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NOA - OB - 69

Mock - 4

Q No: 4

Pak - Afghan relation post - 2021

Introduction:

Pakistan shares a 2940km long border with Afghanistan known as durand line. Due to the geo-strategic and geo-political constraints, the trajectory of Pak-Afghan relation deviated multiple times. During the course of different time-lines, the relationship status between Pakistan and Afghanistan was different. Pakistan observed a strong rivalry with Taliban regime during war on terror pre-2021 era. But after the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan in 2021, made Pak-Afghan relation enter a new phase of coalition. With the effective mediation of China, Pak-Afghan relationship shifted from rivalry to trade partnership.

Though there were some persistent disputes and disagreements between both states during this time. In the light of current dynamics, the Pak-Afghan relationship has been again diverted from liberalism to neo-realism. That's how unpredictable geo-political dynamics are.

Pak-Afghan relation post - 2021

Both states witnessed a new and improved relationship status in post-2021 era after the withdrawal of U.S troops from Afghanistan. Pakistan's inclination towards U.S during WOT restrained Pak-Afghan relations but after withdrawal of U.S from Afghanistan the winds of harmony made states to improve their bilateral relations.

Chinese mediation:

China being a common ally to both Afghanistan and Pakistan acted as an arbitrator between both states. With an excellent arbitration of China, both Afghanistan and Pakistan settled their issues. Not completely but to some extent they agreed on the refugee settlements and counter-terrorism.

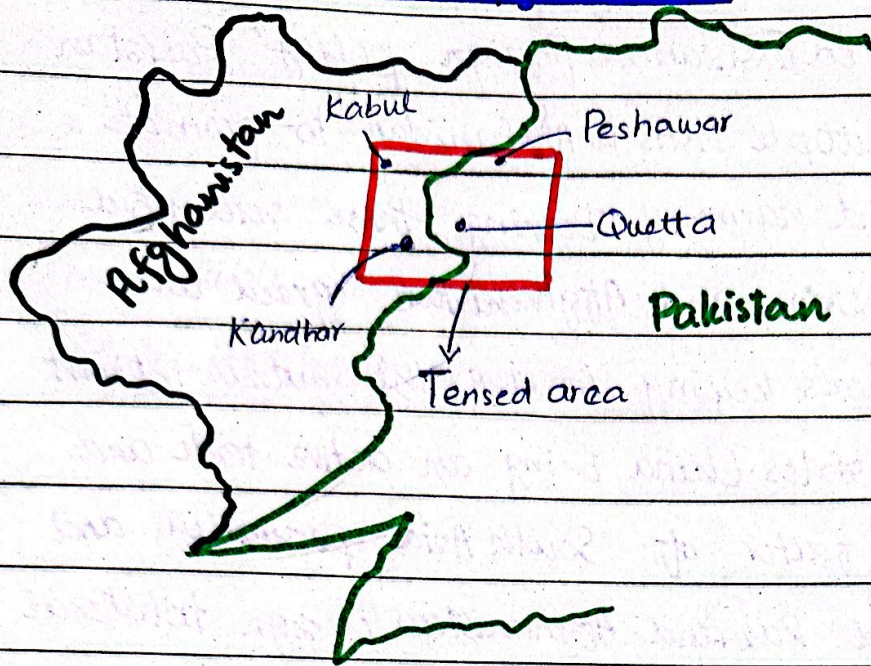
Trade agreements:

Keeping in view the peaceful co-existence foreign policy Pakistan made multiple visits to Afghanistan to promote peace and harmony. During these successful visits Pakistan and Afghanistan agreed to some deals keeping in view the mutual interest of both states. China being an active trade and economic factor of South Asia persuaded and convinced Pak and Afghanistan to sign trilateral trade agreements to promote CPEC and BRI across the region. These trade agreements undoubtedly shifted the trajectory of Pak-Afghan relation from security centric to economy centric.

Mutual cooperation:

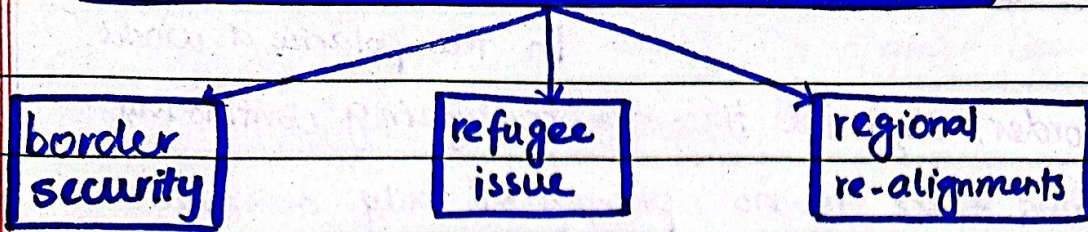
The liberal approach of Taliban government and mutual cooperation between both states was a positive initiative from regional rivalries. Both states mutually agreed to cooperate on border issues, refugee settlement and countering terrorism in the region. This was indeed a diplomatic win from both states.

Current Dynamics b/w Pakistan and Afghanistan



Pakistan and Afghanistan were maintaining good cordial relations in the beginning of year 2025 but as the year proceeded so does the tensions, border instability and mistrust. In October 2025, both countries end up in a war like situation targeting localities and playing a blame game. Pakistan accuses taliban government of backing militant organizations in Pakistan and the rise of militancy whereas Afghanistan was frustrated of Pakistan strengthening ties with their all time rival USA. Hence, the rise of terrorism in Pakistan specifically in KP and Balochistan once again constrained the ties between two states.

Major causes of tensed bilateral ties



1. Border security:

Border security or durand line issue between Pakistan and Afghanistan is rooted in decade long and historic conflicts. The people of Afghanistan were not satisfied upon the border adjustment. In this scenario, the durand line issue has kept the bilateral ties of both states tensed for years now.

2. Refugee issue:

During the war on terror in Afghanistan, Pakistan whole heartedly welcomed 3.5 million Afghan refugees and allowed them to settle in Pakistan. After the U.S withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, Pakistan asked the Afghan refugees (with no Pakistani nationality) to move to their own homeland.

Afghan perceived these orders as act of force and aggression. This created mistrust between the two states leading to constrained bilateral ties.

3 Regional re-alignments

In the polarized world order, regional ties are realigning continuously and there is no permanent ally or rival. The geo-politics is unpredictable. A significant reason behind the most recent war between Afghanistan and Pakistan was regional re-alignment. Pakistan once again strengthened its ties with all time rival of Afghanistan, USA. Afghanistan perceived this realignment as echoes from past tracing back to the era of war on terror when Pakistan supported USA against Afghanistan. But this time, Afghanistan had a secure plan B. Afghanistan immediately planned a visit to India, which is all time rival of Pakistan. Definitely a neo-realist approach in a multipolar world order. This power game and neo-realist approach accelerated the tensions and war between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

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Conclusion:

In a retrospect, Pak-Afghan ties post 2021 era, had different trajectories depending upon geo-politics, global world order and international relations. Pakistan has always welcomed peaceful negotiation and diplomacy from Afghanistan. Whereas Afghanistan being cordial with Pakistan adopted a policy of backdoor diplomacy with India and sponsored terrorism in Pakistan with the assistance of India and militant groups. The only way to maintain long term peace with Afghanistan is transparent agreements with no loopholes, trust building measures, a third party mediation like China and Qatar and collectively countering terrorism.

Q No: 5

Changing dynamics of pak - US relations

Introduction:

"The world hates change, yet it is the only thing that has brought progress - Charles Kettering"

The post 2024 elections in Pakistan as well as in USA inaugurated a new chapter of strengthened bilateral ties with Donald Trump, residing president of USA inclining towards Shehbaz Sharif, prime minister of Pakistan. Both leaders pursue an almost similar foreign policy. Mr. Trump's second regime indeed shifted the dynamics of global politics by sharing strong ties with arab world, imposing double taxes on India, reducing tariffs on Pakistan and mediating as a peacemaker in the wars around the world. After the new governments in power in both states, the trajectory of relationship between US and Pakistan has been shifted from strategic cooperation to transactional cooperation.

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Pakistan-USA relations

1. Changing dynamics with changing governments

Different governments re-shape the state's relationships with other states. Leaders determine the trajectories of international relations. The former governments of Pakistan and USA had anti-sentiments towards each other which created a rift between Pak-Afghan relations. While the present governments in both states are inclined towards each other. Pakistani prime minister Mr. Shehbaz Sharif has even nominated Mr. Trump for noble peace prize. That's how government shape state relations with each other.

Note:-

Apologies for not attempting full mock due to high fever. I will re-attempt the remaining ones and will compensate in my assessments.

Thank you!