The US offers technology, markets, defence cooperation and international

legitimacy - important levers of Pakistan.

How Pakistan could Balance its relations.

1) Clearly define core interests and red-lines:

Pakistan should identify what matters most (sovereignty, security, economic development, connectivity) and communicate those to both China and the US. This reduces misunderstandings.

2) pursue "strategic autonomy" not "strategic dependence":

Avoid being seen as too closely aligned with one power to the exclusion of the other.

Maintain independent decision-making - neither super-power should ~~and~~ dictate Pakistan's strategic path.

3) Economic Diversification and Investment Diversification:

With china continue infrastructure, CPEC 2.0 mining, technology cooperation.

With the us explore trade, critical minerals, technology transfer, market access. The mineral discussions are a good example.

By diversifying, Pakistan lessens risk if one partner slows or changes policy.

4) Diplomacy and Multilateralism:

use regional forums (e.g., shanghai cooperation organization (SCO), united nations, etc). where both china, us and pakistan have interests.

position: pakistan as a constructive regional player rather than a client state.

5) Transparent Communication and

Confidence Building:

Communicate openly with both powers about Pakistan's intent to engage with them.

Avoid secretive deals with that might appear favouring one sided and alienating the other.

6) Domestic Strength and Reform:

Improving governance, security, economic stability gives Pakistan more bargaining power.

A more stable Pakistan is a stronger partner for both China and the US, so domestic reform is a strategic imperative.

Challenges and Risks to Watch:

China may demand deeper security commitments or concessions (such as in Gwadar or mining),

which could limit Pakistan's flexibility.

The US may view closer China-Pakistan ties with suspicion, potentially reducing US support or market access.

Domestic economy constraints may make Pakistan appear dependent rather than equal partner - weakening its strategic position.

Q.4 Ans: Why Militancy is Rising:

- 1) Safe havens and cross-border dynamics. Since the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan and weakened border controls, militant groups (notably the TTP) have exploited cross-border sanctuaries and mobility - enabling attacks inside Pakistan.
- 2) Fragmentation and multiplicity of militant actors: The threat is no longer a single group; TTP, ISIS-K

affiliates, local Lashkar groups in KP, and various Baloch insurgent outfits now operate concurrently - complicating counter-terror responses.

3) Long-running political marginalization, weak governance, perceived economic dispossession (land, resources, CPEC, grievances), and heavy handed security measures fuel Baloch insurgency and recruitment.

4) Economic hardships and weak state capacity: Worsening economic conditions, unemployment, and inadequate public services make youth vulnerable to recruitment.

5) Information / ideology space and local networks: Militants exploit local networks, social media, and ideological grievances; their propaganda and martyrdom

narratives maintain recruitment flows.

Consequences if the trend continues:

Rising civilian and security-force casualties, displacement, and disruption of trade/energy corridors:

Damage to investment climate (esp. CPEC projects in Balochistan) and regional instability that invites foreign meddling.

Erosion of public trust in the state and longer recovery costs.

Recommendations - a balanced, realistic strategy:

Targeted intelligence-led operations (not broad punitive sweeps) to disrupt leadership/finance/logistics of groups while minimizing civilian harm.

Joint border management with Afghanistan - hotlines, joint patrols / ~~carbon~~ cordon-and-search protocols

and agreed "red lines" to reduce sanctuaries for TTP and cross border attacks; use trilateral confidence measures where possible.

Implementation priorities:

Stabilize the border through immediate, agreed de-escalation and hotlines.

Launch joint intelligence task-forces against cross-border networks.

Announce and begin fast-track political and economic confidence measures in Balochistan (local hiring, community councils, grievance redress).