
THE GAME IS ON MANOJ K CHANNAN

1) PYQs linkage:

- Discuss the shift of India's foreign policy towards Pakistan in the light of Pathankot incident. 15(2016)
- How does cross-border terrorism impede the achievements of peace and security in South Asia? 10 (2020)
- Would you agree with the contention that India's inclination to lean on a 'more aggressive hyper-realist posture' has gained a new momentum in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror strike? Comment. 10 (2025)

2) Theory application:

Indian strategic culture

- Nehruvian: they trust to patient, long term diplomacy that builds on existing treaties and obligations, defensive defence, society to society contact and communication and non-alignment.
- Neo liberal: they prefer a pragmatic, flexible approach to Pakistan, a reliance on economic contacts and India's growing economic strength to bring Pakistanis around, a restrained military posture, and alignment with the great powers (especially the US) rather the Non-alignment.
- Hyper realist: they want India to rely on power and force rather than treaties and economic links to take the fight to Pakistan, to subvert it from within, and eventually bring about its collapse.

3) Concepts and keywords: counterterrorism ally, transactional nature of US Pak relationship, tactical alignment, back-channel meetings, national interest, RIC trilateral framework, issue-based cooperation, national security, regional consensus, isolationist, interventionist, and superpower coercion.

4) Important facts:

- **Asim Munir's visit to the USA reaffirming Pakistan's alignment with US strategic interests.**
- **Recent designation of The Resistance Front as a global terror organization**

5) important quotes or statements:

- **US Central command (CENTOM) Chief endorsed Pak as a "Phenomenal partner"**
- **"Assertiveness must be balanced with diplomacy, and power must be tempered by responsibility."**

6) Brief analysis and key points from the news or editorial:

US-Pakistan strategic alignment:

1. **Pak collaborating with the USA for seeking spare parts for its F-16 fleet,**
2. **USA treats Pak as a flexible partner, who is willing to meet demands in exchange for support. (reflecting transactional cooperation)**
3. **USA utilizes terror designations, military aid and economic pressure as tools of influence.**

Other challenges from Pakistan:

- a) **Use of militant groups as foreign policy tools**
- b) **Fragile democratic structures in Pakistan making Army the key player without public accountability.**

How does it impact India:

- a. **USA playing both sides, will try to manipulate India.**
- b. **American tariffs and weapons deals serve as tools of influence, often used to sway policy decisions or gain concessions. It can impact India's autonomy.**

What should India do:

- a. Vigilance and independence in dealing with regional security issues.
- b. Requires a clear and focussed response
- c. It should assert its independence with the USA for counterterrorism, arms sales or trade negotiations.
- d. It must remain focused on its national interests and avoid being manipulated into a state of dependency.
- e. Use RIC trilateral grouping to counterbalance western influence
- f. Use NAM for pragmatic, flexible and focused on issue-based cooperation rather than ideological loyalty.
- g. Engage with neighbours as equal stakeholders with a strategic approach to problem solving, valuing and promoting regional cooperation.
- h. Reevaluating relationships with nations such as Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan.
- i. Restart stalled dialogues for building a regional consensus. (not to compromise sovereignty or national security).