



drishti

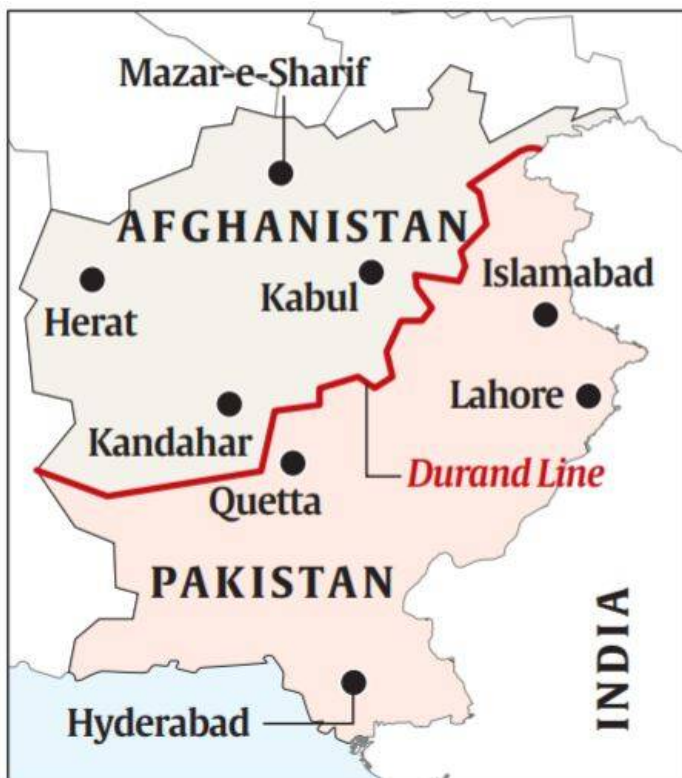
Durand Line: Afghanistan and Pakistan

drishtias.com/printpdf/durand-line-afghanistan-and-pakistan

Why in News

Recently, Taliban has said that **Afghans oppose the fence erected by Pakistan along the Durand Line.**

The **fencing of the 2,640 km land border with Afghanistan** began in **March 2017** after a spate of attacks from across the porous border.



Key Points

- Established in the **Hindu Kush** in 1893, it runs through the **tribal lands between Afghanistan and British India**. In modern times it has marked the **border between Afghanistan and Pakistan**.

- It is a legacy of the **19th century Great Game** between the Russian and British empires in which Afghanistan was **used as a buffer by the British against a feared Russian expansionism to its east.**
- The agreement demarcating what became known as the **Durand Line** was signed between the **British civil servant Sir Henry Mortimer Durand and Amir Abdur Rahman**, then the **Afghan ruler in 1893.**
- Abdur Rahman became king in 1880, two years after the **end of the Second Afghan War** in which the **British took control of several areas** that were part of the Afghan kingdom. His agreement with **Durand demarcated the limits of his and British India's "spheres of influence" on the Afghan "frontier" with India.**
- The **seven-clause agreement recognised a 2,670-km line**, which stretches from the border with **China to Afghanistan's border with Iran.**
- It also put on the British side the strategic Khyber Pass.
 - It is a mountain pass in the **Hindu Kush**, on the **border between Pakistan and Afghanistan.**
 - The pass was for long of great commercial and strategic importance, the route by which successive invaders entered India, and was garrisoned by the British intermittently between 1839 and 1947.
- The line cut through **Pashtun tribal areas**, leaving villages, families, and land divided between the two "spheres of influence".
 - With independence in 1947, **Pakistan inherited the Durand Line**, and with it also the **Pashtun rejection of the line**, and Afghanistan's refusal to recognise it.
 - When the **Taliban seized power in Kabul the first time**, they rejected the Durand Line. They also strengthened Pashtun identity with an Islamic radicalism to produce the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, whose terrorist attacks since 2007 left the country shaken.

Other Important Boundary Lines

- **McMahon Line:**



- Named after the **British Indian Army officer Lieutenant Colonel Sir Arthur Henry McMahon**, who was also an **administrator in British India**, the McMahon line is a demarcation that **separates Tibet and north-east India**.
- It was proposed by **Colonel McMahon** as the boundary between **Tibet, China, and India** at the **Shimla Convention of 1914**.
- It runs from the **eastern border of Bhutan** along the **crest of the Himalayas** until it reaches the **great bend in the Brahmaputra River** where that river **emerges from its Tibetan course into the Assam Valley**.
- It was accepted by **Tibetan authorities and British India**, and is now acknowledged by the **Republic of India as the official boundary**.
- China, however, **disputes the validity of the McMahon line**.
- It claims that **Tibet isn't a sovereign government**, and therefore **any treaty made with Tibet stands invalid**.
- The alignment of the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)** in the eastern sector is along the **1914 McMahon Line**.
 - The LAC is the demarcation that **separates Indian-controlled territory from Chinese-controlled territory**.

- **Radcliffe Line:**



- It divided **British India into India and Pakistan.**
- It is named after the architect of this line, Sir Cyril Radcliffe, who was also the chairman of the Boundary Commissions.
- The Radcliffe Line was drawn **between West Pakistan (now Pakistan) and India on the western side** and **between India and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) on the eastern side** of the subcontinent.

The **western side of the Radcliffe Line still serves as the Indo-Pakistani border** and the **eastern side serves as the India-Bangladesh border.**

Source: IE