International Relations · GS - II

Examine the strategic significance of Gilgit-Baltistan in India-Pakistan relations and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Territorial dispute; strategic location; CPEC connectivity; regional infrastructure; security concerns; India-China-Pakistan relations

Model Answer

Introduction

Gilgit-Baltistan is a strategically important mountainous region administered by Pakistan. Its location connects South Asia with China and Central Asia and places it at the centre of regional geopolitical competition.

Strategic Significance

- **Territorial dispute:** The region forms part of the wider Jammu and Kashmir dispute. India maintains its territorial claim, while Pakistan administers Gilgit-Baltistan.
- **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor:** The corridor passes through the region, linking China’s Xinjiang region with Pakistan. It supports trade and transport connectivity but also raises strategic concerns for India.
- **Infrastructure and energy:** Roads, power projects, solar initiatives and digital connectivity can improve access to electricity, public services and economic opportunities.

- **Security dimension:** The region’s sensitive geography and proximity to China and areas of wider regional instability increase its importance for counter-terrorism and border security.

Way Forward

Regional development should prioritise local welfare, environmental sustainability and transparent project implementation. India, Pakistan and China also need to avoid escalation and support peaceful management of territorial disputes.

Conclusion

Gilgit-Baltistan combines developmental needs with significant strategic importance. Infrastructure development can improve livelihoods, but durable regional stability requires peaceful engagement and respect for international concerns.

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