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## **SUMMARY of the article “US & South Asia” by Touqir Hussain, published on November 30, 2023**

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Pakistan’s foreign policy is anchored in its strategic ties with China, which are vital. However, Pakistan also seeks amicable relations with Washington, and concerns persist about the US-China rivalry potentially limiting Pakistan’s associations with either nation. The recent Biden-Xi meeting at the APEC summit may alleviate some apprehensions, as the US seems more focused on curbing China’s military and technological advancements than its economic growth. Global geopolitics is witnessing a broader competition, with many countries aligning with both the US and China to maximize their global engagement. Despite these opportunities, Pakistan lacks the strategy and capacity to benefit fully. Public sentiments toward China are generally positive, while reservations persist against the US. Pakistan acknowledges the risks of overdependence on China and recognizes the necessity of a working relationship with the US, a crucial export destination, foreign investor, and stakeholder in South Asian stability. However, public reservations against the US persist due to historical complexities, including perceived elitist support, political interference, and repercussions of wars that fueled instability and extremism in Pakistan. Despite the challenges, Pakistan needs to navigate its relationships with both China and the US to optimize its global engagement effectively.

### ***Easy/Short SUMMARY:***

The article discusses Pakistan’s foreign policy dynamics, emphasizing its strategic ties with China and the desire for amicable relations with the US. Recent developments, such as the Biden-Xi meeting, may ease concerns about the US-China rivalry impacting Pakistan’s associations. However, public sentiments

toward the US remain complex due to historical challenges, hindering the country's ability to fully benefit from opportunities presented by aligning with both global powers. The article underscores the need for Pakistan to navigate its relationships effectively to optimize its global engagement.

## ***SOLUTIONS of The Problem:***

### **Strategic Relevance**

Pakistan needs to reinvent its relevance to America's South Asia policy by focusing on its economy and shared security interests, emphasizing its importance beyond historical ties.

### **Economic Emphasis**

Prioritize economic cooperation and mutual interests in dealings with the US, emphasizing the potential for economic collaboration as a driving force for bilateral relations.

### **Public Diplomacy**

Address public reservations against the US through effective public diplomacy, providing a nuanced understanding of historical complexities while highlighting the benefits of a pragmatic relationship.

### **Diversification**

Actively diversify global engagements beyond China and the US, exploring partnerships with other nations to reduce dependence and maximize opportunities.

### **Strategic Alignment**

Align with the evolving global geopolitical landscape, positioning Pakistan strategically to contribute to and benefit from emerging alliances and economic

opportunities.

## ***IMPORTANT Facts and Figures Given in the article:***

- Pakistan's strategic ties with China are foundational to its foreign policy.
- Concerns persist about the US-China rivalry potentially restricting Pakistan's relations with either country.
- The Biden-Xi meeting at the APEC summit indicates a US focus on containing China's military and technological ascent.
- Public sentiments in Pakistan often romanticize ties with China, while reservations against the US persist.
- The US is a significant export destination, foreign investor, IMF-dependent economic supporter, and key stakeholder in South Asian stability for Pakistan.
- Historical complexities, wars, and perceived elitist support contribute to public reservations against the US in Pakistan.

## ***MCQs from the Article:***

1. *What is the keystone of Pakistan's foreign policy?*
  - A. Ties with India
  - B. *Strategic ties with China*
  - C. Relations with the EU
  - D. Cooperation with Russia
  
2. *What recent meeting is mentioned as potentially easing Pakistan's concerns?*
  - A. NATO summit
  - B. *Biden-Xi meeting at APEC summit*
  - C. G20 summit
  - D. SAARC summit

3. *What does the article suggest about public sentiments toward China in Pakistan?*
  - A. Negative sentiments
  - B. Neutral sentiments
  - C. *Generally positive sentiments*
  - D. Unspecified sentiments
  
4. *Why does Pakistan consider a working relationship with the US necessary?*
  - A. Historical alliances
  - B. *Leading export destination*
  - C. Cultural ties
  - D. Geopolitical alignment
  
5. *What is emphasized as the focus for Pakistan to reinvent its relevance to America's South Asia policy?*
  - A. Military alliances
  - B. *Economy and shared security interests*
  - C. Cultural exchanges
  - D. Technological collaboration

## **VOCABULARY:**

1. *Keystone* (noun) (کلیں کونجی): The central or most important part of something.
  
2. *Amicable* (adjective) (امیکبل): Characterized by friendliness and goodwill.
  
3. *Apprehensions* (noun) (اپریہنشنز): Anxiety or fear that something bad or unpleasant will happen.
  
4. *Optimize* (verb) (اپٹیمائز): Make the best or most effective use of (a

situation, opportunity, or resource).

5. *Nuanced* (adjective) (□□□□□□): Characterized by

subtle shades of meaning or expression.

1. *Pragmatic* (adjective) (□□□□): Dealing with things sensibly and realistically in a way that is based on practical rather than theoretical considerations.

2. *Diversification* (noun) (□□□□): The action of making or becoming more diverse or varied.

3. *Romanticize* (verb) (□□□□ □□□□□□): Deal with or describe in an idealized or unrealistic fashion; make (something) seem better or more appealing than it really is.

4. *Elitist* (adjective) (□□ □□□□ □□□□): Relating to or supporting the view that a society or system should be led by an elite.

5. *Ambiguous* (adjective) (□□□□): Open to more than one interpretation; having a double meaning.

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- Diverse Perspectives:  
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**dawn.com**  
**US & South Asia**  
**BY Touqir Hussain**

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PAKISTAN'S strategic ties with China are the keystone of its foreign policy. But it also wants friendly ties with Washington and has been concerned that the US-China rivalry could restrict its relationship with either country.

The encouraging outcome of the Biden-Xi meeting on the sidelines of the recent APEC summit in San Francisco may ease some of Pakistan's concerns. Washington appears focused on containing China's military and technological ascent more than its economic rise, which is beneficial to the US and the global economy, and may be open to healthy economic competition with Beijing.

Geopolitics, too, is opening to a wider contest. As the US and China compete to reorder the world according to their respective visions, many countries are aligning with both to maximise their global engagement and optimise their interests, so as to be comfortable with any future international order. BRICS is just one example of this 'multi-vector' foreign policy.

But Pakistan lacks the strategy and capacity to benefit from the opportunities. Its ties with China and the US evoke conflicting public emotions: a romanticised image of ties with China versus an adverse view of the US.

Yet officials are conscious of the risk of Pakistan becoming overly dependent on China, and feel the country must have a working relationship with the US, its leading export destination, a major foreign investor, a lifeline to its IMF-dependent economy, and a key stakeholder in South Asian stability.

Rivalries and geopolitics have become more complex.

But public reservations against the US remain. It is true the benefits of ties with the US have come at a heavy cost. By supporting the elitist-led, security-dominated, ideologically rooted, and externally dependent outlook on the country, the US hindered Pakistan's political process.



Its wars fomented instability and extremism in Pakistan. But the public must understand that Pakistan's leadership that partnered with Washington was equally invested in US policies and should share the blame.

There are other misperceptions. For decades, Pakistan's leaders, strategic community and public believed in the centrality of Pakistan-US ties to US policies in South Asia, largely because of the high-profile aid relationship. They are now disappointed the US has abandoned an ally and 'switched' to India.

In fact, substantial US aid was not equivalent to a substantive relationship. And the alliance commitment was ambiguous and narrowly focused. Nor did the US have a South Asia policy. But it found Pakistan's services valuable in meeting specific and sporadic geopolitical and security challenges from time to time. That is why it found no contradiction between relations with Pakistan and its support to non-aligned India following the 1962 Sino-India war.

It was not until the rise of China, the onset of globalisation, the advent of information technology, and emergence of religious extremism that America started seeing certain lasting strategic, economic, and security interests in South Asia. Through its relationship with India, it hoped to contain Chinese influence in the region and beyond, and sought Pakistan's cooperation in meeting security threats.

Since then, Great Power rivalry, geopolitics, and regional politics have become more complex, with the assault on globalisation by trade wars, Covid-19, supply chain issues, and national security concerns. After a failed attempt by the US to de-globalise, efforts at re-globalisation, as qualified by geopolitics, are now afoot.

They are marked on the one hand by China's expanding economic footprint, which has spurred the US to enhance its global economic influence, and on the other, by the attempts of rising middle powers to create a multipolar world across geopolitical barriers.

This has blurred the distinction between geo-economics and geopolitics. And rising India finds itself at a crossroads. Its geostrategic position on the Indian Ocean and border dispute with China make it America's natural geopolitical partner, while its technological and economic potential make it an attractive partner in geo-economics. The US wants to accelerate AI development and feels



## SUMMARY of the article US & South Asia by Touqir Hussain

India can help meet its shortage of “scientists, technologists and engineers”.

America’s ties with India and Pakistan are thus not comparable. Pakistan has not lost its value for Washington but its ties of the past won’t be its future. The country will have to reinvent its relevance to America’s South Asia policy by focusing on its economy and shared security interests. Geopolitics though relevant will not drive the relationship.

Bottom line: Ties with the US are not perfect but are still necessary. Ties with China are indispensable but not sufficient for Pakistan’s needs.

The writer, a former ambassador, is adjunct professor Georgetown University and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, National University of Singapore.

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