# Heavy mcqs

* Taliban takeover 15 aug
* rubina saigol death 27 aug
* last us soldier Major General Chris Donahue 30 aug; deadline may 1 to 9/11 to 31 aug
* syed ali shah Geelani death sep 1
* 21st SCO summit in Dushanbe Tajik on September 16-17; iran membership approved
* sep 24 quad meeting at white house
* 24th sep IK addressed UNGA 76th session; saima Saleem blind diplomat
* Social democratic party SDU won 206 seats and german election/ Merkel’s CDU won 196; election date: 26 sept 2021
* harnai earthquake 7 oct
* US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman oct9 visited pak;
* Oct 10 AQ Khan death
* International Day of the Girl Child celebrated on October 11
* Pak ranked 130/139 rule of law index by World Justice Project 14 oct
* Sec of state 2001 2005 collin powell oct 18 died
* Pm imran visit Saudi oct 23-25
* COP 26 Glasgow oct 31- nov 13; Alok Sharma president UK
* Pakistan also signed the Global Methane Pledge, an initiative of over 100 countries to curb methane emissions 2nd nov 2021
* COP27 that will be held in 2022 in the coastal town of Sharm al-Sheikh, Egypt.
* 17th November 2021: 33 bills passed in joint session including EVM, expatriates vote, The ICT Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Bill
* Pakistan has established regular diplomatic relations with Republic of Palau nov 23
* Nov 25 Biden-Xi virtual summit
* Nov 25 Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi represented Pakistan at the 20th Anniversary meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of Government
* 25th Council of Ministers Meeting of ECO (27th November, 2021); Theme: Into the Future Together; Secretary-General ECO, His Excellency Ambassador Khusrav Noziri (Tajikistan, 13th SG)
* President Dr. Arif Alvi will pay an official visit to Turkmenistan to attend the 15th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) being held in Ashgabat Turkmenistan on 28 November 2021.
* Pakistan, a founding member of the G77, was elected to the chair for the fourth time for 2022. The 45th Ministerial meeting of Group of 77 and China; Nov 30th 2021
* Aids day dec 1
* 3rd dec srilankan manager Priyantha kumara diyawadana; sialkot
* 7th dec Putin-Biden virtual meet: eco sanctions if aggression on ukranian border
* 8th dec Gen bipin rawat CDS along 12 others crashed in tamil nadu Mi-17v5
* 10th dec green-line bus karachi
* RSF Reporters sans frontières (Reporters without borders) world press freedom index Pakistan rank 145 score 46.86; india 142/46.56; Norway 1st
* 19th dec 17th Extraordinary Session of OIC Council of Foreign Ministers; OIC secretary general Hissein Brahim Taha, Republic of Chad
* 19th dec Gabriel Boric 35 years new chilean President; Chile was the birthplace of neoliberalism, and it shall also be its grave!”
* 21st dec pak-iran-turkey freight train launched from Islamabad ITI
* 21 dec test of long range 900 km Babur cruise missile 1B; response to s400 india
* Earlier: saheen 1a surface to surface on nov 25th and Fatah-1, a Pakistan-made guided multi-launch rocket system on aug 24th 2021
* Global innovation index 2021 pak ranked 99/132
* 26th dec Desmond Tutu South Africa archbishop died at 90
* 27th dec National Sec Policy approved by National Security Committee; 28th dec cabinet approved it; 14jan 2022 made public
* 6th jan 2022 justice aysesha malik nominated for SC 24 jan took oath
* 17th jan Houthis targeted oil facilities and the Abu Dhabi International Airport.
* 19th jan GCC retaliated and pounded Sanaa
* 140/180 transparency international
* Babar Azam is named as the captain for the ICC ODI Team of the Year, besides being crowned as the ODI Cricketer of the Year. Pace bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi is awarded the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for the ICC Player of the Year. Wicketkeeper batsman Mohammad Rizwan is declared T20I Cricketer of the Year. Besides, female cricketer Fatima Sana is named ICC’s Emerging Women’s Cricketer of the Year.
* NSA visit to Kabul jan 29th 2022
* Rafael Nadal (Spanish) 21st Grand Slam Win; Ashleigh Barty Won woman
* 1st feb gulzar retired; 2nd feb Umar Ata Bandial new CJP and was formally appointed on 17th jan
* Sen krishna kumari kohli chaired 4th feb senate session
* Feb 4 winter Olympics
* Feb 3 imran went and feb 6 met xi
* 6th feb lata died
* 17 feb bill gates Pakistan-hilal e Pakistan
* 23 feb pm left for Russia; 24 met putin
* 24 feb ukrain Russia war
* Psl 7 lahore qalandar winners vs multan sultan
* 3rd march Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev visited isb
* 4 mar shane warne death; uae added fatf list
* 9 march brahmos supersonic cruise missile mian channu Khanewal Punjab
* 10 mar The Islamic State named a new leader, Abu al-Hassan al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi
* 15 mar UNGA resolution: International Day to Combat Islamophobia
* 48th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of OIC member states is being held on 22-23 March 2022 in Islamabad.
* 22 mar water day
* 1-2 april Islamabad sec dialogue
* Arooj aftab won grammy
* Fourth Annual US-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue Apr 11 2022
* Bilqees edhi 15 april

# Quotes

* As **Winston Churchill** had long ago observed: “However absorbed a commander may be in the elaboration of his own thoughts, it is sometimes necessary to take the enemy into consideration.”
* The nineteenth-century German statesman **Otto von Bismarck** observed that in a world order dominated by five states, it is always desirable to be part of a group of three. As former US Secretary of State **Henry Kissinger** has pointed out, this implies that in a three-country order, one should want to be in the group of two.
* Never hold discussions with the monkey when the organ grinder is in the room. **Churchill**
* A politician thinks of the next election, a statesman of the next generation. ~ **James Freeman**
* **Albert Einstein** was spot on when he said the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again with the expectation of different results.
* “The interests of decision-making elite in power always clashes with the interests of the people they represent” writes American historian **Jarred Diamond**, the author of the 2019 famous book Upheaval: How nations cope with crisis and change. He also writes that although the people suffer with what the elites decide and do, elites never suffer as they “insulate themselves from the consequences of their action”.
* **Gates** complained in 2007 that “it is just plain embarrassing that al-Qaida is better at communicating its message on the Internet than America” and again a year later that “[w]e’re being out-communicated by a guy in a cave.”
* On the eve of US failure in the Vietnam War in 1969, **Henry Kissinger** explained America’s failure to win victory as: “We fought a military war; our opponents fought a political one. We sought physical attrition; our opponents aimed for our psychological exhaustion. In the process we lost sight of one of the cardinal maxims of guerrilla war: the guerrilla wins if he does not lose. The conventional army loses if it does not win.”
* **George Bernard Shaw** once said, “There are two tragedies in life. One is not to get your heart’s desire. The other is to get it.”
* anthropologist **Margaret Mead**, “Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”
* “LET China sleep, for when she wakes, she will shake the world”. **Napoleon Bonaparte**
* As **Nelson Mandela** argued in 2001, “a vibrant network and range of civil society activities and organs” is essential to “cement the foundations” of democracy.
* Tactics without strategy, says **Sun Tzu**, is the noise before defeat.
* You can’t keep snakes in your backyard and expect them to only bite your neighbour. Eventually, those snakes are going to turn on whoever has them in the backyard.’ **Hillary Clinton**
* As **De Gaulle** remarked, treaties, like roses and pretty girls, last only as long as they last.
* History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce. ~**Karl Marx**
* “Don’t gamble on the future,” warned **Simone de Beauvoir**. “Act now, without delay.”
* “The shining city on the hill is not as shining as it used to be. ~ German member of the European Parliament regarding US
* Being an old farm boy myself, chickens coming home to roost never made me sad; they only made me glad. ~ **Malcolm X** on Kennedy’s death
* One heartbeat away from the Presidency and not a single vote cast in my name. Democracy is so overrated. ~ **Frank Underwood** VP House of Cards
* the owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the coming of the dusk. ~ **Georg Wilhelm Friedrich** **Hegel;** *He meant that philosophy understands reality only after the event. It cannot prescribe how the world ought to be.*
* If adoption of American principles of governance is made the central condition for progress in all other areas of the relationship, deadlock is inevitable. ~ **Richard Nixon** to Chinese PM 1972
* “IT is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.” ~ **Aristotle**
* EVERY man may not be a misogynist, but every man benefit from a misogynist society, says **Pauline Harmange**, author of I Hate Men.
* **Machiavelli** famously declared in his Discourses that “Gold alone does not procure good soldiers, but good soldiers will always procure gold.” In other words, clout beats cash.

# Facts

* According to the **World Justice Project Rule of Law 2020** report, Pakistan is ranked 120 out of 128 countries.
* According to a recent report by the UN’s World Food Programme, 41m people in 43 countries are “on the very edge of famine”. Two years ago, this number was 27m. The primary factors are conflict, climate change and economic instability.
* THE **World Press Freedom Index** listed by Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) ranks India at an embarrassing142 out of 180 countries. India is three notches better than **Pakistan** (145). Bangladesh (152) is the worst performer from South Asia.
* According to **the Credi0t Suisse Global Wealth Report**, the world’s richest 1 percent, those with more than $1 million, own 44 percent of the world’s wealth.
* The UNDP’s latest **National Human Development Report** places Pakistan’s powerful elite in an uncomfortable moral dilemma as it says this class has cornered economic privileges amounting to $17.4 billion or 6% of GDP. It highlights that policies often result in exacerbating inequalities instead of reducing them. The elite use their power, mostly furtively, to obtain the lion’s share in the national income, leaving little for the less influential and only crumbs for the have-nots.
* According to the report released last week, the corporate sector is the biggest beneficiary of the unequal system. They get inputs cheap and sell their output at higher prices, and enjoy preferential treatment in access to land, capital and services. They acquire around $4.7 billion in benefits. Next on the list of beneficiaries are feudal lords. They are a mere 1.1% of the total population but they own 22% of all agricultural lands.
* the report stark statistics with regard to inequality in Pakistan. While measuring inequality on two factors – income and human development – the report shows that the income share of the richest quintile is 49.6% as compared to only 7% of the lowest quintile. Similar is the case with the measure of human development. The value of human development for the poorest quintile is as low as 0.419 as compared to the corresponding value for the country’s richest quintile which is 0.698.
* IN the **Economist Intelligence Unit’s** annual **Inclusive Internet Index** report, measuring internet inclusion in terms of availability, affordability, relevance and readiness, Pakistan’s overall ranking has dropped to 90th place among 120 nations: the second lowest ranking country in Asia and the lowest in South Asia.

# General Concerns

* <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2352580/rethinking-agricultural-priorities-in-pakistan>
* Ever since the creation of Pakistan, the country has remained entangled with the multiple challenges: bad governance; socioeconomic and power disparities; politico-ethnic polarization; racial and lingual differences; civil-military and of late judicial confrontations; weak political system and leadership; ideological identities; religious extremism and sectarianism; modernity confusion; national identity crisis; and threats to territorial integrity from neighboring countries. The mistrust between the Centre and the small federating units infused by a sense of deprivation has piled up the problems being exploited by the hostile exogenous elements.
* **Dynastic parliamentary system**: A parliamentary government system cannot be dynastic — it is a moral hazard that Pakistan needs to get rid of if we are genuinely looking at a corruption-free political milieu. This long walk to freedom would require a clean and nationalist leadership — a breed not confined to temporary benefits for themselves or their party.
* **Status quo** is the ugliest expression of oppression in the life of nations. In this process, the oppressors resist change because it directly hurts their interests and causes ripples in the decades-old state of stagnancy.
* Diagram

  Description automatically generated

# Climate

### Most imp intl agreements

#### Montreal Protocol, 1987

* Every country in the world eventually ratified the treaty, which required them to stop producing substances that damage the ozone layer, such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). The protocol has succeeded in eliminating nearly 99 percent of these ozone-depleting substances. In 2016, parties agreed via the Kigali Amendment to also reduce their production of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), powerful greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change.

#### UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 1992

* Ratified by 197 countries, including the United States, the landmark accord [PDF] was the first global treaty to explicitly address climate change. It established an annual forum, known as the Conference of the Parties, or COP, for international discussions aimed at stabilizing the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. These meetings produced the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement.

#### Kyoto Protocol, 2005

* The Kyoto Protocol [PDF], adopted in 1997 and entered into force in 2005, was the first legally binding climate treaty. It required developed countries to reduce emissions by an average of 5 percent below 1990 levels, and established a system to monitor countries’ progress. But the treaty did not compel developing countries, including major carbon emitters China and India, to take action. The United States signed the agreement in 1998 but never ratified it and later withdrew its signature.

#### Paris Agreement, 2015

* The most significant global climate agreement to date, the Paris Agreement requires all countries to set emissions-reduction pledges. Governments set targets, known as nationally determined contributions, with the goals of preventing the global average temperature from rising 2°C (3.6°F) above preindustrial levels and pursuing efforts to keep it below 1.5°C (2.7°F). It also aims to reach global net-zero emissions, where the amount of greenhouse gases emitted equals the amount removed from the atmosphere, in the second half of the century. (This is also known as being climate neutral or carbon neutral.)
* Countries set their own targets, and there are no enforcement mechanisms to ensure they meet them.
* The United States, the world’s second-largest emitter, was the only country to withdraw from the accord, a move by former President Donald Trump that took effect in November 2020. However, President Joe Biden reentered the United States into the agreement during his first months in office. A few countries have not formally approved the agreement: Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Libya, South Sudan, Turkey, and Yemen.

#### Cop 26

* COP26 had to achieve consensus on several substantial and procedural issues holding up full implementation of the mechanisms of climate action outlined in the Paris Agreement. The contentious issues include:
  + **Climate ambition** (a euphemism for deeper emissions cuts and other mitigation measures): Under the Paris Agreement, all countries were required to submit more ambitious plans for mitigation in their revised Nationally Determined Contributions by 2020. Until July 30, 2021, revised NDCs were received from 95 countries, including the US which has committed to slashing its emissions by 50 to 52 per cent compared to the 2005 level. Large emitters China, India, Russia and Australia have not announced their latest commitments.
  + According to the synthesis report issued by the UN Environment Programme scrutinising the revised NDCs, the mitigation pledges represent a 12pc increase over previous commitments but are likely to cause a temperature increase of 2.7°C, not 1.5°C, the global climate goal!
  + **Climate finance**: Under the Paris Agreement, developed countries had pledged to collectively mobilise $100 billion annually from public and private sources by 2020 for supporting the mitigation and adaptation initiatives of developing countries. However, the highest amount provided by the developed countries through various channels in recent years was around $78bn in 2018. The Global South has also de­­m­anded that all funds provided to them should be in the form of grants, not loans or investments, and they must come from public sources.
  + **Loss and damage**: COP19 held in Warsaw had responded to persistent demands of developing countries by establishing the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage to assist developing countries hit hardest by climate-induced disasters but did not provide funds. Developed countries have thus far stubbornly refused to give money for L&D.

##### What happened

* The final text refers to a coal phasedown rather than a coal phaseout, a crucial change inserted at India’s insistence (and with China’s acquiescence).; The deal also called on all countries to accelerate their emissions cuts by submitting new national plans by 2022, three years earlier than agreed in Paris.
* But after resistance from rich nations led by the United States and EU, the text omitted any reference to a specific finance facility for the loss and damage climate change has already caused in the developing world. It instead only promised future “dialogue” on the subject.
* “For some loss and damage may be the beginning of conversation and dialogue,” said Shauna Aminath, the Maldives environment minister. “But for us this is a matter of survival.”
* The text noted “with deep regret” that wealthy nations had also failed to stump up a separate annual sum of $100 billion they promised over a decade ago. It urged countries to pay up “urgently and through 2025”.

### Multilateralism

* The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that we will conquer the virus by focusing on a common goal, cooperating, and allowing people the freedom to innovate. We will overcome the threat of global warming the same way.
* European Commission introduced the **European Green Deal** in December 2019. As Europe’s new growth strategy, it aims to transform the EU into a fairer, more prosperous society by guiding the transition to a more resource-efficient, competitive economy. Ultimately, the goal is to achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2050.
* The EU, however, represents less than 10% of global emissions, so European action alone will not be enough to slow global warming. To keep the increase in global temperature as close to 1.5°C as possible, we must support decarbonization efforts beyond our borders. That is why we need a **Global Green Deal.**
* To this end, we have set ourselves three investment priorities. First, we need to ensure that the most advanced clean technologies are embraced everywhere. Despite good progress on renewable-energy deployment, 40% of the world’s electricity is still generated by coal, the dirtiest energy source.
* Our second priority is to invest in breakthrough green technologies like never before. Such research and development is both necessary and an enormous market opportunity.
* Finally, we need to embrace the idea of a “**circular economy**.” As matters stand, we are taking more out of our planet than it can afford to give us. To do so, we need to invest in circular technologies that reuse resources, rather than constantly producing or importing new goods and extracting ever more raw materials. The circular economy has huge potential not only to reduce our dependency on scarce resources, but also to create jobs.

### China

* China is stuck between a fossil fuel-dependent past and a future powered by renewable energy. The country today generates 53% of the world’s coal-fired power. At the same time, it is the world’s leading manufacturer of, and market for, solar panels, wind turbines, and electric vehicles.
* What explains China’s apparent return to its coal-addicted ways? For starters, the protests in Hong Kong, the trade war with the US, and the coronavirus pandemic have shifted policymakers’ focus away from environmental reform. So, too, has the slowdown in China’s GDP growth and the rise in unemployment. The government has been more interested in stimulating traditional, energy-intensive industries like steel, iron, and cement, while provincial leaders have embarked on a spree of construction of coal-fired power plants.
* Furthermore, the recent US-China trade war has heightened Chinese concerns about energy security, given that the country imports 70% of its oil needs and 40% of its gas requirements.
* US disengagement from the Paris Agreement under President Donald Trump probably weakened China’s commitment, too.
* China has vowed not only to halt its funding for coal power overseas but also to help developing countries build green energy production.
* What implications will Beijing’s decision to turn off its taps for coal energy have for several countries, including Pakistan where it has already committed heavy financing of $50bn for both under-construction and planned projects?
* Bill gates rightly noted how the world can benefit from China’s efforts to make green energy more affordable. Without China’s contributions, many of the key ingredients needed to address global emissions, such as rechargeable batteries and solar power panels, would not be affordable, especially for the cash-strapped poorer countries.

### US role

* *Reagan distanced himself from the Carter administration’s environmentalist agenda*. In a symbolic gesture, the new president even removed the solar panels that his predecessor had installed on the White House.
* This is not the first time America is re-entering such a collective effort, but rather the second. Biden, as vice-president, watched in awe as his boss president Obama turned America back toward joining climate talks after his predecessor George W Bush had rejected the Kyoto Protocol climate treaty of 1997.
* ON April 22, world leaders from 40 countries, 17 of them responsible for four-fifths of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions, held a virtual summit convened by President Joe Biden. This summit, explicitly designed to make up for the time lost by America’s withdrawal from the Paris agreement, will help the administration relaunch the US in the global climate arena, and align global climate policy with his domestic economic agenda. The ultimate goal is to have a carbon-neutral economy by 2050 to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, starting with a 50pc reduction in carbon emissions by 2030.

### Effects

* **Health**
* The changing climate has a very direct impact on health of the people, not just in the long term but in the short term also. Once again, the most vulnerable are those who are poor and left behind by exclusionary policies. Rapid rains and flash floods make these slums even more vulnerable as stagnant water stays in the environment for a long period or new locations of wastewater are created, making a perfect home for pathogens to survive and thrive. Rising temperatures have already changed patterns of pathogen life cycle, and with an enabling environment in slums, they are able to colonise their human hosts. The residents of these informal settlements are already vulnerable due to malnutrition and non-existent access to healthcare. New diseases emerging due to societal neglect and climate change is only creating further misery.
* Pakistan in 2020 was ranked the fifth-most climate vulnerable country on the Global Climate Risk Index (Afghanistan doesn’t feature in the top 10). Jacobabad this summer became one of the first places in the world to briefly cross the ‘wet bulb’ temperature threshold that humans can survive.
* 'Wet bulb' conditions occur when it's too hot and humid for sweat to evaporate.
* **Wildfires**
* Ferocious fires have been raging in different parts of the world. In North Africa, wildfires in the Kabyle region of Algeria have claimed at least 65 lives. In Greece, the country faces a “natural disaster of unprecedented proportions” as around 600 wildfires are causing devastation “in all corners” of the country. Fires have also been spreading in Italy’s southern regions, Multiple fires have also destroyed large swaths of pine forests in southern Turkey over the past couple of weeks, spelling disaster for the country’s tourism industry. Siberia — the region known for its merciless winters — has not been spared either. the fires burning in Siberia are reported to be bigger than those burning in many countries combined. On the other side of the world, the Dixie Fires in northern California have burnt down over 900 buildings as firefighters brace themselves for more blazes and destruction. A shocking heatwave in the Pacific northwest turned parts of Canada, of all places, into a cauldron.
* **Floods**
* Life-threatening floods are hardly a novelty in the subcontinent, but they are rather rare in Germany and Belgium.
* Hurricane Elsa’s appearance in the Caribbean July 21, far before the usual onset of the Atlantic hurricane season, reminds us of what awaits the world’s small island developing states (SIDS) in the years ahead.
* Maldives, an island state at great risk from the expected rise of sea level because of global warming.
* **Economic loss**
* Moreover, the costs of such events are mounting. For example, five of the worst natural disasters in US history have occurred since 2005, causing economic damage totaling $523 billion in inflation-adjusted terms.
* **Air pollution** is causing the death of over eight million people globally which is about one in five deaths each year. it is the biggest public health issue according to WHO and World Economic Forum.
* **Glacier melting**
* In Sep 2020 an ice sheet the size of Paris broke off from Greenland’s largest glacier shelf, and in July, Canada’s intact ice shelf – 4,000 years old – fragmented. As Arctic ice melts, sea levels rise, threatening countries worldwide.
* For the first time since records began, sea ice in the Arctic’s Eurasian sector had not yet begun freezing in October (**guardian**)
* Major Fuel Spill in Russia’s North Spreads Toward Arctic Ocean, releasing about 150,000 barrels of diesel into a river (**NYTimes**).
* **Migration**
* Over the next 30 years, more than 140 million people are expected to be displaced by climate change across South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America, at a cost of some $7.9 trillion. **World Bank**
* **Effect on women**
* Compounding the injustice facing marginalized and vulnerable children who have done nothing to contribute to the problem, girls – especially adolescents – often are the first to be forced out of school when droughts, landslides, floods, and other disasters strike, and they are the last to return, if they return at all. Without access to education, these girls face increased risk of sexual exploitation, early marriage, unwanted pregnancy, and child labor.
* The **Malala Fund** estimates that in 2021, climate-related events will prevent at least four million girls in developing countries from completing their education. And this number could reach 12 million by 2025.
* **Geopolitics**
* Moreover, with the green transition, the old strategic choke points – starting with the **Strait of Hormuz** – will become less relevant, and thus less dangerous. These seaborne passages have preoccupied military strategists for decades. But as the oil age passes, they will be less subject to competition for access and control by regional and global powers.
* Phasing out energy imports will also help to reduce the income and geopolitical power of countries like **Russia**, which currently relies heavily on the EU market. Of course, the loss of this key source of Russian revenue could lead to instability in the near term, particularly if the Kremlin sees it as an invitation to adventurism.

### Facts

* According to a recent **Chatham House** report, we currently have less than a 5% chance of keeping global warming “well below” 2º Celsius, relative to pre-industrial levels, as the Paris agreement stipulates.
* In 2015, the National Institute of Oceanography warned that Karachi could be completely submerged by 2060 if the current trajectory of rising sea levels continues.

### Faults

* Right in the middle of the Covid-19 mayhem, Mr Modi liberalised India’s coal policy. UN Secretary General António Guterres responded with a tart message. Opening coal was not the way to fight the virus. Of the two tycoons riding high in India currently, one sells oil, the other coal.
* Greta Thunberg blah blah blah
* **Corruption**
* is one of the biggest enemies of healthy ecosystems. The government’s corrupt functionaries sell the banks of rivers, streams and nullahs to encroachers for building bastis, posh housing societies, plazas and even industrial installations and zones. They allow industry to discharge its effluents into freshwater bodies. Weak governance emboldens them to dislodge communities and plan new cities on the beaches in Karachi and the riverfronts of the Ravi, Soan, Jhelum, Chenab and other waterways.
* The rainforest cover equal to a football field is lost every six seconds; two-thirds of the world’s original rainforest cover has already been destroyed. the annual rate of **rainforest depletion** only in 2019, matched the level of destruction over the past 20 years. In fact, the total loss of rainforest cover between 2002 and 2019 was greater than the area of **France**. The biggest impact has been felt in **Brazil**, which has witnessed a sharp uptick in the depletion of its forested land as a result of the country’s lax policies towards the environment. (Rainforest foundation Norway)
* The **Fossil fuel industries** has plagiarised some tactics of the American gun manufacturers. The gun industry spends a stupendous amount of money in public relations campaigns trying to convince the people that the *gun is not to be blamed for the gun violence* but rather the crazy-minded individuals who start shooting in public.
* **ExxonMobil** knew as early as the 1970s about the severe damage to the environment resulting from the use of fossil fuel. Yet, they went on to fund research, which denied such knowledge.
* While the profit of the environmental degradation was privatised, since it ended up in the hands of a few, the cost of climate change is now being socialised, since everybody is paying the price and everybody is being asked to do something about it.
* Despite being so vocal in terms of criticising Brazil for deforestation of the rainforests, the EU remains Brazil’s largest trading partner. The Bolsonaro government does rightly deserve criticism for aggressively dismantled, for defunding environmental protection agencies, and for enabling illegal loggers and miners.
* It is not only Europe but also other powerful countries like Australia, the US, and China which are fuelling supply-chain exploitation.
* While richer countries are quick to criticise governments and employers in poorer countries, this criticism is no more than hypocritical double-speak, especially when corporations based in these rich countries continue sourcing products and raw materials through blatantly exploitative supply chains.
* solipsistic politicking
* Before COP26, governments scrambled to protect their interests by watering down the IPCC report’s findings. Leaked documents show that oil-producing Saudi Arabia sought to slow the transition from fossil fuels, while coal-exporting Australia defended coal plants and beef-producing Brazil tried to decouple meat consumption and climate change.
* **North-South climate divide**
* Developed economies are finding increasingly coercive ways of shaping other countries’ behaviour. Commitments by most of the Western and multilateral development banks to stop financing coal (now joined by China) restrict options for grid expansion in developing countries where demand for power is growing rapidly.
* Influential countries have also urged the International Monetary Fund to attach green conditions to debt relief for poor countries, as well as to its new allocation of special drawing rights (the IMF’s reserve asset). And the European Union’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism – a non-trade barrier intended to force exporters to Europe to shift to green production – disproportionately hurts small emitters in Africa and Eastern Europe with a lot to lose.

#### IPCC 6th assessment

* the IPCC assessment suggests that at the present rate of greenhouse gas emissions, the 1.5°C threshold will be crossed within a couple of decades. dangers lie beyond that level, stretching to the devastating possibility of 4.4°C by the end of the century.
* Based on more than 14,000 scientific studies, this is the most comprehensive report on the subject to date. The very first line of the report summary reads: “It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land.”
* There is still time to prevent catastrophic global warming, but it will require reducing carbon dioxide emissions 80% by 2030 and 100% by 2050. And while United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has called the latest report a “code red for humanity,” an effective response remains far from guaranteed.
* This “gap between rhetoric and action,” the International Energy Agency (IEA) warns, “needs to close if we are to have a fighting chance of reaching net zero by 2050 and limiting the rise in global temperatures to 1.5°C.”
* If they (GHGs emissions) are cut too slowly, the kinds of heat waves, droughts, heavy rains, and flooding experienced this summer will become more frequent. More catastrophic outcomes, such as abrupt, irreversible changes in oceanic circulation, cannot be ruled out.

### Solution

But cutting emissions is only the beginning. We must also pursue **mitigation** measures, such as protecting and restoring ecosystems, and invest in **adaptation**, so that countries can cope with the challenges that are now unavoidable, including natural disasters, resource scarcity, and human migration. As recent crises – from the COVID-19 pandemic to Hurricane Ida – have shown, systems that enable the rapid mobilization of whole-of-government and whole-of-society responses are essential.

**National Climate Plans**: Nationally Determined Contributions, or NDCs, are a barometer of countries’ commitment to climate action.

Climate Finance Deficit

**Coal Moratoriums**: China, South Korea and Japan have announced stopping international finance for coal. The G7 summit has already agreed to stop international finance for coal by the end of 2021 and to phase out fossil fuel subsidies by 2025. Altogether 44 countries have committed to no new coal, including Pakistan, but a complete exit and switch to renewables will require international financing.

**Fossil Fuel Subsidies**: Governments extend more than $500bn on subsidies for production and consumption to fossil fuels that contribute to climate high emissions, making renewables less competitive. For the decarbonisation goals of the Paris Agreement, subsidies need to be phased out, starting with G20, on a faster pace for the transition away from fossil fuels.

* **Prosecuting Ecocide**
* As proliferating disasters starkly demonstrate, severe damage to the environment is a crime against everyone. Rather than leave it to regulation by individual states, the International Criminal Court should recognize “ecocide” as an international crime.
* Unfortunately, nothing worthwhile has so far been done on this aspect of the grave issue. It is a strange situation where fish are dying by drowning and also of thirst.
* One reason for insufficient climate action to date is that switching to zero-carbon electricity and transportation entails up-front costs. True, some of these replacement costs would have to be paid anyway as cars, coal plants, and gas-fired power stations wear out or become obsolete. More often, though, decarbonization is profitable only on a longer-term horizon in a world characterized by short-termism.
* One efficient way to mitigate global warming would be to increase the price of carbon dioxide emissions by imposing carbon taxes.
* One option would be a “**carbon dividend**,” whereby households would receive a flat-rate income financed by the green tax proceeds. This would disproportionately benefit poorer households.
* governments could use some of the tax proceeds to fund green investments, including by supporting households investing in electric vehicles (especially small ones) and home energy systems. Funding could also be directed to business and government investment in necessary infrastructure and research and development.
* Some people say that *to avoid the threat of catastrophic harm to human welfare posed by global warming, we must radically change our behaviour* – cease flying, use bicycles, and give up red meat. Others believe that *new technologies can deliver carbon-free growth*. So, who is right: Greta Thunberg, who advocates the former course, or Bill Gates, who just wrote a book (**How to avoid a climate disaster**) advocating the latter?
* Gates writes in his book that in a normal year the world adds 51 billion tons of ghg to the atmosphere.
* A lot of human activities generate greenhouse gases: generating electricity, transportation, growing food, heating buildings, and making materials like steel and cement. If our goal was simply to emit ten percent less greenhouse gas, you could imagine trying to limit those activities. But because we need to get to zero emissions by 2050, we have to come up with an alternate way which isn’t too much more expensive to perform those same activities without emitting any greenhouse gases. We can compare the cost per unit of the current way of doing it to the approach that creates no emissions. The actual extra cost, which we call the “green premium,” for things like green jet fuel, is very high. Jet fuel is a good example because there’s a significant premium. In the United States, a gallon of jet fuel averages about $2.20. One way to go green is instead of taking that oil out of the ground that has carbon from millions of years ago coming up into the atmosphere we can take the oil by generating it from plant material or bio-waste or even algae. Biofuels cost $5.35 per gallon. So that's quite a premium, $5.35 versus $2.20 so, $3.15 premium. More than double the typical price. The green premium is a tool that gives us a way of looking at how far away we are from making it easy. And where this green premium is the highest, that’s where we need to put resources behind solving that particular area. We need a lot of research and development, a lot of innovative companies, to help us get the green premium down. And if you can get it down close to zero, yes, that will get us to this 2050 goal of zero emissions.
* **Language of Tragedy**
* “How terrible it is to know when, in the end, knowing gains you nothing,” laments the blind prophet Tiresias in Sophocles’ Oedipus the King. Oedipus had summoned him to reveal the source of the pestilence and ecological disaster ravaging Thebes. But Tiresias knew that the king would reject the truth. Today’s climate scientists and epidemiologists can relate.
* Thunberg and many of her fellow climate activists know that the **language of tragedy** is the only way to express the cataclysm we are facing. But, as Thunberg knows first-hand, young people can easily be dismissed as overly sensitive and melodramatic. That is why the adults – especially scientists and world leaders – must urgently join the chorus of young people and speak in the language of tragedy.
* Mass involvement in policymaking over any issue works only when the masses constitute an **informed citizenry**. Climate change is no exception. A huge portion of the global population doesn’t know much about climate change and how its lives and livelihoods are impacted by it, much less what policy and lifestyle changes are needed to tackle this threat.

### Pakistan

* Prime Minister Imran Khan has already pledged to phase out coal power and shift to greener energy production by 2030. He had announced a moratorium on coal at the Climate Ambition Summit held to mark the fifth anniversary of the Paris Climate Agreement in December 2020
* The Special Assistant to PM on Climate Change has recently floated the idea of trying to get all major political parties in Pakistan to sign an environmental charter. There is no significant commitment to the environment within the manifestos of mainstream political parties. Our ruling parties also tend to undo most innovative initiatives launched by their predecessors. It is thus a good idea to develop consensus on a long-term environmental vision for the country.
* Pakistan as the country had the pleasure of hosting the World Environment Day 2021 on 5th June. Theme: ecosystem restoration
* Speaking at the Middle East Green Initiative Summit in Riyadh, Imran said Pakistan had been hit by 152 extreme weather events in the past decade alone, costing the country over $3.8 billion; and on top of this, the climate adaption costs could run as high as $14 billion for Pakistan alone.

#### Issues

* **Ignoring RE**
* Renewable energy (RE) can bring down the cost of development remarkably, reduce pressure on foreign exchange, strengthen outreach to underserved communities, and reduce emissions for cleaner air in the cities.
* The cost of electricity from solar photovoltaic (PV) panels has decreased by 90pc since 2009, according to the annual World Energy Outlook 2020, by the International Energy Agency.
* Pakistan’s **energy policy has gone in the opposite direction of global trends**. Pakistan abandoned its earlier targets of 1,235 megawatts of wind and 430MW of solar, determined in the 2006 policy for development of RE for power generation. The Alternative & Renewable Energy (ARE) policy adopted by this government in 2019 reset the target for energy from renewable sources by 2030 to 30 per cent excluding hydropower. This target was reduced further to 12pc by the Indicative Generation Capacity Expansion Plan approved in 2021. IGCEP committed to the ‘least-cost option’; yet it has revisited the definition and included seasonally flowing hydropower in the RE category, which ARE had not. This change of heart has effectively elbowed solar and wind energy out of the equation and paved the way for foreign investments in hydropower instead of solar that can be commissioned at one-fourth the cost and time, mostly with domestic financing. It has also accentuated differences between the provinces who have more nuanced perspectives.
* During this period, India attained the fourth global position in wind power and fifth in solar installed capacity.
* **Coal dependency**
* No wonder the country has backtracked from the commitment made by Prime Minister Imran Khan at the Climate Action Summit in December 2020, where he had declared: “We will not have any more power based on **coal**.” It has since been changed to no more ‘imported’ coal.
* In addition to the use for energy, coal is also imported for our fast-expanding cement industry, now propelled to fuel the housing construction to turn around the economic growth rate.
* Unfortunately, the cotton and leather output has been falling over the years due to the effects of climate change in the form of declining availability of freshwater, the ever-rising temperature and abrupt changes in rainfall patterns, and also because of official neglect of the cotton sector.
* While the IPCC report has issued an ominous warning for the global community, it forecasts for South Asia are particularly troubling. Overall, South Asian countries are predicted to see increasingly hot weather, longer monsoon seasons, alongside severer droughts over the next 20 years, as global warming increases by around 1.5 degrees Celsius.
* India and Pakistan are ranked high on the list of countries most vulnerable to climate change in the coming decades. This inevitable climate change also has the potential of becoming a ‘**threat multiplier’** in an already extremely dangerous and tense part of the world.
* Depleting glaciers and reduced river-flows into the Indus can exacerbate the likelihood of conflict between India and Pakistan. Upper riparian China could also be dragged into this conflict as Tibet is the source of not only the Indus but also the Brahmaputra which flows to India and then into Bangladesh. Climate change also has the potential of worsening domestic grievances within these countries, including Pakistan, where provincial water rights remain an issue of contention.
* Without adequate measures put in place to deal with climate change, this growing crisis is likely to exacerbate mass climate-induced migration. These migrant flows can in turn trigger further destabilisation, placing unbearable pressure on already burgeoning megacities and causing refugees to flow across national borders, from Bangladesh into India, and from Afghanistan into Pakistan.
* On Nov 12, 1970, around three weeks before Pakistan’s first democratic elections were scheduled, the Bay of Bengal was devastated by the **Bhola Cyclone**. More than 300,000 people were killed, and the terrain, livestock, and livelihoods of numerous districts destroyed. The cyclone highlighted governance failings and poor infrastructure development in what was then East Pakis­tan, and the military government’s sluggish resp­onse was widely criticised. Several academic studies conclude that its aftermath li­kely swelled the Awami League’s poll results.
* There is growing recognition that climate change fuels political instability, but the discourse is securitised. **A Stanford-led** study in 2019 estimated that climate has influenced between three and 20 per cent of armed conflict risk over the past century, a trend that is expected to dramatically accelerate.
* **Deforestation**: There are reports that the dense forests of North and South Waziristan are being fast denuded of trees, most of which are hundreds of years old, by the avaricious timber mafia. These mafias are recklessly cutting trees for use as timber and also for charcoal, which are, reportedly, much in demand in neighbouring provinces of Afghanistan.
* Food security and water scarcity.

#### Steps taken

* The PPP government in Sindh has outdone the federal government after launching the country’s first electric bus project in Karachi.
* Amid all these wicked problems, a fleet of 100 electric buses might not even make a dent in front of the raging army of 3.6 million registered vehicles of Karachi. While the project may be a first step, what we need is a giant leap. The aim should be to replace all diesel buses with electric ones. The government can also invest heavily in solar buses as another suitable alternative.
* **Miyawaki forests**
* Prime Minister Imran Khan in August inaugurated “the world’s biggest” Miyawaki urban forest in Lahore. Another 53 Miyawaki forests are being developed in different parts of Lahore to create sinks for carbon as well as for better pollution abatement in the city. All have been geo-tagged to monitor their growth and development.
* Brick kiln owners in Punjab have done a commendable job by adopting the zig-zag technology at old-style hazardous kilns. The healthy effects of zig-zag technology are showing up in a variety of ways. One significant impact of it is on the environment, as it has helped preserve and increase biodiversity over a wide area. Butterflies, fireflies and dragonflies that were fast vanishing due to the thick smoke produced by the obsolete brick kilns are no longer threatened species.
* the **Punjab government** has decided to run all Basic Health Units on solar energy. At a signing ceremony in Lahore, the provincial government’s health minister, Dr Yasmin Rashid, told reporters that BHUs in Sargodha, Jhelum and Mandi Bahauddin would be converted to solar to eventually be followed up by all other BHUs around the province.
* PRIME MINISTER Imran Khan has set the direction of Pakistan’s pathway to decarbonising the country’s economy. In his speech in December 2021 at the UN hosted Climate Ambition Summit, he declared that Pakistan will generate 60pc of its energy from renewable sources, ensure that 30pc of new vehicles will be electric vehicles and that Pakistan will no longer pursue coal power plants. These broad pronouncements can guide the country’s roadmap for decarbonisation.
* Pakistan’s first locally manufacture electric bike under the Jolta EV technology project. About 7,500 new motorcycles are sold in Pakistan daily and almost 2 million are manufactured every year. According to recent studies, an electric bike produces 90% less emission than a standard motorcycle — this will prove to be significant.
* Reportage of a couple of coal powered CPEC projects being shelved, and the development of the **HydroChina Dawood Wind Power project** near Karachi, are good signs.
* After taking over as prime minister in 2018, Imran Khan amplified his vision towards the **10 Billion Tree Tsunami Program**, **Clean Green Cities Index**, **National Electric Vehicle Policy** and others.
* A mature tree cleans nearly 22 kilograms of carbon annually from the atmosphere. This figure would jump to almost 220 million tonnes after the completion of 10 Billion Tree Tsunami Program.

#### Steps to be taken

* **transportation standards** have to be taken up from Euro 2 to Euro 6 as in other countries, and taxes could be considered as in The Netherlands that has a 68pc tax on unleaded petrol. Also, municipalities have imposed restrictions on certain vehicles to stimulate alternative forms of transport as Paris has, creating incentives and making it safer for travel over short distances.
* Our climate challenge is an energy challenge.

# Water Crisis

### IWT

* For comparison, the design of the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam over the Nile was revised several times, sometimes on the suggestion of Egypt, the lower riparian.
* Transboundary waters by nature require cooperation. The Turkish-Armenian case offers a pertinent example whereby a dam was jointly constructed on the Arpaçay/Akhuryan River. The two co-riparian do not even have diplomatic relations but share transboundary waters equitably through a permanent water commission and its working groups. It works successfully because they have firewalled the technical work of the commission from political highs and lows. The IWT commissioners have not attempted, or even envisioned, this autonomy.

#### Strategic weapon

* Under British India, Punjab became the largest canal-based irrigation state and fruit basket, providing food to entire Subcontinent. During the British era, the areas forming part of west Punjab (Pakistani Punjab) had extensive and well-built canal network, thus used to produce maximum agricultural products. These canals were fed by the river water, channelled through several water head works. As a result of manipulated division of Punjab by Boundary Commission under Radcliff Award, all these water head works came under Indian control.
* Immediately after independence of Pakistan, India stopped water from flowing into the canals which were irrigating the vast land of Punjab. It created a crises situation in Pakistan and for some time, Pakistan had to pay for the water, it received from Indian controlled water head works. This was the first strategic usage of water by India as a weapon against Pakistan.
* Later on as a result of bilateral meetings between Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan and Indian Premier Nehru, temporary arrangements were made to resume water supply to Pakistan. Nevertheless, the control of head works remained under India for years until World Bank brokered the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) in 1960. Thereafter, Pakistan delinked its canals from eastern rivers and devised a new water feeding system from western rivers. IWT-1960 gave exclusive rights over water of western rivers to Pakistan, which apparently was the best arrangement in the era of cold war.
* It was a unique agreement over water distribution, since world-wide there have been precedence of division of water, rather division of rivers between upper and lower riparian states. In order to manage the IWT, both states established Indus Commission which worked well till 1980s. Nevertheless, since India is the upper riparian state and also an illegal occupant of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, who inhabitants wanted to join Pakistan. In the late 1980s, India started manipulated with the water of western rivers, whose water was dedicated exclusively for Pakistan. It started planning and constructing dams, water storages and hydroelectric projects over these rives.
* In a way, India started manipulating with the water of Indus, Jhelum and Chenab against the essence of IWT-1960. It constructed over a dozen large and small dams on all three rivers and water diversion of twenty kilometres on Neelum River a tributary of Jhelum River. It constructed two major dams and hydroelectric projects; Bagliar dam on Chenab River and Kishanganga at Neelum River. Construction of dams, hydroelectric projects and water storages, reduced the down-stream flow of water, which is a serious violation of IWT-1960. This all is being done by India through a well-planned strategy, which aims to exploit Pakistan, desertification of its huge agricultural land. The strategy will constrain and starve the agrarian economy of Pakistan. As an upper riparian, India is using the water as a strategic weapon to coerce its agrarian economy. Since last few years, there is change in framing the water issue by New Delhi. **In 2016, Indian Prime Minister Modi said “Blood and Water cannot flow at the same time”**. This statement came immediately after the Uri terror attack, which Indian RAW planned to defame Pakistan.
* All-together India has formulated an offensive strategy over the water of western rivers. India is using the IWT treaty as a bargaining chip against Pakistan for the consolidation of its illegal occupation of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Indian leadership has threatened many a times to abrogate the Indus Water Treaty. In summary, the Indian strategy is to use water as a strategic weapon against Pakistan. There is an immediate need to counter this Indian hegemonic design against Pakistan. Pakistan must formulate a long-term strategy to secure the water of three western rivers.
* Pakistan asks for a telemetry system (automatic recording and transmission of data from remote or inaccessible sources to an IT system in a different location for monitoring and analysis) for truth to prevail; **India fast-tracks hydro-power projects worth 15b$ in occupied Kashmir where all the western rivers flow through** (NYT)

#### Importance of Indus

* It is estimated that about 90 per cent of Pakistan’s land area is arid or semi-arid, and is totally dependent on irrigation for its food production. This makes Pakistan a country with the highest irrigated and rain-fed land ratio in the world. Irrigation, in turn, is dependent on one major river system – the Indus – as the country’s other rivers are seasonal in nature. It feeds more than 40 million acres of irrigated land in Pakistan\*. It is the largest contiguous irrigation system in the world. \***PILDAT**
* **Storage**: The problem is that the water demand is 60 per cent in summer and 40 per cent in winter. This necessitates sufficient water storage during the short surplus period for use during the longer water stress period. Without storage, much of the water in the Indus must inevitably run to the sea. However, the Indus’s massive irrigation system has a storage capacity of only a month’s supply.
* heavy reliance on Indus Basin and its tributaries has made it a vulnerable and persistent source of friction with India
* **effects of Indus**: The water of Indus, which is discharged to the sea, keeps the seawater at bay. Due to decrease in waters of Indus River salt water of Arabian Sea has been observed till 100 kilometres. Deforestation shall continue due to loss of moisture on surface, soil degradation, salinity and erosion. This trend is converting fertile lands to desolate deserts. Rare species of Blind Dolphin used to be in abundance in complete Indus water systems but now it has reduced to a number of hardly 200. Another fish species Shad, Barramundi, Dangri, and numerous other valuable species are threatened of their existence. Mangrove forests, spread in an area of 263,000 hectares are the sixth largest forests in the world. Lowering in the water discharge by Indus River is seriously damaging these Mangroves Forests.

#### Treaty

* In 1950 Pak proposed arbitration, india refused; WB offered its good office which both accepted; negotiations took 8 years; **signed on 19 sep 1960**; allocated water of 3 eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas and Sutlej) in their entirety for use by Ind and the western (Indus, Jehlum & Chenab) for Pak while India retained rights of irrigation and power generation with certain limitations on these rivers; Settlement of differences and disputes coming under the Article IX of IWT; Permanent Indus Commission, comprising high level technical representatives, responsible to resolve differences and smooth implementation; the matter can be taken upto govt level; then neutral expert by parties or if failed then WB will appoint; decision of expert would be binding; if expert rules that conflict should be treated as a dispute then it haas to be submitted to a court of arbitration whose award is final.

#### ILAW perspective

* IWT has been criticized for failing to give a mechanism for the redressal of Pakistan’s grievances. In the two disputes that did reach conclusion in case of the Baglihar Decision33 and the Kishenganga Arbitration,34 Pakistan was not able to succeed in its claim fully. This, compared to similar claims that India makes against China with respect to China’s undue construction of dams, raises a question that if Pakistan’s concerns are so legitimate so as to be echoed by India itself, why is the IWT insufficient in addressing them? It must not be forgotten that IWT does not waive the rights of Pakistan beyond the IWT. 7
* Regarding the relationship between the IWT and CIL, the IWT can be, and has been, interpreted in light of CIL. However, CIL can only be used to interpret the IWT before a neutral expert or an arbitrator, and not to supersede the IWT. Particularly, where a direct conflict arises in CIL and IWT, the IWT will ultimately prevail.39 Pakistan’s concerns regarding the IWT and its consistent frustration with respect to unresolved water disputes,40 coupled with limitations inherent to the treaty and India’s uncooperative response that has now escalated to threats of breaching the IWT, calls for an analysis of whether India can act as such. Did IWT not bind the parties? Would India be obligated under CIL more than it is already under the IWT to cooperate and ensure equitable sharing with Pakistan?
* In light of these political developments creating uncertainty between Pakistan and India, and legal developments in CIL, the need to analyse the transboundary water rights of Pakistan beyond the IWT becomes imminent. For brevity, the rights of Pakistan under the IWT and its relationship with CIL must be mentioned, before undertaking a detailed analysis of CIL applicable to the Indus basin independent of the IWT. Under the treaty, Pakistan has a right to the unrestricted use of western rivers; and unrestricted use of eastern rivers, once they cross the boundary delimiting India from Pakistan.25 The right of India to western rivers exercised for the construction of hydropower projects cannot be claimed absolutely, and is subject to the right of Pakistan to a minimum flow of water.26 This minimum flow may vary for Pakistan in light of factors beyond the control of India and Pakistan, e.g. climate change. The IWT further gives Pakistan the right to exchange of data,27 to be notified when the works by India may materially affect or interfere with the flow of water in Pakistan, and to be provided relevant data in this regard as well.28 Pakistan is also entitled to peaceful means of dispute settlement, if any question, difference or dispute between the two states arises.29 Furthermore, the IWT cannot be revoked unilaterally, either by, or against Pakistan.30
* **State practice**: Every principle elucidated in CIL is also binding on India, by virtue of its own state practice as well as its claims against other states that rely on the same principles, such as China, Nepal and Bhutan, the upper riparian states to a lower riparian India. Although CIL is applicable on India even without their acceptance of the same, the active application of said principles gives Pakistan the right to bring up the principle of estoppel in their cases. Applying the principle of estoppel,49 whatever stance is taken by India against the lower riparian states, such as Pakistan and Bangladesh, would contribute to its implied acceptance of the same treatment by China, Bhutan and Nepal.50 It is interesting to note that the claims India makes against China, regarding the construction of dams and diversion of waters that can cause appreciable harm, are both arguments that Pakistan has, time and again, propounded against India.
* **Right to share Indus basin**: The first and foremost right of Pakistan vis a vis the Indus basin under CIL is the entitlement to share the basin with India as an equal, with or without the IWT, or any other agreement. This is evidenced through Article 3 of the Watercourses Convention which states that, watercourse states52 who are not parties to a water-sharing agreement would, nonetheless, be entitled to the rights under the convention. 6 The ICJ also held that the principle of community of interests,57 which gave equality to all riparian states (Hungary V. Slovakia) Therefore, just by virtue of being a lower riparian state, even in the absence of an agreement, Pakistan has certain rights against India in the Indus basin, and vice versa; and these rights may not be curtailed at the whim of either state.
* State Practice: India, as a lower riparian state against Nepal, has acknowledged the rights of both states to ‘equal entitlement’ of the Mahakali river in Article 3 of the Mahakali Treaty btw Nepal and India
* **Conclusion:** even though international law provides a strong set of rights to the states sharing a basin, its weakness lies in its implementation mechanisms. This absence of mandatory dispute resolution mechanism owes partly to the reluctance of India and Pakistan to ratify the UNECE Water Convention and the Watercourses Convention, both of which entail dispute resolution mechanisms.211 At most, Customary International Law imposes an obligation upon states to enter into negotiations, which must be “meaningful.”212 However, there is no mechanism for ensuring the compliance of international law **strictu sensu** in such cases in the absence of actual consent of states. Jurisdiction of judicial forums such as, the International Court of Justice213 and other judicial and quasi-judicial forums, are subject to the consent of the States agreeing to approach or establish the same.214 Therefore, if any dispute arises in the absence of IWT, then Pakistan and India would have no recourse but to rely on their diplomatic skillset to negotiate a truce or refer the matter to an impartial forum with mutual consent.

#### Way forward

* Transboundary water-sharing in South Asia has always been fraught with contentious relationships with bilateral water treaties focusing on national interest, characterised by lack of trust leading to fragmented management of transboundary resources keeping water availability, use and governance in the HKH region in a constant state of flux.
* However, the increasing gap between demand and supply, impacts of climate change and scientific consensus on the need for limiting warming to within 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2030 makes it imperative to elevate climate diplomacy in South Asia to a higher level of engagement, taking it beyond the pale of other political disputes to redirect water management from conflict between riparian states towards productive cooperation for building trust, sharing knowledge and devising mechanisms for achieving mutually beneficial goals.
* Leveraging cooperation at all levels between science, society and policy for a climate security nexus in South Asia is very important to adapt to uncertain global changes for a regional climate of peace and political stability.
* Taking a regional approach to water security is a big ask but not an impossible one. There is a need for redefining the contours of regional water security in ways that are politically acceptable, technically viable and legally correct to counter the formidable and immediate threats posed by climate change.
* both the countries have found themselves in water conflict due to common factors of population growth, urbanization and unproductive polices to tackle the crises. Additionally, enormous impacts of climate change have also resulted in speedy melting of Himalayan glaciers, which has added to the woes of existing water stresses. The abrogation of IWT cannot give security to existing water crisis, therefore, comprehensive plan of action is suggested.
* It is a good omen that the 117th meeting of Indus Water Commissioners was held in Islamabad earlier this month, and it reiterated the resolve to carry on the spirit of cooperation despite reservations on a host of technicalities. Commissioners PK Saxena and Syed Mehar Ali Shah reportedly pondered over water-related irritants, and sophisticatedly brought to the fore their responses over Kiru Hydroelectric Project in Chenab and India’s new run-of-the-river small projects on its western rivers.
* President Eisenhower of the US had rightly termed the accord “one bright spot in a very depressing world picture that we see so often”. Let the trust endure on.

### Issues

#### General

* The new agro-industries influence water decision-making at all levels. The result? Water prices are static like the fuel needle of a non-moving car.
* Instead of finding economic virtues in water saving and efficiency, we continue to invest in infrastructure that only help us imagine abundance.
* The WAA has left it to the Indus River System Authority (Irsa) to figure out how to manage lesser quantities in various months for various crops. The WAA has, however, left two basic questions unaddressed: i) what if there was no agreement on the construction of new reservoirs, and ii) how the growing scarcity would be managed in the interim. Real life is more complex: the WAA had not envisioned the prospect of a Seraiki province in southern Punjab and the political importance of providing water through the Taunsa-Panjnad canal during acute scarcity. Also, it was not envisioned that Punjab would lose most of its 9.3 MAF water to India from the Beas, Ravi and Sutlej, leaving about 3 MAF — and that too mostly during the monsoons — to become even less flexible with Sindh in the Irsa meetings.
* Concurrently, Irsa took several last-minute but important decisions that in future can serve as the basis for long-term scarcity management by the provinces. This includes facilitating early sowing of wheat in Sindh during April and disallowing rice cultivation in the areas between the Guddu and Sukkur barrages. In fact, long-term scarcity management would require two additional steps. First, phasing out of paddy between the Sukkur and Kotri barrages; second, curtailing direct outlets downstream Guddu, particularly in the upper districts of Jacobabad and Sukkur on the one hand, and Khairpur and Naushahro Feroze on the other. Over-consumption there leaves precious little for the districts in the lower regions.
* The accord is based only on the principle of historical usage for water distribution. Punjab and Sindh need to work together to create policy space by exploring such actions as i) economic efficiency in usage including water trade, ii) population size that relies on surface water supply, iii) special needs because of droughts, iv) environmental flows for the delta and creation of wetlands, and v) climate-induced variations in water flows.
* The **IMF** has warned that since water is a key input in agriculture, water shortages and variability can lead to food insecurity, raise production costs and constrain productivity growth.

#### Heath

* The water crisis is a **health crisis**. Nearly 1 million people die each year from water, sanitation and hygiene-related diseases which could be reduced with access to safe water or sanitation. Every 2 minutes a child dies from a water-related disease. Time spent gathering water or seeking safe sanitation accounts for billions in **lost economic opportunities**. $260 billion is lost globally each year due to lack of basic water and sanitation. **Water.org**
* According to the World Health Organizations (WHO), the requirement of water for a good human health is approximately 100 litres per person per day, which is the basic right of every individual.
* Food security points
* Climate change is only one threat. Pollution is also exacerbating the water crisis. Unsafe drinking water is a potentially fatal reality for people around the world. Virtually all freshwater sources are now contaminated to some extent; not even Mount Everest’s snow-caps have been spared.
* Water pollution comes from many sources including pesticides and fertilizers that wash away from farms, untreated human wastewater, and industrial waste. Even groundwater is not safe from pollution, as many pollutants can leach into underground aquifers.
* According to the results of tests carried out by the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources on underground water in 29 cities, there are 20 cities where water collected from various sources was found to be more than 50pc unsafe for drinking.

#### Food security

* serious threat to its food security and rural livelihoods because of escalating water shortages; Punjab, more than half of the province’s share of water in agriculture is lost in canals and watercourses, while inefficient conventional irrigation method of flooding the fields also result in wastage. The water scarcity for agriculture is projected to increase manifold in the years to come as droughts become a norm in different regions — especially Balochistan — because of the changing climate, which calls for the adoption of efficient irrigation systems and better farm technology to reduce water losses and enhance water productivity for improved crop quality and higher yields. This is exactly the area where the **World Bank** has been supporting the Punjab government since 2013 to provide farmers with high-efficiency irrigation systems, including drip irrigation and sprinkler systems, and improving watercourses. Besides, it is helping the government in laser land levelling for minimising crop losses because of uneven fields and creating jobs in villages.

*Agriculture*

* One kilogram of cotton, which is enough to produce one T-shirt and a pair of jeans, consumes 13,000 litres of fresh water. Sugar cane is another water-intensive crop that is grown all the year round. The average water requirement of sugar cane is more than the combined average water requirement of wheat, maize and cotton. In times to come, with static water supply but growing demand, Pakistan will have to find alternative crops for export that are not water-intensive.

#### Climate’s impact on water

* The debate surrounding the water scarcity has recently started taking into account two main factors heavily influencing the issue – climate change and environmental degradation. **Climate change** is affecting the available water resources through rise in temperature, which will increase demand for water in future. Increasing seawater intrusion in coastal areas is threatening cities located in the low-lying region. Changes in monsoon rainfall patterns, which is influenced by climate changes, resulted in the emergence of two distinct weather pattern - heavy rainfall in shorter period of time (causing floods) and no rainfall for longer period of time (causing droughts). Increasing temperature in future will result in more intense droughts which are already impacting several regions in Sindh and Balochistan.
* Furthermore, mangrove forests are depleting due to the lack of freshwater flow to the delta region. Not only do the trees sustain a diverse ecosystem and support the fishing community, they have also protected the coast from natural disasters and soil erosion for centuries. Now, in a span of a few decades, thousands of acres of land have been lost to the sea, particularly in Badin and Thatta districts. According to researchers, it will take just another few years before other parts of the region are submerged under water, unless the present, self-destructive patterns are reversed.
* For years, local and international water experts, including the World Bank, have been warning Pakistan that the unusually fast depletion of the Himalayan glaciers, low storage capacity, unwise use and other related uncertainties would lead to acute water shortage and crisis – flood and drought – in the next 10–40 years.

*Feudalism & elitism*

* influential farmers, some of whom are members of the provincial assembly, are diverting a sufficient quantity of water, and in some cases, even more than their needs, to their fields depriving small landholders, especially those at the tail end of the canals, of an adequate amount of irrigation water. They are doing this with the help of expensive motors and electricity generators. Cultivators, low in terms of landholding, cannot afford these costly machines and equipment. Small farmers fear this selfish practice would reduce their yields and thus their earnings.
* Powerful feudal lords and chieftains divert water to their fields when there is scarcity of water, and in times of floods, the high and mighty reroute the excess water to the lands of small farmers. The most blatant instance of this was witnessed during the floods of 2010 and 2011 in the province.

*Scarcity*

* **By 2050**, up to 5 bil, more than half the world’s people will be water-insecure; in dry regions, climate change will aggravate scarcity. **The UN**
* Our own National Water Policy states that the “water crisis is descending like a thunderbolt”.
* **Per capita water availability** has been going down. In 1947, it was 5,600 cubic metres per person; today it is slightly above 1,000 cubic metres. DAWN
* A new report of the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) says that the country will **approach absolute water scarcity** **by 2025**.
* Pakistan remains **one of the top three water-intensive countries** in the world. **The Tribune**
* The UN estimates that water demand in Pakistan is growing at an annual rate of 10 per cent. **UNESCO**
* Pakistan’s live **water storage capacity** that used to be 16.26-million-acre feet (MAF) in 1976 has reduced to 13.68MAF, which equals to **only 30 days carryover capacity**. The international standard is 120 days**. WAPDA**
* Presently, several parts of the Indus Delta face dire water shortages, which has led to the intrusion of saline seawater onto the land, wreaking havoc on the soil, ecology and economy of the region. In a cruel irony, residents are deprived of water, and simultaneously threatened by it — caught between the devil and the deep blue sea, **between scarcity and excess**.
* Due to availability of bottled water and home filtration systems, the decision makers have clean water and an abundance of it. Those who do not, are not in a position to influence the policymakers.
* The irrigation department of Punjab has stated that while in the 1990s, water could be extracted in the province at a depth of 20–40 feet below ground, in the 2010s, drilling has to take place at close to 800 feet below ground. Additionally, this indiscriminate pumping and heavy use of pesticides are contaminating the aquifer, where tube-well salinity is increasing. It is estimated that 14 per cent of the groundwater reserves are highly saline, unfit for drinking purposes as well as irrigation, and there is now saline water intrusion into mined aquifers.
* Groundwater is akin to the family gold – to be used as a last resort when there are problems with surface supplies. In Pakistan, however, groundwater has been used indiscriminately leading to falling water tables. New NASA satellite data indicates that the Indus basin aquifer is now the second most stressed in the world. This rapid depletion of the aquifer means that Pakistan does not have much groundwater in reserve that can be used as the river system becomes more stressed.
* Anyone wanting to witness the results of over-exploitation of groundwater and unregulated construction wreaking havoc on natural waterways need only visit Quetta and its surrounding areas. The once abundant orchards are now few and far between. The iconic Hanna lake presents a picture of desolation for most part of the year.
* The underground water level in Pakistan’s second largest city, **Lahore**, is depleting fast and is a forecast to meet ground zero situation by 2025 like Cape Town.
* Over the years, the water mafias in Karachi and other urban cities of Sindh have earned billions by creating artificial water shortages for households, who were then compelled to buy water from water tank suppliers. The same psyche has been at work in stealing irrigation water.
* Another kind of water theft is when members of the ruling elite, top military and civil officials as well as law enforcement agencies, do not pay their water bills. It was reported that the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) was owed as much as Rs 40 million for the water tanker service such ‘influential’ had availed. **Dawn**
* The irrigation department of Punjab province claims that it has reduced irrigation water losses by 10% by implementing the latest scientific techniques and better management practices. Several projects to cut water losses are underway, including one in the Potohar region that depends mostly on rains for irrigation. Several other water conservation projects are at different stages of completion.
* It is unfortunate that no government has had the vision to prioritise water governance as part of its national security strategy. According to **Indus River System Authority IRSA**, Pakistan loses $29 billion per annum on unutilised water falling into the Arabian Sea. The authority believes that “we and our coming generations would die of hunger if we do not build dams.”
* Sedimentation is also adding to the existing problem. According to a Dawn report on Pakistan’s irrigation problems, Tarbela dam has lost nearly 30 per cent of its storage capacity since the late 1970s, and now retains so little water that irrigation supplies are threatened. The Tarbela Dam, which used to serve the agricultural needs up to mid-June, when the next filling cycle starts, now regularly hits dead level by early or mid-March.
* Pakistan’s water stress is projected to increase in the next few years. Climate change resulting in prolonged droughts in some regions like Balochistan, erratic weather patterns, frequent flooding, a shrinking winter season and heatwaves in cities like Karachi is aggravating the situation. Dams may be important to trap floodwaters for future use in years of scarcity. But they are not the solution to our stressed water economy. Pakistan remains one of the top three water-intensive countries in the world. This means we can overcome water shortages significantly by conserving this depleting resource through reduction in its wasteful use, especially by farmers, who are the largest users of water. Additionally, the water accord needs to be renegotiated to secure the independent buy-in of all provinces.
* As Punjab faces shortage of canal water, farmers also use underground water through tube wells to irrigate their lands. Over the years, the province has seen a quantum jump in the number of tube wells. From 10,000 tube wells in 1947 this number has grown to 1.2 million. A large amount of canal and subsoil water is lost on the way to fields because water is absorbed by muddy watercourses in the absence of brick-paved channels. At present, 11 MAF water is lost due to muddy watercourses and 21 MAF is wasted because of uneven soil. The provincial government has launched a project to brick-lined water channels. The existing irrigation system in the province is inadequate to meet the present challenges. The government has also introduced other measures to conserve water such as drip irrigation technique and levelling land using laser technology.

*Economy*

* According to **Indus River System Authority IRSA**, Pakistan loses $29 billion per annum on unutilised water falling into the Arabian Sea.
* Pakistan’s **productivity per unit of water and land** is one of the lowest in the world. India and China have reduced substantial amount of water usage in the agricultural sector and enhanced productivity manifold. Economic Survey
* Long-term impacts of water scarcity issue will result in loss of employment opportunities for people employed in the agricultural sector (especially those associated with cotton production) and industrial sector with the textile industry facing the most severe brunt. The issue is increasing the already widened gap between rich and poor regarding accessibility to drinking water.

*Conflicts*

* A tracking of **water conflicts** maintained by the Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment and Security reports 466 conflicts since 2010.
* Over 260 river basins are shared by two or more countries. In the absence of strong institutions and agreements, changes within a basin can lead to **transboundary tensions**. When major projects proceed without regional collaboration, they can become a point of conflicts, heightening regional instability. The Parana La Plata, the Aral Sea, the Jordan and the Danube may serve as examples. **World water Council**
* According to a recent independent report commissioned by members of the G7, the mounting pressures on available water for Pakistan could translate into political instability and security risk. water stress has the potential of being the tipping point and accelerating Pakistan’s trajectory towards the abyss.

*Energy shortages*

* Electricity supply this summer is better than what it had been for the past many years. However, it has deteriorated in June, and this trend began in the middle of May, the two hottest months when temperature soars above 45 degrees Celsius in most parts of the country. The major reason given by the authorities is a shortfall of 6,000 megawatts in hydropower production due to silting of Tarbela Dam.

#### Pak-Afghan

* Pakistan and Afghanistan share nine rivers with annual flows of about 18.3MAF of which the Kabul river accounts for an average flow of 16.5 MAF. At present there is no institutionalized framework of cooperation for sharing of water from the Kabul river between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Attempts to draft a water treaty failed in 2003 and 2006. This has assumed importance because Afghanistan plans to build twelve dams on this river with the help of the World Bank and the international community including India to generate 1,177 MW of electricity. When constructed, there will be a total water storage capacity of 4.7 MAF. Since the entire flow of the Kabul river has been factored in by Pakistan as part of its own water resources, its fear is that these dams could lead to a 16–17 per cent drop in water supply from Afghanistan, which would seriously affect its own water availability. 18 Pakistan will be especially vulnerable because this drop will occur during the winter when the flow of the Indus is already low.

#### Inter-Provincial discords

* The conflict between Pakistan’s provinces regarding water, especially between Sindh and Punjab, dates back to the 1870s, when Punjab started constructing irrigation infrastructure on Indus river. Several commissions were appointed during British rule and subsequently, and several reports have been issued on this complex issue. The latest has been the Water Apportionment Accord (WAA) signed by the chief ministers of all four provinces of Pakistan on 16 March 1991. This accord replaced previous agreements to distribute the Indus waters among the provinces and command areas. The Indus River System Authority (IRSA) was created as the regulatory authority for monitoring and distribution of the water resources of the Indus in accordance with the WAA.
* Punjab and K-P are upper riparian provinces whereas Sindh is downstream or lower riparian and often complains about the shortage of water from the Indus system. The two major water conflicts that exist within Pakistan over the division of water and sharing of water shortages are between Punjab and Sindh, and between Sindh and Balochistan. Sindh as a lower riparian is in discord with Punjab, and Balochistan as a lower riparian of Sindh clashes with it over availability of water.
* The total amount of water available for distribution in the Indus river system as per the WAA of 1991 was 104 MAF. An extra 10 MAF was added as anticipated flows after building additional storages. The accord thus divides a total of 114 MAF but currently 114 MAF is not available, and this has led to the dispute between the provinces. Punjab has argued that allocations should be made according to average percentages of historical use. On the other hand, Sindh argues that divisions must be made according to the same percentages as the accord allocations, with all provinces sharing an equal percentage of the shortfall.
* However, it is not only Sindh that has a problem. IN Recent past, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) government claimed from the Centre Rs 120 billion as compensation for use of its share of water for two decades (1992–93 to 2012–13) by Punjab and Sindh because of lack of infrastructure (Centre rejected). Not to be left out, Balochistan has also complained that it has been using only 3.05 MAF out of its water share of 3.87 MAF since 1992 due to infrastructure constraints and, therefore, it should be immediately paid a compensation of Rs 2 billion to complete rehabilitation and improvement of its existing canals and drainage system.
* The inter-provincial discord over water is best represented by the controversy over the construction of the Kalabagh dam. While Punjab wants the dam, the other three provinces have serious reservations about its impact on them. In fact, the three provincial assemblies have passed resolutions opposing its construction. Several leaders from these provinces have even warned that moves to construct the dam will lead to the breakup of Pakistan.
* The national shortages for the summer crops are now estimated to have jumped from earlier projections of 10pc to nearly 30pc with the drop in temperature in the catchment areas. This is forcing Irsa, the sole arbiter of water disputes under the 1991 Water Apportionment Accord WAA, to release water from Mangla for Sindh’s cotton crop as the provincial government accused Irsa and Punjab of cutting its water share. Punjab is unhappy with Irsa’s move, arguing that the failure to fill the reservoir could augment water scarcity for both Kharif and Rabi crops in the province. It says Irsa should adjust water distribution among the provinces in accordance with the new estimates of shortages and available river inflows.
* During the last 80 years, water flow to the lower Indus Basin has declined by over 80pc, resulting in a permanent crisis in agriculture and steadily increasing seawater intrusion. Sindh cries for more equitable water sharing. The demands from mainstream political parties like the PPP now include the permanent closure of the Chashma-Jhelum link canal, abandoning the construction of the Taunsa-Panjnad link canal, and revisiting Irsa’s mandate to curtail the irrigation authority’s role. The annual filling and release of waters from Mangla Dam has become politicised and needs an agreement on transparent mechanisms. Mismanagement in Mangla, it is claimed, has created severe water shortage downstream from the Sukkur and Kotri barrages.
* Furthermore, the Council of Common Interest (CCI) under the Constitution of Pakistan was designated to hear any complaints about water interference. The CCI and the 1991 accord were meant to create a foundation for collective inter-provincial action on water. However, due to various factors including the wide gap between Punjab and the other provinces, the same was not successful.

### Solutions

* **Grey water**, another name for naturally recycled water, is the way to go. The first stroke-of-pen reform governments across the country can undertake is to make the construction of grey-water tanks mandatory for any site plan approval. This means all the water a household consumes with the exception of flush tanks will be stored in grey-water tanks instead of being flushed into sewers. Untreated grey water is not potable but with a few precautions is fine for gardens, lawns and myriad national obsessions like washing cars and driveways.
* Another building control requirement can be **rainwater harvesting**. This could be very helpful in the areas receiving regular monsoon rains. Simply put, all rainwater drains on the property will flow into the grey-water tank instead of being connected to the sewerage mains.
* Prime Minister Imran Khan has announced that his government would build 10 dams in the near future to counter the threat of a looming water crisis in the country. The construction of new dams is imperative especially in view of the erratic rainfall patterns, induced by climate change, the country has been experiencing in recent years. In some years, there is scanty rain while in others there is excess of it and a large amount of which flows into the sea. Also, our rivers receive around 80% of water inflow within three to four months. All this makes a strong case for increasing the number of dams in the country. Dams will prevent water from ending up in the sea, and the water thus saved will be available for irrigation and domestic purposes and for generating clean electricity.
* The first question that arises whenever the need to increase the green cover, especially in urban areas like Karachi, is broached is ‘but where will the water come from?’ The answer again is grey water. However, this time around it requires some treatment process albeit natural. A sewage treatment plant (STP) using the reedbed method with a capacity to turn 100,000 gallons of wastewater into reusable water costs around Rs3 million. The cost for producing 100,000 gallons of treated water daily would come to around Rs5,000. This water is perfectly suitable for various purposes including gardening and construction.
* The PM is optimistic that the construction of Mohmand and Bhasha dams would greatly help overcome shortage of irrigation and drinking water and add to power generation. A sufficient quantity of irrigation water would increase food production and save the precious foreign exchange now spent on import of food grains. The construction of new dams would also create many jobs. **The Tennessee Valley Authority of the US, set up in 1933**, as part of the programme to overcome the effects of the Great Depression, is a good example of the multiple benefits accruing from dams. Projects launched under the Authority controlled floods, helped improve irrigation, increased electricity generation and created huge job opportunities.
* Water is a **key prerequisite for attaining many of the Sustainable Development Goals**. In the face of the current challenges (fresh) water should be conceptualised as a global common good and global water governance should contribute to its protection. Within South Asia the Hindu Kush Himalayas (HKH) is not just a vast complex of mountains, it is also one of the most vibrant, distinct and intricate mountain systems in the world that produces one of the world’s largest freshwater supplies and holds the biggest reserves of water in the form of ice and snow outside the polar region.
* The HKH region extends to about 3,500 kilometres over eight countries — Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan. It is the source of 10 major river systems, including the Indus, Ganges and the Brahmaputra.
* Accordingly, there is a strong need for collective inter-provincial action to prevent water scarcity. This requires an integrated approach beyond the mere construction of more dams such as fully implementing the 1991 accord, reconstituting the CCI or establishing an oversight committee with the authority to settle water disputes, greater allocation of resources for improved water infrastructure and capacity building of water management institutions such as IRSA.
* Furthermore, the Operating Rules formulated by IRSA lack clarity and seem to be inconsistent with the 1991 accord. The 1991 accord is inflexible in the sense that it uses the average flow of water during the 1977-1982 period to set the water allocation formula. Furthermore, it also fails to specify the rules for control structures. Hence, it would be useful to improve the operating rules within the framework of the accord.
* Inter-provincial disputes on water can be resolved by amending the 1991 accord to ensure that the provinces receive their share of water entitlement, maintain transparency and prevent wastage of water. Furthermore, it is important to that a meticulously calibrated system is put in place for measuring water inflows, storage and outflow. In addition to this, the measurement system must be audited by an impartial and independent party, and all reports should be made transparent for the public and relevant stakeholders to scrutinise. With respect to dams, the government should explore alternative options to the construction of dams on the Indus River such as water storages both on the Indus basin and outside the Indus basin. In case of constructing a dam on the Indus River, it is pertinent that the government seeks consensus from all relevant stakeholders through policy dialogue.
* In September 2020, Prime Minister Imran Khan had announced Rs1.1 trillion worth of Karachi Transformation Plan which also included the completion of **Karachi Bulk Water Supply called K-IV**. Even though K-IV, which is estimated to provide 300 million gallons of water to Karachi from Haleji Lake, will not be enough to meet the growing water needs of the city, it will certainly help fill in the gap in demand and supply of water. Karachi is the only city, after Los Angeles, which gets water from at least 100 kilometres away. Los Angeles gets water from Colorado River and Karachi from Indus and Hub rivers. It is feared that if the government fails to manage water crisis in Karachi, it may lead to large-scale urban violence.
* Agriculture: If you want to solve Pakistan’s water problems, focus on agriculture. Pakistan’s agriculture is very thirsty. No amount of direct and indirect subsidies have helped quench this thirst — it doesn’t wish to pay any taxes on water use or agricultural income. While 85m (44 pc) of the people await access to clean drinking water, planners in Islamabad keep envisioning expensive ways of subsidising irrigation water to mostly rich farmers at nominal costs. As pointed out in a recent World Bank report, only four crops (rice, wheat, sugarcane and cotton) consume 80pc water but contribute a pittance to GDP — 5pc. This poor management costs about 4pc of GDP, or around $12 billion a year. It is a damning story of elite capture.
* In return, the agriculture sector offers one of the poorest ‘crop per drop’ ratios. Comparison shows that the new Istanbul airport that has cost less than the Diamer-Basha dam, for example, will provide 225, 000 skilled jobs serving 40m passengers daily on 1,250 domestic and international flights. The return on investment on agricultural infrastructure is seldom presented in cost-benefit terms.

### Case Study of South Africa

* Cape Town’s water crisis got so bad last year that there were competitions to see who could wash their shirts the least. Restaurants and businesses were encouraging people not to flush after going to the toilet. The city was just 90 days away from turning off the taps.
* A year on, the South African city’s parched dams are now over 80% full. Water use restrictions have been relaxed. And Day Zero – the point at which Cape Town’s municipal water supply would be shut off – never came to pass.
* Reducing demand was a key priority. The City of Cape Town worked to get residents and businesses on board with a host of water-saving initiatives. People were instructed to shower for no longer than two minutes. A campaign with the slogan “If it’s yellow, let it mellow” promoted flushing the toilet only when necessary. And the use of recycled water – so-called greywater – was also pushed.

# Democracy

### Facts/stats/quotes

* On 15 September, we are marking International Day of Democracy.
* In 2020, the **Democracy Index**, published by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) since 2006, fell to its lowest-ever global level.
* A RECENT report by **Freedom House**, the US-based watchdog that assesses democratic trends around the world, has placed **Pakistan** among the top 10 countries where **digital freedoms** are being curtailed.
* Martin Luther King, Jr. said that those who want peace must learn to organize as effectively as those who want war. The same is true of democracy.
* A politician thinks of the next election, a statesman of the next generation. ~ **James Freeman, American journalist.**
* “The interests of decision-making elite in power always clashes with the interests of the people they represent” writes American historian **Jarred Diamond**, the author of the 2019 famous book Upheaval: How nations cope with crisis and change. He also writes that although the people suffer with what the elites decide and do, elites never suffer as they “insulate themselves from the consequences of their action”.
* anthropologist **Margaret Mead**, “Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”
* As **Nelson Mandela** argued in 2001, “a vibrant network and range of civil society activities and organs” is essential to “cement the foundations” of democracy.
* “IT is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.” ~ **Aristotle**

### General

* My 4 Lessons from the book, 'How Democracies Die'
* I have been reading a very interesting book, ‘How Democracies Die by Steven Levitsky, Daniel Ziblatt’. The book was written by the Harvard professors in the aftermath of Trump’s election into the Presidency.
* 1-The democratic decay of a country is a slow and gradual process. Democracies corrode and erode over the years and die a slow smothering death.
* Relevancy in the context Of Pakistan: **{military intervention}**
* 2- Incompetent political leadership which is voted into the office by ignorant masses is mainly responsible for democratic death of a country. Political incompetence is a greater threat to democracy than dictatorship.
* 3-Democracy is all about institutions. Stronger the institutions, stronger the democracy and weaker the institutions, weaker the democracy.
* 4-Greatest threats to democracies are internal, not external.
* Relevancy in the context of Pakistan: The greatest threat to democracy in Pakistan lies in form of extremism, illiteracy, lack of national cohesion, weak institutions, sectarianism and terrorism. These are all internal threats.

### Intl aspects

* The most important service that Merkel and other European leaders provided the autocratic camp, however, was their failure to confront democratic backsliding in neighboring countries such as Hungary and Poland. Over the past decade, governments in both Budapest and Warsaw have rapidly eroded the rule of law, weakened the separation of powers, undermined the free press, and rendered elections deeply unfair. Freedom House, an organization that tracks the status of democratic governance around the world, recently downgraded Hungary to “partly free”—a sad first for a member of the EU.

### Regional aspects

* Authoritarianism remains a persistent problem across much of our region, even if authoritarian tendencies exhibit themselves in different forms. In **Bangladesh**, for example, the political sphere has been dominated by two ruling dynasties with intermittent periods of military rule, and now the near chokehold of the Awami League on domestic politics since 2009.
* **India**, the largest democracy in the world, has shaken off the dynastic rule of the Congress but the country’s socio-economic and political imagination has increasingly been dominated by Hindu majoritarianism.
* In **Sri Lanka**, on the heels of the Easter bombing of 2019, we saw the return to power of the Rajapaksa brothers who had crushed the LTTE in 2009. Their comeback has given wind to ethno-nationalist Sinhalese Buddhists, whose disdain has widened from Tamil Hindus and Christians to the Muslim minority in the country.

### Issues

#### Weak accountability

* NAB cannot proceed against any person or entity who, or transaction in relation thereto, which are not directly or indirectly connected with the holder of a public office… procedural lapses in any public or governmental work, project or scheme, unless it is shown that a holder of public office or any other person has been conferred or has received any monetary or other material benefit from that particular public or governmental work.
* THE government has once again amended the NAB ordinance it had issued earlier in the month and further diluted the efficacy of this controversial accountability organisation. This latest change in the ordinance has taken away the power of removing the NAB chairman from the Supreme Judicial Council and given it to the president. Since the president acts on the advice of the prime minister, it can be deduced that the chairman of NAB will now serve, for all practical purposes, at the pleasure of the latter.
* NAB is an utter failure. It lacks transparency, autonomy and integrity. The process of appointment of its chairman has become tain­ted. Prime ministers and leaders of the opposition who selected successive NAB chiefs know they succumbed to the machinations of the string-pullers.
* “Without strong watchdog institutions, im­punity becomes the very foundation upon which systems of corruption are built. And if impunity is not demolished, all efforts to bring an end to corruption are in vain,” said Nobel laureate Rigob­e­r­­ta Menchu.

#### Media censoring

* Social media digital curt ailing;
* Electronic media Censor
  + A RECENT report by **Freedom House**, the US-based watchdog that assesses democratic trends around the world, has placed Pakistan among the top 10 countries where digital freedoms are being curtailed.

#### Frequent military intervention

#### Role of major powers in weakening

* Military govts legitimacy
* The Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas were elected by every possible definition of democracy, in Egypt and Gaza respectively. Before that Muslim nationalists were elected in Algeria. Their victories were annulled, not very different from the Anglo-American coup staged in the 1950s against Iran’s elected former prime minister Mohammad Mosaddegh. He had nationalised the oil industry.

#### Weak institutions

* Prominent military influence
* Our accountability mechanism is rot, judiciary is overburdened, the Election Commission is resisting modernisation and Civil Service is in serious want of reforms. Consequently democracy in the country has been subdued by the non-democratic forces.

#### incompetent political leadership

* absence of local govt bodies
* strong academic background
  + “The interests of decision-making elite in power always clashes with the interests of the people they represent” writes American historian **Jarred Diamond**, the author of the 2019 famous book Upheaval

#### Political culture of pak

Antony lieven book points

Even after 74 years of existence, Pakistan’s political culture still reflects feudal, tribal and ultra-conservative characteristics. Consequently, politics in Pakistan is the domain of family fiefdoms, feudalism, business and clergy elites. A positive transformation of Pakistan’s political culture is an uphill task and cannot take place unless there is a change in the mindset of those who wield political power. The reason for the dearth of good governance, rule of law, the justice system and across-the-board accountability is the lack of proper education, integrity, prudence and professionalism among the lawmakers. It took the West several centuries to develop its political culture based on democracy, political pluralism, integrity, accountability and professionalism. A society that lacks a proper work ethic and cannot differentiate between right and wrong cannot have a viable political culture.

According to Dr Saeed Shafqat, a renowned political scientist of Pakistan, political culture means “a set of beliefs, attitudes, values and orientations towards political objects in a given political system. These political objects, in turn, may be identified as political parties, various types of elites (i.e. political professional, religious, financial, military, bureaucratic) autonomous groups, social classes, political institutions and so on.”

##### Colonial mentality

* Bureaucracy’s authoritative role

##### Dynastic politics

##### Deepening schisms based on ethnicity

* Ptm; bla; Sindh

##### Political victimization

* Using NAB

##### Religious fault lines

* Shia-Sunni divide
* extremists

##### Illiterate electorate

the illiterate electorate is kept deliberately illiterate which is happy praising, admiring, clapping and voting a political elite to power which like the Mughals is very rich but is intellectually very ordinary and politically mediocre. Politics in Pakistan continues to stumble backwards because of Mir Jaffer-like intrigues.

##### Constituency politics

* Members of parliament have a responsibility to the people who elected them; to do the job for which their constituents have sent them to the legislature. They have a responsibility to the country’s taxpayers too. After all it is taxpayers’ money that pays for their salaries and the many perks they enjoy. Therefore, they also have a responsibility to the country, not just to their political constituency.

##### Regulation of Political Finance

* THE regulation of **political finance** (PF) offers one of the greatest challenges to democracies around the world. Political parties, elected legislators and governments can become hostage to powerful and extremely rich interest groups, if political finance is not effectively regulated and institutions entrusted with the task don’t have robust capacity to enforce the regulations. It is true that political parties and election campaigns require funds for political participation and representation, but ineffective regulation of the flow of money in politics can corrupt political institutions and lead to political corruption and damage public trust in democratic institutions and processes.

##### Polarization

###### Electoral malpractice

* Pakistan’s political system biggest failure? Inability to hold credible and transparent elections. Why? No consensus among political parties on the reforms required to safeguard against electoral malpractice. Why? Acute polarization, a hallmark of country’s politics, possibly the biggest hurdle that stops political stakeholders from sitting across the table.

###### Fake news

* Fake news: a term for misinformation and disinformation popularised by former US president Trump to delegitimise media criticism against him
* Connection btw Polarized politics and fake news. How? in polarised society and politics people choose to believe what their partisan side transmits or what accords with their own views. They only listen to news media or follow online sites which echo their own bias.

###### Low Political discourse

* THE quality of political discourse in our country has plunged to a new low. In the current climate of toxicity, lawmakers, ministers and prominent politicians don’t think twice before uttering profanities, striking one another and using disgusting language be it on the floor of the National Assembly or on the set of a TV talk show. In our highly polarised political environment, criticism is no longer constructive. It is personal and nothing is off limits. Political opponents treat each other like enemies, and deliberating in good faith is increasingly becoming a rarity.
* The government must realise the cost at which this polarising politics will come. By using such tactics, and viewing politics as a blood sport, our leaders are letting down the people instead of rendering the public service that is required of them. Such antagonism against political rivals will promote intolerance within society as well, something we witnessed in the Daska by-election. With a general election scheduled in two years, the leaders of all political parties should know that hateful rhetoric and toxic speeches can trigger political violence.
* Decency must return to politics, otherwise our already polarised society will continue its descent into political chaos. The ruling party must take the lead in setting the tone for mature politics, and base criticism of its rivals on substance rather than resorting to name-calling and personal attacks. It cannot continue to laud and reward such behaviour. By deploying these tactics, politicians appeal to their voters but do little to solve their problems. Healthy debates and criticism are hallmarks of a democracy. Sadly, there is no sign of either in our political discourse. Our political leaders should correct themselves before we reach a point of no return.

###### Unparliamentary conduct

* Of course, it is the deepening political polarisation in the country which often drives unparliamentary conduct. The unrestrained and intemperate language used by many MPs is a reflection of this as well as the dominant political culture that sees the ethic of war — to subdue the ‘enemy’ — rather than the ethic of competition as their guiding ‘principle’. This rules out efforts to engage rivals or show them any respect.
* What gets lost in this deeply polarised environment is the obligation to work parliament in the public interest. If parliament’s role is to legislate, debate and inform, then disorderly behaviour is tantamount to a dereliction of duty and responsibility. Political leaders and members of the assemblies never cease to declare their commitment to parliament’s supremacy, but these claims sound hollow coming from those who engage in rowdy behaviour on the floor of the House.
* if the ruling party treats parliament as a means only to maintain the government in power rather than as an instrument of governance this has a bearing on parliament’s functioning. Its role as a forum to initiate and shape laws, articulate and debate policy is left diminished. When the leader of the House barely comes to parliament this not only signals lack of interest but also sets an example for senior ministers to routinely skip attending the Assembly.

###### Reliance on ordinances

* Lawmaking by executive fiat also marginalises parliament’s role. The PTI government has relied more on promulgating ordinances for its legislative agenda than legislating by parliament. It may be following an inglorious tradition but it has now beaten the record of two predecessor governments in issuing ordinances, according to an assessment by Pildat. The great value of parliamentary debate is that it mobilises consensus, builds legitimacy for government measures and galvanises support for its policies. Lawmaking by ordinance denudes the government of these benefits and prevents wider ownership of laws that are decreed in this manner or rushed through parliament without discussion.
* THE ECP’s apprehension about the new ordinance that amends the election law is understandable. The controversial move paves the way for parliamentarians and elected office-holders to campaign during elections, making it very easy for the state machinery to be used to influence the outcome of the polls.
* Since coming to power in 2018, the PTI has regrettably placed greater reliance on presidential ordinances to bring in laws of its own liking. By one reckoning, this government has introduced more than 75 such measures since 2018.
* It is true that the Constitution asserts that if the president is “satisfied that circumstances exist which render it necessary to take immediate action”, he may promulgate a law through an ordinance. But this provision exists in anticipation of an extraordinary situation and cannot be a substitute for the process of debate, consideration and voting that any draft law put before parliament undergoes.

###### Flawed opposition

* The opposition too has an obligation to participate with earnestness in parliamentary proceedings. But the major opposition parties have not engaged in a sustained or consistent way in the Assembly. They have often swung between boycotts, walkouts, disruptive actions and even threats to resign from membership. The opposition should use parliament as a forum to articulate policy alternatives and present solutions to national problems in addition to subjecting government measures to critical scrutiny. Irrespective of how treasury benches act, opposition members can seize the initiative by proposing legislation, initiate debate on key issues and vigorously perform the function of oversight of executive actions.

###### Talk shows as a substitute for parliament

* There is another reason for the diminished role of parliament as a debating chamber. 24/7 television news channels with their proliferation of talk shows have increasingly become the main platform for political debate. Appearing on television gives instant, high visibility, and is therefore prioritised over Assembly attendance by most political leaders. This affects parliament’s deliberative role. Media engagement is of course essential in politics today but that should not mean lawmakers treat television appearances as a substitute for parliamentary duties.

###### Lack of quorum

* LACK of **quorum** has become a chronic problem for the present National Assembly which is in the process of becoming a redundant institution. It is also a matter of concern that this should be happening at a time when the fourth Assembly is moving towards the completion of its five-year term. In its report on the completion of the third parliamentary year of the National Assembly, Pildat, an independent forum focusing on democracy and governance in Pakistan, stated that the Lower House “failed to see any improvement in the attendance of members, including Prime Minister Imran Khan, as 24 out of the 79 total sittings were adjourned due to lack of quorum”.
* It appears that the lawmakers have lost interest and faith in the institution perhaps because of the government’s heavy dependence on ordinances instead of parliament for lawmaking and taking key policy decisions on other forums. Although ensuring quorum — for which the presence of 86 members, or one-fourth, of the 342-member House is required — is primarily the responsibility of the government, the opposition has frequently used the lack of it as a means of disrupting proceedings even during Question Hour. It is time for Prime Minister Imran Khan to intervene in his capacity as the Leader of the House. If he himself does not have time for parliament, he must at least issue directives to his ministers and the party’s chief whip to ensure the presence of at least the required number of members to keep the parliamentary system functional and prevent the alienation of Pakistanis from the democratic process which may well be the wish of certain elements that are against democracy.

###### How Parliament should be?

five features that a modern democratic parliament must possess.

* Socially and politically representative of diverse people and protect all members, especially minorities and other vulnerable elements of society. Although the authors of the article find the existing arrangements in Pakistan adequate, they suggest parliament could be made more inclusive by reserving a small number of seats for farmers, industrial workers, students and people with disabilities;
* Transparent in the conduct of business and open to the media;
* Accessible to the people, including civil society, associations and the youth;
* Accountable (ie its members) to the electorate;
* Effective when it performs its legislative and oversight functions in accordance with the people’s needs and aspirations and keeps in mind a proper comprehension of future generation’s needs.

### Challenges

* Gdp nahi; infrastructural paucity
* Strong influence; paisa family
* Petty interests
  + A politician thinks of the next election, a statesman of the next generation. ~ James Freeman, American journalist.
* Political interference in bureaucracy
* Resources aur power ki game local govt
* Constiututional roles ki violation
  + Judicial activism
  + Military intervention
* Security dilemma
* patriarchy

### Solutions

* Education
  + Leaders bhi educated houn; electorate bhi
* Strengthening Intra party democracy
* Bipartisanship
  + “IT is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.” ~ Aristotle
  + Another challenge is to address dysfunctional political polarization. There is a big difference between political opposition and political sabotage. Responsible politicians represent their constituents’ interests and demands. But they also work with (willing) opponents to govern effectively. Attempting to destroy those who disagree is an affront to democracy. But even trying to thwart all initiatives or legislative proposals by opponents is a recipe for democratic erosion.
* Political etiquettes
  + The National Assembly speaker has set up a council of senior parliamentarians to get members of the house to adhere to democratic and parliamentary norms. The effort must be praised. All too often, the National Assembly descends into chaos, with language and actions that are embarrassing, to say the least. Uncouth behaviour also goes across party lines. While some may misbehave more than others, any amount of bad behaviour should be intolerable. The floor has, over the years, been used to deliver various “sexist, religious or ethnic slogans” that the council has been instructed to help avoid.
* Bureaucratic reforms
* Set up and empower local govt bodies
  + anthropologist Margaret Mead, “Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”
  + unfortunately, Pakistan hasn’t been lucky enough to be blessed with competent political leadership (exceptions aside). This is mainly because of weaker Local Government institutions. LGs are said to be nurseries of democracies and in their absence where is the nascent political leadership supposed to get experience and exposure?
* Checks and balances
* Shift from geopolitics to geoeconomics
* Positive judicial role
* Gender equality
  + EVERY man may not be a misogynist, but every man benefit from a misogynist society, says Pauline Harmange, author of I Hate Men.
* Woke civil society
  + As Nelson Mandela argued in 2001, “a vibrant network and range of civil society activities and organs” is essential to “cement the foundations” of democracy.

# Israel-Palestine Conflict

### Updates

**Start reading updates from last bullet**

* Recent Ramadan Attacks
* After four years of meticulous, exhaustive study, Amnesty International recently published a report showing that in all areas under Israeli control, two very different systems exist: one that honors rights, equality, and freedom for Israeli Jews; and one that denies rights, equality, and freedom for Palestinian Arabs.
* Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas addressed UN’s 76th General Assembly and issued a bold ultimatum: Israel has one year to withdraw from the Palestinian territory it occupied in 1967, including East Jerusalem, or the Palestinians would no longer recognize Israel based on the 1967 borders, and they would take the occupation before the International Court of Justice.
* In a recent address to the UN Human Rights Council, the **special rapporteur on human rights** in the occupied Palestinian territory, Michael Lynk, said that ‘illegal’ and ‘inhumane’ Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) were tantamount to war crimes. The report has stated that Israeli settlements are illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention which is binding for all countries, signatories or not. As per articles 47 and 48, an occupying power cannot change the demographics of the occupying territory by either dispelling the indigenous population, or by importing its own population. Furthermore, the occupying power is bound to provide the territory with all provisions needed for the inhabitants’ welfare. Under this, the UN and member states have recognised Israeli expansion as illegal numerous times before too. Yet, there is no concrete action against Israel, and covert and overt support has always allowed it to carry on with impunity.
* the UK’s interference to obstruct ICC’s investigation into Israel’s war crimes; in a recent vote at the UN Human Rights Council calling for a probe into Israel’s recent atrocities, India chose to abstain; Yasser Arafat calling Indira Gandhi his ‘sister’; Israel bombing building stationing AP, Al-jazeera
* Palestinian citizens faced off against Israeli security forces over access to the Al Aqsa mosque; far-right Jewish group staged a provocative march in the disputed city in which extremists chanted “death to Arabs”.

### Background

* Territorial dispute; religious and historical significance to all Abrahamic religions; Book (The Jewish State by Theodor Herzl 1896); homeland for Jews to escape anti-Semitism in Europe; migration accelerated after the Holocaust; 1947 UNGA voted for 2 states and special intl regime for Jerusalem; Palestinian Arabs-> Jews usurped their homeland with the help of UK & US, defeat of allied arab armies-> Nakba ‘catastrophe’ uprooted 700,000 Palestinians;
* Hai khak e filistin pay yahdi ka haq Hispania pay haq q nahi ahl e arab ka
* Six-Day War 1967->Israel’s occupation of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza; UNSC resolution 242 and 338 to withdraw from occupied lands
* Current Population: Israel 9.2 mil (around 2 mil arab); 2 mil Palestinians in Gaza and 3 in West Bank

### The One-State or two Reality

#### One-state

* a single country made up of pre-1967 Israel, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank. As a placeholder name, let’s call this one, sovereign state “the Holy Land.”
* Israel as the Jewish State is not compatible with the Holy Land because the latter assumes symbols, laws, and government policies do not favor Jews over Palestinians. Yet Israel today privileges Jews in many ways, e.g. in migration, housing, employment, political rights, and treatment by security organs of the state. Why would Israeli Jews willingly forfeit those advantages?
* What, for example, would happen to the **Law of Return**, which gives a Jew from anywhere in the world the right to become a citizen of Israel?
* A parallel problem would arise with the **Palestinian right of return**. Palestinians, with backing from international law and UN resolutions, claim a right to return to their homes and land from pre-1948, the years before the establishment of the State of Israel. Over 5 million Palestinians are registered as refugees with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).
* In concrete terms, it is difficult to imagine how the shift would take place in the state’s armed forces and **security** and intelligence community. Would Palestinians be integrated into the Israeli military and police to bring the numbers closer to 50/50 and to put Palestinians in key leadership roles? Would Palestinians leaders be given access to Israel’s nuclear secrets? That seems hard to imagine and yet that is what equality mandates.
* What would equality mean in **socioeconomic terms**? In the status quo, Israeli Jews have many times the income and wealth of Palestinians.
* There are organizations that illustrate successful Arab-Jewish partnerships and the values that could help one state function amicably such as the Hand-in-Hand schools, the Oasis of Peace, the Palestine-Israel Journal, the Parents’ Circle, and Combatants for Peace. It might be difficult to prevail in the face of hyper-nationalism, but there are kernels of a mutual and stable future.
* Some political parties and leaders will make hypernationalist, ethnoreligious, or supremacist appeals that stoke inter-group animosity and conflict.
* Rashida Tlaib (Palestinian descent Congresswoman) advocated one-state sol, her rationale: soon Arab will be more numerous than Jews so it will eventually become Palestinian state. Instead Jews will push them out into Jordan where they believe Palestinians belong; apartheid state; while vaccinating it was apparent how Arabs were treated as second class citizens; Israel has now settled approx. 400000 jews in West Bank, plus another two in East Jerusalem since 1967;

#### Two-State

* A two-state solution means there would be two states, a State of Israel and a State of Palestine located alongside each other (Beauchamp 2021). The State of Israel already exists as an independent country; its borders would largely revert to what they were from 1949-1967. The State of Palestine would be located in the Gaza Strip and a contiguous section of the West Bank that encompasses 95% or more of the West Bank territory. Jerusalem would serve as the capital of both states, with Israel’s sovereign capital in West Jerusalem and Palestine’s sovereign capital in East Jerusalem, though an exact division is complicated by the Israeli settlements (neighborhoods) that ring the core of East Jerusalem. The Old City of Jerusalem, and perhaps some adjacent holy sites, would be 1) shared 2) overseen by an international committee 3) or somehow divided between the two states.
* Many members of the international community support the two-state solution, including the European Union, the League of Arab States, Russia, the United Nations, and the United States. But Israeli-Palestinian negotiators, especially in 2000-2001 (Oslo/Camp David/Taba) and 2007-2008 (Annapolis), have failed to reach agreement on a two-state solution (Pressman 2003; Avishai 2011).

#### Weighing the options

On four criteria for comparing the two options, a two-state solution probably does better on these four metrics, but neither option looks especially promising or easier to achieve.

* **clarity of blueprint**
* *One state:* the main question is whether Jewish privilege would be fully eliminated or transformed into Jewish communal rights.
* *Two-state*: where exactly would the border be drawn? How many, if any, Palestinian refugees would be allowed to move into Israel? What would be the status of Jerusalem’s Old City? What restrictions would be placed on Palestinian military and police forces?
* **Popular support among Israelis and Palestinians:** Two-state acc to surveys like *PCPSR 2021; Palestinian-Israeli Pulse 2020*
* **Political feasibility:** neither option; Likud and Israeli right; Hamas oppose two state; Israeli settlers; Palestinian refugees too oppose it; A *one-state* solution has to overcome widespread Israeli Jewish opposition why? Don’t want arab majority; why Palestinian oppose? It would be an apartheid regime
* **International support:** Two state

### Role Of US

#### Involvement

* Shortly after ww2, joined UK that recommended 100000 Holocaust survivors relocate to Palestine; first country to recognize Israel as a sovereign nation 1948; attempted to mediate Arab-Israeli conflict after 6 day war; 73 oil crisis and Kissinger shuttle diplomacy among ME capitals in 74 and 75 helped de-escalate the war; 78 Camp David Accord-> round 1 talks about Palestinians self rule in Gaza and West-Bank round 2 peace treaty btw Egypt and Israel 79; 93 Oslo peace accords signed in White house, Palestinians recognized Israel’s right to exist and Israel recognized Pal autonomy in Gaza and the West Bank; Israel-Jordan Peace treaty 94; Clinton Parameters to Trump’s Peace to Prosperity; Since 1980, US has only onmce allowed UNSC to condemn Israel for its settlement construction, in late 2016, when the outgoing Obama administration abstained from a vote on the matter; Abraham Accords
* emergency UN Security Council meeting was delayed for days, because of Washington ; when met, the US repeatedly blocked a statement that all other 14 members of the Council agreed on, which called for de-escalation, an end to evictions of Palestinian families and respect for international humanitarian law; book ‘**The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy**’ by Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt; Failure to act would call into question all of Biden’s recent criticism of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Russia, China, and others for human-rights and rule-of-law violations

#### Interest in the region

* energy resources, first soviet then Iranian influence, protection of arab allies and Israel, American jewish community, Christian evangelicals like Mike Pompeo real interest in Zionism is not Jews’ security, but Armageddon, the end of the world, which they believe will come only when all Jews are in Israel, both strong supporters of Israel; interest in resolving waned in recent years; more prominent issues like Iran; pivot to asia

#### Position on Palestinian statehood

* Biden says he supports 2-state; Bush became first to publicly endorse a Palestinian state represented in the 2003 Road Map for Peace; Obama tried but talks failed in 2014; trump’s plan dubbed Peace to Prosperity would have given Israel sovereignty an essentially undivided Jerusalem, including the Old City and the holy sites, relegating the Palestinian capital to a sliver of East Jerusalem; no right to return for refugees; 50b$ investment in developing future Palestinian state; His plan would shrink Palestinian territory in WB to 70 % as Israel annexed the Jordan valley and all its settlements there; Palestinian Authority rejected it.
* Not supported 2-state sol in UN; say decide through negotiations with Israel; standing in its way of becoming full member.

#### On Jerusalem

* Oslo Accords-> claims to Jerusalem would only be decided in final status negotiations; Presently, Israel views whole city as its capital; Palestine->East Jerusalem; for decades Us and other states having relations with Israel kept their embassies in Tel Aviv; 1995 US law requires its relocation to Jerusalem; but waived the requirement to protect national security interests of US; Trump didn’t. Biden reopen Palestinian mission in DC and US consulate in East Jerusalem closed by Trump

#### Aid to Israel and Palestine

* US foreign aid to Israel a report by CRS; Israel largest cumulative recipient of US foreign assistance since WWII; To date, the US has provided Israel $146 billion in bilateral assistance and missile defence funding; although from 1971 to 2007, Israel also received significant economic assistance; first intl operation of F-35, 5th gen stealth aircraft; has purchased 50 F-35s funded with US assistance; US military aid for Israel has been designed to maintain Israel’s “qualitative military edge (QME)” over neighbouring militaries
* Blinken announced nearly 40m$ aid to Palestine; 360m$ after Trump had cut off

### International Law

* international law has not been a dependable friend to the Palestinians (from the Balfour Declaration in 1917 to the UN Partition Plan in 1947 to UN Security Council Resolution 242 in 1967, the cornerstone of the peace process). While it has lent the Palestinians a hand by recognizing their claim to territories occupied by Israel after the 1967 war and their right to statehood
* international law has made a difference only when the outside forces that purport to uphold it—especially the permanent members of the UN Security Council—are prepared to in fact do so. the absorption of Arab East Jerusalem into Israel, U.S. recognition of Israeli sovereignty in the Golan Heights, and now de facto annexation of much of what remains of Palestinian lands
* International law has not helped solve conflicts in Crimea, Cyprus, Kashmir, Kosovo, or Nagorno-Karabakh. It was not international law that compelled Israel to withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula, southern Lebanon, or Gaza; it was a combination of power politics and diplomacy
* There are 88 Security Council resolutions on the Palestine question. The answer to the dispute, the oldest on the UN agenda, has long been spelt out in several resolutions — a two-state solution that ensures a viable and independent State of Palestine

### Abraham Accords

* Investment, tourism, airspace, security
* Egypt (1979), Jordan (1994), oman Bahrain welcomed this agreement
* Turkey (considering disbanding diplomatic relations with UAE; hypocritic action) 2010 10 turkey protestants killed by israel forces; Hamas (UAE stabbed knife on our bank); Iran Foreign Minister (dagger on ummah) Palestinian President spokesman termed it as Treason; Malaysia condemned this pact
* Israel will not proceed to annex parts of West bank

### Negev Summit

THE recent meeting in the Negev desert, which brought together top officials from Israel, the US and those Arab regimes that have normalised ties with Tel Aviv, has been widely seen as a jamboree of peace. the Arab foreign ministers of Egypt, Bahrain, Morocco and the UAE backed a “peaceful resolution” of the Arab-Israeli dispute, the irony that the Palestinians were not invited to a meeting held in their own land was difficult to escape, reinforcing the perception that they had been thrown under the bus by their Arab brethren.

Moreover, the conclave also strengthened the view that the US and Israel were firming up an anti-Iran coalition. If there were any doubts about this particular motive, the Israeli foreign minister cleared them up when he emphatically declared that a “new regional architecture” was being created to deter “our common enemies, first and foremost Iran”. This, then, was the key reason behind arranging the Negev meeting.

### Why Arab countries recognized Israel?

* The one-time pan-Arab call for a united front against Israel “from the Atlantic Ocean to the Arabian Gulf” has given way to normalization across that same expanse.
* Rather than insisting on “land for peace” and offering normalized ties only in return for a full Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 lines, Arab governments have given precedence to self-interest.
* UAE in august 2020 Bahrain in Sep (shia majority country with sunni royal family) both recognize for their own gains not for US;
* Morocco (U.S. offer to legally recognize its de facto annexation of the Western Sahara)
* Sudan (removed from the list of states sponsors terrorism, been on that list since 1993 when omar al bashir’s govt gave shelter OBL, who later plotted the bombing of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania; will have to pay $335 million in compensation to the victims of the 1998 embassy bombings) Sudan recognition is termed by scholars as blackmailing.
* Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan recently told CNN that normalisation with Israel would bring “tremendous benefit to the region”. In the same breath he added that Saudi-Israel ties depended on the establishment of a Palestinian state — Riyadh’s standard line.

### Historical Muslim-Jews Ties

* from madina to ummayad caliphate in peace; caliphate didn’t had coinage on Jews advice Abdul malik ibn Marwan minted first dinar which had jewish symbols like menorah; shift of power from arab to turks didn’t affected Jews; during the **Reconquista (**reconquest of christ territory from muslims in Iberian peninsula) Jews were also killed; sultan Bayezid 2 offered them asylum in his empire; todays Bulgarian jews are descendant of those Spanish Jews; during crusades they were murdered and expelled, saladin let them returned; Czarist Russia, Hitler

### Solutions

* Hamas & PA reconciliation; the Palestinian-led Boycott, Divest, Sanctions (BDS) movement (author sally rooney); Norway’s sovereign wealth fund has said it will divest from two firms linked to Israel’s illegal settlements in occupied Palestinian territories in the West Bank; Maldives suspends ties; UK activists shut down a factory of a subsidiary of Israeli arms manufacturer Elbit which produces drones for use by the Israeli army. In Italy, dockworkers as part of a union refused to load ships with weapons when they learnt they were being exported to Israel. And in South Africa, dockworkers refused to unload a ship that had arrived from Israel, with a worker’s union vowing to make South Africa an ‘apartheid-free zone’ in line with requests by the BDS movement. The boycott of South Africa ultimately forced an end of the apartheid regime that had existed for 35 years, and similar calls are being made against Israel for its apartheid policies to end.

# IMF

Following the ravages caused by World War II, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was originally established to allow countries with payment deficits to borrow money temporarily and repay their debt to others. The hope was that this would create financial stability, foster global cooperation, facilitate trade and growth, as well as reduce poverty.

Proponents of IMF bailout programs claim that the liquidity provided and the reforms demanded are preventing more extreme financial hardship.

But the opponents argue that their ingredients make troubled countries more dependent on IMF aid and their populations poorer.

#### Washington Consensus

Originally set out by British economist John Williamson in 1989, the principles included lower government borrowing to discourage high fiscal deficits, cuts in government subsidies and lower corporate taxes.

Other "structural adjustments" recommended were freely-floating currency exchange rates, free trade policies, relaxing rules that hamper foreign direct investment and competition, as well as the privatization of public assets.

*The neoliberal economic policies proposed in the Washington Consensus have since become pillars of bailout conditions enforced not only by the IMF, but also by its Washington-based offspring, the World Bank.*

#### Implementation of SAPs

The typical SAP counsels a country experiencing fiscal and trade difficulties to undertake a standard set of measures aimed at “getting the prices right.” First, **either devalue or float the currency** in order to make exports more competitive on the world market, earn more foreign exchange and pay down external debt. Second, **allow interest rates to rise to levels comparable in real terms to other countries’ interest rates** in order to encourage increased domestic savings, prevent capital flight and attract foreign financial capital. Third, **reduce the growth rate of the money supply** to combat inflation and fourth**, curb government budget deficits** so as not to “crowd out” private borrowers from the capital funds markets.

##### Structural reforms

As the initial stages of structural adjustment take hold, the country is advised to undertake deeper reforms of the institutions framing the economy. **Privatization of public assets and enterprises** is considered essential to generate new revenue for an indebted, deficit-ridden public sector, and to stimulate productive investment by a private sector made more efficient by its singular pursuit of profit over other social and political objectives of state-owned enterprises. A **shift in the tax structure toward consumption or value-added taxes**, along with the streamlining of corporate and personal income taxes, encourages investment over consumption**. Legal changes favouring investment by private capital**, whether domestic or foreign, and the **unfettered repatriation of profits to investors**, are considered essential to attract and hold investment in a fiercely competitive global economy. **Trade liberalization** opens the economy to the bracing challenge of global competition and a more efficient use of its resources.

#### Pak’s love for the IMF

**Pakistan’s formula for economic growth is as flawed as it gets**: borrow foreign currency-denominated loans, build some large-scale infrastructure, get a minor growth spurt in the process, and wait until this growth spurt fades so we can repeat the process again.

This is what the previous government did. And, the one before that. It could have worked if, while borrowing to build infrastructure, it did not ignore the underlying constraints to growth and productivity.

Because they did not do that, Pakistan has ended up with an increasing level of debt, a balance of payment crises, and a government struggling to keep the growth spurt going. When these challenges become dire — Pakistan often ends up getting a loan by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

This time is the 22nd occasion we have been loaned capital by the fund since 1958. And, if our public discourse and policies remain the same, we will without doubt keep knocking at IMF’s door every few years (or some other lender for that matter).

The logical argument made by analysts in Pakistan here is that the government needs to bring meaningful reforms to our economy. So, in due course, we are in a fiscally sound enough condition that we do not require bailouts like the ones we get from the IMF.

This is a perfectly accurate demand. But, it often masks the political causes to our economic despair. The problem with talking about the economy divorced from politics is that we end up with superficial reforms.

This is because any meaningful reforms are impossible if the political structure does not allow them. For this to change, our public discourse needs to take a holistic overview of our institutions. This is a contribution to that end.

##### It’s not economics, stupid. It’s politics

The political institutions, I’d argue, are more important in determining our prosperity. As Acemoglu and Robinson argue, those who control the political power determine economic institutions. So, if political power (which in turn determines the political institutions) is controlled by a small, extractive elite, they will set up economic institutions which benefit them, not the majority.

Now, look at Pakistan. Our political economy is defined by an embedded culture of rent-seeking and patronage.

This means we have a system which grants profits to certain players in our economy unfairly, hence undermining the central principle of efficient market allocation — fair competition — and creating a wrong set of incentives for businesses.

**Our manufacturing sector is rife with examples of rent-seeking practices.** For example, Pakistan’s automobile sector is dominated by a handful of Japanese manufacturers known for selling low-value cars while making a considerable profit. Despite this, Pakistan provides them with extensive trade barriers to protect them from foreign competition.

Direct evidence of our political structure influencing economic outcomes comes from a paper by Asim Ijaz Khwaja and Atif Mian. They show that politically connected firms in Pakistan receive loans from government banks in Pakistan at lower rates despite defaulting more than non-politically connected firms. This is evidence of unaccountable political power translating into inefficient economic allocation.

###### Focus on political discourse

What may seem to a passerby as a country which continues to choose poorly thought-out economic policies, sees rampant corruption and a failure to establish a productive industrial base, are in fact symptoms of the political institutional structure which benefits a narrow extractive governing elite at the cost of everyone else.

Our economic failure is a symptom of our collective political choices. Once we can allocate political power more fairly, we can make better economic outcomes.

Tweaking institutions at the margins does have some impact. Hence, the IMF’s stabilisation programme will provide some macroeconomic stability. The stock market might recover, the fiscal deficit might get narrower. Taxes might increase a bit, so will inflation.

And, in due course, we will issue a statement saying goodbye to the IMF for few years. Before repeating the process again and again.

But, if the new government wants to break this cycle and make a sincere attempt at reforming Pakistan into some sort of an egalitarian, prosperous nation, it needs to start by looking at political power and the political institutions which rise from them, as they are the real constraints to our growth.

Even if it can make marginal changes on the economic front, they would not unlock the kind of transformative shift we need for widespread prosperity.

#### Unpopularity/issues

People have protested against the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in country after country that has borrowed from it, be it Argentina, Ecuador, Egypt, Greece, Jordan, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan or Tunisia. The placards held by the protesters often accuse the IMF, the global lender of last resort, of promoting debt imperialism and worsening economic inequality.

Why is the IMF so unpopular even though one of its key functions is providing its “resources to member countries in need”?

##### Free markets fundamentalism

Much of the bitterness against the IMF comes from the **conditions it attaches to its loans**. These conditions stem from free markets extremism: cutting down the role of the government because of an unshakeable belief in the supremacy of markets. “Free markets may not be perfect but they are probably the best way to organise an economy,” reads the tagline of an article on finance and development on the IMF’s website — summarising the problematic mindset criticised by many over the years.

Over the years, the notion of free markets has been the subject of a great deal of critique. The late Mahboobul Haque, a Pakistani economist and finance minister, who earned widespread respect for his work on human development, articulated his practical observation as follows: “Markets are not very friendly to the poor, to the weak, to the vulnerable, either nationally or internationally. Often, we act as if markets are free. They are not. I have seen that in my country. The markets are often the handmaiden of powerful interest groups, and they are greatly affected by the prevailing distribution of income.”

##### Unfair adjustments

Sovereign debt is replete with spillover costs (or externalities) including inter-generational injustices. Debt is contracted at the hands of the ruling elite but it is paid back by generations of ordinary citizens through the nose. It is because of the injustice in debt-financing that the IMF is facing protests by the Kenyans for approving $2.34 billion three-year financing for Kenya.

The IMF’s adjustments do not address the economic injustice inherent in the current political economy of the indebted country. Inevitably, it is what hurts the people at large that gets done — such as a rapid devaluation — rather than what may discomfort the ruling elite, such as bringing the untaxed rich in the tax net.

The people of Pakistan would probably have been thankful if the IMF conditions required the government to take immediate and decisive action against those evading taxes in different sectors such as real-estate, tobacco, and sugar. The IMF’s conditionalities could have drawn loud cheers if they required the government to go after those who have been transferring billions and billions abroad by using fake bank accounts opened in the name of the poor.

A call for help through the Stolen Assets Recovery initiative to its rich member-countries where Pakistan’s ill-gotten wealth finds a home, estimated to be far greater than the IMF’s $6 billion loan, could have seen praises for IMF trending on Pakistan’s social media. But no such luck.

Instead, the IMF has required Pakistan's government to take steps like raising the energy tariff.

##### Plutocracy

When people say democracy, they tend to mean a one-person one-vote system to elect their leaders. But unlike its parent, the United Nations, where the General Assembly uses one-country one-vote, the IMF is a shareholders' plutocracy. While there are 190 members of the IMF, the richer countries have most of the voting power that elects its 24-member executive board including its managing director. The US alone has a voting share of more than 16pc, giving it veto power over major decisions at the IMF because they require more than 85pc vote.

The US and Europe have an informal agreement that the head of the IMF will be a European acceptable to the US and the first deputy managing director will be a US national. It goes to show that the IMF is not walking its own talk of good governance, liberalisation and competition. This parochial agreement led to the election of a managing director in 2007 — the consensus European nominee despite a questionable reputation — who earned global notoriety for crass sex scandals. His predecessor was sentenced to four-and-a-half years in jail in Spain for embezzlement, while his successor was found guilty of negligence by a French court.

##### credibility

The point of Doing Business was to report on each member state’s regulatory environment, elements of which include legal procedures, wait times, start-up costs, the efficiency of the judicial system, and the accessibility and reliability of basic utilities like electricity. These and many other factors determined each country’s overall ranking. In the 2018 report, for example, New Zealand ranked highest, and Somalia the lowest.

The **Doing Business reports** were highly respected and thus widely used, not only by national policymakers as an indication of how their country’s regulations and performance compared with others’, but also by independent researchers and firms and financial institutions contemplating investments abroad. It was not uncommon for a head of government to instruct his ministers to pursue policies geared toward climbing the rankings.

But following the 2018 report, there were complaints about the data that had been used, leading the World Bank to commission the highly regarded law firm WilmerHale to investigate. Its report, issued last month, found serious irregularities with respect to China’s ranking in the 2018 report. The investigators report that Kristalina Georgieva, the Bank’s then-CEO (second in command) who has since become managing director of the IMF, urged staff to reconsider the results for China, and then “explored … ways to change the methodology to raise China’s ranking.” The report also points out that the Bank had an interest in placating China, because it was seeking Chinese support for a capital increase at the time.

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If an IMF managing director is thought to be amenable to pressures to alter data and analyses, the credibility of the Fund’s work will be greatly diminished, if it is believed at all. Should Georgieva remain in her position, she and her staff will surely be pressured to alter other countries’ data and rankings. And even if they resist, the reports they produce will be suspect. The entire institution’s work will be devalued. That prospect alone should be enough for the IMF’s political masters to find a new managing director whose commitment to the integrity of the work is not in question.

##### US influence

Critics have long argued and researchers have substantiated that the political alignment between a country and the US, which may be gauged by the voting pattern at the UN General Assembly, influences IMF’s lending decision.

The one who pays the most to the piper may call or, if he so desires, interrupt some of the tunes. In July 2018, the US secretary of state warned that any potential bailout for Pakistan should not provide funds to pay off Chinese lenders. “Make no mistake. We will be watching what the IMF does,” he said in an ominous message because he could.

##### Not accountable

Despite its layers of governance, the IMF has particularly weak accountability. Its website mentions that it is accountable to its member countries, but that doesn’t mean much when the power is concentrated in the hands of a few. Its website immediately goes on to say that the IMF is scrutinised by many including civil society and academia. In fact, this is scrutiny that applies to any high-profile institution; it is not accountability.

The IMF is known to make costly mistakes in its prescriptions. In a paper published in 2013, an IMF chief economist stated that “stronger planned fiscal consolidation has been associated with lower growth than expected.” This was an implicit confession that a key assumption underlying the IMF’s fiscal austerity in Europe in the wake of the global financial crisis was wrong. The IMF, however, does talk a fair deal about learning from mistakes. That is, when the IMF conditionalities result in grave consequences for millions of people from a borrowing country, the decision makers at IMF may learn from the experience. Whatever this is, it surely is not accountability.

Stiglitz also said that although the IMF was funded by money from taxpayers, it was not held accountable to their interests, "which clearly identifies the problem of governance as one of the prime problems with the IMF for taxation without representation."

##### Culturally alien

There is no reason to doubt the integrity of the nearly 2,700 employees at IMF who reportedly come from as many as 150 countries. To do so would be both wrong and distasteful. The problem is the free-market indoctrination of IMF’s decision making, which is culturally alien to a poor country like Pakistan, and an organisational design that does not give voice to those suffering from IMF’s conditions.

##### Serves itself

This we-care-but-we-don’t approach shouldn’t come as a surprise because the objective of the IMF conditions, in its own words, is to get its money back: “These policy adjustments are conditions for IMF loans and serve to ensure that the country will be able to repay the IMF.”

##### Summary

In sum, the IMF subjects the people already hurt by the failures of their governments to more hurt by the failures of the markets. It is not due to ignorance but because of how the IMF works that people in borrowing countries have no love for the IMF.

**The trouble is that the IMF is designed as a fire fighter, and that too in friendly places**. Those perceived as less friendly are kept on a tight leash. In any case, fire fighters are never the ones to be asked to build back. That is a task for the owners of the house. If they don’t know how to rebuild, nobody else can.

#### Synthesis

##### Asia Crisis

The late 1990s Asian financial crisis was caused in large part by South Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia's heavy reliance on short-term foreign loans and openness to hot money. When it became apparent in 1997 that private enterprises would not be able to meet their payment obligations, international currency markets panicked and Asian currencies plummeted.

The IMF treated the Asian meltdown like other emergency situations, giving assistance only in exchange for structural adjustment policies. The Fund instructed governments to cut spending, with the result that this deepened the economic slowdown.

In South Korea, for example, a country whose income approaches European levels, unemployment skyrocketed from approximately 3 percent to 10 percent. "IMF suicides" became common among workers who had lost their jobs and dignity.

In Indonesia, the worst-hit country, poverty rates rose from an official level of 11 percent before the crisis to 40 to 60 percent, and GDP declined by 15 percent in one year.

Malaysia stood out as a country that refused IMF assistance and advice. Instead of further opening its economy, Malaysia imposed capital controls, in an effort to eliminate speculative trading in its currency. While the IMF mocked this approach when adopted, the Fund later admitted that it succeeded.

##### One size fit all

Joseph Stiglitz, chief economist at the World Bank between 1997 and 2000, had serious doubts about the viability of the new doctrine (SAPs). Although noting at the time that this policy was appropriate for some Latin American countries, it "didn't make sense to apply it blindly to other countries."

In 1995, Mexico was hailed as a shining example of the IMF's new policy, as the country had repaid a bailout package to the tune of $52 billion (€45 billion). But it would take only a few years that its failures became obvious.

Mexico's citizens suffered a sharp decline in real per capita income, which in 1998 had fallen back to a level last seen in 1974. From the end of 1994 to the end of 1996, Mexico added $560 billion to its total external debt because the government bailed out mainly commercial banks to the tune of $545 billion by buying all their bad loans.

#### SDRs

In August, the International Monetary Fund announced, to much fanfare, that its members had reached a historic agreement to issue $650 billion of special drawing rights (SDRs, the Fund’s unit of account) to meet the COVID-19 emergency. SDRs are bookkeeping claims that governments, through the IMF’s good offices, can convert into dollars and other hard currencies to pay for essential imports, such as vaccines. And $650 billion isn’t peanuts: it’s nearly 1% of global GDP. This could make a big difference for poor countries impacted by the virus.

The problem is that SDRs are allocated according to countries’ quotas, or automatic borrowing rights, within the IMF, and the quota formula depends heavily on countries’ aggregate GDP. As a result, barely 3% of the $650 billion total went to low-income countries, and only 30% went to middle-income emerging markets. Nearly 60% was allocated to high-income countries with no shortage of foreign-currency reserves and no difficulty borrowing to finance budget deficits. More than 17% went to the United States, which can print dollars at will.

#### Reforms

* While the IMF routinely prescribes shock therapy to its borrowers, its own reform of its governance and capital moves at a snail’s pace. Its 2010 reform agenda, which was initiated in 2008, was finally reported as put into place in 2016. The voting share of the US, its dominant member, was maintained at above 16pc. While the IMF labelled the change as historic, independent observers saw the voting reforms as having little to no impact. Despite an unenviable record of internal reform, the IMF, which is nearly as old as Pakistan, demands that Pakistan implement a wide range of substantive adjustments within 39 months.
* Amid the ruins of World War II, as the victors debated the contours of the new economic world order, John Maynard Keynes proposed an ‘International Clearing Union’ which could confiscate rich countries’ persistent trade surpluses and offer them to poorer ones, thereby making sure that the gains from trade would accrue to all nations. The US delegation, however, was in no mood for sharing its reserves or power with anyone. The US proposal for an ‘International Monetary Fund’ sought to maintain the supremacy of the US dollar by making it the sole currency convertible into gold.
* This IMF-directed international economic order has not really worked for the developing countries judging by the lack of convergence between rich and developing countries’ living standards. Some economists have shown that it would take most developing countries between 170 and 200 years to catch up with the living standards of the US provided these countries grow two per cent more than the US every year. This was before Covid-19.
* In order for the IMF to make tangible value addition in the lives of those residing in the developing world, the time has come for some serious reforms. The institution would perhaps need to be redesigned in order to be made more representative as well as more accountable with respect to its policies.
* Recently, and under pressure from the developing countries, some efforts have been made for reforming the IMF. For starters, IMF is in the process of issuing a historic stimulus of around $650 billion. However, the IMF is planning to allocate this stimulus or Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) on the basis of existing quotas and not on the basis of need.
* According to this formula, Pakistan would get about $2.8 bn, where the US would rake in about $113bn. Against the backdrop of massive economic devastation in developing countries, the IMF needs to not only increase this stimulus to at least $1tr, but also distribute it on population and reverse quota basis, meaning that bigger countries with smaller quotas like Pakistan would obtain a significant share of these SDRs.

# SDGS

* SDG1 end poverty 2 no hunger 3 good health 4 quality education 5 gender equality 13 climate action 16 peace justice and strong institutions
* The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), comprising 17 inter-related development goals and 169 specific targets, provide a “scheme to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all”.
* In the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) lies the solution to Pakistan’s three central challenges: **development, democracy and defence**. That said, the SDGs will provide the glue that holds this fragile triangle. Implementing the UN’s 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, if realised as an integrated policy package, will also lead to long-term economic prosperity, human and environmental development. However, aside from external threats, a poor score card on meeting the 17 SDGs and the 169 targets specified by the UN will pose a serious, non-traditional threat to the country’s national security. That said, it is time to address what could turn out to be more like 17 socio-economic risks to Pakistan’s security and progress, if targets remain unmet, especially those related to poverty alleviation, gender empowerment and climate change adaption.

# Middle-East

## Arab Uprisings

* In 2021, there may be few beliefs more universally shared than that the Arab uprisings failed
* Early hopes for revolutionary change crashed into the blunt force of “military coups, civil wars, and fractured states
* Return to Business as usual (Obama focus tilted towards JCPOA; trump’s toward normalizing arab relations with Israel)
* Successful revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Libya; (end of autocratic rule?) hopes were crushed in few years
* A military coup in Egypt ended its nascent democratic experiment. Fragile transitions in Libya and Yemen collapsed into civil war. Recently In the wake of widespread protests on 25th july against the country’s Covid-19 resp­onse and restrictions, Tunisia’s president, Kais Saied, sacked the prime minister and suspended parliament.
* Syria descended into a nightmarish mixture of insurgency and international proxy warfare. Eventually, autocrats across the region clawed back most of the power they had lost
* The effects of the uprisings should not be measured in regimes overthrown or democratic elections held
* Democracy was only one part of the protesters’ demands: corruption, disastrous governance, and economic failure.

## Israel-Palestine

* Human rights violation

## Syrian Conflict

Present Syria is surrounded by Lebanon to the southwest, Turkey to the north, Iraq to the east, Jordan to the south, and Israel to the southwest. It is home to diverse ethnic and religious groups. After becoming independent on April 15, 1946, Syria continued to face political unrest until November 1970 when Lieutenant General Hafiz-al-Assad, got hold of the country, after a bloodless military coup. He ruled Syria for 30 years with iron hands and died on June 10, 2000. He was replaced by his son Bashar-al-Assad.2 Assad promised to introduce reforms in the country to redress the grievances of the people but did not follow it up. Instead, he took U-turn and followed his father’s policies.3 As a corollary, restive population already motivated by ‘Arab Spring’, started popular uprising in January 2011.4 To appease the masses, Assad announced several plans including the lifting of the country’s 48 years old state of emergency.5 Yet, in the absence of a well-thought-out strategy, he used brutal force to control the protestors and called them ‘rebels’6 which forced them to take up arms. The ‘rebels’ instantly started to receive foreign help. Initially, America placed around 2,000 ground troops in the north and north-east of Syria to support Syrian Kurds.7 Under the cover of anti-Assad forces, jihadist groups like Islamic State/Islamic State of Iraq and Syria(IS/ISIS) also entered Syria and penetrated in the ranks of rebels. Due to this change, the US and its allies withheld their support to rebels, a step that helped Assad to regain the lost territory from IS.

In December 2018, President Trump took an hasty decision to withdraw American troops from Syria by proclaiming that IS/ISIS was defeated in Syria. The pullout of U.S. troops has increased uncertainty around the role of other external parties to the conflict—including Iran, Israel, Russia, and Turkey—as well as the future of internal actors.

#### Actors

**Iran**: Syria is Iran’s main ally in the Arab world, and Tehran entered the conflict fearing that any successor to the Assad regime led by the country’s Sunni majority would align with its rival Saudi Arabia.

In addition, Iran maintains its access to Hezbollah through Syria. It relies on Hezbollah as an asymmetrical deterrent to a militarily dominant Israel, and Syria offers a conduit to arm the Lebanese group.

to defend Shia holy sites that they believe would be wiped out if Sunni militants toppled Assad’s government. Foremost among them is the tomb of Sayyida Zainab, the prophet Mohammed’s granddaughter, in a southern Damascus suburb.

Iran has helped keep the Assad regime economically afloat even while it was bearing the weight of international sanctions for its nuclear program. Early on it dispatched military advisors, and later, members of its elite Quds Force and Revolutionary Guard soldiers, their first major deployment abroad.

**Moscow’s** ties to Syria long predate the civil war, and it provided the Assad regime with a diplomatic shield at the United Nations after the start of the uprising. Then, in December 2015, it intervened militarily, focusing on supporting Assad’s campaign in the west and north, particularly in its bid to recapture rebel-held eastern Aleppo.

Russia’s interests include protecting its military bases on the Mediterranean coast. A **deep-water port** at **Tartus** offers Russian naval ships and nuclear submarines their only access to the eastern Mediterranean that does not require transiting the Bosporus, which is controlled by Turkey, a NATO member.

With the opposition weakened, Russia launched a diplomatic process in Astana, the Kazakh capital, that sought to instate a nationwide cease-fire as the groundwork for an eventual political settlement.

Russia wants to see the regime’s structure remain intact, and its officials cite the anarchy and civil war that followed NATO-led regime changes in Libya as reason to caution against Western support for antigovernment forces in Syria.

**Turkey** believed that Assad would quickly be overthrown and was an early backer of the Syrian opposition in 2011. Though it remains the opposition’s main patron, Turkey’s primary interest lies elsewhere, in blocking the emergence of an autonomous Kurdish region in northern Syria. As Syrian Kurds have set back the Islamic State and Arab opposition forces on the battlefield, they have consolidated territory under their control. Turkey fears that this will inspire intensified national aspirations within its own Kurdish minority just across the border and provide domestic insurgents with a staging ground for attacks. The main Syrian Kurdish armed group, the YPG, **has links to the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK),** whose war with the Turkish state resumed in the summer of 2015 amid a breakdown in peace talks.

**GCC**: The Arab Gulf states’ primary concern is what they see as Iranian expansionism in the Arab world. They seek Assad’s overthrow, but are less interested in a democratic order taking his regime’s place. A second-order concern is counterterrorism, particularly with respect to the Islamic State, which is thought to be responsible for several attacks inside Saudi Arabia.

#### Sectarian tension

To further complicate the situation in Syria, the civil war soon became sectarianized and gave way to a rise of militant Salafism and groups such as the Islamic State. Syria is a highly heterogenous country; as of 2010, its population consisted of Sunni Arabs (65%), Kurds (15%), Alawites (10%), Christians (5%), Druze (3%), Ismailis (1%), and Shia (1%) (Balanche, 2018). In addition, the country is led by a minority Alawi regime represented by President Bashar al-Assad.

the regime stroked fears of the alternative to Alawi rule, By tying minority survival to the regime’s survival, this thesis argued that Assad was able to secure a support base that prevented the development of a cross-sectarian opposition movement challenging his rule.

#### Consequences

* Much of Syria's rich cultural heritage has also been destroyed. All six of the country's Unesco World Heritage sites have been damaged significantly
* Half a million dead**. Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights**. more than 2.1 million civilians have suffered injuries or permanent disabilities as a result of the conflict, More than half of Syria's pre-war population of 22 million have fled their homes.
* Even refugee hosting countries are beginning to show signs of retracting initial sympathies. In recent days, Denmark has become the first European nation to rescind residency permits of its Syrian refugees, stating that some parts of the war-ravaged country were now safe to return to. Ahead of the fifth Brussels Conference on Syria, international donors fell short by $6 billion of the United Nation’s requested $10 billion for this year. Here it is important to emphasise that humanitarian assistance is the only means of sustenance for millions of Syrians.

#### Present

The government has regained control of Syria's biggest cities, but large parts of the country are still held by rebels, jihadists and the Kurdish-led SDF.

The last remaining opposition stronghold is in the north-western province of Idlib and adjoining parts of northern Hama and western Aleppo provinces.

The region is dominated by a jihadist alliance called **Hayat Tahrir al-Sham** (HTS), but is also home to mainstream rebel factions. An estimated 2.7 million displaced people, including a million children, are living there, many of them in dire conditions in camps.

#### The BRI and Syria

However, amidst the despondency, a flicker of hope could be discerned with the Chinese Foreign Minister’s visit to Syria on July 17 2021. During meetings with President Assad and his Syrian counterpart, he offered Syria to join multi-billion-dollar BRI.

Over the years, China has made ventures in Syria, examples of which include a $2 billion industrial park, several cooperation agreements on trade, and shares in two of Syria’s largest oil enterprises — the Syrian Oil Company and Al-Furat Petroleum. Huawei has also avowed to revitalise Syria’s nationwide telecoms network.

For Syria, inclusion in the BRI portends numerous benefits. Therefore, the question is: what are the gains for China?

Firstly, Syria represents a passage to the Mediterranean which is a recourse to the Suez Canal. Chinese investments in eastern Mediterranean ports are aimed at **reviving the significant Eurasian commercial routes which link China to Europe, Africa, and beyond**. Undoubtedly, the inclusion of the Tartus seaport would fortify China’s position in the Levant.

Secondly, Syria is advantageously located at the junction of oil and gas pipelines that not only link resource fields in the Arabian Peninsula, Persian Gulf, and Iran with European markets but on a wider scale is at the crossroads of Africa, Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. This fact was accentuated by Assad himself in 2009 when he proposed **a ‘four seas’ initiative** in the hope of creating a unified economic bloc comprising Syria, Iraq, Turkey, and Iran — the Mediterranean Sea, Caspian Sea, Black Sea, and the Persian Gulf. With Syria’s inclusion in the BRI, China will be placed to regenerate this initiative besides having an easier access to the oil-rich Arabian Peninsula.

Safe to say that apart from being a win-win situation, China- Syria cooperation may be the UN’s last hope for amity in the war-torn country, and an answer to the Syrian populace’s cry for help.

## Yemen Conflict

* Internal divisions since beginning
  + Yemen has long struggled with religious and cultural differences between its north and south and the legacy of European colonialism
  + formed in 1990 with the unification of the U.S.- and Saudi-backed Yemeni Arab Republic, in the north, and the USSR-backed People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY)
  + Ali Abdullah Saleh, a military officer who had ruled North Yemen since 1978, assumed leadership of the new country.
* Arab Spring.
  + - Saleh stepped aside in 2012 after receiving assurances of immunity from prosecution. His vice president, Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi, assumed office as interim president in a transition brokered by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) backed by US.
* Causes behind current crisis
  + - Subsidy backlash
      * HAdi lifted subsidies on fuel under IMF reforms ; attracted support to Houthis
    - Houthi takeover
      * captured much of Sanaa by late 2014. Reneging on a UN peace deal, they consolidated control of the capital and continued their southward advance. Hadi’s government resigned under pressure in January 2015 and Hadi later fled to Saudi Arabia
    - Saudi intervention
* Parties
  + - GCC
      * At Hadi’s behest in 2015, Saudi Arabia along with GCC launched an air campaign against the Houthis with the aim of reinstating Hadi’s government
      * For Riyadh, accepting Houthi control of Yemen would mean allowing a hostile neighbor to reside on its southern border, and it would mark a setback in its long-standing contest with Tehran.
      * the UAE came into conflict with its allies in 2019, when it backed the separatist Southern Transitional Government (STC), which captured Aden.
    - US
      * U.S. interests include security of Saudi borders; free passage in the Bab al-Mandeb strait, the choke point between the Arabian and Red Seas and a vital artery for the global transport of oil; and a government in Sanaa that will cooperate with U.S. counterterrorism programs
      * Biden ended support for its military offensive, including the sale of weapons, and signaled a shift to diplomacy
    - The Houthi movement
      * named for a religious leader from the Houthi clan and officially known as Ansar Allah, emerged in the late 1980s as a vehicle for religious and cultural revivalism among Zaydi Shiites in northern Yemen.
      * Iran is the Houthis’ primary international backer and has reportedly provided them with military support, including weapons. Hadi’s government has also accused Hezbollah, Iran’s Lebanese ally, of aiding the Houthis.
      * Attacks on Saudi and UAE
* Riyadh agreement
  + - affirms that the factions will share power equally in a postwar Yemeni government. The separatists reneged on the deal for several months in 2020, but eventually they joined a unity government with equal representation of northerners and southerners.
* Humanitarian impact
  + the war had displaced more than three million people
  + Covid; food insecurity;
* Winner
  + a low-cost, high-reward opportunity to bog down and bleed its Saudi rival
  + ties between the rebels and Tehran have deepened (attack on oil factories)
  + has given Iran both the motivation and the opportunity to flex its muscles, and it has obliged
* Truce
  + The ceasefire came into effect on April 2 to mark the holy month of Ramazan and is supposed to last two months.
* Solution
  + UN efforts failed: The 2018 Stockholm Agreement averted a battle in the vital port city of Hodeidah, but there has been little success in implementing the accord’s provisions, which includes the exchange of more than fifteen thousand prisoners and the creation of a joint committee to de-escalate violence in the city of Taiz.
  + Without a fair power-sharing deal that allows all the country’s tribes and confessional groups to participate in governance, long-lasting peace will not be possible in Yemen. Moreover, Saudi Arabia and Iran, both of which are seen to be fighting a proxy war in Yemen, should use their influence with their respective Yemeni partners to ensure that the truce is successful, and that peace talks to encourage a negotiated settlement to the country’s civil war are given fresh impetus.

# Reko Diq

IN what is being described as a breakthrough, Barrick Gold Corp has agreed to restart the suspended Reko Diq mine project in Balochistan’s Chaghi district, following a settlement with Pakistan on the framework to reconstitute the agreement after 10 years of legal battles and negotiations. The reconstituted agreement allows the Canadian company’s Chilean partner, Antofagasta Plc, to exit the project by withdrawing from its claim of $3.9bn in place of a payment of $900m. The two companies have won an award of around $11bn from an international arbitration court against Pakistan’s decision denying their joint venture a licence to develop Reko Diq. The government claims that the agreement will help it avoid the penalty, besides bringing in an investment of $10bn and creating 8,000 new jobs in the province. Under the new arrangement, Barrick gets half the project while Balochistan and federal state-owned firms will each hold 25pc of the remaining half. Barrick will get a mining lease, an exploration licence and surface rights. The project, once it enters the production stage five to six years from now, is billed to be potentially the world’s largest gold and copper mine, with deposits capable of producing 200,000 tons of copper and 250,000 ounces of gold a year for more than half a century. The government contends that Pakistan will benefit for “over 100 years from this project and the total worth is estimated to be over $100bn”.

Indeed, the new agreement seems to be an improvement from the past when international investors held 75pc of the project. But questions remain. For instance, the details made public so far don’t inform us if the investor plans to set up a refinery at Reko Diq for exporting precious metals or intends to take minerals out of the country in their raw form like the Chinese operator in Saindak. In case Barrick decides to export the metals in their raw form, do we have the capacity for determining the quantity extracted and moved out of the country, and to verify the exact revenue? Will there be a cap on the quantity of minerals to be excavated annually? Will Barrick and Pakistan share the anticipated investment equally according to their shareholding? If yes, where will $5bn come from for investment in five to six years? The government owes it to the people of Balochistan as well as the rest of Pakistan to make all the details public for the purpose of transparency.

# Populism/illiberalism

* FOR the past decade, the rise of reactionary and regressive forms of populism across the globe have remained a source of anxiety for progressive and liberal quarters. The paradigmatic cases of such populism include Modi in India, the Brexit movement in the UK, Trump and the Tea Party phenomenon, Bolsonaro in Brazil, Orbán in Hungary, and Duterte in the Philippines. These leaders and their movements have either led or enabled the rise of anti-minority (especially anti-Muslim) sentiment, centralisation of power, and the steamrolling of institutional norms.

# NSP

* WORDS have power. Say something often enough, and it will manifest. This is why, despite the mounting, valid critique, Pakistan’s first-ever National Security Policy should be commended. “The security of Pakistan rests in the security of its citizens.” These are the words with which the prime minister introduced the policy. Not the army, not the border with India, not the nuclear arsenal. This paradigm shift will inevitably make security and broader policy discourse in Pakistan more productive.
* has made two key contributions to the security discourse. First, it has opened up space for non-military threats to be considered.
* Second, the NSP has left the door ajar to view many of the newly recognised non-traditional security threats as transnational.
* NTS threats can be primarily internal, external or a hybrid of internal and external factors casting a long shadow on internal and external security
* the report provides a comprehensive framework for looking at national security by making it more holistic and inclusive. By bringing geoeconomics into the centre of the concept, the NSP also charts a clear vision for policymaking at the national level.
* Mentioned Education deficit, population growth, extremism
* Gender security: The document rightly acknowledges that “no security policy can be successful unless it adopts a gendered lens to achieving peace and security
* The NSP is vague in many areas but an umbrella document such as this one is not expected to deliver on details. It is supposed to provide a broad framework and a clear direction for policymaking and guide decision makers in picking the right choices for resource allocation
* A policy document must align goals with resources and capacity, and ends with means so that it is in sync with realities. That’s what makes policy enforceable.
* NTS threats
  + Internal sec; non-state actors; hybrid warfare
  + Food insecurity; environmental challenges; population explosion; water scarcity

## Media Suppression

### PECA

* The Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016
* The amendment’s mala fide intent is clear: it seeks to protect any government or state functionary from criticism, and enables swift action against those who criticise or voice dissent, in a major attack on the right to freedom of speech and press freedom.
* The definition of “person” has been expanded to “any company, association or body of persons whether incorporated or not, institution, organisation, authority or any other body established by the Government under any law or otherwise”. This means that while previously only aggrieved persons could file a complaint and case, now any company or government institution can invoke Peca.
* Section 20 has also been made non-bailable, non-compoundable and cognisable, with powers that have been given to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) under Peca. This means that anybody can be jailed immediately for criticising the state without chances of bail, and remain so despite an out-of-court settlement.
* As the government’s mala fide intentions become clearer, the attorney general has told the media that the government will not pass the ordinance in this form. But political parties must follow the democratic process to take out Section 20 entirely from Peca, and not allow this ordinance to exist in any form. The desperate weakness of the regime cannot override the foundations of our constitutional democracy.

### Social media rules

* FOR the third time, the cabinet has approved a draft of social media rules titled the ‘Removal and Blocking of Unlawful Content Rules 2021’ to govern (read: censor) content on social media in Pakistan.
* They borrow from a colonial-era penal code to draw boundaries around the freedom of speech
* For protection of the “glory of Islam”, blasphemy laws have been included, without safeguards against the misuse and abuse of the law — an irresponsible move by the government — as was witnessed in the brutal killing of Mashal Khan based on false accusations.
* Under “integrity or defence of Pakistan”, colonial clauses from the PPC such as “sedition”, which should be done away with, are cited.
* What is worse, the rules stipulate a 48-hour period for social media companies to restrict for users in Pakistan content that the government wants censored. Live-streaming of content under the categories mentioned will also be prohibited.
* The worst and most regressive part of the rules is that they allow the government to officially block entire social media platforms, something that is detrimental to the economy, disproportionate, and archaic.
* The broad powers given to the PTA make it judge, jury and executioner of online content with the only option of a second appeal in a high court.
* Instead, the state must focus on quality digital literacy, provide legal protection to victims of cybercrime that the FIA is failing at currently, and understand the workings of social media and the internet. It must stop deliberately violating the basic democratic right of free speech.

### PMDA

* Pakistan Media Development Authority — a euphemism for the Orwellian Big Brother.
* As envisaged by the government, the PMDA will be a **one-stop shop regulator for all media** — print, broadcast, film, and digital — and headed by a government-appointed bureaucrat. The PMDA will also have tribunals to hear complaints against media organisations, decisions of which can only be appealed at the Supreme Court. The tribunals, headed by chairpersons of high court judge level, will have the power to impose fines of Rs25 million and hand down jail time of up to three years. The PMDA will grant licences to media organisations which will have to be renewed yearly; it will also have the power to seal offices of media houses.
* It also seeks to assume the content regulation powers of the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) and regulate digital media as well as over-the-top (OTT) streaming services such as Netflix, etc as well as content creators on YouTube. This is problematic, because the internet is the only place where some independence of thought and ideas finds space, especially when television has become so restrictive in terms of what one can say.
* the PMDA in its current form will cause further job insecurity in the media. When media organisations have to renew licences every year at the whim of a state-controlled regulator, they will constantly be navigating a thin line, walking on eggshells, and reflecting all other associated idioms that describe a media having a gun held to its head in the form of licence non-renewal, exorbitant fines or jail terms for violating government-mandated terms. The media organisations and their employees that choose to stay independent will have to suffer more.
* Should the media be regulated by the very state that the media is supposed to hold accountable? The answer is a no-brainer, but state propaganda is washing logic away.
* Misinformation is often news that is inaccurate or false and shared without the intention to deceive. Disinformation, on the other hand, is information that is shared to deliberately deceive and mislead the public. Whereas the news media is of course given to errors, and disinformation can also be fed through it, **the state is in no position to arbitrate the truth.**
* More importantly, what will be the consequences of disinformation being shared by state officials and institutions? Branding citizens as traitors without any proof, spreading rumours about political opponents, deliberately delegitimising journalists and activists that report facts and hold the state accountable, and spreading propaganda. Even Fatima Jinnah was accused of being a ‘foreign agent’ by dictator Ayub Khan with no evidence in order to win an election, so such tactics are not new either. Not to forget ministers accusing opposition members of smuggling drugs, claiming there are videos, but never making them public. Will there ever be accountability for such excesses and partisan propaganda?

#### Reaction

* Groups representing the media including the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists, lawyers groups such as the Pakistan Bar Association, and civil society groups such as the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and the Joint Action Committee have all rejected the bill, and rightly labelled the PMDA as “**media martial law**”. The Digital Media Association has also strongly opposed the draft bill.
* It is important that the government engages stakeholders, especially as the media forms the fourth pillar of the state in a democracy, holding the government and state machinery accountable and playing a critical oversight role where the legislature, executive, and judiciary are concerned. Without the support of media organisations, and with the intention of seeking to expand control over them, the allegations of a media martial law and comparisons to dictator Ayub Khan’s tactics are not an exaggeration.
* In the past few years, the government has **withheld advertising to media houses** that have been critical of its policies and exerted pressure to get certain anchorpersons off air.
* Apart from being problematic for the reasons outlined here, it is also important for the government to consider the **economic repercussion**s. Increasing media repression will not bode well for **Pakistan’s GSP-Plus status**; granted by the EU, this scheme of tariff concessions is contingent on respect for human rights.

# Health

* The country has the lowest life expectancy in the region — 67.3 years. On the other hand, it has the highest infant mortality rate — 55.7 out of 1,000 live births in the region, as compared to 46 in Afghanistan, 28 in India.
* **Low spending**: public health spending remains far below international standards. According to the **Economic Survey**, health expenditure in 2018-19 was 1.1pc and 1.2pc in 2019-20. The WHO recommends that governments spend at least 6pc of their GDP on health.
* **Negligence**: Take the recent chilling incident reported from Lahore’s Mayo Hospital. An 80-year-old woman died after a former security guard posing as a doctor performed surgery on her back wound.
* **Insufficient doctors**: Now there are reports that in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, there is only one certified cardiologist to cater to a population of more than 37 million. Recently, this bitter ‘reality’ surfaced during the hearing of a case pertaining to substandard stents, at the Supreme Court of Pakistan.
* The state of health in Pakistan has attracted a great deal of foreign attention. For instance, The New York Times Magazine of April 4, 2021, had a cover story on the health situation in Pakistan, focusing in particular on the outbreak of paediatric HIV in the country.
* **Solution**: many poorer countries manage to have better health outcomes than Pakistan by focusing on primary care and strengthening their public health capacities. Allocating resources strategically and prioritising hard-to-reach areas and marginalised groups can help ensure that access to services is not determined by geography, or income. Active disease surveillance and prevention can blunt outbreaks, or at least stop health systems from becoming apathetic and dysfunctional when crises do occur.
* Health services are for health and not just for treating diseases. For ‘healthcare’, five kinds of health services are needed: promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative. A good combination of these five services constitutes essential healthcare.
* The common understanding about health services is limited to curative care provided in hospitals. Preventive and promotive health services are actually more cost-effective than curative services and, in fact, in many cases determine curative services.
* Examples of preventive services are vaccination, screening for various common diseases, disease control measures for both communicable and non-communicable infirmities and protection against injuries.
* Meanwhile, promotive services include, for example, information and education for adopting healthy behaviours and making healthy choices to guard against risks to health (smoking cessation; wearing masks; salt control in diet; exercising; planning the number of children and appropriate spacing between them).
* Rehabilitative health services are important for disabled people and those recovering from diseases, injuries and surgeries. People who have lost limbs for example need prosthetics and physiotherapy.
* Last but not least, people suffering from fatal diseases, for example late-stage cancers, or those who are very old, weak and terminal need special care to make death easy and painless.
* Sehat card
  + By conservative estimates, the KP government has spent Rs12 billion on the scheme since its inception in 2016. A 60-bed hospital typically costs Rs136m as per the feasibility report available on the Ministry of Commerce website.
  + The biggest selling point — health cover for all — of the programme is in fact its biggest drawback. It is trying to provide facilities to all and sundry rather than targeting those who genuinely need it.
  + Why the government thought of involving the private sector rather than uplifting the health infrastructure on its own can be attributed to two reasons: either the private-sector mafia saw a business opportunity and convinced the government or maybe it was a tacit admission of the inability of the authorities to undertake the construction of new hospitals and control financial embezzlement. Or perhaps it was an admission of administrative failure to get doctors to serve in relatively remote locations across the country.

# Food Security

* experts agree that around 50% people are food insecure i.e. they are not getting a sufficient amount of nutritious food due to lack of purchasing power.
* Stunting in Pakistan affects at least four out of 10 children under the age of five. The condition affects the mental, physical and cognitive development of the affected children who are not able to reach their full mental and physical potential. A further 29pc of children remain underweight. Unicef has described this situation as a “rising emergency”.
* GIVEN that Pakistan has the third largest population of stunted children in the world, the government’s plan to expand the Ehsaas Nashonuma programme from 14 districts to the rest of the country is a step in the right direction.
* Besides children, women too have a greater need for nutritional support.
* an NGO named **Rizq-Cargill** ecosystem has joined the fight against hunger. They are contributing to the government’s initiative Koi Bhooka Na Soye. The organisation is setting up a countrywide food bank network to provide uncooked and cooked food to those not getting sufficient nutritious food.
* Pakistan was ranked 80th on the Global Food Security Index of 2020 out of 113 countries as it lagged behind almost all South Asian nations
* This means that Pakistan scored extremely poorly on all indicators or drivers of food insecurity — from food availability, affordability, quality and safety to natural resources and resilience
* food security is inextricably linked to overall government policies meant to alleviate poverty, increase domestic agricultural productivity, curb price inflation and ensure safety of food with regard to agricultural productivity.
* The commercialisation of food also poses a huge problem. While the rich have complete control of industries, and feudal lords own the land, food resources should first and foremost meet the needs to the people before it is exported for profit or sold at high prices. Furthermore, agriculture remains utterly neglected even though our economy is agriculture-based. While lands are increasingly becoming barren due to climate change, deforestation and pollution, little to no research has been conducted and no serious mitigation efforts have yet been taken.
* The government also suggests importing semen for free distribution among farmers to boost livestock productivity, supplying subsidised fertilisers, increasing the number of crops grown and encouraging fruit and vegetable production. The authors of the strategy expect the interventions will help alleviate rural poverty and enhance household incomes.

# Post-Covid World order

* Decline in globalization
  + Already being eroded after brexit and arrival of trump
* Rising inequality
  + As we look around the globe at the impact of the pandemic, one thing is clear: we are all in the same storm, even if we aren’t all in the same boat.
  + job losses in most developing countries
* Acceleration in govt intervention
* Power shift from west to east
* deterioration of us role in global affairs
  + busy with domestic problems
* Strengthening of China’s role in global affairs
  + As the US starts to lose its credibility as a true global leader, China-centric globalisation might become palatable for the world
* Covid Effect on pak
  + Challenges
    - Poor health sector capacity
    - Disconnect btw federal/provincial govt
    - Digital literacy and divide
    - Exacerbation of socio-economic conditions
    - National crisis management strategy
      * Slow response by ndma only after ncoc game changed
  + Opportunities
    - Regional health security
    - Reforming health sector
    - Establishment of prevention and disease control centre

# Population & Demographic dividend

* Issues
  + Unintended pregnancies
    - With an annual population growth rate of 2.4 per cent (the Asian average is 0.92pc), Pakistan adds 5.2m people every year to its headcount which is close to adding one Norway annually!
  + Access to contraceptives
    - contraceptive prevalence rate CPR is defined as the proportion of women of reproductive age who are using or whose partners are using a contraceptive method at a given point in time. Pakistan’s CPR is extremely low at 34.5pc. To put this in perspective, Iran has a CPR of 77.4pc, Turkey’s is 73.5pc and even Bangladesh’s CPR has climbed to 62.4pc.
* Demographic dividend
  + countries that have a larger proportion of working-age population relative to the young and elderly dependents is said to be undergoing a demographic transition that creates the condition for a demographic dividend.
  + If harnessed, it could lead to potentially greater economic activity. If it is not capitalized upon, it could lead to massive unemployment and its attendant consequences.
  + The **one positive feature** of the otherwise gloomy demographic scenario is the outward migration of Pakistani labour; Remittance
  + massive ‘youth bulge’ could pose a serious threat to law and order. radicalization of youth
  + would pose huge pressures on resources like food, water and energy. A country that was near to being self-sufficient in food in the early 1980s has a food security issue today largely due to increased population.
  + it is worth noting that after the period of demographic dividend, there would be rapid population ageing.
  + Pakistan then could be caught between a large uneducated and unskilled young population and a significant older population, which would place an extraordinary burden on Pakistan’s economy.
  + Pakistan has the second youngest population in the region after Afghanistan. Sixty-four per cent of our people are below the age of 30.
  + **Total fertility rate (TFR)** is “the average number of children a woman would have throughout her childbearing years.”
  + Bangladesh’s phenomenal success in reducing its TFR from 6.9 to 1.99 in the last 50 years, enables it to be miles ahead of Pakistan in meeting Sustainable Development Goals.
  + **Pakistan with a TFR of 3.6**
  + Pakistan could learn much from Iran and Bangladesh on how they engaged clergy to give fatwas and used mosques for advocating population control.
  + The **Early Child Marriage Restraint Act**, defining 18 years as the minimum age for marriage, ought to be legislated and enforced in all provinces
  + It is well known that uplifting the status of women by empowering them through education and inducting them into the labour force and giving them a role in decision-making brings down fertility rates. (Bangladesh)
  + In matters of reproductive health at least women should be given a free choice in the matter of birth control rather than be treated as chattel. ‘Mera jism meri marzi’ is, after all, not an unreasonable demand.

# National unity/integration

* is a process through which people having common goals, sense of belonging and patristic sentiments arrive at a consensus on social, political, cultural, religious and economic cohesion with diversity.
* national integration is a quest for unanimity within the state regardless of religion, race, creed or ethnic traits and language. It ties up every section of the society for a combined purpose of serving and developing a nation state
* Common goals, interests and preferences may create a sense of unity among fragmented elements of society
* multiplicity of cultural and ethnic traits crosscut each other for their competing interests in attaining specific goals of ensuring maximum shares within the meagre national resources. This competition has made national unity difficult for national integration.
* The consciousness of separatism usually emerges in suffocated societies having internal crevices created by their ethno-lingual, racial, caste, and creed corrosions. With the deepening of these fault lines, the sub-nationalists try to exploit loyalties of the dissatisfied factions to their advantage.
* The sectarian extremist tendencies under the guise of Shia, Deobandi and Barelvi sects have further threatened national integration and challenged the very birth of Pakistani nation.
* National language also unites the nation by promoting national consciousness in the multilingual country. Likewise, interfaith harmony, dialogue, respect to religious freedom, and mutual acceptance have the potential to assimilate in promoting the national solidarity and integration.
* **Impediments**
  + the early death of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the infant state witnessed administrative and governance challenges; economic and political instabilities pushing the military to power; the emerging sub-nationalist tendencies sponsored by hostile agencies; and the Indian animosity of “1948, 65 and dismemberment of 1971”19 made integration a difficult process, creating many hurdles, which later on dragged the country into identity crisis.
  + the futile debate on ideological identity of the nation “as an Islamic state, moderate state, socialist state has also been the contributory factors affecting the state efforts for the national integration; socialism during 1970s; Islamization during 1980;
  + unable to initiate effective people-centric policies that could address the real grievances of various ethnicities at the social, political, and economic levels, specifically of the communities of East Pakistan, Balochistan, tribal areas, and Sindh to some extent. Eventually, the dismemberment of East Pakistan in 1971, the number of “insurgencies in Balochistan,”25 and the demands for “Pushtunistan, as well as Sindhu Desh,”26 are the cases in points.
  + the unfavorable circumstances and environment engineered by the **external elements** to aggravate the situation, thereby perpetuating economic disparities, ethno-religious extremism, political instability and sub-national tendencies at the domestic front. The victimization of Pakistan by the external hostile states has added complications to the phenomena of national integration.
  + **Leadership dilemma**: Even, influential leaders like Zulfikar Ali Bhutto lost his charisma after the debacle of East Pakistan and had been unable to transform the parochial feelings of the people of East Pakistan, Balochistan, and former North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) recently named as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) by diluting the separatist sentiments with national loyalty.
  + **Bad governanc**e: root cause to all inefficiencies: social injustice; economic inequality; regional disparity; unemployment; unaccountability; delayed justice; misuse of power; corruption; nepotism; uneven infrastructure and industrial development; unequal distribution of natural resources along with the demands for royalty; inefficiency of institutions; and dissatisfaction among the general public.
  + The ill-disciplined governance in the country has made space for both the religious fanatics, and the sub-nationalists fulfilling their nefarious designs with the foreign backing and funding. Eventually, the religio-ethnic schism based on provincialism has become a breeding ground for discontentment, and deprivation, eroding the national harmony, integration, and prosperity.
  + National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, 18th Amendment, Pervez Musharraf development plan for Balochistan, Aghaz-e-Haqooq-eBalochistan, National Action Plan, CPEC project and FATA merger with KP. These measures are considered positive steps to meet the demands of the provincial governments of Pakistan for attaining more political power, ensuring larger share in national funds, developing basic infrastructure, and warranting basic services for raising the living standards of the people.
  + **Ethno-cultural diversity**: the tug of power among various political parties at the provincial and federal levels dominated by the conflicting ethnicity, causing unease of relations between the center and provinces - the key concerns for national integration. The cleavage may disintegrate the nation by spiraling the feelings of marginalization and alienation, as evident in the case of East Pakistan dismemberment in 1971,
  + social fabric of Pakistan is also fragmented around **biradari** and caste structures that are much cherished as a main source of identity, and recognition, specifically in remote areas of the country, thereby eclipsing the importance of nationhood.
  + **Weakened federation**: the entire political structure of Pakistan evolved in a manner that a small ruling elite has remained dominated on the main landscape of the federal politics
  + Solution: separation of power between the federal government and the federating units
  + **Sectarianism, Extremism, Ideological Identity and Modernity Confusion**
  + The Quran forbids exaggerating religious matters (religious extremism) and ordains just and balance (middle path) between the extremes. Islam celebrates “Ikhtilaf”73 (diversity). It defines the boundaries of religion to avoid overstepping and to prevent schism.
  + According to Stephen P. Cohen, “The most significant struggle in Pakistan is not a civilizational clash between Muslims and non-Muslims but a clatter between diverse conceptions and interpretations of Islam, predominantly how Pakistan should implement Islamic identity in State’s outlook.”
* **Recommendations**
  + A well-thought-out National Social Action Plan (NSAP) is required considering the socio-economic, and political imperatives of all the provinces, thereby satisfying the essential needs of the ethno-cultural, and socio-political divergent identities. It will minimize the regional-provincial disequilibrium, granting more sense of ownership to the federating units supportive of the process of national integration.
  + Equitable distribution of development projects is required while accommodating the local private sector for creating new entrepreneurial units, cementing the unified economy.
  + Media plays an important role for cultural consolidation and national integration. A strong national narrative should be broadcasted to counter the extremist and sectarian along with provincialism narratives in the society.
  + Local govt

# AI/TECH/Digitalization

* The digital revolution is without a doubt the most significant event in information dissemination since Gutenberg’s printing press and arguably marks a much bigger shift in human communication.
* Satellite images cost several thousand dollars 20 years ago, today they are often provided free and are of incomparably higher quality. Human Rights Watch has analysed satellite imagery to document ethnic cleansing in Myanmar.
* How states would rise and decline by 2040 would immensely depend on how they adapt to new technologies especially Artificial Intelligence (AI), automation and biotechnology. The uses of technology would have economic, social and international impacts in positioning Pakistan to remain relevant in the global arena. This is what the US Global Trends 2040 report prophesises.
* AI is to get done by machines what we, humans, do at the moment. The next elevation will be Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), which will enable machines to exceed the known limits of human understanding and capacities.
* AI shall be replacing jobs and transforming the working force while at the same time, it shall be creating even more than the jobs it will be replacing. This means there will be more jobs available in 2040 than now but these will orient around the principles and capabilities of the discipline of AI.
* According to recent GSMA report on mobile money, globally cross-border remittances processed via mobile money increased by 65% in 2020 (to $12 billion), reaching over $1 billion in transactions sent and received each month.

## Pakistan

* In a recently published report by Payoneer, a global payment platform, Pakistan was ranked fourth in the freelancers’ market, well above India and Bangladesh. Despite Covid-19, Pakistani freelancers earned $150m in FY2019-20 (The same year mango exports earned $104m despite multiple subsidies). This feat was achieved despite Pakistan’s ranking in the bottom quartile in the Inclusive Internet Index 2021, published by the Economist Intelligence Unit
* Pakistan is estimated to reach the median age of 30 years by 2040 which is as much of good news as much as it rings alarms. Having a huge youth population by 2040 would mean tapping more opportunities but would require strategic planning from now. Time game allows us 20 years as a formative period, in which a child admitted in grade one today will be able to meet our demands and address our needs in the fields of AI and perhaps AGI, by 2040.
* This will create global markets for our youth as developed economies are fast aging. The median age in Japan, South Korea and Europe will pass the threshold of 45 years which means more elderly people and this would weigh in on their economies
* Improve Cyber security; NADRA biometric data hacked, reported FIA
* If Pakistan plans inclusive, sustainable and youth-led economic growth, the authorities must consider the following.
* For starters, the government must actively eliminate all the barriers in the way of PayPal operations in Pakistan. The service is available in more than 200 countries in 25 currencies.

### Cybersecurity policy

* PAKISTAN’S National Cybersecuri­ty Policy has been approved by the cabinet, and it is surprising that Pakistan did not have one up till now.
* The purpose of the policy is stated to be “Inter-departmental coordination and holistic approach to address cybersecurity challenges and their emerging trends on a national level”.
* A critical factor in implementing such a policy will be getting the necessary buy-in from government institutions that must take cybersecurity seriously. Issues such as taking shortcuts, not updating anti-spyware and anti-viruses in computers and phones, and thinking of cybersecurity expenditure as unnecessary are some of the impediments that already exist and are likely to continue with a senior bureaucracy that is resistant to change.
* Take, for example, the recent hacking of the Federal Board of Revenue records which took place despite repeated reminders in its third-party audit reports that asked the FBR to take cybersecurity protocols and compliance seriously, including when the current chairperson was a member IT, apart from warnings from others.
* The policy also mentions the need to protect the online privacy of citizens. When there is no data protection bill, how can foreign investors be confident of doing business here? What consequences exist for weak cybersecurity protocols that lead to data breaches, and what legal recourse to citizens is available in case of data breaches?
* The mention of encryption is completely missing from this policy, and Pakistan should move towards ensuring the highest possible encryption protocols for data related to its citizens, as well as for critical national infrastructure that requires maximum security
* Such a policy cannot be successful without behavioral change, improvement in the overall legal system, inclusion of diverse voices, and cross-sector coordination and collaboration.

### Steps taken towards digitization

* e-passports will be equipped with new features that can enhance security and ensure transparency. It will help reduce identity fraud (biometrics) and can be used at border control as well. The microchip in the passport will help retrieve passengers’ data and verify their images, which will also simplify the process of passport renewal. Pakistani travellers will also benefit from the e-gate facility at airports around the world.
* The Kissan Card scheme aims to streamline the administration of various government programmes that support farmers while also making them more transparent. The platform contains information such as demographics, contact details, crops and landholding patterns, livestock, details on the local irrigation system, and levels of mechanisation. This helps with the appropriate allocation of schemes — the right scheme for the right farmers
* The card will also eventually be used as the basis for affordable loans
* IN a meeting on the President’s Initiative for Cyber Efficient Parliament on Wednesday, President Arif Alvi expressed his desire to see parliamentary operations completely digitised by January 2023. In the first phase of this initiative, the minister for information technology and telecommunication has said, agendas of sessions of both houses of parliament and their committees, motions, proceedings, etc would be presented through a computerised system.
* this effort can lay the groundwork for increasing transparency and public participation with their elected representatives. Several studies have found that a key barrier in greater citizen engagement is knowledge of how parliament works.
* But an increasing reliance on technology can also widen inequalities between online and offline populations unless also supplemented with a holistic strategy to improve digital literacy and internet access
* NADRA; NCOC; Citizen portal
* **Cadastral mapping**: it would bring a major shift in the economy and drastically reduce land conflicts that are responsible for almost half the litigation burden that our frail civil and criminal justice system must shoulder. As the prime minister pointed out, digitising land records will eradicate land grabbing, control illegal and haphazard construction activities and land development in both the urban and rural areas, guarantee transparency in land and property transactions, curb record tampering, and provide quick ownership information online. More importantly, the availability of verified records online should go a long way in increasing the access of people, particularly women, to land and property.
* Stiff resistance from the provincial revenue bureaucracy that is deeply invested in the legacy land administration system owing to factors ranging from financial corruption to fear of technology has kept successive governments from making meaningful progress in this area.
* The Government of Pakistan too is alive to the situation and equipping the youth with digital skills to absorb them in the job market. The government plans to train 25,000 educated young persons, particularly from disadvantaged segments of society, in digital skills in order to enable them get online jobs. These youths to be equipped with the required skills will be trained under the **Ehsaas Digital Hunar Programme**.

## Warfare

* Traditional conflicts and wars saw confronting states or their proxies strategizing to overpower their adversary in the domains of air, sea, land, and space. Now cyberspace has quickly become the fifth domain of warfare, with the keyboard and mouse appearing to be the modern arms of choice. In 2010, the US acknowledged cyberspace as an operational domain stating that “cybersecurity threats represent one of the most serious national security, public safety, and economic challenges we face as a nation
* Cyberspace and the internet are central to the workings of modern economies, societies, political systems, militaries, and just about everything else, which makes digital infrastructure a tempting target for those seeking to cause extraordinary disruption and damage at minimal cost.
* Moreover, states and nonstate actors can carry out cyberattacks with a high degree of deniability, which adds to the temptation to develop and use these capabilities. We know when and from where a missile is launched.
* According to Sun Tzu, victory can be accomplished by subduing the enemy without even fighting.[12] Such a pursuit of triumph without sending a soldier across the border happens the best in cyberspace.
* China reportedly gained access in 2015 to 22 million US government personnel files – which include information that could help determine who was or is working for the US intelligence community.
* Russian interference in US elections
* **Zero-click attacks**: SO, you receive a WhatsApp call from an unfamiliar number. You choose not to answer it. There’s another call. You still don’t answer. But that’s enough for spyware to be installed on your phone, regardless of whether it’s an Apple or an Android. Welcome to the world of zero-click attacks.
* it can also turn on the camera and microphone without the user’s knowledge. it was deployed against activists, journalists, and political opponents of regimes friendly to Israel.
* NSO Group, the Israeli firm behind Pegasus, has long denied its technology was involved in any way with the assassination of Jamal Khashoggi, but Israeli software appears to have helped the Saudi authorities to track his movements and monitor his communications as well as those of his relatives and close associates.
* **Propaganda warfare:** While populism is hardly new, the internet – especially social media – has enabled misinformation and reckless promises to be disseminated more efficiently than ever before.
* The “Stop the Steal” campaign that took root after Trump’s electoral loss last November, and fueled the Capitol insurrection, was based on no evidence. But, aided by social media, it spread rapidly among his supporters, where it found fertile ground and remains entrenched.

### Solutions

* Companies that develop and sell surveillance technologies must be held accountable.
* There is also a dire need to **implement export controls** for surveillance technology and subject it to scrutiny and human rights due diligence as these are tools of cyber warfare with a grave impact.
* Surveillance technology grossly violates the right to privacy of citizens. Further, surveillance induces fear in journalists, activists and citizens who are apprehensive about being observed by law-enforcement agencies and governments, and end up not expressing their opinions. This in effect violates the right to freedom of speech, as well as citizens’ right to information.
* Over time, a US-Russia pact could serve as a model that could be joined by China, Europe, and others. If it were extended to China, prohibitions on the theft of intellectual property (and penalties for violating the ban) could be added. None of this adds up to disarmament, but it is the cyber equivalent of arms control, which is as good a place to start as any.
* Joseph Nye suggests deterrence by denial in cyberspace; deterring an attack by fortifying own defensive capabilities to make the cost of the adversary’s gains prohibitive.

# Regionalism

* a process of establishing alliances/organisations at regional level among different countries.
* Penguin Dictionary of International Relations defines “regionalism is to a region what nationalism is to a nation.
* In International Relations, a region is invariably an area embracing the territories of three or more states.
* They are bound by ties of common interests as well as of geography.
* In other words, regions and organisations are not necessarily congruent.
* In its essence, the main debate about regionalism is whether it is leading to a more polarised or more cooperative world economy and world order.
* Three Asias
  + Stretching from Turkey to Bangladesh and Kazakhstan to Sri Lanka, the three Asias
  + consist of huge land mass with a combined population of around 2 billion people.
  + Application of regionalism in Europe, Southeast Asia and elsewhere cannot be replicated in Central, South and West Asia because of structural contradictions.
  + Organizations: SAARC and ECO
    - Read organizations
  + Challenges:
    - inter-connected but lack vibrant economic, commercial, trade, educational, cultural and connectivity in science and technology
    - share common issues ranging from water, energy, environmental, educational, scientific, technological areas, along with the challenges emanating from global warming and climate change.
    - the glaciers located in Himalayan, Hindukush, Karakorum and Pamir regions are a source of water resources to the three Asias and because of global warming, there is a serious threat of melting of glaciers and the looming water crisis in all the three regions
    - water crisis will lead to food and energy shortages along with reduced agricultural and industrial production.
    - rise of extremism, intolerance, radicalisation of youth, violence and terrorism
    - leadership crisis
    - Countries which possess military, economic and political clout in the three Asias are India, Pakistan, Turkey, Iran, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan but these five countries, instead of focusing to strengthen regional connectivity in Central, South and West Asia, are either involved in mutual discords or extra-regional involvement.
    - No member of ECO and SAARC is devoid of issues which are of critical nature ranging from ethnic, sectarian, communal, lingual, economic, territorial and resource-based conflicts. Majority of members of the two regional organisations are grappling with the unresolved inter-state conflicts, particularly those between India and Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.
    - non-implementation of South Asian Free Trade Arrangements SAFTA,
  + Solutions
    - both SAARC and ECO must work together and overcome hurdles which have so far prevented the economic development and free movement of the people, goods, services and capital.
    - Afghanistan and Pakistan are simultaneously in ECO and SAARC and act as a bridge between South, Central and West Asia.
    - Projects like Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad train
    - Role of regional powers Russia and China
    - produce visionary leaders like the French President Charles de Gaulle and the West Germany’s Chancellor Konrad Adenauer who changed the destiny of Europe by signing the historical Franco-German Treaty of Peace and Cooperation in 1963.

## Electoral Reforms

* The electoral reforms suggested by the PTI government encompass 49 amendments and deletions from the Elections Act 2017. Some significant amendments/deletions are: introduction of the Electronic Voting Machine; extending the right of vote to overseas Pakistanis; political parties with a minimum of 10,000 members would be eligible to get registered; political parties would be liable to hold annual conventions where people would be free to remark on the performance of the party; the right to challenge the appointment of the polling agent; electoral roll would be prepared based on NADRA data; elimination of the provision to delimit constituencies based on population and conducting Senate election through the open ballot.
* Generally, election reforms have always aimed at institutional improvement of ECP and its functional autonomy. Some parts of the reforms have focused on fairness in election and evaluation/counting processes. Efforts have been made to improve voter turnout as well.
* As indicated by the PM’s aide on parliamentary affairs, election reforms are going to focus on fairness of election by introducing automated mechanisms of vote counting. This is fair but not enough.
* One area to be considered, in order to make elections fair, is addressing factors that adversely affect voters’ behaviour. Shandana Khan in her book, Crafty Oligarchs and Savvy Voters, has detailed how kinship shapes voters’ behaviour and subsequently their choice.
* Clientelism being at the epicentre of Pakistani political system, reinforced by kinship and feudal lordship, does not allow voters to break off relations with their patron, even though this client-patron relationship has been instrumental in people’s underdevelopment. This very clientelism has been the cause of persistent undermining of merit on different occasions.
* With the rise of social media, such videos have gone viral recently where political lords, who happen to be feudal lords as well, openly threaten people to vote for them. Alongside fearful feudal lords, it is sometimes the fear of religiously sacred personalities that possibly compels people to vote against their will.
* whether machines will help people in going against their kinship? Or will machines be able to dilute the fear caused by contextual factors?
* The answer, in my opinion, is no. In India, it has been long since electronic voting machines (EVMs) have been introduced. Have people in India been able to elect a fair government which is not corrupt? In some ways yes, but majorly, no! Because rural voters vote under fear. Whereas, in the UK, the voting system is manual, but elections are fair.

### Major issues

Four key areas of reforms are extremely contentious and there is a dire need for dialogue on these: the multimillion-dollar EVM project; the reportedly insecure system of voting for overseas Pakistanis; the indirect dilution of ECP authority to prepare electoral rolls by transferring some of its constitutionally mandated functions to Nadra; the delimitation of constituencies based on the number of voters rather than total population. These are some of the key areas of divergence between the ruling party and the opposition on one hand and between the government and the ECP on the other.

#### Voter lists

A crucial proposed reform is that Nadra, instead of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), should prepare the voter lists. Which of the two entities, Nadra or ECP, is technically better positioned to prepare the voter lists? Obviously, Nadra! All CNIC holders being eligible voters, Nadra can generate the list with a click using its CNIC database. The opposition would not let Nadra have the role. Reasons: first, Nadra is an executive arm of the government, therefore can be influenced by the political party in power; second, the Constitution empowers only the ECP to prepare the voter lists. However, the Constitution was framed in 1973 when CNICs and even Nadra did not exist and holding an identity card was not compulsory to be a voter. Times have changed. The fourth industrial revolution is underway, and nations that refuse to benefit from technology would stand doomed.

#### EVM

* the ECP, which had already expressed its reservations about the EVMs earlier, weighed in with specific objections — 37 of them, to be exact — contained in a document submitted to the Senate Standing Committee on Parliamentary Affairs. The ECP’s objections include, among others, the concern that the machines are not tamper-proof and have software that can be easily altered; there is not enough time for such large-scale procurement and deployment of EVMs and training the massive number of operators required; there are security issues involving the chain of custody.

#### Overseas voting

* A KEY electoral issue these days relates to voting by overseas Pakistanis. Legally, they can vote even now if in Pakistan as voting is a basic civic right under current laws not lost even by dual citizens. The Supreme Court has also asked the state to facilitate overseas voting.
* Objections on the issue are also invalid and largely reflect xenophobia. Some say since they don’t pay taxes, they must not vote. No law limits voting rights to only taxpayers and such a law will make innumerable resident voters ineligible. Also, taxes are paid for availing state services. If they don’t pay taxes, they also don’t avail state services. However, they are a major source of remittances that reduces our yawning external deficit and could also become a major source of investment, charity, technical expertise and policy ideas based on their exposure abroad. So the focus here is on how to facilitate voting abroad to enhance their interest in and contribution to Pakistan.
* Research by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance shows that a big majority of electoral states, nearly 115 states and territories, allow overseas voting. More than half are developing states.
* The **modality of voting** is a key issue. The options include postal, electronic or physical voting. most states, especially developing ones with more issues of rigging, use physical voting. This is a security-wise safer though logistically harder option. It may reduce turnout somewhat in large countries like the US where Pakistanis live in dozens of smaller cities beyond the larger ones with consulates. It will also involve getting host countries to give permission for such voting which could be tricky to obtain in Gulf states. But these are logistical issues that must be sorted out. As technology and security improve, other options could be used later.

### Plus points

* contains a number of proposals to ensure broader inclusion of relatively marginalised segments of society such as women, non-Muslim minorities, trans persons and physically handicapped persons in various aspects of the electoral process.
* counting a person as guilty of corrupt practices if he or she persuades any person to vote or to refrain from voting on the grounds of belonging to a gender along with other grounds already present in the law such as religion, province, community, race, caste, biradari, sect or tribe (Section 167).
* it also encourages greater transparency by specifically obligating the ECP to post a variety of information on its website. For example, civil society had been struggling to persuade the ECP to post the annual statements of legislators’ assets and liabilities on its website. The Amendment Bill has now specifically included the provision of posting this information on the ECP website.

## Judicial reform

* THE wheels of justice turn slowly but they grind exceedingly fine, goes the proverbial expression. It is, however, the first part that best describes Pakistan’s judicial system, while we are far from achieving the second half of that reassuring dictum.
* According to a study conducted a few years ago by the Supreme Court, a property suit takes nearly 30 years to conclude.
* In the light of this reality, a parliamentary committee on Tuesday did well to clear an amendment to the Code of Civil Procedure which stipulates that judges must decide cases of moveable and immovable property, including those involving women’s inheritance rights, within one year. Further, the appellate court must give its verdict within 90 days.
* According to the Supreme Court’s most recent fortnightly case disposal report, there are 51,852 cases pending in the apex court, while the total backlog in the country’s courts amounts to approximately 2.16m.
* One way to reduce the pendency rate is to appoint more judges. There are 3,067 judges presiding over the caseload in the district and high courts, while 1,048 positions are yet to be filled; the apex court has 17 judges, with two judges’ positions vacant. These vacancies must be filled as soon as possible.
* Moreover, as was done during former Supreme Court chief justice Iftikhar Chaudhry’s tenure, double shifts can be instituted for judges to hear cases. In May 2019, the apex court began hearing cases through video link connectivity for the first time; this method must be scaled up from its present limited use.
* improve the efficiency of the courts, through better infrastructure, better training, and increased staffing, with improvement measured in the reduction of the enormous backlog of pending cases. Other aspects of the system, including improved legal education, have not been touched. Although the superior judiciary has reason to see itself as highly qualified, the same is probably not true of the lower courts.
* The increase in judicial activism, including, in particular, the emergence of public interest litigation in the mid-1980s, and within that the now routine use of Suo moto powers, is seen by some as the essence of reform but by others as the emergence of a new antidemocratic claim on political power.
* the critics argue, the court is in effect sending a signal that filing a case in the normal way and waiting in the queue for it to be decided is a second- best way of getting justice.
* Hence, despite the Suo motu notice of the Mukhtaran Mai gang rape case, which received much attention, the Supreme Court has repeatedly had to intervene in other rape cases that came up later because of the lack of any macro-level change in the overall system in place. This is because the suo motu proceedings never actually addressed the institutional issues that required the Supreme Court to bypass the normal judicial processes in the first place.
* If more people viewed the exercise of such powers in this light, we would be less jubilant and more worried with every successive suo motu notice being taken. It seems that the increasing use of such powers reflects nothing but the ever-increasing gap between the demand for justice and the judiciary’s ability to deliver it.
* Incompetent and/or overworked public prosecutors, individuals prepared to bear false witness for a price, shoddy police investigations, etc — the problems are many and serious.
* One of the first steps towards **judicial reform** is to stop influencing high-profile cases, followed by stopping the judiciary from intervening in civilian matters. Another crucial step is to stop the judges from giving excess statements. Judges speak through their judgments and not statements. Not to forget the urgent need of police reform.
* Critique: why is there judicial tolerance for repeated, grave violations of citizens’ fundamental rights by state officials (missing persons, severe restrictions on freedom of speech, press and media etc)?

### Blasphemy

* the European parliament adopted a resolution severely criticising Pakistan’s blasphemy laws and showed its intent to review the country’s GSP-plus status in the light of the alarming increase of blasphemy cases, mostly directed against human rights promoters, artists, intellectuals, journalists and marginalised people.
* THE acquittal of Shafqat Emmanuel and Shagufta by the Lahore High Court this week has once again underscored the deeply problematic and growing misuse of the blasphemy law. After spending seven years in jail, following the handing down of a death sentence to them by an additional district and sessions judge, the Christian couple has been acquitted of charges of sending a blasphemous text message to the complainant, a shopkeeper identified in some news reports as a mosque cleric.
* in many chilling cases, an accusation of blasphemy alone — with no evidence or formal legal process — can result in violence and death. The cases of university student Mashal Khan and Christian couple Shama and Shahzad are just two examples of how such accusations lead ignorant people to take the law into their own hands. This trend must come to an end, and our lawmakers must unite to find a solution so that more innocent citizens do not suffer.

## Child abuse

* The annual report 2021 by Sahil, an NGO engaged in the protection of children’s rights, says that of the 2,949 victims, 1,510 were girls and 1,450 boys. On an average, eight children are subjected to sexual abuse daily in the country.
* WAKING up nearly every day to a new case of child abuse, violence and murder makes one wonder: who is to blame? Maybe it is my paediatric community that has been unable to guide parents, or maybe it is our society that frowns upon sex education and life skills as one way of bringing down the incidence of rape and murder. Or perhaps it is the parents who think their reputation in the family and community is far more important than the mental health of their child. Or perhaps it is our government for whom the enforcement of laws is never a priority.
* The increase in the number of cases of child abuse is also due to the absence of proper systems to handle these cases, poor law enforcement, court rulings that do not follow policy, no guaranteed punishments for rapists, poverty, unemployment, lack of population control efforts, uninhibited access to inappropriate material via social media, little attention to mental health, no lessons in the curriculum on how to keep physically safe, and finally their taboo nature in a conservative society.
* We must register speedy FIRs and implement fair court judgements besides carrying out exemplary punishments and activating the Zainab Alert law.
* Parents must be alert at all times. One cannot emphasise enough that the predator is always nearby and often someone very close to the child. In fact, 80 per cent of the time, the abuser is someone known to the child.
* children these days possess smartphones, and they watch (and understand) everything. It is easy to see how parents are ready to abdicate their roles of supervision and guidance and leave it to social media to ‘educate’ the child. At the other end, as a society, we still consider it immoral to talk to our children about this topic in all its aspects.
* Educational institutions should step forward to do their bit to safeguard their students. Make child protection committees in schools and pledge to take the responsibility of keeping children safe in schools. Madressahs should also follow these rules. We can only curtail child abuse by taking positive steps, and not by pointing fingers.

## Tourism

* Tourism can be a multi-billion dollar industry in Pakistan provided there is awareness and policy on the part of stakeholders to promote the culture of tourism. A country’s image and reputation is judged on the basis of its capacity to provide basic facilities to tourists, particularly foreigners.
* When India and China can earn more than $20 billion from tourism and various European countries like Switzerland, France, the UK, Italy and Greece can fetch several hundred billion dollars from tourism, why cannot Pakistan, a country blessed with enviable natural beauty?
* **Why Pak?**
* Pakistan is blessed with beautiful tourists as well as historical and religious sites where tourists from abroad visit in large numbers. The north of Pakistan is known for its peaks, glaciers, lakes and forests where not only homegrown tourism can flourish but millions of tourists from abroad can also be attracted. Likewise, the historical sites of Texila and Mohenjo Daro can be a big draw for foreign tourists. The deserts of Tharparkar in Sindh and Cholistan in Punjab, as well as the coast of Pakistan, particularly in Balochistan, also have the potential to attract local and foreign tourists in large numbers.
* **Steps to be taken**
* When one talks about the culture of tourism it means four major requirements.
* First, the attitude and behavior of those who are supposed to provide guidance and facilities to tourists.
* Second, adherence to hygiene and cleanliness at restaurants, eateries, washrooms and hotels at tourist spots.
* Third, availability of affordable accommodation and food is essential for creating a culture of tourism in Pakistan.
* Finally, the absence of tourism culture in Pakistan has much to do with corruption and inefficiency on the part of tourism departments in various provinces of the country who are either irresponsible in their duties or lack proper training on providing maximum facilities to tourists at affordable prices.
* **Facilitation**
* The recent approval given by the **Universal Service Fund** (USF) Board of 10 projects for providing broadband internet services to remote areas and tourist destinations will indeed prove to be beneficial for the country in the long run. The estimated cost of the project is Rs11.5 billion and projects such as the Optical Fiber Project will be initiated in more than 19 under-served districts of Pakistan.
* the initiative will also attract foreign investors as companies such as Elon Musk-owned Starlink are looking to launch internet services in the country — other competitors might follow suit.
* When there was civil war going on in Sri Lanka from 1983 till 2009 and foreign tourism plummeted, the government encouraged local tourism which tried to bridge the gap in income from foreign tourism. Pakistan needs to **promote homegrown tourism** and take practical steps to provide safety, security, better hygienic, infrastructure and accommodation facilities so that both local and foreign tourists can be pulled in.
* **Drawbacks**
* A recent World Bank study has warned that tourism in Pakistan’s ecologically-fragile areas has significantly increased the stress on the environment. As these areas become more and more polluted, the surreal and enchanting glory of nature is slowly being diminished and destroyed. As a result, the natural habitat of the diverse species of animals, birds and marine life present in the county may become endangered, or even worse, be driven to the brink of extinction.
* While a simple and efficient waste disposal system can help fix half of the problem, the other half of lies in trying to figure out the most sustainable method of disposal. In this regard, solid waste can be either be used as fertilisers in the agriculture sector or brunt to produce electricity in these areas. Plastic waste, on the other hand, will pose a huge problem as most of it isn’t biodegradable and cannot be simply dumped in landfills — since it takes anywhere between 20 to 500 years for it to decompose. For this, the government needs to restrict the use of plastic and provide other suitable alternatives.
* Such solutions have multifarious benefits. They will not only help in developing local industries, protect tourism, and generate foreign exchange, but also aid in the fight against the all-encompassing problem of climate change and global warning.

## Hindutva and India

### Democracy situation

* But that isn’t even the worst of it. Sweden’s V-Dem Institute no longer considers India to be a true democracy, instead calling it an “**electoral autocracy**”. Under Modi, India has seen one of the world’s most visible declines in respect for democratic values. V-Dem actually ranks it worse than Thailand, which saw a military coup in 2014 and where real power is still understood to rest with the military. Modi’s rule has been more damaging to democracy than a military coup.
* **The Economist Intelligence Unit has referred to India as a “flawed democracy”.** India, ranked as a free country until now, was **demoted to 111th place among 162 countries and was now only “partly free”. (Freedom House)**
* **At June’s G7 summit**, India joined 11 other signatories, from Canada to South Korea to the European Union, in issuing a joint statement affirming their “shared belief in open societies, democratic values, and multilateralism.” The statement identified “politically motivated internet shutdowns” as a threat to freedom and democracy. **By this definition, India can no longer be considered a model of democratic values.**

### Media suppression

* During the devastating second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, when public services failed, Indians used social-media platforms like Twitter and WhatsApp to crowdsource resources. Indians also used such platforms to organize and mobilize support for protests against controversial agricultural reforms and the discriminatory Citizenship Amendment Act. But the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party deemed this unacceptable.
* the government is attempting to establish more consistent control over how the internet operates in the country, **through the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.** the Rules grant the Indian government vast powers to suppress content online. This includes forcing tech platforms to remove posts or videos deemed libellous, hateful, deceptive, or in violation of the country’s sovereignty and integrity.

### Vaccine diplomacy

* As countries scramble to secure supplies in the face of "vaccine apartheid," India has enhanced its global standing by making vaccines that are readily available in the world's poorest countries. This effort may one day help India secure recognition as a global power – with a permanent UN Security Council seat to go with it.
* quietly pursuing “**vaccine diplomacy**.” Its “Vaccine Maitri” (Vaccine Friendship) campaign has shipped hundreds of thousands of Indian-made Covishield vaccines, manufactured under license from Oxford-AstraZeneca to some 60 countries. Vaccines have helped mend strained relations with Bangladesh and cement friendly ties with the Maldives.
* India can leverage its scientific and medical skills to enhance its geopolitical standing. At a time **when most richer countries are criticized for hoarding vaccine doses**, India stands out for having sent 33 million to poorer countries, with millions more in the pipeline. There is also an unspoken subtext: rivalry with China.

### Hindutva

* **AIM**: Hindu hegemony in India and Hindustan’s (India’s) hegemony in South Asia **AKHAND BHARAT**
* in BJP-ruled India, it is safer to be a cow than a Muslim. Shashi Tharoor in parliament
* Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
* The **Hindu identity** according to Hindu nationalists is constituted by three characterizations, i.e., **Jaati**, **Rashtra** and **Sanskriti**. Jaati is a common race where Rashtra denotes a collective nation and Sansikriti is the culture of a common civilization.
* **Headquartered at Nagpur, RSS was established in 1925** in southern India by Keshav Baliram Hedgewar (1889–1940) to foster unity amongst the Hindu nation in reaction to pan-Islamic Khilafat Movement in Subcontinent in the 1920s.
* In 1923, **V. D. Savarkar coined the term ‘Hindutva’** in an essay titled “Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?
* He crafted the motto, **Hindu-Hindi-Hindustan** – which refers to religion, language, and country while restricting and prohibiting minorities.
* RSS claims to be a unified party with members from all Hindu castes, but it is **dominated by upper-caste Brahmins.**
* **Objectives**: to penetrate the society at grass-root level to accentuate Hindu nationalism and impose its pre-modern social hierarchies, progressively weaken and subjugate of Muslim population with apparent aim to compel them either reconvert to Hindu religion or marginalize them as non-entity or to leave India, assert and establish influence over the entire subcontinent as historical right, get rid of foreign dependence and assert Indian role at the regional and global levels.
* **identical to Hitler and Mussolini’s concept of Nazism and Fascism**. However, it appears to be much closer to Hitler’s Nazi ideology which emphasized nation-building as compared to Mussolini’s Fascism that focused on the state-building.
* **Shakha** (branch) is the basic unit of RSS organization which **enrols volunteers** with a balanced mix of age groups. The Shakhas are responsible for recruiting, training, and propagating of Hindutva philosophy. First, overseas Shakhas of RSS was established in Kenya in 1947.
* **The largest network comprised of over 40 chapters and 150 Shakhas in the US alone**, which is playing a pivotal role in generating funds, influencing the Hindu Diaspora besides promoting Indian/RSS interests abroad.
* Such foreign donations enable RSS to finance its operational activities including communal violence against minorities, such as demolition of **Babri Masjid** and lynching passengers of **Samjhauta Express**.
* **The New York Times correspondent**, who covered 2014-elections, reported an extensive RSS mobilization campaign using its organizational presence in each village and urban locality to garner support for BJP.
* Wilkinson theorized that minorities are protected only if the government relies on minority vote for its survival and political advantage.
* **Ayodhya Violence**: At least 1000 people were killed; most of whom were Muslims across India. The charged religious emotions were shrewdly exploited by RSS-BJP leadership to increase its vote bank in the next election. Resultantly, BJP’s Lok Sabha (House of People) seats tally rose from 119 seats in 1991-elections to 161 seats in 1996-elections.
* Had there been no riots Modi would not have won the 2003-elections in Gujarat with thumping majority. In the domestic pretext, it made Modi a leader and ardent hardliner in the ranks of Hindu nationalists and also **brought him in the first line of leaders of BJP**. This was the reason that when **Atal Bihari Vajpayee** tried to remove Modi from his seat, the BJP leadership including L.K. Advani supported Modi and he was not removed. Modi stayed as the Chief Minister of Gujarat from 2001 to 2014.
* Appointing devout RSS workers on government jobs is the main method of influencing India’s policies**. Modi**, **Yogi Adityanath** – a staunch RSS religious leader was nominated as Chief Minister. Yogi has become a symbol of hate and communal violence in UP, and **Amit Shah** to name few.
* Indian public service officeholders can associate themselves with RSS, undermining the principle of neutrality in the public service. The Government of India had imposed a ban on this in 1986 after the murder of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi but later, most of the states lifted the ban under BJP’s political pressure. The biased conduct of police and other state institutions in myriad cases of violence against minorities in recent years substantiate the argument. In the recent **anti-Muslim riots in Delhi, Police not only supported the violent mob but also torched the Muslims and their properties.**
* **Under Vajpayee**, former Prime Minister, the Delhi Chapter of RSS launched a network of schools indoctrinating RSS philosophy. BJP has also **altered and reproduced public school textbooks** to indoctrinate Hindutva ideology in the Hindu youth.
* Wilkinson observed the phenomenon of Hindus’ economic gains as an outcome of communal violence in India. He asserted that **communal violence was employed by the slum-lords and the real-estate tycoons to grab the valuable lands and then selling it at inflated rates.** some of the Hindu businessmen endeavoured to get hold of Muslims’ cloth business in Meerut and cigarette business in Jabalpur, Moradabad, and Kanpur. This resulted in the eruption of anti-Muslims violence and their forcible eviction.
* **National Register of Citizens** (NRC) and **Citizenship Amendment Act** (CAA) bills aiming at reducing Muslims to the status of illegal immigrants, It has also proven that Jinnah’s “Two Nation Theory” was realistic.
* Following the strategy of **fait accompli**, the BJP-led Indian government revoked Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution to assimilate IOK as Indian Union territory. RSS-BJP is set to roll out a land-grabbing scheme to allot 6000 Acres Kashmiri Muslims’ land at a paltry rate of just one Indian Rupee per Kanal (600 square yards). 77 It plans to offer 50 percent GST waiver and cheap loans to Hindu investors in the garb of promoting industrial, IT, and tourism development in IOK.78 Such a plan implies serious diplomatic, economic, and security consequences for India. With engineered policies of providing domicile and employment, Indian intent of converting Kashmiris from majority to minority is evident.
* India has rendered **SAARC** **dysfunctional** and desires to make it an exclusive Indian domain through bilateral engagements, excluding Pakistan. Following the **Chanakya’s** teachings, India has been deepening its relations with Iran and Afghanistan to use their soil for fomenting instability in Pakistan. This was admitted by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the Sharam-al-Sheikh Summit and later confessed by Indian intelligence spy captured in Pakistan – Kulbhoshan Jadhav. **{proxy warfare}**
* As the Indian hard power is increasing, it is becoming increasingly belligerent (manifested by killing of innocent civilians along LOC), a proclamation of military doctrine (Cold Start Doctrine which projects its perilous over-confidence to wage a limited conventional war91), and post-Pulwama events (losing two fighter aircraft).
* **purchase of S-400 anti-aircraft missile systems** worth $800 million with Russia. It is now pushing the case for building a third aircraft carrier to realize its dream of a blue water navy and establish its hegemony on the Indian Ocean and beyond before China could dominate the Indian Ocean.
* the debate on the **revision of ‘no first use’ nuclear policy has been triggered by BJP leaders,** which may prove perilous for the entire region. **Pakistan has been experiencing a hybrid threat**, mainly emanating from India. Having understood the viability of the deterrence regime, India had switched to the policy of indirect strategy to bleed Pakistan instead of destroying.
* to isolate Pakistan diplomatically, **targeting Pakistan by manipulated information warfare (exposed by EU Disinfo Lab101),** launching a so-called surgical strike by India in Azad Jammu and Kashmir area along the line of control (LoC) to undermine Pakistan’s security forces 102 (an unsubstantiated Indian claim), using Afghan and Iranian soil to foment instability in Pakistan and **targeting CPEC projects** evidenced by Kulbhushan Jadhav’s arrest on Pakistan’s territory and confession of perpetrating terrorism.
* Volatility, distrust, and uncertainty best define the strategic environment of South Asia.
* The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) acts as the political wing of radical Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) – **the Saffron Bridge** – which is providing an overarching ideological and structural base.
* RSS downplays division of India on religious identity grounds, therefore, stress regaining the control over the entire Indian Subcontinent as the pre-ordained seat of Hindu rule after British Raj – an expansionist notion in the modern concept of nation-state. **RSS external relations thinking under various BJP regimes can be explained by the Mearsheimer’s theory of offensive realism, which buttresses survival through hegemony.**
* **Ban on cow slaughter** was followed by a campaign against inter-faith marriages in the name of **‘love jihad’.**
* The most menacing of all the devices for the **suppression of dissent is prosecution for sedition**. His technique is not to debate with his political opponents. It is to vilify them and denounce them as persons lacking in patriotism. This is the standard technique employed by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). But it is also a recognised symbol of fascism.
* Recent pak-india match in world cup Muhammad Shami; Gurgaon Prayer banning
* For decades, India was seen as a rare democratic success story in the developing world. But, by barring NGOs, including Mother Teresa’s Missionaries of Charity, from receiving foreign funding, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Hindu nationalist government has once again demonstrated that it has a very different vision of India.
* Haridwar hate-speech; openly called for the genocide of Muslims in India, invoking the ‘Rohingya model’ for their followers
* Bully Bai app: The ‘online auction’ is even more disturbing in a way because it highlights yet again the toxic confluence of misogyny and Islamophobia; Consider that after the scrapping of Article 370 that granted special status to India-occupied Kashmir, a BJP legislator remarked that this was an invitation for Hindus to marry “fair” Kashmiri women. The ‘auction’ is an uglier manifestation of the same triumphalist mentality.

# Islamophobia

## Evidence

* Close on the heels of the sacking of a Muslim minister from the British government due to her ‘Muslimness’ comes another report on the growing Islamphobia in the UK. The report reveals Muslims face more discriminations than other religious and ethnic groups in Britain. Uni of Birmingham
* The latest amongst moves contrary to the spirit of tolerance has been a ruling from the EU’s top court that allows employers to ban female workers from wearing the headscarf while on the job in order to present an image of “neutrality”.
* Meanwhile in India, Hindu zealots have lynched Muslims for eating beef, knowing they can get away with their crimes as the state is sympathetic to their hateful ideology. Myanmar and Sri Lanka have also seen incidents of mass violence against Muslims, often instigated by extremist sections of the Buddhist clergy.
* Trump forgets name of Taliban leader, calls him Mohammed. July 25
* It is not just Switzerland which has banned veil, niqab, burqa or full face cover, other countries in Europe like Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, France and the Netherlands have taken similar measures.
* **Don’t judge a woman by her cover!**
* President Gotabaya Rajapaksa said he was concerned that burying Covid-19 victims would “contaminate the groundwater”. The World Health Organisation holds that there is no evidence that the virus can spread from a dead body, and so does not take this position.
* **Role of media:** The UNHRC report titled “Countering Islamophobia/Anti-Muslim Hatred to Eliminate Discrimination and Intolerance Based on Religion or Belief”, released in early 2021, notes an overall rise in Islamophobic incidents around the globe and states that negative and ex parte portrayals of Muslims in the media have contributed to the rise of Islamophobia.
* attacks on Muslims receive relatively less coverage; the Quebec mosque shooting for “five minutes of airtime” on CBC the night it occurred while the 2017 London Borough attacks in the UK were covered for hours with live commentary.
* **Rationale:**
* In Europe and North America far-right groups have indulged in anti-Muslim violence, deadly in some cases, emboldened by demagogues and populist politicians looking to grab a few votes by demonising the other.
* conspiracy theories such as the ‘great replacement’ idea which roughly states that immigrants, particularly Muslims and people of colour, will ‘replace’ native Caucasians and Europeans.
* Justification for Palestine’s oppression**:** Islamophobia has been the most powerful instrument in garnering support for Palestinian oppression within the western world. Arabs have essentially been dehumanised over decades which has led to the justification of ethnic cleansing, expulsion, and racism, all under the garb of defending the “only democracy in the region” from grave security threats.
* **Solution and Pakistan’s efforts**:
* Islamist militancy is thoroughly a modern construct, a reactionary phenomenon born out of the injustice and repressiveness found in most Muslim states, and the colonial interventions of non-Muslim powers in places such as Palestine and Kashmir. The world community must therefore address both issues: the profound anti-Muslim prejudice evident in many societies, as well as the repressive systems in most Muslim states that help create the foot soldiers for religiously inspired militancy.
* The international community constantly censures Pakistan for victimisation of religious minorities. The growing misuse of blasphemy laws targeting both Muslims and non-Muslims are also cited as a manifestation of the extremist ideology gaining ground in the country. The PTI government’s overdose of religiosity has imparted a sense of impunity to extremist religious groups. Will the international community heed the prime minister’s appeal given this situation at home?
* Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, while virtually addressing a session of the UN’s Economic and Social Council, highlighted the issue of Islamophobia
* Prime Minister Imran Khan in October established the National Rehmatul-lil-Aalameen Authority, a body mandated to research how best to disseminate lessons from the life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to the people
* This authority should give particular attention to inclusive representation: scholars from faiths other than Islam and eminent female scholars since they are Pakistan’s soft underbelly.

## Pak efforts

* Ever since he took office in 2018, Prime Minister Imran Khan has been very vocal against rising Islamophobia and the grave global consequences of this trend
* In the backdrop of this year’s nationwide protests (in April) against France trying to justify the publication of sacrilegious caricatures of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), PM Khan summoned OIC ambassadors to his office on 3rd May, he assigned their countries a new mission. So far Muslim countries have failed, he said, to convince the West — France particularly — that blasphemy against the Prophet (PBUH) was hurting sentiments of the world’s 1.5 billion Muslims.
* After PM’s visit to SL, SRI LANKA has in a welcome move reversed its order that mandated all those dying of Covid-19 be cremated.
* In 2019, Pakistan proposed a six-point plan at the UN directed at countering racism and religious hatred. The then Pakistan ambassador to the UN, Maleeha Lodhi, also highlighted the need for legislative tools to address the issue. Concurrently, in the same year’s OIC meet, PM Imran underscored the necessity of having an anti-Islamophobia strategy, upbraiding all ideas that link any religion to terrorism.
* During a passionate 50-minute speech in the UNGA in 2019, Imran highlighted the global impact of anti-Muslim sentiment and called attention to how Islamophobia is being used as a tactical weapon by India to subjugate the Kashmiris and delegitimise their struggle under the banner of ‘Islamic terrorism’.
* In 2020, he wrote letters to Muslim leaders where he advised addressing the knowledge gap regarding Muslim sentiments, particularly in non-Muslim countries. He also wrote a letter to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg to take down Islamophobic content. At the 2020 Shanghai Cooperation Organisation conference, he again underscored the need for bridging gaps between all faiths. This year, March 15 was observed as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia as a result of Pakistan’s proposal at the OIC last year.

# Education

### Quotes

* An investment in knowledge pays the best interest. – Benjamin Franklin
* Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today. – Malcolm X
* The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet. – Aristotle
* “The ink of the Scholar (Knowledgeable person) is more holy than the blood of the martyr.”.
* “Seeking knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim (men or women)”

### Facts

* Gender disparity enrolment: 13% women literacy rate 46.5 Pakistan Today newspaper
* According to the **Economic Survey of Pakistan 2020-21**, the literacy rate in the country remains stagnant at 60 per cent.
* Studies indicate that each additional year of learning can raise incomes by 8-10%. World Bank estimates that enabling every girl to complete 12 years of education could generate an additional $15-30 trillion in lifetime productivity and earnings.
* Research also shows that violent conflict drops by up to 37% when girls and boys have equal access to education. inter-agency network for education in emergencies INEE
* And closing gender gaps in education can contribute to curbing climate change and hunger, and to fostering respect for human rights. Malala Fund

### Overview

* Those who talk about ‘Jinnah’s Pakistan’ ad nauseam would do well to heed his prophetic words: ‘**The importance of education and the right type of education cannot be over-emphasized. … There is no doubt that the future of our state will depend upon the type of education and the way in which we bring up our children as the future servants of Pakistan**.’ =Poor education in Pakistan today has similarities with the Muslims failing to take to Western education in post-1857 era. What Pakistan needs today is another Syed Ahmad.
* education creates a skilled and well-trained workforce essential to a thriving private and public sector.
* Pakistan’s education sector is a combination of three parallel streams – public or government-run schools, private schools and madrasas. (The schools run by the military are in a class of their own.) Each of these three streams has its own curriculum and examination processes. The National Internal Security Policy 2014–18 has summed up the impact of such stratification of education as: ‘Serious cleavages have appeared in the society as a result of these systems, and continued existence in parallel spheres compounds the possibilities of violence among divided youth.

### Socio-political aspects

The biggest gift that education gives to an individual is the power to thinking and to evaluate one’s surroundings and this is the first step towards awareness regarding the ills and evils that exist in the society. The education also enables an individual to identify ways through which social evils ought to be eliminated.

### English superiority

* Before the Britishers arrived, the sub-continent was a thriving intellectual region. Even though education was perpetuated through religious institutions — the ‘Madrassa’ for the Muslims and the ‘Pathshala’ for the Hindus — contemporary sciences, multilingual manners and spirituality were also a part of their teachings. The morals of the people were exceptionally high. In order to break India’s backbone and destroy the self-esteem of the people, the Britishers decided to introduce a new English medium system by establishing missionary schools to enforce Western ideals and induce a sense of inferiority among the people. This is where the fracture started, and it has all been downhill still then.
* Based on in-depth studies and interviews, it reconfirms that children learn best in a language they understand. This is generally the mother tongue or the language of the environment in multilingual communities.
* The existence of ‘Easy Urdu’ is an exercise of privilege to smooth the way for those born to advantage. The absence of ‘Easy English’ is an exercise of power to eliminate competition from those who might be more intelligent, competent, and motivated. The outcome of this exercise of privilege over an extended period of time is there for all to see if they wish to see it.
* The Citizen Foundation TCF’s move towards indigenous languages is laudable.

### Learning poverty

* In 2019, the World Bank estimated that 53% of children finishing primary school in low- and middle-income countries (and as many as 80% in some low-income countries) still could not read and understand a simple text. In light of these findings, the bank introduced a new concept: “learning poverty.”

### Youth bulge

* According to the WEF report “Future of Jobs”, the core skills needed to survive in the 21st century are: complex problem-solving techniques, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and digital literacy. These are ideally developed early, in basic education, and then refined at colleges and universities and during lifelong learning. Therefore, our SNC must deliver a strong base of foundational linguistic, scientific, technological, engineering and mathematical (STEM) know-how.

### OOSC

* To put nearly 23 million additional children into school would be a gigantic task. Pakistan would need to build nearly as many schools as exist today, furnish them and employ as many new teachers as are currently in service. Imagine the amount of resources needed to provide schooling to all 23 million out of school children. How difficult this will be is illustrated by the example below.
* The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) lies right under the nose of the federal government and is hardly some rural district of Balochistan or Sindh, and yet there is a 35 percent deficit of teachers in ICT public schools. The posts are not being filled because the government has no money to pay the additional salaries.

### Quality

* Given the state of education in Pakistan, especially scientific education, it is hardly surprisingly that Pakistan is among the least innovative countries in the world. Pakistan's rank drops to 107th position in Global Innovation Index 2020 from last year’s 105th rank. (Total 131 countries) The current allocation on research was only 0.2 per cent of GDP, far below the world average as most developed countries spend between 2 and 4 per cent of their GDP on research.
* Enhancing the quality of instruction in public schools would require several things.
* One, it would require more frequent and better pre-service and in-service training for the teachers.
* Good teachers are thus a bit like good climate policy: future generations benefit, but they have no influence over today’s decisions.
* South Korea has drawn some of its most talented people into teaching, and schoolteachers are among the country’s richest people. The story of Cha Kil-yong, who earned $8 million in one year teaching school mathematics online, has few parallels anywhere.
* Two, public schools still lack in essential facilities such as furniture, water supply, toilets, etc. The situation continues to be so in spite of receiving donations for the infrastructural improvement of schools from several countries. A rigorous auditing of where these funds go is badly needed.
* Three, textbooks provided by the state are of abysmal quality, both in content as well as in presentation. A heavy investment in high-quality textbooks is an essential requirement for improving educational quality.
* Classrooms tend to be overcrowded, with a low teacher-student ratio, hampering effective in-class learning. Outdated pedagogical practices, inadequate subject-specialists, non-merit-based teacher appointments, high turnover rates, and multigrade teaching exacerbate the situation.

### Financial problems

* Pakistan has a long-standing target of spending 4 per cent of the GDP on education. This target was set in 1992 and every government has repeated the pledge since. Pak spent 2.9 percent acc to Global innovation index 2020
* on an average, at the national level, 89 per cent of education expenditures comprises administrative expenses like salaries of teachers. Only 11 per cent comprises development expenditures, which is not sufficient to raise the quality of education.
* The bigger issue is that education remains a non-priority for the government. While other expenditures registered significant hikes in 2019-20, education-related expenditures witnessed a decrease of 29.6 per cent in the year. The cumulative education expenditures by the federal and provincial governments in FY2020 stood at 1.5 per cent of the GDP compared to 2.3 per cent in FY2019.

### Teaching Methodologies

* Unfortunately though, most of the educational institutions in our country are still using the conventional teaching philosophy in classrooms which is monotonous, uninteresting and boring for students. As a result children’s critical, creative thinking and problem-solving skills remain in dormancy. Resultantly, majority of students graduating from educational institutions are devoid of the knowledge and skills required in the job market at national and international levels.

### HEC

* Although we have seen the proliferation of universities over the last few decades, most of them have inadequate academic standards and are run as businesses committed to the mass production of graduates with very little actual education. At a basic level, it is due to the lack of well-qualified faculty, but it is also due to a lack of commitment to education as a goal in itself.
* a second negative development is undermining their purpose: the forced mass production of ‘research’ papers. it has substituted quality control of research with simply counting the number of research papers produced as a metric for evaluating competence. The majority of research papers produced at our institutions do not pass rigorous peer review. If they are published at all, it is in journals with low standards or through the occasional random one passing the filters of peer review despite their low quality. The emphasis in promoting research has thus shifted from quality to quantity.

#### Controversy

* the revised **ordinance** about the Higher Education Commission’s (HEC) autonomous status was approved by the federal government. The ordinance introduces several changes regarding the appointment and job duration of chairman and executive director.
* As per the amendment in **Section 6** of the HEC Ordinance, 2002, the chairperson can now hold the position for only two years instead of four. However, the duration of service for members and the executive director shall remain four years. Consequently, the chairperson has been ceased at once while the members and executive director of the commission stay.
* The amendment in **Section 11** curtails the commissions’ authority for the appointment of the executive director. Now the prime minister shall appoint an executive director on **the Ministry of Federal Education (MOFE).**
* It appears the revised ordinance was put forward just to sack the chairperson and take the commission under the wings of the MOFE. The role of the ministry in the appointment of the executive director will politicise the hiring process. It is a critical position responsible for implementing the commission’s orders, decisions, and policies.
* Involvement of MOFE in HEC matters means that it will now be the politicians rather than academics who will be making higher education decisions. The distribution of research funds and scholarships and hiring of faculty will be influenced by the MOFE. This will undermine the mission of the HEC to improve and promote higher education, research, and development without any political interference.

#### Banuri V. Rehman

* Banuri believes in widening and strengthening undergraduate teaching across the country and quality instead of quantity. Rahman’s approach, however, is more numerical: more scholarships, PhDs, research grants and research papers, etc. A clash of approaches between two schools of thought is normal. However, both parties have entered another level of personal attacks where policy debate has been left far behind.

#### Provincial autonomy

* Some quarters see the HEC as a redundant entity after the passage of the 18th Amendment. Others see the option of its disbandment as disastrous. At present, the provinces are the custodians of public universities and degree-awarding institutions. On many occasions, lawmakers have been irked by the HEC’s actions. Some years ago, the process of degree verification by the HEC caused consternation when certain lawmakers were disqualified for holding fake degrees.
* Conversely, many arguments are cited to retain the HEC for all the contributions it has made to higher education. Quality control mechanisms, uniformity of core values in curriculum, the continuous revision of baseline curricula, continuing with projects, prospective grants and funding from international bodies, support to faculty in research, collaborations and seminar/conference grants etc are part of the argument to retain the HEC as it is now.
* Provincial autonomy is probably the only rationale proffered to counter the argument of HEC supporters.

### University Reforms in Pak

* Twenty-one Pakistani universities have been included in the Times Higher Education’s World University Rankings 2022. Out of these, five have made it to the list of top 800 institutions in the world. The ranking is considered as one of the most prestigious in the world and Pakistan has shown tremendous improvement year on year, especially in two key areas: research citation and teaching scores.
* the real indicator needs to be in terms of how much higher education contributes to the overall growth and prosperity of Pakistan. This includes producing intellectuals and academics as well as skill- and technical-based workers who can work together to build resilient, inclusive and responsible industries.
* Unfortunately, this has not been the case since decades. Pakistan suffers from a massive brain drain, unemployment is rampant, the higher education curriculum is archaic and outdated, and freedom of expression is heavily curtailed. Only certain academic subjects and narratives have been allowed to flourish.
* One hopeful aspect is that there is greater awareness on climate change and environmental issues. The University of Agriculture Faisalabad is ranked 24th globally for Climate Action while NUST is the 67th leading university working on Affordable and Clean Energy.
* Decentralization (give autonomy to university)
* HEC is more focused with quantity instead of quality of research
* Proper dispensation of funds in public sector uni
* Put an end to nepotism, mismanagement, financial corruption & ethnic strifes

### SNC

* The Single National Curriculum (SNC) is an outcome of the promise of Naya Pakistan. A Pakistan free of educational apartheid, where education is aligned to the emerging international trends in teaching, learning and assessments, which develops analytical skills, critical thinking and creativity in students, and which moves away from rote memorisation. A Pakistan where it doesn’t matter whether one attended an ‘elite’ private school, a public school or a madressah. A Pakistan where every schoolchild will receive the same kind of education, and will thus have the same opportunities in life.
* Prime Minister Imran Khan has launched the first phase of the Single National Curriculum in august.
* By doing away with the dichotomy caused by the hitherto different curriculums being taught in English-medium and Urdu-medium schools, the SNC is expected to remove disadvantages faced by those receiving instructions in Urdu and the inferiority complex that the dual system induces in the latter category of students. Now English will be taught from Grade-1 in all schools and seminaries. The SNC will help towards attaining social justice.

#### Phases

Single National Curriculum is being developed in three phases:

* Phase I: Development of SNC and textbooks   **Pre-I-V** (March 2021)
* Phase II: Development of SNC and textbooks **VI-VIII** (March 2022)
* Phase III: Development of SNC and textbooks **IX-XII** (March 2023)

#### Vision

One system of Education for all, in terms of curriculum, medium of instruction and a common platform of assessment so that all children have a fair and equal opportunity to receive high quality education. Single National Curriculum is a step in that direction.

#### Issues

* Policies hardly survive the change in government in Pakistan.
* **Constitutional Transgression**: In the current design of SNC, the federal government has transgressed upon the constitutional domain of the provinces. The Parliament, through the 18th constitutional amendment, had transferred the curriculum-making authority to provinces, restricting the federal government’s domain to the federal capital area and the educational institutions directly under its control. Given education was made a provincial subject through the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, the introduction of the SNC is being seen as a clawback by the federal government and has been contested in some provinces on this count. This takes away the ‘national’ aspect.
* The government’s slogan of reform is ‘an end to educational apartheid’, a laudable goal indeed. But what has been approved and notified is a **uniform curriculum, not a system of uniform education**. The latter would also imply equal educational facilities for all — rich and poor, rural and urban, boys and girls. Only a uniform education would ensure an end to the educational apartheid. But the government has not put forward any plan for uniform education yet. And it is unclear if it ever will.
* **Critical thinking**: The primary focus is on the sheer quantity of information poured into students’ heads. For the sake of “uniformity of the mindset” the SNC tries to end diversity. It kills critical thinking and this results in rote learning and cultural alienation.
* **Language mix:** child mother tounge
* **Article 22 (1)** “No person attending any educational institution shall be required to receive religious instruction, or take part in any religious ceremony, or attend religious worship, if such instruction, ceremony of worship relates to a religion other than his own.”
* This law implies that no lesson in any textbook that is compulsory to students of all faiths can contain material specific to any religion. The SNC violates this fundamental right of non-Muslim Pakistani citizens by prescribing lessons in Urdu and English courses that are already a part of the Islamiat curriculum. Urdu textbooks are asked to start with a hamd and a naat, and there is invariably a lesson on Seerat-un-Nabi or the life of the Prophet (PBUH).
* When challenged to justify this violation of constitutional right, officials at MOFEPT refuse to correct the wrong. Instead, they prescribe outlandish ways of avoiding the violation: they want teachers to ask non-Muslim students to leave the class during such lessons.
* **Govt response**: The SNC has also taken special care to ensure that there is no material in it that offends the sensibilities of any of the minorities in Pakistan. In fact, it is for the first time that a separate special curriculum has been prepared for Hindus, Christians, Bahais, Sikhs and Kalaash. Ministry’s entire attempt has been to ensure that the curriculum is not only reflective of all Pakistanis but promotes tolerance, peace and brotherhood among all communities in the country,” according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Education in response to objections being raised by various quarters on the SNC. The federal government’s approval process for science textbooks does not involve any consultation with the Muttahida Ulema Board and so any claim that the board has prohibited the inclusion of any diagrams or educational material from the biology textbooks is factually inaccurate.
* The much-debated Single National Curri­cu­lum should have made a deliberate effort to address the disrespect towards women and the propensity to condone violence against them. Although the SNC aims to create national harmony, it fails to address grave social injustices in the revised curriculum. It does not see **gender equity** as a moral and societal obligation.

#### Implementation

* the actual problem arises at the grassroots level where preparation, motivation, capacity and availability of logistical and material resources are lacking and the implementation of SNC might even be resisted at that level by some other education systems.
* As things stand now, no textbook can be published or prescribed for any public or private school without an NOC from the Punjab Curriculum and Textbook board PCTB. Not only are the private publishers expected to conform to the shoddy standards used in the model textbooks, but there is also a lengthy three-tiered review system in place to get the NOC.
* Right now, the greatest concern for all serious educationists is that some of the most clueless government functionaries might hold the power to damage the future of education in this country.

#### Conclusion

### Impact of Covid

* Consecutive school closures meant that students were deprived of the learning flow that had persisted before the said closures. The government truly stepped in with a diverse set of initiatives, often also in partnership with other institutions within the Pakistani educational ecosystem. Distance learning using technological innovation, herewith termed EdTech, was rapidly adapted to in a way that guaranteed access. There were two spectrums on which these initiatives played out. Considering the limited access to the internet within Pakistan, low-tech initiatives, too, were adopted to cater to a wider expanse. In terms of the low-tech initiatives, TeleSchool and Radio School were launched for students across the nation. While internet access only covers about 15% of the population, roughly 70% of the population has access to a television set and 96% of the population has access to the radio.
* The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (MoFEPT), while keeping this in mind, launched the said initiatives in collaboration with Digital Pakistan. The E-Taleem portal on the MoFEPT website has more than just these recorded lectures on show.

### Solutions

* Ehsaas Education Stipends programme under which monetary incentives will be provided to attract girls and boys to school.

# Governance

* Governance is Reconciling individual interest with national interest ~Tariq Banuri
* The pursuit of the **Sustainable Development Goals** could be a good start towards the journey of good governance.

## Public policy

* THE framing, advocacy, implementation and oversight of public policy is a primary governmental responsibility.
* The circuitous and circular path Pakistan’s policymaking takes is even more worrying. is akin to running on the treadmill: you expend energy, believe you have covered distance, but you are actually in the same place. This ‘**treadmill policymaking**’ and the suspended reality it represents, vitiates the effort and expenses made, and the public expectations raised.
* Economy struggling? IMF-bailout time, plus calling in more favours from friends. Institutions failing? Twiddle with their structures, rather than their functions, even though it did not work the previous 10 times. Exports uncompetitive? SOEs haemorrhaging even more heavily? Patch them with even more subsidies. The list goes on.
* This treadmill effect of never moving forward; deploying rusted ideas on repeat; focusing on process rather than outcomes; and the inability to keep pace with the dynamic contexts in which public policy is framed, is a betrayal and violation of public trust.
* K-P is now spending more on education and health per capita than Punjab or Sindh

## Bureaucratic accountability

Administrators possess authority and influence in many societies due to their expertise, permanence, status, discipline, organizational structure and their closeness to the corridors of political power. The administrators’ Accountability is inevitable to make sure credibility of government and justify the role of the civil servants as the real servant of the people.

The accountability mechanisms of the bureaucracy can be formal and informal.

* formal tools of bureaucracy are the hierarchical arrangements, rules and regulations, performance evaluation, legislative checks, judicial review, Ombudsman and so on.
* informal consists of personal values, professional codes, media, public opinion, Interest and pressure groups, and etc.

### Background

Pakistan's colonial heritage has great impact on its bureaucratic and political institutions (Islam, 1989). Colonial regime developed strong and highly centralized bureaucratic set-up during the 19th and 20th centuries. It was administered by the Indian Civil Service (ICS). While manipulated democratic institutions were gradually allowed into colonial India. The ‘elected representatives’ role was to recommend rather than to decide. Powers were not transferred to these democratic institutions but they were formed to legitimize and strengthen the bureaucratic state (Washbrook, 1997). Thus Pakistan inherited very sound bureaucratic institutions from colonial rulers and weak democratic institutions. Since the withdrawal of British from India-Pak, bureaucratic institutions of the country have played assertive and influential role in the governing structure as compared to democratic actors.

### Intervention in politics

For the early decade after partition (1947-1958), political scenario of Pakistan was dominated by senior civil servants with the support by the military elites. The governor-general, representing the bureaucracy, derailed the political process. Ghulam Mohammad, the third governor-general, took the extra-constitutional dismissal of the elected Prime Minister; Khwaja Nazimuddin in 1953 despite the latter was supported by majority of the members of the parliament (Newman, 1959). He also dismissed the Constituent Assembly when it had almost completed its task of constitution- making. Ghulam Mohammad also institutionalized the role of the army into polity by including the army’s commander-in-chief, General Ayub Khan, as defense minister in the cabinet.

### Challenges

* Political interference reduced the spirit of responsibility, answerability, effectiveness and professionalism among the civil servants.
* the absence of commitment and spirit of the politician actors towards real and across-the-board accountability process.
* The courts seem to have become more aggressive towards bureaucrats. Earlier, the summoning of bureaucrats was not so common. Where it was absolutely essential, most judges would express their disappointment or anger in their chambers rather than in open court. Maintaining the dignity of a bureaucrat is as important for the government’s writ as his own self-respect.
* The media is a double-edged sword. While it can be a great motivator by highlighting good work done by a government functionary, it mostly sensationalises some real and perceived shortcomings, giving names. Some smart functionaries befri­end the media and receive undue projection while the straightforward ones can be hit by undeserved reporting.
* NAB may have recovered Rs800 billion in corruption money, but it has made the bureaucracy more bureaucratic. Decisions previously taken by a sections officer/ assistant commissioner are now taken after months of procrastination and throwing paper around by the federal secretary/chief secretary or the cabinet.

### Solution

* better laws, stronger, greater, transparent accountability mechanisms and more transparency alone will lead to transitional phase of bureaucratic accountability in Pakistan.

## Performance agreements

* The Prime Minister has signed performance agreements with 41 federal ministries to make them accountable during the remaining period of the current government. This is a novel concept for Pakistan’s public sector which has so far known only one form of accountability — inquiries and investigation on corruption. Never ever has anyone been questioned on subpar performance, let alone in a systematic and documented way. This isn’t a smokescreen; this is a paradigm shift on accountability in a way Pakistan’s hasn’t seen before.
* These are the kind of performance agreements that are used in developed countries such as the UK and New Zealand. Here’s how the process works: Each Ministry prepares first draft of their goals and presents to a Review Committee who makes sure that the goals are outcome-driven and not process-driven. The final draft is shared with PM Office and feedback is discussed with ministries. A final agreement is then signed by PM and Minister. Quarterly reviews are then held, including summaries reviewed by the PM personally, to make sure delivery for government’s agenda is on track or corrective action is taken.
* the ministries have committed to more than 1,300 reform, policy, development and administrative initiatives, with most expected to be completed within the next two years.
* For instance, by June 2022, the Privatization Division will complete the privatization of Balloki and Haveli Bahadur power plants, Pakistan Steel Mills, Jinnah Convention Centre Islamabad and much more properties.
* Reward and reprimand are two important steps in good governance. The other day PM awarded certificates to the heads of top 10 ministries and divisions on the basis of their performance for achieving their targets, he was simply raising the bar for a qualitative change.
* But the buck should not stop at photo-op and showering of laurels, it must go on to ensure that public confidence has been restored and the government should be seen to be alive and responsible to dispense its duties earnestly.
* it is debatable whether it should be made public for it could create bitterness and generate a controversy within the ranks of the cabinet members, and demoralise and embarrass those ministers who were assessed rather low on the ladder and defeat the very aim of enhancing performance and working as a well-knit team.
* There is a strong view that there are several negative outcomes of this type of rating and few advantages, if any. For example, when the foreign minister who is the principal representative and spokesperson of Pakistan abroad is not rated among the top few, albeit by this questionable criterion, it has ramifications.

# Energy Crisis

## Issues

* The story of Pakistan’s energy sector is symptomatic of virtually all sectors of the economy. Pakistan’s policy-makers have been remarkably adept in articulating the overall objectives for energy policy within a national development context. The problem is not what the objectives are but how they can be achieved.
* The New York Times, as early as April 2010, quoted a Pakistani senior official as saying, “There is nobody in Islamabad who is working on a coherent, integrated plan. The discussion just keeps going in circles.”
* In the light of overwhelming evidence, analysts unanimously agree that the **absence of coordinated planning and policy formulation** is a fundamental drawback to Pakistan’s energy sector.
* The analytical mechanism to achieve this is **integrated energy planning and policy formulation (IEP**), which requires a supportive institutional structure at the policy level.
* Another reason that the early efforts did not succeed was the **unchecked expansion of the bureaucracy**. On an overall basis, Pakistan’s bureaucracy today supports 61 federal ministers and ministerial-level advisors, many based on party patronage.
* This bloating also affected the energy sector. Instead of moving toward a streamlined structure and a consolidated ministry of energy, responsibility for the sector was fragmented, thus adding to the complexity and confusion.
* **Distribution:** According to the State Bank of Pakistan’s Annual Report 2014, the more binding bottleneck in the energy sector was not generation (most generation units were working well below capacity), but **distribution**.
* Apart from theft and leakages estimated at about 20 per cent, ‘the prevailing transmission and distribution (T&D) system can reliably handle loads of only 11,500– 12,500 MW during a given period. Any load beyond this increases the likelihood of a breakdown in the distribution network, which is becoming more common.
* Without upgrading the existing distribution network, any addition to generation capacity (and even the settlement of the circular debt) could not ease load management on a sustainable basis. Unfortunately, despite this hard constraint, policy has mostly focused on generation.’
* **Reliance on imports**: A significant amount, about a third, is imported in the form of oil and coal, although the country has vast indigenous reserves of coal and considerable exploration prospects for petroleum. Oil **imports**, which meet around 80 percent of Pakistan’s crude oil and products requirements, cost upward of $12 billion annually. Some 60 percent of coal requirements are imported.
* **Minimal exploration:** Four international oil companies were engaged in exploration in Pakistan in the early 1980s.
* **Excess capacity:** Today Pakistan has “surplus” electricity with an installed power generation capacity of nearly 40,000 megawatts (MW). Its maximum transmission capacity is around 26,000 MW. Five Chinese power plants with a cumulative capacity of nearly 5,300 MW are ready to go online in near future. This will add to the capacity payments, which have turned out to be an albatross around our neck
* **Circular debt**

### Circular debt

* THEY say the road to hell is paved with good intentions. The aphorism is particularly relevant to Pakistan where the existing economic mess is largely of our own making. Politicians promise people stuff they can’t afford. This leads to growing subsidies, rising loans and widening budget deficits. Spurts of such debt-fuelled growth gives people a temporary and false sense of prosperity. However, any operation run on unsustainable cash injections in the form of subsidies, tax breaks or outright bailouts blows up sooner or later.
* The menacing source of this burden is the relentless I OWE YOU (IOUs) that keep piling up among the players in the energy sector supply chain. This includes power distributors, power producers, as well as oil and gas companies, such as PEPCO (Pakistan Electric Power Company), IPPs (Independent Power Producers), K-Electric, Pakistan State Oil and Southern Sui Gas. The origin of debt seems simple: When you cannot afford to pay back what you owe, you incur a debt. But what if it wasn’t your fault in the first place? What if you couldn’t pay what you owed, because someone else couldn’t pay you? This is the chain of IOUs that has dominated discussions on energy financing in Pakistan since 2007, which was around the time international oil prices went up. As importing oil became more expensive, the government at the time did not pass on the price increase to the customers, leading to an imbalance between actual money owed to fuel companies, and money available to collect from the end consumers. The fact that a lot of energy was wasted during transmission (and still is), and a lot of people didn’t pay their bills (and still don’t), only compounded the problem. Hence began the vicious cycle where the government and consumers didn’t pay the power-distribution companies, who couldn’t pay the power-generation companies, who couldn’t pay the fuel companies, who couldn’t buy more oil, leaving the government no choice but to borrow even more money, only for the cycle to repeat itself, with even greater numbers. This vicious cycle is the circular debt.
* Looking through a political economy lens, there are four problems at the root of circular debt challenge: the hangover of past contracts, artificial sweeteners to appease political constituencies, white elephants at the tail end of electricity network, and pigeonholing to avoid difficult decisions.
* **Past contracts**: The contracts signed with numerous power producers with preposterous capacity charges by the last government is a glaring example of ineptitude and corruption. It was far better to have braved scarcity of electricity than to have produced it at a stupendous cost that none could afford to pay, hence the monumental figure of the recurrent circular debt that is ravaging the economy.
* **Appeasements**: Political compulsions sometimes prevent governments from passing on tariff increase to consumers, such as during Covid. But without check, it can also create a perverse incentive to pass on the hot potato to the next government. Any changes in tariff adjustment mechanism (through proposed NEPRA Act amendments) or withdrawal of subsidies, however, can be politically contentious, especially in a charged political environment.
* the **white elephants** refer to power distribution companies (DISCOs) with excessive technical and commercial losses, on the back of poor infrastructure, thefts and non-recoveries from private and government consumers. Almost half of the circular debt build-up is because of transmission and distribution losses over and above NEPRA’s allowed limit, and non-recoveries. The DISCOs, however, operate with impunity without penalty for poor performance and are marred with powerful labour unions and vested interests.

## Solutions

* A review of the energy objectives through several of Pakistan’s five-year plan cycles reveals that the objectives are well thought out and clearly stated. The overall objective is to develop the sector to support an expanding economy. To accomplish this, a number of subsidiary objectives are stipulated, which are summarized in three groups as follows. The first is to enhance energy supplies by developing indigenous resources, importing energy at competitive prices to meet deficits, expanding delivery infrastructure, and improving energy efficiency and reliability. The second is to improve energy security by relying more heavily on indigenous resources, thus reducing import dependence, and by diversifying energy supplies to manage risks and external shocks. The third is to strengthen the sector’s long-term viability by gradually shifting the government’s role from that of owner to policymaker and regulator, encouraging the private sector to own and run the country’s energy enterprises through appropriate incentives, such as attracting foreign and local private capital using competitive means. Consumer orientation would be achieved through an emphasis on service provision. Pro-poor interventions would promote affordable energy for the underprivileged. Due emphasis would be given to upgrading environmental protection measures in the production and utilization of energy.
* In many developing countries, including Pakistan, energy planning is carried out and policies formulated largely on an ad hoc, crisis-driven, subsector basis. For instance, plans for the petroleum, electric power, or coal subsectors, and of other energy subsectors such as fuelwood and other renewables, are prepared largely independently of each other. By virtue of its high profile and visibility, the electric power subsector often gets the lion’s share of attention. This inevitably leads to serious distortions in the policy framework in areas such as pricing and subsidies, which favor this subsector at the cost of others as well as of the overall economy
* IEP harmonizes the policies and plans of the energy sector to meet national socioeconomic objectives, while ensuring close coordination and consistency between each of the energy subsectors. It is part and parcel of the overall economic planning process with which it is closely coordinated. IEP develops a coherent set of energy policies in key areas such as: the energy requirements to fuel national growth while meeting environmental targets; the optimum mix of fuels; conservation measures; measures to diversify and increase energy security by reducing dependence on foreign sources; meeting the energy needs of the poor; saving foreign exchange; reducing the trade deficit; and raising sufficient revenues to finance continued sector development.
* Why not export at least 2000 MW to power-starved Afghanistan the way India did by connecting Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar to its national grid? This regional Indian electricity trade is intelligently designed to put energy security in these countries in the hands of New Delhi, thus providing it an important control lever.
* Afghanistan, with an installed capacity of 700 MW only, is in dire need of electricity for most of its population. It owes Tajikistan millions of dollars for the electricity it has been buying from central Asian state.
* Pakistan can help Afghanistan by buying off much cheaper Afghan coal and providing it electricity, primarily going for a barter model. Currently, Pakistan imports 16 million tonnes of coal every year from South Africa and Australia for its power plants and the cement industry.

# Economy

## Historical overview

* first 20 years highest growth rate in South Asia; By the 1990s, slowest growing country in South Asia. World Bank
* main explanatory factor: experiment with socialism had a negative impact on industrial development, export expansion, the quality of education and gave an overarching role to the bureaucracy in economic decision-making.
* The substitution of a culture of entrepreneurship, risk taking and innovation by rent seeking and patronage suppressed the dynamism of the private sector
* Bureaucratic harassment, problems of law and order, unreliable and expensive power and inadequate infrastructure also discouraged investment
* Disintegration of the unified eco of West and East
* During Zia era the process of nationalization was abandoned, the preferential orientation towards public sector did not diminish in any perceptible way.
* The frequent changes in government throughout the 1990s and consequential political instability played havoc with the economy. Uncertainty and discontinuity of economic policies, patronage-based economic governance benefitting a small elite to the exclusion of the majority of the population and exogenous shocks derailed the economy from its tracks
* Nuclear test and follow up sanctions
* Alliance with US and NATO restored international financial aid
* A careful calculation of costs and benefits of Pakistan’s participation in the war against terror would reveal that the benefits received via foreign assistance pale into insignificance compared to costs incurred since 2001.
* Economic management played second fiddle to political management and coalition politics.

## Tax Structure

* Taxes are involuntary charges levied on individuals or corporations and enforced by a government entity—whether local, subnational or national—in order to finance government activities.
* the prime objective of the taxes is revenue generation. However, for sustained stream of revenues, the tax policy also needs to be growth facilitating.
* These dual objectives can only be achieved if the tax policy reduces the deadweight loss resulting from imposition of taxes, and help transactions grow. Higher number of transactions is associated with higher economic growth and more employment. Increased growth enhances the taxable capacity of the economy and therefore generate sustainable streams of revenues.

### Flaws

* The objective of the tax policy is reduced to only to collecting more revenues to achieve illusive targets of Tax— GDP ratio and to reduce fiscal deficit.
* Growth facilitation has not been the priority. Increasing the tax-to-GDP ratio even at the cost of violating the basic principle of taxation—fairness, certainty, efficiency, and convenience—has become the cornerstone of policy.
* Consequently, the tax structure has taken the shape of an exploitative and antigrowth design that kills transactions.
* The amplified share of indirect taxes in total collections, the increase dependence on withholding taxes accompanied by compliance cost, and the use of tariff for revenue generation instead of a trade facilitation instrument are some of glaring examples of a tax structure that would go for short-term revenue gains by sacrificing long-term growth.
* Frequent changes in policy and rates make the environment very uncertain especially for potential investors.
* Excessive withholding regime: About 70 percent of tax revenue is collected through withholding tax agents such as banks, utilities, telecom etc. placing the burden of collection on these businesses and increasing their business costs. Easy source of collection for FBR
* if these taxes are not levied, businesses would reinvest them to expand, then the overall impact would be more economic activity resulting in even more tax collections than that forgone. But unfortunately, while policies are made, no one notices the loss to economic growth and job creation due to these adverse tax measures.
* Similarly, excessive documentation requirements increase transaction cost. Together, these make the tax policy inefficient and inconvenient

### Recommendations

* There is a clear need to have a transaction-facilitating policy rather than having one that kills transactions.
* A tax system must be simple and clear
* Tax rates and policies should be stable and not changing in minibudgets every few months forcing all to speculate on tax policy
* Rent seeking: political economists define it as people’s lobbying of a government to grant them subsidies and financial privileges that would ultimately enhance their personal wealth.
* Research is needed to assess which industry need such exemption and why? And for how long? Whether those that have been given these exemptions/concessions have achieved the desired results such as jobs creation and economic growth.
* While people pay their taxes, they expect to receive services in return. This is a very rational expectation. Whereas, when a government levies taxes, even if not pronounced, it by default agrees to return the money in the form of services. This is a basic principle of taxation.

## Issues and Sol

* **Innovation and start-ups**: When Henry Ford introduced motorcars in the US, there were no proper roads in the country. Good roads were built from the money raised through taxes on vehicles and fuel. So first came the innovation and the infrastructure later.
* Traditionally, Pakistanis like to invest in physical assets like real estate. On the other hand, startups are an investment in human beings (founders) with an idea and a big dream. Growing investment in startups will result in the birth of a niche meritocracy in the country, which will challenge our social norms where the smartest labour and capital is incentivised to become rent seeking rather than productivity or innovation seeking.
* raising a quarter of a billion dollars already this year. This is more money than they have raised in the last five years combined.
* Startups have been innovation and economic growth engines for developed countries like the US (think Silicon Valley and the hundreds of thousands of high paying jobs it has created).
* Imagine the opportunities a meritocracy creates for women and other marginalised groups in our country.
* **Inflation**: debt servicing takes up a considerable portion of the federal budget; the purchase of wheat, sugar and oil weighs in heavily on the import bill; rampant corruption has eaten up the very foundations of the economy; and the continued devaluation of the rupee has further aggravated the entire condition
* **Inefficient judicial system**: underperforming judicial system, where expeditious dispute resolution remains elusive, with parties stuck in judicial proceedings for years with no end in sight.
* Lack of FDI can be attributed to our inefficient judicial sys
* World Bank ease of doing business report: the resolution of a commercial dispute in Pakistan took 1,072 days on average, compared to 164 days in Singapore, 216 in New Zealand, and 437 days in the UK
* A concerted effort is required by all stakeholders including lawyers, judges, bar councils, the executive and legislature to defeat the lethargy and red tape that plague Pakistan’s judicial system.
* **Women inclusion**: How far the new State Bank initiative — ‘Banking on Equality: Reducing the Gender Gap in Financial Inclusion’ — will help remove the barriers to women’s access to banking and financial services, only time will tell. Yet the first of its kind mainstreaming effort for the financial sector, which introduces a gender lens in our banking practices, is creditable. The policy aims to boost the number of active women-transaction bank accounts from the existing 14.5m to around 20m by 2023 and increase female participation in the workforce of financial institutions from 13pc to 20pc by 2024.
* **Low tax to gdp ratio**
* **Loan waivers:** an estimated Rs 20 billion in loans were waived off by more than thirty banks between 2012 and 2014 to facilitate about 2,000 privileged customers among the previous and incumbent governments, causing a massive loss to the public exchequer. This came on top of Rs 403 billion that were written off by various governments between 1997 and 2009. (tribune)
* **Debt Trap**: failure to reform the tax system and increase revenue collection is a major factor behind heavy domestic and foreign borrowings by the government; The fact that Pakistan’s external debt continues to accumulate, and it has to borrow more dollars to repay its old loans suggests that the country has actually been caught in a debt trap; government will continue to borrow more money to repay its old loans while accumulating more debt. This is not sustainable for any economy, least of all a fragile one. The government should put its house in order to attract FDI, boost exports, increase tax revenues and incentivise domestic savings to get out of this trap.
* Take **Scandinavian countries** as an example. Widely held up as role models of development, they carry a heavy debt burden. But it’s used to further the quality of life rather than extend an inefficient leviathan in the form of the public sector. And that investment pays off in the form of the public’s trust, which then happily pays a large percentage of their income to the government as tax.
* In conclusion, debt acquisition does not perpetuate worries if it can spur economic growth and enhance the quality of citizens’ lives.
* **Political will**: Charter of economy (consensus of major polities regarding eco policies) is required
* As Acemoglu and Robinson argue, those who control the political power determine economic institutions So, if political power (which in turn determines the political institutions) is controlled by a small, extractive elite, they will set up economic institutions which benefit them, not the majority.
* Our manufacturing sector is rife with examples of rent-seeking practices**.** For example, Pakistan’s automobile sector is dominated by a handful of Japanese manufacturers known for selling low-value cars while making a considerable profit. Despite this, Pakistan provides them with extensive trade barriers to protect them from foreign competition.
* Direct evidence of our political structure influencing economic outcomes comes from a paper by Asim Ijaz Khwaja and Atif Mian. They show that politically connected firms in Pakistan receive loans from government banks in Pakistan at lower rates despite defaulting more than non-politically connected firms. This is evidence of unaccountable political power translating into inefficient economic allocation.
* **Geopolitics**: Ukraine crisis; pak-india issues
* **Policy inconsistency** biggest reason for country’s abysmal dev record; other SA countries focused on human dev, building better institutions, we obsessed with illusion of growth
* in 60s 80s 200s aim was to legitimise the regime on the basis of growth, helped by foreign aid, earlier partner in cold war then war on terror. 5-year term for democracy, short term projects preferred over long-term reforms, no rational politician would choose latter, even if some did next govt would sabotage it to prevent initiator from gaining political mileage.
* **Economic inequality:** unequal access to wealth or income; eco-soc consequences; on eco front, rising no. of poor people causes less investment in edu and health, negative impact on future productivity and eco prosperity, poverty reduces demand for goods and services, leads to eco stagnation; on socio sphere: eco inequality is associated with high crime rate, mental illnesses, suicides, social unrest or class conflict between the haves and the have-nots
* **Governance**: Why Nations Fail authors argue diff of income btw haves and haves-not stems from the difference in their institutions ie laws, rules and processes
* **LOW FDI**: Pak has to attract FDI which depends on peace prospects in the region and better gains and ease for the investor; FDI solves balance-of-payment problem
* Nike’s annual report shows that 40 per cent of the company’s global footwear production is currently produced in Vietnam.
* Major FDI: CPEC related
* **Low exports:** lagged behind its South Asian counterparts since early 90s, despite eco liberalisation and privatization; despite a sustained period of exchange rate stability with no energy shortage between 2001 and 2005 (explained by Atif Mian in his research paper) Reason: twin deficits: current account and fiscal, low investments rate and savings compared to its GDP;
* *Solution*: an export-led growth model; lifted millions out of poverty in China South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore; China invested heavily in education, particularly science and technology, as well as in heavy engineering and other capital-intensive industries. Foreign investors looking for trained and low-cost workers found no shortage of human talent as the ‘communist’ China had invested heavily in basic education and its Special Economic Zones (SEZs) jump-started the labour-intensive exports-led industrial revolution that has transformed China.
* **Low private investment:** Tax concessions and government-guaranteed yields may have succeeded in attracting investments in the energy sector, an unsustainable model; instead 3D strategy required: Deregulate (end bureaucratic hurdles and rent-seeking), devolve (without it impossible to provide basic services) & digitise (without it cannot compete in a world defined by digital divide);
* **Elite Capture:** World Bank report titled Pakistan@100 points to elite capture and jobless growth as key impediments to realising the nation’s true potential.
* **Digitization:** A SIGNIFICANT number of Pakistanis have shifted to internet and mobile banking to transfer money, pay bills and shop online. Covid-19 forced people to use online banking services; the waiver of transactional fees on all online interbank and intra-bank fund transfer encouraged many to start accessing internet and mobile banking services; the incentives offered by the provinces to taxpayers using mobile banking for payment of government taxes or restaurant bills also contributed to an uptake in digital transactions.
* Selling spectrum at low cost, cutting taxation on the internet, lowering duties on mobile phones and giving subsidised access to the poor would facilitate ‘internet for all’ — the pay-offs are likely to be greater than the celebrated signal-free corridors, motorways and BRTs.
* **State-Owned enterprises:** Wapda, railways, Steel Mills, PIA and others have succumbed to political interference of PPP and PML-N governments in the past. Corruption and overemployment have turned them into parasitic entities. The present government will do well to privatise them despite the political saber rattling from all directions.
* **Red tape:** to import 3d printer 9 gov agencies are involved; land developers must obtain 22 NOCs from diff agencies;
* **Low trade:** Pakistan’s trade with regional economies, with the exception of China, has historically remained far below its potential; multiple factors which have long prevented economic connectivity of the Saarc countries that also include Afghanistan. Long-standing political and territorial disputes between individual states, terrorism and poor security conditions in other countries, non-tariff barriers created by some to protect their local businesses, higher cost of trading within the region etc; certain ‘exogenous’ issues such as the international sanctions against Iran, which keep Pakistan and others from developing commercial ties with the affected country
* There are three reasons to promote regional trade in South Asia: strategic, demographic and consumer benefit.
* On the **strategic** front, climate change and water security pose an existential threat to the breadbasket in India and Pakistan. Increased trade ties in the agricultural and energy sector can build linkages that can allow long-term research and innovation that benefits both countries.
* The northern subcontinent’s **demographic** dividend is turning into a ticking time bomb. Increased trade flows can foster economic development on an east-west axis that has historically been the driver of income and wealth generation in the region for millennia.
* Improved trade ties will also bring more innovative and better-quality goods and services to population centres at lower prices, creating savings for **consumers** economically hard hit by the pandemic.
* **Inter-provincial disparities:** Despite significant institutional developments in NFC award, inter-provincial disparities are widening. Human development: Sindh, Punjab, KP, Bal respectively; Sindh highest because of high GDP per capita, better progress on life expectancy; Punjab leads on edu, highest net enrol ratio and literacy rate; KP showing improv; Bal deteriorating in the past decade; appears decentralization initiated by 18th amend and 7th NFC Award failed to mitigate inequities across provinces. **HDI**
* 18th amend apply fullest extent to be effective in eliminating inequities; article 140A, a viable solution: devolution of political, admin and financial responsibility and authority to the elected representatives of the LG; will pacify grievances; to make provincial autonomy effectual, avoid elite-capture at inter-provincial level; for that effective inter-district decentralization; making LG functional, make Provincial Finance Commissions efficient; ensure social cohesion in our societal structure; shape our behavioural structure cuch to eliminate biases against social identities like ethnicity, race, gender, etc
* **Unemployment:** E-residency policy (facilitation, registration , hiring employees from Pak, virtual presence); freelancing (pak ranks 4th high-performing freelancers; develop products which can be used by local industry and exported too); increase in tech unicorns ( Estonia makes 1b$ yearly, investment in start-ups, reduce unemployment); Expanding e-commerce market (Amazon seller list inclusion benefit especially for women, in india some 100k sellers exporting products worth more than 2b$ a year, local like Daraz); Embracing fintech (solve informal economy issue, online banking, digital payment); capacity building (vocational and technical training Digiskills, govt launched NAVTTC programme with objective to train 50k individuals with marketable skills, free of cost courses); linking academy and industry (making internships mandatory after finishing uni)
* **Reliance on remittance:** Record remittances reported in fiscal year 2021.This is a good sign for the economy since remittances are the biggest source of foreign exchange earnings for Pakistan — significantly higher than export inflows — and help finance the trade deficit.
* Multiple factors — disruptions to international travel due to Covid restrictions, a crackdown on hundi and hawala as part of the FATF mandate, ease of money transfer through banks and, last but not the least, massive rupee depreciation — have encouraged overseas Pakistanis to use formal banking channels to send cash to their families since the Covid outbreak. Part of the remittances is also flowing in through RDA deposits for utility bill payments, transfers to rupee accounts, etc.
* Once the virus is contained and travel reopens, inward remittances could decline or stagnate. Given external-sector vulnerabilities, even a small dip in remittances will increase Islamabad’s reliance on loans to finance the deteriorating current account deficit unless measures are taken to preserve the remittance growth momentum.

## Agriculture

* Although share in economy dropped below 20% of GDP; rural populace (2-3rd of total pop) livelihood depends on it; provides employment to 39% of entire national labour force; Pak’s food security, 75% exports dependent on this sector’s performance
* For a country where 70pc of the population is engaged in agriculture is it not shameful we spend almost 40pc of what we earn in importing agricultural produce, supposedly our area of strength?
* The Federal Committee on Agriculture says that despite an unprecedented, good wheat harvest (28.75 million tons), exceeding the target by 2m, we will still need to import 1m ton for strategic reserves. We have the Ministry of National Food Security and Research at the centre, with agriculture departments in each province and an equal number of irrigation departments, plus provincial food departments, research institutes, the Zaria Taraqiati Bank etc. Yet we spend 40pc of our export income on importing food and agricultural products.
* Reason: the complete lack of priority for agriculture, only paying it lip service.
* Pakistan, once one of the largest producers of cotton in the world, has now become a major importer of the commodity.
* The Multan Cotton Research Institute has been closed and large swathes of land of the Cotton and Textile Institute Karachi were handed over to the US Embassy. the Punjab government wants to convert the Bahawalpur Research Institute into the provincial secretariat of the proposed government of South Punjab.
* The contempt and low esteem that the government holds agriculture research institutions in is evident in these actions. This contempt for research is seen across the board. Rather than improve research in the country the solution seems to be to close down such institutions and leave everything to either the private sector or imports.
* **PM’s Agriculture Transformation Plan**-> proposed interventions of 100bn 3years to reduce farm input cost to encourage crop value-addition, enhance milk production, provide fertiliser subsidy, the construction of grain storage, and so on; effective for short-term for long-term heavy investments in research & development to develop new, high-yield, drought- and disease-resistant seed varieties, help farmers adopt modern technologies, improve soil fertility and water efficiency, etc
* Modernisation of the agriculture sector, then, requires an immediate shift from the current subsidy-based strategy to the adoption of new approaches and heavy public investments. It also demands that the government give tax and other incentives to the private sector to set up agro-based industries and invest in cold chains to minimise wastage and supply disruption from farm to consumers.
* In an out-of-the-box solution to empower the farmers, a Kisan Portal has been launched. Pakistan is in drastic need of land reforms. More than 80% of farmers are with small landholdings, and they inevitably fall in the trap of feudal class who fleece them of their produce. To further compound their miseries is their lack of access to markets and mills. . The Kisan Portal may be a window of opportunity, but again the argument is how many millions of farmers have access to smartphones, its proper understanding and internet?
* Give farmers proper incentives and they work wonders. This has been incontrovertibly proved by the fact that the maiden agricultural policy of the Punjab government, introduced in 2019, has started to give more than expected results within a short time. In 2020-21, the province has had record harvest of wheat, paddy, sugar cane and other crops. Some of the incentives being provided to the farmers are interest-free loans; the government is also paying them premiums on crop insurance, subsidies on purchase of basic inputs, agricultural machinery and laser land levelers. The subsidies amount to billions of rupees. Moreover, growers are assured of a minimum support price fixed for wheat and sugar cane.

## Major Intl projects

* **Trans-Afghan**
* railway from Termez in Uzbekistan to the Pakistani city of Peshawar via Mazar-i-Sharif and Kabul in Afghanistan. The railway could transport up to 20 million tons of cargo per year, and the section from Termez to Mazar-i-Sharif, built by Uzbekistan, is already operational. In Peshawar, the railway will connect arriving trains with the Pakistani transport system, thereby linking the Central Asian and Eurasian railway networks to those of South Asia and providing access to the Pakistani ports of Karachi, Qasim, and Gwadar. It is estimated that the new railway will reduce goods transportation times from Central Asia to Pakistan from 30 days to 15 and cut transportation costs by 30-35%.
* More suitable than Bandar Abbas
* Pakistan and Uzbekistan have signed **Agreement between Uzbekistan and Pakistan on Transit Trade (AUPTT)**. The AUPTT would give access of Pakistani seaports to Uzbekistan and offer the access to all five Central Asian States for Pakistani exports. This would help in enhancing trade and regional connectivity and open doors for increasing Pakistan’s exports to Uzbekistan, while harnessing the potential of a $90 billion market in Central Asia.
* **TAPI:** The 1,814-kilometer pipeline will run from the Galkynysh gas field in Turkmenistan to the Indian city of Fazilka via Herat and Kandahar in Afghanistan and the Pakistani cities of Quetta and Multan.
* Although security concerns have long cast doubt on the TAPI pipeline’s viability, completion is now scheduled for December 2023. Crucially, a high-ranking Taliban delegation visited Turkmenistan on February 6, promising to support the project
* PAK-Russia projects
* it is a welcoming development that Samsung has officially started its production of mobile phones in Pakistan. This will indeed help create more jobs and support local industries. The government must look for creating a chain reaction whereby the industry steadily develops, urging companies like Apple, Google, Huawei and many more to tap into the enormous potential in the country and compete with each other.

## Impact of CPEC

* Pakistan cannot lift its people out of poverty unless it is able to increase the productivity of its agriculture. The agriculture Joint Working Group under CPEC was set up last year after an MoU was signed in March 2020.
* Cotton being vital to Pakistan’s export economy, one of the first projects in this domain, has been started for high quality cotton seed production and field experiments are ongoing.
* Large pieces of land in different provinces have been identified for collaborative investments by Chinese and Pakistani companies for different high value crops as well.
* A JWG for science and technology had already been set up last year. It is extremely encouraging that both the Chinese and Pakistani sides have agreed to start a new working group for information technology.
* Over the years, SEZs have been successfully implemented by many countries around the world which include Republic of Korea, Taiwan, China, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Mauritius, the Dominican Republic and El Salvador. These SEZs have paved their way towards industrialisation, economic development and growth.3 SEZs have also brought Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to the host country resulting in foreign exchange earnings, enhancing exports and government revenues for the country. Moreover, SEZs have also helped in technology transfers, adoption of modern management practices along with skills up-gradation in most of the emerging economies
* The second SEZ has been set up in Rashakai in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. The unique thing about Rashakai is that the developer of this SEZ is a Chinese company and it is responsible for marketing this SEZ to Chinese and other investors. It has already attracted foreign investors and the first of these projects is under construction in Rashakai and expected to start production next year.
* The third SEZ which is expected to become operational is in Dhabeji in Sindh.
* new infrastructure projects were started with a particular emphasis on the western alignment of CPEC which connects the most underdeveloped regions of Pakistan with Gwadar and the major urban centres of Pakistan
* The new international airport is under construction, the connection with national power grid is in advanced stages of completion, dams for increased water supply have been built, Eastern Expressway is nearly complete and a number of socioeconomic projects for the people of Gwadar and nearby areas are being implemented.

## SBP Amendment Act

* the new bill seeks to formally empower SBP so that it will only focus on price stability. Where the bank’s independence can arguably assist with price stability and low inflation, the initiative appears to be in line with IMF’s austerity and fiscal consolidation agenda that the Fund imposes on borrower nations.
* **Critics**: SBP’s plan to only focus on maintaining price stability when the lack of employment is a social crisis in this country has serious political implications. Third, IMF-SBP forcing austerity and fiscal consolidation on the Pakistani government, in a time of crisis no less, will also impede the government’s ability to pay for public services like health, education and clean drinking water now and in the future.
* **Proponents**: WHAT should be the goals of our monetary policy? Should it be to maintain price stability or promote growth, or both? The State Bank of Pakistan should be focused on maintaining price stability, besides supporting growth, when so many government departments such as Planning Commission are already focused on promoting growth, and none on maintaining price stability.
* There is no denying that the need for central bank freedom in targeting price stability was being felt for a long time. The negative impact of excessive political intervention in its functions of monetary and exchange rate policy determination on the economy and current account under the previous PML-N administration also made many change their opinion. But concerns remain regarding the bank’s role in times of crises such as the Covid pandemic. Will it stick to its redefined mandate of price stability, or would it be willing to support economic growth in such crises? We don’t know. We’ve seen central banks across the world stepping in to support economic growth and recovery during the 2008 global financial crisis as well as after the outbreak of Covid in 2020. On both occasions, the IMF, which pushed Islamabad to change the State Bank law as a key condition for its funding, was standing behind them. State Bank autonomy is very desirable to prevent politicians from influencing the bank for political purposes. But we also need clarity on its role during such crises.

# Taiwan

* Taiwan has the right to peace and democracy in accord with the concept of the “One China” policy, which has been the bedrock of China’s relations with the US since the days of Richard Nixon and Mao Zedong. The US is right to warn China against any unilateral military action toward Taiwan, as that would threaten global security and the world economy. Yet, just as Ukraine does not have the right to join NATO, Taiwan does not have the right to secede from China. In recent years, however, some Taiwanese politicians have flirted with declaring independence, and some US politicians have taken liberties with the “One China” principle. Then President-elect Donald Trump started the US’ backsliding in December 2016, when he said, “I fully understand the ‘One China’ policy, but I don’t know why we have to be bound by a ‘One China’ policy unless we make a deal with China having to do with other things, including trade.” Then, President Joe Biden provocatively included Taiwan in his Summit for Democracy this month, following US Secretary of State Antony Blinken’s recent advocacy for Taiwan’s “robust participation” in the United Nations system. Such US actions have greatly aggravated tensions with China.
* Again, those US security analysts who argue that Taiwan is within its rights to declare independence should reflect on America’s own history. The US fought a civil war over the legitimacy of secession, and the secessionists lost. The US government would not tolerate Chinese support for a secessionist movement in, say, California.
* the US should make clear once again that it steadfastly opposes Taiwan’s secession and does not aim to “contain” China, especially by reorienting NATO. For its part, China should renounce unilateral military action against Taiwan and reaffirm the two-system principle, which many Taiwanese believe to be under imminent threat following the crackdown in Hong Kong
* Recently, record-breaking numbers of Chinese military planes have entered Taiwan’s “air defense identification zone,” where the island’s authorities assert the right to demand that aircraft identify themselves. China’s muscle-flexing sends a clear message: it is serious about incorporating the island – and “reunifying” China – potentially by force.
* What are the bald facts about Taiwan’s China claim? Cutting through its ownership under various Chinese dynasties, it was colonised by the Japanese before it was returned to China in 1945, only to become the base for the Kuomintang after Mao’s revolution. In 1979, the US switched its loyalty to the People’s Republic of China as part of intensified efforts to isolate the USSR, which was not different from the way it has wooed India in the post-Cold War era to counter China.
* In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower threatened to use nuclear weapons after China shelled a rocky islet near Taiwan’s coast, when the ROC was still a military dictatorship. But things were different then. The US was treaty-bound to defend Taiwan. This changed after 1972, when President Richard M. Nixon agreed that Taiwan was part of “one China,” and President Jimmy Carter nullified the defense treaty in 1979. Whether the US would still fight a war over Taiwan has become a question subject to what Henry Kissinger long ago termed “strategic ambiguity.”
* There are practical reasons why a Chinese military attack on Taiwan might still provoke a war with the US. China’s control of the East China Sea would be a threat to Japan and South Korea. Allowing that to happen could start a dangerous nuclear arms race in East Asia. Taiwan also has highly advanced computer technology, which the US and its democratic allies would prefer not to see in the PRC’s hands.
* So far, China appears to be playing a game of chicken, probing Taiwanese defenses, flying into its airspace, stepping up naval patrols, engaging in military practice runs for an invasion, and making provocative statements about “not ruling out the use of force.” This is met on the American side with more arms shipments to Taiwan and tough talk about a new cold war.
* John Cena #TaiwanIsACountry
* In January, Biden became the first US president since 1978 to host Taiwan’s envoy to the US at his inauguration.
* the only way to discourage aggression by a revisionist power is for the status quo power to threaten to go to war. That is how the US kept West Berlin – which had a political status even more precarious than Taiwan’s – free throughout the Cold War.

### West’s hypocrisy

In a similar vein, another offshoot of colonial Britain’s control of distant and varied real estate is the Indian Ocean Island of Diego Garcia, which legally, historically speaking, belongs to Mauritius, but has been occupied since decades by the US military, a close UK ally, as one of its most crucial bases around the planet. Mauritius wants Diego Garcia back, and has even offered to let it be used by the current occupants on a 99-year lease. The US won’t hear of it. Countries like India have traditionally supported the island’s return to Mauritius. Now, given New Delhi’s newly minted anti-Chinese worldview and its embrace of the US-led Quad with Japan and Australia as other partners, it remains to be seen how it balances the yawning contradiction between diplomatic morality and domestic expediency.

# Money laundering.

Money laundering is to move cash clandestinely from one region to the other by not notifying the movement of the cash to the relevant authorities of the government. It is carried out “to disguise ill-gotten incomes origin and to convert black money into legal one”5 . This is a kind of offense in which the criminal tries to hide the ends and means of his illegal money to enjoy a greater profit margin.

The **Panama and Pandora revelations** have been the result of ferreting by the Interna­tional Consortium of Investigative Journa­lists, a collaborative group infiltrating into an offshore underworld of financial chicanery.

The Panama Papers, released in 2017, had been compiled by 400 reporters from 80 countries, coordinated by the ICIJ and its partners, The McClatchy Washington Bureau and The Miami Herald. Their revelations “exposed offshore companies linked to more than 140 politicians in more than 50 countries” and earned them the coveted Pulitzer Prize that year. Since then the net has been expanded. The recently released Pandora Papers “involved more than 600 journalists in 117 countries”.

This treasure trove of ill-gotten treasure has been culled from over “11.9 million files from 14 offshore law firms and service providers [,] such as Trident Trust, one of the world’s largest offshore service providers, with offi­ces in the British Virgin Islands (BVI), Mauri­tius, Singapore and other secrecy jurisdicti­ons, including the U.S. state of South Dakota”.

Flailing among them like landed fish are Russian oligarchs close to Putin, Czechs, Venezuelans, even the president son of Kenya’s father Jomo Kenyatta. A disappointing addition is King Abdullah II of Jordan. The Panama and Pandora Papers have not only besmirched already soiled reputations; they have destro­yed the confessional sanctity of offshore hav­ens. Clients who bought secrecy have been betrayed by their hired confidants. The tortuous technology that should have concealed their dubious doings have instead revealed them.

## Tax-Heavens

The country’s loose defences by design against money laundering and tax avoidance have made it a destination of choice for mega money criminals. The country is home to a sophisticated ecosystem of businesses with devilishly creative wealth management firms and high-end lawyers. A 2019 analysis by Transparency International had found that this country was home to around 87,000 properties that were owned by anonymous companies with no trace of their owner. Bringing here all the stolen money from anywhere in the world is a walk in the park. For decades, the country has intentionally acted as a home to attract money for tax avoidance and money laundering purposes. Transparency International has urged the government to strengthen its defences against “dirty money”.

You could be forgiven for mistaking the above country with Pakistan but it is actually the UK. The Pandora Papers have shown how the UK is a hub for money laundering. Whether Russian oligarchs or runaway politicians from Pakistan, the country is home to some of the dirtiest cash on earth. Half of the entire Russian money laundering is estimated to occur in England. The total value of properties anonymously owned in London alone was likely over 100 billion pounds.

Prime Minister Imran Khan repeated his call for ending the illicit flow of money from developing countries to tax havens and other developed countries. During his speech at the 15th UN Conference on Trade and Development, Imran noted that the UN’s Financial Accountability, Transparency, and Integrity for Achieving the 2030 Agenda (FACTI) Panel had estimated that around $7 trillion of global wealth was parked in tax havens around the world, an amount that is expected to grow by as much as $1 trillion every year. He accused rich countries of doing little to curb the practice, even though several rich countries are facing migrant crises that are directly related to the impact of such financial flows on the developing world.

The superrich in many other countries – including the Gulf petrostates, China, India, Turkey, some Latin American countries, and Ukraine in earlier times – have also secured their illicit gains with the complicity of Western financial institutions and governments.

These arrangements have not only helped to sustain autocratic regimes in Russia and elsewhere. They have also engulfed Western financial institutions and economies. Oligarchs’ money has transformed financial markets by injecting huge amounts of liquidity, thereby changing the nature of financial intermediation and contributing to growing global imbalances. Since 1990, the United States, the United Kingdom, and several other Western countries have run large current-account deficits financed by capital flows from the rest of the world.

the amount of dark money circulating in the international financial system has reached gargantuan proportions. Gabriel Zucman of the University of California, Berkeley estimates that at least 8% of global financial wealth (more than $7.5 trillion) is now held in tax havens – a figure that does not include the other forms of dark money residing at the heart of the Western financial system.

Illicit financial flows probably have contributed to the remarkable boom in Western stock markets in recent years as well, further benefiting the rich.

## FATF

* The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is a global watchdog that develops policies for curbing money laundering and financing of terrorism (ML/TF). It sets standards and guidelines for all countries to adopt, as well as monitors and evaluates countries on their performance. The aim is to promote countries to adopt FATF Recommendations and in doing so, preserve the integrity of the global financial system.2
* The FATF and its regional bodies regularly monitor countries’ AML/CFT frameworks. The FATF conducts peer reviews of each member on an ongoing basis to assess levels of implementation and provides analysis of each country’s system for preventing criminal abuse of the financial system. These evaluations, called Mutual Evaluation Reports (MERs), review how well a country’s AML/CFT frameworks fulfill the FATF requirements (Technical Compliance), and broadly, how well these frameworks are working to protect against ML/TF risks (Effective Compliance). The criteria that the FATF relies upon to conduct these evaluations comprise of 11 Immediate Outcomes to measure Effective Compliance, and 40 Technical Recommendations to measure Technical Compliance. Currently, the FATF is holding its Fourth Round of AML/CFT Mutual Evaluations.
* Countries that are not up to the par in terms of the FATF’s standards are subject to further scrutiny and evaluations until they satisfy the FATF requirements. The FATF places such countries into two categories –**Jurisdictions under Increased Monitoring**” (the ‘grey-list’) and “Non-Cooperative Countries and **Jurisdictions subject to Call to Action**” (the ‘black-list’). Being placed on the ‘grey-list’ has significant reputational and financial implications for a country, such as being subject to harsher conditions when pursuing international loans and increased scrutiny while conducting transactions through the global financial system.
* The FATF, along with its regional bodies such as the Asia Pacific Group (APG), then regularly conducts assessments and evaluations of countries on the grey-list. Eventually, countries that improve their performance are allowed to exit the grey-list and are removed from increased scrutiny.
* Countries on the black-list are not considered part of the global financial system, and all matter of transactions, whether with other countries or at the individual-level, are effectively banned. This provides countries on the grey-list an impetus to improve its compliance with the FATF standards and exit the grey-list.
* The FATF sword hung perilously over our heads for a good part of three years. Pakistan was accused of having a lax approach towards cracking down on terror financing and money laundering, and as a result faced the threat of being blacklisted by the organisation. This could have had devastating consequences for the economy. However, since this February, the blacklisting blade has inched away.

### Pakistan and the FATF

### Why placed on the grey list?

In 2018, the FATF placed Pakistan on the ‘grey-list’ – citing ‘structural deficiencies’ that resulted in failure to effectively target TF/ML.3 In 2019, the Asia Pacific Group’s Mutual Evaluation Report (MER) provided a detailed assessment of the nature of these deficiencies. Some of the core reasons for being grey-listed included:

Lack of necessary legal frameworks to target TF/ML; Lack of coordination amongst governmental actors and law enforcement agencies; No coherent risk-based assessment tools; No laws/regulations for certain high-risk sectors such as Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Persons (DNFBPs); Lack of mechanisms to promote international cooperation.

Consequently, a 27-point Action Plan was developed by FATF for Pakistan to align its AML/CFT frameworks with international standards.

### Steps taken by PAK

Since June 2018, when Pakistan made a high-level political commitment to work with the FATF and APG to strengthen its AML/CFT regime and to address its strategic counter‑terrorist financing-related deficiencies, Pakistan’s continued political commitment has led to significant progress across a comprehensive CFT action plan. Pakistan has completed 26 of the 27 action items in its 2018 action plan. The FATF encourages Pakistan to continue to make progress to address, as soon as possible, the one remaining item by continuing to demonstrate that TF investigations and prosecutions target senior leaders and commanders of UN designated terrorist groups.

In response to additional deficiencies later identified in Pakistan’s 2019 APG Mutual Evaluation Report (MER), in June 2021, Pakistan provided further high-level commitment to address these strategic deficiencies pursuant to a new action plan that primarily focuses on combating money laundering. Since June 2021, Pakistan has taken swift steps towards improving its AML/CFT regime and completed 6 of the 7 action items ahead of any relevant deadlines expiring, including by demonstrating that it is enhancing the impact of sanctions by nominating individuals and entities for UN designation and restraining and confiscating proceeds of crime in line with Pakistan’s risk profile. Pakistan should continue to work to address the one remaining item in its 2021 action plan by demonstrating a positive and sustained trend of pursuing complex ML investigations and prosecutions.

Amended AML act; FIA acted against Hawala Hundi;

The amendment in the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA) 1947 The main reason behind the amendments in the clauses of this Act was to restrict the free movement of foreign currency within the country, to increase the punishment in case of foreign exchange violations and to give explicit power to the institutions to take immediate action against any illegal action.

The SBP imposed heavy fine of around Rs 805 million on 10 banks for violating anti money laundering and counter financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) laws.

The National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) clamped down the operations and assets of 70 such banned organizations in Pakistan in the start of last. The major crackdown was against the leadership of Lashkar -eTaiba (LeT), Jamat-ud-Dawa (JuD) and Falah-e-Insaniat Foundation (FIF), which are all banned by the United Nations. Hafez Saeed the founder of all three organizations was arrested by the CTD and all his accounts were frozen. He was booked for terror financing. Recent Hafiz Life-imprisonment

### US response

* the US has said it supports Pakistan’s efforts to meet the global financial watchdog’s conditions and acknowledges that this country has made “significant progress” on the original action plan.
* The State Department encouraged Pakistan to complete the remaining actions “expeditiously” in the second action plan.

### Political tool?

* Indeed, the FATF is used by global powers as a political tool to put pressure on countries like Pakistan. There are examples where the global watchdog delisted other jurisdictions under its enhanced monitoring even though they had done far less than Islamabad to tighten their controls over flows of illicit money. Thus, the feeling that India is misusing the FATF platform against Pakistan, as voiced by the foreign minister, is not entirely misplaced. Also, there are many who are calling for the FATF to first take action against the European countries believed to be major hubs of illicit money before forcing Pakistan to meet its standards. These are legitimate concerns and Pakistan should ask for the fair application of the AML/CFT regime everywhere.
* India’s external affairs minister, S. Jaishankar, claimed in front of a gathering of BJP leaders that India had successfully put pressure on Pakistan. A spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad has responded to these disturbing claims by saying this had exposed India’s “true colours” and “duplicitous role”. the acknowledgement by the Indian minister not only brings New Delhi’s negative role out in the open, it also casts a shadow over decision-making within the FATF itself.
* With Pakistan having made such appreciable progress in its actions, the July 25 decision was rather unexpected. Given this situation, the least that the FATF must do is to take stern notice of the Indian minister’s statement and admonish New Delhi for bringing the FATF into disrepute. If a perception is created that countries are settling scores using the FATF platform, then this will adversely impact the credibility of the international watchdog and undercut the mandate that it says it carries.
* Somehow, the FATF loses its senses of detecting money laundering when it comes to England, which is literally home to money laundering. The saddest part is that Pakistan’s supposedly loose money laundering system has not affected the British economy negatively.
* The universal tale of the emperor Alexander the Great goes that his soldiers caught a pirate terrorising people in the open seas. There is an audience between the emperor and the pirate. The emperor demands how dare the pirate molests the sea. The pirate says he molests the sea with his tiny little boat while the emperor molests the whole world with his large fleet. Yet, it is the pirate who, being a smaller criminal, is called a robber and the emperor, being a bigger criminal, is called an emperor.

### Blacklist

e includes direct sanctions on the international transactions, foreign loans and import and export of the state. Moreover, there could be major demise in the international standing/ ranking of the state, the foreign banks and companies will pull out from the state and a massive fall in the flow of the foreign currency as well. The large Pakistan current account deficit could increase, and the stock market could fall with a very low dip in the shares as well. All these ramifications are sufficient to draw the state towards destruction.

More ramifications following would be the reason for the destruction in the internal situation of Pakistan. Where there being no jobs for masses in Pakistan, an increase on the debts of individuals, increase in the taxation and inflation.

another implication post black list would be the continuous surveillance on every big transaction the state makes. Pakistan would have to combat with even less and limited resources than ever before. The diplomatic, economic, political, social, cultural etc., every kind of association with regional and international actors would be compromised, ultimately cutting off all types of association of Pakistan from the international community.

### Blessing in disguise?

* So, while the gruelling quest for a much sought-after FATF white-list continues, it is doubtlessly a blessing in disguise. In fact, in the process of satisfying the Paris-based task force in order to avoid its blacklist, Pakistan has fast-tracked its efforts to curb money laundering and terror financing and made significant progress to a huge benefit to its national economy.
* After all, the primary beneficiary of the exercise to stop money laundering and combat terrorism financing would be the national economy and the Pakistani people. The actions implemented so far to meet the 27-point FATF action plan have already resulted in remittances bonanza for the economy, providing more room to grow it.
* In the meantime, Pakistan should continue to progress on the remaining, important agenda item and take action against senior leaders of UN-designated terror groups. Pakistan has benefited by strengthening its existing laws and legislating new ones to fulfil FATF requirements and it should ensure effective implementation of these laws. The FATF should also acknowledge Pakistan’s efforts, despite the malicious manoeuvring by countries like India, and move swiftly to strike Pakistan’s name off the grey list.
* Fulfilling FATF requirements has forced Pakistan to do a system upgrade aimed at dismantling a structure that it had at one point either helped create, or looked the other way while others built it up brick by brick. However, it is interesting that senior officials say the strategic change in policy towards militant organisations had begun before the FATF issue surfaced. FATF in essence provided a framework for the policy that had begun to take shape in response to changing dynamics.
* Systemic reform to combat terror financing, and strategic reorientation to jettison ‘jihadi’ organisations and curtail the prospects of their fresh resurgence have already begun to pay dividends. The state just needs to hold its nerve and institutionalise this transformation for the long term.

# Ukraine Conflict

* + Former soviet republic, rightfully belongs to Rodina, the motherland
  + Historical significance: Kyiv capital of modern Rus

## Pakistan

* It enjoys good relations with Ukraine and there is a close cooperation between the two countries in the field of defence. Pakistan’s main battle tank, the M-80, is of Ukrainian origin and there are other areas in defence — helicopters, electronics and night vision devices — in which the two militaries have been cooperating. Over the years, trade in agricultural products has increased with Ukraine
* In recent years Pakistan has also considerably improved its relations with Russia. Russian exports to Pakistan consist of edible vegetables, Iron and steel, inorganic chemicals and machinery; and Pakistan exports edible fruits, vegetables, cereals and apparel to Russia. Pakistan is interested in expanding cooperation with Russia in the energy, defence and space sectors and negotiations on the gas pipeline project is in advance stage and Memorandum of Understanding has been signed. With US and Western sanctions and ban on purchases Pakistan would be assessing the fallout of it on these projects.
* **at the strategic level:** with China having fully embraced Russia and standing firm with it any support in favour of Ukraine would be considered breach of trust. In this situation, Pakistan will continue to tread a difficult balancing act.
* The morally correct position would have been not to overlook Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. But morality takes a back seat when expediency demands a different approach. Where was West morality in iraq, etc?
* **Economic effect**: With the unfolding of these events Pakistan’s economy, already in distress, will face additional pressure due to escalating fuel prices and unsettled global conditions.
* Pakistan did some excellent tightrope walking at the United Nations General Assembly session on Ukraine. By abstaining from voting on the resolution condemning Russia for marching into Ukraine, it took a stance that was passive and left a lot of room for behind-the-curtain diplomacy. Pakistan’s choice of words was startling, as it took a high moral ground by emphasising the need to protect territorial integrity of a state without threatening the national interests of another. In other words, it played out carefully by reiterating its commitment to Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, and at the same time allied itself with the Russian concerns on the undesired extension of NATO eastwards.

## Causes of war

* Result of overreach by both parties
* NATO continued its expansion in post-soviet space in despite of promise made by Bush admin with Gorbachev in return for withdrawal of Soviet forces from East Germany
* In 1998, George F. Kennan, the long-time diplomat and historian of US-Soviet relations, was prescient and pessimistic. “I think [NATO expansion] is the beginning of a new Cold War,” he said. “I think the Russians will gradually react quite adversely and it will affect their policies. I think it is a tragic mistake.”
* In 2008, US President George W. Bush’s administration called for Ukraine to be invited to join NATO
* Russia’s overreach lies in its 2008 invasion of Georgia and 2014 annexation of Crimea and occupation of Ukraine’s industrial heartland in Donetsk and Luhansk
* Nato perceives itself as a defensive alliance, which Russia rejects. According to Russia, Nato has a history of getting into conflicts not directly involving its members. It uses the pretext of humanitarian interventions to justify its aggressive ambitions — like it did in Kosovo and Libya.

## Purpose of Russian invasion

* demonstrate to Ukraine and other Eastern European states that the NATO and US commitments to them are actually quite weak
* yalta conference; each power’s spheres of influence to be respected; Ukraine and Belarus left as buffer; Russia cannot manpower its whole border;

### Russian demands

* include ‘ironclad guarantees’ that Ukraine and no other former Soviet republic will become NATO member.
* That NATO will vacate positions taken after 1997.
* And the US will wind up its deployment in Europe including nuclear missiles.

### Ukraine Joining NATO Solution

* France and Germany maintain their longstanding threat to veto any such bid for membership, Ukrainian and NATO officials have both reiterated that the choice to join lies with Ukraine.
* US supports but forgets its own Monroe Doctrine
* Austria and Finland option: both secured their independence and future prosperity by not joining NATO, as that would have provoked Soviet ire. Ukraine today should show the same prudence.
* NATO would foreswear enlargement into Ukraine, provided that Russia respects Ukraine’s sovereignty and that Ukraine respects Russian security interests

Afghan Peace Process

Background

* Times magazine cover statement Dec 2001 “The Last Days of The Taliban”; Soviet invasion; President Reagan hosted Mujahideen in White House; declared ‘moral equivalent’ to the founding fathers. CIA, Uni of Nebraska and Jihad;; The Bear Trap ref that to Americans “Afghanistan was more acceptable as red (communist) than green (Islamic)”; Washington Post article’s regarding US afghan policy (imposing democracy and free market eco on an ancient, tribal society that was unsuited for either)

Pakistan factor

* Trump too realised country importance after his initial diatribe against it; pak provides easy access to the afghans; tens of thousands straddle Pak’s border without a visa for business and jobs; pak is food basket of afg and is its largest trading partner for export; pak provides afg shortest transit route; Karzai referred both as ‘Siamese Twins’.
* **Pm op-ed in Washington post**: wrote about our losses (70k lives 150b dollars in eco while us provided only 20b; tourism and investment dried up; targeted as collaborator leading to terrorism against our country from ttp and others, us drone attacks (sovereignty; as pm said in parliament will uk allow us to attack there?); promoting eco connectivity and regional trade key to lasting peace and security in afg, if us couldn’t win war from inside afg after 20 years, how from bases in our country? Earlier in an interview to HBO (PM said Absolutely NOT)
* **US centcom chief**: Gen MCKenzie remarked country most affected after us withdrawal is afg; unconstrained refugee flows, possibility of new terrorist attacks could ramp up
* **Border fencing:** because of terrorist activities and as a contingency plan to prevent or at least minimize the negative fallout of the civil war in afg. Pakistan has sought to mitigate this danger by fencing much of the border, sealing illegal crossing points, increasing border posts, strengthening the capacity of the Frontier Corps, upgrading training of law-enforcement personnel, enhancing technical surveillance and stationing regular troops there.
* Pakistan was fencing the border with Afghanistan mainly to give a virtual Durand Line the appearance of a permanent border, prevent terrorist intrusions, and slow down the refugee influx if the crisis next door deepens. The fence needed a policy and bilateral understanding or a joint mechanism with Kabul, irrespective of who ruled Afghanistan. Now, when the Taliban regime has rejected the idea of the fence, state institutions are once again trying to pacify them, merely for damage control, rather than initiating a discourse on evolving a joint border coordination and control mechanism.
* **Recent attacks**: whether via IEDs or direct fire — on Pakistani security forces (Johar Town Lahore & near Quetta airport). Shaikh Rashid 88 % of the border (Durand Line) has been fenced which should enhance security.
* **Proxy warfare:**  Sanction Pakistan is a Twitter trend that is being supported by some of these frustrated Afghan and Indian minds.
* **NAP:** after aps attack national consensus to root out terrorism and extremism resulted in 20 point NAP; not only talked about eradicating terrorist groups through military operations but also to fight extremist ideologies. Madrassa reforms, discouraging hate speech as well as sectarianism were the NAP’s key points. Time to take action on every point.
* **Taliban our friend?**
* What interests did the Taliban purportedly serve Pakistan, apart from being a massive drain on resources, an international liability and radicalising influence at home? It refused to resolve the Durand line issue. It regularly disregarded Islamabad’s pleas to show respect for human rights or to moderate its ways, resulting in the constant international marginalisation of Pakistan.
* Recently, as the Taliban expanded their sway, reports have emerged of the TTP terrorists living in territories controlled by their ideological Afghan twins. This has given birth to a host of questions. Why have the Taliban not taken any action against them? Why have Pakistan’s ‘brethren’ not expelled or handed them over?
* there is the added danger that the Taliban will seek to extend their writ to much of Pakistan. If so, it would be hard to miss the irony, as it was Pakistan’s provision of a sanctuary to the Taliban for so many years that allowed it to wage war. Now, in a modern-day version of Frankenstein, it is possible that Afghanistan will become a sanctuary for taking the war to Pakistan – potentially a nightmare scenario, given Pakistan’s fragility, large population, nuclear arsenal, and history of war with India.

#### Pak and US

* Republican senators have moved a bill seeking to label the Taliban as a terrorist organisation and sanction the group and anyone doing business with the regime. Pakistan is directly referenced in the bill.
* “Pakistan acts as an arsonist and poses as the fireman. They should suffer diplomatic and economic isolation. previous US national security adviser
* The US asked Pakistan for release of the Taliban leadership and then pleaded with us to push the Taliban to start talks with them in Doha. The US also unilaterally released 5 top Taliban leaders they had imprisoned in Gitmo to ensure their participation in the Doha talks. The US then held formal, direct talks for 18 months with the Taliban, including Sirajuddin Haqqani. And the US President personally phoned to congratulate Mullah Baradar on the successful signing of the peace deal with the Taliban on February 29, 2020, all these developments conferring legitimacy on the Taliban and facilitating their return to power.

#### Pakistan

* Victory is only the first step. It is an acknowledgement however that Pakistan was right all along in its approach towards the conflict in Afghanistan. When former army chief Gen Ashfaq Kayani had argued in written form that the US/Nato strategy would not work, and the Afghan National Army would ultimately collapse, he was ignored in Washington and London. As reported in detail by American journalist Steve Coll in his book Directorate S, Gen Kayani kept on advising US officials to change strategy and not depend so much on the advice of people like Hamid Karzai. But the American hammer saw every problem in Afghanistan as a nail.
* the fact that Pakistan maintains its diplomatic mission in Kabul shows that there is already a de facto recognition of the Taliban government.
* The decision was taken not out of choice but out of compulsion,
* The reason behind Pakistan’s strategy stems from its fears that any instability in Afghanistan will have catastrophic consequences for the country. The officials listed certain reasons for this move viz,
* (a) if Afghanistan is left on its own, there will be economic and humanitarian crises, resulting in mass exodus of refugees,
* (b) economic and humanitarian crises will also create a security vacuum inside Afghanistan that would threaten security in Pakistan and beyond,
* Kabul will not have a pro-India regime with an intelligence service like NDS actively promoting instability in Pakistan
* Pakistan could also try and settle its TTP problem once and for all if the Taliban regime is willing to cooperate in all aspects;
* a peaceful western border would enable Pakistan to focus more on the continuing threat from the eastern border.
* Pakistan could open up a land route to Central Asia and beyond and push forward its geoeconomic agenda
* There is of course a downside even to the upside. The fears of scapegoating by the US and other Western nations remains real. even though it has not picked up momentum. However, handled deftly, and with greater support from China and Russia, Pakistan can push back if such a campaign is orchestrated. If the Taliban behave, and do the right things, the prospects of a Western blowback against Pakistan can diminish significantly.
* He (PM in UN) was correct in saying that if the international community did not engage constructively with the Taliban government, the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan would become even grimmer with poverty rates shooting beyond 90pc in the near future.
* While Mr Khan may be sincere in urging the international community to lend a hand, the Taliban government is doing itself no favours by refusing to accommodate any demands of the international community, including Pakistan. Not only is the Taliban leadership showing reluctance to include other ethnicities in its governing set-up, it has flatly declined to entertain the idea of having women representation in government. To add insult to injury, the Taliban are cracking down on girls’ education and restricting women from working in offices.
* In the latest regressive move, Taliban officials have declared they will start harsh punishments including executions and amputations. All this means that the Taliban are gradually reverting to their old ways and there is little chance that they will show flexibility to global demands.
* This intractability may appeal to the Taliban hardliners but it will ensure that their government will not get the recognition they want any time soon.

Why US left?

* more than 2,300 US military lives lost, tens of thousands of US wounded, countless Afghan casualties and more than $2 trillion in taxpayer money spent.
* Biden believed following Trump down this dishonourable path could recover some of the working-class support that the Democrats had been losing to Trump’s isolationist populism.
* When Biden told the world in February that “America is back,” many assumed he meant the US would lead an alliance of open societies determined to stand up for the rule of law and an international order promoting peace and prosperity. But if “America is back” instead means that the US is returning to isolationism, the result will be bad for everyone, including Americans. (US history isolationism)
* **US view**: Primary obj-> degrade the threat of terrorism against US and allies; accomplished decade ago; Al-qaeda capabilities are a fraction of what they used to be; threat from afg smaller than various parts of Africa and ME; in Somalia for instance, al-shabab’s territorial and governing power are steadily increasing and the group retains a strong allegiance to al-Qaida; Us veterans of such unending wars are prime recruits for right wing militias in the us and threat to public safety, democracy, rule of law; capitol bill attack was manifestation of this
* Now, threats from China, an aggressive Russia, North Korea, and Iran — as well as zoonotic pandemics — are more important strategic priorities
* **History of un-ceremonial and abrupt withdrawal**: left Saigon (South Vietnam’s capital) in 75 in haste, 93 abandoned peacekeeping operations in Somalia; always goes for escapist option recent example is afg
* **Soviet withdrawal**: result of third-party mediation by UN, the Geneva accord of April 14, 1988 was guaranteed by the Soviet Union and the US, with Pakistan and the Soviet-backed Kabul regime as signatories

Daesh IS-K

Daesh entered Afghanistan in 2015, with former TTP fighters flocking to their banners along with disaffected members of the Afghan Taliban and other militant groups

Daesh V Taliban; Salafi v. Hanafi; Daesh has expansionist orientation

* attack on school 80 girls and gunmen attacked maternity ward in Dasht-i-Barchi area, a neighbourhood populated by the Shia Hazara community; 10 mine workers in Baghlan province.
* 100 people reported dead in the Daesh claimed terrorist bombings outside Kabul’s airport. “We will not forgive, we will not forget. We will hunt you down and make you pay.”
* Sayyidabad mosque (Shia-Hazara) in Kunduz city, a suicide bomber blew himself up, killing some 50 people. the claim by IS-K that the Kunduz bombing was carried out by an ethnic Uighur militant should send alarm bells ringing in Beijing in particular. China has long been concerned about the presence of the Eastern Turkmenistan Islamic Movement — a Muslim separatist group campaigning against Chinese rule in the Muslim-majority Xinjiang province.

Taliban takeover

#### Hooks

* If there has been one lesson from Afghan history, it is that no outsider has been able to dominate it for long. This is what the British learnt in the nineteenth century, the Soviets in the twentieth and the US in the twenty-first.
* The Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, following President Joe Biden’s precipitous and bungling military exit, has brought an ignoble end to America’s longest war. This is a watershed moment that will be remembered for formalizing the end of the long-fraying Pax Americana and bringing down the curtain on the West’s long ascendancy.

#### Reasons behind Quick takeover?

* an over-confident US went to war with Iraq, instead of stabilising and strengthening Afghanistan. The US shifted attention to Iraq, fighting a war of choice because of Bush’s ideological foreign policy fixation, when he labelled Iraq, Iran and North Korea as part of the ‘Axis of Evil’
* In short, top-down nation-building has been widely discredited. This model assumes that establishing a military presence and pouring resources into a country will inevitably deliver security, development, and democratic governance. Yet because nation-building requires the support of the people, it can succeed only if it is conducted through local representatives who are perceived as legitimate.
* This element was absent in Afghanistan. By backing warlords like Abdul Rashid Dostum, whose forces committed numerous atrocities, the West undercut its own nation-building efforts and alienated much of the Afghan population.
* the focus was on recruiting and training people but not on building institutions. Hence, corruption was endemic and career progression and accountability missing
* Partly, those training created forces dependent on their resources rather than what was possible indigenously — the US military developed a model in which its air support was a crucial factor for the Afghan forces.
* Biden’s calamitous troop pull-out without a transition plan to sustain the Afghans’ combat capabilities unleashed a domino effect, with 8,500 NATO forces and some 18,000 US military contractors also withdrawing and leaving the Afghan military in the lurch.
* But not all the blame can be laid at the door of the outsiders.
* Ashraf Ghani and others around him in Kabul didn’t do much to win over their countrymen. If the north, which had evaded Taliban influence the last time, fell quickly it was partly due to its troubled relations with Kabul. Just recently in Badakhshan, government troops fired on protesters demanding water and electricity, reported the Washington Post. In Mazar-i-Sharif, in 2017, a governor was fired by Ghani, a move which nearly led to an armed conflict between the local militias and federal troops.
* Afghanistan’s acting defense minister, General Bismillah Khan Mohammadi, defended the military, tweeting, “They tied our hands from behind and sold the country. Curse Ghani and his gang.”
* The fault lines and fissures were multiple, but the presence of the superpower had papered over all of it. Once the forces’ withdrawal was finalised, there was a widespread — inside Afghanistan as well as internationally — sense of the inevitability of a Taliban takeover. Perhaps this simply convinced or hastened everyone to give up the fight rather than opting for resistance.

#### Taliban 2.0

* **“Conquering the world on horseback is easy; it is dismounting and governing that is hard” - Genghis Khan.**
* The Taliban are in the global spotlight. They will be judged for their deeds, and not words. “We will not allow anyone to use our lands to target anyone, and we do not want to harm others,” Baradar outlined his would-be administration’s external relations. The Taliban leadership has to keep that pledge, and this is what is demanded of them by the international community.
* China, Russia and Turkey have reposed trust in the Taliban by not evacuating their embassies.
* Press restrictions bbc banned; beard rule; women education
* Islamic Sharia: establishing an Islamic emirate headed by an ‘Amir-ul-Momineen’.
* Legitimacy: They will learn that without a functional financial system, without a central bank, and without foreign exchange reserves, they cannot make the payments on the electricity they import from their neighbours.

#### OIC

* At the end of the meeting, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and the OIC secretary general Hissein Brahim Taha announced that the body had agreed to establish a Humanitarian Trust Fund and Food Security Programme to deal with the crisis in Afghanistan. The Fund will be managed by the Islamic Development Bank and will be made operational by March of next year.

Terrorism

The major sources of terrorism now reside in Afghanistan, and nearly all the regional states are under threat. At present, there are cells of al-Qaeda, Islamic State-Khorasan Province (ISKP), Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), and Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The most dangerous are al-Qaeda and ISISK which aim to “replace all Central Asia’s secular regimes with an Islamic caliphate that would encompass Central Asia, Afghanistan, and parts of Pakistan and China”.

Each group poses a significant problem for each specific country of the region. For China, it’s ETIM and its collaboration with the Uighur militants. For Russia, IMU; for Pakistan, TTP; and for Iran, ISIS. All the countries have been grappling with the perennial issue of cross-border terrorism.

**UN report feb 2021:** govt army stated multiple times terrorist infra of ttp uprooted from pak found refuge in afg; in 2020 pak permanent member to UN presented a dossier claiming that ttp and other anti=pak groups were being reunified at the behest of india; un report confirmed this

Climate

* Writing in the New York Times, Somini Sengupta put it well: “…while it would be facile to attribute the conflict in Afghanistan to climate change, the effects of warming act as what military analysts call threat multipliers, amplifying conflicts over water, putting people out of work in a nation whose people largely live off agriculture, while the conflict itself consumes attention and resources.”
* Pakistan must heed the climate dimension of the Afghan crisis. The impact of climate change on agriculture will intensify, leading to more hunger, and more refugees. Pakistan and the global community must support climate adaptation and mitigation measures in Afghanistan to better manage the crisis. This will be essential for Pakistan, itself a climate vulnerable country with impending water and food scarcity challenges, where resentment against refugees and regional food exports are only set to grow, potentially driving conflict.
* Afghanistan’s water scarcity may also drive divisions between the new Taliban regime and Pakistan.

Regional impacts

* Regionally, the US withdrawal would be seen with satisfaction especially by Iran, Russia and China as the weakening of America’s footprint in Afghanistan would mean less points of friction and more opportunities of access to Afghanistan both for political and economic reasons.
* **China**: An opportunistic China is certain to exploit the new opening to make strategic inroads into mineral-rich Afghanistan and deepen its penetration of Pakistan, Iran, and Central Asia. To co-opt the Taliban, with which it has maintained longstanding ties, China has already dangled the prospect of providing the two things the militia needs to govern Afghanistan: diplomatic recognition and much-needed infrastructure and economic assistance.
* Afghanistan sits at the crossroads of all energy, trade and transit corridors in an era of geo-economics. An average of $1,100 billion poured in by China in Central Asia, South Asia, Middle East and Africa depends on peace in the landlocked state. This inevitably is the future lifeline of Kabul’s economic and defence viability. Thus, sustainable relations with all in the region and beyond are sine qua non for ensuring prosperity. Taliban should creed to German strategist Hans Morgenthau’s theory of realism: “All nation-states are motivated by national interests.” Taliban too should broker ties on interdependence.
* **Russia**: Central Asian states and their security is a Russian worry as they are under Russian sphere of influence and many people from these states seek legal or illegal jobs in Russia. When compared to the demographic projections of Russia which suggest that by 2050, Russia’s population may still decrease by 20% or more, the Russians know that they will continue to have to rely on the working hands of migrant workers from the Central Asian States for foreseeable future. Therefore, Russia cannot afford Talibanization or any kind of radicalisation to infiltrate mainland Russia through these states and contribute to its destabilisation.
* **Iran**: more focused on iraq and Syria, reached an understanding with Taliban, close contacts with Tajiks, uzbeks(Persian card) and hazaras(shia card); shares Russia view regarding IS and US collab;
* **India:** only country which will be upset of the US drawdown; may lose leverage in Afghan governmental machinery, including media houses to malign pak; its afg policy has always been pak-centric; its consulates in Kandahar and Jalalabad are serving as bases for espionage activites; TTP is supported by NDS and India; prime motive: to divert pak military resources along the afghan border; using afghan soil to stir trouble in Balochistan and tribal areas; Jadhav case
* **Ideal scenario:** Pak, Ind and Afg cooperative relationship benefits entire landmass of South Asia, Central Asia and the ME; security dilemma; zero-sum games

Afterwards

* If process fails: return to status quo antebellum; That means, an unencumbered trade in opium; second, expanded space for domestic and foreign jihadists to train to kill ‘crusaders;’ third, the painstaking reconstitution of Afghan women’s rights (human rights in general, actually) achieved over the past twenty years will collapse; civil war; India may take advantage of such a situation. Afghanistan may turn into a sanctuary once again for religious extremists affecting the entire region. Pakistan will have to face massive influx of Afghan refugees for which the country’s economy is not geared to cope with.

# Pak foreign policy

* **History**
  + ML under Quaid supported Allies in WW2 and praised US as a beacon of light for nations like ours striving for independence and freedom from foreign rule.
  + First US ambassador to Pakistan Paul Alling asked Jinnah about India-Pakistan relations he wished to see. “An association similar to that between the US and Canada,” said Jinnah
  + Quaid emphasized about good relations with Britain, India and other countries, demanded non-intervention from others and respected sovereignty of other states.
  + Despite Kabul’s challenge to the boundary agreement, it had signed with British govt in 1893, Quaid hoped secure and friendly relations. Iran was first to recognize, Quaid was admirer of Ataturk**.**
  + Policy of isolation is inimical to the interests of particularly middle and small powers, so Pak couldn’t pursue it
  + Addressing a meeting in Mumbai in 1945 Jinnah said I have no enmity against the Jews but why should the Arabs be dumped with such a large number of Jews? As Governor General of Pakistan, he sent a cable to President Truman in December 1947 conveying pakistan's shock at the UN general assembly's decision to partition Palestine
  + the start was promising, Pakistan hosted a number of conferences of representatives of Muslim peoples to deliberate on issues of common concerns. differences in policies emerged with the rise of Arab nationalism that emphasized the Arab bond virtually to the exclusion of known Arab Muslim states. while Egypt lead towards the Soviet Union for support against the UK and USA Pakistan security imperatives drove it to lines with those power. The Baghdad pact provoked strong Arab denunciation on the additional ground that iraq's membership was divisive of Arab unity. pakistan's role at the first London conference on the Suez crisis further antagonized Arab sentiment against Pakistan.
* **Key pillars**
  + Security and territorial integrity (achieved by alliances; both ecosoc
  + Ensuring safety and securioty of strategic assets
    - Modernize systems; close reklationshi[p with IAEA
    - Counter negative propaganda
    - Neutralize domestic and external threats
  + Socio-eco development
  + Just and Fair resolution of Kashmir issue
  + Close relations with neighbours
  + Regionalism
  + Promote global peace
* **Challenges**
  + Relations with China and the US while navigating the Sino-US confrontation,
  + dealing with Afghanistan’s uncertainties,
  + managing the adversarial relationship with India
  + Kashmir
  + Geo-economics
  + balancing ties between strategic ally Saudi Arabia and neighbour Iran
  + increase soft power
  + countering islamophobia
  + to operationalize the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)
* **Transitioning from geopolitics to geoeconomic**
  + Geoeconomics
    - Definitions include the geostrategic use of economic power, using “economic tools to advance geopolitical objectives”, achievement of foreign policy outcomes by economic, not military, power projection, and “use of economic instruments to promote and defend national interests, and produce beneficial geopolitical results”.
    - Edward Luttwak, a US strategic thinker, first forged the term geoeconomics in 1990 in the Cold War’s aftermath. He argued that commerce was displacing military power
    - book War by other Means by Robert Blackwill and Jennifer Harris contributed to the global debate on the rising role of geoeconomics in the international arena by examining the means adopted by the US, China and others to accomplish foreign policy goals
    - recent Ukrain-Russia conflict
  + Where is your national security, where is your influence when you have to ask to be saved? It is pretty embarrassing,” Abdul Razzak Dawood (PM’s advisor on commerce) said in a candid speech at the Islamabad Security Dialogue
  + ‘Diplomatic Subservience’ which limits Pakistan’s ability to freely join alliances and blocs as per its strategic interests.
  + Winning at geoeconomics, however, is more complicated than winning at geopolitics. Aligning with a superpower to fight a war is easier, since all you need to do is open up supply lines and manage relations at the state level. On the other hand, securing even a paltry $100 million investment for a manufacturing plant requires policy and bureaucracy to work in sync across areas ranging from taxation and power generation to land procurement and labour regulations.
  + Geopolitics is also a seller’s market — there are limited options when it comes to gaining access to Afghanistan — while geoeconomics is a buyer’s market where countries from Rwanda to Indonesia are competing for a finite pool of investment and trade dollars.
  + **Islamabad Security dialogue**
    - security paradigm contains a geo-economic vision as its foundation, with three pillars, namely: lasting and enduring peace within and outside, non-interference of any kind (in the internal affairs of neighbouring and regional countries) and boosting intra-regional trade and connectivity.
  + **Analysis**: It is questionable how geoeconomics will be separated from geopolitics as the two are interrelated. Moreover, at a time when Pakistan is confronted with more than one geopolitical storm — regional and global — how exactly will the country negotiate geopolitical challenges while pivoting to geoeconomics? Afghanistan is at an inflection point facing the growing danger of descending into chaos with serious ramifications for Pakistan’s security. Relations remain tense and unpredictable with India which continues on a repressive course in occupied Kashmir with demographic changes and further bifurcation of the state looming, which is bound to further inflame the situation. US-China confrontation is casting a shadow over the region posing a challenge for Islamabad that wants to avoid getting into its crosshairs but may find that a tough balancing act. Thus, geopolitics and Pakistan’s security dilemmas cannot be wished away by declarations alone.
  + if Pakistan wants to pursue a geoeconomics policy in any meaningful way it has to transform its economy, ensure a stable political environment and reorder its internal priorities and budget allocations. Economic power and capability cannot be ‘borrowed’ or ‘imported’ from outside but built at home by undertaking long postponed structural reforms.
* **Vision East Asia**
  + strengthening trade/investment ties with ASEAN region
  + Over the years, Pakistan has attained Sectoral Dialogue Partner SDP status with ASEAN
  + the SDP status does not entitle to participate in all important East Asia Summits
  + ASEAN-Pakistan merchandise trade currently stands at US$ 6.181 billion; Pakistan’s exports to ASEAN are US $ 0.993 billion and imports from ASEAN are US $ 6.181 billion. Pakistan so far has not been able to secure FDP status with ASEAN, the prime opponent is Singapore.
  + To break the impasse in Pakistan-East Asia relations, enhanced bilateral interaction, high level exchange with ASEAN countries, Japan, South Korea and Oceania (Australia, New Zealand) need to be planned.
  + Students, professionals and artistes should be sent to this region to enhance people-to-people contacts. The Buddhist sites in Pakistan can be a source of attraction for the East Asian countries.
  + Economic cooperation and efforts to sign FTA with Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Brunei, Philippines should be pursued. With enhanced economic ties, Pakistan can mould the ASEAN opinion in its favour and win over the support for FDP status.
  + Pakistani diaspora living in ASEAN countries and local entrepreneurs need to be mobilized to attract investments for Pakistan.
  + India’s “Look East Policy”, initiated in 1991 focused on cultivating economic interaction with the ASEAN states. The policy has been pursued by successive Indian governments. India has FDP status with ASEAN, is member of ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and regularly participates in ASEAN Summits.
  + Prime Minister Modi has renamed India’s “Look East Policy” as “Act East Asia Policy”, signaling India’s growing interest in the region. It points towards India’s trans-regional aspiration and envisioning a larger political role globally. The ‘Act East Policy’ indicates that India wants to have an ‘active’ and ‘prominent strategic role’ in Asia-Pacific.
  + India’s future engagement with the countries of Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia and Oceania will largely be determined by the ‘security dynamics’ and ‘geopolitical convergences’
* **MENA**
  + Neutrality-cum-balancing
  + condition through which a state declares non-involvement in a conflict or war and indicates its intention to refrain from supporting or aiding either side.
  + Pakistan’s policy cannot be described as consistently ‘neutral’, as external and internal political influences have shaped Pakistan’s response in various contexts. As such, aside from implementing an observable policy of neutrality in some cases (such as the GCC-Qatar crisis), a policy of balancing can also be observed in other cases (such as the Yemen conflict)
  + Pakistan’s decision to join the ‘Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC)
  + Pakistan pursued a proactive policy and Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi led these efforts from the front by travelling to the UN headquarters in New York to galvanise diplomatic efforts in favour of the Palestinian cause. Implementation of UN [resolution] for establishment of independent and contiguous Palestinian State, with Al-Quds Sharif as its capital [is] imperative.” FM said; deep pockets interview cnn
* **Hurdles**
  + Publicly articulation of foreign policy
    - Words have consequences, intended or unintended. Words on foreign policy can affect — for good or ill — Pakistan’s diplomatic relations, how the world sees us and international opinion.
    - public criticism of the OIC by SM Qureshi
  + Populist politics
    - making bombastic or provocative pronouncements aimed only at the local audience, which have direct implications for Pakistan’s ties with other countries.
  + Image problem
    - Extremism, money laundering FATF, deep state
  + See [general concerns](#_General_Concerns)
  + Economic mismanagement
    - Dependency on donors and other states

# Relations

## Pak-China

* It is indeed a unique relationship between a communist giant and an Islamic country, between a godless one and God-fearing one. Continued commonality of interests has bridged differences in language, culture, history and ideology. For China, Pakistan continues to be the hub of its South Asia policy; for Pakistan, China is the Pole Star in its national security strategy.
* China’s interest: The first was the mutuality of interests with Pakistan vis-à-vis India. The second was the spillover of terrorism and Islamic radicalization from Pakistan and Afghanistan into Xinjiang, adversely impacting the eight million ethnic Uighurs. Third, China’s growing economic stakes in Afghanistan, including the $3.5 billion copper-mining contract at Mes Aynak near Kabul.
* Pakistan’s motivation has been to use ‘borrowed power’ from China to balance its inferiority with India. To this end, it has seen in China a friend that would bail it out politically and militarily.
* relationship dates back to the 1950s when Pakistan was one of the first states to recognize the People’s Republic of China and the first Muslim one to do so. However, it was only in the 1960s, especially after the 1962 Indo-China war, that the relationship started taking off.
* A high point of the budding Pak-China relationship (as also of the Pak-US relationship) was Pakistan facilitating the secret visit of US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to China in July 1971.
* In the China–Pakistan Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation and Good Neighbourly Relations signed in April 2005, both countries agreed that ‘neither party will join any alliance or bloc which infringes upon the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity’ of either country, while simultaneously positing that both parties ‘would not conclude treaties of this nature with any third party’.
* providing diplomatic support to Pakistan’s position on Kashmir in the United Nations; vetoing proposals in the UN that were harmful to Pakistan, and lobbying against bringing a proposal to the UN Security Council (UNSC) that would hurt Pakistan’s interests.
* China asked Washington to respect Pakistani sovereignty, and any pre-planned move against Pakistan would be considered a move against Beijing. The US received warning from Beijing for the first time, and China for the first time announced such kind of support for any of its neighbouring countries. {Abbottabad} Recent example: UN session on Kashmir after aug 5 incident
* Earlier, China had even vetoed Bangladesh’s entry into the UN since it regarded it to be a rebellious province of Pakistan. In 1972, during Bhutto’s trip to China, a joint communiqué strongly condemned India’s ‘naked aggression’ and ‘occupation of Pakistan’s territory’.
* On its part, Pakistan has refrained from taking up the issue of the persecution of Muslim Uighurs in China, though it has been very vociferous about the status of Muslims in other areas like the Rohingyas and the Kashmiris. Equally, it has ensured that the issue was not taken up during the OIC (Organizations of Islamic Countries) meetings, which was acknowledged by China too.
* Even more than the political, the key element of the Pak-China relationship has been, and is, defence cooperation – conventional weapon supplies and nuclear cooperation (civil and military). For China, militarily equipping Pakistan has been a low-cost option to keep India bogged down and threatened with a potential two-front war.
* Chinese JF-17 Thunder fighter aircraft; J-10 medium-role combat aircraft, F-22P frigates with helicopters, K-8 jet trainers, T-85 tanks, F-7 aircraft, small arms and ammunition. China has also helped Pakistan build its heavy mechanical complex, aeronautical complex, and several defense production units. 9 Moreover, unlike the US, China has never cut off supplies of weapons, or imposed sanctions on Pakistan.
* Trade-deficit: The primary reason for trade between Pakistan and China being at a low ebb is that Pakistan’s exports to China are basically low-value raw material and commodities since it is not in a position to export high-tech goods. This, together with minimal people-to-people contacts, detracts from the high-sounding epithets of the political and military relationship.

### What Pak can learn from China

* There are two ways one can make an effort to alter the behavior of a nation-state. One is to learn lessons from your own history; and two, learn pertinent lessons from the history of other nations.
* Although Mao Zedong has been recently viewed very critically by his own people, there could be no doubt that the ground for China’s quick rise was laid by him soon after he and the communist party took control of the country on October 1, 1949. His three moves had a lasting impact on the country. The first was to bring the status of women on a par with that of men. In 1965, I saw many old women who could barely walk because of small and stunted feet as a result of foot-binding, a common practice in the country among the well-to-do segments. Small feet were one aspect of women’s beauty but the real reason was to drastically reduce their mobility. Mao banned the practice; those who continued the practice were severely punished. {Use this in gender studies too}
* The second major contribution was to bring universal education to all of China, to the country’s cities and the remotest villages. No one was to remain illiterate, unable to read and write.
* The third important part of Mao’s drive to develop the Chinese human resource was to bring universal healthcare to the citizenry.
* These three actions brought the Chinese population to the level at which the people could take the next step towards modernity, both economic and social. Mao made several mistakes; some of them cost millions of lives. But there cannot be any doubt that he laid the ground for China’s rapid transformation.

## Pak-Afghan relations

* Afghanistan is one of the few countries of the world whose every frontier divides peoples speaking the same language and belonging to the same ethnic group or tribe.

### Durand Line

When Maharaja Ranjit Singh crossed the Indus and captured Peshawar, the Durrani winter capital, and its surroundings in 1823 from the Afghans, little did he realize that he was to change the course of history of the region forever. Very much like Caesar crossing the Rubicon, there was no turning back once the Sikhs established themselves on the west bank of the Indus. The British inherited Ranjit Singh’s empire that included Peshawar and pushed it further westwards, demarcating their boundary with Afghanistan via the 1893 Durand Line. Pakistan, in turn, inherited the British possessions in 1947 and the stage was set for the events that had, and continue to have, a fundamental impact on Pakistan and the region.

Durand Line has been a long contentious issue between ever-changing Afghan regimes and Pakistan. The de jure boundary was demarcated by Sir Henry Mortimer Durand (Foreign Secretary of British India) and Afghanistan’s Emir Abdur Rahman Khan.

#### Afghan stance

Afghanistan was the only country that opposed Pakistan’s membership to the United Nations on 30 September 1947 on the grounds that treaties with Britain lapsed when a new state, Pakistan, was created. As such, for Afghanistan, the Durand Line that demarcated the border between Afghanistan and British India after the Second Afghan War ceased to exist. In any case, the Afghans considered the 1878 Treaty of Gandamak and the Durand Agreement of1893 as unjust agreements imposed on them by Britain, which they were forced to accept after a military defeat.

the Afghan Amir Zahir Shah, in his effort to appease India, refused to accept the border treaty signed in 1893 between the British government and Afghanistan.

successive Afghan governments have not given up the possibility of the independence of these areas if they could not be reincorporated into Afghanistan. In 1949, Afghanistan formally repudiated any formal status for the Durand Line in a Loya Jirga (grand national assembly). Thus, Afghanistan has not reconciled to the loss of what is today Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (earlier NWFP) and the northern part of Balochistan or almost 20–25 per cent of present-day Pakistan

#### Pakistan stance

Pakistan became an independent state with its already demarcated Eastern, Western and other borders. Due to the enforcement of **Article 62 of the Vienna Convention** that whenever any of the new country is emerged out of the colonial territory all the agreements inked in the era of previous rulers of the region will stand intact and legal. The Durand Line was considered an international border by all means.

Pakistan gracefully honoured all the previously signed and accepted territorial border pacts and showed its resolve to manage its borders with full force and deterrence.

However, Pakistan has always been insecure about the lack of its acceptance by Afghanistan. The insecurity is real given the common Pakhtun population straddling both sides of the Durand Line and about 20–25 per cent of Pakistan’s territory being vulnerable to any Afghan revanchist designs.

Pakistan’s policies towards Afghanistan are, therefore, geared to get an Afghan government accept the sanctity of the Durand Line as the international border so that no ambiguity is left as far as its western borders are concerned.

The policy of securing the border has two objectives. One, a strong government in Afghanistan would be dangerous as it could try and recover Pakhtun territories lost to the Sikhs and inherited by Pakistan via the British.

The second objective is based on Pakistan’s perception about India. Pakistan views its relations with Afghanistan not merely in a bilateral context but in a South Asian context too coupled with the perceived relationship that the US has with India and Pakistan. A nightmare scenario for Pakistan would be for India to encourage the revanchist claims of a strong and friendly (towards India) Afghanistan. This Indo-Afghan alliance would catch Pakistan in a vice-like grip with a hostile India on the east and a hostile Afghanistan on the west. For this reason, Pakistan has determined that India must not be allowed any space in Afghanistan.

#### Taliban

the recent statements of Interim Information Minister Zabiullah Mujahid and Taliban’s Defence Ministry’s spokesman Enayatullah Khwarizmi, in which they have reiterated that the “Issue of the Durand Line is unresolved.” Exacerbating the conflict, Taliban forces had also been seen removing the fence and destroying the installations at the border. However, calling the current developments at the border just an attempt of miscreants by the Foreign Ministry can be witnessed as an attempt to keep “maximum restraint”.

#### India

Unfortunately, India has remained busy in conspiracies since her independence.16 It not only managed to make changes in the partition plan with the help of British representatives but also created hurdles for the newly established state of Pakistan and supported Afghanistan in terms of finances and diplomatic ties in order to create unrest in Pakistan and on its borders. Durand Line is one such example. Indian researchers, academicians and analysts always carried the state policy on Durand Line. An Indian researcher Arka Biswas in his paper “Durand Line: History, Legality & Future” narrates “Thus both the 1893 and 1905 treaties were personal in nature.”17 In fact the treaties were signed between the delegations appointed by both sides of the governments. So, any treaty signed between official and state-appointed delegations can never be treated as private or so.

#### Intl community

The international communities, including the US, the UK, China and other nations and international organizations have always backed the legal position of Pakistan”

#### Readjustment?

The readjustment and realignment of the Durand Line based on historic accounts would be fatal for even Afghanistan itself as it has been ruled for centuries by the monarchies based in India and Pakistan. The realignment of borders on historic grounds in the present era would do no good except for jeopardising the whole current international order and would only cause chaos, confusion and anarchy.

### Turbulent relations

Skirmishes broke out between the two countries in 1960 after Afghanistan was found supporting armed separatists in Pakistan’s NWFP region. Diplomatic relations remained suspended for two years between 1961-63. Afghanistan claimed all of the NWFP and half of Balochistan as its parts.

Pakistan had a separate Afghan desk in its Directorate of Intelligence even before it had one on India. That was the level of threat it assessed from Afghanistan. ZAB converted the desk into a full section when relations further soured under Sardar Daud who came to power with Soviet backing. His tenure betrayed another round of open hostility with Pakistan. The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1979 began a kinetic war on the western border of Pakistan with frequent forays deep inside Pakistan. The Taliban tenure from 1996 triggered another challenge of religious extremism which kept hibernating between religious militancy and outright terror through groups given to ignite defiance and initiate a pervasive insurgency against the state in the tribal regions and its hinterland.

The young Kabuli is imbued with the belief that his and his nation’s woes are all rooted in Pakistan. Talk of generational hostility and perpetual animosity.

### Border fencing

The border must be controlled for entry and exit as for any modern state. Where needed garrisons must be created to bolster support to the deployed troops as well as keep a stable inner front. CPEC, Balochistan, and a thriving hinterland economy in a secure and a stable environment is our and this region’s passport to a prosperous future.

### Pak Afg trade

* South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation-Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SAARC-CCI) President Iftikhar Ali Malik said on Sunday that Pak-Afghan bilateral trade has a vast potential of $8 billion to $10 billion annually, which can be achieved easily. Malik said Afghanistan was a good market for Pakistani products and legal trade would also help to eliminate the menace of smuggling, which had since been hitting Pak economy hard.
* He mentioned that Afghanistan imported electrical goods, steel, cement, bricks, clothes, Kinnow (citrus fruit), bananas and other edible items from Pakistan, while Afghanistan exported fresh and dry fruit to Pakistan.

### Pak FP regarding Afg

#### Strategic depth

* A term frequently used in Pakistan is ‘strategic depth’ to describe the motivation of its policy towards Afghanistan. The concept, as noted in an earlier chapter, was based on the reality that several of Pakistan’s population centres were close to the border with India. Coupled with a flat terrain it provided a scary scenario in military terms. Hence, geographical space or depth was sought in Afghanistan. Even before the creation of Pakistan, the Cabinet Mission Plan of 16 May 1946 had stated clearly: ‘The two sections of the suggested Pakistan contain the two most vulnerable frontiers in India and for a successful defence in depth the area of Pakistan would be insufficient.
* The only time that Pakistan has felt relatively secure about its western border as also about its Pakhtun population was when the Taliban were in power in Kabul between 1996 and 2001. However, no Afghan government, not even the Pak-sponsored and backed Taliban government, has accepted the legality of the Durand Line though, of course, they did not raise any irredentist claims either.
* Ironically, it was Pakistan that served as the strategic depth for the Taliban. Many of their leaders, their families and even foot soldiers sheltered across Pakistan, and their war wounded were extended medical help as their forces faced a US-led onslaught.

#### Reaching out

* Pakistan was no more interested to apply the flawed ideas like ‘Strategic Depth’ in Afghanistan while replacing it by ‘Reaching out Afghanistan’, which was primarily comprised of the policy of ‘mutual respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity’ and with no particular favourite picks.
* Pakistan’s support for a friendly regime in Afghanistan and indigenous movement in Indian occupied Kashmir brought several challenges including militancy, terrorist attacks, the proliferation of drug networks, and an unchecked influx of refugees to Pakistan. It brought sever domestic consequences ranging from terrorist attacks, worsened law and order situation and deteriorating socio-economic conditions. The ‘Reaching Out’ policy of Pakistan should be exclusively focused on economic and trade-based measures between the two countries as this economic strategy can effectively counter the increasing Indian influence on Afghanistan. However, this policy requires enhanced interaction between civilian stakeholders of both countries to expand cultural and educational cooperation rather than confining Afghan policy as a matter of security. initiate joint economic ventures with Afghanistan to connect South Asia with the Central Asian region and preferential trade and transit agreements. Pakistan also needs to furnish its economic ties with Afghanistan to deal with its potential energy security rivalry in Central Asia with India. Pakistan needs vigorous efforts through diplomacy to realize Afghan leadership about the unparalleled possibilities and opportunities of trade and transit for Afghanistan which Pakistan can foster. India’s influence can only be countered by developing close economic interdependence of Afghanistan on Pakistan

## Pak-iran

* Raja Ghazanfar Ali khan (quaid’s close friend) first ambassador to iran
* Iran-iraq war pak supported iran
* Islamic rev received blessing form pak
* 3 lacs pilgrims visit iran every year
* Border of peace, friendship, and love
* The fact is that the Pakistan-Iran relationship, though amiable for the most part, has not been able to grow to its full potential. There are various reasons for this, most of them being geopolitical. While both states share a long border and centuries of cultural, linguistic and religious ties, these links have failed to translate into robust bilateral trade relations. President Rouhani hinted at “unimplemented agreements” standing in the way of better trade ties, specifically mentioning the stalled Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project. Pakistan has been wary of attracting US sanctions and annoying friends and benefactors in the Arab world by getting too close to Iran in the post-1979 era. However, it needs to explain to its friends that one relationship does not need to come at the cost of the other.
* Official Pakistan-Iran trade is only in the region of a few hundred million dollars. This figure can grow manifold if both states decide to significantly improve trade ties. For example, there is a thriving informal border trade in Balochistan. If this were formalised and the requisite facilities provided in this underdeveloped part of the country, it could bring jobs to the impoverished region. While the opening of a third border crossing at Pishin-Mand is a welcome move, many more such points are required, along with infrastructure — roads, utilities, shops catering to the needs of traders and travellers — to facilitate trade.
* Iran-China agreement
* A geostrategic cooperation can emerge btw Three regional giants (south asia; east asia; middle east) pak, china, Iran
* Iran’s natural resources ancient history cultural ties with CARs; China’s economic boost, veto power, global influence, connectivity inventiveness; Pak’s nuclear power, emerging regional hub (economy, defence), geopolitical regional vitality

## Iran-china deal

* $400 billion in investments in Iran spread over 25 years encompassing telecommunications (5G), infrastructure, banking, free trade zones as well as a vast expansion in military cooperation. In exchange, China will benefit from a steady and secure supply of discounted oil to cater to its ever-increasing needs.
* For Pakistan the deal portends many benefits. Firstly, it will pave the way for increased border security. For China, increased security between Pakistan and Iran is a necessity for the successful implementation of the (CPEC) which is the BRI’s flagship project.
* Iran’s official inclusion into the BRI will be crucial in lessening Pakistan’s energy woes. The former has the capacity to export 3000MW of electricity to Pakistan at low rates.
* much-needed boost to Pak-Iran trade — the potential of which amounts to $5 billion.
* the two ports (Gwadar & Chabahar) supplement each other and with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of Sister Ports already in place, further convergence now seems more likely than ever.

## Pak-US

* Relationship of convenience
* Both were moving in same direction for diff reasons
* Us was guided by its global policy of containing communism and pak was motivated by problem of national security and defense
* This asymmetrical diplomacy gave rise to mistrust
* 71 turning point for pak and tilt towards china (betrayal by usa)
* During the 1980s, the Pressler Amendment was legislated but not enforced until the early 1990s after Pakistan’s utility was no longer needed after the end of the Cold War. Then came 9/11, following the Pakistan-bashing of the Clintonian years. Bush forced Pakistan into friendship or else it was to be bombed back to stone age. The politically significant year of 2011 had started with the Raymond Davis affair who killed innocent civilians on a busy Lahore road in broad daylight. In May, Osama bin Laden was found and killed in Abbottabad, leaving Pakistanis as well as Americans seething with anger.
* Then came the Memo Scandal where a despicable Pakistani diplomat, one Husain Haqqani had asked Admiral Mike Mullen to enlist American help in taming the Pakistani military, a dream that has eluded India and many others. Following that was the killing of Pakistani soldiers in what is known as the Salala incident. Later, Trump came and bashed Pakistan by cutting aid, saying that in return for US aid, Pakistan had reciprocated with “nothing but lies and deceit”.
* Same happened after Afghan withdrawal tried to blame pak: read afghan peace process
* excluding Pakistan from the climate summit is a deliberate political snub from the new US administration (Bangladesh, India & Bhutan invited)
* **Summit for democracy**: the Foreign Office said that Pakistan did not mind engaging with the US “on a range of issues” though “at an opportune time”.
* **India**
* Signing of BECA entails both countries (US/IND) to share all kinds of military information, aero-space, geomagnetic and gravity data, sensitive satellite and sensor data
* **Alliance curse**
* The concept of the “**alliance curse**”, presented by Hilton L. Root in 2008, explains that once asymmetric alliances between first and third world countries are agreed upon based on improving the well-being of both countries. This provides gains for both countries at first. The superpower country benefits in lieu of its political and military influence, and gains policy concessions, such as cheap oil, UN votes, military bases or access to strategic routes from the third world country; these gains are highly lauded within the superpower country. The third world partner with an autocratic regime gains a sponsor and a strong supporter which provides protection, the much-needed economic aid, military aid, and abundant credit.
* This scenario, though, seems like a fair alliance of mutual benefit but as time progresses it becomes a curse for the population residing within the third world partner-country.
* These benefits received by the autocratic leadership within the third world country pave the way for the country to enter into a “**development trap**”, as the legitimacy and support from a superpower partner markedly reduces the incentives for the autocratic leadership to govern the third world country for prosperity and invest in local institutions, which promote accountability and transparency. Therefore, the assistance received by the third world partner has also been termed as a “**hypocrisy trap**”.
* Usually, the aid money received by these autocratic leaders plays an important role in providing concessions to a small coalition of elites within the third world country who in return promise loyalty and provide local legitimacy to the autocratic regime in the face of opposition.
* The asymmetric alliance tends to last until the country remains autocratic. Once the underdeveloped country crosses the threshold point on the curve, the alliance tends to end or severely weaken.
  + An alliance with the US in the long run weakens democratic transition in Pakistan.
  + An alliance with the US leads to weakened government institutions in Pakistan (Zia decided to hold general elections without the participation of political parties; major political parties boycotted the elections of 1985)
  + An alliance with the US curbs sustainable economic growth in Pakistan (the economy crumbled each time the regime ended, which is owed to cut-off of US aid packages and unsustainable economic policies.)
* **Future**
* Pakistan’s economy though has a great potential but at present is too weak and would take a few years before it would attract the US market.
* The attitude of the US toward Pakistan is largely being influenced by its rivalry with China. Pakistan is considered too close to Beijing and any interaction that helps Pakistan is considered as strengthening its strategic ally also.
* Pakistan cannot afford to alienate the West and the US because the cards are clearly stacked against Pakistan. For one thing, without funding from the US and multilateral agencies like the IMF and the World Bank, Pakistan’s economy would be seriously affected. FATF, recent child soldier list
* almost 40 per cent of Pakistan’s exports are directed to the West just as most of the foreign assistance and investment comes from these countries. Third, even though China has become the main supplier of weapons, the Pakistan military continues to be heavily dependent on the US for weapons and spares.
* Pak-US relations should perhaps revolve more around less tension creating spaces like education; IT; and clean energy’s rather than unrealistic expectation about security co-operation. Recalibrating ties in this manner, will certainly keep Pakistan important for Biden’ America’s hopefully for the right reasons this time.

## Pak Saudi

* Saudi Arabia, as early as 1943, financially supported the Pakistan Movement. In early 1980s, Riyadh paid the $500 million shortfall for Pakistan to buy 40 F-16s from the US. PM Nawaz’s government was gifted $1.5 billion; and in 1998, Riyadh pledged 50,000 barrels of oil per day to offset American sanctions after Pakistan carried out its nuclear tests. The kingdom has been providing considerable material support to Islamabad during the recent pandemic and other calamities.
* Our more than 2.2 million expats in the kingdom remit a crucial over $6 billion annually.
* Previously, the Saudi debt was rolled over or converted into a grant, however, under the prevalent environment, that should not be expected.
* Issues: Yemen war; Kashmir; Qureshi angered Saudi Arabia with a threat to hold a meeting of Muslim countries on the Kashmir issue outside the ambit of OIC

## Pak-india

* The transition from checkered past to a beckoning future could not be achieved by Pakistan alone. Agreement on the division of the assets and liabilities of British India provided for a 17.5% share for Pakistan but India stalled implementation. the transfer of cash balances amounting to rupees 750 million was delayed for months causing severe difficulties for Pakistan.
* of the other assets, India dishonestly retained much of Pakistan’s share what mattered to them above all else was to cripple and thwart the establishment of Pakistan as a viable independent state. Demarcation of boundaries in Punjab and Bengal was interested to the boundary Commission headed by Cyril Radcliffe, a British jurist. Its mandate required it to do so on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. While it could also take into account quote other factors unquote it was expected to be just impartial. But Radcliffe yielded to Governor General Mountbatten’s pressure and awarded several Muslim majority areas to India including two subdivisions of Gurdaspur district, providing its access to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Jinnah called the award unjust and incomprehensible. Mountbatten was indebted to Nehru for retaining him as Governor General of independent. Apart from providing india with a road link to kashmir via jammu, the unjust boundary award, announced on 17 august comma three days after pakistan's independence, added fuel to the raging fire of communal warrants.
* Involvement in Pak
  + Johar town Lahore attack near residence of Jamaat-ud-Dawa chief Hafiz Saeed
  + Kulbhushan Jadhav spy
  + the Brussels-based organisation EU DisinfoLab published an investigative report titled Indian Chronicles, which revealed a staggering network of misinformation and propaganda against Pakistan.
  + The report exposed an operation that took place over 15 years in 116 countries, featuring more than 500 fake media outlets and a dozen fake NGOs
  + Joint press conf FM and ISPR representative presented dossier underlining wicked role of India; Celebratory event at Indian Consulate Jalalabad after APS attack; Anti-CPEC terror cell with budget $500m working under Modi supervision; Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, ttp, bla (proxies of India); Pak’s foreign secretary briefed permanent members of UNSC about the dossier; India plans to upscale terrorist activities In Pak; India violates several unsc resolutions particulary 1373 which combats the financing of terrorism
* Indian foreign policy
  + Modi’s India perceives itself as a global power, with American backing. It, therefore, requires Pakistan’s capitulation and subservience like other South Asian states. In this environment, Pakistan’s relations with India cannot improve. On the contrary, Pakistan will be asked to not only abandon its position on Kashmir but also to accept Indian dictation on its foreign relations, such as with China.
  + Defame and discredit Pakistan in international forums and media.
  + Divert Pakistan-bound investment, exports, tourism to weaken the country’s economy.
  + Defang Pakistan’s ability to influence international human rights forums, principally at the UN and EU, with regard to India’s egregious human rights violations in Indian-occupied and illegally held Kashmir.
  + India largely pursued deterrence by denial strategy. Shivshankar Menon, who served as Foreign Secretary of India from 2006-2009, expounded that choice of restrain in response to Mumbai attacks was based on strategic calculations that more was to be gained by not attacking Pakistan rather than attacking it. India primarily focused on gradually isolating Pakistan by getting exceptional support from the international community
  + Pakistani decisionmakers largely remained focused on the peripheral and conventional threats while overlooking the soft power of India as its economic and cultural influences became key dynamics of her foreign policy approach of isolating Pakistan. The 2008-terrorist attacks in Mumbai commenced the process of diplomatic isolation of Pakistan.
  + India as Co-Chair of the joint group of FATF and Asia Pacific Group (APG) tabled a resolution against Pakistan in June 2019 to put her in the blacklist of FATF, however, China, Turkey, and Malaysia opposed the move
* Strong economy
  + India’s economy is the seventh largest in the world. The Western and Arab countries are India’s investment partners on a reciprocal basis. The Gulf countries have invested in India to the tune of $100 billion. This economic success has been one of the significant reasons behind Pakistan’s failure at the United Nations Security Council on the issue of Kashmir.
  + The United Nations Human Rights Commissioner had released two consecutive reports, in 2018 and 2019, on human rights violations in Kashmir. Still, all five Security Council members have been standing behind India.
  + Recent investment by UAE in IIOJK
  + India’s recent election to Human Rights Council Oct 14 with the support of the overwhelming majority of the UN membership is the latest example of the international community’s disregard of India’s massive violations of human rights in occupied Kashmir.
* Security concerns
  + eastern state of Jharkhand who were trying to sell several kilos of uranium — a key ingredient of nuclear weapons — while a similar incident occurred recently in Nagpur, Maharashtra.
  + BrahMos misadventure
* US
  + Pakistan should not put its faith in the US either. Due to the Indo-US strategic convergence against China, Washington’s geo-political interests will continue to override its principles about human rights or Pakistan’s national interests.
  + Fourth Annual US-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue
    - call on Pakistan to take ‘irreversible action’ against terrorism
    - call for perpetrators of 26/11 and Pathankot attacks to be brought to justice
* Backchannel negotiations/people to people
  + when the nuclear tests – conducted by India and Pakistan in May 1998 – jeopardised their ties, a track II dialogue involving non-officials with the support of their respective governments led to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee visiting to Lahore in February 1999.
  + The attack on the Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001 resulted in a prolonged stand-off, with one million forces from the two countries locked in an eyeball-to-eyeball contact on their mutual border
  + But the breakthroughs that followed – like India and Pakistan agreeing to normalise relations and cease fire along the line of control; and Vajpayee visiting Islamabad to participate in SAARC summit in January 2004
  + #PakistanStandsWithIndia and #IndiaNeedsOxygen became top trending hashtags on Twitter in both countries; Eidhi offering 50 ambulances, govt offered ppe, ventilators; pawri meme
* Current standoff
  + The current stand-off between India and Pakistan after the Uri attack in occupied Kashmir in September 2016 is the longest thus far, as it also include the Balakot and Pulwama incidents of February 2019 and annexation of Jammu & Kashmir in the Indian Union on August 5, 2019 under Jammu & Kashmir Reorganization Act. After the Uri attack, India suspended the composite dialogue with Pakistan and along with Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Bhutan boycotted 19th SAARC summit which was to be held in Islamabad in November 2016. Following the illegal absorption of occupied Kashmir in the Indian Union, Pakistan downgraded its diplomatic relations with India and suspended trade and travel ties with its eastern neighbour.
* Water
  + The Indus Water Treaty talks were held between the water commissioners of India and Pakistan in March after two years to discuss the future of hydroelectric power plants being constructed by India in occupied Kashmir, as Pakistan has the right to raise objections on the design of the dams built by India on the rivers designated to it for unrestricted use.
* India’s vulnerabilities
  + it has to contend with a two-front confrontation with China and Pakistan. In occupied Kashmir, it has failed for decades to overcome a popular uprising. Internally, several Indian states are beset with raging insurgencies. Modi’s propagation of the fascist Hindutva agenda has divided the country and alienated 200 million Muslims, apart from tarnishing India’s secular credentials. His economic policies combined with mishandling of the Covid pandemic has slowed down economic growth, increasing the number of Indians below the poverty line.
* Way forward
  + THE road to peace in South Asia runs through Kashmir. “If there is a road map [on Kashmir], then, yes, we will talk”, the PM told Reuters while discussing Pakistan-India relations.
  + while engaging with India, Pakistan must not compromise on its principled position. Pakistan should also engage directly with the Kashmiris and take them into confidence so that they do not feel betrayed.
  + No talks and trade until reinstatement of the state’s special status? A weak country can also not be cowed into accepting such preconditions for dialogue let alone an aspirant for regional and global leadership.
  + Recognising the limitations of one’s choices is not defeatism. It is pragmatism.
  + Pakistan decided to import sugar and cotton from India a month ago, but when critics raised a hue and cry against the decision, the summary forwarded to the cabinet for endorsing the import from India was withdrawn.
  + As we have seen, the issue of the Falkland Islands was resolved after 181 years through a referendum under UN supervision. Similar privileges should be given to the people of Kashmir
  + the time has come to reimagine the LoC as a ‘Line of Connectivity and Cooperation’. The history of the post-World War II era conclusively shows that countries prosper when regions prosper, and when they give priority to “geoeconomics over geopolitics” — that is, by building links of physical, digital, trade, economic, cultural and people-to-people connectivity

### Kashmir

The state of Jammu and Kashmir was one of some 500 quasi autonomous princely states which exercised varying degrees of internal autonomy on the basis of treaties and agreements made during the period of colonial penetration, and recognised Britain as their suzerain. The British Indian Independence Act of 1947 affirmed the lapse of British suzerainty over the states. Theoretically, the states regained their sovereignty. The rulers of some of the larger ones nourished ambitions to independence but they did not receive much support. The British secretary of state for India announced, 'We do not, of course, propose to recognise any states as separate, international entities. Earlier, on 25 July 1947, Governor General Mountbatten had advised the princes to accede to Pakistan or India. This advice was consistent with the principle underlying the Partition Plan of 3rd June.

All the princely states except Hyderabad, Jammu and Kashmir and Junagadh followed the principle of partition and acceded to India or Pakistan. The Nizam of Hyderabad aspired to independence, but his state was invaded and occupied by India in 1948. When the Muslim ruler of the Hindu-majority state of Junagadh announced accession to Pakistan on 15 August 1947, the Indian government protested, arguing that the decision by the ruler was 'in utter violation of the principles on which partition of India was agreed upon and effected."

the territory’s forcible occupation by India is based on an illegal instrument of accession signed by the last maharaja who had fled to New Delhi fearing an uprising by Kashmiris who wanted to accede to Pakistan in October 1947. Following this, India sent its troops into Srinagar and illegally occupied the territory.

George Orwell, in Nineteen Eighty-Four, had a term for people whose lives didn’t matter and whose deaths and disappearances could not be discussed: they were called unpeople. The Palestinians and the Kashmiris are the real-life unpeople.

#### Article 370

* Article 370 came into effect in 1949 which exempted Jammu and Kashmir State from the Indian constitution. That article, according to Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah who is called the Lion of Kashmir and the first Prime Minister of J&K, became the basis of the relationship between the Indian state and the state of J&K. That article allowed the Indian-administered region jurisdiction to make its own laws in all matters except finance, defence, foreign affairs and communications.
* Article 370 established a separate constitution and a separate flag and denied property rights in the region to outsiders which meant that the residents of the state lived under different laws from the rest of the country in matters such as property ownership and citizenship. That was the special status which was given to the Indian occupied J&K in 1949 which diminished with the passage of time. Prime Minister was replaced with Chief Minister, and President with Governor. With each passing day, the erosion of the writ of Article 370 led to a direct control of occupied J&K by the Indian state as most of the times since 1970s Governor’s rule was imposed by New Delhi.
* As far as Article 35-A in concerned, it was introduced through a presidential order in 1954 to continue the old provisions of the territory regulations under Article 370 of the Indian constitution and permitted the local legislature in the disputed territory to define permanent residents of the region. It forbade outsiders from permanently settling in the occupied territory, buying land there, getting local government jobs and security education scholarships. The article, referred to as the Permanent Residents Law, also bars female residents of the occupied region from property rights in the event that they marry a person from outside the state. The provision also extends to such women’s children.

#### Legal position of Indian occupation

* India’s long-held view that the Kashmir issue would be resolved bilaterally as decided in the Simla Agreement had been in conflict with Article 103 of the UN Charter. The said article stipulates, “In the event of a conflict between the obligations of the members of the UN and their obligations under any other international agreement, their obligations under the present Charter shall prevail.”
* Pakistan’s claim about the illegal instrument of accession is based on three plausible arguments: Indian government failed to produce the original document and always presented a copy; as per the principle of Partition, Muslim-majority areas were to be part of Pakistan; and if Indian illegal occupation is accepted in the case of J&K, then the decisions of Junagarh and Hyderabad Deccan to align with Pakistan have to be accepted as well.
* The Indian government’s denial of granting the universal right of self-determination to people of J&K is against the spirit of UN and its resolutions 1541 and 2625.
* The government’s action of changing the demography of J&K is also against international laws.
* The UN’s 27th report on terrorism identifies India as a source of terrorism within its own boundaries and in the region. Organising and patronising terrorist activities in the region shows strong evidence that India is a rogue state that threatens the peace, security, freedom and prosperity of its people and the people of J&K.

#### What’s happening under Delhi rule

* humanitarian agencies like WHO were denied access to J&K, the fundamental religious freedom of Kashmiris was curtailed, and access to media, diplomats and activists was denied.
* Demographic changes
* In addition to demographic change, the Indian government has passed a law to diminish the use of the Urdu language — which has been the official language for the last 131 years in the region. Muslim names of public spaces are also being changed while an effort to artificially decrease the representation of Muslims through forced delimitation is another attempt to diminish the unique identity of Kashmiris.
* The altered demographics and a reconfiguration of electoral constituencies are expected to allow Hindu-nationalist politicians to realise their longstanding goal of installing a Hindu chief minister in IOK.

#### Rights org

* But it is not just Pakistan that has been speaking up about the dismal situation in occupied Kashmir. Human Rights Watch has spoken of India’s “harsh and discriminatory restrictions on Muslim-majority areas” of the held region while Amnesty International has also criticised India’s ham-fisted approach in IHK. Moreover, several members of the European Parliament have urged the EU to take note of the “humanitarian situation” there. In a letter to the European Commission president, they have expressed “grave concern” over the situation in occupied Kashmir while slamming the arbitrary detentions and the misuse of antiterrorism laws by India.

#### Pak’s efforts

* On 6 August 2019 the Pakistan Foreign Office issued a statement stating, "As a party to this international dispute, Pakistan will exercise all possible options to counter the illegal steps." It called the revocation a "unilateral step".
* On 7 August, a meeting of the National Security Committee decided to downgrade Pakistan's diplomatic relations with India. Pakistan's High Commissioner to India was recalled and the Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan was expelled.[5] The next day, Pakistan's Minister for Railways Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad suspended the Samjhauta Express train service[6] and the Thar Express.[7] The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting decided to ban all cultural exchanges with India, including banning the screening of Indian films and dramas inside Pakistan.[8] On 9 August 2019, Pakistan formally suspended a large part of its trade relations with India and banned all exports and import to/from India.
* On 11 August 2019, Prime Minister Imran Khan compared the Indian government to "Nazis"
* The foreign ministers of the OIC Contact Group on Kashmir later released a statement expressing its concerns regarding the situation in Kashmir and asking India to “rescind” the actions it had taken.
* Islamabad made numerous attempts to get the UNSC to hold a discussion on Kashmir, but was unable to make progress until China stepped in. That the UNSC would be discussing the Kashmir question for the first time since 1965 was a victory in itself.
* Since then, Pakistan has continued in its efforts to construct a narrative of India being an aggressor in Kashmir by forcing the region into a lockdown
* On 4 August, Pakistan's government released an updated political map which included Pakistan's territorial claims on Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, the Siachen Glacier, the eastern banks of Sir Creek, as well as Junagadh and Manavadar in India's Gujarat region. The map also annotated Ladakh's boundary with China as "frontier undefined", whose status would be formalised by "the sovereign authorities concerned after the settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute." The map was adopted for official use throughout Pakistan.[24][25] The government renamed the Kashmir Highway, which runs through Islamabad, as Srinagar Highway.[26][27] On the occasion of the one-year anniversary of the revocation of Kashmir's special status, Pakistan also observed 5 August as Youm-e-Istehsal ("Day of Exploitation") nationally. Rallies and seminars were arranged to express solidarity with Kashmiris
* FOREIGN MINISTER Shah Mahmood Qureshi has unveiled a dossier SEPT 12 that lists in detail how New Delhi has been committing gross violations of human rights in India-held Kashmir. It claims that India has also been facilitating and sponsoring the international militant Islamic State group.
* "Why is there duplicity of standards? [...] the change in demography in an occupied territory is a war crime according to the fourth Geneva Convention. Why is not anyone taking notice? [...] You can't cherry-pick," Mazari thundered.
* The Pakistan-sponsored resolution titled ‘Universal Realisation of the Right of the Peoples to Self-Determination’ was on Friday 17th dec 2021 adopted with a consensus voice at the UN General Assembly in New York.

## US-Iran

* Started with **Abadan Crises**, Mosaddeq nationalised the Iranian assets of the British Petroleum BP controlled Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) and expelled Western companies from oil refineries in the city of Abadan. British sought US help and both decided to remove Mosaddeq from power as shown in CIA documents and then 1953 coup happened, and SHAH was brought back to power who was West-friendly. Iran was considered strategic ally under SHAH (buffer to Soviet Union and access to cheap oil). However, Shah was suffering from crisis of legitimacy at home. Was hell-bent on westernizing Iran. That western influence angered shia clergy and later rest of the populace.
* **Iranian Revolution (78-79):** exiled shia cleric Ayatollah Khomeini embodied the revolutionary movement, returned from France in 79. Within months Iran became Islamic republic which it remains to this day.
* **The Hostage Crisis (79-81):** Carter allowed Shah to come to US for cancer treatment, angered Iranian students took a group of US employees hostage demanding that Shah return to stand trial. Iran became poster child of Islamic fundamentalism for US political establishment. Rescue attempt went wrong, Carter failed to win re-election. Lasted for over 444 days. Meanwhile, Sadam decided to invade Khuzestan province, home to Abadan oil refinery. Iran retaliated and it turned into gruelling 8-year war.
* **The Iran-Iraq War (80-88):** US supplied weapons to both, but favoured Sadam over Iranian clergy. Iraq came on the top and this hardened Iran’s attitude towards US.
* **US embassy bombing (83):** Israel invaded Lebanon in 82 to push out PLO, Iran intervened and trained and armed militia fighting Israel. Iran used asymmetric warfare against US, and this is where proxy groups become handy. Hezbollah bombed the US embassy. Both militia and political party and dominates Lebanon today.
* **9/11:** Iran had nothing to do with it, but Iran came to experience the repercussions of it. By now Iraq had become an American foe and attacks become justification for US to invade it. Seeing Americans on its border Iran started nuclear program.
* **The nuclear age:** claimed for civilian purposes but West responded with sanctions. Iran didn’t stop enriching Uranium but sanctions crippled its economy which moved her to negotiating table (JCPOA).
* **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action:** limited Iranian nuclear facilities and opened it up to more rigorous inspections in return for sanctions relief.
* **Maximum Pressure:** trump withdrew from deal in 2018 and reimposed sanctions under the policy of maximum pressure, Once again raising tensions in the region.
* **Deaths of** **Qasem Soleimani** (commander of the Quds Force, an IRGC division primarily responsible for extraterritorial and clandestine military operations) and **Mohsen Fakhrizadeh** (father of Iran’s nuclear programme).
* the underlying premise of Trump’s abrogation of this deal was the undeclared policy of regime change in Tehran. Encouraged by hawks in his national security team, Trump expected the Iranian government to be swept away by a popular upheaval due to the tough US policy of sanctions, covert actions, isolation and coercion. That policy failed.
* **JCPOA then and now**: The JCPOA closed all possible paths to an Iranian nuclear weapon by requiring drastic cutbacks in Iran’s nuclear activities. This included disposing of 97 percent of its low enriched uranium, disposing of all of its uranium enriched to higher levels, ripping out two-thirds of its enrichment centrifuges, filling a reactor with cement, and various other measures. A result was to set back the “breakout time” that would be required to build a nuclear weapon if Iran chose to do so, from what most experts estimated to be as little as two or three months before the JCPOA to a year or more after the agreement went into effect.
* For assurance that Iran was living by its obligations, the JCPOA imposed the most intrusive system of monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency to which any nation has ever voluntarily submitted. The IAEA inspections confirmed that Iran did indeed abide by its obligations, from the entry into force of a preliminary agreement in January 2014 through a full year after the Trump administration reneged on all U.S. obligations in May 2018.
* The result of that reneging provided a stark contrast from the earlier favourable results. Trump’s policy of “maximum pressure” on Iran was a maximum failure. After exercising patience for a year, Iran responded to the U.S. pressure with counterpressure of its own. This mainly took the form of incrementally exceeding the JCPOA limits regarding uranium enrichment (which Iran was no longer obliged to observe, given that the United States was now in violation of the agreement). As a result, Iran has acquired twelve times the low enriched uranium that it did when the JCPOA was fully in effect, as well as beginning to enrich to higher concentrations of fissile material than it did under the agreement. This heightened activity represents a bargaining chip that Iran has repeatedly emphasized it can, and will, quickly reverse if the United States comes back into compliance. But in the meantime, Iran’s nuclear program is bigger than it was when the United States was complying with the JCPOA, and breakout time has decreased (though not down to where it was before the agreement was negotiated).

## US-China relations

### Early tensions and History

* Chinese support to North Korea against UN & US in 1950s; US military and nuclear threat in support of Taiwan 1954, support to Tibetan uprising 1959
* Mao intervened in the Korean War against the US, fomented the Taiwan Strait crises later in the 1950s, and encouraged wars of national liberation against Western powers. When President John F. Kennedy’s administration entered office in 1961, it regarded China as a rising nuclear bête noire and considered military action against it.
* Formal relations July 1971 secret visit of Kissinger to China

### Rule-Maker Race

* Western governments routinely condemn others for rulebreaking. Russia, for example, has been rebuked for its annexation of Crimea, repeated cyberattacks on other countries, and physical attacks on Russian dissidents abroad. China, too, has been condemned as a major transgressor. Biden administration’s characterization of China as a global menace that steals intellectual property, maintains illegal subsidies, permits rampant corruption, and is carrying out genocide.
* **And yet, in the coming decades, the biggest global threat will not be China the rule-breaker, but China the rule-maker**. China’s growing influence over international norms, standards, and conventions is a game changer. For centuries, Western powers have taken it for granted that they are the world’s norm-setters, massively influencing other countries’ policies through the “Washington Consensus,” the “Brussels effect,” and other channels.
* The **Brussels effect** is a newer coinage, popularized by legal scholar Anu Bradford to describe the global impact of the European Union’s regulatory policies. The EU’s standards governing data privacy, product safety, genetically modified organisms, sexual rights, and other issues tend to be adopted as a matter of course by multinational corporations and other countries seeking access to Europe’s massive single market.
* Over the last decade, however, the free-market Washington Consensus has been challenged by a “**Beijing consensus**” of managed globalization, industrial policy, and state capitalism, while the Brussels effect has run up against a potential “Beijing effect”: China’s export of technology standards through its “Digital Silk Road.”
* Moreover, many global rule-setting bodies that once underpinned European and American predominance now have Chinese leaders. These include (or have included) the International Telecommunication Union, the International Organization for Standardization, and the International Electrotechnical Commission. China is poised to set the standards for rapidly developing technologies such as artificial intelligence and robotics, and Chinese companies’ technological infrastructure – built to Chinese standards – has spread to numerous countries.

### Democracy and internal affairs

* The United States defines democracy and freedom in terms of electoral politics and individual expression, for example, whereas China defines them in terms of social security and economic development. Washington will have to accept these divergences of opinion rather than try to impose its own views on others.
* boycotted barley sales from aus over covid origin investigation; threatened uk of ‘consequences’ over Huawei scenario

### Human Rights

* the American gulag at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba,
* the ICC investigators have been sanctioned by the US for daring to investigate alleged war crimes in Afghanistan.

#### Xinjiang

* **China’s stance**: Located in the northwest of China, Xinjiang is a vast region rich in natural resources. It has a very important strategic location as it connects China with Central Asia. Home to several ethnic groups, the region has been deeply affected by ethnic separatism, religious extremism, and violent terrorism, called “the three forces”. These forces are a cause of thousands of terrorist attacks carried out in Xinjiang from 1990 to the end of 2016, resulting in huge losses of lives and property. While this violence seriously jeopardised the stability and security of the country, it particularly hindered Xinjiang's economic development and social progress.
* **US Stance**: At the height of World War II, Hitler issued the infamous ‘Night and Fog’ decree, following which thousands of opponents of his regime were forcibly disappeared and sent to concentration camps. (institutionalisation) Xinjiang

##### Critical analysis

* Isn’t re-educating the people who have lost their way not much better than torturing and killing them? Hundreds of thousands of Muslims have died at the hands of the Western powers since 9/11. By executing the policy of rendition, the US sent hundreds of Muslim prisoners to countries like Syria, Jordan and Egypt where they were tortured, interrogated and even killed. American forces would remember well what they did in Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan as well as in Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. Drones also played a big role in the American targeted assassinations of the ‘declared terrorists’. in his book, **The Great Delusion**, American international relations scholar John Mearsheimer describes how “President Obama had a kill list known as the ‘disposition matrix’, and every Tuesday there was a meeting in the White House – it was called ‘Terrorist Tuesday’ – where the next victims were selected”. So, the big question here is that whatever the US and its defence and strategic partner India do to combat terrorism is right but whatever China and Pakistan may do is wrong.

### Meetings

* Anchorage summit
* Online summit: on nov 15 2021; lasted 3 and a half hours
* It ranged over all the issues on which the world’s two superpowers compete, disagree, collaborate, clash and confront each other — trade, Taiwan, Iran, North Korea, technology, climate change, human rights and strategic weapons.

### Summit for Democracy

* Certainly, the rivalry is clear as China and Russia were left out and Taiwan, Beijing’s bête noire, was invited by the US.

### Winter Olympics

* Tensions are already intensifying as the US, together with Canada, the UK and Australia, is officially boycotting the 2022 Winter Olympic Games (although the athletes will attend) in China over the latter’s alleged human rights violations.

### Tech rivalry

* The latest President Biden’s policy of cracking down on Chinese apps and adding several Chinese companies to the US investment blacklist reflects how wary the administration is of their penetration and dominance in the US market.
* America also remains at the forefront in key technologies (bio, nano, information) that are central to twenty-first-century economic growth. China is investing heavily in research and development, and competes well in some fields. But 15 of the world’s top 20 research universities are in the US; none is in China.
* US sanctions have already crippled telecoms giant Huawei and prevented SMIC, a semiconductor manufacturer, from getting its hands on the most advanced technologies. If the US persuades the EU and Japan to revive the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (CoCom) to choke off technology flows to China – a prospect made more likely by the Ukraine war – China will have little chance of winning the technology race with the US.

### Military power

* Over the past decade, Chinese leaders abandoned Deng Xiaoping’s moderate policy of “Hide your strength, bide your time.” They became more assertive in many ways; building and militarizing artificial islands in the South China Sea, intruding into waters near Japan and Taiwan, launching incursions into India along the countries’ Himalayan border, and coercing Australia economically when it dared to criticize China.
* Beijing seeks to turn the People’s Liberation Army into a world-class fighting force ready for war at any moment, emphasizing quality over quantity, cyber-capabilities over conventional prowess, and artificial intelligence-based weapons systems over individual combat skills. Yet the PLA’s mission will remain one of deterrence, not expansion.
* US has nearly 20 times the number of nuclear warheads as China; 11 nuclear powered aircraft carriers which China has 2; 2000 modern fighter jets compared to Chinese 600; 800 overseas bases China has 3; China spends $250b on its military which is third as much as the US; Brooking Institute says that China military outlays fall well below NATO’s 2 percent minimum; Britain had adopted a "Two-Power" standard in 1889 - i.e. her fleet was to be larger than the fleets of the next two powers combined.; US military spending is larger than next 10 countries put together, 6 of which are Washington close allies; America intelligence budget alone of 85 b dollars is much larger than Russia’s total defence spending and US never wondered that this type of spending can be seen by other countries as worrying or threatening. Fareed Zakariya CNN

### Economy

* Answering who is the greatest leader of the 20th century, Nadav Eyal in his international bestseller book Revolt – The Worldwide Uprising Against Globalization writes, “Only one twentieth century leader inherited a backward and poor country and in return gave back to its people a superpower.” His name is Deng Xiaoping.
* To spur its economic growth, modernization and avenge its humiliation china under Deng entered US led order; not to help to preserve it but to challenge it from within
* Purchasing Power Parity China has surpassed US acc to IMF in 2014.
* Beijing will also seek to reduce its exposure to U.S. financial sanctions, including by promoting the use of the renminbi in foreign trade and investment. Last year, it started trials of a digital currency in a handful of large cities, an innovation that could one day allow China and its business partners to conduct international transactions outside SWIFT, the financial messaging system, which is under de facto U.S. control and a major source of American geopolitical leverage..
* the US was once the world’s largest trading economy and its largest bilateral lender. Today, nearly 100 countries count China as their largest trading partner, compared to 57 for the US. China plans to lend more than $1 trillion for infrastructure projects with its Belt and Road Initiative over the next decade, while the US has cut back aid. China will gain economic power from the sheer size of its market as well as its overseas investments and development assistance. China’s overall power relative to the US is likely to increase.
* President Joe Biden’s primary focus and strategy is to weaken China economically by raising trade barriers, accusing it of malpractices and taking multiple measures to put brakes in China’s economic rise.
* the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee officially backed the Strategic Competition Act of 2021, which labels China a strategic competitor in a number of areas, including trade, technology, and security. The Strategic Competition Act purports to highlight supposed “malign behaviors” in which China engages to attain an “unfair economic advantage” and the “deference” of other countries to “its political and strategic objectives.”

### MIC

A popular American narrative today about China is that “it is no more rising; it has already risen”. But what is stranger and more important is the US behaviour during the entire process of China’s rise. This is because the US made no deliberate effort to prevent or even slow down this rise. In fact, it facilitated the same. Is this the brainchild of those that run and benefit from the military-industrial complex (MIC) — the Lockheed Martins and the Northrop Grummans and their likes? There exists a mutual interest between the US military and the defence industry that supplies it, and together both make a great force to influence the US public policy. So, has a threat been deliberately created?

### Geography

The US is surrounded by oceans and neighbors that are likely to remain friendly. China has borders with 14 countries, and territorial disputes with India, Japan, and Vietnam set limits on its hard and soft power.

China shares sea or land borders with 19 countries, 10 of whom have ongoing territorial disputes with China

### Energy

* Energy is another area where America has an advantage. A decade ago, the US was dependent on imported energy, but the shale revolution transformed North America from an energy importer to exporter. At the same time, China became more dependent on energy imports from the Middle East, which it must transport along sea routes that highlight its problematic relations with India.
* Importing 80% of oil that China needs is its strategic vulnerability and contributes to one of the most deliberated US-China conflict contingencies which is: what if US navy blocks the Strait of Malacca (80% of Chinese oil imports pass through it?
* China’s deal with Iran, its interest in Afg and Central Asia.

### Immigration

* Immigration also will play an important role in maintaining America’s technology lead. In 2015, when I (Joseph Nye) asked former Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew why he did not think China would surpass the US, he pointed to America’s ability to draw upon the talents of the whole world – a possibility that is barred by China’s ethnic Han nationalism. It is no accident that many Silicon Valley companies have Asian founders or CEOs.

### Space race

* **Artemis Accords**-a set of bilateral agreements between the US and Australia, Canada, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom that set out principles for future civil space exploration. (US circumvent UN to avoid China)
* The next phase of competition in space will be to establish a mining base on the Moon. Lunar mining is important for two reasons. First, ice on the moon’s surface can be converted into hydrogen and oxygen and used as rocket fuel, which is crucial for deep-space missions.
* The second reason is closer to home: the moon’s surface contains highly valuable rare-earth metals that are used in technologies like cell phones, batteries, and military equipment. China currently produces approximately 90% of the world’s rare-earth metals, giving it significant leverage over other countries, including the US. By sourcing these metals from the moon, countries could reduce their dependence on China.
* On May 15 2021, the Chinese successfully landed its Tianwen-1 spacecraft on Mars. The Chinese space lander and rover (named Zhurong after the Chinese god of fire) is the most recent of a number of missions to Mars — by the United States, the Russians, and in their wake an unlikely United Arab Emirates with its Hope orbiter.
* perhaps the most telling achievement is that the Chinese space programme is home-grown. They did not abduct German scientists as the Americans and the Russians did following the defeat of Germany in 1945. Ironically, German brains provided the fission that exploded bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, took Sputniks into space, sent men to the moon, and fuelled a simmering Cold War.

### Soft power

* The Norwegian political scientist Geir Lundestad has argued, the American role in post-war Europe may have resembled an empire, but it was “an empire by invitation.”
* US is clear winner.

### Diplomacy

* China overtook the US in total number of diplomatic posts in 2019
* More regional agreements;

#### Middle East

#### Latin America

* Two views regarding china-latin America relations: one view points out that China-Latin American relations are different from US-Latin American relations because of i) South-South principles, such as non-involvement in internal affairs and sovereignty, ii) China’s alternative development model, and iii) the absence of policy conditionalities when it comes to loans. Consequently, China promotes alternatives to the Bretton Woods system, resulting in increased Latin American autonomy. Such authors argue that improving relations with China will contribute to Latin American countries’ development and a multipolar world order.
* On the contrary, other scholars point out the reproduction of center-periphery dynamics, the reproduction of Latin America international insertion as an exporter of commodities and an importer of manufacture. They highlight i) the asymmetrical trade relationship, resulting in new types of dependence and ii) the formation of a new hegemony (Li, 2019). Moreover, they argue that extractivism – chiefly through mining, oil extraction, and monoculture farming – generates wealth concentration and does not lead to development.

#### Debt trap diplomacy

* China has effectively taken ownership of the Greek port of Piraeus with the stated intent of making it Europe’s biggest and most important maritime hub.

#### Hostage diplomacy

* Canada Huawei CFO

#### Wolf Warrior diplomacy

* From the COVID-19 pandemic to the Xinjiang cotton crisis, China’s diplomatic department and diplomats aggressively hit back against Western criticism in confrontational ways; and this type of diplomatic practice is also known as another name, “**Wolf Warrior diplomacy**”. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, the Wolf Warrior diplomacy has been guiding the official rhetoric of state propaganda.

### Comparing China with USSR

* distinguished Singaporean academic and former diplomat Kishore Mahbubani in his book titled **Has China Won? The Chinese Challenge to American Primacy** asks Does the US have a strategy in its geopolitical competition with China? No, says Mahbubani and argues that America is committing the “classic strategic mistake of fighting tomorrow’s war with yesterday’s strategy” as it is treating the China challenge similar to the old Soviet threat.
* Even if containment worked against the Soviet Union in the Cold War, a with-us-or-against-us strategy will not deliver the same results today.
* It’s not so with China, whose GDP will soon surpass and then far exceed that of the US. With its competent top-down political and economic governance, technological prowess, sizeable foreign investment, and ambitious diplomatic outreach (including large-scale exports of its own COVID-19 vaccine), China already enjoys substantial global sway. There is no going back to the decoupled, two-bloc global order of the Cold War.
* **China is Not the Soviet Union: Applying Kennan’s ‘Long Telegram (**the five-thousand-word essay George Kennan wrote from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow in February 1946 explaining the Soviet strategic mindset, and which became the intellectual foundation for the U.S. strategy of “containment.”)**’**
* While Kennan observed that “Moscow sees in the UN not the mechanism for a permanent and stable world society founded on mutual interest and aims of all nations,” Beijing today in fact does see the UN as such a mechanism—albeit with a somewhat different vision than most Western powers for what such a “world society founded on mutual interests” would look like.

#### Will containment work?

* Chinese President Xi Jinping is no Stalin, and the Chinese system is not Marxist-Leninist but “market Leninist” – a form of state capitalism based on a hybrid of public and private firms subservient to an authoritarian party elite. A third cold war would be a non-starter because of three main reasons, as follows:
* First, European allies of America, particularly Germany, is not keen to confront China because of its huge trade and investment ties with Beijing. China has augmented its trade with Europe by road and rail, and European markets are flooded with Chinese commodities. In the first cold war, the Soviet Union and its allies had no such trade or investments in the West and there were no economic stakes which both China and the West, particularly European countries, have on each other. A cold war only perpetuates in an environment of hostility, propaganda and psychological warfare which is not the case with China. If the Biden administration is trying to equate China with the former Soviet Union, it will be a wrong comparison.

#### Dual circulation

* Chinese President Xi Jinping’s new strategy centres on the concept of “dual circulation.” Behind the technical-sounding phrase lies an idea that could change the global economic order. Instead of operating as a single economy that is linked to the world through trade and investment, China is fashioning itself into a bifurcated economy. One realm (“external circulation”) will remain in contact with the rest of the world, but it will gradually be overshadowed by another one (“internal circulation”) that will cultivate domestic demand, capital, and ideas.
* The purpose of **dual circulation** is to make China more self-reliant. After previously basing China’s development on export-led growth, policymakers are trying to diversify the country’s supply chains so that it can access technology and know-how without being bullied by the United States. In doing so, China will also seek to make other countries more dependent on it, thereby converting its external economic links into global political power.
* And yet, last year, China was still the world’s largest exporter, shipping $3.3 trillion in goods to the rest of the world, with the US its leading export market. In fact, overall trade with the US grew by more than 20% in 2021, as total Chinese trade reached a new high. Trade with the European Union also grew, reaching $828 billion, even as disagreements over human rights torpedoed a controversial EU-China investment agreement.
* That agreement had been born of the belief that Europe would maintain strategic neutrality in the Sino-American cold war, in order to reap the economic benefits of engagement with China. But if human-rights concerns were enough to convince the European Parliament not to ratify the deal, Russia’s war against Ukraine – which China has tacitly supported, and which has pushed the US and the EU closer together – seems likely to drive the EU toward a broader economic decoupling from China.

### War is inevitable?

* Case study of Germany and UK and its relevance to US-China
* Germany’s Weltpolitik strategy (transforming Germany into a global power) provoked uk; Britain saw Germany’s economic and militarily rise antithetical to its liberal values, its prosperity derived from state intervention not through liberal laissez-faire approach; no direct clash over throne, territory or borders in fact trade, cultural bonds, interconnected elites and royal families were some factors which could foster peace; Thucydides trap
* US wont peacefully cede its dominance in East Asia to China (presence in south china sea, using india as a staunch ally, supporting taiwan’s independence, etc.)

### How to stop war/ way forward?

* Economic interdependence won’t cause war? (UK and Germany were closely interdependent on each other before ww1)
* Nuclear deterrence? Mutual assured destruction (MAD) prevented Cold War, but technological evolution has made thinkable that was once unthinkable (limited nuclear war won’t resulting in apocalyptic destruction)
* Liberal international order? You know problems about this one
* Rather then seeing it as an ideological competition which are zero-sum in nature it should be taken as traditional great-power rivalry which diplomacy could manage through conciliation, compromise, and search for common ground
* Robert Axelrod – now a professor emeritus at the University of Michigan – in his book The Evolution of Cooperation found that the most beneficial long-term strategy for an actor such as a nation-state is to cooperate first and then play tit-for-tat. In other words, a country will gain in the long run if it offers a goodwill gesture and then responds in kind to its opponent’s subsequent moves.
* The only way to prevent a new round of deterioration in US-China relations is for either Biden or Xi to take the first concrete step signalling willingness to cooperate, and then adhere strictly to the reciprocity rule thereafter. Since the long-entrenched Xi seems to have more room to manoeuvre than Biden, he is better positioned to take the initiative. Moreover, he has a rich menu of options to demonstrate goodwill – and likely elicit a positive US reaction – without risking too much political capital. For example, China should immediately allow the return of the American journalists it expelled last year in response to US restrictions on reporters working for state-run Chinese media outlets in the US. Another possibility would be to dismiss the charges against the 53 pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong arrested in early January.
* The EU should consider launching a diplomatic initiative reminiscent of the Helsinki Process, credited with reducing tensions between the Soviet and Western blocs in the 1970s. Through such a process, Europe could broker agreements to promote de-escalation, risk reduction, and crisis management, thereby reducing the likelihood of armed conflict.
* Compared to more direct stakeholders, the EU might be better positioned to mediate thorny issues such as Taiwan and the South China Sea. It might even be able to promote constructive diplomacy in the domains of cyber and outer space.

### How must Pakistan manage this?

* Into this milieu, enter the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. The US has made every effort to wean Pakistan away from it. It has used public diplomacy to warn of the consequences, leaned on the Pakistani leadership privately, raised directly as well as via information operations the bogey of China’s ‘debt trap diplomacy’ (put to rest by The Atlantic, and brought the IMF into play. It has also activated ‘spoilers’ within the government and political actors to sabotage CPEC.
* Unfortunately, in Great Power rivalry there can be no fence-sitters or casual bystanders. While Pakistan should aim to de-hyphenate its relationship with China and the US, realistically it will be increasingly difficult to ‘balance’ its relations with both, especially if the expectation from the US is that Pakistan will tone down its strategic relationship with China in any way.
* A quick review of who brings what to the table for Pakistan is illustrative. The US has had a transactional relationship with Pakistan for decades, subjecting its ‘ally’ to arms embargos and financial sanctions on multiple occasions since the 1980s. Under the Obama administration, the relationship broke down almost completely with the unprovoked killing of 24 Pakistan army soldiers at the Salala check post by US forces in Afghanistan in November 2011.
* As the war in Afghanistan headed towards ignominious defeat for America, Pakistan was increasingly subjected to a campaign of demonisation, with successive US administrations scapegoating the country rather than take ownership of the outcome.
* China, on the other hand, is a strategic ally of Pakistan since the very beginning. It has provided steadfast and unflinching diplomatic, financial, military and people-to-people support for Pakistan for virtually the entirety of the latter’s existence. It is now Pakistan’s main arms supplier at a time when the US has again blocked the transfer of weapons to the country (the latest episode involves the T-129 ATAK Turkish gunship helicopters), while deepening its own defence partnership with India.
* By putting together and leading the $62 billion CPEC, China is now playing a potentially transformational role in Pakistan’s economy. Despite Pakistan’s inability to conceive a grand design for CPEC, the project offers an unprecedented opportunity to transform the country’s economy. The immense benefits will accrue, however, not by limiting CPEC to a transit corridor for two-way shipments to and from China using Gwadar, or by over-investment in power generation leading to expensive excess capacity, but by integrating Pakistani firms into the Chinese supply chain and relocating ‘sunset’ industries from the mainland to Pakistan. This should have been the clearly articulated central aim and purpose of CPEC for Pakistani planners from the start. By focusing on this ‘mission’, constraints to growth (specifically to exports) would have been identified and seriously addressed — such as bottlenecks in logistics and physical infrastructure, the low skills level of the domestic labour force, impediments embedded in the country’s taxation regime etc.
* While at the moment we appear quite far from achieving the potential benefits inherent in an economic corridor such as CPEC, all is not lost. Improved strategising and better planning even at this late stage can retrieve the situation, albeit further out than desirable. Once Pakistan has aligned CPEC with its foundational objective of improving its external competitiveness and enhancing exports, it should then leverage it as a conduit for east-west regional connectivity. **The first order of business, however, should remain delivering on the promise of CPEC.**

## US-KSA

* For the Kingdom, America Is No Longer the Only Game in Town. Saudi officials trace the modern U.S.-Saudi partnership back to the historic summit between Saudi King Ibn Saud and President Franklin D. Roosevelt aboard the USS Quincy in 1945. Since then, America has ranked as the Kingdom’s foremost international ally, although those bonds have been sorely strained in recent years by issues like Islamic extremism, economic policy and human rights. Yet America’s standing with the Kingdom is no longer nearly as unassailable as it once was. That’s because the past half-decade has seen the emergence of a burgeoning strategic partnership between Saudi Arabia the People’s Republic of China (PRC). This “new era” of bilateral ties has been punctuated by upwards of $100 billion in Chinese investment and assorted other contacts that have cumulatively made the PRC a major stakeholder in the kingdom’s Vision 2030 plan and Saudi Arabia a key node in China’s vaunted Belt & Road Initiative.
* America and Saudi Arabia also agree on the need to stabilize the Middle East, fight global jihadist groups, contain Iran, and end the war in Yemen and rebuild the country – and for Arab states to normalize relations with Israel. the two countries have a shared interest in the stability of global energy and financial markets, as well as the supremacy of the US dollar as the world’s reserve currency.
* the White House decided to publicly release a long-suppressed intelligence report pinning the blame on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, for the 2018 death of dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi.
* In his first foreign policy statement, Joe Biden announced an end to the sale of “offensive” weapons to Saudi Arabia, given its role in the war that has devastated Yemen. But there’s no bar on “defensive” weapons.
* The potential restrictions threaten a tentative Saudi contract for up to 50 of Lockheed Martin’s F-35 fifth-generation stealth fighters, as well as earlier Saudi efforts to procure over a dozen U.S. armed drones.
* “The aim is a recalibration, not a rupture,” a senior Biden official told the Washington Post.
* What the White House does next will go a long way toward determining the shape of the future U.S.-Saudi relationship—as well as Riyadh’s larger geopolitical trajectory.
* Khaled al-Malik (prominent Saudi journalist) suggested that Riyadh can respond to Biden’s potential arms sales restrictions by turning to Russia or China for its weapons import needs.
* Recent consideration of oil trade in yuan

## US-Europe

* Most Europeans think they should be investing in their own defense, rather than relying on the US; and many now see Berlin, rather than Washington, DC, as the “go-to” capital for leadership. Most alarmingly, most Europeans are not interested in the Biden team’s goal of developing a common transatlantic approach to China. A majority in each country wants to remain neutral in any future conflict between the US and China.
* It is no less striking that it was German Chancellor Angela Merkel who negotiated the CAI. Merkel is a committed Atlanticist who would not oppose the US even when it decided to invade Iraq in 2003.

## West/NATO-China

* G7 leaders meeting in the UK lambasted the People’s Republic for what they termed excesses in Xinjiang and Hong Kong, while calling for “peace and stability” across the Taiwan Strait. Beijing is particularly sensitive about all three areas and considers criticism in these issues as meddling in its internal affairs. The G7 also called for a new investigation into Covid-19’s origins. Meanwhile, at the Nato summit in Belgium, the military grouping seemed even more direct when it criticised China’s martial activities. Though the Nato secretary general said he did not want a new cold war with China, the summit communiqué stated that Beijing poses “systematic challenges to the rules-based international order and to ... Alliance security”. On the other hand, China has termed the G7 statement “baseless accusations” while Nato’s concerns were akin to “slandering China’s peaceful development”.
* Today, China is not only taking a central role in Indo-Pacific security affairs, but is also becoming an increasingly visible security actor in Europe’s periphery.
* As NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg noted, ‘this is not about moving NATO into the South China Sea, but it is about taking into account that China is coming closer to us’
* Close ties between China and Russia, especially in the security and military spheres, have also been a source of concern for NATO allies. Chinese naval forces have conducted joint exercises with the Russian Navy in the Baltic and Mediterranean seas
* The PLA has opened a new military base in Djibouti, is a more active participant in United Nations peacekeeping operations and has even conducted joint exercises with Russia.
* The European Commission’s ‘EU–China – A Strategic Outlook’, published in March 2019, simultaneously identified China as a partner, an economic competitor and a systemic rival.
* Beijing views NATO as a potential threat to its interests of building a global network of bilateral relationships centred around Beijing and to its goal of becoming a global power by 2049, the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the People’s Republic of China.
* the Chinese leadership views NATO as what it calls a ‘remnant of the Cold War’, which lost legitimacy after the collapse of the Soviet Union and is therefore looking for a new enemy to justify its existence.
* China is also deeply concerned about NATO’s potential involvement in the Asia-Pacific.
* Countries in Central and Eastern Europe that are members of the 17+1 initiative (which promotes investment links between China and 17 states in the region) and those that signed on to the BRI are likely to be China’s focus, although they are by no means the only ones that Beijing will approach to prevent the coalescence of a transatlantic anti-China bloc. Beijing’s goal is to present China as a responsible power and an alternative to a sabre-rattling United States, to help create a counterweight to the US inside NATO.
* With some exceptions most European allies are sceptical about a confrontational policy especially as they have key economic equities in ties with China. Last year China became the EU’s top trading partner surpassing the US. Germany’s top export market and biggest trading partner happens to be China
* One in three German cars is sold in China. In 2019, Volkswagen sold nearly 40% of its vehicles in the country, while Mercedes-Benz sold about 700,000 passenger cars there
* There is an old adage that when you owe the bank a million, the bank owns you, but when you owe it a billion, you own the bank. Similarly, China can be said to “own” German foreign policy because of the German economy’s dependence on exports
* Italy is part of BRI and is reported to have agreed with Merkel during the G7 summit that action against China should be avoided.
* Other than perhaps France and Belgium, most EU countries prefer a more measured approach to China. Washington’s closest ally, UK may also be reluctant to adopt too antagonistic a policy especially as it wants to expand trade and investment with China.
* Similarly, South Korea, Japan, and other Asian democracies in China’s neighborhood are not interested in a blustery confrontation. Biden would be wise not to force US allies to make stark choices

## West-Russia

### Policy of Revival and Reassertion

* + Defend its erstwhile USSR sphere of influence (Eastern Europe, central asia, middle east Baltics, asia-pacific)
  + Using military power to increase its significance on global stage; economically weak due to sanctions
  + Hotspots: Ukraine, Belarus, Syria, etc.

### Ukraine

Read [Ukraine conflict](#_Ukraine_Conflict)

### Kazakhstan

* + motives of Russia: Former soviet republic; Russian speaking population; part of motherland; its sphere of influence
  + unlike other soviet republics: **BRI** importance; can’t antagonize China; trade shifted to yuan (rubble value decreased)
  + lesson for west: CSTO’s deployment in Kazakhstan shows that Russia is equal to the US, has its own NATO, and has the ability to expand its influence into large neighbouring countries

### Sanctions

* + Most severe ever witnesses;Swift, against Russian oligarchs wealth in safe heavens, Russia’s tilt towards China
  + Do they work or further worsen? Japan oil embargo; Germany in WW1 tell otherwise

### Germany

* + Regardless of how often Germans and Russians have been at each other’s throats, the enduring reflex goes back to Bismarck, who famously told the country in the middle: “Never cut the link to St. Petersburg.”
  + Energy dependence**:** Russia is Europe’s number one supplier of both crude oil and natural gas.
  + Europe's most divisive energy project, Nord Stream 2 is designed by Russian energy giant Gazprom to double the amount of gas flowing from Russia straight to Germany, bypassing traditional transit nation Ukraine.
  + Washington has for years lobbied Berlin not to increase its energy dependence on Russia.
  + is now seeking to diversify its energy sources, even reconsidering extending the life of its three remaining nuclear power stations.

### Cyber Warfare

* + Russian meddling in US elections, Russian malwares attacking govt agencies, discussed in Geneva meeting
  + Propaganda warfare during Ukraine conflict

### Why Russia problem for west?

* + declining powers are often the most dangerous ones
  + Austria-Hungary, that started World War I by declaring war on Serbia (Graham Allison’s book: Destined for War)
  + Gas war against Central and eastern European countries
  + Migration crisis along Belarus’s borders with Lithuania, Latvia, and Poland
  + Growing arms sales: in Africa top weapon supplier; in the middle east

## Russia-China

* a ‘**marriage of convenience’**, born out of both sides considering the United States their main adversary
* issues ranging from security and global governance to the economy and human rights, the China–Russia relationship is becoming ever closer.
* **Reacting to American unilateralism**, Russia and China have moved increasingly closer through their **bilateral Treaty of Friendship** of 2001, and the **Shanghai Cooperation Organization**, which encompass political, security, military, economic and technical cooperation
* Isolated from intl community Russia has since turned to China as its preferred global partner.
* Both Russia and China have shared security interests when it comes to maintaining stability in Central Asia and the Arctic, and to opposing the US and NATO.
* to show the strength of their military cooperation with joint exercises and drills, which have taken place in the European neighbourhood as well as in Russia.
* They also have **partly complementary economies**, with Russia exporting mostly raw materials to China and importing machinery, equipment and technology from Beijing. Russia also remains China’s top arms supplier.
* Finally, **shared political values** have also driven the two countries closer. Beijing and Moscow largely agree on issues such as the role and sovereignty of the state, their approach to global governance and human rights, and the principle of non-interference, among others.
* Taiwan/Ukraine factor; AUKUS/QUAD/NATO
* On foreign policy, Beijing and Moscow share similar approaches to Iran, Syria and Venezuela, and recently revived a push to lift United Nations sanctions on North Korea.

### Hurdles

* Russia is more isolated now than the Soviet Union ever was, it has become dangerously dependent on China.
* This relationship, however, is at the same time **becoming increasingly asymmetrical in favour of China**
* The Chinese economy continues to grow, and Beijing is becoming a more relevant global actor on a range of issues.
* Russia, on the other hand, suffers from a stagnant economy and deep inefficiencies that are likely to turn Moscow into the junior partner in the relationship in the future, which could hurt Russia’s strategic autonomy.
* With the **growing strength of the Chinese defence industry**, China is less and less dependent on Russian arms imports – one of Moscow’s main points of leverage in the relationship – and it has already joined Russia as one of the world’s main arms exporters
* Many in Moscow are also concerned about China’s expanding presence in Russia’s traditional sphere of influence – the Arctic and Central Asia.
* For now, however, the relationship between China and Russia continues to grow closer in the face of perceived challenges to both regimes from NATO and its partners, creating issues that the Alliance must consider
* For Putin, a far-off and uncertain threat from a more powerful China is more acceptable than the immediate and certain threat he perceives from Washington.
* China supporting Russia in Ukraine conflict

### Troubles for west

* Firstly, Russia and China are amplifying each other’s messages and pushing similar global-governance ideas that threaten liberal democracies and the rules-based international order.
* particularly visible within the UN system, where Beijing and Moscow often vote together in order to help prop up friendly illiberal regimes or to create new cyber norms and standards that would enshrine the principle of ‘cyber sovereignty’.
* China has had less of a military presence in the European theatre so far, not least owing to geographical distance. But China’s investments in European ports, digital networks and other critical infrastructure, together with its political-influence efforts, could allow Beijing to slow down a potential NATO response to Russian aggression or even to dissuade individual NATO allies from taking action against Russian hybrid attacks or interference efforts.
* China’s triangulation gambit: joining with Russia to corner the United States, just as the Sino-American rapprochement 50 years ago successfully cornered the former Soviet Union. The US, the architect of that earlier triangulation, was now being triangulated.

### Geopolitics of energy

* is defined as “the effect that location of resources has on the politics of the states”.
* the very idea of becoming a military power before becoming an economic power cost Russians the disintegration of their Soviet Empire. Have the Russians and the Chinese learnt these lessons?
* Russia’s pivot east is not territorial expansionism but economic, political and energy expansionism with clearly defined strategic intent and strategic aims. The goal of the grand pivot Asia-Pacific is to contain China but Russia’s pivot east is meant to cooperate and collaborate with it. Put it simply — China needs energy and Russia needs markets and both will draw benefit from this mutual collaboration.
* President Putin’s geostrategic and energy alignment is very much clear. Russia cannot solely depend on selling its gas to Europe in future and for that purpose and to ward off and circumvent US sanctions, its energy alignment is pivoting east. This means that oil and gas pipelines will not run only from east to west but from west to east as well — towards China.
* China became the largest energy consumer of the world when it overtook USA in 2009. China in 2014 signed a $400 billion deal with Russia for provision of Russian gas for next 30 years.
* **Winter Olympics**: The two countries signed oil and gas deals worth over $117bn to strengthen the economic dimension of their relationship. The source said the gas deal would be settled in euros, as Moscow tries to diversify from the U.S. dollar and hedge itself against any potential sanctions from Washington.

## India-China

* Another strategic challenge: before Ukraine conflict, the US seemed to be focusing on the global threat posed by China, and on the Indo-Pacific rather than Europe. But America may now revive its adversarial obsession with Russia.
* India’s traditional allies in the region can sense which way the wind is blowing. Nepal has allowed China to build major railway lines and highways across its northern border areas. Bhutan signed a border agreement last October that surrenders territory coveted by China, giving the Chinese an advantage in any future conflict with India. Most of India’s other South Asian neighbors have signed up to China’s Belt and Road Initiative, which India strenuously opposes.
* And to the east, the ruling junta in Myanmar has declared a “special kinship” with China, whereas its predecessor had come to see India as a valuable counterbalance to China.

## Russia’s foreign policy towards South Asia

* Historically, the South Asian region remained under the strict surveillance of the Soviet policy-making apparatus. During the 19th century, a tussle between Russian and British empires emerged, which was dubbed as Great Game, in which Britain sought influence in Central Asia to buffer the crown jewel of its empire, i.e., British India. The Russian empire could not assert its dominance in the region due to the strong footprints of the British empire. During the 1970s, another attempt was made to gain a dominant role in South Asia, which resulted in the Soviet-Afghan war followed by the disintegration of the USSR. However, Russia’s strive to redefine its interest in the region became apparent in the post-Cold War era, specifically, post-9/11.
* Traditionally, Russia has been maintaining friendly relations with India, and most of the time, India remained the epicenter of its foreign policy towards South Asia. However, a strategic shift was observed in the aftermath of the 2014-Ukrainian Crisis, when Russia inclined more towards China for its political support and economic cooperation. Today, Russia’s South Asia policy can be seen as a multi-vectored strategy to meet changing geopolitical realities in the region. The significant aspects of existing Russian foreign policy towards South Asia include seeking peace in Afghanistan, securing energy (gas pipelines) and trade routes passing through the region, and gaining access to warm waters. Afghanistan, therefore, remains a strategically important country for Russians as it provides strategic space to access warm waters in the South through CPEC. Kremlin administration, once hostile towards Kabul, is now keen on reaching a peaceful solution in Afghanistan to reduce instability and in security in the region. Such a major shift in Russian foreign policy is also linked to its Central Asia policy aimed at isolating the US in the Eurasian region.
* Russia has adopted multilateralism as a foreign policy instrument to increase its strategic and economic outreach. In this regard, the Eurasian Economic Union and Shanghai Cooperation Organization have been integral. Also, Russia has joined hands with China on its Silk and Road initiative by reiterating its support to BRI and CPEC. Similarly, Pakistan-Russia relations have seen an upwards trend in the last couple of years. Russia has moved away from defining its relations with Pakistan based upon its relationship with India. Both countries have signed various bilateral agreements and conducted military exercises. Today, Russia is actively engaged with the regional states to counter the US-led western influence in the region, while promoting multilateralism in the international system. However, Russia’s economic and political limitations have made it difficult to maintain its active presence throughout the region.
* Cold War; Pak in US camp

### Russia-India

* Ukraine conflict: poses a fundamental challenge to India’s traditional strategy of non-alignment
* Finds itself between a rock and a hard place, potentially antagonizing the West while still losing Russia to China's embrace.
* India abstained in a succession of United Nations votes – in the Security Council, the General Assembly, and the Human Rights Council – condemning the Russian invasion.
* India did not even object to Russia’s earlier recognition of the independence of the separatist Ukrainian regions of Donetsk and Luhansk.
* The reasons for India’s reticence are easy to discern.
* Russia supplies India with about 50% of its weapons and defense equipment.
* diplomatic relations with the Kremlin have been close since the days of the Soviet Union. Soviet vetoes at the UN frequently shielded India on Kashmir, and the Kremlin’s protection was indispensable during the 1971 Bangladesh War of Independence, when the US and China supported Pakistan.
* while India’s other commercial ties with Russia are much more modest than those it has with the United States, they are still significant
* Russia’s increasing closeness to, and geopolitical affinity with, China has therefore been worrying Indian policymakers for some time.
* Kremlin has also been visibly warming to Pakistan
* India seems to feel that it needs to cling to Russia’s goodwill in order to avoid losing it altogether.

### Pak-Russia

#### Mending of ties

* The first thaw in their relationship was witnessed with mutually exchanged visits of Russian Prime Minister, Mikhail Fradkov, and the then President of Pakistan, Pervaiz Musharraf, in 2003.
* Subsequently, both countries started moving towards a strategic partnership amid changing geopolitical and geostrategic environment at regional and international level.
* The Russian Defense Minister’s visit to Pakistan in 2014, marked a new era of friendship between Moscow and Islamabad. During the visit, the first-ever military deal was signed through which Russia committed to selling Mi-35 gunship helicopters to Pakistan.
* Despite the horrors of the past, both countries have ground of convergences in South Asia, such as bringing peace in Afghanistan, curbing the menace of terrorism and extremism, and working for better economic ties
* 2014: Russia lifted its embargo on selling defense equipment to Pakistan.
* Pakistan-Russia joint military exercises Druzba are enhancing their strategic partnership. Pakistan also participated in the war games, Tsentr (2019) and Kavkaz (2020) held in Russia.
* Kremlin believes that Pakistan can play an important role in the region as the country has an edge due to its geographical location.
* Under SCO-RATS (Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure), Russia seeks Pakistan’s expertise from its successful campaigns against terrorism and extremism in the region, such as Zarb-e-Azb and Rad-ul-Fassad military operations
* The inclusion of Pakistan as a permanent member in SCO also signals the significance of growing reliance and partnership. The economic, trade, technology, and energy cooperation between Moscow and Islamabad is becoming a priority for both countries.
* there has been increasing bilateral interaction at the senior official level. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov visited Islamabad last April after nearly nine years.
* Russian President Vladimir Putin has offered Pakistan a “**blank cheque**” offer of support, Lavrov’s exact language was an offer of “any cooperation” that Pakistan needs.
* Also in 2015 Russia posted on its state-funded official Think Tank Website RISS (Russian Institute of Strategic Studies) an article written by Andrew Korybko titled ‘Pakistan is a zipper of Pan-Eurasian integration’. It was in this article that the Russian dream of Eurasian integration was highlighted in detail and it was in the same article that Pakistan was referred to as ‘South Asia’s gatekeeper’ and a country that was at the heart of any scheme designed to extract geopolitical and geo-economic benefits in Eurasia. Far from being a lost cause, Pakistan was termed the supercontinent’s most important economic hope. The importance of Pakistan’s potential was explained in its ability to connect the massive economies of the Eurasian Union, Iran, SAARC, and China, thereby creating a pan-Eurasian economic zone. Therefore, it doesn’t require a doctorates degree from a world renowned university to understand why the Russian foreign minister had visited our country first time in over a decade. Russia recognises Pakistan’s prime geopolitical potential and has thus maneuvered to rapidly increase its full-spectrum relations with a country that it considers South Asian gatekeeper.
* Putin remarks on islamophobia
* PM’s visit to Russia despite West’s warning (first trip of a pak leader in more than 2 decades) and Pak’s neutrality over the Ukraine conflict
* Pakistan may emphasise a position of neutrality but global developments of late, which have also included the Afghan situation after the departure of US troops, have brought it closer to the Beijing-Moscow axis.
* Similar views on afg
* Pak stream gas pipeline: Under the new deal, Pakistan will have a 74% share in the pipeline, with the rest going to Russia. The first agreement for the project was signed in 2015, but was never implemented, partly due to the risk of running foul of US sanctions on Russia.

#### Pakistan’s options

* Technology has fundamentally changed the human history and both these countries (china and Russia) are technological giants. In today’s world, it is technology that fuels the economic growth and both these resurgent powers can help us and our technology-starved industries
* Pakistan has its own place in changing geopolitical dynamics but caution is needed if the country is to safeguard its interests. Improving relations with Moscow is to be welcomed but it is also crucial that it maintains a balance in foreign ties so that it doesn’t end up favouring one side over the other