

Current Affairs 2023

Q. No. 2

Discuss historic Pakistan and Turkey bilateral relations beyond the areas of socio-economic and strategic realms. Explain its geopolitical ripple effects in the Himalayas, the Arabian Peninsula, and the South Caucasus.

1. Introduction

- Pakistan-Turkey relations are rooted in **historical solidarity, cultural affinity, political trust and people-to-people bonds**, extending beyond conventional economic and military cooperation.
- The relationship has acquired wider geopolitical significance from **South Asia to the Middle East and South Caucasus**.

2. Pakistan-Turkey relations are founded upon deep historical and civilizational bonds

2.1 Support of Muslims of the subcontinent for the Ottoman Caliphate during the **Khilafat Movement** created an enduring emotional connection.

2.2 Turkey promptly established diplomatic relations with Pakistan after independence in **1947**.

2.3 Cold War cooperation through **RCD, CENTO and other multilateral frameworks** institutionalized bilateral friendship.

2.4 Shared Muslim identity, cultural exchanges and historical affinity continue to provide a strong foundation for bilateral relations.

3. Pakistan-Turkey relations have expanded beyond traditional economic and defence cooperation

3.1 Educational exchanges, scholarships and academic cooperation have strengthened human connectivity.

3.2 Turkish television, tourism and cultural diplomacy have enhanced Turkey's soft power in Pakistan.

3.3 Parliamentary exchanges and high-level visits have deepened political coordination.

3.4 Both states support each other's positions on important international issues, particularly **Kashmir and Cyprus**.

3.5 Cooperation through the **OIC and other multilateral forums** has amplified their diplomatic influence.

4. Pakistan-Turkey relations create geopolitical ripple effects in the Himalayas

4.1 Turkey's support for Pakistan on Kashmir gives Pakistan an additional diplomatic voice internationally.

4.2 Growing Pakistan-Turkey-Azerbaijan cooperation has increased India's strategic concerns.

4.3 Turkey's expanding engagement with Central Asia connects the Himalayan region with wider Eurasian geopolitics.

4.4 Pakistan can potentially leverage Turkish economic and diplomatic outreach towards Central Asia.

5. The partnership affects the balance of power in the Arabian Peninsula

5.1 Turkey's close relationship with Qatar intersects with Pakistan's traditional relations with Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

5.2 Pakistan's simultaneous relations with Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Qatar require careful diplomatic balancing.

5.3 Pakistan can use its multidirectional relationships to promote **regional dialogue rather than bloc politics**.

5.4 Greater Turkish-Pakistani cooperation can contribute to a more diversified regional balance of power.

6. Pakistan-Turkey cooperation has generated important geopolitical effects in the South Caucasus

6.1 Pakistan and Turkey strongly supported Azerbaijan during the **Nagorno-Karabakh conflict**.

6.2 The emerging **Pakistan-Turkey-Azerbaijan triangle** has developed into an important political and strategic grouping.

6.3 Greater connectivity between South Asia, Central Asia and the Caucasus creates opportunities for trade and energy cooperation.

6.4 This alignment influences the strategic calculations of **Armenia, Iran, Russia and India**.

7. Pakistan should transform its historic friendship with Turkey into broader Eurasian connectivity

- 7.1 Expand cooperation in education, technology, tourism and cultural diplomacy.
- 7.2 Develop trade and transport links connecting Pakistan with Turkey through Central Asia.
- 7.3 Strengthen cooperation in renewable energy, defence production and emerging technologies.
- 7.4 Maintain strategic autonomy while using the partnership to advance Pakistan's regional interests.

8. Conclusion

- Pakistan-Turkey relations have evolved from **historical solidarity into multidimensional geopolitical cooperation**.
- Their growing interaction has consequences across the **Himalayas, Arabian Peninsula and South Caucasus**, making the partnership an important component of Pakistan's Eurasian foreign policy.

Q. No. 3

The UN climate summit (COP-27) in Sharm el Sheikh discussed Pakistan's catastrophic summer floods exacerbated by climate change. Discuss the COP-27 roadmap to face climate change and proposed measures for reconstruction and rehabilitation of Pakistan.

1. Introduction

- Pakistan's 2022 floods demonstrated the **disproportionate vulnerability of low-emitting developing countries** to climate change.
- COP-27 provided Pakistan an opportunity to transform the catastrophe into a case for **climate justice, loss and damage, adaptation and resilient reconstruction**.

2. Pakistan's 2022 floods exposed the multidimensional consequences of climate change

- 2.1 Extreme rainfall and flooding caused massive destruction of lives, homes and infrastructure.
- 2.2 Agricultural destruction threatened food security and rural livelihoods.
- 2.3 Displacement and stagnant water increased the danger of **malaria, dengue, cholera and other epidemics**.
- 2.4 Damaged roads, bridges, schools and health facilities disrupted economic and social activity.
- 2.5 The disaster demonstrated that climate vulnerability can reverse years of development gains.

3. COP-27 provided a roadmap centred on mitigation, adaptation and climate justice

3.1 The establishment of new **Loss and Damage funding arrangements** recognised the special needs of climate-vulnerable developing countries.

3.2 Greater emphasis was placed on **climate adaptation and resilience**, alongside emissions reduction.

3.3 Developed countries were urged to strengthen climate finance for vulnerable developing economies.

3.4 Early-warning systems and disaster preparedness were identified as essential tools for reducing climate losses.

3.5 Accelerated transition towards renewable and low-carbon energy remains necessary to limit future warming.

4. Pakistan requires climate-resilient reconstruction rather than simple rehabilitation

4.1 Rebuild homes, roads, bridges and public facilities according to **Build Back Better** principles.

4.2 Relocate settlements from highly flood-prone areas where necessary.

4.3 Construct climate-resilient schools, hospitals, water systems and sanitation infrastructure.

4.4 Restore agricultural land through climate-smart farming, resilient seeds and improved irrigation.

4.5 Rehabilitate livestock, small businesses and rural livelihoods through targeted financial support.

5. Pakistan must address the public-health and social consequences of the floods

5.1 Establish disease-surveillance systems and emergency healthcare in vulnerable districts.

5.2 Provide safe drinking water and sanitation to prevent water-borne diseases.

5.3 Strengthen nutrition programmes for children and displaced families.

5.4 Restore education facilities and protect children from prolonged disruption.

5.5 Expand social protection and cash assistance for disaster-affected households.

6. Pakistan needs international climate finance for sustainable rehabilitation

6.1 Developed countries should provide grants and concessional financing rather than adding unsustainable debt.

6.2 Loss-and-damage financing should reach highly vulnerable communities efficiently.

6.3 International institutions should support debt sustainability and resilient infrastructure.

6.4 Technology transfer and climate expertise should accompany financial assistance.

7. Pakistan must strengthen domestic climate governance

7.1 Improve coordination between federal, provincial and local disaster-management institutions.

7.2 Integrate climate risk into urban planning, agriculture, water and infrastructure policies.

7.3 Strengthen meteorological forecasting and community-based early-warning systems.

7.4 Restore forests, wetlands and watersheds as natural flood-management mechanisms.

8. Conclusion

- COP-27 shifted greater attention towards **loss and damage, adaptation and climate justice**.
- Pakistan must combine international climate finance with domestic reforms to transform flood recovery into **long-term climate resilience**.

Q. No. 4

Discuss the core causes of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and its socio-economic, political and strategic consequences. Explain its devastating impact on Pakistan and its severe lesson for the country's survival.

1. Introduction

- Russia's invasion of Ukraine in **February 2022** resulted from accumulated tensions involving NATO expansion, Russia's security perceptions, Ukraine's Western orientation and the unresolved Donbas conflict.
- The war has transformed global security, energy, food and economic relations while exposing Pakistan's external vulnerabilities.

2. NATO expansion and Russia's security concerns constituted a major cause of the invasion

2.1 NATO's post-Cold War expansion brought the alliance closer to Russia's borders.

2.2 Moscow viewed possible Ukrainian NATO membership as a direct strategic threat.

2.3 Russia sought a sphere of influence in its immediate neighbourhood.

3. Ukraine's Western orientation intensified the Russia-Ukraine strategic confrontation

3.1 Ukraine increasingly pursued integration with the **EU and Western institutions**.

3.2 Russia perceived the shift as erosion of its historical and geopolitical influence.

3.3 The annexation of Crimea in 2014 further entrenched the confrontation.

3.4 The unresolved conflict in **Donbas** and failure of the Minsk process deepened mistrust.

4. The war has produced devastating global socio-economic consequences

4.1 Disruption of Russian energy supplies contributed to global energy insecurity.

4.2 Disruption of Ukrainian and Russian agricultural exports intensified food insecurity.

4.3 Fertilizer shortages increased agricultural costs worldwide.

4.4 Global inflation and supply-chain disruptions weakened economic growth.

4.5 Millions of Ukrainians became refugees, creating the largest displacement crises in Europe in decades.

5. The war has transformed global political and strategic alignments

5.1 NATO regained strategic relevance and expanded its membership.

5.2 Russia's confrontation with the West intensified the emerging **multipolar order**.

5.3 Russia-China strategic cooperation acquired greater significance.

5.4 European states increased defence expenditure and military preparedness.

5.5 The conflict revived great-power competition and nuclear-risk concerns.

6. Pakistan has suffered from the economic consequences of the war

6.1 Higher international oil prices increased Pakistan's import bill.

6.2 Rising energy costs intensified inflation and pressure on foreign-exchange reserves.

6.3 Disruptions in wheat and fertilizer markets threatened food security.

6.4 Global inflation increased Pakistan's cost of imports and debt servicing.

6.5 Economic instability complicated Pakistan's already severe Balance-of-Payments pressures.

7. The war created a difficult diplomatic balancing challenge for Pakistan

7.1 Pakistan sought to maintain relations with Russia without alienating Western partners.

7.2 Pakistan's strategic partnership with China adds another dimension to its foreign-policy calculations.

7.3 Islamabad has emphasized dialogue, sovereignty and peaceful resolution rather than taking a confrontational position.

8. The Ukraine war provides severe lessons for Pakistan's national survival

8.1 Economic vulnerability can become a national-security vulnerability.

8.2 Pakistan must achieve greater **food and energy security**.

8.3 Export diversification is essential for reducing dependence on external financing.

8.4 Strategic autonomy requires balanced relations with competing major powers.

8.5 Political stability and institutional capacity are essential for surviving external shocks.

9. Conclusion

- The Ukraine war demonstrates that **geopolitical conflict rapidly translates into economic and human insecurity worldwide**.
- For Pakistan, the central lesson is clear: **economic resilience, food and energy security, strategic autonomy and domestic stability are prerequisites for national survival**.

Q. No. 5

Discuss CPEC as the great leap forward of economic regionalization in the globalized world. Explain its potential advantages, challenges and future prospects.

1. Introduction

- CPEC is the flagship corridor of China's **Belt and Road Initiative**, linking Pakistan's infrastructure and economy with China's western regions and wider Eurasian markets.
- It can transform Pakistan from a geographically strategic state into a **regional connectivity and trade hub**.

2. CPEC represents a major step towards economic regionalization

2.1 CPEC connects China with the Arabian Sea through Pakistan.

2.2 Gwadar provides potential access to markets in the Middle East, Central Asia and beyond.

2.3 Roads, railways, energy projects and digital connectivity can reduce regional transaction costs.

2.4 CPEC can integrate Pakistan into wider **regional and global value chains**.

3. CPEC can address Pakistan's infrastructure and energy constraints

3.1 Energy projects have helped expand electricity-generation capacity.

3.2 Road and transport infrastructure can improve internal and regional connectivity.

3.3 Gwadar can develop into a logistics and maritime trade centre.

3.4 Digital connectivity can support Pakistan's emerging technology economy.

4. CPEC can promote industrialization, employment and exports

4.1 Special Economic Zones can attract domestic and foreign investment.

4.2 Industrial cooperation can increase manufacturing capacity and employment.

4.3 Technology transfer can improve productivity and human capital.

4.4 Export-oriented industries can help Pakistan earn foreign exchange.

4.5 Less-developed regions can benefit from improved connectivity and investment.

5. CPEC can generate wider regional economic benefits

5.1 Central Asian states can potentially gain access to Arabian Sea routes.

5.2 Afghanistan can benefit from improved regional connectivity if political stability permits.

5.3 Pakistan can connect Chinese, Central Asian, Middle Eastern and South Asian markets.

5.4 Regional energy and trade corridors can increase economic interdependence.

6. Security and terrorism remain major challenges to CPEC

6.1 Terrorist attacks against Chinese nationals and CPEC-related projects threaten implementation.

6.2 Instability in Balochistan creates additional security concerns.

6.3 Pakistan needs stronger intelligence, local security and community engagement.

7. Governance, financing and economic weaknesses can reduce CPEC's benefits

7.1 Political instability and policy discontinuity discourage long-term investment.

7.2 Debt-servicing and external-payment pressures can create financial concerns.

7.3 Delays in Special Economic Zones limit industrial transformation.

7.4 Lack of transparency and institutional coordination can undermine public confidence.

7.5 CPEC must produce exports and productivity rather than merely infrastructure.

8. CPEC's future depends upon a shift from infrastructure to industrialization

8.1 CPEC Phase-II should prioritize **industrial cooperation and Special Economic Zones**.

8.2 Pakistan should use CPEC infrastructure to promote export-oriented manufacturing.

8.3 Gwadar should be integrated with regional logistics and maritime trade.

8.4 CPEC should be extended through commercially viable links with Central Asia.

8.5 Local employment and participation should remain central to future projects.

9. Conclusion

- CPEC can become Pakistan's gateway to **regional economic integration**, but connectivity alone cannot guarantee prosperity.
- Its success ultimately depends on Pakistan's ability to convert **infrastructure into industrialization, exports, employment and sustainable economic growth**.

Q. No. 6

Critically discuss rapid population growth and its severe consequences for the world.

1. Introduction

- The world's population reached **8 billion on 15 November 2022**, symbolizing both humanity's demographic achievement and its growing resource challenge.
- The central issue is not population size alone but the interaction between **population growth, consumption, inequality, resource scarcity and environmental limits**.

2. Rapid population growth is driven by declining mortality and persistent high fertility

- 2.1 Advances in medicine, sanitation and nutrition have significantly reduced mortality.
- 2.2 Fertility remains comparatively high in several developing countries.
- 2.3 Poverty, illiteracy and limited reproductive healthcare contribute to high fertility.
- 2.4 Early marriage and limited female empowerment reinforce population growth.
- 2.5 Population momentum keeps total populations growing even after fertility begins to decline.

3. Population growth can create severe socio-economic pressures

- 3.1 Rapid labour-force growth can produce unemployment when economies cannot create sufficient jobs.
- 3.2 Governments face greater pressure to provide schools, hospitals and housing.
- 3.3 Poverty and inequality can deepen when economic growth fails to match population growth.
- 3.4 Rapid urbanization can produce slums, congestion and inadequate public services.
- 3.5 Food demand rises, increasing pressure on agricultural systems.

4. Rapid population growth intensifies competition for natural resources

- 4.1 Growing populations increase demand for freshwater.
- 4.2 Agricultural expansion can contribute to deforestation and biodiversity loss.

4.3 Fossil-fuel consumption and resource extraction can increase environmental degradation.

4.4 Waste generation and pollution rise with population and consumption.

5. Population pressure can intensify climate and environmental insecurity

5.1 Greater demand for energy and resources increases emissions when economies remain fossil-fuel dependent.

5.2 Water scarcity can intensify competition between communities and states.

5.3 Climate-related disasters can cause larger humanitarian crises where populations are highly concentrated.

5.4 Loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services threatens long-term human welfare.

6. Rapid population growth can generate political and security consequences

6.1 Competition for land, water, food and employment can contribute to social conflict.

6.2 Youth unemployment can increase political frustration and instability.

6.3 Resource scarcity can intensify migration and refugee movements.

6.4 Governments may struggle to maintain adequate governance and public services.

7. Pakistan illustrates the dangers of population-resource imbalance

7.1 Rapid population growth places pressure on education, healthcare and employment.

7.2 Urban population growth is increasing pressure on housing, transport and water.

7.3 Water scarcity and climate vulnerability amplify demographic pressures.

7.4 A large young population can become either a **demographic dividend or demographic burden**, depending upon education and employment.

8. Population growth must be managed through human development rather than coercion

8.1 Universal education, particularly female education, reduces fertility.

8.2 Women's economic empowerment increases household investment in children's education and health.

8.3 Accessible reproductive healthcare and voluntary family planning support informed choices.

8.4 Job creation and human-capital development can convert youth populations into productive assets.

8.5 Sustainable cities, resource efficiency and climate-resilient development can reduce environmental pressure.

9. Conclusion

- The 8-billion milestone is not inherently a catastrophe; the real danger emerges when **population growth combines with poverty, inequality, unsustainable consumption and weak governance.**
- Sustainable development and human empowerment offer a better response than treating population growth merely as a numerical problem.

Q. No. 7

Critically discuss energy's influence on world geopolitics and the distinctiveness of global energy governance.

1. Introduction

- Energy is not merely an economic commodity; it is an instrument of **national power, strategic influence and geopolitical leverage.**
- The geography of energy resources, transportation routes and emerging clean-energy technologies continuously reshapes global power relations.

2. Unequal distribution of energy resources makes energy a geopolitical instrument

2.1 Major oil and gas reserves are concentrated in particular regions, especially the Middle East and Eurasia.

2.2 Resource-rich states can use energy exports to generate revenue and political influence.

2.3 Import-dependent states face strategic vulnerability when supply routes are disrupted.

2.4 Energy security has therefore become an integral component of national security.

3. Energy has historically shaped alliances and conflicts

3.1 Middle Eastern oil has influenced the strategic engagement of major powers in the region.

3.2 Russia's gas exports created deep energy interdependence with Europe before the Ukraine war.

3.3 China's growing economy has made energy security central to its foreign policy.

3.4 Strategic chokepoints such as the **Strait of Hormuz** and major maritime routes possess enormous geopolitical importance.

4. The Ukraine war demonstrates the weaponization of energy

4.1 European dependence on Russian gas became a strategic vulnerability.

4.2 Russia's energy leverage became part of the broader geopolitical confrontation.

4.3 Europe accelerated LNG imports, alternative pipelines and renewable-energy investment.

4.4 Russia increasingly redirected energy exports towards Asian markets.

5. The global energy transition is creating a new form of geopolitics

5.1 Renewable energy can reduce dependence on geographically concentrated fossil fuels.

5.2 The transition increases the strategic importance of **lithium, cobalt, nickel and rare-earth minerals**.

5.3 States possessing critical minerals and clean-energy technologies can gain new geopolitical influence.

5.4 Competition over batteries, solar panels, electric vehicles and green technologies is creating new strategic dependencies.

6. Global energy governance is distinctive because it is fragmented and multi-institutional

6.1 **OPEC and OPEC+** influence global oil production and prices.

6.2 The **International Energy Agency** promotes energy security, data coordination and transition policies.

6.3 The UN climate framework focuses on reducing greenhouse-gas emissions and climate cooperation.

6.4 National governments retain substantial control over energy production, taxation and security.

6.5 Consequently, no single institution possesses comprehensive authority over the global energy system.

7. Global energy governance faces a fundamental conflict between security, affordability and sustainability

7.1 States seek cheap and reliable energy while simultaneously attempting to reduce emissions.

7.2 Developing countries argue that climate policies must not restrict their development.

7.3 Energy crises can encourage countries to temporarily return to fossil fuels.

7.4 Unequal access to green finance and technology creates a developed-developing world divide.

8. A stronger global energy governance system requires cooperation rather than competition

8.1 Diversify global energy supplies and transportation routes.

8.2 Expand renewable-energy investment and clean-technology cooperation.

8.3 Ensure fair access to critical minerals and green technologies.

8.4 Protect vulnerable developing countries from energy and climate shocks.

8.5 Harmonize energy security with long-term climate objectives.

9. Conclusion

- Energy remains a decisive instrument of **geopolitical power**, but the energy transition is changing the nature of that power.
- Effective global energy governance must reconcile **security, affordability and sustainability** in an increasingly multipolar world.

Q. No. 8

Critically discuss why Pakistan's economic growth continues to be a Balance-of-Payments constraint. Do you think export performance is the most relevant long-term challenge, and explain radical structural reforms to improve exports?

1. Introduction

- Pakistan's recurring economic crises reflect a structural **Balance-of-Payments problem** in which periods of economic expansion increase imports faster than foreign-exchange earnings.
- Weak export performance is a central long-term constraint because sustainable growth ultimately requires **earning foreign exchange rather than repeatedly borrowing it**.

2. Pakistan's growth model generates repeated Balance-of-Payments pressures

2.1 Economic expansion increases demand for machinery, fuel, raw materials and consumer imports.

2.2 Domestic production remains dependent upon imported energy and intermediate goods.

2.3 Export growth has historically failed to increase at the same pace as import demand.

2.4 The resulting current-account deficit places pressure on foreign-exchange reserves.

2.5 External borrowing temporarily finances the gap but increases future debt-servicing obligations.

3. Pakistan's foreign-exchange reserves remain vulnerable because external payments exceed sustainable inflows

3.1 Large oil and energy-import bills consume significant foreign exchange.

3.2 External debt repayments create recurring foreign-exchange requirements.

3.3 A narrow export base limits the country's ability to generate stable dollar earnings.

3.4 Foreign direct investment remains insufficient to sustainably finance external deficits.

3.5 Remittances provide crucial support but cannot substitute for a competitive export sector.

4. Weak exports constitute the central structural weakness of Pakistan's external sector

4.1 Pakistan's exports remain concentrated in relatively low-value products, particularly textiles.

4.2 Low productivity and limited technological sophistication restrict competitiveness.

4.3 Insufficient value addition prevents Pakistan from capturing higher returns in global markets.

4.4 Limited export-market diversification increases vulnerability to external shocks.

4.5 Weak integration into global value chains prevents Pakistan from fully benefiting from international trade.

5. The cost of doing business reduces Pakistan's export competitiveness

5.1 Expensive and unreliable energy raises production costs.

5.2 Poor logistics and transport infrastructure increase delivery costs.

5.3 Policy uncertainty discourages long-term investment.

5.4 Complex taxation and regulatory procedures reduce business competitiveness.

5.5 Skills shortages constrain movement into technology-intensive exports.

6. Pakistan needs radical structural reforms to transition towards export-led growth

6.1 Replace protectionist import-substitution policies with **competitive export-oriented industrialization**.

6.2 Diversify exports into IT, engineering goods, pharmaceuticals, processed food and high-value manufacturing.

6.3 Upgrade textile production from basic products towards technical textiles, garments and branded products.

6.4 Modernize agriculture and develop value-added agro-processing for international markets.

6.5 Expand the IT and digital-services export ecosystem through skills, broadband and reliable payment systems.

7. Productivity, technology and human capital must become the foundation of export competitiveness

7.1 Increase research and development and technology adoption.

7.2 Establish industry-linked technical and vocational education.

7.3 Encourage foreign investment that brings technology and access to international markets.

7.4 Integrate Pakistani firms into global production and supply chains.

8. Energy, taxation and trade policies must be redesigned around exports

8.1 Provide competitive and reliable energy to productive industries.

8.2 Simplify taxation and customs procedures.

8.3 Reduce anti-export tariffs on imported industrial inputs while avoiding indiscriminate protection.

8.4 Establish stable, predictable trade policies independent of short-term political cycles.

8.5 Improve ports, logistics, customs digitization and border connectivity.

9. Pakistan must move from a debt-financed growth cycle towards an export-financed growth model

9.1 Increase foreign-exchange earnings through diversified exports.

9.2 Attract FDI into export-oriented sectors rather than primarily domestic consumption.

9.3 Use regional connectivity and CPEC to access new markets.

9.4 Develop long-term export strategies instead of short-term administrative incentives.

9.5 Maintain macroeconomic stability so exporters can plan and invest with confidence.

10. Conclusion

- Pakistan's Balance-of-Payments crisis is fundamentally **structural rather than merely cyclical**.
- Export performance is indeed one of the most important long-term solutions, but sustainable external stability requires a broader transformation involving **productivity, energy, taxation, human capital, technology, investment and export diversification**.
- Pakistan must ultimately move from “**borrow, import and consume**” to “**produce, export and earn**.”