

Q. No. 1

What are the . . . in 21st century.

ANSWER

1. Introduction:

"Foreign policy is an extension of a nation's constitutional philosophy" - said Malecha Lodhi, the former Foreign Secretary aptly defining the concept.

Pakistan's foreign policy is no exclusion, it is constitutionally anchored, normatively guided by Islamic principle, sovereignty, peace, and international cooperation, and operationalized through evolving geopolitical realities. In the 21st century, Pakistan's foreign policy has produced strategic gains but also incurred structural costs, reflecting the tensions between ideals and realpolitik.

2. Constitutional Context (Background)

The 1973 Constitution provides the normative framework for Pakistan's foreign policy and lacks a detailed policy blueprint. According to it,

foreign policy authority flows from Parliamentary sovereignty, Executive primacy, and Islamic ideological orientation. Hamid Khan notes the constitution gives:

“directional principles rather than rigid commands” — Constitutional & Political History of Pakistan.
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3. Constitutional Provisions in the Foreign Policy of Pakistan:

3.1. Article 40-Principles of State Policy

Article 40 is the cornerstone constitutional article on foreign relations in Pakistan. It mandates Pakistan to strengthen ties with Muslim world, promote international peace, and respect sovereignty and non-interference. These provisions reflect a balance between ideological idealism and diplomatic realism.

3.2: Preamble and Article 2A

The Objectives Resolution was made substantive via Article 2A, which requires Pakistan's Foreign Policy to align with Islamic Justice, equality of nations, and moral conduct in international affairs. Justice (R) Munir A. Sheikh highlights its role as "constitutional conscience", making it a significant provision.

3.3. Executive Authority in FP (Articles 90 & 97)

The constitution lays the authority to formulate foreign policy with Federal Government (Cabinet & PM). Whereas, the President performs ceremonial diplomatic functions. With limited tenure in office, often halted abruptly historically, this explains why Pakistan's foreign policy often reflects executive priorities, sometimes at the cost of continuity.

4. Salient Features of Pak's FP in 21st Century:

4.1. Security - Centric Orientation:

In the aftermath of 9/11, Pakistan's foreign policy has adopted a security-first diplomacy. Furthermore, stability concerns coupled with security regarding Afghanistan, India, and counter-terrorism dominates the agenda. Zahid Hussain, Dawn analyst, calls it, "strategic obsession crowding out economics", pointing towards the country's weak economic situation in parallel.

4.2. Strategic Balancing among Great Powers:

Pakistan finds itself in a unique position, courted by all Great Powers of the world. It has established a careful calibration between: ~~on~~ China as a strategic and economic partner; US for security ties and its

IMF influence; Russia characterized by increasing engagement. Maleeha Lodhi terms this as "multi-vector hedging diplomacy".

4.3. Geo-economics turn post-2018 :

Another feature has been a shift from geo-politics to geo-economics, especially after National Security Policy (2022). This has put an emphasis on trade corridors, connectivity, and regional integration, epitomized by CPEC. Moazzam Yusuf argues that economic security is now "core national security" in his paper.

5. Gains of Pak's FP in 21st Century

5.1. Strategic Partnership with China :

The China Pakistan Economic Corridor, a flagship BRI project, has elevated Pakistan's regional relevance, promising long-term infrastructure, development, and energy gains. Anatol

Lienen notes that China provides
"strategic patience & Pakistan lacks elsewhere"

5.2. Diplomatic Repositioning on Afghanistan

Pakistan played a central role in Doha Process and Taliban negotiations with US after the latter decided to withdraw its troops. Despite challenges, Pakistan had emerged as indispensable stakeholder, acknowledged in Western diplomatic circles and UN forums.

5.3. Renewed Outreach to Muslim World:

In 21st century, Pakistan had kept on strengthening its ties with Saudi Arabia (now with a mutual defense pact), UAE, Türkiye, and Central Asia. Recently, it has engaged in Gaza Peace Talks, on the platform headed by US with Muslim leaders, and also extended visits or received them with Jordan. A key factor here is economic diplomacy via

remittances and investment, along with strategic outreach in the Middle East.

6. Losses of Pak's FP in 21st Century:

6.1. Economic Diplomacy Deficit:

The major loss is in trade which remains below potential with neighbors and beyond. The major lost potential is with complete trade closure with India, which World Bank estimates to cost billions of dollars in losses. Furthermore, Pakistan has limited Free Trade Agreement leverage as compared to peers, with huge asymmetry favoring China in Pak-China trade.

6.2. Image and Narrative Challenges:

Pakistan's international image is undermined by persistent challenges, such as FATF grey list legacy and Terrorism perceptions. This reflects a failure in "strategic communication

diplomacy', and an under utilization of the country's soft power.

6.3. Inconsistency and Civil-Military Duality:

Pakistan's foreign policy has been discontinuous in 21st century, mainly due to government changes and Civil-Military coordination gaps. Hassan Askari Rizvi calls this Pakistan's "foreign policy paradox", which have created an uncertain perception internationally.

7. Conclusion:

Pakistan's Constitution (1973) provides clear ethical direction but leaves execution flexible in foreign policy. In 21st century, Pakistan's foreign policy achieved strategic survival and relevance, yet underperformed economically and narratively. The future success depends on constitutional consistency, parliamentary oversight, and geo-economic prioritization. Ultimately, foreign policy's strength flows from internal stability and economic resilience.

Q. No. 2

The Kashmir issue . . . Explain .

ANSWER.

1. Introduction:

"No conflict is resolvable unless the consent of the governed is central to the settlement" —

UN conflict resolution

principle

The issue of Kashmir represents a triple-layered dilemma, comprising competing state sovereignties, fragmented Kashmiri aspirations, and a hardened geopolitical environment. This core bone of contention between Pakistan and India has been locked into a prolonged stalemate in the absence of a mutually acceptable, and a people-centric solution.

2. Background:

Kashmir issue originates from 1947 Partition, contested accession, and

UN Security Council Resolutions (1948-49).

Over the decades, the issue shifted from international mediation to bilateralism to internalized security dispute currently. Alastair Lamb describes Kashmir as "the unfinished business of Partition".

3. The Structural Dilemma - Three Stakeholders, Divergent Endgames

At the core of the issue lies divergent objectives of the key stakeholders in this issue. Pakistan maintains Kashmiri's right of self-determination under UNSC resolutions, while India makes it a question of territorial integrity and internal sovereignty. For Kashmiris, the goals have been multiple, often conflicting political aspirations.

3.1. Stakeholder 1: Pakistan's Position

Legalism without leverage

Pakistan's position is anchored

in UN resolutions; international law, and the plebiscite principle, ^{asking for} giving Kashmiris to decide their own fate.

Despite being diplomatically consistent on this principle, Pakistan has limited coercive leverage post-Simla Agreement which enshrined bilateral resolution.

Maleeha Lodhi aptly describes Pakistan's case to be "morally strong but strategically constrained".

3.2. Stakeholder II: India's Position: -

Sovereignty over Self-Determination:

India views Kashmir as an integral part of the Indian Union and an internal matter post-Simla (1972).

The Abrogation of Article 370 (2019)

has hardened this stance further, reducing negotiating space among the neighbours. Dawn analysts describe this as "legal consolidation replacing political accommodation".

instability created by unilateral

3.3. Stakeholder III: The Kashmiri People -

Fragmented Aspirations:

Kashmiris are not on the same page when it comes to their political aspirations. Some advocate independence, some are pro-Pakistan, while others are pro-India political actors. Bose highlights this as "aspirational pluralism" within Kashmiri society.

4. Dimensions of this Dilemma:

4.1. Absence of a Single Kashmiri Voice

As there is no unifying leadership that represents all regions; ^{and} Jammu, Ladakh, Kashmir valley; or identifying a common "people's will" proves to be a complex procedure. This makes UN-style plebiscite difficult and complicated.

4.2. Security vs. Political Resolution:

India prioritizes security control

over political dialogue. Their heavy militarization of the disputed region has reduced space for trust among neighbours and undermined free political expression for Kashmiris.

4.3. International Fatigue and Realpolitik

Post-9/11, the global priorities have shifted toward counter-terrorism and strategic partnerships. This has ^{the efficacy of} undermined multilateral resolution mechanisms and has resulted in Kashmir issue being treated increasingly as a bilateral or internal issue.

Although UN's normative commitment persists, practical engagement has waned.

4.4. Post-2019 Constitutional Lock-In

India's unilateral constitutional changes have altered Kashmir's legal status. It has reorganized the territory administratively whilst creating facts on ground, further

complicating reversal.

4.5. Pakistan - India Trust Deficit

Trust deficit remains high between Islamabad and Delhi as Composite Dialogue remains suspended and no confidence-building mechanisms since early 2010s. It gets worsened under the propensity of conflicts such as Uri, Pulwama, and now Pahalgam. Kashmir cannot move forward in this atmosphere of perpetual hostility.

4.6. Human Rights vs. Strategic Silence

Persistent allegations of arbitrary detentions by Indian authorities and media restrictions are levelled against India. UN OHCHR reports raise humanitarian concerns, however, enforcement remains absent as human rights advocacy clashes with strategic interests of major powers.

4.7. Lack of Acceptable Compromise Formula

During the course of conflicts, several compromise formulas like independence of Kashmir, partition along LOC, and giving autonomy to Kashmiris to decide their fate have surfaced, however, none of these have garnered simultaneous acceptance of all stakeholders. In this regard, Stephen Cohen argued that, "Kashmir is a dispute where every solution creates a new loser", reducing it to zero-sum game.

5. Prospects Analysis: Why the Dilemma Persists?

The inherent power asymmetry bilaterally among the neighbours and from Kashmiri's perspective as well favours status quo, marginalizing Kashmiri consent. International systems reward stability over justice, further dimming the prospects of a change in status-quo. Hence, the dispute remains a managed affair, not resolved.

6. Conclusion:

Kashmir's dilemma does not lie in lack of proposals, but in absence of an inclusive process aimed towards resolution. Any durable settlement must ~~pro~~ prioritize Kashmiri agency, restore political space, and combine legality with legitimacy. Until these can be guaranteed, Kashmir will remain a conflict of competing truths rather than shared solutions.