**GEOSTRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCEOF PAKISTAN**

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1.**Introduction:**

 Geo means "the Earth" strategy means "planning, tactics and policy"and significance means"importance".Geo strategic means the importance of a country or a region as by virtue of its geographical location.The term was first used by Frederick L. Schuman in his 1942 article "Let Us Learn OurGeopolitics" .Geographical attributes of a state bring it both, some opportunities to avail and some risksto evade. Pakistan availed the opportunities from its geography but could escape the risks it posed.When a state learns how to exploit its geography to the best of its political and strategic interests thestudy which comes in shape is called geostrategic and geopolitics.

2.**Geographical description of Pakistan:**

 Pakistan's geography where brought the country countless material benefits there its unwiseexploitation also invited the chaos in the region.Pakistan is located in South East Asia.24.35 North and37.05 North latitude and 61 East to 78 East longitude. Its area is 796096 sq km stretching over 1600 kmfrom North to South and about 885km from East to West.In 1947, possessing a unique geographical location, Pakistan consisted two distant parts; the WestPakistan, in the Indus River basin and the East Pakistan (later on became Bangladesh in December 1971)located more than 1000 miles (1600 kilometers) away in the Ganges River delta. Separated from eachother, these two wings had 1000km wide Indian territory between them.Pakistan is a land of plains, mountain ranges, deserts and coastal belt. The country shares its EasternBorder called 'Radcliffe Line' with India. On its Northern side, it has Sino-Pak Border. Its Western frontsinclude the boundaries of 'Durand Line' with Afghanistan and 'Gold Smith Line' with Iran. The ArabianSea has limited the South of the country. With the total area of 7,96096 km square, Pakistan emerges tobe one of the most significant geographical patches of Asia. In the West, Pakistan borders withAfghanistan, whose one kilometer narrow Wahkhan strip kept the defunct Soviet Union away fromPakistani frontiers. To the North, she has the Peoples Republic of China. Geography has also placedPakistan at the mouth of the strategic Persian Gulf where 65% of world's oil is produced.Westernnations, including the United States,are drawn geographically to Pakistan because of their keen interestin keeping the Arabian Sea open for the Persian Gulf oli shipments which make up a major part of theirenergy supplies. The oil rich heart of the Persian Gulf region

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Iran, is in the northwest of Pakistan. In theSouth, the Arabian Sea, the northwestern extension of the strategically important Indian Ocean washesPakistan s coastal shores. Khunjerab Pass links Pakistan and China.Pakistan and Iran borders meet atKoh-i-Tuftan .The narrow strip of Wakhan separates Central Asia from Pakistan.Towards east,Punjab-Rajasthan borders which is 1650 km long.The Pakistan-Afghanistan border is 2250 km(DurandLine).Coastal belt is 700 km. Being the gateway to Central Asia and a suitable route of access of WorldPowers into land-locked Afghanistan, the geography of Pakistan suffered from the side effects of the'New Great Game' and the 'Global War on Terrorism'. But things are in transformation today. TheNorthern border with China where gets ready to bring billion dollars investment in the wake of CPECthere the Western border with Afghanistan is seeking TAPI Gas Pipeline. Similarly, the South Westernboundary with Iran will sooner or later be flexible for Pak-Iran Gas Pipeline.

3.**Political importance:**

US interests in the regions to contain the Growing China, nuclear Iran, terrorist Afghanistan, and tobenefit from the market of India. Security and Business are two main US interests in the region while

Pakistan is playing a front line role against terrorism. Today the political scenario of the region is tingedwith pre emption policy and US invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, Irans nuclear program, Indiasgeopolitical muscles(new strategic deal with US) to gain the hegemony and to counter the The Rise ofChina which has earned all the qualities to change unipolar world into Bipolar world. In all these issues,Pakistan is directly or indirectly involved, especially after Al Qaeda operations. The American think tankshave repeatedly accepted that war against terror could never be won without the help of Pakistan.Pakistan has rigorously fought, and ongoing military operation in Wazirstan is also targeting thesuspected Taliban in the bordering area. Main threats to Pakistan: Balochistan and Wazirstan conflictsare posing threats to any economic project like IPI gas pipeline. Negative role of India, US, Iran in thisconflict ridden area. Kashmir is flash point, accelerating nuclear race in the South Asia. Instablegovernments in Pakistan have contributed in weakening the strong position.

4.**Geostrategic importance of Pakistan:**

When Pakistan emerged on the map of the world as a sovereign and independent state in August 1947,it was like a baby in ICU with hardly any prospect of survival, on account of its extremely vulnerabledefence and fragile economy. However, despite numerous setbacks, crises and turmoils of giganticmagnitude, it has so far been able to survive and make some progress due to several factors, perhapsthe most important of which is its strategic geographical location and its particular ideology.Pakistan is located at a region which has great political, economic and strategic location. It has been hubof activities of great powers for last 20 years. It has witnessed intervention of three great powers i-eBritain, USSR, and USA. Its significance was further enhanced during cold war when it becomes ally of USpolicy of containment of USSR and now the post cold war era has witnessed its significance particularlyafter the events of 9/11.The geographic location of Pakistan makes it a junction of the three importantparts of the world.South Asia,West Asia and Central Asia.Pakistan is thus located in one of the most sensitive regions of the world where global rivalries of greatpower,accentuated by local rivalries came into conflict with each other and serve to heighten Pakistan'ssecurity concerns.Safeguarding its security is,therefore,a principal aim of Pakistan's foreign policy evenunder normal circumstances. In today's troubled times,it has become foremost preoccupation.Pakistan's geostrategic position is such that since its creation, it has faced a succession of challengingsituations. In recent years,the problems in the region have multiplied in a way that has focused world'sattention on Pakistan.

1. **Proximity of great powers:**

Pakistan is located at the junction of great powers. In its neighbors one world power Russia and theother emerging power china lies. Any alliance among world powers enhances its significance. This factorhas been utilized by Pakistan after 9/11.

1. **Gateway to central Asia-(oil and energy game):**

Central Asia is the center stage of new Great games. Western quest for resources- oil and energyresources in the central Asia. After USSR decline, new quest started which is as manifested by politics ofoil. Pakistan is located very close to the oil rich Middle Eastern countries. The belt started from Iran andextended to Saudi Arabia. Thus, Pakistan can influence shipment of oil. Iran is struggling to export it