

TEST NO: 02

16

Current Affairs

QUESTION: 02

Examine the global fallout of Trump's tariff policies, analyzing their impact on international economic relations.

(1) Introduction: From Liberal Trade to Weaponized Protectionism

Trade wars are good, and easy to win.
— Donald J. Trump —

The recent developments in global trade are marked by the continuous fragmentation of supply chains, the strengthening of China-European trade ties, and the expansion of regional blocks like RCEP excluding the United States (US). This incident demonstrates that the repercussions of Donald Trump's tariff policies remained deeply embedded in the global economy. Trump's assertion that trade wars are 'easy to win' underestimated

complexity of modern interdependence and instead unleashed a period of economic uncertainty, alliance erosion, and systematic instability in international economic relations.

(2) Nature and Scope of Trump's Tariff Policies

(2.1) Mercantilist Ideology And Trade Deficit Obsession

Trump's tariff strategy was ~~was~~ rooted in a zero sum mercantilist worldview, equating trade deficits with national loss and surplus with victory. The administration justified tariffs as compensation for "lost ground," particularly against China, while claiming tariffs could generate \$6 trillion in revenue over a decade. This was criticized as economically flawed.

(2.2) Economic and Strategic Rationale Behind Tariffs

The stated objectives of tariffs included:

Reducing the \$1.2 trillion US goods trade deficit (2024)

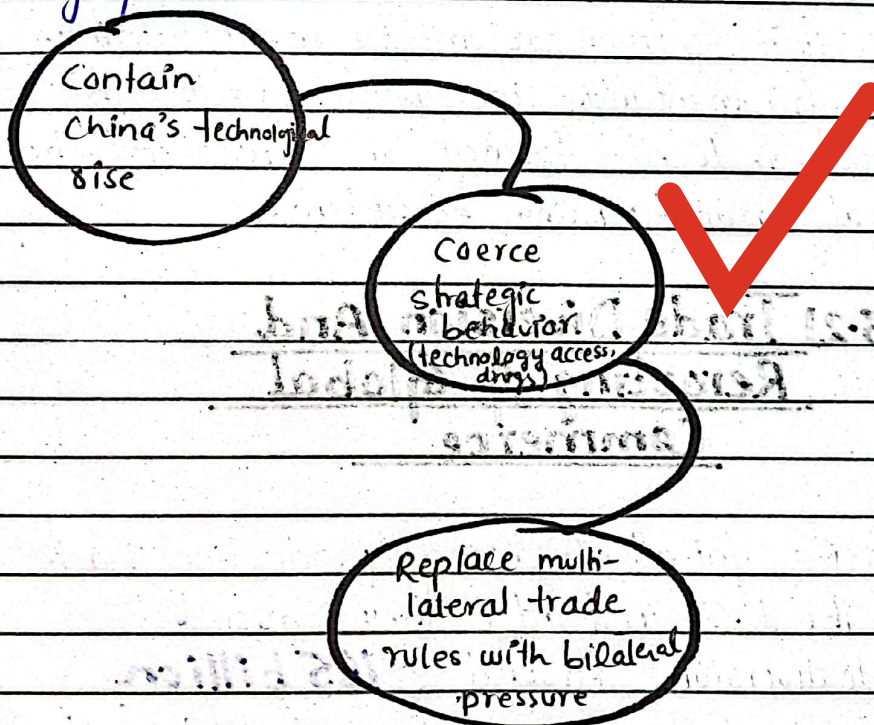
Protecting domestic manufacturing and defense industrial base

Enforcing "reciprocal fairness" against perceived unfair trade practices.

However, these measures ignored the realities of global value chains and interdependence, making them blunt instruments rather than targeted solutions.

(2-3) Geopolitical Motivations and Power Reassertion

Beyond economics, tariffs functioned as geopolitics tool to:



This approach signaled a shift from rules-based cooperation to economic coercion, unsettling allies and rivals alike.

(3) Critical Evaluation: Global Fallout and Structural Consequences

(3.1) Fragmentation of Global Supply Chains

Trump's tariffs pushed global supply chain toward a breaking point. WTO projections indicate that continued escalation could reduce US-China merchandise trade by up to 80% while IMF data show tariffs on semiconductors and electronics raised prices by **12%** in dependent industries, including German automobile manufacturing. This fragmentation increased production costs, reduced efficiency and weakened the global manufacturing ecosystem.

(3.2) Trade Diversion And Rerouting of Global Commerce

Tariffs failed to bring production back to the U.S; instead, they caused trade diversion. Around **\$165 billion** in annual trade was rerouted through Southwest Asia as firms shifted operations to Malaysia, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand to bypass U.S tariffs on China. This undercut the tariffs' original purpose

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while imposing high restructuring costs on firms.

(3.3) Erosion of Alliances and Crisis of Trust

The indiscriminate use of tariffs including 25% duties on steel and aluminium imposed on NATO allies has eroded trust in U.S leadership. Canada retaliated with **\$20.7 billion in tariffs**, while the European Union targeted politically sensitive U.S exports like **bourbon and motorcycles**. EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen labeled the tariffs, "bad for business" and destabilizing to transatlantic relations.

(3.4) Disproportionate Harm To Developing Economies

The Global South bore the heaviest costs.



Source:

International
Trade
Centre

Global trade could shrink 3-7%.

Catastrophic Outcomes:

Cambodia's apparel exports
(20% of GDP) face a
49% tariffs

Bangladesh risks \$3-3 billion
in annual losses and
upto 4 million job losses
in textiles

~ International Trade Centre ~

- These outcomes undermine poverty reduction, labor rights and UN Sustainable Development goals.

3.5 Acceleration of Multipolarity and Bloc Formation

Trump's tariffs inadvertently accelerated multipolar global realignment.

- China deepened ties with EU and ASEAN.
- RCEP strengthened without US participation
- BRICS expanded alternative financial and trade mechanisms.

This weakened US influence and hastened the decline of a US centric

-trade order.

3-6 Undermining the Rules-Based International Order

By passing WTO dispute mechanisms and violating the Most Favored Nation (MFN) principle, Trump's tariffs eroded the legitimacy of multilateral trade governance. The normalization of unilateral economic coercion sets a dangerous precedent for future trade conflicts and global instability.

(4) Conclusion: The High Cost of Winning Trade Wars

In a world of global supply chains, protectionism protects no one for long

Trump's tariff policies reshaped international economic relations not by restoring US dominance, but by fragmenting supply chains, weakening alliances, accelerating multipolarity, and destabilizing the global trading system. While politically

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appealing, these policies exposed the limits of unilateral economic coercion. In the long run, their legacy is less predictable, more divided global economy. One where cooperation has been replaced by confrontation, and stability by uncertainty.

QUESTION:03

Critically analyze the 27th Constitutional Amendment...

(1) Introduction: Constitutional Amendment and the Judiciary in Contemporary Pakistan

Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.
— Lord Acton —

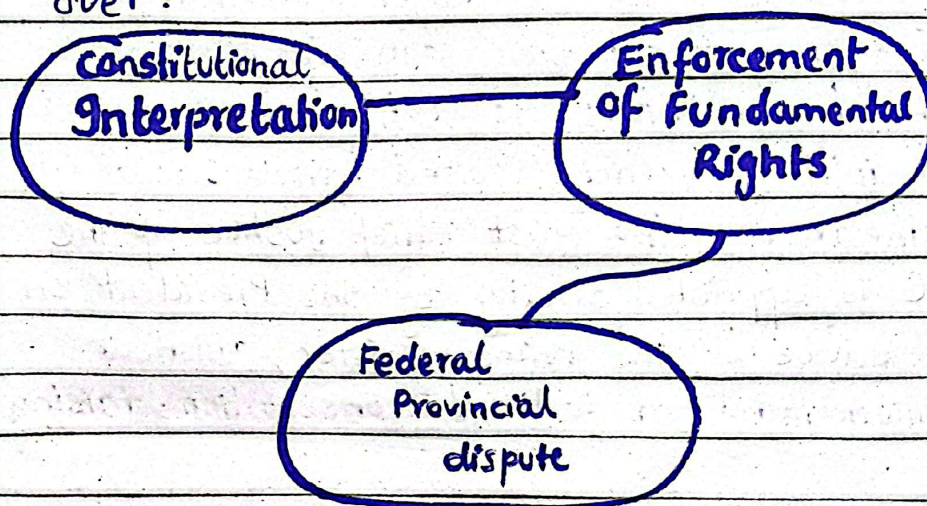
The recent constitutional development most notably the 27th Amendment (2025) have reignited a fundamental debate on the proper role of judiciary in a democratic polity introduced in the

aftermath of prolonged tensions between the executive and the Supreme Court, the amendment fundamentally restructures judicial authority by creating a **Federal Constitutional Court (FCC)** and significantly curtailing the powers of the Supreme Court. While proponents frame it as a corrective against judicial overreach, critics view it as a systematic effort to subordinate the judiciary to political control, raising profound questions about judicial independence, restraint versus activism, and the constitutional trichotomy of powers.

(2) Sailent Features of The Constitutional Amendment

(2.1) Creation of The Federal Constitutional Court (FCC)

The amendment establishes a FCC under Chapter 1A (Articles 175B-175E) as a new apex body with exclusive jurisdiction over:



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Critically, FCC decisions are made binding on all courts, including the Supreme Court, effectively demoting the latter from its historic position as the ultimate constitutional arbiter.

(2.2) Curtailment of Supreme Court Jurisdiction and Suo Motu Powers

One of the most controversial aspects is the abolition of the Supreme Court's suo motu jurisdiction under Article 184(3). A conditional suo motu power is ~~transfere~~ transferred to the FCC, restricting immediate judicial intervention in crisis.

(2.3) Executive Influence in Judicial Appointments and Transfers

The amendment empowers the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) to recommend the transfer of High Court Judges without their consent, with refusal amounting to retirement or disciplinary action (revised Article 200). Furthermore, the first Chief Justice of the FCC is appointed directly by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister, without parliamentary or judicial consultation, raising

serious concerns about politicization.

(3) Curtailment of Judicial Powers : A Critical Evaluation

(3.1) Institutional Subordination of the Supreme Court (SC)

By stripping the SC of constitutional supremacy, the amendment undermines the doctrine articulated in *Sindh High Court Bar Association vs. Federation of Pakistan* (PLD 2009 SC 879), where the court emphasized that the **judicial independence** is a basic feature of the Constitution.

Reducing the Supreme Court's role risks converting constitutional adjudication into an excessive managed process.

—Hamid Khan: Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan—

(3.2) Restricted Access to Justice and Fundamental Rights

The abolition of unconditional *suo motu* jurisdiction significantly weakens judicial protection of fundamental rights. In *Benazir Bhutto vs. Federation of Pakistan*

(PLD 1988 SC 416), the court held the proactive judicial review is essential in societies where executive abuse is common. The FCC's application-based model may delay or entirely block relief in urgent human rights cases, particularly affecting marginalized groups.

(4) Judicial Activism vs Judicial Restraint: Where Does the 27th Amendment Stand

(4.1) Reaction to Judicial Activism:

The amendment is widely interpreted as political response to judicial activism, especially post 2007, when courts frequently intervened in governance, elections and executive decisions.



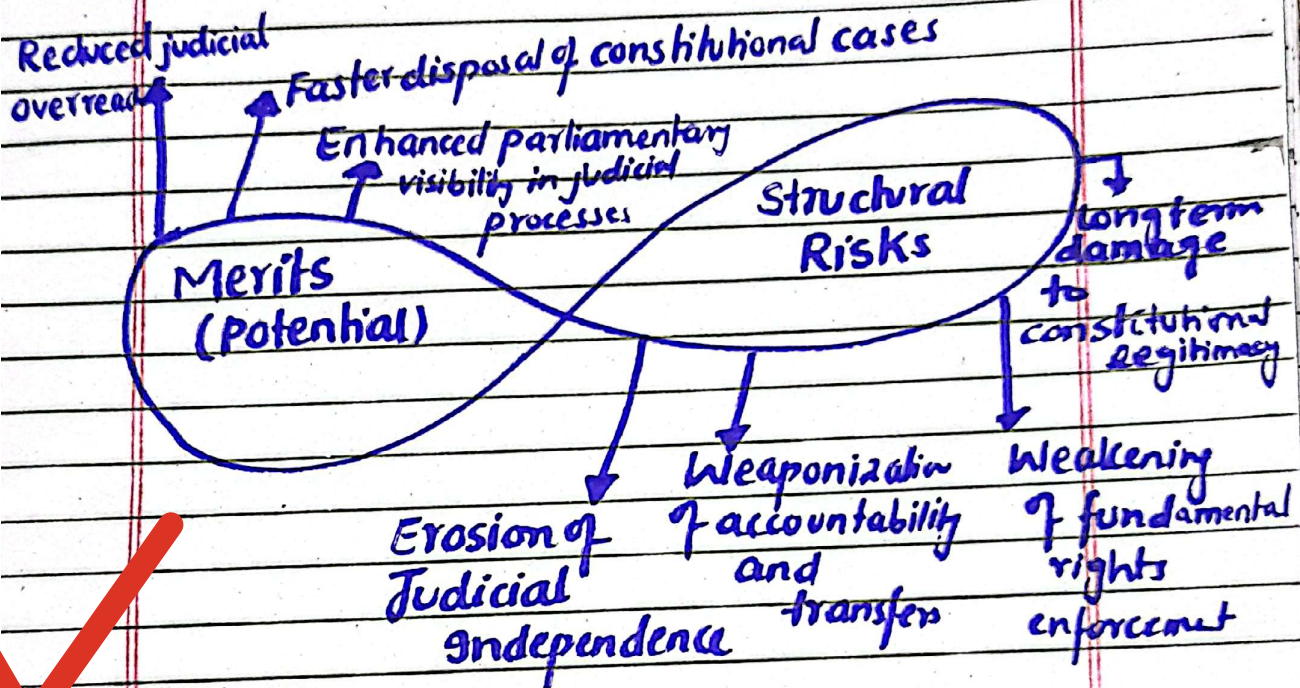
(4.2) From Judicial Restraint to Judicial Subservience

However, critics argue that the amendment goes beyond restraint and institutionalizes judicial subservience. As Justice (R) Jawwad S. Khawaja notes,

Judicial restraint cannot mean abdication of constitutional

| responsibility |

(5) Opportunities And Challenges Ahead



(6) Conclusion: Restraining Justice Judges or Rewriting the Constitution

Judicial independence is not a privilege of judges, but a right of the people.
 - UN Basic Principle on the Independence of Judiciary.

The 27th Constitutional Amendment represents one of the most far-reaching attempts to restructure judicial power in Pakistan's history.