

October 22, 2025

Date: _____

Pakistan Affairs

PART - II

QUESTION # 6

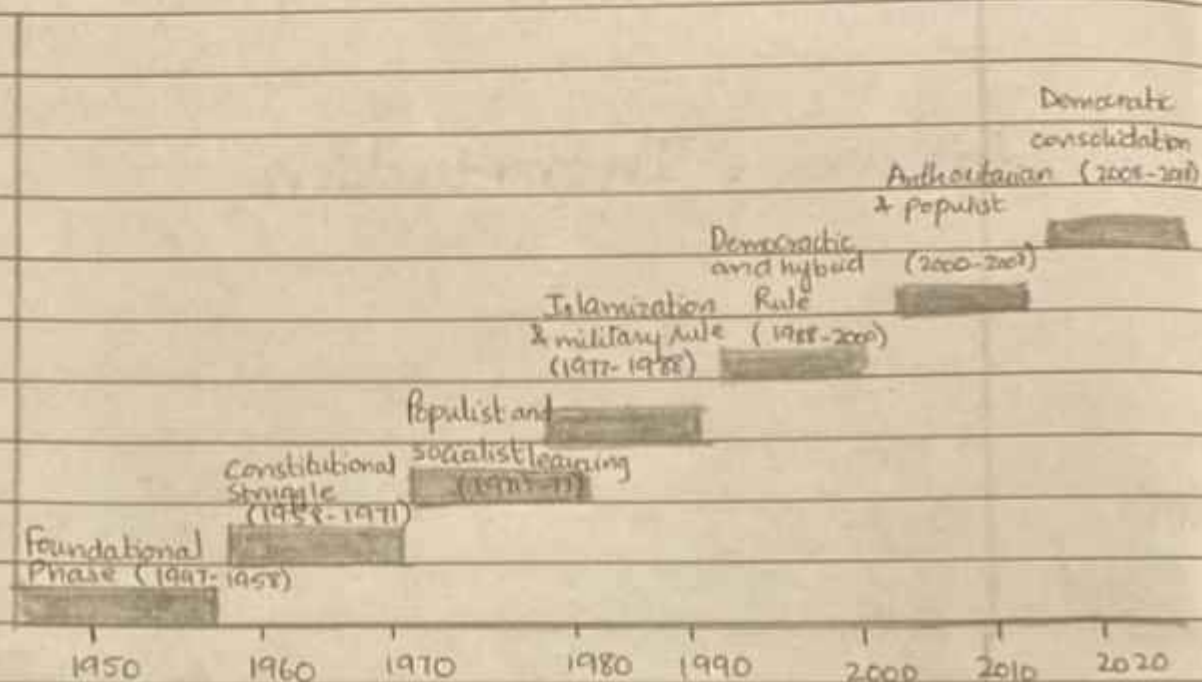
Discuss the role of ideology in Pakistan's nation-building process. How the interpretation of ideological contour evolved over time in Pakistan's political and social discourse?

Answer: Introduction

"Ideology" means a set of ideas and normative claims that explain a polity's raison, prescribe political membership, and legitimate institutions and public policy. In Pakistan the dominant ideological claims have revolved around the Two-nation Theory and Islam's role in public life. Nation-building is the process of creating a durable, shared sense of national identity and the institutions that embody it. The interaction between ideology and nation building in Pakistan has been dynamic: ideology has both enabled state formation and produced deep contestation (because multiple social actors have disrupted what that ideology means in practice). The result is a layered, historically contingent national identity rather than a single, uncontested creed.

Ideology was decisive for Pakistan's birth and remained central to its nation-building, initially a mobilising identity forming narrative based on Muslim separatism, later as a contested terrain where religious, political and state actors interpreted Islam, citizenship, and right to suit institutional interest. Over time the ideological contour shifted

from elite-led foundational nationalism to periodic redefinitions under military rule, populist politics and ethno-regional challenges, producing a plural but unevenly institutionalized national identity.



Role of ideology in early nation - building:

Mobilisation and legitimacy

The two nation-theory (Muslims and Hindus as distinct nations) offered a clear ideological justification for partition; it converted religious identity into a basis for political sovereignty.

The ideological clarity was essential for mass mobilisation and the creation of a territorial state.

Institutional Ambiguity:

Founding elites, however disagreed about whether Pakistan would be a secular, liberal state with a Muslim majority or an explicitly Islamic state. The ideological ambiguity allowed multiple interpretations to coexist. Constitutional secularism, Muslim personal law, and Islamic Symbolism all featured in the public store.

Political Consequence:

The early state-building key institutions (bureaucracy, military, judiciary) that would later interpret ideology politically; meanwhile, curricula and official rhetoric began to gradually embed Islam as a cultural pillar without a final settlement on constitutional identity.

Constitutional Struggles and Ideological Contestation (1958-1971)

Military Intervention:

The 1958 coup signalled that the military would become an arbiter of political order. The absence of definitive constitutional settlement turned ideological questions into instruments of governance. The regime alternately invoked stability, development, and Islamic Symbolism to justify rule.

Ethno-Regional Pushback:

The ideological premise of a pan-Muslim identity encountered ethno-linguistic nationalism (e.g. Bengali nationalism) that exposed limits of an ideology rooted mainly in religion. The 1971 catastrophe

East Pakistan's succession) revealed the tensions between territorial neighborhood and an ideology insufficiently to ethnic diversity.

Bhutto period (1971-77)

Left of center reinterpretation:

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto sought to reimagine national ideology and populist/socialist development and a modernizing Islam, mixing Islamic references with redistribution economic policies to legitimate a new social contract.

Institutional Impact:

The 1973 constitution (Parliamentary system, Islamic provisions like Objective Resolution integration) attempt to balance Islamic identity with democratic structures an uneasy compromise that left ideological contours open to future contestation.

Zia ul Haq's Islamization (1977-1988)

Instrumental Islamization:

General Zia transformed state ideology deliberately, constitutional amendments, ordinances (Hudood, Blasphemy expansions) state patronage to madrassas, and Islamization of curricula.

This was an active redefinition: ideology was used as a tool to consolidate regime legitimacy and counter leftist or ethnic ~~cooperation~~ opposition.

Long-Term effects:

Zia's period institutionalized a religious idiom across law, education, and public administration. It strengthened religious parties and conservative clerical networks and shifted popular discourse so that Islam became a primary legal and moral reference in many public domains.

Post Zia Democratization (1988-2000) Contested Reversal

Democratic governments tried to roll back some authoritarian features but could not fully reverse structural changes (laws, madrasa networks). Ideology became more polaristic in rhetoric, human rights, women's mobilization, and ethnic assertions entered mainstream debates.

Hybrid Outcomes

The result was a mixed polity where democratic procedures coexist with Islamic legal legacies and powerful unelected actors (e.g. military, judiciary, religious lobbies) still shaping ideological boundaries.

Authoritarian and Populist Phase (2000 - 2018)

Musharraf and Managed Ideology:

Aims of enlightened moderation and economic liberalism sought to reframe ideological discourse towards moderation and development yet these attempts clashed with domestic religious

politics and security paradigm of the "War on Terror"

Electoral Populism:

Political parties used religious symbolism instrumentally in electoral competition; new political movements also mobilised identity and grievance narratives (urban poor, provincial assertions). The ideological field thus broadened: economic redistribution, anti-corruption populism and identity politics all competed with religious narratives.

Contemporary contours (2018-Present)

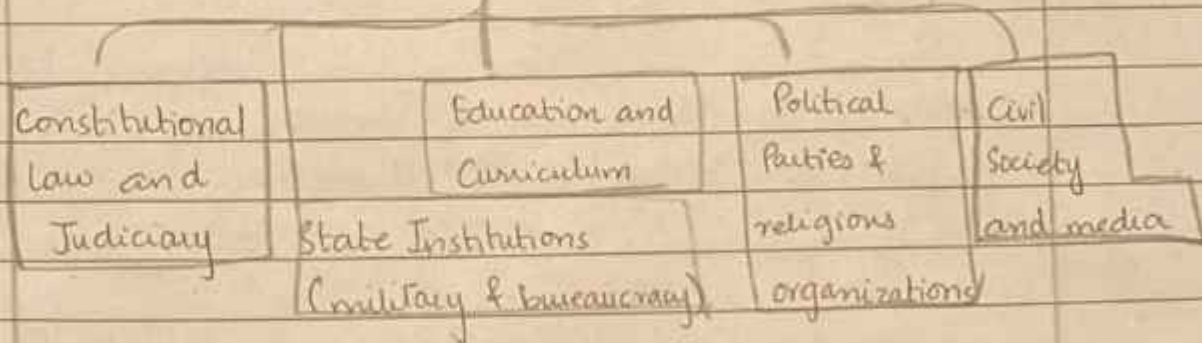
Multiple-Simultaneous Narratives:

Today ideological debate ranges from constitutional interpretation of Islam and citizenship right to economic models and populist anti-elite rhetoric. Ethno-regional demands (Baloch, Sindhi, Pashtuns) civil society liberalism, religious conservatism, and nationalist security discourse co-exist uneasily.

Media and Diaspora Impact:

Social media, private television and internationalized Pakistani diaspora voices have amplified ideological pluralism and polarization. Competing narrative now spread rapidly making ideological consolidation harder.

Mechanisms through which ideology shaped nation-building



→ Constitution law and Judiciary.

Constitutional provisions and court rulings have operationalized ideological claims (e.g. objective resolution, blasphemy laws, Hudood judgements) thereby embedding certain interpretations into the legal order.

→ State Institutions (military and Bureaucracy)

The military's periodic interventions used ideology (stability, Islamic values) to justify exceptional authority, the bureaucracy implemented ideological policy shifts.

→ Education and Curriculum

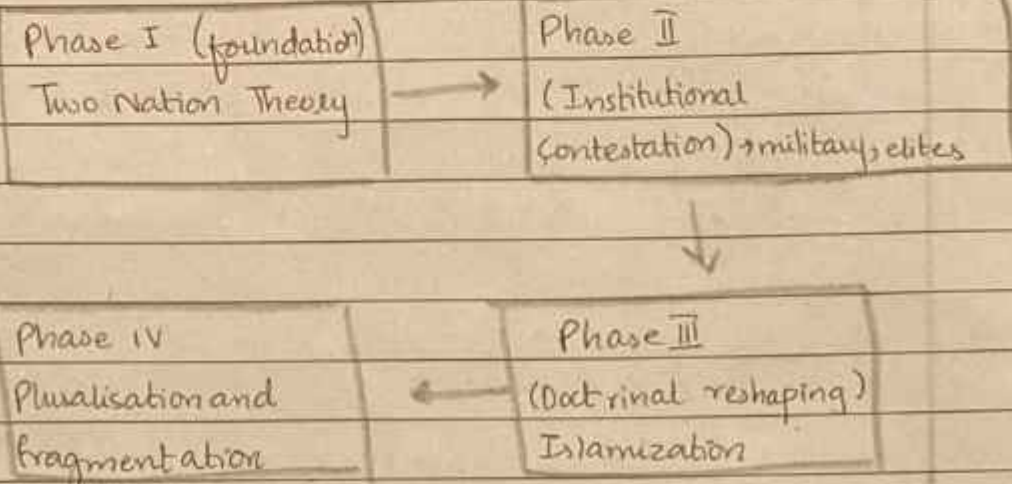
School textbooks, university syllabi, and madrasa curricula transmitted preferred narratives of history, identity and citizenship to successive generations.

→ Political Parties and religious Organizations.

Parties used religious languages for legitimacy; religious organizations provided grassroots networks that could be mobilised for or against state projects.

→ Civil Society and Media:

NGOs, human right activists, media occasionally contested state/religious narratives, promoting alternative conceptions of citizenship and minority rights



Policy Implications and Recommendations

For durable, inclusive nation-building, Pakistan needs a multi-pronged strategy.

Constitutional Clarity.

By revisiting the democratic and constitution and creating a balance between religious identity and civic rights, strengthen civic education that teaches constitutional citizenship alongside religious literacy.

Depoliticize state Institutions:

Reduce institutional dependence on ideological legitimation, promote professionalism in the military and bureaucracy to prevent ideological instrumentalisation.

Curriculum Reform:

Update School and university curricula to include plural histories, critical thinking, and inter-communal understanding while respecting religious diversity.

Legal Safeguard:

Amend or clarify laws that have created social exclusion (with parliamentary consensus) and strengthen independent judiciary protections for minority rights.

Strengthen Civil Society:

Invest in local initiatives that bridge ethnic and religious divides, support NGOs that foster inclusive narratives.

Conclusion:

Ideology has been central to Pakistan's nation-building. It created the initial political community shaped institutions, and became a recurrent resource for competing actors. But because ideological contours have been repeatedly interpreted by founders, military regimes, political parties, religious actors, civil society - Pakistan's national identity remain plural, contested and evolving. Constructive nation-building requires simultaneously recognising the mobilising power of ideology and managing its plural interpretation through democratic institutions, legal protection, education and inclusive development.

Question # 8

Evaluate the role of key political and social ideologies in the Pakistan Movement between 1930 to 1947. How did events such as Alabad address, Congress Ministries of 1937 and Lahore Resolution influence the demand for a separate homeland?

Answer: Introduction

The Pakistan movement between 1930 and 1947 was driven by a blend of political, cultural and religious ideologies. It evolves from the desire to protect Muslim identity to a full-fledged demands for a separate homeland. Ideology gave coherence to Muslim aspirations, linking religion with nationalism and politics.

Ideological foundations of the Movements

Ideological Dimension	Key Elements
→ Religious-Philosophical	Iqbal's idea of an 'Islamic polity' based on spiritual democracy and socio-economic justice
→ Socio-Political	Muslim League's political awakening to safeguards Muslim identity and interests
→ Cultural Nationalist	Resistance to Hindu cultural hegemony

promoted by congress and revival
of Muslim League

Allahabad Address 1930

Allama Iqbal's Allahabad Address laid the intellectual foundation for Muslim nationalism. He envisioned a separate Muslim polity in northwest India based on Islamic values of equality, justice and spiritual democracy. This address marked a turning point from minority protection to the idea of Muslim nationhood.

Emergence of the 'Pakistan' Concept

Chaudhry Rehmat Ali's 1933 pamphlet "Now or Never" transformed Iqbal's vision into a concrete political idea by coining the term "Pakistan". It gave geographical and ideological clarity to Muslim aspirations and set the tone for a separate homeland in the Muslim-majority regions.

Congress Ministries, 1937-39

The congress ministries policies exposed the reality of Hindu majoritarianism. Promotion of Hindi, the singing of Vande Mataram, and bias in administration deepened Muslims' fears of cultural and political domination. These developments convinced the Muslim League that coexistence under a Hindu-dominated congress was unrealistic.

Lahore Resolution 1940

The Lahore Resolution was the political manifestation of Muslim ideology. It called for 'independent states' in Muslim majority areas, providing a practical framework for Iqbal's philosophical vision. This resolution united Muslims under the banner of a distinct national identity and gave the Pakistan Movement a clear direction.

Cabinet Mission and Independence

The failure of the 1946 Cabinet Mission Plan revealed the deep ideological divide between the Congress and the Muslim League. The League's rejection of a united India confirmed that Muslims sought not just autonomy but full sovereignty. The independence of Pakistan in 1947 thus represented the culmination of a long ideological evolution.

Ideological Evolution of the Pakistan Movement

Allahabad Address 1930



Pakistan Concept (1933)



Congress Ministries (1937)



Lahore Resolution (1940)



Cabinet Mission (1946)



Independence (1947)

Conclusion:

The Pakistan movement was not merely a reaction to political grievances but a result of deep ideological awakening. From Iqbal's spiritual vision to Jinnah's political leadership, ideology transformed muslim identity into a national consciousness, culminating in the creation of Pakistan, a state conceived as a homeland for South Asian Muslims.

QUESTION #3

The current economic challenges of Pakistan are challenges of Political Economy or the issues are deep rooted in structural flaws in our economy. Take a side and suggest policy measures to address these challenges.

Answer : Introduction

Structural Flaws: The Underlying Causes

Pakistan's economy suffers from chronic imbalances and inefficiencies that have persisted for decades, making the country highly vulnerable to external and political shocks. These are the structural issues.

• Weak Export Base and Import Dependency:

The economy has a narrow, low-value, added export basket, heavily concentrated in textiles, and is highly reliant on imported inputs (energy, machinery, food items). This structural

imbalance leads to chronic current Account Deficit (CAD) and depletes foreign reserves, resulting in cyclical Balance of payments crises and repeated recourse to the IMF.

• Fiscal Imbalances (low tax-GDP Ratio)

Pakistan has one of the world's lowest tax-to-GDP ratio (around 9-11%). This is due to a narrow tax base, massive tax evasion, an over-reliance on regressive indirect taxes, and the exemption of powerful sectors like large-scale agriculture. This results in persistent Fiscal Deficit, necessitating heavy domestic and external borrowing, leading to Debt Trap.

• Inefficient Public Sector and state owned Enterprises (SOEs)

Heavily loss-making SOEs (e.g. aviation, railways and power) drain the national exchequer through subsidies and bailouts, contributing significantly to the fiscal deficit and public debt.

• Energy Sector Circular Debt:

The power sector is plagued by massive ~~esse~~ circular debt due to high transmission losses, inefficient distribution, non-payment of bills, and expensive Independent Power Producer (IPP) contracts, making power tariffs unaffordable and production cost high for industry.

- **Low National Savings and Investment:**

A consumption-driven growth model, coupled with low national savings (one of the lowest in the region) and an uncompetitive business environment, results in insufficient capital for productive investment and long-term sustainable growth.

Political Economy: The Crisis Multiplier

While the structural flaws are the engine of instability, Political Economy issues, the interplay of political power, institutions, and economic decision-making prevent the implementation of long term reforms and often triggers acute crisis.

- **Policy inconsistency and Reversals:**

Frequent changes in government and political instability lead to the reversal or abandonment of long-term economic policies (e.g. privatization, tax reforms) undermining investor confidence and continuity.

- **Elite Capture of Resources:** The politically powerful and influential elites (landlords, industrialists, specific bureaucratic segments) successfully resist reform (like taxing agriculture or eliminating SOE losses) that threaten their vested interests, thus preserving the structural flaws.

- Weak Governance and Corruption:

Institutional failures, poor contract enforcement, and widespread corruption reduce the efficiency of public spending, deter foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and erode the public's trust in the government's ability to manage the economy

- Populist Fiscal Deficit Decisions:

Political compulsions often lead to untargeted subsidies, excessive expenditure, and politically-motivated borrowing, ballooning the fiscal deficit just before elections or political transitions

Structural Flaws
(root cause)

Enable / Require

Chronic Crises
(CAD, Fiscal deficit)

Demand

Short Term populist Fixes /
Political Economy Issues

Reverse

Structural Reforms
(creates Vicious Cycle)

Policy Measures to Address Structural Challenges

Addressing Pakistan's economic challenges require an aggressive, consensus-based and politically resilient reform agenda targeting the structural roots.

Fiscal and Tax Reforms

Measures	Policy recommendations	Rationale
→ Tax Base Broadening	Eliminate statutory Regulatory orders (SROs) and exemptions, particularly for affluent sectors and individuals	End Elite capture and increase direct tax collection, shifting the burden from the poor to rich
→ Direct Taxation	Implement and enforce a comprehensive agricultural income tax (provincial), and a progressive income and tax of property regime	Correct the regressive nature of the current tax system and significantly enhance provincial revenues
→ FBR Restructuring	Overhaul the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to simplify procedures, automate processes and reduce human intervention	Improve efficiency, transparency, and reduce tax evasion

→ External Sectors Reforms

Measures	Policy Recommendations	Rationale
→ Export Diversification	Shift focus from raw/low-value textiles to high value, non-traditional sectors (e.g. IT, pharmaceuticals, engineering goods, agro-processing)	Increase foreign exchange earnings and reduce vulnerability to a single sector's performance
→ Import substitution	Incentivize local manufacturing of key imported items, especially energy and machinery components	Reduce reliance on foreign currency for essential imports
→ Exchange Rate	Maintain a market-determined exchange rate (managed float) with minimal intervention	Prevent artificial overvaluation, which hurts exports & subsidizes imports

→ Public Sector and Governance Reforms

Measures	Policy Recommendations	Rationale
→ SOE privatization	Aggressive and transparent privatization of loss-making SOEs (e.g. PIA, Pakistan Steel Mill) and professionalization of key state entities	Stop the massive fiscal haemorrhage and improve efficiency
→ Energy Sector Rationalization	Resolve the Circular Debt through a time-bound plan, rationalize tariffs and shift	Reduce energy costs, for supply industry, improve supply, and

		energy towards indigenous and renewable resources (Solar, Wind, Thar Coal)	decrease reliance on imported fuels.
→	Governance and Rule of Law	Implement civil Service and judicial reforms to ensure policy continuity, strict contract enforcement, and a predictable regulatory environment.	Essential for attracting to term foreign and domestic investment

Conclusion:

Pakistan's economic challenges are structurally rooted, but their immediate manifestations as crises is a product of political economy. The long term-policy solution lies not merely in fiscal or monetary adjustments, but in Political Economy Consensus - a Charter of Economy agreed upon all major political and institutional stakeholders. This consensus is required to implement that unpopular but necessary structural reforms consistently over the next 10-15 years, finally breaking the vicious cycle of debt, instability and dependency. Without politically costly reforms, Pakistan will continue to oscillate between temporary stability and recurring crises.

QUESTION # 05

Answer: Changing Dynamics in Pakistan-US Relations

The relationship has historically been "a roller coaster" but recent developments, particularly the US withdrawal from

Afghanistan in 2021 and the intensifying U.S.-China rivalry have fundamentally altered its trajectory.

1. Influence of Global Power Shift

US Pivot to Asia/Indo-Pacific: The U.S. has visibly shifted its strategic focus away from South Asia to the Indo-Pacific, primarily to counter the rise of China. This has reduced Pakistan's strategic significance as a "frontline state" in the context of Afghanistan.

Deepening Pakistan-China Ties:

After the U.S. pivot, Pakistan's "all-weather strategic cooperative partnership" with China, particularly through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), has deepened. This creates a challenging dynamic, as Pakistan's closest ally is the key U.S. competitor.

US India Strategic Partnership

The U.S. is strengthening its ties with India, including through platforms like the Quad, as strategic counterweight to China. This robust US-India-Islamabad-Washington relationship.

2. Strategic realignment by Pakistan:

Pakistan is actively pursuing a policy of "geoeconomics" over traditional geopolitics. This involves

Diversified Partnerships (Multi-Alignment)

Seeking balanced relationships with all major powers (U.S., China, Russia, EU) to maximize economic benefits and avoid being drawn fully into any one

blo's suit.

Focus on Economy:

Shifting national priorities to economic stability, trade, connectivity and investment in sectors like IT, energy and minerals.

Economic Diplomacy With the U.S

Pakistan has sought to engage the US on trade and investment. Recent high-level engagements have focused on economic cooperation, including potential US investment in Pakistan's energy and mineral sectors.

3 Impact of New Government

While specific administrations in both countries have an impact, the underlying structural shifts are more defining.

Elements	U.S Administration (e.g. 2021)	Pakistan Government (Recent)
→ Priority for Pakistan	Low (not central to the Indo-Pacific Strategy)	High (seeking stability and economic engagement)
→ Engagement Focus	Counterterrorism (narrowly defined), climate change, health, limited trade)	Geoeconomics, trade access to U.S markets, military assistance
→ Tone	Initially distant and conditional; more pragmatic and direct in recent engagements	Pragmatic, seeking a reset to a broad-based, long-term relationships

Strategic Partnership Vs. Transactional Cooperation

The relationship is predominantly one of Transactional cooperation

Transactional Cooperation

The current engagement is defined by issue-specific, limited scope-cooperation driven by immediate, separate national interests, lacking the long-term, comprehensive vision of a partnership

Future

Description

→ Narrow Mutual Interests

The primary shared interest is counter terrorism (e.g. intelligence sharing against groups like TTP and IS-K) which is a short term need for the US post-Afghanistan. Pakistan cooperates for security support and international legitimacy.

→ Conditionality and Trust Deficit

US aid and cooperation remain highly conditional, often tied to Pakistan's action against militants or its non-proliferation stance. Decades of mutual mistrust ("do more, less and deceit") persist, preventing a deeper strategic bond.

→ Economic Basis

While economic engagement is growing (US as Pakistan's largest export market) US investment is often selective and short-term, not constituting a deep, strategic economic alliance that would fundamentally transform the relationship.

- Absence of Shared World view
- Divergence on core issues remains: Pakistan's alignment with China, its Kashmir stance and the US's strategic priority on India. These differences make a genuine long-term strategic alignment possible.

Why not a Strategic Partnership:

A strategic partnership implies a long-term commitment, shared values and alignment on core regional and global interests. This is currently absent.

- No Grand Strategy Alignment:

The US strategic goal is to contain China; Pakistan's strategic goal is to leverage its location for economic gain and maintain a strong China relationship. These are fundamentally divergent.

- Dehyphenation of India: The US has made it clear it no longer views South Asia through the hyphenated India-Pakistan lens, reducing Pakistan's strategic value in US regional calculus.

- Lack of Institutional Depth: The "roller coaster" history shows the relationship is highly dependent on geopolitical crises (Cold War, War on Terror) and personal chemistry, rather than deep institutional ties that transcend government changes.

In conclusion, the post-realignment phase of Pakistan-US relationship is defined by a more pragmatic, low expectation, transactionalism. Both governments engage only where their narrow, immediate interests,

Date: _____

converge, primarily in counter terrorism and limited economic exchanges - while fundamentally pursuing separate strategic objectives & shaped by the broader global power shift towards US-China competition.

—————X—————