

Repeating Questions – Analytical Insights (IR 2016–2025)

1. Pakistan Foreign Policy (MOST REPEATED)

Appeared in: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2025

Analysis:

This is the **core question of the entire paper**. Almost every year, it appears either directly or indirectly.

Examiner's Focus:

- Determinants (geography, ideology, economy, military)
- Relations with:
 - USA
 - China
 - India
 - Afghanistan
- Shift from **security-driven** → **geo-economics**

Insight:

If you prepare ONE topic deeply, make it this.

Always link with:

- CPEC
- War on Terror
- US-China rivalry

2. India–Pakistan Relations / Kashmir / Water Issues

Appeared in: 2017, 2018, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

Analysis:

This topic is **permanently relevant** due to ongoing tensions.

Examiner's Focus:

- Strategic rivalry (nuclear deterrence)
- Kashmir dispute (legal + political angle)
- Water conflict (Indus Waters Treaty)
- Peace vs conflict debate

Insight:

Questions are becoming more **analytical + solution-based**, not just historical.

Prepare:

- Conflict resolution models
 - Confidence-building measures (CBMs)
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3. Security Concept (Traditional vs Modern)

Appeared in: 2016, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022

Analysis:

Shift from:

Military security →

Human security, climate, cyber, hybrid warfare

Examiner's Focus:

- Post-Cold War security
- Non-traditional threats:
 - Terrorism
 - Climate change
 - Cyber warfare

Insight:

Always write **comparison (old vs new security)**

Add modern examples = high scoring

4. International Relations Theories

Appeared in: 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2023

Analysis:

Theoretical questions test your **conceptual clarity**.

Key Theories:

- Realism vs Liberalism
- Constructivism
- Feminism
- Neo-realism

Insight:

Examiner wants:

- Comparison
- Application (real-world examples)

Don't just define → **apply to Pakistan or global politics**

5. Globalization & International Political Economy (IPE)

Appeared in: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022

Analysis:

Highly relevant due to economic crises and globalization debates.

Examiner's Focus:

- Dependency theory
- Neo-imperialism
- IMF & World Bank role
- Impact on developing states

Insight:

Always include:

- Pakistan's debt situation
 - IMF programs
- Balanced answer = pros + cons
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6. China / US–China Rivalry (Rising Trend)

Appeared in: 2017, 2020, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

Analysis:

This is a **new high-frequency topic**.

Examiner's Focus:

- Rise of China
- Indo-Pacific strategy
- Balance of power
- CPEC / BRI

Insight:

Future papers will likely focus MORE here

Always connect:

- Pakistan's strategic position
 - Economic dependence
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7. Nuclear Politics / NPT / Deterrence

Appeared in: 2016, 2019, 2022, 2025

Analysis:

Moderately repeated but **high importance**.

Examiner's Focus:

- Nuclear deterrence (India vs Pakistan)
- NPT limitations
- Strategic stability

Insight:

Combine:

- Theory (deterrence)
 - South Asia example
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8. International Organizations (UN, IMF, SAARC, etc.)

Appeared in: 2016, 2019, 2022, 2023, 2025

Analysis:

Always appears but in **different forms**.

Examiner's Focus:

- Effectiveness
- Bias toward powerful states
- Role in developing countries

Insight:

Always critique:

- “Tool of powerful countries” argument
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9. Afghanistan & Regional Stability

Appeared in: 2016, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2023, 2024

Analysis:

Important due to Pakistan's geography.

Examiner's Focus:

- Taliban issue
- Pak-Afghan relations
- Post-US withdrawal

Insight:

Link with:

- Security
 - Refugees
 - Border issues
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Final Smart Preparation Strategy

High Priority (Do First)

- Pakistan Foreign Policy
- India-Pak Relations
- US-China Rivalry
- Security (modern concept)

Medium Priority

- IR Theories
- Globalization / IMF

Supporting Topics

- Nuclear politics
 - International organizations
 - Afghanistan
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Golden Insight (Very Important)

CSS papers are shifting from:

- “What is...”
- “Analyze / Critically evaluate / Suggest solutions”

So your answers must:

- Show **analysis**
- Include **examples**

- Provide **solutions**