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Your eyes are a thorn in my heart
Inflicting pain, yet I cherish that thorn
And shield it from the wind.
(Mahmoud Darwish)

The Two-State Solution

How to achieve peace in the Middle East

After weeks of devastation and destruction by war, the four-day truce in the deadly war between the Zionist state of Israel and Hamas came as a much-needed breather. While this humanitarian pause in the war is a welcome development to prevent more bloodshed, it's a temporary arrangement; the real need is for a permanent cease-fire. There are numerous examples in the past century of truces that have been instrumental in ending wars. The world must realize the pain of the Palestinian people and play its role in ending the Israeli atrocities in Gaza that have killed thousands of innocent people, including women and children, and try to carve out a permanent ceasefire.

The fascist Israeli regime must stop its atrocities and adhere to principles of international law so as to cultivate a long-lasting peace in the region that has been ravaged by intermittent wars.

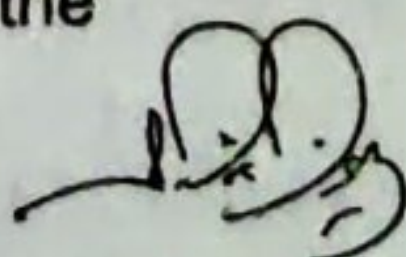
Although efforts have been made to facilitate peace negotiations and different proposals have been put forward over the years, a comprehensive and lasting resolution has yet to be achieved, mainly due to Israel's intransigence.

Israel, which has been continuously expanding its territories into Palestine illegally by displacing Palestinians, has often cited the right to self-defence for justifying its actions in Gaza. That is why it also doesn't hesitate to kill, torture or jail Palestinian people when they resist its occupation. When lands are "cleared" from Palestinians, it allows Jewish migrants to resettle on Palestinian lands. Besides resettlement, sometimes Israelis individually come and seize a Palestinian's house with the help of Israeli police and kick the owner's family out of the house. It was through this continuous displacement and oppression of Palestinians by Israel that armed groups like Hamas emerged. For sure, if there weren't Hamas, there would be another organization, as oppression compels people to self-defend themselves. So, the real need is to address the causes behind this conflict – Israel's illegal actions in Gaza. The world must understand that Israel does not have the right to defend itself if it is occupying someone else's lands. It does not have the right to kill someone in occupied lands. When victims (Palestinians in this case) respond to Israel – even in violent ways – they are right in their actions, as they are the oppressed, the target, and above all, the righteous side. Besides, international law supports Palestine's self-defence while making Israel's actions illegal and criminal.

So, the world must stop Israel from committing grave violations of international law and give the Palestinians their due right to live in peace and harmony.

In this context, this decades-long conflict demands a just and peaceful resolution of the Palestine issue, based on the two-state solution — that calls for establishing an independent state for Palestinians (on the basis of pre-1967 borders, with Al Quds Al-Sharif as its capital) alongside that of Israel. It seems the only option to achieve durable peace in the Holy Land. And, this solution is supported by most countries around the world. Likewise, Pakistan has also consistently advocated for a two-state solution as the key to enduring peace in the Middle East, with a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the Palestinian question anchored in international law and in line with relevant United Nations and OIC resolutions.

With Israel continuing on an escalatory course, a regional conflagration cannot be ruled out as neighbouring countries come under mounting pressure. No country wants a wider conflict. But the longer Israel's war on Gaza continues, the higher the risk of the conflict expanding into a multi-front one across the Middle East.



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Terror Financing of Hindutva Groups

Recently, an FATF team visited India to conduct evaluations, assessing the BJP-led country's implementation of the legal framework against money laundering and terrorist financing. A fair and unbiased report by the team would find mounting evidence of the involvement of Hindutva groups, which operate with state patronage, in systematic and organized acts of terror, particularly targeting religious minorities. These Hindutva groups rely on various legal and illegal methods, globally as well as domestically, to raise funds for their activities against religious minorities. A fair investigation will find a complex network of transactions, disguised as charitable endeavors, interwoven with a web of extremist organizations operating at home and abroad, and the covert funnelling of financial support to Hindu supremacist and religious groups. According to advocacy groups, the government in New Delhi seemingly grants a carte blanche to the RSS and several of its affiliates engaged in receiving foreign funding through diverse channels. The BJP and its RSS affiliates have conducted killings and acts of violence against minorities with impunity. The unabashed Hindu-first messaging by BJP politicians has emboldened Hindutva groups, leaving the country's Muslim and Christian minorities in a perpetual state of fear and alienation. The activities of these Hindutva groups clearly fall under ethnically or racially motivated terrorism, a growing threat that the FATF itself has recognized in the past. The muted stance on Hindutva groups and their intricate global financial networks is seen by experts as potentially empowering their actions within India. If not addressed, there are concerns that the Indian government may start taking this lack of scrutiny for granted, potentially escalating actions against religious minorities more brazenly.

Sajjad Ahmad Usmani, Rawalpindi

The Politics of Electables

While the Election Commission has finalised February 8, 2024 as the date to hold general elections, we continue to witness the persistent reoccurrence of problems witnessed in previous elections. The transfer of "electables" from one political party to another is again in full swing. Despite the fact that such individuals may not wield influence within the party's structure, policies or governance, "electables" readily switch allegiances. This, however, undeniably undermines and disrupts the organisational integrity of political parties, hindering the lateral movement of political workers within parties. This entire process not only erodes the political parties' structures, but also weakens the fabric of democracy. Moreover, it perpetuates a party model and politics centred around a select few individuals. Unfortunately, this model comes at the expense of weakening relationships with local party members or activists, impeding democratic discourse within political parties. A transparent and candid discussion among political leaders is imperative, given the pressing need to address this issue, which inevitably raises questions about the quality of democracy in Pakistan. The challenges posed by "electables" politics must be met with resolute determination.

Maira Haider, Sialkot

Plight of Pakistan's Financial Hub

The basic amenities that are the lifeline of any thriving urban centre have become elusive in Karachi. The city's infrastructure, the backbone of its economic prowess, is crumbling. Roads, essential arteries for the city's lifeblood, are marred by potholes and fractures. Rampant encroachment reflects the lack of urban planning and regulation. Public transport faces regulatory chaos and the lack of a coherent system contributes to traffic mayhem. The mismanagement of water resources, including theft, leaves the city in a perpetual state of thirst. Being a financial powerhouse, Karachi should boast an abundant water supply, but unfortunately its residents are left empty handed. The urgent need for a unified, comprehensive approach to address Karachi's multifaceted challenges is imminent. The resilience of Karachi and its people calls for a collective commitment to break free from the shackles of neglect and usher in a new era of prosperity.

Samia Usman, Karachi

Equip KP Police

The sacrifices made by the KP Police are starkly evident, with a staggering 150 policemen martyred and 280 others injured this year alone in their relentless pursuit to restore peace. The overall figure of police martyrs has now surpassed 2,000, underscoring the gravity of the situation and the ruthless targeting of law enforcement by terrorist elements. Whilst we salute the sacrifices of police personnel, it is imperative to recognize the dire need for equipping it with the right kind of training and cutting-edge equipment to effectively counter the menace of terrorism. Training programs should be comprehensive, encompassing not only tactical skills but also psychological resilience, enabling the force to navigate the complex and evolving landscape of terrorism. Moreover, the provision of modern technology and surveillance tools can empower the police to stay one step ahead of the adversaries. We expect that the Inspector General along with the provincial government to take the requisite steps in this regard which will also instil sense of security amongst the people.

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INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION (ISS) Completes 25 Years



Context

- The International Space Station (ISS) passes 25 years since the first module Zarya was launched into orbit in November 1998.
- The ISS was the brainchild of former US President Ronald Reagan, who in 1984 proposed building a permanently inhabited spacecraft in cooperation with a few other countries.

About International Space Station (ISS)

The International Space Station (ISS) is a space station and orbital laboratory that serves as a unique platform for scientific research and international cooperation in space exploration.

- The ISS is a joint project involving space agencies from multiple countries.
- The major partners in the ISS program include NASA (United States), Roscosmos (Russia), ESA (European Space Agency), JAXA (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency), and CSA (Canadian Space Agency).
- The station represents one of the most extensive and successful international collaborations in the history of space exploration.

Space Agencies

- Each partner space agency is responsible for various segments of the ISS.
- For example, NASA oversees the U.S. portion of the station, which includes modules like Destiny and the Kibo laboratory.
- Roscosmos manages the Russian Orbital Segment (ROS), which includes modules like Zvezda and the Poisk module.

Support for Deep Space Exploration

- The ISS serves as a testbed for technologies and systems that will be crucial for future deep space exploration missions.
- It helps scientists and engineers understand the challenges of long-duration space travel and serves as a platform for research on life support systems, radiation protection, and human health in space.

Orbit and Altitude

- The ISS orbits the Earth at an average altitude of approximately 420 kilometers (260 miles).
- It travels at an average speed of about 28,000 kilometers per hour (17,500 miles per hour), completing an orbit around the Earth roughly every 90 minutes.

Research and Experiments

- The primary mission of the ISS is to conduct scientific research and experiments in a microgravity environment.
- Researchers from various fields, including biology, physics, astronomy, and Earth sciences, use the station to study the effects of long-term space travel on the human body, conduct experiments in materials science, and perform Earth observations.

Modular Structure

- The ISS is modular in design, consisting of multiple interconnected modules and components.
- These modules serve various purposes, including living quarters for astronauts, laboratories for scientific research, and storage areas.
- The station's modular structure allows for the flexibility to add new components as technology advances.

International Crew

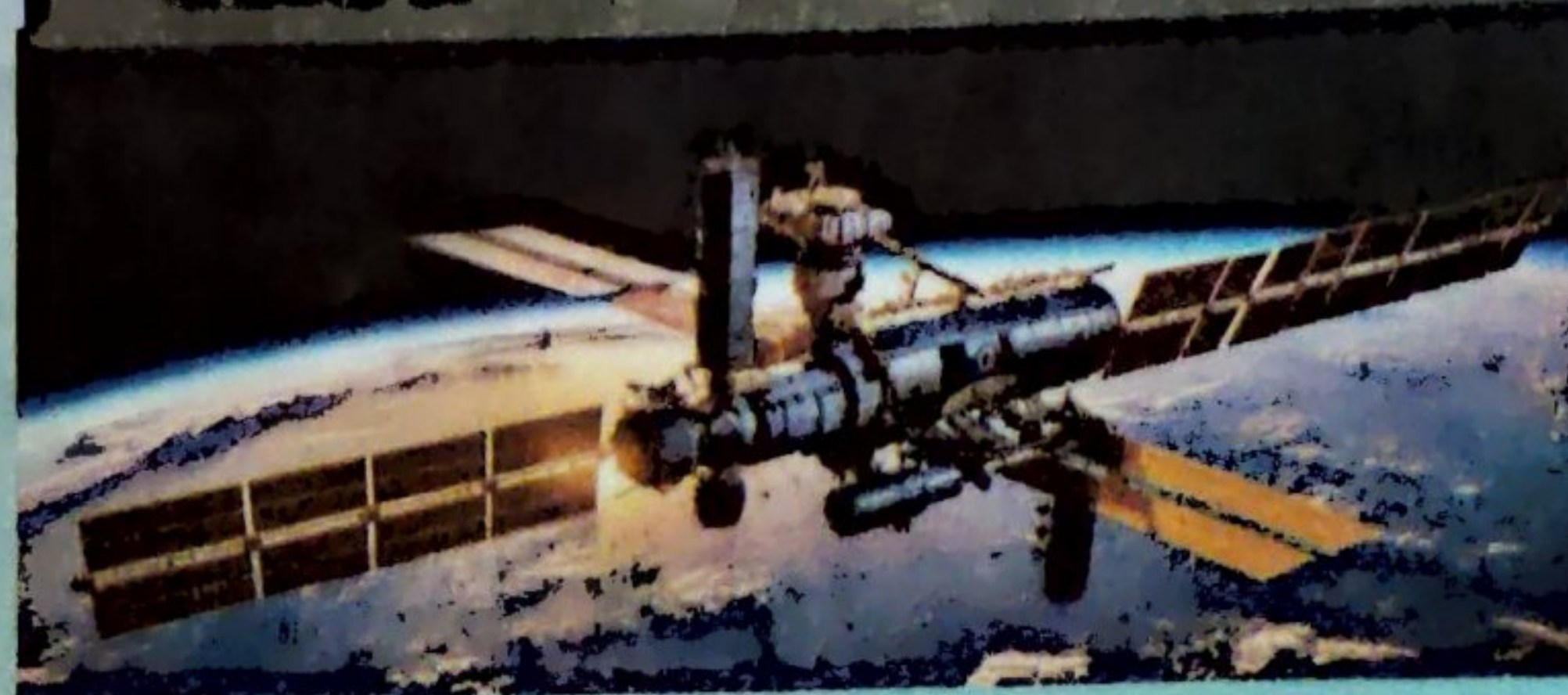
- The ISS continuously hosts a rotating crew of astronauts and cosmonauts from different countries.
- These crew members live and work on the station for extended periods, conducting scientific experiments, technology demonstrations, and maintaining station systems. Crews typically stay on the station for several months.

Significance

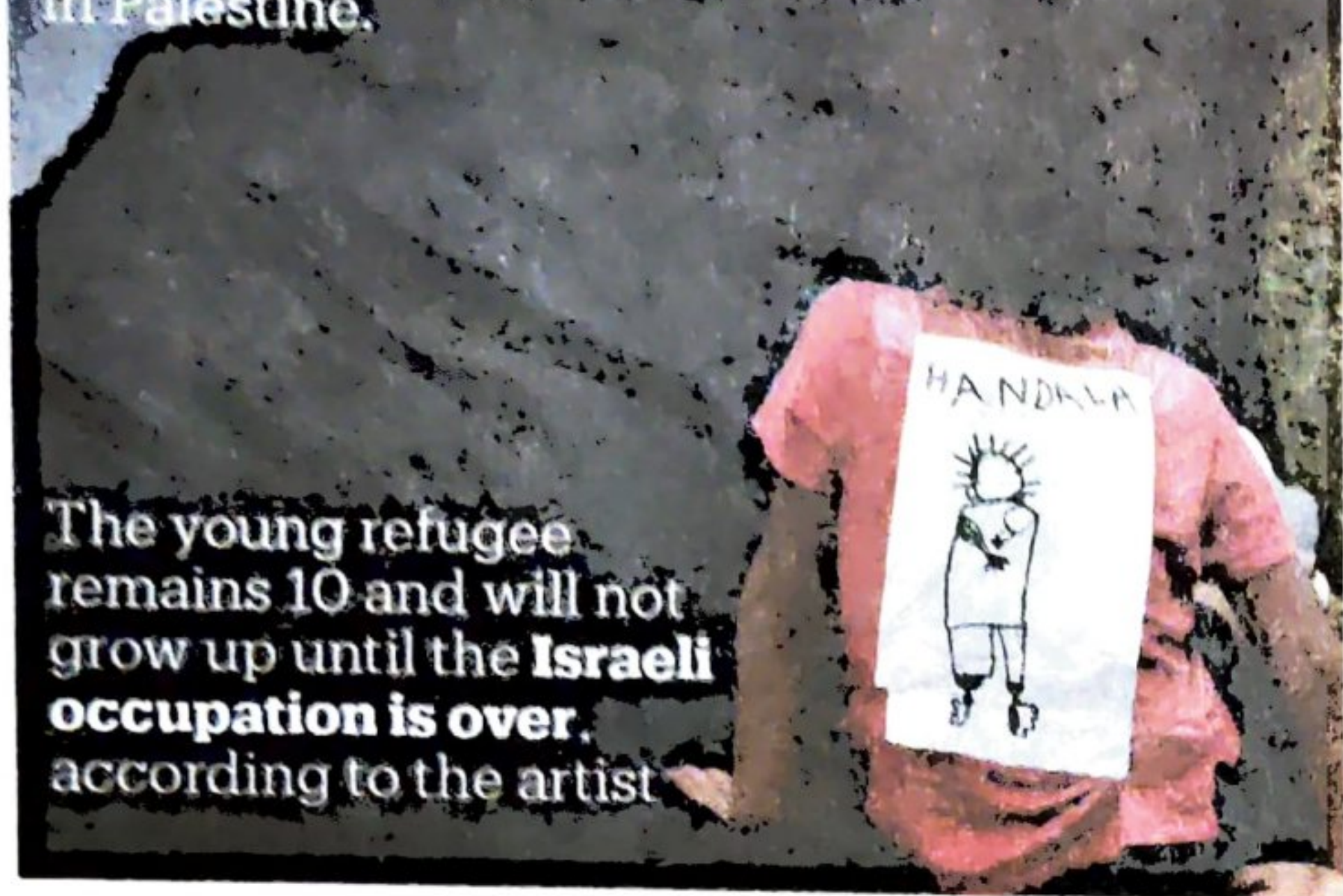
- **Technological Innovation:** The development and maintenance of the ISS necessitate cutting-edge technologies, driving innovation in fields such as robotics, life support systems, and space-based infrastructure.
- **Human Spaceflight Experience:** Serving as a long-term habitat for astronauts, the ISS provides invaluable insights into the challenges and effects of extended human spaceflight, essential for planning future deep-space missions.
- **Educational Outreach:** The ISS offers educational opportunities, engaging students worldwide and inspiring the next generation of scientists, engineers, and space enthusiasts through educational programs and live communication with astronauts.

Other Facts:

- India is aiming to build a Bharatiya Antariksha Station (Indian Space Station) by 2035.
- China's self-built space station, also known as Tiangong or Celestial Palace in Chinese, has been fully operational since late 2022.

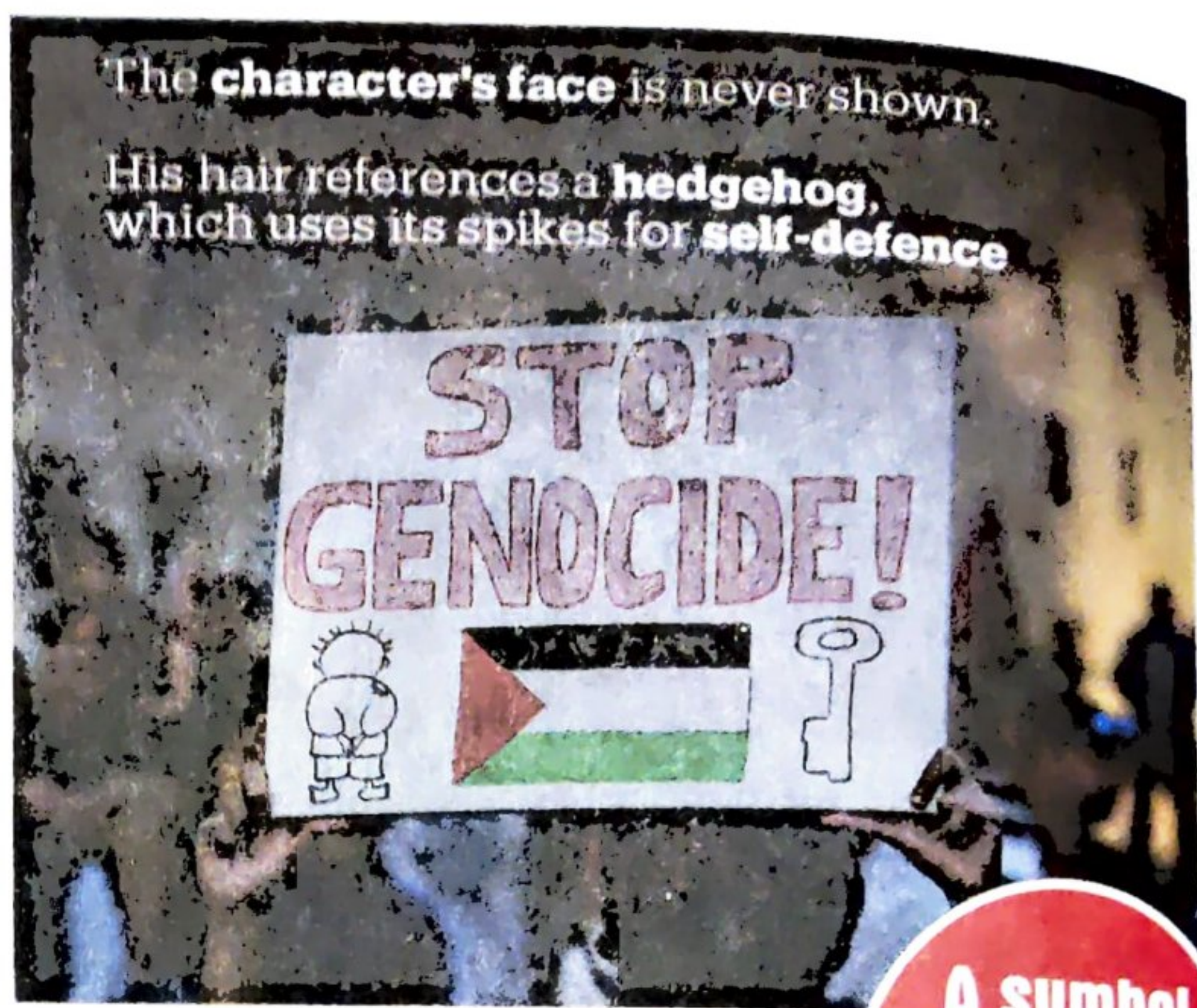


Handala represents a **10-year-old refugee boy**, his age referencing cartoonist Naji al Ali's age when he was forced to leave his home in Palestine.



The young refugee remains 10 and will not grow up until the **Israeli occupation is over**, according to the artist

The **character's face** is never shown. His hair references a **hedgehog**, which uses its spikes for **self-defence**



A symbol of Palestinian resilience

Handala, a symbol of Palestinian resistance and resilience, is a cartoon character created by Palestinian cartoonist and political commentator Naji al-Ali whose work has been revered throughout the Arab region for its boldness, outspokenness and humanity. This character has lived on to become Palestine's pictorial conscience and is a beloved and iconic figure in Palestinian culture. Although Naji al-Ali was murdered in 1987, his work survives him even today as a symbol of the Palestinian cause.

Depicted as a barefoot, ragged refugee child with his back turned to the viewer, Handala remains a potent symbol of the struggle of the Palestinian people for justice and self-determination. Its face is never shown, representing the anonymity and universality of the Palestinian struggle. Handala was born ten years old, and he will always be ten years old. At that age, Naji al-Ali left my homeland, and when he returns, Handala will still be ten, and then he will start growing up. The laws of nature do not apply to him. He is unique. Things will become normal again when the homeland returns. The character's posture and body language convey a sense of determination and defiance, as if he is ready to face any challenge that comes his way.

In the words of Naji al-Ali, "The character of Handala was a sort of icon that protected my soul from falling whenever I felt sluggish or I was ignoring my duty. That child was like a splash of fresh water on my forehead, bringing me to attention and keeping me from error and loss. He was the arrow of the compass, pointing steadily towards Palestine. Not just Palestine in geographical terms, but Palestine in its humanitarian sense — the symbol of a just cause, whether it is located in Egypt, Vietnam or South Africa."

Despite the passage of time, Handala remains as relevant as ever, as the **Palestinian struggle for freedom and justice** continues. Through his enduring presence and an everlasting message, Handala serves as a powerful reminder of the Palestinian people's struggle and a call to action for those who seek to support their cause. ■



HANDALA

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The Business of War



Making money when humanity suffers

Wars are seen as conflicts between two or more nations, but there are often other actors who benefit from this, even if they are not directly involved. Wars anywhere in the world are no less than a lifeline for them. These "real winners" of war are the defence sector conglomerates who make money when humanity bleeds. Wars lead to increased demand for the things that weapons manufacturers make – tactical missiles, fighter aircraft, artillery, etc. Since wars feed demand for weapons, the manufacturers expect their revenues to accelerate. The prospects for their business are shiny in the coming years, as demand for their products will surge amidst the ongoing conflicts and brewing tensions between the world's major powers.

Dr. Sidra Muqet

Most people don't benefit from wars or, certainly, from the prospect of broader regional conflicts. But a rare few do, notably the executives of companies that manufacture weapons. Weapons manufacturers have seen their stocks surge amid the Russia-Ukraine war and now the one between Israel and Hamas. A recent market survey suggests that after Hamas began attacking southern Israel on October 7 – and Israel promptly began another, even more brutal assault on the Gaza Strip – the

value of stocks in Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman surged. These conglomerates expect industry revenue to accelerate in 2024 and 2025 as higher spending bills passed over the past several years by different countries around the globe begin to make their way into their income statements. They are proving German pacifist Karl Liebknecht's assertion that "For capitalism, war and peace are business and nothing but business" right. The wars and conflicts in many parts of the world, especially the ongoing Russia-

Ukraine and Israel-Palestine wars, are demonstrating the proof of that assertion in spades. There is no denying that the main purpose of weapons manufacturers, as for all businesses in a capitalist system, is to make profit – for shareholders, salaries and bonuses for their staff and (through taxes) the government. During peacetime, this is achieved by replacing "consumables" such as ammunition used in training, modernizing in-service equipment, providing replacements for kits reaching end of life and developing

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new technologies for the military. Levels of supply and, therefore, income and profits, will increase in times of conflict as combatants will use up and lose larger quantities of military materiel.

The latest data on global military spending, published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in April this year, reveals that global military expenditure increased by 3.7 percent in real terms in 2022 to reach a new high of \$2240 billion and that three largest spenders in 2022—the United States, China and Russia—accounted for 56 percent of the world total.

As per the SIPRI report, the United States remains by far the world's biggest military spender. US military spending reached \$877 billion in 2022, which was 39 percent of total global military spending and three times more than the amount spent by China, the world's second-largest spender. The 0.7 percent real-terms increase in US spending in 2022 would have been even greater had it not been for the highest levels of inflation since 1981. The increase in the USA's military spending in 2022 was largely accounted for by the unprecedented level of financial military aid it provided to Ukraine. Given the scale of US spending, even a minor increase in percentage terms has a significant impact on the level of global military expenditure. US financial military aid to Ukraine totalled \$19.9 billion in 2022. Although this was the largest amount of military aid given by any country to a single beneficiary in any year since the Cold War, it represented only 2.3 percent of total US military spending. In 2022, the USA allocated \$295 billion to military operations and maintenance, \$264 billion to procurement and research and development and \$167 billion to military personnel.

The ongoing war between Hamas and Israel will add impetus to this spending, as President Joe Biden has asked Congress for \$106 billion in

military and humanitarian aid for Israel and Ukraine and humanitarian assistance for Gaza. The money could be a boon to the aerospace and weapons sector which enjoyed a 7-percentage point jump in value in the immediate aftermath of Hamas's October 7 attack on Israel, and the beginning of Israel's bombardment of Gaza in response.

Since most of the big arms manufacturers are based in the United States, the country hardly supports any efforts for making peace. Its jingoistic leaders keep on backing the conflict whether it is providing arms to Ukraine and Taiwan or sending its military aid to Israel. An irrefutable

fact is that at a time when thousands of Palestinians are being slaughtered by the Zionist state of Israel, US officials kept on fanning the flames

by

providing additional military aid to Israel, though from the viewpoint of avoiding more human casualties and averting a humanitarian disaster, the most rational and responsible response after the initial attack should have been to call on parties to exercise maximum restraint and calm and achieve a ceasefire as soon as possible. Investors have always been quick to tell who will be the winners in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While the Biden administration warned any group against taking advantage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, if any group stands any chance to exploit the conflict and profit from the violence, it will probably be the US military-industrial complex. Whenever there is a military conflict or even merely regional tensions in any part of the

world, the US can always find a way of turning it into a great opportunity for American arms dealers to make a fortune.

Instead of contributing to the maintenance of world peace, the US has continued to fuel the escalation and continuation of various conflicts so as to bring fortunes to its military-industrial complex, but it comes at the expense of people's lives.

In the end, it seems apt to say that in terms of war, we are entering a different phase globally with respect to geopolitics with conflicts appearing more likely compared with recent decades. As countries need to replenish their weapons, defense companies will do very well. First of all, there will be contracts to resupply weapons. The bigger stream of profits, however, will come from assured post-conflict increases in national security spending. It appears likely that the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Hamas wars will permanently expand the weapons industry. According to William Hartung, a senior research fellow at the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft, "Plans that have been floated so far include building new weapons factories, dramatically boosting production of ammunition, anti-tank weapons, and other systems, and easing oversight of weapons procurement. These changes will come at a cost that, over time, will run into tens of billions of dollars above current spending plans, and possibly more—much more."

The real winners of war remind us that war is not just a conflict between two or more nations. It is also a business, and there are people who profit from the destruction and chaos caused by war. Supporting wars or aggressors to get enough orders is dangerous to the world. The world cannot afford to allow them to continue making profits from misfortunes in other countries and regions. ■

The writer is a member of staff.



Nighat Karim Qazi

On Nov. 2, the world's first Artificial Intelligence (AI) safety summit concluded at Bletchley Park in central Britain, where representatives and companies from 28 countries across the globe in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the European Union signed the Bletchley Declaration, which aims to tackle the risks of the so-called frontier AI models. The inaugural two-day summit, hosted by British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, was attended by world leaders including European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, US Vice President Kamala Harris, UN Secretary-General António Guterres and many others. Here are the key takeaways from the event.

The Bletchley Park Declaration

"Frontier AI" is defined as highly capable foundation-generative AI models that possess dangerous capabilities that can pose severe risks to public safety.

The declaration, which was also endorsed by Brazil, Ireland, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and the United Arab Emirates, incorporates an acknowledgment of the substantial risks from potential intentional misuse or unintended issues of control of frontier AI — especially cybersecurity, biotechnology and disinformation risks, according to the UK government, the summit host.

The Declaration noted the "potential for serious, even catastrophic, harm, either deliberate or unintentional, stemming from the most significant capabilities of these AI models," as well as risks beyond frontier AI, including those of bias and privacy. The declaration said that the risks are "best addressed through international cooperation," as attendees agreed to work together to "support a network of scientific research on Frontier AI safety."

However, there have also been opinions that even though such a Declaration was issued during the summit, it is mainly in principle. Others say that countries have yet to

Uniting for a safer tomorrow!

work out a clear roadmap for global cooperation and no specific measures concerning cooperation on AI safety have been proposed.

The US was calling the shots

The UK may have been the host of the world's first AI safety summit, but the US, home to most of the world's AI giants, made it clear they are the ones calling the shots.

US Vice President Kamala Harris said the US voluntary commitments to responsible AI practices, adopted by a range of large AI labs in the US, are just an "initial step" toward legislation on AI safety. That will add to a range of US safety policies already announced.

"We intend that these domestic AI policies will serve as a model for global policy, understanding that AI developed in one nation can impact the lives and livelihoods of billions of people around the world," Harris said in her speech.

That might be a tricky pill for the EU to swallow, as the aim of the bloc's delegation was "selling" the EU AI Act at the summit, "the first ever legislation on AI," said Commission

The World's First



Safety Summit



The world's first major summit on artificial intelligence (AI) safety was held in Britain from Nov. 1 to Nov. 2 in Bletchley Park, north of London (UK). Over two days, the Summit brought together approximately 150 representatives from across the globe including government leaders and ministers, and industry, academia and civil society leaders at this historic place — which is considered by many the birthplace of modern computing as it is the place where top British code-breakers cracked Nazi Germany's "Enigma" code during World War II — to discuss possible responses to the society-changing technology. Historians believe that advances made there in cryptographic and intelligence processes during World War II contributed greatly to the Allied effort, and may have shortened the War by a couple of years. The participants agreed to the urgent need to understand and collectively manage potential risks through a new joint global effort to ensure AI is developed and deployed in a safe, responsible way for the benefit of the global community. They signed the Bletchley Declaration that represents an important step forward on managing the risks and realizing the benefits of frontier AI systems.

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vice president Věra Jourová, stressing the EU law can "go further" than the US executive order on AI published recently.

The EU delegation emphasised that even though some of the most powerful AI models are being developed in the US, they will have to comply with the EU laws to operate inside the bloc, and advocated for the

the idea of a national safety institute. But in the run-up to the summit, US officials grew wary of giving this UK expert body too much access to US-made frontier models, despite existing information-sharing deals between a number of US AI developers and the UK government. The issue was solved by the US decision to create its own national

formal agreement to work very closely together on their assessments of threats from new, more powerful models. The UK announced that Singapore will also collaborate on safety testing with the institutes. The idea is to widen the network and connect with other organisations working on AI safety elsewhere in the world.

Bletchley Park

When World War II broke out in 1939, like many other British agencies and institutions, Britain's Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS) was promptly moved out of London, under constant threat from German bombers. The new location, Bletchley Park, was a Victorian country house located in a sprawling 58-acre estate in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. Bletchley was well connected by the rail network, and lay on Britain's north-south telephone line, making it an ideal choice for the GC&CS. Over the course of the War, over 10,000 people worked at Bletchley Park, their efforts devoted to a singular objective: to read intercepted messages from the enemy to provide useful intelligence for the War effort.

Bletchley Park is most known for cracking the 'unbreakable' Enigma code. Enigma machines were cipher machines used by the Nazis to encrypt their radio messages. They featured a set of rotors, as well as a plugboard, which helped create over a 150 quintillion combinations. Since settings were typically changed every 24 hours, manually breaking the code was near impossible. This is where the Turing Bombe entered the picture. An electro-mechanical device that replicated the action of Enigma machines, British mathematician Alan Turing's device significantly expedited the process to identify the code. At the peak of the War, hundreds of Turing Bombes would be simultaneously operated, mostly by women in dingy rooms. By breaking the code more quickly, the invention allowed analysts to decipher German messages in time for the Allies to act on said intelligence.

Another machine built at Bletchley Park was the Colossus, to help in the cryptanalysis of the Lorenz cipher, used specifically by the German High Command. Designed by Tommy Flowers under Max Newman, a total of 10 Colossi were built at Bletchley Park during 1943-45.

Many regard the Colossus as the world's first programmable, electronic, digital computer, although it was programmed by switches and plugs, rather than a stored program. Unfortunately, after the War, all the machines were destroyed and the people who worked on them were sworn to secrecy. Consequently, for the longest time, it was not recognised as the world's first computer. But it was, and it was remarkably fast for its time.

Bletchley Park's work was central to Allied planning during the War, giving Allied commanders a unique insight into the minds of their enemies. From the Battle of El Alamein (1942) to the Normandy landings (1944), Bletchley Park's fingerprints can be seen all over Allied successes. Historian FH Hinsley, considered the foremost authority on British intelligence during the War, contends that Bletchley Park's contribution reduced the length of the war by two years.

Then there is the technological legacy that Bletchley Park left, the primary reason why it was chosen to host this year's AI Summit. Principles developed by Turing and his colleagues continue to inform modern computing, artificial intelligence.

right of different jurisdictions to regulate as they find more appropriate.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres wasn't happy either, insisting the UN should be the forum for global decisions on AI safety. "One country or group of countries cannot dominate," he said.

Protectionism has not gone away

The most concrete result to come out of the summit was the announcement of plans for the UK and US to set up national AI safety institutes — to help AI startups prevent societal risks and threats to national security from the most advanced models.

Britain was the first country to float



safety institute, announced on the first day of the summit.

UK prime minister Rishi Sunak said the institutes will be able to test the models before they are released — calling this a "truly landmark agreement".

Both institutes will enter into a

More AI summits

The UK government also announced that there would be future AI safety summits.

South Korea will launch another "mini virtual" Summit on AI in the next six months and France will host the next in-person AI summit next

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year.

A new AI supercomputer

The UK announced it will invest £225 million (€257 million) in a new AI supercomputer, called Isambard-AI after the 19th-century British engineer Isambard Brunel.

It will be built at the University of Bristol, in southern England, and the UK government said it would be 10 times faster than the UK's current quickest machine.

Alongside another recently announced UK supercomputer called Dawn, the government hopes both will achieve breakthroughs in fusion energy, health care and climate modelling.

Both computers aim to be up and running next summer.

applications over the past year.

The summit concluded with a discussion between Sunak and billionaire Elon Musk in front of a group of invited business leaders and journalists. Musk praised the inclusion of China in the AI safety agreement, a decision that some condemned after many Western governments reduced their tech cooperation with China. SpaceX and Tesla boss Elon Musk said: "Having them (China) here I think was essential, really. If they're not participants, it's pointless." Musk believed it's "a good thing" for the United States, Britain and China to be "aligned on (AI) safety." He went on to stress the importance of the US, the UK and China working together to

work with all sides to implement the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative, and promote AI technology to better benefit humankind and build a community with a shared future.

However, trust in China remains very limited. The UK and its closest allies wanted China to take part only in discussions about risks — but excluded the Chinese delegates from sessions on priorities for AI development in the next five years and opportunities for international collaboration. In a big diplomatic coup for host nation Britain, China signed the Bletchley Declaration, a joint statement committing to working with the US, the EU and all

Who Signed it?

The Bletchley Declaration was signed by 28 countries, including the United States, China, India, the European Union, and others.

Russia is not in the list.

Location:

Bletchley Park is in England.

It's where Alan Turing and his team cracked the Enigma code during WW-II, which is considered a pioneering event in the field of modern computing.



China is indispensable in global AI discussions

China was a key participant at the summit, given its role in developing AI. Its involvement in the summit was described as constructive by several officials from other governments, and was a victory for those advocating that the Chinese government needs to be involved in high-level discussions on AI safety and transparency, as some of the world's biggest industry players are Chinese companies. Statistics from the World Intellectual Property Organization showed that Chinese institutions applied for 29,853 AI-related patents in 2022, accounting for more than 40 percent of global AI

promote AI safety.

The Chinese delegation promoted China's Global Artificial Intelligence Governance Initiative launched at the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held in Beijing on Oct. 17-18, and carried out bilateral talks with relevant countries. The Chinese delegation expressed willingness to work with all parties to strengthen communication and exchanges on AI safety governance, and contribute wisdom to the formation of an international mechanism with universal participation and a governance framework with broad consensus. The Chinese delegation also noted that China is willing to

the other countries attending the event to collectively manage the existential risks from AI.

But policymakers must now work out what the shared language in the statement means in real practice for companies, including startups. South Korea and France will host the next AI safety summits, within six months from each other, with the goal of converting the Bletchley Declaration into "more concrete and tangible" actions.

The tough work has just begun. ■

The writer is an AI enthusiast from Hyderabad.

On October 23, eleven countries from Asia and South America signed a ground-breaking global declaration, the "Global Declaration for River Dolphins," in Bogotá, Colombia, with an avowed aim to save the world's six surviving species of river dolphins from extinction, including the Indus river dolphin which is endemic to Pakistan.

Importance

River dolphins live in some of the world's most important rivers, including the Amazon and Orinoco in South America, and the Ayeyarwady, Ganges, Indus, Mekong, Mahakam and Yangtze in Asia.

These rivers support hundreds of millions of people, from local communities in remote areas to the residents of megacities.

These rivers water vast amounts of agricultural land, fuel industry and business and sustain a wealth of wildlife.

Highlights

The Declaration seeks to reverse the decline of all river dolphin species and bolster vulnerable populations. The efforts encompass reducing pollution, enhancing the dolphins' habitat, freeing dolphins entangled in fishing gear. It will scale up collective efforts to safeguard the remaining river dolphin species, by developing and funding measures to eradicate gillnets, reduce pollution, expand research, and increase protected areas.

Participants

The Declaration was adopted by the River Dolphin Range states like Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Colombia, Ecuador, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru and Venezuela.

These countries agreed to improve water quality in the dolphins' habitat, create protected areas, tackle overfishing and involve Indigenous communities in the affected regions in protecting the animals.

Eight Pillars

- 1. Protected Areas:** Establish a network of protected areas for dolphins.
- 2. River Dolphin Site Management:** Enhance the management of these sites.
- 3. Research and Monitoring:** Expand research activities and monitor dolphin populations.
- 4. Community Engagement:** Involve local communities and Indigenous Peoples in conservation efforts.
- 5. Sustainable Fishing:** Eradicate harmful fishing practices.
- 6. Water Quality & Quantity:** Improve the water quality and ensure adequate quantity.
- 7. Awareness:** Celebrate World River Dolphin Day to spread awareness.
- 8. Resources and Partnerships:** Increase resource allocation

and foster partnerships for conservation.

The case of Pakistan

The population of Pakistan's endangered Indus River dolphins has nearly doubled over the past two decades, thanks to concerted efforts by the government, communities and NGOs, including WWF-Pakistan.

According to Syed Ghulam Qadir Shah, Inspector General Forests, Ministry of Climate Change, "The population of the Indus River dolphin has been successfully recovered in Pakistan from the brink of extinction through coordinated efforts. Yet, unsustainable fishing practices, habitat fragmentation, water infrastructure developments and pollution continue to pose significant threats to its surviving population."

Nonetheless, with only around 2,000 Indus River dolphins remaining, WWF-Pakistan is collaborating with local communities to intensify conservation initiatives and combat the threats these creatures face.

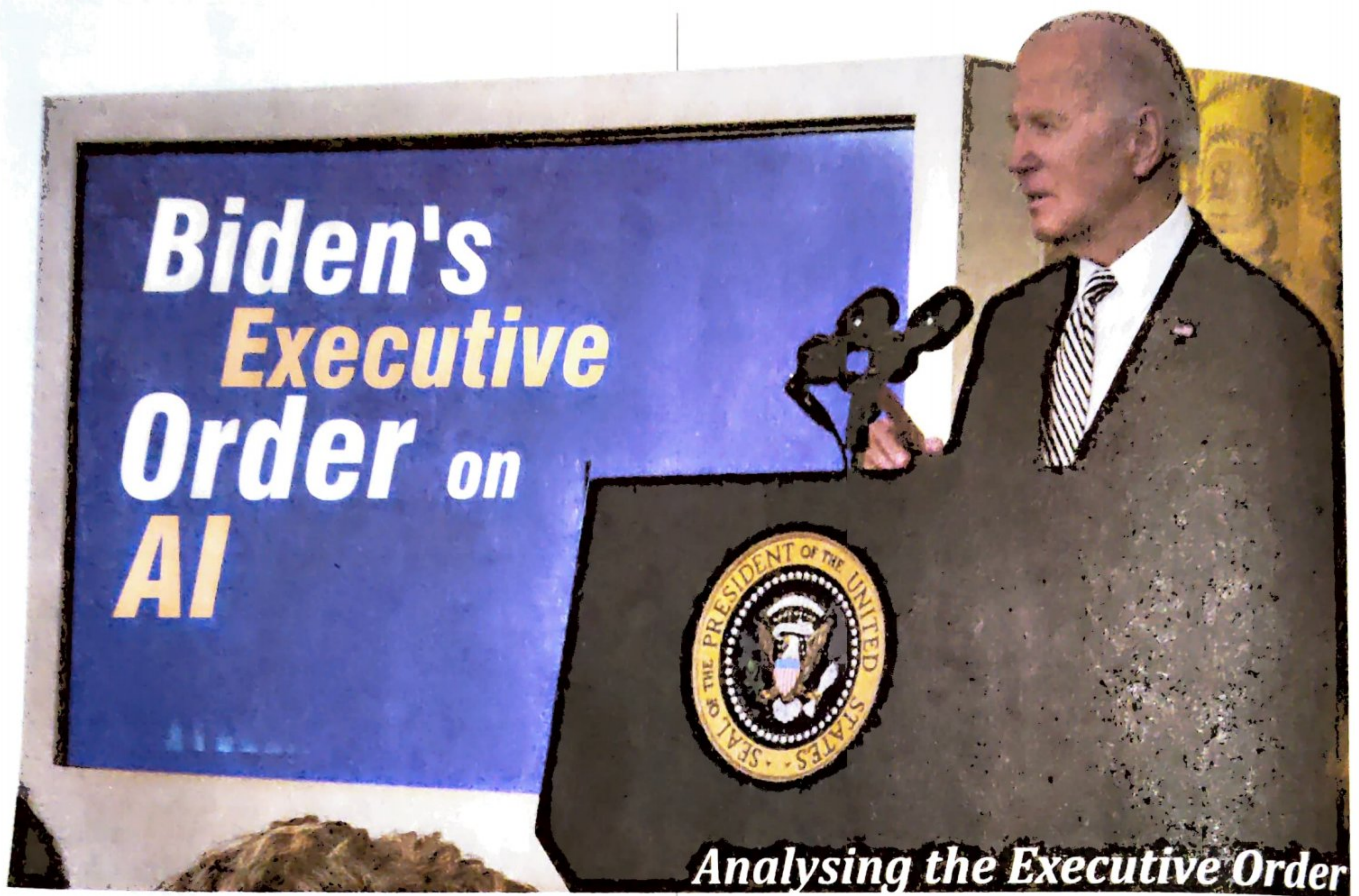
This includes reducing pollution to improve the dolphin's habitat, releasing dolphins entangled in fishing gear, and rescuing dolphins trapped in irrigation canals. 🐬

River Dolphin & Its surviving species

- River dolphins are a group of freshwater cetaceans, or marine mammals, that have adapted to live in rivers and freshwater ecosystems.
- They are distinct from their ocean-dwelling counterparts and have evolved unique characteristics to thrive in freshwater environments.
- They are found in various parts of the world, and they are known for their social behaviour and unique physical features.
- They typically have a flexible, elongated body shape that is adapted to manoeuvre in river currents.
- They have unfused neck vertebrae, allowing them to turn their heads freely.
- They have reduced eyesight, as their underwater habitat does not require highly developed vision. They primarily rely on echolocation for navigation and hunting.
- They are known for their social behaviour and can be found in small groups or pods.
- They are often solitary or in smaller groups, which may join together for feeding and socializing.
- They are known for their playful and acrobatic behaviour, including leaping out of the water.

Global DECLARATION FOR RIVER Dolphins





Analysing the Executive Order on the Safe, Secure and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence

Since the widespread release of generative AI systems like ChatGPT, there has been an increasingly loud call to regulate them, given how powerful, transformative and potentially dangerous the technology can be. Answering this call, US president, Joe Biden, has issued an executive order on artificial intelligence that seeks to balance the needs of cutting-edge technology companies with national security and consumer rights. Called "Executive Order on Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence," the order requires leading AI developers to share safety test results and other information with the government.

Key Takeaways

»The lengthy order is an ambitious attempt to accommodate the hopes and fears of everyone from tech CEOs to civil rights advocates, while spelling out how Biden's vision for AI works with his vision for everything else.

»The order wields the force of agencies across the US federal government and invokes broad emergency powers to harness the potential and tackle the risks of what he called the "most consequential technology of our time."

»The order also requires that cloud service providers

Ayeza Fatima
report foreign customers to the federal government.
»It also recommends the watermarking of photos, videos and audio developed by AI tools.

- Watermarking helps track down the origin of content online and is used to fight deep fakes and manipulated images and text used to spread disinformation.

»Broadly summarized, the order directs various federal agencies and departments that oversee everything from housing to health to national security to create standards and regulations for the use or oversight of AI. For example:

- The order invokes the Defense Production Act to require companies to notify the federal government when training an AI model that poses a serious risk to national security or public health and safety.
- They must also share the results of their risk assessment, or red team, testing with the government.
- The Department of Commerce will determine the technical thresholds that models must meet for the rule to apply to them, likely limiting it to the models with the most computing power.
- The National Institute of Standards and

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Technology will also set red team testing standards that these companies must follow, and the Departments of Energy and Homeland Security will evaluate various risks that could be posed by those models, including the threat that they could be employed to help make biological or nuclear weapons.

The DHS will also establish an AI Safety and Security Board comprising experts from the private and public sector, which will advise the government on the use of AI in "critical infrastructure."

▶The agencies and departments will also develop guidelines that AI developers must adhere to as they build and deploy this technology, and dictate how the government uses AI.

▶The Office of Science and Technology Policy will work with various departments to create a framework for screening and monitoring synthetic nucleic acid procurement, the DHS will ensure it is being adhered to

▶The Commerce Department will also create rules and best practices for screening synthetic nucleic acid sequence providers to ensure that they're following that framework.

▶There will be new reporting and testing requirements for the AI companies behind the largest and most powerful models.

Principles and priorities

The Order is guided by eight principles and priorities:

1. AI must be safe and secure by requiring robust, reliable, repeatable and standardized evaluations of AI systems, as well as policies, institutions, and, as appropriate, mechanisms to test, understand and mitigate risks from these systems before they are put to use.
2. The US should promote responsible innovation, competition and collaboration via investments in education, training, R&D and capacity while addressing intellectual property rights questions and stopping unlawful collusion and monopoly over key assets and technologies.
3. The responsible development and use of AI require a commitment to supporting American workers through education and job training and understanding the impact of AI on the labor force and workers' rights.
4. AI policies must be consistent with the advancement of equity and civil rights.
5. The interests of Americans who increasingly use, interact with, or purchase AI and AI-enabled products in their daily lives must be protected.
6. Americans' privacy and civil liberties must be protected

by ensuring that the collection, use and retention of data is lawful, secure and promotes privacy.

7. It is important to manage the risks from the federal government's own use of AI and increase its internal capacity to regulate, govern and support responsible use of AI to deliver better results for Americans.

8. The federal government should lead the way to global societal, economic and technological progress including by engaging with international partners to develop a framework to manage AI risks, unlock AI's potential for good and promote a common approach to shared challenges.

Drawbacks

★While Biden has broad powers to regulate how the federal government uses artificial intelligence, he is less able to reach into the private sector.

★The order issued after several government departments' work of more than a year is limited in its scope.

★It centers on safety and security mandates, but it also contains provisions to encourage the development of AI in the United States, including attracting foreign talent to American companies and laboratories.

★The order's security mandates on companies were created by invoking a Korean War-era law, the Defense Production Act, which the federal government uses in what Biden called "the most urgent moments."

★The order builds on voluntary commitments already made by technology companies.

★The order has provisions for preserving Americans' privacy, although it acknowledges that the ability to do so is limited without a federal data privacy law and calls

on Congress to pass one.

★The Order calls for the Department of Commerce to create and issue guidance on best practices to detect AI-generated content. But that call is a far cry from having the technology to actually do so.

Conclusion

While the order has more teeth to it than the voluntary commitments Biden has secured from some of the biggest AI companies, many of its provisions don't (and can't) have the force of law behind them, and their effectiveness will largely depend on how the agencies named within the order carry them out. They may also depend on if those agencies' abilities to make such regulations are challenged in court. ■

The writer is a student at UMT, Lahore.

PRESIDENT BIDEN SIGNED AN EXECUTIVE ORDER ON AI TO:

SET NEW STANDARDS FOR AI SAFETY AND SECURITY

PROTECT AMERICANS' PRIVACY

ADVANCE EQUITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS

SUPPORT WORKERS

PROMOTE INNOVATION AND COMPETITION

ADVANCE AMERICAN LEADERSHIP ABROAD

ENSURE RESPONSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT USE OF AI



Undoubtedly, Sino-US ties are one of the most consequential inter-state relations in the modern-day world. The nature and dynamics of this relationship can have a profound impact on global trade, conflict-resolution mechanisms, the effectiveness of the United Nations, the ongoing fight against climate change, the future development of artificial intelligence, and many other areas. During a meeting with a high-level US delegate in October 2023, Chinese President Xi Jinping summed up the significance of this relationship by noting: "How China and the United States get along with each other in the face of a world of change and turmoil will determine the future and destiny of mankind." Nevertheless, both sides, unfortunately, seem to be caught in a Thucydides' trap, engaging in fierce competition to secure a military edge and gain clout and influence in second-tier countries across the globe. This situation demands that both countries hold their horses and engage in meaningful dialogue to find ways for cooperation, not competition. The recent US-China Summit involving face-to-face interaction between US President Joe Biden and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping is one such much-needed development that can help thaw their ice-frozen relations and build a better world. Therefore, a



Is US-China summit a sign of stabilizing bilateral ties?

closer examination of the Sino-US relationship from the perspective of the recent summit is worth our attention. Before this much-anticipated meeting, signs of stabilization in US-China relations were quite visible, thanks to a diplomatic blitz engineered by President Biden's team. Although the US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, decided not to visit Beijing in the wake of the spy balloon saga, he did go there in June 2023. Later on, high-level visits by state officials, including the US Treasury Secretary, Janet Yellen, Climate Envoy John Kerry and Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, helped improve things to some extent. This flurry of diplomatic activities reflected the Biden administration's desire to navigate this relationship, which is marked by an ocean of ideological differences over human rights, trade and China's military development, in a better way. These visits led to the establishment of economic and financial working groups and exchange mechanisms that paved the way for this rendezvous. Furthermore, right before the scheduled meeting, Chinese Vice President Han Zheng made the preparatory visit and noted that he was seeing positive signals in the ties with the United States, and he expressed China's willingness to strengthen dialogue and normalize the relationship. Earlier, he met Secretary Blinken, underscoring China's desire to restructure and enhance the ties between the world's

two economic and military giants.

Even though Washington-Beijing diplomatic relations saw some improvement, underlying structural challenges remained unresolved, which further enhanced the strategic importance of the Summit. There are multiple areas where both sides fear the risks of a downward spiral that can escalate into a confrontation, or even war. China's military manoeuvres over Taiwan's airspace, its continual support to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, North Korea's supply of weapons to Russia, increased tensions in the South China Sea (SCS) - including recent naval skirmishes between Chinese and Philippine vessels - and the US-led so-called Freedom of Navigation Operations in the SCS; all these issues are casting an ominous shadow over the long-term cooperation between these countries.

Against this backdrop, both sides prepared for the summit. We first enlist those agenda items so as to better analyze the impacts of this summit on the current and future trajectory of Sino-US ties.

The agenda was no short of difficult issues. To start with, China wanted the USA to roll out a red carpet welcome for President Xi, receiving him with honour and dignity. President Xi faces some muted criticism at home for increasingly strained foreign relations and slowing down the rocket-propelled economy of the country. The



Brookings Institute observed that the image of President Xi being accorded more than a customary meeting would hold added value for him. Seeking assurance from Biden that the USA would not prefer any political party in the upcoming 2024 election in Taiwan and demanding reassurance that it didn't wish complete independence of Taiwan was another major agenda item on the table. Of all the issues straining Sino-US relations, Taiwan has become the thorniest one. President Xi, while underlining the strategic importance of this island for China, remarked: "The Taiwan question is at the very core of China's core interests, the bedrock of the political foundation of China-US relations, and the first red line that must not be crossed in China-US relations." Besides these issues, trade, decoupling/de-risking, artificial intelligence and US-led export controls on semiconductor technology, which the Chinese state news agency, Xinhua, had termed efforts to stifle China's technological advancement, were also expected to be on the table before the summit.

The United States also had several issues to discuss directly with President Xi. First, there was the issue of restoring military-to-military (M2M) communication. China withdrew from that mechanism after then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's Aug. 2022 visit to Taiwan. Before the meeting, several US officials, including the top US military commander, Gen. CQ Brown Jr., told reporters in Tokyo that restoring military-to-military communica-

tion was hugely important to avoid any miscalculation. In October this year, the US military released a video showing a Chinese fighter jet flying within 10 feet of the US's 52 bomber over the SCS, nearly causing an accident. Similarly, the Pentagon revealed that more than 180 intercepts of US warplanes by Chinese aircraft had happened, necessitating the importance of maintaining M2M communication. President Biden was also expected to ask China to use its burgeoning sway over Iran to stop it from expanding the Hamas-Israel war. In addition, he was also expected to urge President Xi to use China's influence to curb the growing pace of ballistic missile tests by North Korea and stop Pyongyang from supplying munitions to Russia. Underscoring the importance the US attached to its treaty obligations in the Asia Pacific was another major agenda item. In response to an incident in the contested Shoal in the SCS in which Chinese ships blocked and collided with two Philippine vessels, President Biden remarked that the US defense commitment to the Philippines is ironclad. And finally, there was an issue of alleged Chinese intervention in the US election. US analysts were hoping that he would make it clear to President Xi that any action or interference in the 2024 presidential election would raise extremely strong concerns from the US side.

These were some agenda items that experts were hoping would occupy the in-person meeting during the San Francisco summit. The Council on Foreign Relations, a well-reputed American think tank, enlisted Fentanyl and climate change, along with Taiwan and the ongoing Hamas-Israel war, as four important areas that would be raised, or should be watched, during the Biden-Xi rendezvous.

Having discussed the broad contours of irritants plaguing US-China relations, now we look at the major takeaways of this much-anticipated and talked-about event being dubbed a textbook example of personal diplomacy.

The first takeaway of this face-to-face meeting that spanned over four hours is the resumption of M2M communication between the US Defense Secretary and his Chinese counterpart. This engagement would be possible up and down the military chain of command. President Biden himself attempted to frame this outcome as a breakthrough that could help avoid miscalculation on either. The Pentagon also welcomed this development, terming it a key to avoiding the risk of operational incidents or miscalculations spiralling into a crisis or conflict. Xinhua also reported that both sides decided to resume M2M communication based on quality and respect. Needless to say, this decision could help preempt any miscalculation from escalating into a major armed confrontation, particularly in the SCS and the Taiwan Strait.

Not surprisingly, Taiwan was also on the agenda and both

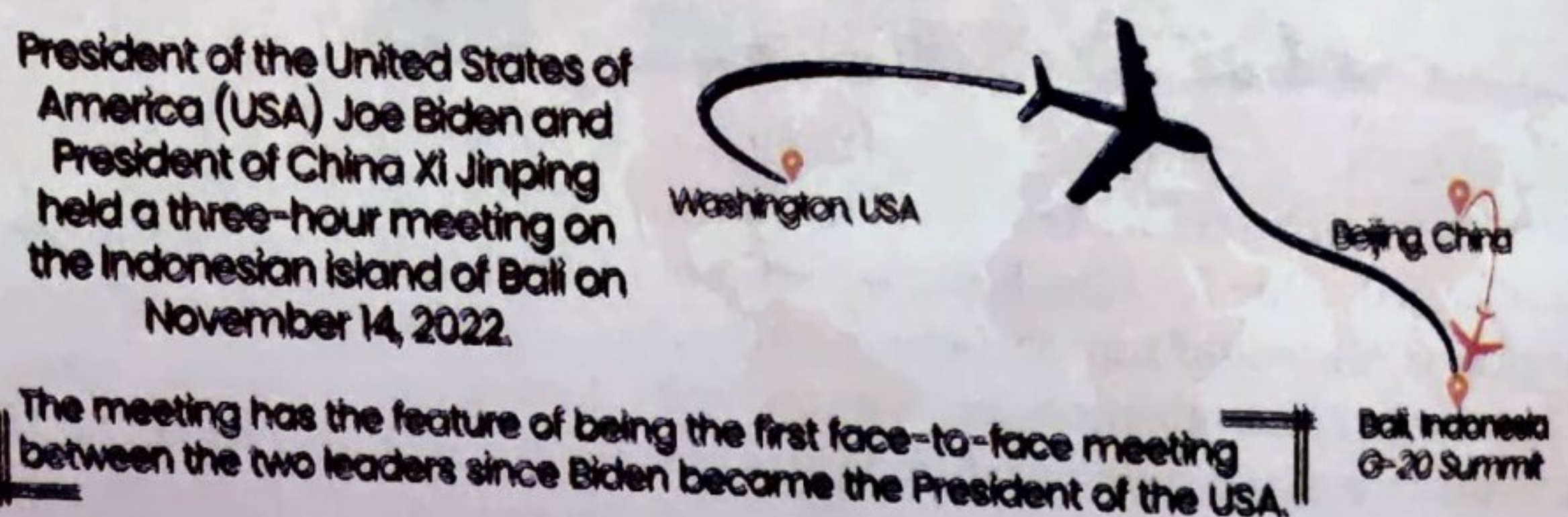
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sides spent considerable time on this issue. The US officials dubbed the discussion on Taiwan "clear-headed" and not "heated". Both presidents reiterated their respective stances. As earlier mentioned, the upcoming Jan. 13 presidential election has become a point of concern. Biden and his aides are watching closely what China will do to scare the Taiwanese into voting for a party that is more favourable to Beijing - the Kuomintang Party, to say it precisely. Hence, Beijing-led election manipulation through cyber-interference, arm-twisting and lobbing missiles around the island, are some measures that US officials are anticipating. During the summit, Biden reportedly chided Xi for the massive military buildup and committed to helping Taiwan defend itself. President Xi responded by asking Biden to end strategic ambiguity and stop arming Taipei. Analysts believe that this candid talk could help improve the situation on the ground because both sides now realize that this hotspot could escalate into confrontation. Establishing direct M2M communication is, thus, a welcome step in this regard.

The third major area was the economy. De-coupling/de-risking, US-led sanctions on semiconductor technology and AI came under discussion. It should be noted here that China is struggling to revive its economic growth, which is being hampered by its ageing population, growing debt and US-led export control on sensitive technology. The readout from the Chinese side concerning Biden-Xi reported that the Chinese President told Biden that such measures were nothing but to deprive Chinese people of their right to development. The US official, on the other hand, noted that the US disagreed with Chinese "non-market economic practices". One important development in this regard is that Washington and Beijing have decided to promote and strengthen US-China government talks on AI. Hence, the differences remained unaddressed and both sides stuck to their point. This is something that could negatively impact the world economy. In particular, the next year is the year of the US presidential election and US-China economic ties and trade imbalances will continue to dominate both policy decisions and debate, hurting the global economy. Regulating the future development of AI is becoming another front in US-China competition. Though

Biden and Xi agreed to discuss this issue at a higher level, they are not ready for any mutual declaration. One can hope that US-China government talks will play a role in crystallizing consensus over devising regulatory regimes to control the destabilizing and dangerous role of AI. The fourth major outcome of this ice-breaking rendezvous, which Biden framed as another diplomatic achievement, is President Xi's willingness to regulate fentanyl precursors. Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is the leading cause of drug overdose in the USA and the single most important cause of death for Americans between the ages of 18 and 45 years (Brookings). Over the years, stopping the flow of this opioid has become a major electoral issue in the United States. Now that China has agreed to stop chemical precursors that are used in the synthesis of fentanyl, President Biden would have a feather in his cap when he justifies the importance of personal diplomacy during his presidential campaign. The ongoing war in Palestine also came under discussion, which can be seen as the sixth takeaway of this in-person meeting. At the time of writing this article, more than

Biden-Xi Meeting



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11,300 mostly non-combatant and unarmed civilians - more than half of them being children - have been massacred by Israeli Defense Forces in a frenzied retaliation for the Hamas-led surprise attack of October 7. President Biden, in line with trademark hypocritical policy line adopted by the United States over the past many decades, refused to coax Israel into stopping the ground invasion. He also noted during a post-Summit press conference that the endpoint for the Israel-Palestinian conflict should be a two-state solution. US officials reported that Biden asked China to rein in Iran and leverage its influence in stopping Iranian leadership from taking propagative steps, as those could end up in regional conflagration. However, Xinhua and other Chinese media did not mention this in their reports and analysis.

The Russia-Ukraine war, the alleged role of North Korea and the increasing pace of testing of ballistic missiles also

National Climate Plan. Both sides also agreed to push for a joint declaration during COP28 to triple the global renewable target. Obviously, the normalization of US-China climate talks was a breakthrough because cooperation between these two countries is crucial for securing a consensus agreement at the upcoming COP28 being held in Dubai, UAE. But no clear mention of climate during the Xi-Biden meeting indicates that all is not well. One can hope that both states realize that their cooperation is a sine qua non for any meaningful progress on meeting targets set under the Paris Climate Agreement and subsequent COPs.

In conclusion, the meeting of the heads of both superpowers is a positive development, indicating the desire on both sides to stabilize ties and improve working relationships. It is also worth noting that Xi Jinping and Joe Biden have multiple reasons to tone down the rivalry or rhetoric. The meeting could generate political capital for



Disagreements should not be a chasm that keeps the two countries apart. Instead, the two sides should look for ways to build bridges to help them walk toward each other.

President Xi Jinping at a summit with US President Joe Biden
San Francisco, US
November 15, 2023

occupied the agenda of the meeting. Xinhua and the New York Times both reported that President Xi stressed that the Ukraine issue must be settled through dialogue and negotiation and asked Biden that stakeholders needed to listen to North Korea's legitimate concerns.

The biggest disappointment came from the absence of any mention of climate change when President Biden was listing key achievements of the Summit. A few days before the commencement of the meeting, China and the USA, the world's two biggest emitters of greenhouse gases, reached an agreement on climate change. The US Special Representative for Climate John Kerry and his Chinese counterpart Xie Zhenhua released a joint statement, underscoring Sino-US consensus to back a new global renewable target, and work together to reduce methane and plastic pollution. To the pleasure of climate activists, China pledged, for the very first time, to add nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and methane (CH₄) to its 2035

both heads, allowing Xi Jinping to project himself as capable of resolving issues biting the Chinese economy, such as US-led outbound investment restrictions on advanced tech and export controls, and providing Biden with something to boast about during the upcoming tumultuous US presidential election.

The conciliatory approach on Taiwan, consensus over opening up M2M communication, curbing fentanyl precursors, and candid and open discussion over Ukraine, North Korea's nuclear and ballistic program, and like areas would help pave the way for stabilizing the bilateral ties. The world needs improved working relations between these superpowers. Henry Kissinger once rightly noted: "The need for the world's two largest economies to avoid confrontation is in the interest of global peace." ■

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One of the most important multilateral economic meetings of the year, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit, was held in San Francisco, California. Among the most-anticipated moments at APEC was the meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and US President Joe Biden. Among the business and cultural leaders gathered from around the world were plenty of other stars circling in their orbit: Apple's Tim Cook, Tesla's Elon Musk, Golden State Warriors Coach Steve Kerr and singer Gwen Stefani, to name a few. The event featured speeches, announcements, protests, world leader one-on-ones, political fundraisers and parties. Here are some key takeaways from this coming together of the powerful and politically connected:

1. US Resets with China

The event provided an opportunity for Biden and Xi to hold only their second face-to-face meeting as presidents, amidst strained relations which atrophied to a near-historic low after a provocative visit to Taiwan by US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi incensed China which responded by shutting down eight formal communication channels with Washington, including on military-to-military talks. Before going into the summit, Biden said he would define success as getting back on a "normal course" with China that includes "corresponding, being able to pick up the phone and talk to

Muhammad Ali one another if there's a crisis, being able to make sure that our militaries still have contact with one another." If this was the objective, then the two leaders managed to achieve more than that. They agreed to: 1) resume high-level military-to-military communication; 2) establish a working group on counter-narcotics cooperation; and 3) establish government-level talks on artificial intelligence. This was a diplomatic breakthrough given the low expectations from the summit and the strain in the complicated US-China relationship. Going a step further, President Xi proposed a "new vision" for bilateral ties based on five pillars that include jointly developing a right perception; managing disagreements effectively; advancing mutually beneficial cooperation; shouldering responsibilities as major countries; and promoting people-to-people exchanges. Biden agreed that with stable relations, they could prevent conflict,

manage differences and cooperate in areas of shared interest. He reaffirmed the five commitments he had made in Bali: the US doesn't want a new Cold War; doesn't seek to change China's system; doesn't seek to revitalise its alliances against China; doesn't support 'Taiwan independence'; and has no intention to have a conflict with China.

2. Fentanyl, climate, supply chain cooperation

The summit led to diplomatic progress advancing three important concerns — addressing the fentanyl drug



A look at the key outcomes



epidemic, reducing carbon emissions blamed for climate change and preventing supply chain disruptions that have contributed to shortages of necessities and price spikes.

President Biden discussed fentanyl, climate and supply chain concerns with China's Xi and Mexico's President Andrés Manuel López Obrador. And the White House announced new agreements with signatories of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity that include a first-of-its-kind supply chain agreement and substantial progress on a clean economy agreement.

3. Taiwan

Taiwan was a major topic. Xi Jinping described it as crucial to US-China relations. He urged the US to respect its commitments regarding Taiwan's independence. Xi favoured peaceful reunification but didn't rule out force. Biden stressed the US's commitment to regional peace.

Biden also used the summit to highlight the strong US economy and its ties to other Pacific nations, even as his vision for greater regional cooperation to counter China's influence stumbled on the trade front over his bid to strengthen workers' rights.

4. Divisions

The 21 APEC members went into the meetings divided over Russia's war in Ukraine and the Israeli war on Gaza, and that is how they left. A statement issued by the US echoed last year's APEC leaders' declaration in saying that "most" APEC members "strongly condemn aggression against Ukraine." It said the leaders exchanged views on the Gaza crisis, with some objecting to the language of the chair's statement in an accompanying "Golden Gate Declaration" covering economic issues "on the basis that they do not believe that APEC is a forum to discuss geopolitical issues."

Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia in a joint statement said they were among the APEC members who supported the messages of the

How effective is APEC?

APEC's activities center on trade and economic issues only. The group does not consider military matters and was not created by a world-changing event like a war.

The organization technically has member "economies" rather than countries. This permits room for membership by both China-ruled Hong Kong and self-ruled Taiwan.

One of APEC's biggest strengths is its ability to get countries to work together on big projects and to ease business relations without requiring specific agreements. Economists note that traditionally, APEC has helped to reduce tariffs and other barriers to trade.

But the world's trading system has changed from when APEC began during a period of increased worldwide cooperation and expansion. US efforts have centered on economic competition with China rather than cooperation.

Riyadh summit, which had called for an immediate end to military operations in Gaza, rejecting Israel's justification of its actions against Palestinians as self-defence. The three countries also called for an "immediate, durable and sustained" humanitarian truce, and for the unhindered provision of essential goods and services to civilians in Gaza.

On Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the statement said there had been no accord but "most members strongly condemn" the aggression. "We note with deep concern the adverse impact of the war in Ukraine and stress that it is causing immense human suffering and exacerbating existing fragilities in the global economy."

5. WTO reforms

The Declaration reaffirmed the determination to create a free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent, inclusive and

predictable environment for trade and investment, and also expressed the commitment of all countries to carry out the necessary reforms of the WTO in order to improve all its functions. "We are committed to necessary reform of the WTO to improve all of its functions, including conducting discussions with a view to having a fully and well-functioning dispute settlement system accessible to all members by 2024," the statement said. ■

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When it comes to the Israel-Palestine conflict, we often see Western nations, especially the United States, backing Israel on the pretext that it has the right to defend itself from any attack from the Palestinian side. Although thousands of innocent Palestinians have lost their lives due to the gruesome military incursions by the Zionist state, these so-called flagbearers of human rights seem unmoved by these mass slaughters and keep backing Israel. Another episode in this long series came on October 29, when the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy and Canada released a joint statement whereby they reaffirmed their support for Israel's "right to self-defence

As the fate of 2.3 million Palestinians remains uncertain amid intensifying Israeli military operations and a rapidly rising death toll, there is an almost universal consensus that Israel is violating international law. Statements by Israeli politicians and leaders have declared that all Palestinians in Gaza are responsible for Hamas actions, so their backbone should be broken. The language used is extremely dangerous. Genocidal language has been used, and alarm has been raised by hundreds of scholars. But, despite all these grave violations of international law, many states are still bent on supporting Israel by professing the viewpoint that it has the right to defend its territory. However, it must be noted that Israel has occupied the Palestinian territories and no state has the right to self-defence if an attack comes from that occupied land.

Osman Khan
against terrorism." "The leaders reiterated their support for Israel and its right to defend itself against terrorism and called for adherence to international humanitarian law, including the protection of civilians," said the statement, which was posted on the British government's website. Heavily influenced by the power of this "right to defend" propaganda, many people around the world seem ready to buy this narrative without delving deep into it to ascertain whether it's right or wrong. In the following paragraphs, we will try to bust this myth.
What is the right to self-defence?
Humanity has always recognized that individuals have the right to



Israel's Right to 'Self-Defence'

WHAT DOES THE INTERNATIONAL LAW SAY?

INTERNATIONAL

defend themselves from violence. It refers to the use of force to repel an attack or imminent threat of attack directed against oneself or others or a legally protected interest.

In international law, this basic normative intuition is codified for states in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations which reads:

"Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defence shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security."

It must be noted here that Article 51 is an exception to the Charter's general prohibition on the use of force found in Article 2(4). The prohibition on the use of force is at the heart of the Charter, given that the most fundamental aim of the Charter and the UN, the organization created by the Charter, is to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" (Preamble). It stands to reason that any right to use force as an exception to the general prohibition on resorting to force would be narrow. Article 51 permits a state to act in unilateral or collective self-defence only "if an armed attack occurs." This article concerns the international law exception to the prohibition on force for self-defence.

Israel's illegal occupation

Occupation, under customary international law, is the "effective control of a power (be it one or more

states or an international organization, such as the United Nations) over a territory to which that power has no sovereign title, without the volition of the sovereign of that territory." An occupation ends whenever the foreign power no longer exercises effective control over the territory.

International law has long recognized the illegality of occupation resulting from an unlawful use of force by the occupying state. The illegality of such occupation stems from the general obligation of states under customary international law to cease internationally wrongful conduct and eliminate its consequences.

rule over millions of Palestinians, including blockaded Gaza. Gaza has been under an illegal blockade for 16 years, and during these 16 years, five wars had already taken place in Gaza — in 2008, 2012, 2014, 2021, 2022—and these had already caused the deaths of 4,200 people, including 1,100 children.

Does Israel have this right?

Israel and its supporters often invoke Article 51 of the UN Charter which makes many believe that they are right in standing by Israel's side. However, what most people forget here is that Israel has occupied Palestinian land militarily, and illegal occupation gives rise to the duty of

the occupant to withdraw from the occupied territory immediately and unconditionally. International law has long recognized the illegality of occupation that results from an unlawful use of force by the occupying state. There is jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) that says that self-defence cannot apply in a context of military occupation when, in this

case, Israel is occupying another state and another people. In 1986, in a case between the United States and Nicaragua, the ICJ pronounced that the Charter rules on self-defence had entered into customary international law. The court even pointed to references by the United States characterizing the prohibition on the use of force as a preemptory norm of international law (*jus cogens*). The ICJ emphasized the limits on self-defence found in Article 51 and in general international law beyond the Charter, especially in the form of the principles of necessity and proportionality.

In simple words, a state cannot simultaneously exercise control over a territory it occupies and militarily attack that territory on the claim that it is "foreign" and poses an

Omitted parts

"They took care of all our needs, they were very courteous. They made sure we were clean, that we ate. We ate the same food they did."



The novelty of recent illegal occupation theories concerns the extension of the notion of illegal occupation to certain occupations resulting from the lawful use of force by a state in self-defence. Commentators advocating such extension have largely focused on the occupation of Palestinian territories by Israel since 1967, which is currently the only prolonged occupation resulting, by most accounts, from a war of self-defence. The occupation that Israel has maintained on the West Bank, including in Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, is illegal for many reasons, including because it has translated into a default apartheid, into a vehicle to colonize Palestinian land, to forcibly displace people, to arbitrarily arrest and detain adults and children alike, to impose martial

exogenous national security threat. In doing precisely that, Israel is asserting rights that may be consistent with colonial domination but simply do not exist under international law.

This stance is supported by the UN special rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Francesca Albanese, who, during a recent interview, said: "The right to self-defence that Israel has invoked under Article 51 of the UN Charter is quite clear. It entitles a state to repel an attack that comes from another state. So, the action necessary to repel the attack must be based on its intensity and scope."

Israel's attempts to change international law

Since the beginning of its occupation in 1967, Israel has rebuffed the applicability of international humanitarian law to the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Despite imposing military rule over the West Bank and Gaza, Israel denied the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (the cornerstone of Occupation Law). Israel argued that because the territories neither constituted a sovereign state nor were sovereign territories of the displaced states at the time of conquest, it simply administered the territories and did not occupy them within the meaning of international law. The UN Security Council, the International Court of Justice, the UN General Assembly, as well as the Israeli High Court of Justice have all roundly rejected the Israeli government's position. **Significantly, the ICJ recognizes the entirety of the Hague Regulations and provisions of the 1949 Geneva Conventions that pertain to military occupation as customary international law.** Israel's refusal to recognize the occupied status of the territory, bolstered by the US' resilient and intransigent opposition to international accountability within the UN Security Council, has resulted in the condition

that exists today: prolonged military occupation. Whereas the remedy to occupation is its cessation, such recourse will not suffice to remedy prolonged military occupation. By virtue of its decades of military rule, Israel has characterized all Palestinians as a security threat and Jewish nationals as their potential victims, thereby justifying the differential, and violent, treatment of Palestinians. In its 2012 session, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination described current conditions following decades of occupation and attendant repression as tantamount to apartheid.

In complete disregard for international law and its institutional findings, Israel continues to treat the Occupied Territory as a colonial possession. Since the beginning of the second Palestinian intifada in 2000, Israel has advanced the notion that it is engaged in an international armed conflict short of war in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Accordingly, it argues that it can 1) invoke self-defence, pursuant to Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, and 2) use force beyond that permissible during law enforcement, even where an occupation exists.

Conclusion

Israel is distorting/reinterpreting international law to justify its use of militarized force in order to protect its colonial authority. Although it rebuffs the de jure application of Occupation Law, Israel exercises effective control over the West Bank and Gaza and, therefore, has recourse to police powers. It uses those police powers to continue its

colonial expansion and apartheid rule and then, in defiance of international law, cites its right to self-defence in international law to wage war against the population, which it has a duty to protect. The invocation of law to protect its colonial presence makes the Palestinian civilian population doubly vulnerable.

It forces the people of the Gaza Strip to face one of the most powerful militaries in the world without the benefit either of its own military or of any realistic means to acquire the means to defend itself.

More broadly, Israel is slowly pushing the boundaries of existing law in an explicit attempt to reshape it. This is an affront to the international humanitarian legal order, which is intended to protect civilians in times of war by minimizing their suffering. Israel's attempts have proven successful in the realm of public relations, as evidenced by President Obama's uncritical support of Israel's recent onslaughts in Gaza as an exercise in the right of self-defence. Since international law lacks hierarchal enforcement authority, its meaning and scope are highly contingent on the prerogative of states, especially the most powerful ones. The implications of this shift are, therefore, palpable and dangerous. Failure to uphold the law would allow states to behave according to their own whim in furtherance of their national interest, even in cases where that is detrimental to civilian non-combatants and to the international legal order. For better or worse, the onus to resist this shift and to preserve protection for civilians rests upon the shoulders of citizens, organizations and mass movements that can influence their governments to enforce international law. There is no alternative to political mobilization to shape state behaviour. ■

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INTERNATIONAL

Shafqat Javed



Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Russian officials have emphasized their formidable nuclear arsenal, aiming to deter other countries from aiding Ukraine in resisting the invasion. Russian President Vladimir Putin first stoked fears he could carry out a limited nuclear strike in Ukraine and then vowed to "use all the means at our disposal" to defend Moscow's conquests when he annexed four Ukrainian regions six months later. However, in recent months, Russia has explored other ways to use its atomic arsenal as a deterrent against western support for Ukraine. While these measures fall short of outright threats, they attempt to show Russia's determination in Ukraine, and the broader cost of standing in its way.

It was in this context that President Putin signed, on Nov. 2, a law that withdraws Russia's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), a global treaty that bans nuclear weapons tests. Here we take a look at the CTBT and the global implications of Russia's withdrawal.

What is CTBT?

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which is its formal name, is a global agreement with the goal of prohibiting all nuclear explosions, whether for civilian or military purposes. It comprises a preamble, 17

articles, two annexes and a Protocol with two annexes.

Background

The United States conducted the world's first successful nuclear weapons test in July 1945. Four years later, the Soviet Union tested its first nuclear weapon. These tests triggered a decades-long arms race between the two superpowers. Between 1945 and 1996, more than 2,000 nuclear tests were carried out — 1,032 of them by the United States and 715 by the Soviet Union. Britain carried out 45 tests, France 210 and China 45. The radioactive fallout from those tests drew criticism from around the globe. As a result, several attempts to curb the explosive tests were made.

a. Limited Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (LTBT): The 1963 LTBT prohibited nuclear testing in the atmosphere, outer space and underwater, but underground tests were still permitted.

b. Threshold Test Ban Treaty (TTBT): Six years later, the US and Soviet Union agreed to sign the TTBT, which established a nuclear "threshold" by banning the two countries from conducting tests that would produce a yield exceeding 150 kilotons (equivalent to 150,000 tons of TNT).

c. Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT): After the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, geopolitical tensions simmered down. The

On Nov. 2, Russian President Vladimir Putin officially rescinded Russia's adherence to the ban on nuclear weapons tests, arguing the nation should have the same capabilities as the United States, which never ratified the treaty. This action puts Russia in the same category as the USA, a signatory that has yet to ratify the agreement. The move by Russia comes during the ongoing conflict with Ukraine; hence, raising the significance of the action.

Unpacking Russia's

Withdrawal from

CTBT

Ramifications
can be profound



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UN took advantage of the situation and adopted the CTBT, which put a blanket ban on the explosive testing of nuclear weapons.

Article IV elaborates on the global verification regime to monitor compliance with Treaty provisions. The regime is to comprise a global network of monitoring

stations (the International Monitoring System), an International Data Centre in Vienna, a consultation and clarification process, On-site inspections and confidence-building measures.

Another important text is the Resolution adopted by the States Signatories on 19 November 1996, establishing the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO).

- Annex 1 to the Treaty lists States by geographical regions for elections to the Executive Council.
- Annex 2 to the Treaty lists the 44 States that must ratify the Treaty for it to enter into force.
- Protocol Part I describes the functions of the International Monitoring System (IMS) and the International Data Centre (IDC).
- Protocol Part II sets up the procedures for on-site inspections.
- Protocol Part III deals with confidence-building measures.
- Annex 1 to the Protocol lists the facilities comprising the IMS network.
- Annex 2 to the Protocol lists the characterization parameters for IDC standard event screening.

It was opened for signature in 1996 and has been signed by 187 nations, and ratified by 178. Although it was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1996, it's still in the ratification stage — 18 countries are yet to ratify (the process by which a state indicates its consent to be bound to a treaty). While Russia ratified the

- ▶ **CTBT bans all nuclear explosions**, whether for military or peaceful purposes.
- ▶ It seeks to establish **CTBT Organization (CTBTO) to verify the ban worldwide.**
- ▶ Its **verification regime** includes:
 - ▶ **International Monitoring System**
 - ▶ **International Data Centre**
 - ▶ **On-Site Inspections**
- ▶ It was **opened for signature in 1996**, and has been **signed by 187 nations and ratified by 178.**

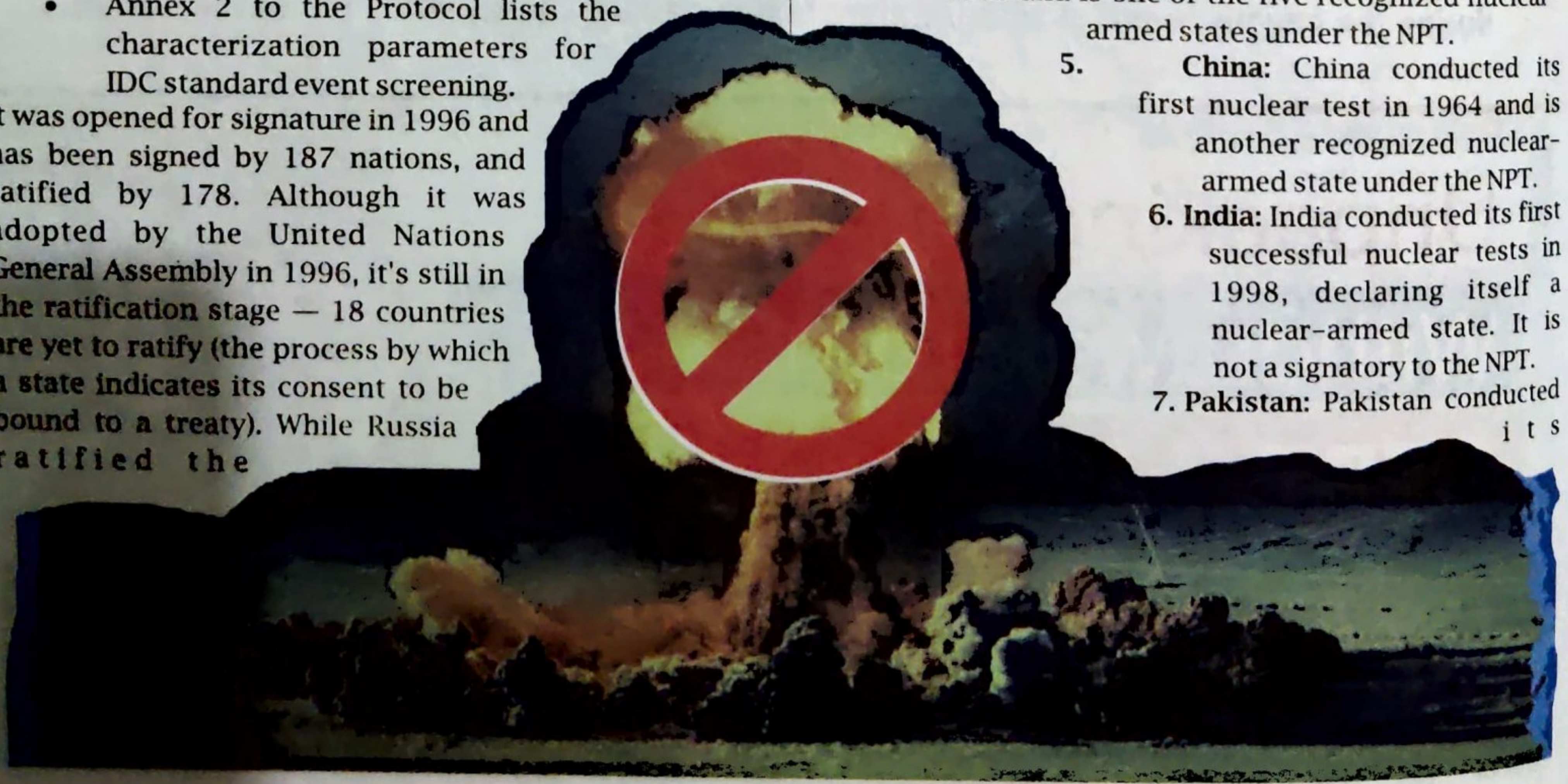


agreement in 2000, the US is still to do so.

Ratification

By Article XIV of the Treaty, it must be signed and ratified by 44 specific nuclear technology-holder countries to enter into force. However, several nuclear-armed states, including the United States, China, India, Pakistan and North Korea, have not ratified the treaty.

1. **United States:** The United States was the first country to develop and use nuclear weapons during World War II. It conducted nuclear tests during the mid-20th century and maintains a significant nuclear arsenal.
2. **Russia:** As the successor state to the Soviet Union, Russia inherited the Soviet nuclear arsenal. It is one of the two countries with the largest nuclear stockpiles globally.
3. **United Kingdom:** The United Kingdom developed its nuclear weapons in the 1950s. It maintains a small but powerful nuclear deterrent.
4. **France:** France conducted its first nuclear test in 1960 and is one of the five recognized nuclear-armed states under the NPT.
5. **China:** China conducted its first nuclear test in 1964 and is another recognized nuclear-armed state under the NPT.
6. **India:** India conducted its first successful nuclear tests in 1998, declaring itself a nuclear-armed state. It is not a signatory to the NPT.
7. **Pakistan:** Pakistan conducted its



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nuclear tests in 1998, officially declaring itself a nuclear-armed state. It is also not a signatory to the NPT.

8. **Israel:** Israel is widely believed to possess nuclear weapons, although it has not officially confirmed its nuclear arsenal. It is not a signatory to the NPT.
9. **North Korea:** North Korea conducted nuclear tests and declared itself a nuclear-armed state in the early 21st century. Its nuclear program has been a source of international concern.

Implications of Russia's withdrawal

While Russia maintains its own 32 monitoring stations and pledges to continue providing data from them, its withdrawal from the CTBT has sparked apprehension about the future of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation initiatives. The move could pave the way for atomic testing to resume for the first time since the Soviet Union collapsed, though the Kremlin has said it will only do so in response to possible US tests. Moscow also carried out a "final test" on a new missile that has potentially unlimited range; deployed tactical nuclear weapons to neighbouring Belarus; and suspended its participation in the New START treaty, the last major arms-control deal still in force with the US.

The United States' decision not to ratify the CTBT has been contentious and deeply unfortunate. Yet, Russia's move to "mirror" this stance by de-ratifying the treaty introduces a new level of volatility with possible profound implications for the treaty itself and the world. While Russia may not immediately resume nuclear testing, the de-ratification signals to other nuclear weapons states that the constraints imposed by the CTBT are fluid. This could encourage nations that have been reticent to commit fully to the treaty or, worse, prompt some ratified states to reconsider their positions. This can be deeply unsettling.

However, the fact remains that the CTBT stands as one of the last pillars of an unravelling global architecture painstakingly built up over decades to manage the risks posed by nuclear weapons. While a decision to "un-ratify" the treaty won't automatically sink the shared human interest in banning explosive nuclear testing, it does mark a very worrying development in a process that has seen the conspicuous and unwanted return of nuclear weapons to global politics. Norms against nuclear testing, an expectation of calm and careful language concerning nuclear statecraft, and, of course, taboos against the use of nuclear weapons in war, are powerful constructs that benefit everyone on the planet. Such guardrails take years of effort to establish and to become "normalised," and require strong, concerted, global support now to ensure that they survive into the future. It is the duty of everyone to protect against complacency in our nuclear world, not least those directly in charge of nuclear weapons

► Other nuclear weapons control treaties

- **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) 2017:** includes a comprehensive set of prohibitions on participating in any nuclear weapon activities (India did not sign).
- **Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT) 1968:** To avert the danger of nuclear war through the prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons and other measure (India did not sign).
- **Partial Test Ban Treaty 1963:** Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water (India signed and ratified).



programmes, and maintaining norms of responsible nuclear behaviour is at the heart of this.

The Future of CTBT

Russia's de-ratification of the CTBT will not significantly change the status of the Treaty itself. This move is essentially a formality, while crucial cooperation with the CTBTO preparatory committee and the International Monitoring System will remain. The testing moratorium also remains in place, with Russian officials continuously emphasizing that Russia will not be the first to resume testing nuclear weapons. This situation bears some resemblance to the "Post-INF Moratorium." The CTBT regime will likely remain as it is, but unfortunately, its full entry into force now seems even less probable.

Conclusion

Russia's decision to withdraw from the CTBT is a cause for concern in the realm of global security. It highlights the need for diplomatic efforts to address the underlying issues that have strained international relations and undermined nuclear disarmament initiatives. The CTBT, despite its imperfections, remains a vital step towards a world free of nuclear weapons, and preserving and strengthening it should be a priority for all nations committed to global peace and security. ■

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INTERNATIONAL

Faridullah



As climate catastrophes are wreaking havoc on the planet, countries around the world are gearing up for COP28, which is scheduled to be held in Dubai, UAE, from Nov. 30 to Dec. 12.

This year's climate talk, which is one of the most significant climate summits since the Paris Climate Accord of 2015, will set the ball rolling for discussions on topics like climate finance, fast-tracking the transition to renewable energy, prioritizing the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable populations and ensuring inclusivity. However, since the host country is a petro-state, the Conference has already attracted some controversy.

The menace

Climate change, sometimes used interchangeably with global warming, refers to long-term changes in climate, particularly the rise in average surface temperature of the earth, mostly due to the accumulation of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere. This accumulation of CO₂ is due, mainly, to the burning of fossil fuels. Truly, anthropogenic activities have exacerbated the climate change issue, which poses an existential threat to the Earth, and those living on it.

It has led to numerous climate catastrophes, including droughts, wildfires, biodiversity loss, infectious-disease outbreaks, famines, poverty, displacement of people and even regional conflicts. All these events occur at the cost of economic development. According to a report by the World Economic Forum, "[The year] 2022 saw 10 climate-related disasters that resulted in more than \$3 billion worth of damage each." The report further says, "The 2022 floods in Pakistan were the sixth most expensive event and also a disaster with the highest human cost."



In March this year, a report released by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) revealed that the world is likely to surpass its most ambitious climate target of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above preindustrial temperature by the early 2030s. Beyond that threshold, scientists believe that climate events will become so extreme that humanity will not be able to adapt to them. The UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, while commenting on the report, said:

"The era of global warming has ended; the era of global boiling has arrived." Additionally, according to scientists, July of this year was the Earth's hottest month on record.

Background to COPs

To monitor climate change and combat dangerous human interference with the climate system, an international environmental treaty, known as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), was signed by 154 countries at the UN Conference on Environment and

Development (UNCED), formally known as the Earth Summit, which took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. The treaty came into force on March 21st, 1994. The countries that have ratified the Convention are referred to as Parties to the Convention, currently numbering 198. These parties convene annually at a summit formally known as the Conference of the Parties (COP), where they assess the effects of measures taken and the progress made towards achieving the objectives of the Convention. The first COP meeting was held in Berlin in 1995, and since then, it has been held every year, except for 2020, when it was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



COP28

Ticking of the climate time bomb!

INTERNATIONAL

This year's summit will be the 28th annual meeting; therefore, it is designated as COP28.

Who will attend?

Each party to the Convention will participate in this meeting. According to the website of the UAE embassy in Washington DC, "This major global event will welcome high-level participation, including over 140 heads of state, senior government leaders, over 70,000 participants, and more than 5,000 media professionals."

COP28 Pillars

The COP28 in Dubai aims to address the climate crisis through four essential pillars, which represent the themes of the conference.

1. Firstly, expediting the transition to renewable energy resources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Secondly, rectifying climate finance and securing the \$100 billion pledged by developed countries in the Paris Climate Accord of 2015. This funding is intended to support adaptation and mitigation efforts in developing countries.
3. Thirdly, to prioritize the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable populations.
4. Lastly, to ensure full inclusivity so that marginalized communities, indigenous people, women and youth are actively involved in the decision-making process.

company some 343 years to capture the carbon it has produced. Moreover, in 2030 alone, when ADNOC says it will capture 10 million tonnes of carbon, the company will also produce 492 million tonnes, capturing just 2 percent. Greenpeace, an independent international organization advocating for a balance between human progress and environmental conservation, called his appointment "alarming". One climate activist even remarked, "This appointment goes beyond putting the fox in charge of the henhouse." Undoubtedly, the role of the president of the COP is of utmost importance and requires impartiality. How can a person who heads an oil giant and intends to expand oil and gas production genuinely implement climate policies aimed at reducing fossil-fuel usage?

Will it be a futile exercise?

Climate activists assert that countries, particularly developed ones, are failing to take practical steps to mitigate the climate crisis. While world leaders convene frequently to discuss the issue, these meetings are often seen as mere business as usual. Activists attribute this lethargy to both a disregard for the climate warnings issued by scientists and the relentless lobbying efforts of the fossil fuel industry. There are some who, driven by misconception, even question the validity of the term climate change, dismissing it as a myth. The fossil fuel industry, the leading contributor to climate change, maintains fixers and lobbyists at various levels, from municipal level to national to international one, to obstruct any climate-related legislation. Notably, the world's five largest publicly owned oil and gas companies reportedly spend approximately \$200 million annually to lobby against efforts to address climate change. Moreover, at COP26 in Glasgow in 2021, the delegates from fossil fuel companies formed a larger group than the largest national delegation. While ostensibly attending the summit to contribute to climate crisis mitigation, critics contend that they were there to sabotage any progress in reducing fossil fuel usage. Last year, at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, they had more delegates than the combined delegation of the 10 most-affected countries by climate change. Some attendees called it a glorified fossil fuel trade show. Furthermore, petro-states vetoed any reference to fossil fuel phase-down in the COP resolution. A minister from one of the petro-states at COP27 said:

"We don't see this as a discussion about fossil fuels." However, he failed to acknowledge

When we talk about climate change, we can't ignore the impact on women who bear the brunt of consequences of climate change particularly in developing countries. Gender-inclusive approach is not just the right thing to do, its also smart. It paves the way to a more just and resilient future for all.



Mahnoor Rashid
Youth Delegate from Pakistan
for COP28

Controversy

COP28 has already sparked controversy among civil society and climate activists, as the host country is one of the largest producers of oil and gas, which are significant contributors to GHG emissions. Furthermore, the UAE currently pumps around 4 million barrels of oil per day and plans to expand the capacity to 5 million barrels a day by 2030. Critics question how effective the implementation of climate policies can be when the host country is planning to increase its oil production, instead of transitioning to green energy. Compounding the issue, the president of COP28 is none other than Dr. Sultan Ahmad Al Jaber, the CEO of state oil giant Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), one of the world's largest oil companies - he is the first CEO to ever serve as a COP President. This situation raises a glaring conflict of interests, as Al Jaber serves as the UAE Special Envoy for Climate Change while his company, ADNOC, intends to boost oil and gas production by 50% by 2030. According to a recent report, if ADNOC's CCS projects operate at full capacity between now and 2030, it would take the



that the climate crisis is a fossil fuel crisis. As UN chief Antonio Guterres says, the fossil fuel industry is "the polluted heart of the climate crisis".

The fossil fuel industry faces a glaring conflict of interest. On the one hand, it claims to be combating climate change, while on the other, it funds various campaigns against the same. For instance, an article published in the Guardian revealed that Willie Soon, a climate change denier and a prominent researcher at the Harvard-Smithsonian Centre for Astrophysics, had his work funded almost entirely by the fossil fuel lobby, receiving more than 1.2 million dollars. Furthermore, the head of the International Energy Agency (IEA) engaged with

and expand fossil-fuel usage.

Conclusion

However, whatever the case may be, the UAE is leading this year's climate talk in good faith. After all, the UAE was the first country in the Middle East to sign and ratify the Paris Climate Accord of 2015, commit to an economy-wide reduction in emissions and announce an initiative to achieve net zero by 2050. Furthermore, it earns 30% of its GDP from oil, which is less than what it earned a decade ago. The UAE, although a petro-state, is committed to transitioning to renewable energy. Moreover, Sultan Ahmad Al Jaber also leads a government renewable energy company and, as a climate expert, serves as the

COP28 oil hosts to confront north-south challenge

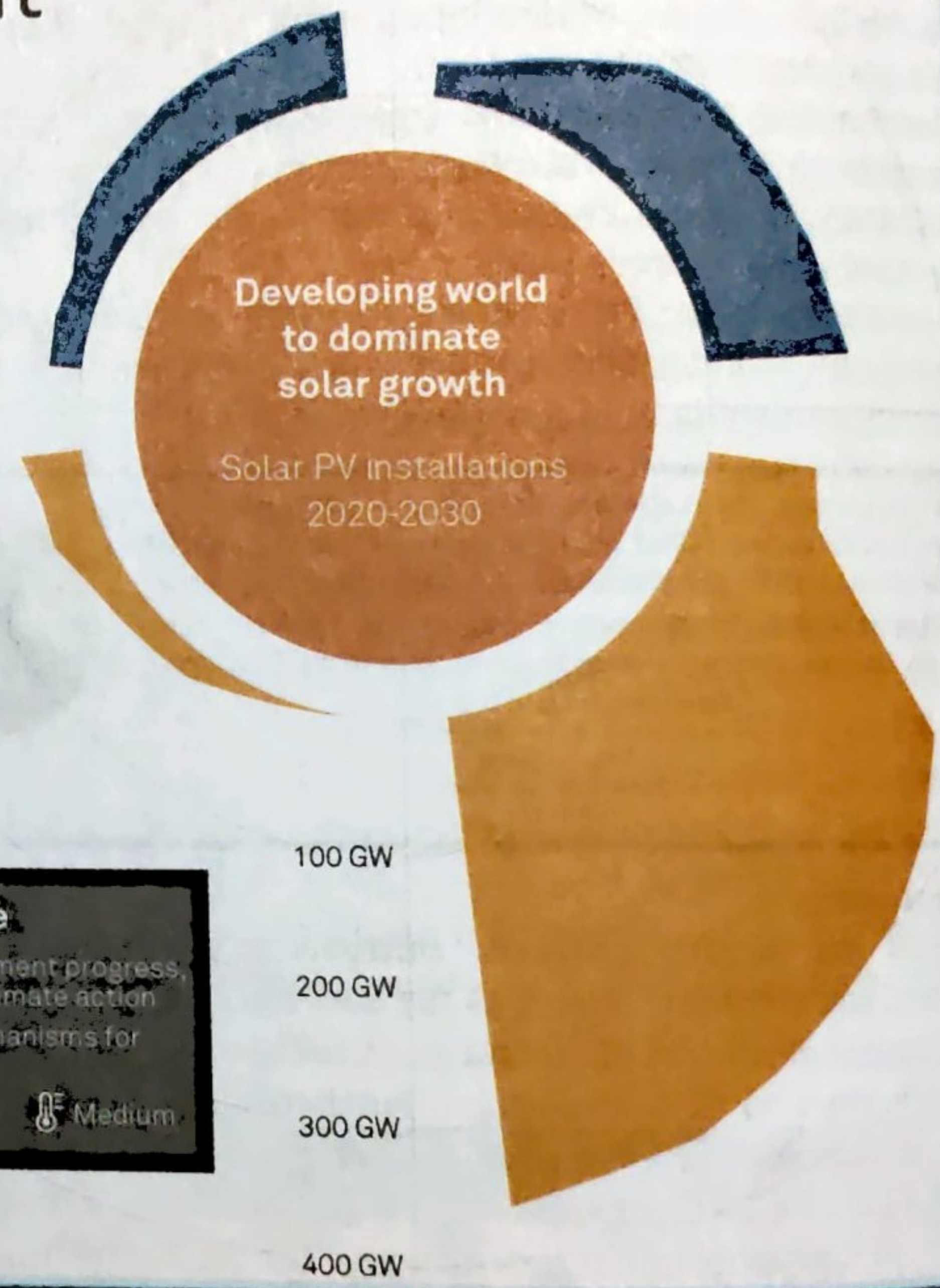
Four key themes at this year's UN climate talks in Dubai illustrate the stark division in regional priorities. World leaders must bend the emissions curve while reducing climate inequalities.

- Global North
- Global South
- Probability
- ☁ Climate impact

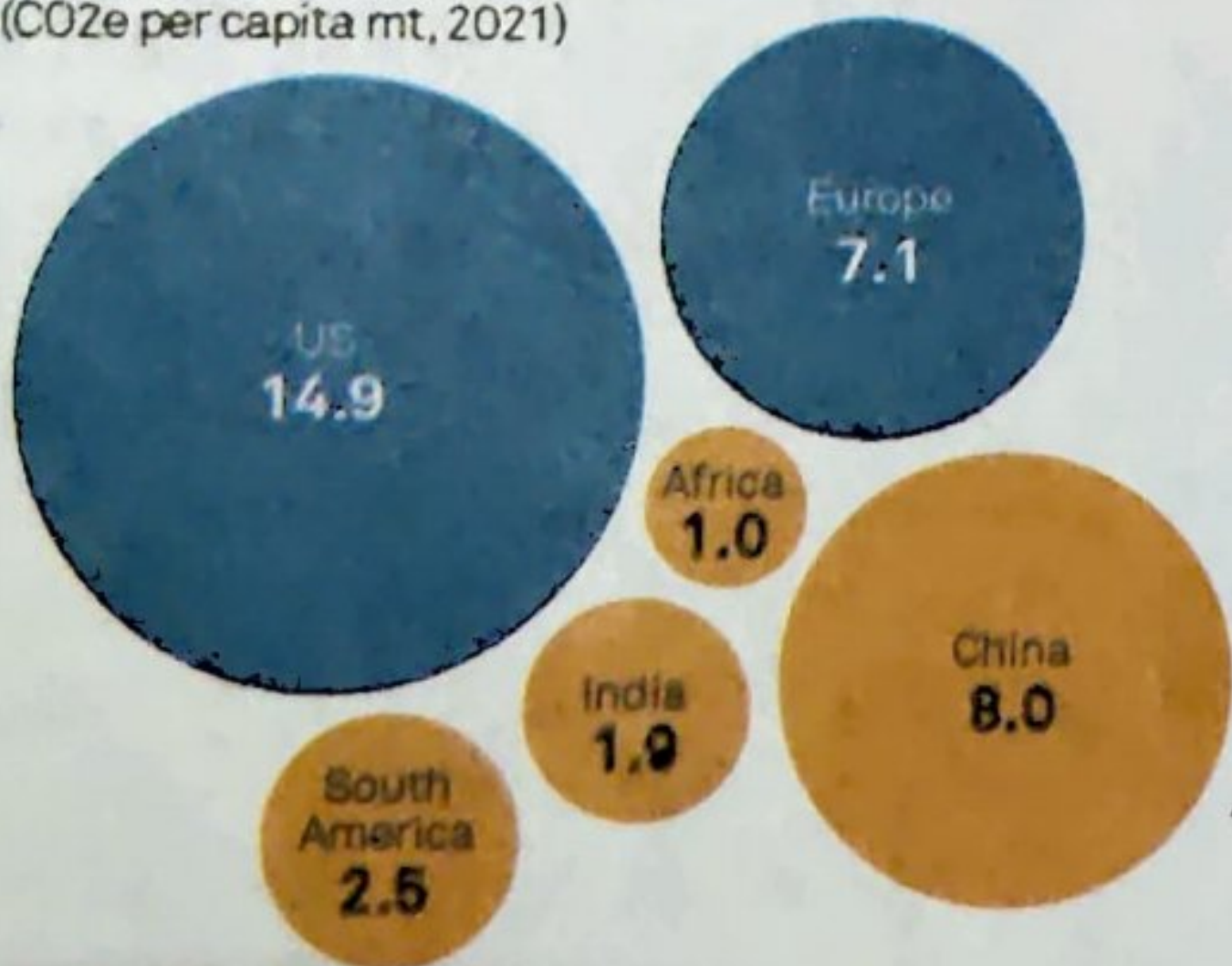
Renewable energy

- Triple renewable energy output by 2030
- Revive Global South green funding outside China

■■■■■ High



Huge disparity in per capita emissions
(CO2e per capita mt, 2021)



Global stocktake

- Details Paris Agreement progress to trigger greater climate action
- Agree funding mechanisms for Global South

■■■■■ Medium

several oil companies to increase their oil and gas production while simultaneously pledging to comply with the Paris Accord. The fossil fuel industry often touts that it invests a large amount of money in renewable energy and carbon capture, but that is only one percent of its total spending. Carbon capture has been used as an excuse to continue

Minister for Industry and Advance Technology. The UAE is also committed to diversifying its oil-based economy by developing other sectors, like tourism. Thus, it can be said that, by acting in good faith, the UAE may serve as a role model for other petro-states seeking to reduce emissions and embrace green practices. After all, the climate problem is not beyond the power of people; it is the will, not power, that is lacking in tackling the climate issue. ■

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INTERNATIONAL

Dr Iqra Munawar

Maritime disputes across the vast South China Sea (SCS) have ratcheted up in recent years. Tension flared up again in September when the Philippine coastguard removed a "floating barrier" installed by China in a disputed area in the SCS, calling it a "decisive action" in "upholding international law". Under President Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr, the Philippines has taken increasingly assertive steps to protect its claim to shoals in the SCS, leading to several confrontations with Chinese vessels in waters off the Philippine islands.

They include standoffs between the Chinese coast guard and what Manila says are shadowy Chinese maritime militia boats and tiny wooden Philippine fishing vessels; Chinese water cannons blocking the resupply of a shipwrecked Philippine military outpost; and a lone Filipino diver using a knife to sever a massive floating Chinese barrier.

Amid rising tensions between Manila and Beijing over territorial disputes in this vital economic passage, the United States military kicked off two weeks of multilateral exercises with its

Philippine allies and multiple international partners.

Geography of the South China Sea

The SCS is a strategic body of water abutting the Western Pacific. To its north lie China and Taiwan. On the west is the Indo-Chinese peninsula, including the long Vietnamese coast, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore; Indonesia and Brunei open up to the southern parts of the sea; and finally to the east is the Philippines, which refers to the waters off its coast as the West Philippine Sea. Bracketed by China and several Southeast Asian nations, parts of the vital economic passage are claimed by multiple governments, with Beijing asserting ownership over almost all of the waterway. Over the past two decades, China has occupied a number of obscure reefs and atolls far from its shoreline across the SCS, building up military installations, including runways and ports. Competing claimants, such as the Philippines, say such actions



Rising tensions and their global implications

Tensions in the South China Sea are flaring once again. Stability in the region is seen as being increasingly threatened with the latest episode in the long-running tensions which came to the fore on September 25 when the Philippine Coast Guard removed barriers placed by Chinese vessels at the entrance to a lagoon off the Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea, following the orders of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. This action was followed by a two-week-long military exercise Maritime Training Activity Sama Sama [meaning together] 2023, which began on October 02, involving Australia, Canada, France, Japan, the United Kingdom and Malaysia, along with the US and the Philippines. These events have once again shone the spotlight on simmering tensions in the region and the wider ramifications of the dispute, which extends not only to the many claimants of the sea's islands and waters but also to all countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

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infringe on their sovereignty and violate maritime law.

Economic significance

The 1.3-million-square-mile waterway is vital to international trade, with an estimated third of global shipping worth trillions of dollars passing through each year. As much as \$3.37 trillion worth of trade passed through the SCS in 2016, estimated a report from the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). The report said, citing the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), that 80% of global trade by volume and 70% by value is transported by sea. Of the total volume, 60% passes through Asia, with the SCS "carrying an estimated one-third of global shipping". While a disruption in trade would certainly impact the world, China, the world's second-largest economy, would likely face the biggest impact. The CSIS report estimated that 64% of Chinese trade passes through the SCS — the highest for any country. In contrast, 14% of US trade passes through it.

It's also home to vast fertile fishing grounds upon which many lives and livelihoods depend.

Much of its economic value remains untapped, however. According to the US Energy Information Agency, the

According to the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative (AMTI), as many as 70 disputed reefs and islets are under contestation. The AMTI says China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Taiwan have built more than 90 outposts on these disputed features. Vietnam occupies "between 49 and 51 outposts spread across 27 features," including "facilities built on 21 rocks and reefs in the Spratly Islands". Vietnam and other countries have also reclaimed new land to build outposts on them — China's reclamation activities in recent years have especially changed the dynamics of the dispute given Beijing's resources and the speed and scale of reclamation work.

Who claims what?

China claims "indisputable sovereignty" over almost all of the SCS, and most of the islands and sandbars within it, including many features that are hundreds of miles from mainland China. China, the AMTI says, has 20 outposts in the Paracel Islands and seven in the Spratlys, and has since 2012 exerted control of the Scarborough Shoal through "a constant Coast Guard presence". "Since 2013, China has engaged in unprecedented dredging and artificial island-building in the

US-Vietnam Defence Pact

On Sept. 10, during US President Joe Biden's visit to Vietnam, a "comprehensive strategic partnership" was signed between the two countries. Vietnam is currently navigating frosty relations with the US as it seeks to be a low-cost manufacturing hub. The deal includes tech and textile exports and minerals as the strategic Southeast Asian nation lifted Washington to Hanoi's highest diplomatic status symbolic but significant change, which raises the US by two levels to the top hierarchy. The status is one previously reserved only for China, Russia, India and, as of last year, South Korea. Vietnam had long avoided the move for fear of upsetting Beijing.

Biden's visit came as US-Vietnam trade long-simmering territorial dispute the South China Sea. The US and Chinese vessels. They also called for and unimpeded lawful commerce in the Vietnam's move is likely to trigger

a top official to Hanoi earlier in the week at short notice ahead of Biden's scheduled visit. The head of the Chinese Communist Party's international department, Liu Jianchao, met Trong and both agreed to "consolidate political mutual trust".



between Washington and Beijing as the foothold in the international competition deals included those on semiconductors. Asian nation lifted Washington to alongside China and Russia. The follows years of lobbying by Washington, status in Vietnam's bilateral ties reserved only for China, Russia, India Vietnam had long avoided the move for

and investment ties are growing and a between Vietnam and China heats up in Vietnam warned against the "threat or days after the latest clash involving "freedom of navigation and overflight South China Sea."

disquiet in Beijing. China had dispatched

waterway holds at least 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 11 billion barrels of oil.

Who controls those resources and how they are exploited could have a huge impact on the environment. The SCS is home to hundreds of largely uninhabited islands and coral atolls and diverse wildlife at risk from climate change and marine pollution.

The Dispute

The SCS dispute essentially revolves around multiple claims to the land features — islands and reefs — and associated territorial waters. Under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), every state "has the right to establish the breadth of its territorial sea up to a limit not exceeding 12 nautical miles" and an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) up to 200 nautical miles from the territorial sea baseline.

Spratlys, creating 3,200 acres of new land, along with a substantial expansion of its presence in the Paracels," the AMTI estimates. The Philippines, meanwhile, occupies nine features in the Spratlys and Malaysia occupies five. Taiwan maintains one outpost in the Spratlys on Itu Aba island, "the largest natural feature in the Spratlys". Taiwan has also reclaimed "eight acres of land to construct a new wharf, which was completed in late 2015".

In 2016, an international tribunal in The Hague ruled in favour of the Philippines in a landmark maritime dispute, which concluded that China has no legal basis to claim historic rights to the bulk of the SCS. China has ignored the ruling: Manila says Beijing continues to send its maritime militia to Mischief Reef and Scarborough Shoal in the

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Philippines' exclusive economic zone. In the southern portion of the sea is the Spratly Island chain, which Beijing calls the Nansha islands. The archipelago consists of 100 islets and reefs of which 45 are occupied by China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Vietnam or the Philippines. In the northwestern part of the sea, the Paracels - known as the Xisha islands in China - have been controlled by Beijing since 1974 despite claims from Vietnam and Taiwan. China's ruling Communist Party also claims self-governing Taiwan as its own territory, despite having never controlled it. The Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam, Brunei and Taiwan also hold competing claims. And the United States agrees, regularly sending its navy destroyers on freedom of navigation operations close to contested islands, leading to fears that the SCS could become a flashpoint between the two superpowers.

Diplomacy and arbitration

Given the complexity of the disputes and the multiple claimants - most of which are members of ASEAN - talks to manage the SCS between China and ASEAN have focused on coming up with a Code of Conduct, which has proved elusive. ASEAN, given the disputes within, has been unable to come up with any joint front to negotiate with China, the biggest claimant both from the perspective of its military might and the extent of its claims.

In 2002, the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and China adopted a Declaration on the Conduct of Parties, which affirmed their "commitments to the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law, including UNCLOS". The DoC was also aimed at paving the way for a Code of Conduct, which has yet to materialise. Instead, disputes have only grown more acute. In 2013, Manila initiated arbitral proceedings against China under UNCLOS, claiming its actions had violated the convention. Beijing refused to participate, deeming the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) illegal. A 2016 ruling from the PCA rejected China's "nine-dash line". Marked on all of China's official maps, including the most recent map released in August that drew a protests from several countries, the line claims all of the Sea's islands and features. Left somewhat ambiguous is whether China also claims the entire waters within the line, or only the associated territorial seas of the land features. Chinese officials have never spelled out the exact claims, although they have insisted on "historical rights" to the "waters and islands".

The PCA ruling said China's claims were inconsistent with UNCLOS. While stating it did not take a position on matters of sovereignty of

land features, the PCA tribunal concluded that to the extent China had historic rights to resources in the waters of the South China Sea, such rights were extinguished to the extent they were incompatible with the EEZ provided for in the convention". It also "concluded that there was no legal basis for China to claim historic rights to resources within the sea areas falling within the 'nine-dash line'". Further, it noted that under UNCLOS, "islands generate an exclusive economic zone of 200 nautical miles and a continental shelf" but "rocks which cannot sustain human habitation or economic life of their own shall have no exclusive economic zone or continental shelf".

Global implications

The South China Sea is widely seen as a potential flashpoint for global conflict, and the recent confrontations between Manila and Beijing have raised concerns among Western observers about potentially developing into an international incident if China, a global power, decides to act more forcefully against the Philippines, a US treaty ally. Washington and Manila are bound by a mutual defence treaty signed in 1951 that remains in force, stipulating that both sides would help defend each other if either were attacked by a third party.

Marcos has strengthened US relations that had frayed under his predecessor, with the two allies touting potential future joint patrols in the SCS. As the partners held their largest military exercise in April 2023, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs warned that US-Philippine military cooperation "must not interfere in South China Sea disputes."

The US, however, has condemned China's recent actions in the contested sea and threatened to intervene under its mutual defense treaty obligations if Philippine vessels came under armed attack there. ■

The writer is a researcher and IR expert.

Disputed claims in the South China Sea

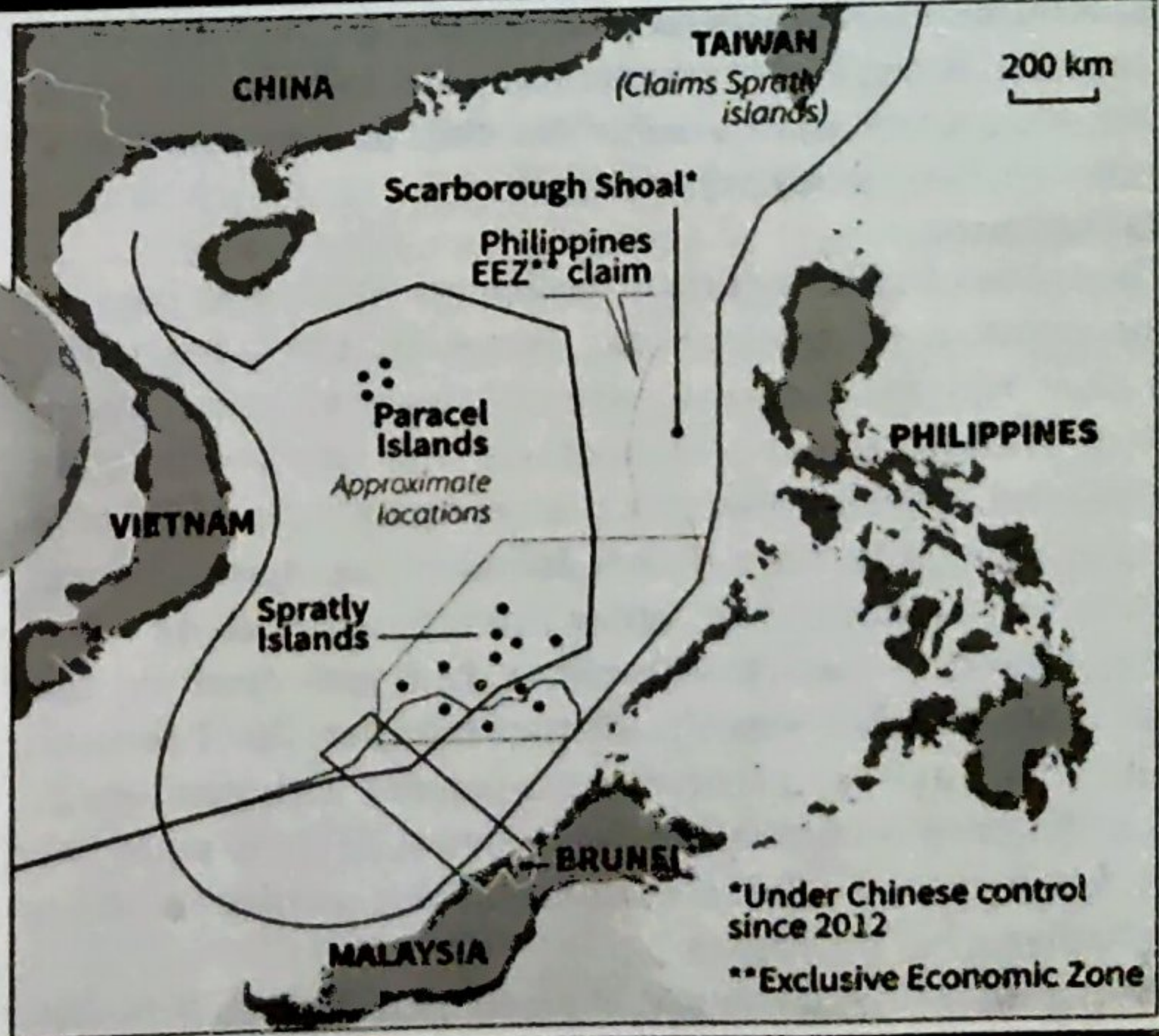
Claims

- China
- Philippines
- Malaysia
- Brunei
- Vietnam

Area:
South China Sea covers more than 3 million sq km

Trade:
Over \$5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes through the sea annually

Oil and gas:
Major unexploited oil and gas deposits are believed to lie under the seabed





India Reorienting Its Middle East Policy

Today's geopolitics is indeed characterised by the perception of self-interest. India, a country that has long followed a policy of non-alignment in world affairs, is now in the process of fundamentally reorienting its foreign policy. The Modi government's policy shift on the Israel-Gaza tensions has become a nail in the coffin of India's neutral policy in the Middle East. The country's abstention on the Arab resolution calling for a humanitarian truce in Gaza and support for a failed Canadian amendment condemning the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel mark a definitive shift in the evolution of India's policy towards this region.

Background

The roots of India's current policy go all the way back to the creation of modern-day Israel. In 1947, when the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution that recommended establishing the state of Israel alongside a Palestinian state, a newly independent India voted against it. Then-Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi, and other Indian nationalists were sympathetic to the Jewish cause, but they opposed the partition of what was the British mandate for Palestine and advocated for a federal arrangement with guarantees for minority religious rights for Jews. In their view, the creation of a Jewish state would disenfranchise the Arab inhabitants of the region.

Pragmatic considerations also shaped Indian officials'

Zahid Hussain Qadri
position. With a substantial Muslim population within its own borders, India could not afford to ignore their sentiments. An overture towards Israel could have adverse effects on the fragile legitimacy of the new state, particularly stirring turmoil among Indian Muslims, who had just experienced the trauma of the Partition of India. At the time, India also wanted to present itself as a standard-bearer against colonialism and to demonstrate its solidarity with newly decolonized Arab states, which were also being courted by Pakistan.

India formally recognized the state of Israel in 1950, and allowed the country to open a consulate in Mumbai in 1953. For much of the Cold War, Indo-Israeli contacts were limited; New Delhi still wanted to avoid alienating the Arab world and sought to appease the Muslim population at home. It wasn't until 1992 that India granted full diplomatic recognition to Israel, including the opening of the Israeli Embassy in New Delhi. With the Cold War over and the impending Oslo Accords—which sought rapprochement between Israel and the Palestinians—India chose to end its policy of keeping Israel at a safe distance.

At the same time, India maintained strong support for Palestine. In 1974, India was the first non-Arab country to recognize the PLO as the "sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people," and the next year, a PLO office was set up in New Delhi. India was again the first

non-Arab country to recognize the state of Palestine when it was proclaimed in 1988. In multilateral votes after India and Israel normalized ties, India consistently sided with the Palestinian position, including support for Palestine's application for complete United Nations membership.

India rejected Israel's advances for more than four decades. It is only since 1992 that Israel and India have had active diplomatic relations. The Indian government's long hesitation was also due to the fact that India was dependent on oil supplies from the Middle East. In the meantime, the two countries maintained intensive relations in trade, with high annual growth rates, in agriculture and in culture.

Shift under Modi

The ties between India and Israel have flourished whenever the BJP is in power—be it under Atal Bihari Vajpayee from 1998 to May 2004 or under Modi in the last ten years when bilateral collaboration took on the form of

a strategic partnership and a bonhomie between Modi and Netanyahu. Modi was the first Indian Prime Minister to pay an official visit to Israel in February 2017, a quarter of a century after full diplomatic ties between the two countries were established under a Congress party government headed by P. V. Narasimha Rao. In February 2018, Modi also became the first Indian PM to visit Ramallah, where the Palestine government is headquartered. Modi's

separate visits to the next-door countries clearly marked a new phase in India's Middle East policy—that of de-hyphenating ties with Israel and Palestine. Delinking New Delhi's relations with Tel Aviv and Ramallah is something never attempted before.

The 'war on terror' after 11 September 2001, led to an intensification of India-Israel relations. Both countries had bitter experiences with terrorist attacks: Israel because of the unresolved Palestine issue, India earlier through the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka and till today because of Kashmir, over which India and Pakistan are bitterly fighting.

Today, Israel has become an important, at times the second most important, arms supplier to India. Around 40 percent of all of Israel's arms exports go there. Israeli companies modernized the obsolete Soviet MiG-21 and other fighter aircraft of the Indian armed forces. For

years, Israel has supplied electronics and missiles for the modernization of almost all categories of weapons. An agreement provides for the joint production of anti-aircraft missiles. According to estimates by the Stockholm Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the volume of Israeli arms exports to India in the last five years amounted to \$1.8 billion. To arm itself against the aggressive policies of China, India ordered more weapons from Israel. Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Israeli counterpart Benny Gantz agreed to strengthen bilateral relations during the latter's visit to India in June 2022, and they talked about companies in the Indian defence industry.

Latest developments

Modi's statement immediately after the Hamas attack hinted at a radical shift in India's policy towards the Middle East. In what can be called a sharp upbraiding of Hamas's multipronged attack against Israel from Gaza on October 7, Modi tweeted: "Deeply shocked by the news of



terrorist attacks in Israel. Our thoughts and prayers are with the innocent victims and their families. We stand in solidarity with Israel at this difficult hour." After speaking with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Modi added, "India strongly and unequivocally condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations." Neither statement nodded at people in Gaza. These statements hint at an unmistakable shift away from the carefully choreo-

graphed balancing act that characterized New Delhi's earlier responses to clashes between Israel and Palestinians. These remarks were viewed by a section of Indian foreign policy observers as siding with Israel and in sync with the reactions of the US and Western countries but out of tune with the countries of the global South.

Why this shift?

So, what explains this seemingly dramatic shift in India's stance towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? A few factors appear to have shaped its calculations.

The following key considerations have traditionally shaped India's relations with the Islamic countries in West Asia:

1. There are about nine million Indians working in the region and India imports over half of its crude oil requirements from the area.
2. The recently launched mega connectivity project called India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor. India

believes that one of the aims of Hamas may have been to jeopardize potential partnerships involving India, Saudi Arabia and Israel through the IMEEC connectivity project.

3. It is also possible that India has taken note that a number of key Arab states, from Egypt to Saudi Arabia, have not offered full-throated support for Hamas. At best, they have called for avoiding further escalation of hostilities while issuing minor denunciations of Israeli actions. Unlike during previous crises, various Arab states had normalized, or were in the process of normalizing, ties with Israel when Hamas attacked. This cautious reaction from some Arab countries gives New Delhi some diplomatic leeway, especially when it comes to its growing trade and strategic relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council states.

4. Then, there is a domestic dimension that has hamstrung India's West Asia policy in the past. It is the presence of a large number of Muslims in India—both Sunni and Shia. The divisions within West Asia on the issue of Hamas or any radical variety of Islam, particularly in moderate Islamic countries and democracies, and the ethnic divides there have always influenced India to stay away from the vortex of West Asian conflicts. But that has changed in the last decade, keeping in mind the realignments in West Asia. Among the winds of change are Israel-Arab and Iran-Saudi Arabia détente.

5. Finally, India's clear-cut condemnation of Hamas could be a signal to the United States about its willingness to support another critical US ally. This public position may assuage the Biden administration's misgivings about India's wobbly stance on

A hotbed of misinformation

The Israel-Palestine conflict was a hotbed for conspiracies and false information even before the current flashpoint. While researchers so far have found minimal evidence of disinformation of foreign origin, the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip has nonetheless observed a surge in misinformation. This reveals the significance and salience of the digital battlefield in modern-day warfare and combat, engaging the participation of citizens beyond the Middle East in a battle of discourse and ideology. Amid this fragmented information sphere, the manufacture of and engagement with pro-Israel content among Indian nationals, more significantly among right-wing Hindu nationalists, have not escaped popular attention.

On October 7, within hours of Hamas's surprise attack on Israel, social media platforms were rife with support for Israel – and also fake news. What stood out in the clamour was the fact that a fair amount of it was produced and distributed by accounts from India. Pro-Israel content – including disinformation – is being widely shared on social media by Indian nationals, more significantly by right-wing Hindu nationalists. BOOM, a reputable Indian fact-checking service, found several verified Indian X users at the front and center of a "disinformation campaign" that targets Palestine with negative news while supporting Israel. In one instance, a video purporting to show young girls taken by a Palestinian fighter as sex slaves was circulated on X. This video had no context and was likely from a school trip to Jerusalem, but this was shared widely by Indian accounts.

the Russian war in Ukraine. Without harshly criticizing New Delhi, the Biden administration has nevertheless expressed its disappointment with India's failure to condemn Moscow's invasion.

The apparent softening in India's policy towards Israel is in line with trends in the Middle East. In a move towards normalization, the UAE opened its embassy in Tel Aviv in 2021, becoming the third Arab country, after Egypt and Jordan, to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel. Just weeks before the Hamas attacks, Netanyahu told the UN that Israel was "on the cusp" of a historical deal with Saudi Arabia. The apparent thaw has also prompted India to weigh its options on Israel.

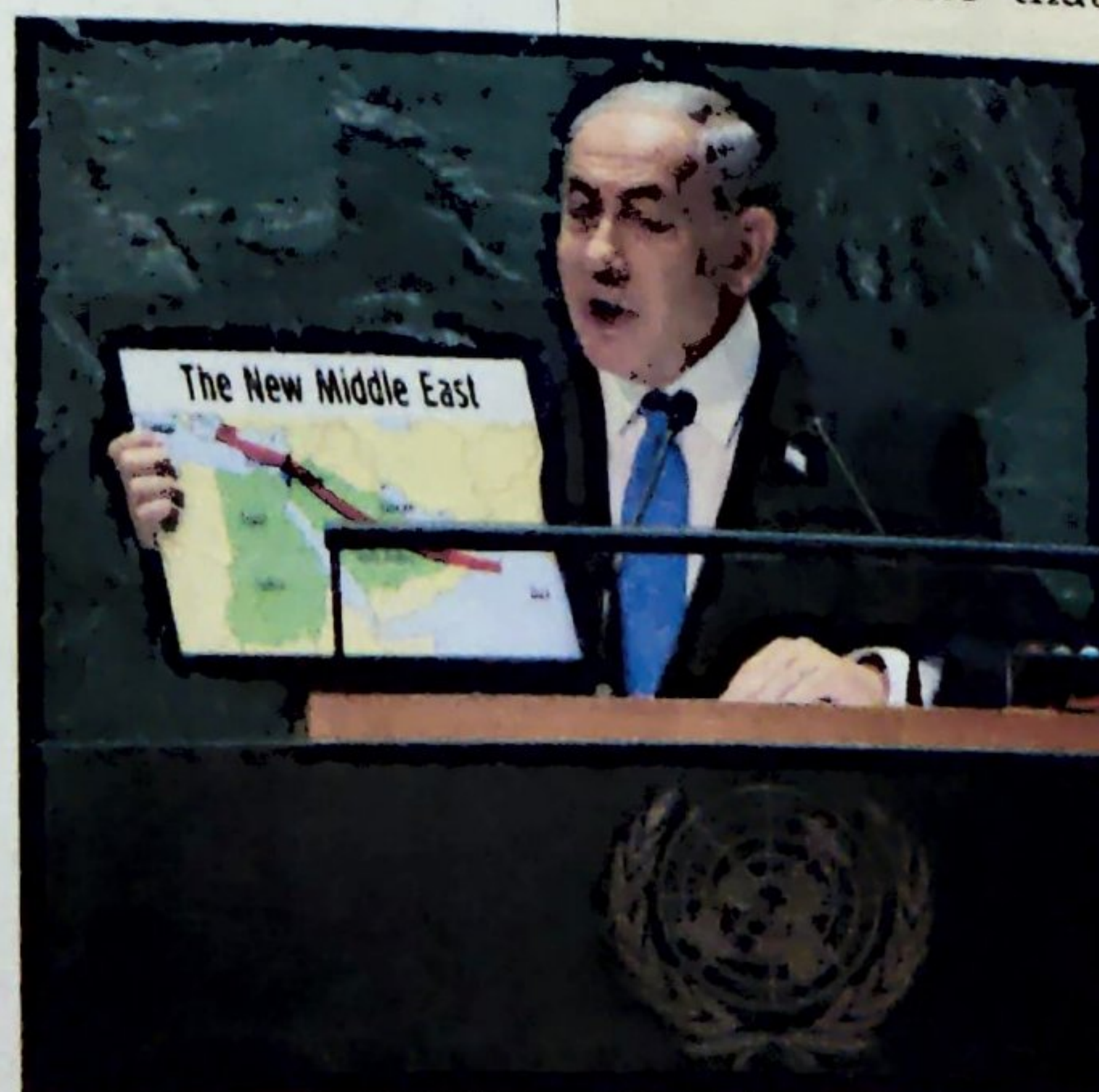
Conclusion

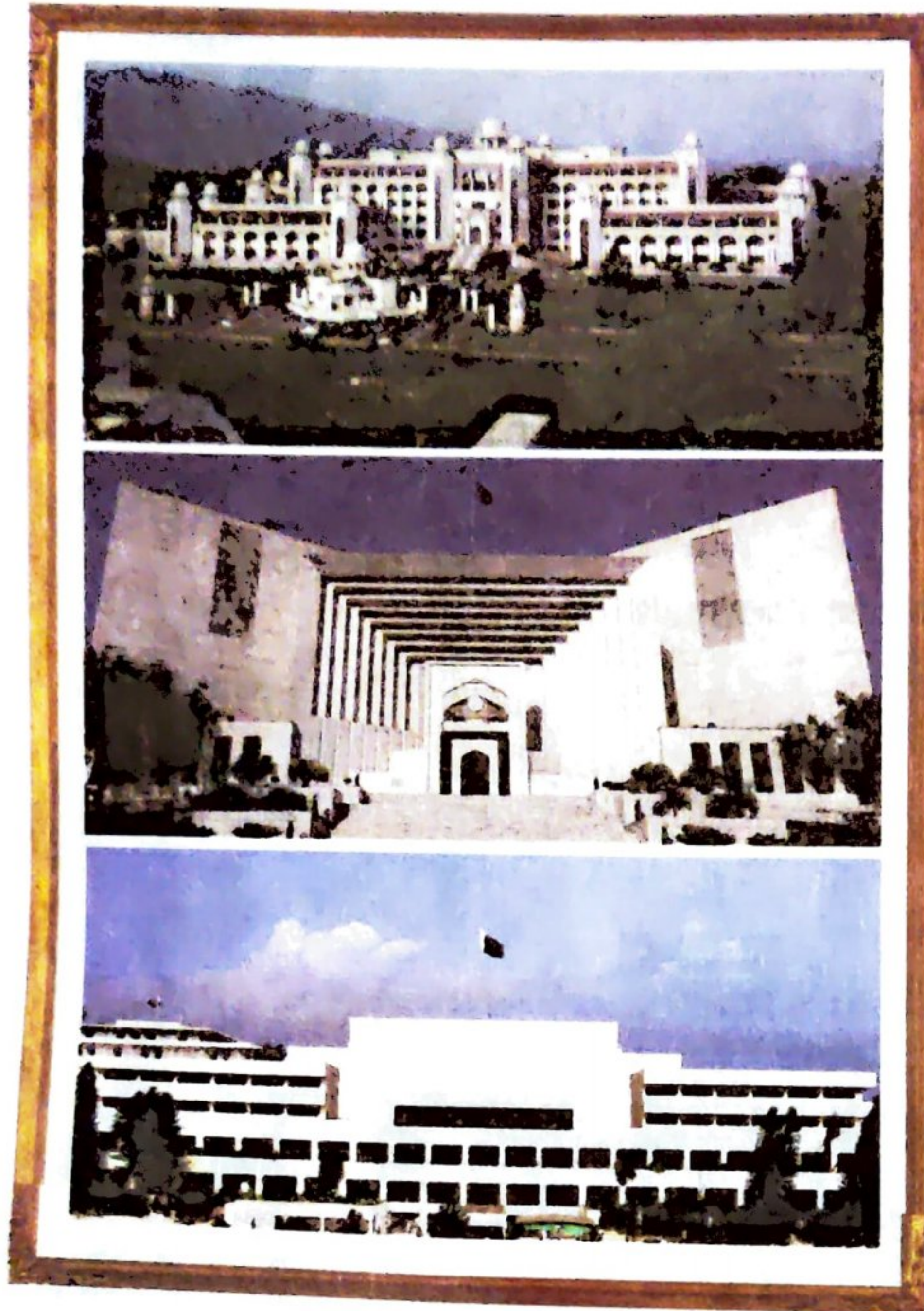
In the past, whenever violence broke out between Israel and Palestine, the approach of the Indian government, even the Modi government, has invariably been to also underline the other side's track record of violence, and also add the context of the Palestinians being denied their legitimate political rights by Israel. This time, Modi's tweet left that out. Clearly, it suits the BJP to conflate the rampant anti- it is creating in India with the portrayal of the latest conflict in Gaza as Hamas' handiwork. This also means blaming Hamas fully for the violence that ordinary Palestinians have also faced at the hands of Israeli forces over the decades. Picking Israel over Palestine just for this would undo years of empathetic and non-partisan statesmanship that India has demonstrated in one of the world's most divided, most volatile conflict zones. ■

The writer is a lecturer, serving in KP.

democracies, and the ethnic divides there have always

Muslim climate that





Ensure
Separation of
Powers
...to have rule of
law in Pakistan

Is Pakistan a stable or a struggling state? Is Pakistan performing well on all key developmental indicators? Is its economy stabilized or struggling? Does Pakistan have a stable, calm and working political realm? A plethora of such questions rush to one's mind as one thinks about the contemporary position of Pakistan. The answers to all of the above make it clear that Pakistan is not a prosperous and developed state. Rather, it is struggling with a lot of issues. But how did we reach this point? Although the answer to this burning question may enumerate a number of reasons, the one less-talked-about yet pivotal reason is that we have failed to ensure that no institution infringes upon the powers of other institutions. In other words, we failed to have the concept of separation of powers implemented in its true letter and spirit. We didn't heed the fact that a precondition for the rule of law is to ensure separation of powers among legislative, executive and judicial bodies.

Dr. Khurshid Rizvi

It is a simple truism that a stable, prosperous, democratic and legalitarian state cannot exist and survive without implementing and following the rule of law. It is due to this fact that life in developed countries pivots around the rule of law as every citizen is subjected to the same laws, and no one is above the law. Similarly, the beauty of democracy lies in the rule of separation of powers and the principle of checks and balances. Without the principle of separation of powers, and a viable machinery of checks and balances, the institutions of the state will encroach into the jurisdiction of each other, thereby leading to the set-up of a weak democracy in the nation. Although ensuring the rule of law is the cornerstone of the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan, the country

lacks this in practice as the law is not equal, clear, and accessible; rather it is predictable and above powerful people. Pakistan has been witnessing an unstable democracy since its inception, with governments being thrown over and institutions overriding each other's jurisdictions. In the words of former Chief Justice of Islamabad High Court (IHC) Justice Athar Minallah, who is now a judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, "there's no rule of law here, but the rule of the elite". Before we delve deep into the topic, it seems apt to first understand the two concepts of 'rule of law' and 'separation of powers'.

Rule of law

The rule of law is a principle of governance in which all persons,

institutions and entities, public and private, including the state itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated, and which are consistent with international human rights norms and standards. It requires measures to ensure adherence to the principles of supremacy of the law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, participation in decision-making, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness and procedural and legal transparency. According to Black's Law Dictionary, "the rule of law, also known as "the

supremacy of law", provides that decisions should be made by the application of known principles or laws without the intervention of discretion in their application". For the rule of law to function properly, there must be transparency in the law, equality under the law, an independent judiciary and access to legal remedy.

The rule of law assures that the legal system—from the creation of laws through their implementation and ultimately to the court process—is fair, easily accessible and effective. Being a philosophical and legal concept, writers, philosophers and jurists, belonging to different ages, civilizations and countries, have described the concept of the rule of law in a variety of ways. "The law is reason without passion and is thus preferable to any individual," writes Aristotle in his book Politics.

In the UK, the concept of the rule of law developed from the writings of Prof. A.V. Dicey, Joseph Raz and Lord Bingham. In 1959, the International Commission of Jurists declared that respect for the "supreme value of human personality" should be the goal of all laws.

These historically developed concepts have now become part of almost all the constitutions of civilised nations.

Rule of law or rule by law?

The rule of law is the principle that no one is above the law. The objective of this principle is that governmental authority is legitimately exercised only in accordance with written, publicly disclosed laws adopted and enforced by established procedural steps that constitute due process. The principle is intended to be a safeguard against arbitrary rule, whether by an authoritarian leader or by mob rule. Thus, the rule of law guards against both dictatorship and anarchy. The rule of law is, thus, distinguished from "rule by law", whereby the law

acts as a tool of executive or legislative oppression.

Separation of powers

Separation of powers, also known as Trias Politica, is the idea that the government must be based on "three separate branches" where power is wielded, so they can keep a check on each other. Put simply, it refers to the division of powers into distinct branches of government, each with its own responsibilities. One of the earliest and clearest statements of the separation of powers was given by French social commentator and political thinker Montesquieu in 1748: "When the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person, or in the same body of magistrates, there can be no liberty... there is no liberty if the powers of judging are not separated from the legislative and executive ... there would be an end to everything, if the same man or the same body... were to exercise those three powers."

The doctrine of separation of powers divides the powers of the state among three organs in such a way that one organ keeps a check on, and is accountable to, the other organs. For example, the legislative organ is responsible to make laws and pass financial bills but they require the authorization of the President who is a part of the executive organ. The executive organ is responsible for daily administration work but it is responsible to the legislature for its actions. The judicial organ is responsible to interpret the laws and settle disputes, but appointments to judiciary are governed by legislative and executive organs. Judicial also keeps a check on legislation and administrative

order made. It may declare them null and void if they are inconsistent with fundamental rights or the constitution of the state.

Implementation gaps

Despite full consensus on the validity of the rule of law, there are always implementation gaps.

Take the example of the US, whose founding fathers stressed the equality of all men, freedom and liberty, human rights and the rule of law. Even so, slavery and racial discrimination continued in the US for a long time. American society struggled for two centuries to fill the gap between theory and practice of the rule of law, including a civil war in the 1860s and a civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King in the 1960s.

Europe's case is no different. Centuries ago, voices were raised questioning the divine rights of kings. The 17th-century political theorist John Locke argued that every person has natural rights to life, liberty and property. This was a revolutionary idea; ever since, many European thinkers have contributed to liberalism and enlightenment with strong support for the rule of law. Europeans from various walks of life struggled hard against tyranny and discrimination for centuries before they succeeded in establishing the European Union, which holds together diverse societies through adherence to universal human rights and the rule of law.

Another example is that of China, which has attained rapid economic progress, thanks mainly to meritocracy and strict enforcement of the laws through a complex web of local people's congresses overseen by the Communist Party.

When we look at Pakistan, it also suffers from large gaps in theory and practice of the rule of law. Fortunately, the theory itself is sound. Islam, the majority faith in



Pakistan, enjoins harmony. The life of the Prophet (PBUH) illustrated the values of peaceful coexistence of faith-based communities and tolerance. The Constitution also grants the right of freedom of religion to every Pakistani citizen under Articles 20 and 36. Jinnah's speech on Aug. 11, 1947, made it clear that every citizen of Pakistan, whether Muslim, Hindu or Christian, would be free to go to their places of worship.

Yet, we see elements within our own society that consistently challenge the rule of law. Sadly, sometimes they even take false pride in breaking the law. From self-serving feudal lords to corrupt public office-holders to religious extremists, some segments of Pakistani society have developed a flawed sense of entitlement over and above the law of the land. If Pakistan is to become a developed state, governed by the rule of law, all citizens must be treated as equal before the law, regardless of ethnicity, faith, race or cultural disposition. Our leaders should act as role models by giving up overt displays of entitlement around public offices.

Is a strict separation of powers possible?

In Pakistan, a person cannot serve in more than one branch. Members of the cabinet representing the executive organ can be part of the National Assembly which represents a part of parliament. It is impossible to achieve absolute separation of powers, some overlapping will occur especially between the legislature and executive branches. However, the separation between the judiciary and the other two branches is very strict, as the judiciary must be independent and free from political influence. In Pakistan, the judicial power can decide on the constitutionality of laws and declare invalid any exercise of power that is not authorized by law and conflicts with the constitution. This is known

as a judicial review. Under Article 184(3) of the Constitution of Pakistan, the Supreme Court can take action by exercising suo moto power. The key to the success, however, requires the balance of power among the institutions. If one institution dominates the others, it will probably not be able to maintain democratic values. A clash of institutions can damage the democratic process.

The current state in Pakistan

Over the past 76 years, Pakistan has produced an institutional structure that is highly unlikely to meet the demands of the time. Resultantly, the institutional wreckage, left unrepaired by regimes in the past, continues to increase and debilitate over time.

The democracy in the country has been challenged by the judicial

Governments without separation of powers commit the worst crimes.

James Cook

activism, the interference of judiciary in the affairs of other institutions of government. Intervention of one institution into the other not only destabilizes the democracy but also affects the prestige of the judiciary. The root cause of wobbly politics in Pakistan is the clash of institutions.

On the other hand, the judicial system of Pakistan has never remained independent in its decision-making. It has always been pressurized by other institutions of the country either military or religious groups.

Dr. Hassan Askari Rizvi, a leading professor of political science and a famed political analyst, argues that the powers of institutions in Pakistan overlap, which is affecting

the democratic procedure. A major threat to democracy in Pakistan emanates from the non-elected institutions of bureaucracy and the judiciary. Over the years, the bureaucracy of Pakistan has supported other elements so as to expand its authority over parliament. Whenever the military took over the democratic government, the judiciary was the former's main supporter. During all such military takeovers or crises against an elected parliament, the apex courts have been consistently engaged in judicial activism. The clash of powers between the executive and the judiciary is not a good omen for Pakistani democracy.

Way forward

Our governance model should embrace a genuine separation of powers between branches of the government (legislative, executive and judicial) for effective checks and balances as uniting these powers could lead to authoritarianism, as amply witnessed by Pakistan in its short history.

We also need an independent judiciary that can withstand the political winds and restore people's confidence in the rule of law; and an education system that teaches children at an early stage about their civic rights and responsibilities as equal citizens of Pakistan.

One caveat to all that is said above is that the law itself must be clear, universal in application, consistent across equivalent cases, easily knowable to the people, formulated after consultations and due diligence, and without retroactive effects. Applying the law inconsistently and using it to harass political opponents undermines public faith in the rule of law. As Montesquieu said, there is no greater tyranny than that which is perpetuated under the shield of the law and in the name of justice. ■

The writer is an academic.

The Economic Cooperation Organization, an economic bloc that includes several ex-Soviet nations – Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – along with Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and Türkiye, held its 16th summit in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan. During this two-day summit, which was held on November 8-9, the participating leaders discussed plans for speeding regional economic integration. They also talked about the need for increasing the ECO's global profile through fostering regional and global partnerships. The participants also urged the international community to come up with a "more serious and fruitful response" to the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip amid the Israel-Hamas war and called for increased humanitarian assistance to people in Afghanistan.

The 16th ECO Summit



Aftab Abbasi



The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), a political and economic intergovernmental organization founded by Türkiye, Pakistan and Iran in 1985, recently held its 16th summit in Tashkent. The event

was attended by Heads of State/Government of the ECO Member States, including Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Türkiye and Turkmenistan, as well as ECO Secretary-General (Khusrav Noziri).

The Summit reviewed the post-pandemic activities of the organization including, inter alia, the progress made in regional trade, transport, energy, tourism, agriculture sectors, etc. ECO leaders noted that member countries were required to be more receptive and responsive to mutually materialize ECO's sectoral initiatives for ensuring shared and sustainable progress and development in the region. In this regard, the meeting appreciated Uzbekistan for introducing some joint action plans to speed up the process of regional economic integration, including the country's proposal on the establishment of an International Industrial Exhibition within ECO and offer for hosting its first exposure in Uzbekistan during 2024.

Underscoring the significance of year-wise conceptual themes and the yearly selection of ECO Tourism Capitals, the leaders noted that such positive trends would support and accelerate the accomplishment of ECO's multifarious agenda. Besides, they emphasized the necessity of enhanced international cooperation to create greater harmony amongst the nations so that the current geopolitical challenges may collectively be addressed. In this regard, the leadership appreciated ECO's efforts for increasing the organization's worldwide visibility through more and improved regional and global partnerships. Underlining the role of parliamentary diplomacy which continues to grow in global relations, ECO leadership acknowledged the importance of the Parliamentary Assembly of ECO Member States (PAECO).

The Summit also discussed the current situation in Afghanistan, urging increased humanitarian assistance to solve the severe socioeconomic problems of Afghan people. Looking into the escalating tensions in Palestine and the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in Gaza, the ECO leaders stressed the need for the international community to come up with a more serious and fruitful response.

According to the ECO Secretary-General, the role of the 16th Summit has "increased manifolds as the highest ECO leadership gathered in Uzbekistan to review the organization's progress and activities as well as provide some thoughtful guidance for the continued improvement of ECO, especially during the emerging global disputes and current geopolitical challenges.

Pakistan was represented by Caretake Prime Minister



Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

In his address to the august gathering, PM Kakar called for international condemnation of Israel's actions in Gaza, urging the ECO member states to push for a ceasefire in Gaza. He further said the "incessant and lethal" Israel bombardment was "a deplorable act". "This issue needs to be addressed in accordance with the relevant UNSC and OIC resolutions," he urged. "I urge all ECO member states to push for a ceasefire in Gaza, support the call for provision of humanitarian assistance and rally efforts to hold Israel to account," he stated.

While terming the Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad corridor a significant development, the interim PM said that Pakistan is upgrading its rail and road infrastructure to facilitate trade with the neighbors and beyond.

The caretaker PM also shared that Pakistan has established a Special Investment Facilitation Council that will serve as a single window platform for multidomain cooperation including agriculture, defense production, IT, energy and mining.

Afghanistan has a critical role in regional connectivity, the PM said.

"Projects such as Central Asia-South Asia Electricity Transmission and Trade (CASA-1000), Trans Afghan railways, Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) and others are not only merely economic projects; they are strategic investments in our shared future."

He added that Pakistan looks forward to working closely with other ECO countries towards the shared goal of building a peaceful, prosperous and interconnected Afghanistan. He also pointed out that despite being blessed with natural resources, geographical

linkages and cultural heritage, the ECO region has been unable to exploit its true trade potential as it had just two per cent share in global trade and 8pc in intra-regional trade. Reiterating Pakistan's commitment to ECO Vision 2025, Mr Kakar called for collective efforts and accelerated reforms to achieve the organization's objectives and the region's trade potential for bringing "colossal" economic and peace dividends.

About ECO

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) is an Asian political and economic intergovernmental organization established in 1985 to serve as a platform to discuss and improve development and promote trade and investment opportunities.

Background

In 1964, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey (now Türkiye) founded the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD), for enabling socioeconomic development of the inhabitants of the Member States. At a time when the world was bereft of global and regional vision and shared solutions, the RCD called for effective multilateralism at the regional level and held the promise of regional economic integration. The idea was to channel the historical affinity and brotherhood among the three countries to establish a well-defined multilateral platform. It was envisioned that the primary focus would be on promotion of economy through trade and connectivity as well as further strengthening the cultural bonds.

By the 1980s, however, RCD had clearly failed to meet expectations

regarding establishment of a mechanism for trade liberalization and realising the region's latent trade potential. In addition, it had been able to implement an abysmally small number of the envisaged/approved projects under its portfolio. With the arrival of the Islamic Revolution

in Iran in 1979, the organization lost its vitality and came to an end.

Still, keeping the significance of regional economic and development cooperation in view, the RCD was rechristened as the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in 1985. After the end of the Cold War, the organization witnessed an expansion in its Member States, as the newly-independent Central Asian Republics and Azerbaijan as well as Afghanistan opted to join ECO through the signing of the Treaty of Izmir in 1992.

The common theme of economic prosperity through the building blocks of trade, connectivity, tourism, energy and cultural cooperation struck a chord with the newly-independent and other members which were motivated to preserve their unique identity and at the same time, engage closely with other regional stakeholders for economic progress and prosperity.

Objectives

The organization's objective is contributing to the development of the member states, removing trade barriers within the ECO region and developing intra-regional trade, as well as promoting the ECO region's integration with global markets, strengthening cultural and historical ties among the member states. The main objectives of the organization can be summarized as:

- to remove trade restrictions in the ECO region;
- to expand intra-regional and inter-regional trade
- to promote cooperation in the fields of agriculture; energy and minerals; finance

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and economy; industry; trade and investment; transport and communications; environmental protection; economic research and statistics; human resource development and international relations by taking into account the experience of other regions and global economic trends.

Potential

The ECO Region shelters more than 500 million inhabitants and expands over 8 million square kilometers of land, connecting the north to south, south and east to the west, Asia to Europe and Eurasia to the Arab World. Composed of some Caucasus, South, West and Central Asian countries, ECO is one of the oldest intergovernmental organizations. Pointing to the potential of the ECO, Turkish president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, said, "With a population of 500 million and a total income of \$1.5 trillion, the Economic Cooperation Organization undoubtedly has an important position. However, it is thought-provoking that the trade between the members of the organization corresponds to only \$85 billion ... I believe that this figure does not benefit us. We must increase our efforts to raise our trade volume to \$100 billion in the first place."

To capitalize on this potential, he said, "We must strengthen our cooperation potential from trade to energy, from transportation to the environment. We now need to put into effect the Economic Cooperation Organization Trade Agreement (ECOTA), which is among the strategic goals of our 2025 vision document and unfortunately has not been implemented for 20 years ... We must strengthen our cooperation potential from trade to energy, from transportation to the environment. Making the Economic Cooperation Organization Trade and Investment Bank (ECOBANK), which we host in Istanbul, more active with the participation of all members will

serve this purpose."

Importance for Pakistan

Intra-regional trade is vital for the entire region's economic progress and to mitigate interstate conflicts. This is why Pakistan assigns great importance to the activities of regional organizations. The theme of this year's summit was 'Year of Strengthening Connectivity,' a replica of ECO Vision-2025. It is also analogous to Pakistan's economic concept, i.e. increasing economic cooperation among the Central, West, and South Asian nations to resolve their trade, financial, investment, and development challenges. The ECO has enormous potential to contribute to global trade. However, its trade volume is unimpressive



because it contributes two percent to international and eight percent to regional trade. As a founding ECO member, Pakistan has always advocated for increasing interregional trade, connectivity, and economic cooperation. Therefore, PM Kakar recommended that the ECO reduce barriers to economic integration. Pakistan-Uzbekistan bilateral cooperation is on a positive trajectory. Both sides aim to advance transport and communication engagement by constructing Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan railway tracks. Admittedly, this project can only be accomplished by improving Afghanistan's political and security

project is the increasing mistrust between Kabul and Islamabad. In summary, ECO members can improve their interstate economic connectivity through the network of rail and road linkages, sea routes and energy pipelines. In this context, Pakistan's geography holds enormous promise for ECO members.

Analysis

The economic cooperation models of European Union and ASEAN are seen as examples of best practises for regional economic collaboration. The basic premise of these organizations is that complementary economic practices provide a conducive environment for trade promotion and help reduce obstacles to free market exchanges. This was also an important objective for the founding of the ECO.

The objectives of the ECO are, indeed, lofty and have the potential to address the common woes of the people of the region and enable it to become one of the most vibrant collaborative platforms in the world. No doubt, some progress has been made in different areas but the pace is not satisfactory despite highly favourable characteristics of the organization - all countries are Muslim, have geographical contiguity, enjoy good relations, have no political disputes and are full of natural resources. A case in point is the adoption of an ambitious 'ECO Vision 2025' back in 2017, which envisaged clear goals for strengthening cooperation in areas like trade, transport and connectivity, energy, tourism, economic growth, social welfare and environment but the pace of implementation is wanting. In this backdrop, Prime Minister Kakar has outlined a workable plan of action for increasing regional trade, strengthening connectivity, operationalizing major transport corridors and seeking energy security. He supported the ECO's corridor-based approach like Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran (KTAI), Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI), Kazakhstan,

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Turkmenistan and Iran (KTI) and others and said the integrated transport projects would help promote trade and connectivity. For the revival of the Istanbul-Tehran-Islamabad rail project, Pakistan was upgrading its rail infrastructure with the cooperation of China to speed up the flow of goods. There is a need for opening more border points within the ECO region to enhance connectivity and trade as connectivity projects would also facilitate the private sector and widen the scope of business and investment. Afghanistan has special significance in regional connectivity and execution of regional projects like CASA-1000, Trans Afghan Railway and TAPI but continued instability and uncertainty

is one of the major hurdles in the way of moving meaningfully towards regional cooperation. The ECO countries should, therefore, coordinate their policies on Afghanistan and contribute their share for realization of the goal of a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan. The prospects for infrastructure development in the region can receive a boost if the ECO as a bloc decides to join the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Energy security is another vital issue closely linked to the pace of economic development of a country. Some ECO member states are rich in oil and gas and are also in a position to export electricity to neighbouring countries. They should, therefore, focus on expeditious implementation of

projects like CASA-1000, which envisages import of electricity by Pakistan from Tajikistan during summer season and now that Pakistan has a generation capacity of 45,000MW (but its winter requirement is just around 12,000MW) it proposes to export electricity to Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan in winter months through the same CASA-1000 transmission line. Similar arrangements in other areas of collaboration could help mitigate economic problems of the member countries and accelerate the pace of socio-economic development. ■

The writer is a member of staff.

ECO Summit

Held every two years at the level of heads of state and government
15 Summit meetings have been held

Council of Ministers (COM)

Organization's highest decision-making body
 Annually convenes at the level of foreign ministers

- Regional Planning Council (RPC)
- Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR)
- Sectoral or joint ministerial meetings
- ECO Secretariat

Its secretariat is located in Iran, the economic office in Türkiye, and the scientific office in Pakistan



Muhammad Anwar Farooq

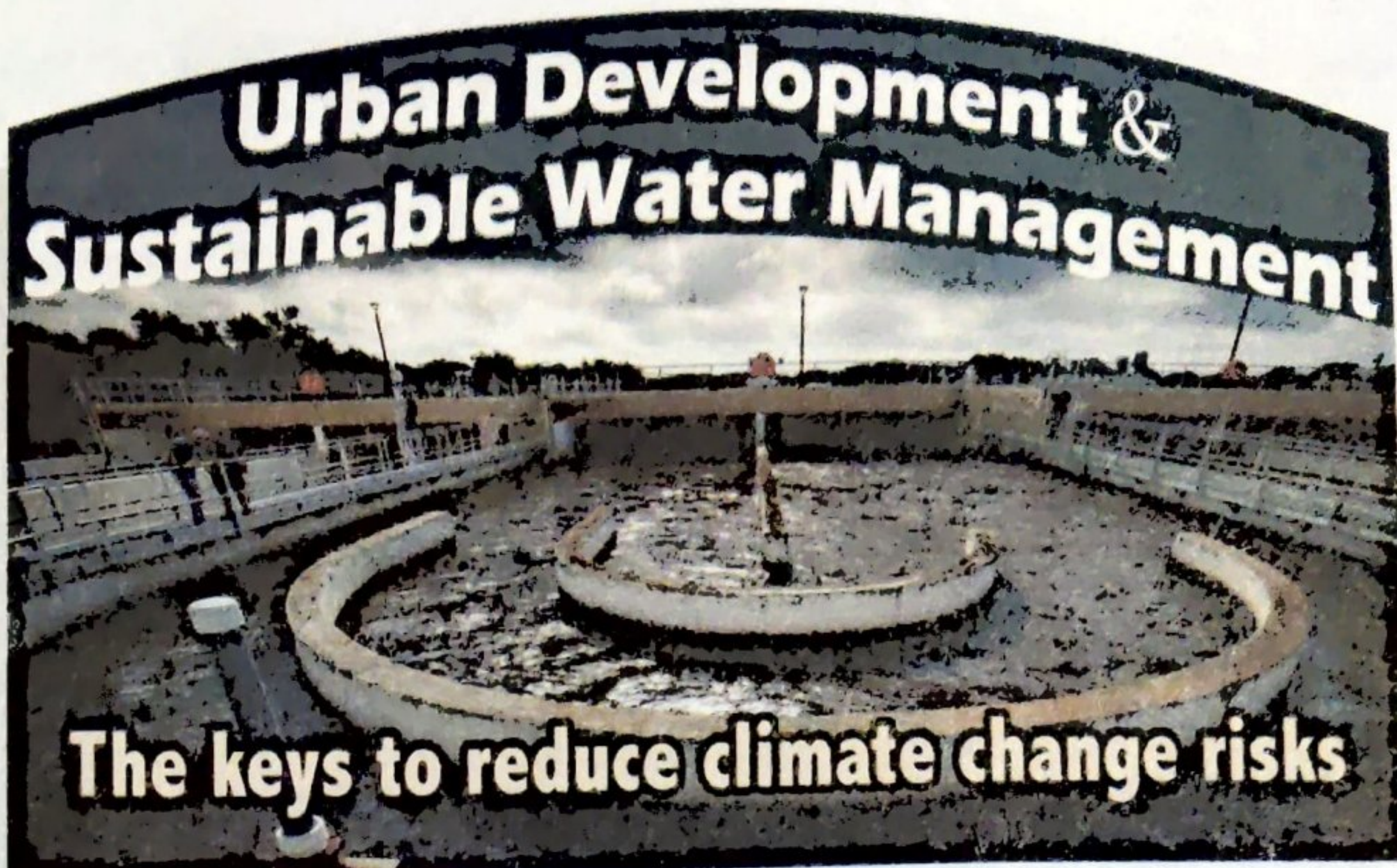


Climate change risks refer to the various adverse effects and potential consequences of the ongoing changes in the Earth's climate patterns, primarily driven by human

activities such as the release of greenhouse gases (GHGs) into the atmosphere. These risks pose significant challenges to both the natural environment and human societies. Some of the key climate change risks include rising temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, sea level rise, extreme weather events, ocean acidification, biodiversity loss, food and water insecurity, health risks, economic disruption, migration and displacement, and loss of cultural heritage, etc. These climate change risks are interconnected and their severity varies depending on the rate and extent of global warming, regional factors and societal responses. Mitigating these risks requires international cooperation, a reduction in GHG emissions and proactive adaptation measures to protect vulnerable communities and ecosystems.

Successful practices to reduce climate change risks through urban development and sustainable water management typically involve a combination of strategies, policies and technologies aimed at mitigating GHG emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change. These practices are essential for countries like Pakistan that are vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events, water scarcity and rising temperatures.

Many countries have taken successful measures to cope with the challenges posed by climate change. Many cities globally are adopting green infrastructure and sustainable urban planning. This includes creating green spaces, such as parks and urban forests, implementing transit-oriented development, promoting mixed land use and using energy-efficient building designs. For example, the city of Copenhagen (Denmark) is known for its sustainable urban planning and emphasis on cycling as a mode of transportation, reducing the need for cars and associated emissions. Pakistan is rapidly urbanizing and this trend is expected to continue. Sustainable urban planning can help reduce emissions from transportation and buildings, promote cleaner energy sources and increase resilience to climate change impacts such as heat waves and flooding. Implementing water recycling and reuse systems can reduce the strain on freshwater resources. It involves treating and reusing wastewater for non-potable



purposes like irrigation, industrial processes and toilet flushing. For example, Singapore's NEWater program treats wastewater to a high standard and reuses it as a source of drinking water, reducing the city's dependence on external water sources. Pakistan also faces water scarcity issues due to factors like population growth and increased demand. Implementing water recycling and reuse can help conserve precious freshwater resources and enhance resilience against climate change-induced water shortages.

Cities prone to flooding have developed comprehensive flood resilience and drainage systems. This involves building flood protection infrastructure, floodplain management, and early warning systems. A successful example is Rotterdam, the Netherlands, which is known for its innovative approaches to flood management, including the use of water plazas, green roofs and underground storage facilities to manage stormwater. Pakistan also experiences frequent floods, especially during monsoon seasons. Developing effective flood resilience and drainage systems can help protect vulnerable urban areas from flooding and its associated damages.

Sustainable transportation options such as electric buses, metro systems, cycling infrastructure and pedestrian-friendly pathways can reduce emissions from the transport sector. Bogotá, Colombia, is recognized for its Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, which reduces congestion and GHG emissions. Pakistan's major cities face issues of traffic congestion and air pollution. Promoting sustainable transportation modes can mitigate emissions and improve air quality.

To adopt these practices and reduce climate change risks through urban development and sustainable water management, Pakistan has to develop and implement comprehensive urban planning

and zoning regulations that prioritize sustainability and resilience. It is necessary to invest in public transportation and cycling infrastructure to reduce car dependency and emissions. Enhanced water management through recycling, efficient distribution and demand-side management will help to cope with the challenges. There is an urgent need to build flood-resistant infrastructure and implement effective floodplain management. It is necessary to encourage green building practices to increase energy efficiency and reduce GHG emissions. Collaboration with international organizations for financial support to fund these initiatives is an urgent need for countries like Pakistan.

Pakistan, like many other countries, must use urban development and sustainable water management techniques to reduce climate change risks due to its unique vulnerabilities and challenges. The reasons why Pakistan must adopt these practices include vulnerability to climate change impacts, rapid urbanization, water scarcity, flood vulnerability, heavy dependence on agriculture, rapid glacial melt, continuously increasing health risks, challenges related to energy security, issues related to biodiversity conservation and the urgent requirement of economic stability and social well-being. Pakistan must use urban development and sustainable water management techniques to address its specific climate change risks and vulnerabilities. These practices are essential for protecting the environment, economy and the well-being of its people while contributing to global efforts to combat climate change. ■

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Introduction

Approaching the issue with a humanitarian lens, the Government of Pakistan pressed all undocumented migrants from all countries to depart the country by 1st November 2023, avoiding prosecution or forced expulsions. Pakistan opted to support their departure, reflecting a compassionate approach. Nevertheless, this benevolent call elicited a diverse range of responses. The response from the Western nations and the international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) was critical, deeming it a harsh decision. Notably, the deportations and prosecutions of illegal immigrants are considered routine, unlike the approach taken by Pakistan. Despite this, Pakistan remains steadfast, citing its lawful right under the UN Charter. However, even under this principled stance, the repatriation of illegal immigrants bears consequences for the trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. This article seeks to examine the international human rights protections for 'illegal' immigrants and whether the international legal framework concerning human trafficking and migrant smuggling extends any safeguards to those affected by the convergence of these two legal systems, i.e. national law imperatives vis-à-vis the international obligations derived from the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime.

National Law

The Foreigners Act, 1946 (the 1946 Act), serves as municipal law that governs and criminalizes illegal immigrants in Pakistan. Section 3 of the Act provides legal cover for the exodus of undocumented immigrants. It states: "Federal Government may by order make provision either generally or with respect to all foreigners or with respect to any particular foreigner or any prescribed class or description of foreigner, for prohibiting, regulating or

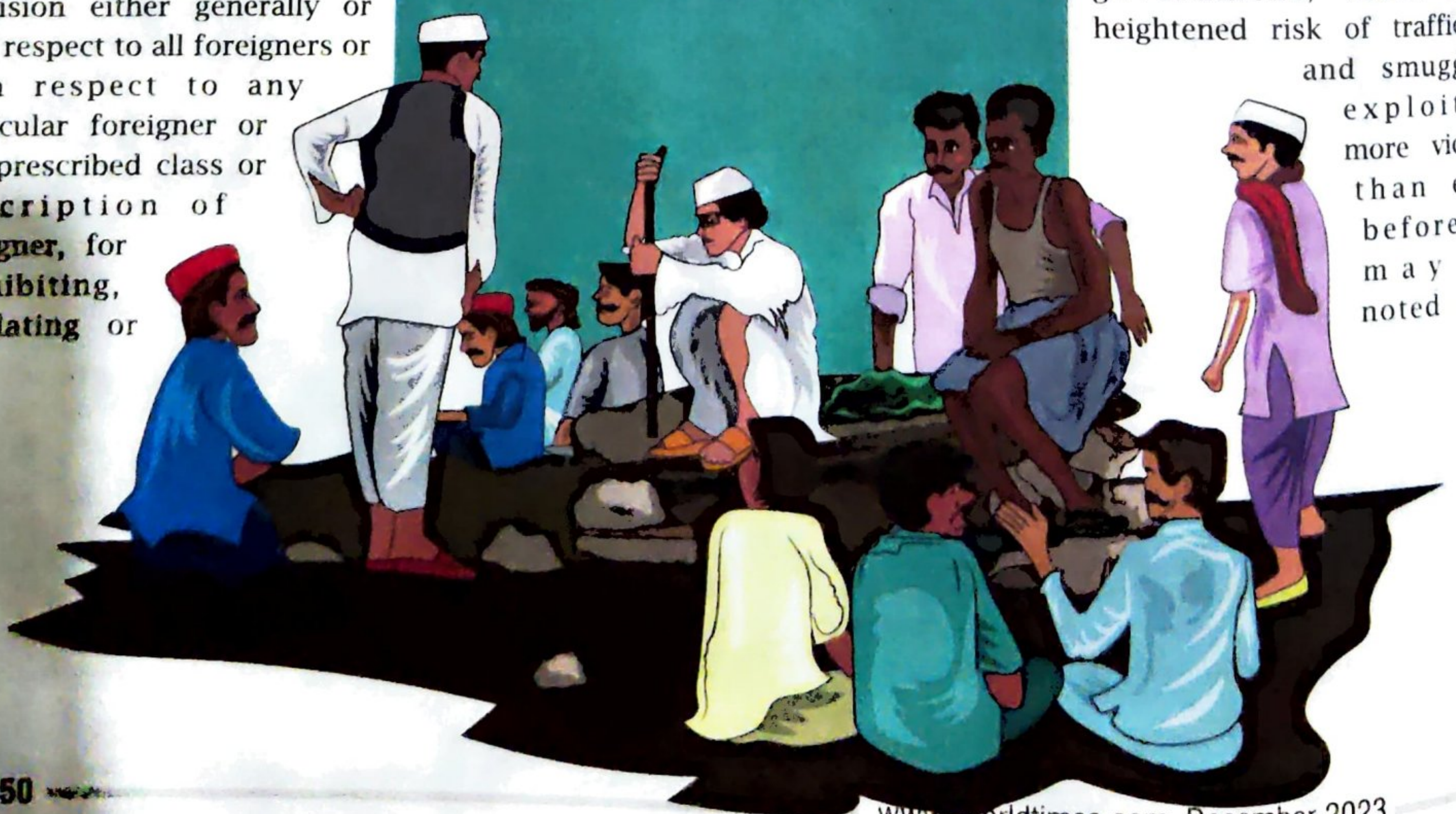
restricting the entry of foreigners into Pakistan or their departure therefrom or their presence or continued presence therein." Under this law, the government is empowered to either prosecute these individuals or deport them, with provisions for detention established in designated 'holding places' (section 4 of the Act) for those awaiting deportation. It may be noted that the 1946 Act predates international law dealing with refugees under the 1950 Statute of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), including the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. While the 1946 Act governs the legal aspects of the exodus of illegal immigrants, the laws concerning trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants must supplement this process. The two laws (the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2018, and the Prevention of Smuggling of Migrants Act, 2018) must be seen as complementary to the Foreigners Act, 1946. The analysis of the laws reveals that they lack specific provisions addressing the situation of illegal immigrants who may fall victim to or engage in crimes related to trafficking and

smuggling. Nevertheless, the officers of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) dealing with deportations on borders are legally obligated to prevent trafficking and smuggling. They may utilize the data gathered from cross-border agencies and international NGOs. Given the conflict situation in Afghanistan, aggravated by the abrupt withdrawal of the US and the non-recognition of the Taliban government, there is a heightened risk of traffickers and smugglers

exploiting more victims than ever before. It may be noted that

Illegal Immigrants

National and International Law

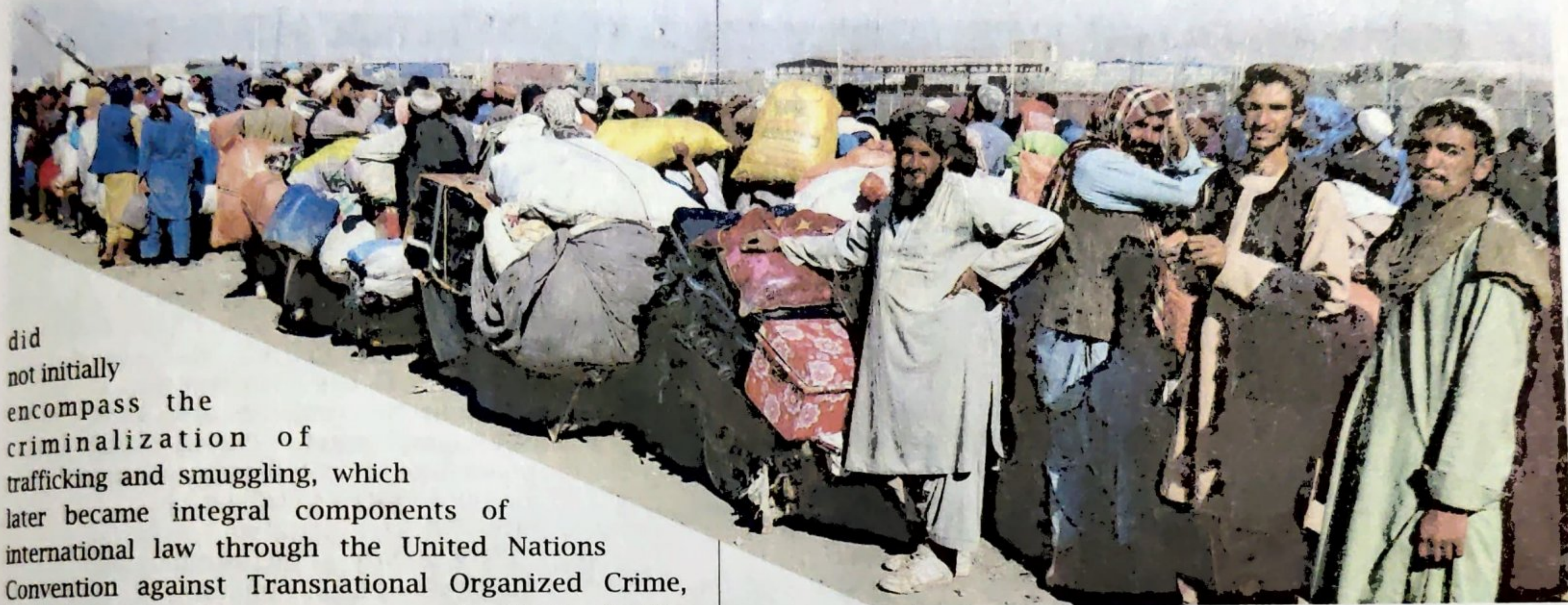


children and women are likely to be vulnerable to such networks, more so than adult males.

International Law

The realm of public international law extends protections to stateless and illegal immigrants through the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to Refugees and its Protocol. Notably, these two international instruments

particularly through Marten's Clause, which obliges all parties, including those engaged in armed conflicts, to extend protection and the rule of law based on established civilized norms and the dictates of public conscience, becomes instrumental. It is likely to provide the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) with the mandate to deal with such people. However, the ICRC will have to work in close coordination with Afghan and



did not initially encompass the criminalization of trafficking and smuggling, which later became integral components of international law through the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000 (UNTOC) and its two accompanying Protocols. The UNTOC, being the more recent legal framework, incorporated the principle of non-refoulement, a fundamental tenet of international human rights law, which is explicitly safeguarded in Articles 19 and 14 of its respective Protocols. The principle of non-refoulement provides that refugees shall not be returned to countries where they might face torture and persecution. Now, in the current case of deportation of the illegal immigrants, the concept of non-refoulement might not apply for two reasons: the refugees are not being repatriated, and Pakistan is facilitating protected transportation for deportations, thereby reducing opportunities for criminal networks to target the illegal immigrants. However, during these deportation processes, there exists a potential for criminal networks to infiltrate the repatriated populations along the Afghanistan-Iran borders. Such groups may coerce or entice deportees into participating in trafficking and smuggling activities. It is imperative for the international community to address these cross-border criminal activities, particularly as these individuals might be trafficked to Western countries. A collaborative effort is necessary to counter this threat in a timely manner.

Given that these persons have not been designated as 'refugees', it is unlikely that any single UN agency will provide them with any support. In this context, the legal protection offered by international humanitarian law,

Iranian government officials to disseminate awareness on trafficking and smuggling to the affected persons.

Way Forward and Recommendations

Under Article 14(1) of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, every human being is granted the right to asylum. However, international law does not impose an obligation on states to extend protection to asylum-seekers. Consequently, due to this gap in the international legal framework and the emphasis on national sovereignty, states often adopt approaches that align with their own national interests. To address the potential exploitation by criminal networks engaging in trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, the international community may consider doing the following:

1. Formation of a coalition among international NGOs aimed at safeguarding illegal immigrants from trafficking and smuggling;
2. Conducting a comprehensive risk assessment of the exodus to establish the correlation between the deportations and trafficking in persons;
3. The establishment of holding areas on the border where families must be kept together, ensuring they are well treated with respect and kept informed about the dangers of the criminal networks before they are allowed to leave the holding areas. ■

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IMPLEMENTING TRANSFER PRICING **REGULATIONS**



Introduction

At present, Pakistan has a severe economic crisis, as visible from the following economic statistics:

- ★ foreign exchange reserves with the central bank are not enough to finance imports on a sustainable basis;
- ★ national currency, i.e. the Pakistani rupee, lost value per USD from PKR215 in July 2022 to a record low of PKR276 in February 2023 in the interbank market;
- ★ inflation of 27.55% reached a decades-high level in January 2023;
- ★ benchmark interest rate, which was 17% in January 2023, is now at 22%, the highest in more than 24 years;
- ★ total debt and liabilities as a percentage of GDP have increased from 85.7% (PKR47.844 trillion) in 2021 to 89.2% (PKR59.696 trillion) in 2022, and total debt-and-liabilities servicing remained at 8.2% of GDP in these years.
- ★ To deal with an acute economic crisis, the government is negotiating with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to secure financial assistance. As always, the IMF is stressing on the government to raise more revenue for fiscal stability. Already, the IMF has pressured the

Bilal Hassan

government to achieve the tax revenue target of PKR7.47 trillion (9.6% of GDP) for the financial year 2022-23. For the tax period July 2022-January 2023, tax revenue shortfall has been recorded at PKR214 billion as tax collection remained at PKR3.965 trillion against the assigned target of PKR4.179 trillion. Tax-wise, the seven-month tax collection is as under:

- ★ Income Tax = PKR1.747 trillion
- ★ Sales Tax = PKR1.476 trillion
- ★ Federal Excise Duty = PKR190 billion; and
- ★ Customs Duty = PKR551 billion.

Pakistan is not so successful in mobilizing tax revenue as compared to countries with similar economies, which is visible from the fact that the tax authorities calculated the tax gap at PKR1,289 billion or 26% of potential collectable tax revenue. The tax gap percentages of potential collectable tax revenue calculated under different taxes are as below:

- ★ income tax gap = PKR730 billion, which is 31% of potential collectable income tax;
- ★ sales tax gap = PKR519 billion, which is 24% of the potential collectable sales tax;
- ★ customs duty gap = PKR11 billion, which is 11% of potential collectable customs duty.
- ★ The above tax gaps could be larger as the tax authorities excluded the underground economy and the agriculture sector from the calculations.
- ★ The considerable size of the tax gap is an immediate explanation for widespread tax evasion and tax avoidance in the country. Among others, the inability of the tax authorities due to limited tax capacity in developing countries like Pakistan to enforce transfer pricing (TP) regulations effectively is an important reason for tax evasion and tax avoidance by the multinational enterprises (MNEs) involved in substantial intra-group trade of goods and services.

Legal Framework for TP Regulations

Under the provisions of ITO 2001, the tax authorities are empowered to:

- ★ re-characterize transactions that have been entered into as part of a tax avoidance scheme;
- ★ make adjustments to transactions that have no bona fide commercial substance or substantial



- ★ economic effect;
- ★ disregard entities or corporate structures that do not have an economic or commercial substance or were created as part of the tax avoidance scheme;
- ★ treat a place of business in Pakistan as a permanent establishment (PE) if the said place fulfils conditions specified in Section 2(41)(g) of the ITO 2001;
- ★ recompute profits where business transactions between a resident and a non-resident person (related parties or associates) are non-arm's length and result in the diversion of business profits towards the non-resident.

★ Section 85 of ITO 2001 defines related parties or associates as two persons who associate in such a manner that one may reasonably be expected to act in accordance with the intentions of the other, or both of them may act in accordance with the intentions of a third person. In other words, they are able to influence the terms and economic results of the transaction. Under the provisions of ITO 2001, the following shall be associates or related parties:

- ★ an individual and a relative of the individual;
- ★ members of an association of persons (AOP);
- ★ a member of an AOP and the AOP itself, where the member controls 50% or more of the rights to income or capital of the AOP;
- ★ a trust and any person who benefits or may benefit under the trust;
- ★ a shareholder in a company and the company itself, where the shareholder controls either directly or indirectly:

- (a) 50% or more of the voting power in the company;
- (b) 50% or more of the rights to dividends; or
- (c) 50% or more of the rights to capital; and
- ★ two companies, where a person controls them, either directly or indirectly:
- (a) 50% or more of the voting power in both companies;
- (b) 50% or more of the rights to dividends in both companies; or
- (c) 50% or more of the rights to capital in both companies

To establish arm's-length prices for transactions between related parties, the following methods are prescribed:

- ★ comparable uncontrolled price (CUP) method - the comparison with prices charged in comparable transactions between independent parties;
- ★ resale price method - the subtraction of a margin from the end-selling price to an independent third party;
- ★ cost-plus method - the addition of a margin to

the costs of producing the relevant goods or services, etc.; or

- ★ profit-split method - the associates form a business enterprise and agree to divide profits in a manner that independent persons would have agreed to based on the fact that they are dealing with each other at arm's length.

The profit split method can only be applied in a situation where the tax authorities are unable to reliably apply other methods, including the CUP method, resale price method or cost-plus method. The ITO 2001 provides that among the CUP, resale price and cost-plus methods, the method that provides the most reliable measure of the arm's length price is to be applied. If it is not possible to determine the arm's length price reasonably with any of the CUP, resale price and cost-plus methods, the tax authorities may apply any other method consistent with the arm's length standard to determine the arm's length price.

Conclusion

Following the recommendations provided in the OECD BEPS Action Plan, Pakistan introduced rules concerning documentation and CbC reporting requirements in November 2017. Taxpayers having transactions with related parties or associates are obliged to submit a Master File, Local File, CbC report and any other related documentation if requested by the tax authorities in connection with proceedings initiated under the provisions of the ITO 2001.

Pakistan is a developing country and needs substantial revenue for social and economic development. At present, domestic revenue is not sufficient to meet the country's budgetary requirements as well as foreign and domestic debt and liability obligations. However, the current economic crises have created an opportunity for the authorities to enhance tax revenue through enforcement so as to minimize tax evasion and tax avoidance. Diverting profits through

transfer pricing by the MNEs is an important area of concern for tax authorities in Pakistan.

Pakistan has published TP regulations to deal with cases of transfer pricing. However, to deal with the issue effectively to protect much-needed revenue requires skilled and professionally competent work force, which could be developed through training. Developing countries like Pakistan could utilise resources such as tax data bank and training modules offered by the International Bureau of Fiscal Documentation to improve the knowledge and skills of their workforce in the area of transfer pricing. ■

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Dr M. Usmani

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) continues to grow exponentially, permeating many aspects of society. The development of AI has opened up a variety of potential uses for military and defence purposes. Applications of AI in defence settings are potentially unlimited, and include, for example, logistic support, simulation, target recognition and threat monitoring. Moreover, amidst rising geopolitical tensions across the globe, most militaries are working relentlessly to modernize all aspects of their equipment and operations to meet the evolving needs of modern armed conflict. As the world advances towards a future increasingly dominated by AI, a number of countries are investing huge resources to tap its benefits in the defence sector.

AI's potential in defence is vast. It can streamline operations, enhance decision-making and increase the accuracy and effectiveness of military missions. Drones and autonomous vehicles can perform missions that are dangerous or impossible for humans. AI-powered analytics can provide strategic advantages by predicting and identifying threats. So, no military or any major player within the defence supply chain can afford to ignore any AI value chain layer. It is due to this reason that in today's modern, tech world, AI-based military systems and the

subsequent utilization of AI-based decision-making systems are gaining momentum in high-end technology states. In this changing global landscape, the shift in balance of power would be in favour of those states that will have new warfare technologies that are re-defining the modern warfare. Thus, AI not only foreshadows the death of the traditional basis of power but also functions as a foundational cornerstone for the new world order.

What is AI?

- It is a stream of study that involves the creation of advanced algorithms that can mimic the human brain.
- The pioneer of AI John McCarthy, defines it as "the science and engineering of making intelligent machines, especially intelligent computer programme."
- The revised definition of AI terms it as "the study of mechanisms underlying intelligent behavior through the construction and evaluation of

Use of AI in Defence Sector

Artificial Intelligence is widely acknowledged to be one of the most dramatic technological game-changers of our age. It has infiltrated practically every industry we can imagine and is already having a disruptive impact on most walks of private and public life. It has changed the way people and businesses work, and it is now swiftly becoming a necessary component of modern combat. Modern militaries are actively pursuing AI research in the fields of intelligence collection and analysis, cyber operations, command and control, and for use in a variety of autonomous vehicles.



EXAM PACK

- artefacts that attempt to enact those mechanisms.
- AI is often termed as a technology but instead it is an enabler to a constellation of technologies.

Need for AI in defence sector

- AI is globally acknowledged as the most dramatic technological advancement of our age.
- The inception of AI as a discipline transpired in wartime research in various analytical areas such as cryptography, the calculation of ballistic firing tables for artillery and in the cruise missiles.
- Future warfare would see AI as the third revolution in warfare being utilized with minimal adverse impact.
 - This augments the implications of AI on national security, military tactics and defence strategies as almost 70-75% of global defence leaders believe that AI will be very, or extremely, important to organizational strategies and in bearing outcomes.
- It as an aspirational goal, a game-changer and a transformative national-security technology that is opening up several prospects of military success as well as threats to defence and security.
- Three major areas of national security which would see a significant impact from the increasing developments in AI are military superiority, information superiority and economic superiority through data, data-driven technologies, machine learning technology, network technologies, and cyber defense

- technology.
- The transformation of warfare through AI, along with biotech, strategic weaponry and computers, would increase armed forces' readiness and bring a paradigm shift in modern warfare and the security apparatus of states.

Advantages

- Using AI-powered drones and robots to patrol borders provides increased coverage and reduces the need for human intervention in dangerous situations.
- The use of AI in the cyber domain has led to the automation of various tasks that are available for both offensive and defensive purposes.
- The effective use of AI in applications in rockets, missiles, aircraft carriers and naval assets has made AI an essential factor in national-security architecture.
- The dual use of AI has given weak states more visibility and need to ramp up their capabilities.

Concerns

- Due to the dual use of AI (both military and civil applications), there is higher and easy accessibility of AI-based tools to non-state actors, which has further made it challenging to control the flow of technology.
- AI's extensive influence and success have the capability to alter the current power dynamics between nations.
- Furthermore, underfunded countries in AI may risk weakening their future military and economic dominance.
- Technology giants have control over the resources, which can easily lead to the weaponization of AI.

4 PERILS OF MILITARY AI**1 AI is biased.**

AI reflects the biases of the data it is fed, the biases of its developers, and the original reason for its creation. Much AI used by the military first had a civilian function.

These biases have been noticed in emerging AI technologies such as facial recognition, which often fails to correctly categorize persons with darker complexions or distinguish among images of women and gender minorities. Biases can lead to mistaking a friend for an enemy or vulnerable civilians for opposition forces in combat situations.

2 AI-assisted weapons dehumanize.

AI-assisted weapons reduce humans to data points - objects to be observed or targeted.

This dehumanization eliminates a critical human element from warfare. According to the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, "machines lack inherently human characteristics like compassion and understanding of human rights and dignity, which are necessary to make complex ethical choices and apply the laws of war." Properly trained military personnel are necessary to make appropriate moral and ethical decisions.

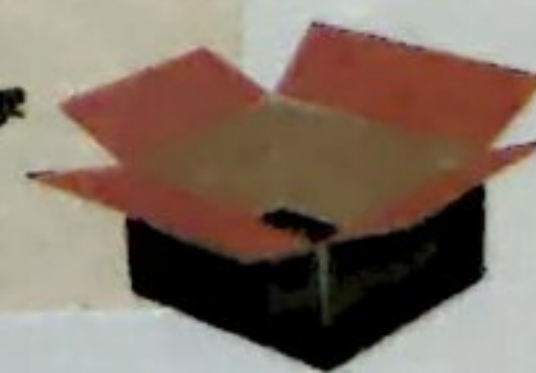
3 AI-assisted technology is unpredictable and unreliable.

No matter how much work is put into programming for all possible outcomes, the unexpected can happen when AI-assisted weapons are deployed.

Despite claims that AI-assisted weapons will be more accurate, there is evidence that AI-assisted technologies are easily hijacked or hacked. A recent *Wired* article illustrated "the propensity for the cleverest AI chatbots to go off the rails." Author Will Knight saw this as a "fundamental weakness that will complicate efforts to deploy the most advanced AI." As well, security expert Paul Scharre notes that "even when AI models correctly refuse to perform a harmful task, users can often 'jailbreak' the model through simple tricks, such as asking it to simulate what a bad actor would do."

Spotlight: The "Blackbox" of AI

A black box is a system that can be understood in terms of inputs and outputs, without any knowledge of its process. The operator or owner of the system will not know why it does what it does and is unable to predict with any certainty the final outcomes of the system's use. This unpredictability can produce unintended and dire consequences in battle.

**4 The creation of AI-assisted tech is poorly regulated.**

At the end of 2019, PAX published a report by Frank Slijper entitled *Slippery Slope: The arms industry and increasingly autonomous weapons*. After surveying 50 global arms producers, it was determined that only four showed "best practices." The 30 that were of "high concern" all worked on "technologies most relevant to lethal autonomous weapons while not having clear policies on how they ensure meaningful human control over such weapons."

- There is a lack of international regulation on developing and deploying AI-enabled weapon systems.
- The question of accountability and liability is a discerning factor in cases where AI-enabled systems malfunction, where human lives are at stake.

Countries embracing AI in defence sector

Vladimir Putin said, "Artificial intelligence is the future, not only for Russia, but for all humankind. It comes with colossal opportunities, but also threats that are difficult to predict. Whoever becomes the leader in this sphere will become the ruler of the world."

- Major powers like the United States, Russia, China and France are earnestly engaging in the exploration and deployment of AI technologies within military frameworks and are investing big time in AI-enabled systems to enable them to maintain military lead.
- According to a story by The Times of India, which cited senior defence sources, India's defence forces are now "increasingly focusing" on deploying AI in the military to facilitate quicker decision-making and reduce the sensor-to-shooter loop.

How is the Indian Army using AI?

- AI-based real-time monitoring software has been deployed for generating intelligence in counter-terrorism operations.
- Indian army has also begun leveraging hi-tech military simulator technologies to train its first batch of recruits, a trend that is likely to mark its prevalence across military training in the near future.
- India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh recently launched 75 newly-developed AI technologies during the first-ever "AI in Defence" symposium where products like robotics, automation tools and intelligence surveillance were on display.
- The United States and India have also agreed to launch an inaugural Defense Artificial Intelligence Dialogue and expand their joint cyber training.

Where stands Pakistan?

India's ongoing attempt to transform into a superpower has the potential to reshape the dynamics of its historical rivalry with Pakistan. However, the geographical proximity between the two countries is unlikely to let Pakistan escape Indian anxiety.

- In 2020, the Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Computing (CENTAIC) of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) started a Cognitive Electronic Warfare (CEW) program to

use AI and machine learning for effective analytical and tactical decision-making.

- CENTAIC focuses on fields including Big Data, ML, Deep Learning, Predictive Analysis, and Natural Language Processing and serves military and civilian needs.
- Furthermore, as Pakistan and China have been participating in joint air exercises since 2011, this dedication to AI/ML and CEW is considered a step towards improved interoperability with the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF).
- Similarly, the Pakistan Army declared the opening of its Cyber Command in 2022. It is said to have two divisions, one of which—the Army Centre of Emerging Technologies—reasonably is assumed to have AI as one of its primary research interests.

Although Pakistan has not openly declared the integration of AI in the military domain, these initiatives indicate Pakistan's dedication to using AI and ML for electronic warfare, which can provide them with a significant advantage in modern battles.

Future use of AI in Pakistan's defence forces

AI has broadened the horizons of application for machines by providing artificial enlightenment to computers and analytical systems. Machines, as a result, are not only conducting tasks, they are also making decisions. Applications like practice tools for training troops, bioinformatics, data aggregation

from nation-wide databases and the security options that AI technology offers can be optimized with these intelligent computers. It is due to these capabilities that technology offers, which are applied by scientists as AI in the defence sector to make up for the limitations that humans have. Some fields in which AI can be utilized are as under:

- **Military drones for surveillance.** The significance, efficacy, prominence and employment of military drones have increased manifold in recent decades. The world has been witness to the fatality and harmful effects created by drones used by the US and its allies in Iraq and Afghanistan in war or terror. Through the application of AI-based technology, drones have become the most lethal weapon, especially to engage a hidden hostile target most accurately without using ground support methods. Other vital utilities include successfully channelling remote communication in a secure way, both video and audio, to ground troops and military



bases in order to track hostile deployment and their movement along with searching for lost friendly forces, and reconnaissance/surveillance in remote terrains within the war zone.

- **Combat robotic soldier on the battlefield.** AI has enhanced robotics technology and it can be deployed on land to assist soldiers in all variants of operations in the war zone. This smart, intelligent and high-graded performance robotics can be used by national security authorities and are designed with operational and strategic objectives to offer efficient methods for achieving success in war zones. With rapid developments in the field of machine learning and evolution in robotics, bipedal humanoid robotics can jointly build the search and rescue battlefield missions. These robots are autonomous, flexible, adaptive, having self-repairing fault rectification system, all of which contribute to a swift and competent initiation and execution of military decisions.
- **AI uses in missile technology.** Emerging demand for precise missile systems' striking capability has raised the military forces' awareness of their striking and assault operations. However, in the future, the precise missile strike is anticipated to represent a huge size in military operations in various geographical areas. AI as a field of simulated intelligence is focused on supporting various fields, emphasizing increased missile variants. AI is significantly used in improvement and upgradation of radar sites, target acquisition in warships and anti-ship missile precision strikes against hostile vessels, along with target acquisition of armored and buried targets.
- **Intelligence-aware munitions system.** Afghanistan has been a testing ground for many latest developed weapons and munitions systems, and ironically Hollywood continuously discloses many of such military developments through their releases. These sensors gather data and transmit targeted information based upon the target's acoustic, signatures, seismic and magnetic modalities. Each sensor node will be able to provide signatures to estimate the target's type, bearing and direction of movement. Such systems are capable of distinguishing among tanks, trucks and personnel carriers, vessels and send reports to the control point. It would use self-configuring and self-healing communication network. The system would also be able to determine the appropriate effects module to engage the target and the time at which it should activate for concentrated efficacy.
- **AI and air power.** As AI has proven to be

massively acceptable inside the decision-making cycle of real-time airborne frameworks, it necessitates examining likely variations that could be faced in the future while employing air power and its targets. The apparent variations that could take place in the future employment of air power is where AI can play a leading role. In the near future, within a decade, AI would be fully acknowledged into the 'observe, orientate, resolve, and act' loop in the air power's application. These four major variations are likely to take place which include human-machine integration, target recognition and directing, airspace management and combat search and rescue operations.

- **AI uses in navy.** From a critical perspective, examining the present business employment of AI, numerous possibilities for implementation to aid and upgrade naval forces and the marine corps are observed. Future autonomous weapons systems and combat technologies aside, the near-term applications of AI can make the navy more responsive, flexible and deadly.

Conclusion

AI is changing not only the living styles, employment performances, people-to-people interaction, learning and decision-making of people as well as the operational and business environment of organizations but also military tactics and warfare. In this regard, significant capitalization of AI has been seen in hybrid, cyber and network-centric warfare. There is an increasing debate on global platforms for devising regulatory frameworks and common standards, which is the right direction to make optimum use of advances in emerging technologies like AI. Creating a supportive AI ecosystem in Pakistan will depend on investments in critical infrastructure, tapping the private sector innovation ecosystem and capitalizing on the developments made by the leading nations in AI. ■

The writer is a Lahore-based academician and political analyst.

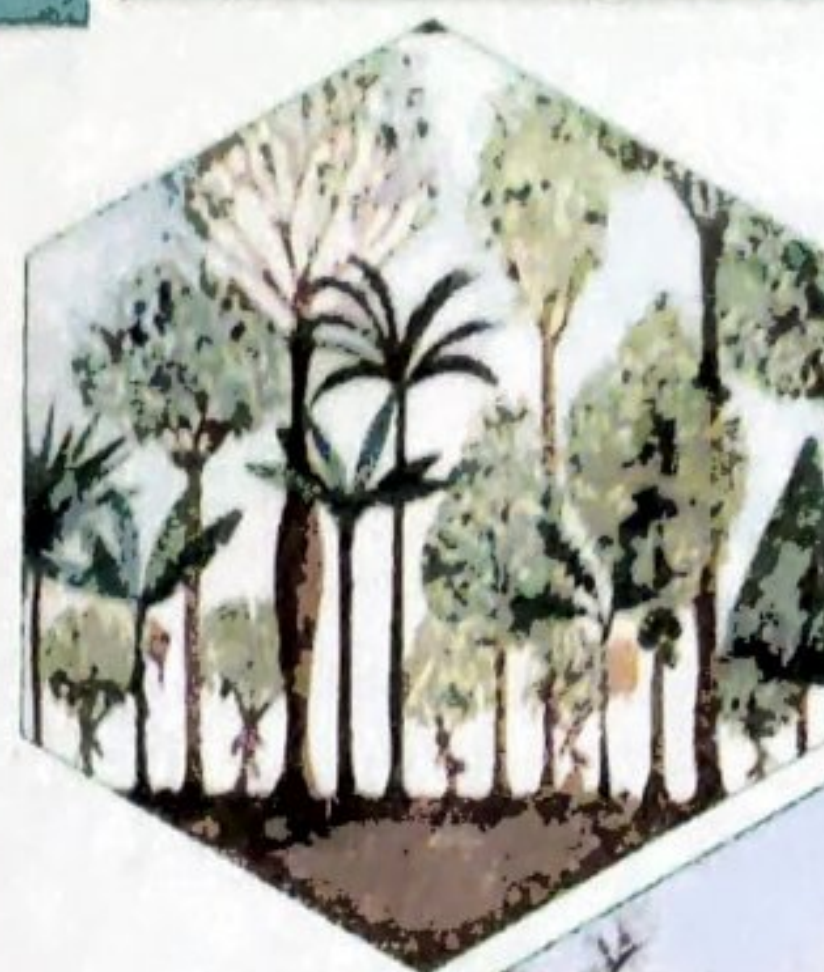
In Greek mythology, the gods sometimes punished man by fulfilling his wishes too completely. ... Throughout history, humanity has suffered from a shortage of power and has concentrated immense effort on developing new sources and special applications of it. It would have seemed unbelievable even fifty years ago that there could ever be an excess of power that everything would depend on the ability to use it subtly and with discrimination."

— Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy by Henry Kissinger



Agroforestry

An eco-friendly and sustainable substitute for traditional farming practices



It is common knowledge that agroforestry is a land management system that combines trees, crops and/or animals on the same piece of land. It has been practiced for centuries in different parts of the world, including Pakistan, where it provides various benefits for the environment, economy and society. It is an essential part of the farming system as it helps to support sustainable agriculture income from the farmlands. Hence, it is not only a source of protection of natural forests in the country but also provides significant economic benefits to growers. Moreover, it has now transformed into one of the major agricultural economic streams as the wood produced on the farmlands has become the principal raw material for many industries.

Muhamamd Furqan Alvi

Pakistan is an agrarian country where the demand for food is increasing because of the growing population. However, the country is battling the problems caused by soil erosion, water scarcity and the impacts of climate change, which bring unpredictable weather patterns that wreak havoc on crops. Since Pakistan is blessed with diverse climate and geography, there is an urgent need to optimise resource use, minimise waste and promote ecological balance. This requires sustainable and regenerative solutions. One such solution can be agroforestry that not only protects our environment but also secures a prosperous future for the farmer, ergo the country. In the current age of ecological sustainability and conservational awareness, agroforestry plays an important role as an eco-friendly and sustainable approach.

What is agroforestry?

Agroforestry is an intensive land management system that optimizes the benefits from the biological interactions created when trees and/or shrubs are deliberately combined with crops and/or livestock. It is a collective name for land-use systems and technologies where woody perennials (trees, shrubs, palms, bamboos, etc.) are deliberately used on the same land-management units as agricultural crops and/or animals, in some form of spatial

arrangement or temporal sequence. In agroforestry systems, there are both ecological and economic interactions between the different components.

Definition

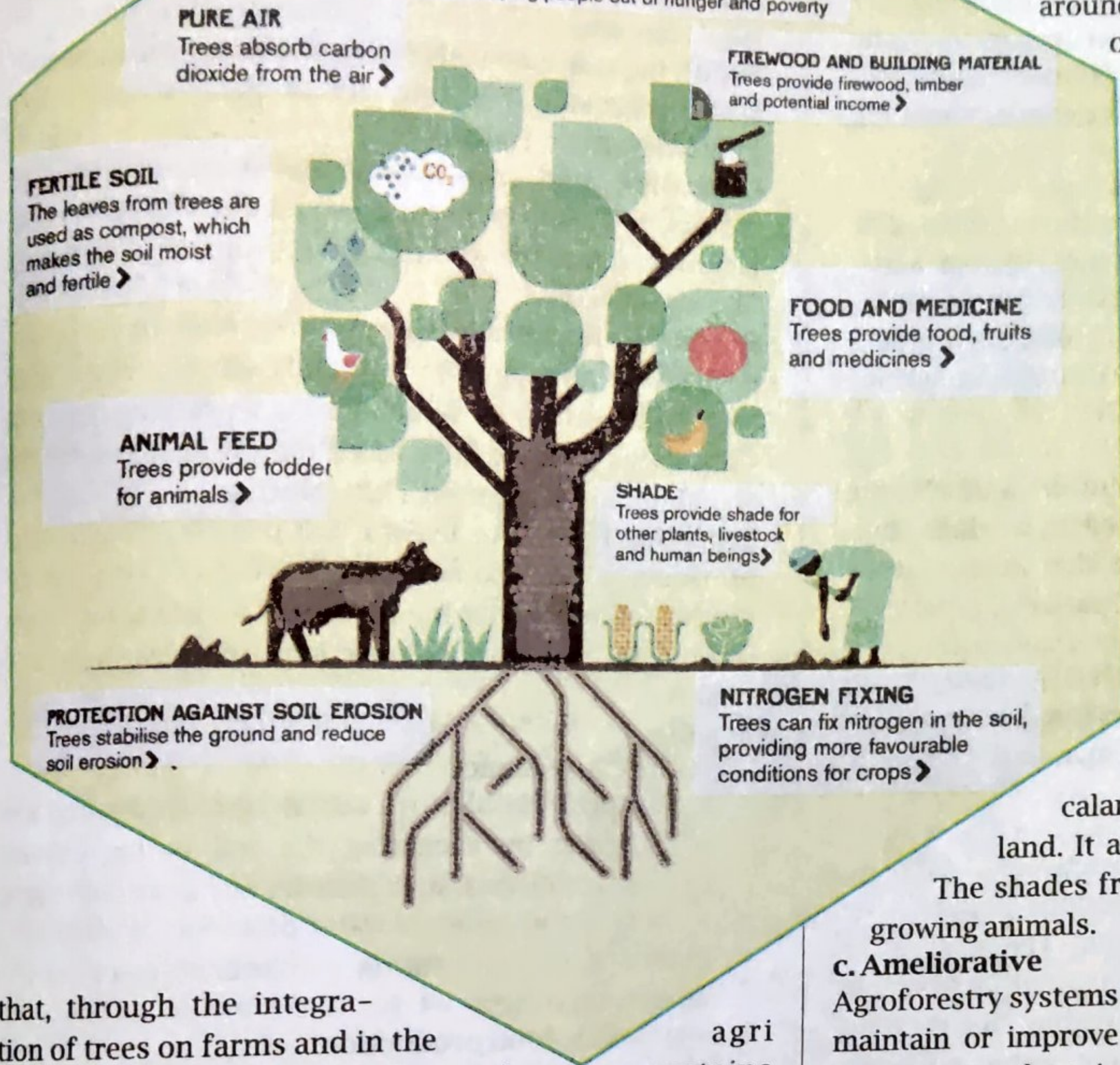
In simplest language, agroforestry is the production of trees and of non-tree crops or animals on the same piece of land. The crops can be grown together at the same time, can be grown in rotation, or can even be grown in separate plots when materials from one are used to benefit another. However, this simple definition fails to take into account the integrated concepts associated with agroforestry that make this system possibly the most self-sustaining and ecologically sound of any agricultural system. Thus, a second definition of agroforestry would be the integration of trees, plants and animals in conservative, long-term, productive systems. Agroforestry can be considered more as an approach than as a single, finished technology. Although several finished systems have been devised and tested, such technology may require adjustment for particular situations. The flexibility of the agroforestry approach is one of its advantages.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), agroforestry can be defined as "a dynamic, ecologically based, natural resource management system

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AGROFORESTRY

Our method for helping people out of hunger and poverty



benefits including food, feed, fuels, often fibers, and usually renewed soil fertility.

Basic principles

The basic principles of agroforestry revolve around the intentional integration of trees or woody perennials with agricultural and/or livestock systems to achieve multiple objectives.

a. Productive

Agroforestry systems can produce food, crops, fruits, litter, timber, fuels, fuel wood and fodder for livestock. The production of these useful things helps to run for a better livelihood along with helping to improve the long-run production capacity of the same area.

b. Protective

Agroforestry helps to minimize the degradation of farmlands and other natural resources by working as shelterbelts. The trees are planted to protect the land from soil erosion and other natural calamities that could affect the used land. It also maintains moisture in the soil.

The shades from the trees could be vital for the growing animals.

c. Ameliorative

Agroforestry systems with legume trees and crops help to maintain or improve the productivity of the land. The leguminous plant is a good source of nitrogen that improves soil fertility along with its quality. The litter obtained from the trees could help to maintain various ecological cycle, which takes place on the agricultural land.

d. Livelihood improvement

From the sale of forest and agriculture products, farmers could generate some income for the betterment of livelihood. An increase in the production of food and useful and saleable products helps to improve the livelihood of the farmers.

Classification of agroforestry systems

a. Agrisilvicultural systems

In agrisilviculture, the cultivation of annual crops or other agricultural activities is combined with the intentional growth of trees or woody plants in the same area.

b. Silvopastoral systems

In these systems, trees or shrubs are intentionally planted and managed within pastures or rangelands to provide multiple benefits for both livestock and the environment.

c. Apiculture with trees

In this approach, various nectar-producing trees that attract honeybees are strategically planted along the boundaries of agricultural fields. This serves a dual purpose of promoting agricultural productivity through

that, through the integration of trees on farms and in the cultural landscape, diversifies and agri sustains production for increased social, economic and environmental benefits for land users at all levels."

Why agroforestry?

Agroforestry systems make maximum use of the land. Every part of the land is considered suitable for plants that are useful. The emphasis is placed on perennial, multi-purpose crops that are planted once but yield benefits over a long period of time. Furthermore, systems of agroforestry are designed for beneficial interactions of the crop plants, and to reduce unfavourable interactions. They are designed to reduce the risks associated with agriculture, small scale or large, and to increase the sustainability of agriculture. Agroforestry practices normally help conserve, and even improve, the soil.

Agroforestry includes a recognition of the interactions of crops, both favourable and unfavourable. The most common interaction is competition, which may be for light, water or soil nutrients. Competition invariably reduces the growth and yield of any crop. Yet competition occurs in monoculture as well and this need not be more deleterious in agroforestry systems.

Agroforestry systems are designed to produce a range of

enhanced pollination and providing a source of nectar for honeybees, ultimately leading to honey production.

d. Aquaforestry

In this approach, a variety of trees and shrubs that are favoured by fish are deliberately planted in the vicinity of fish ponds, including around their perimeters. The primary purpose of this system is to enhance fish production and stabilize the embankments surrounding the fish ponds.

Key traits of agroforestry practices

Four key characteristics - intentional, intensive, interactive and integrated - are the essence of agroforestry and are what distinguish it from other farming or forestry practices. To be called agroforestry, a land use practice must satisfy all of the following four criteria:

a. Intentional

Combinations of trees, crops and/or animals are intentionally designed and managed as a whole unit, rather than as individual elements that may occur in close proximity but are controlled separately.

b. Intensive

Agroforestry practices are intensively managed to maintain their productive and protective functions, and often involve annual operations such as cultivation, fertilization and irrigation.

c. Interactive

Agroforestry management seeks to actively manipulate the biological and physical interactions between the tree, crop and animal components. The goal is to enhance the production of more than one harvestable component at a time, while also providing conservation benefits such as non-point source water pollution control or wildlife habitat.

d. Integrated

The tree, crop and/or animal components are structurally and functionally combined into a single, integrated management unit. Integration may be horizontal or vertical, and above- or below-ground. Such integration utilizes more of the productive capacity of the land and helps to balance economic production with resource conservation.

Main objectives

The objectives of agroforestry are as follows:

Enhancing land productivity and restoration: The primary goal is to efficiently manage land to increase and restore its productivity.

Utilizing resources economically and efficiently: The aim is to make the most economical and efficient use of available resources.

Creating rural employment opportunities: It endeavours to generate employment opportunities for rural communities.

Supplying raw materials for rural cottage industries: It seeks to provide raw materials for small-scale cottage industries in rural areas.

Increasing food crop production: A key objective of agroforestry is to boost the production of food crops, legumes, and tubers to meet the growing food demands of the population.

Enhancing nutritional value: It promotes the production of vegetables, pulses, milk and meat, contributing to improved nutritional value in food, a pressing need for the populace, where the average daily calorie intake falls way short of the required 3000 calories.

Supplying fodder for livestock: It plays a pivotal role in providing a vast population of livestock with much-needed fodder. Proper fodder supply is critical for large-scale milk and meat production from livestock and poultry.

Benefits

a. Enhanced resilience

- » The integration of trees within agroforestry reduces soil erosion by anchoring the soil during adverse weather conditions, such as heavy rain or strong winds.
- » Also, the trees mitigate water pollution by absorbing excess water, preventing contamination of nearby ponds and rivers.

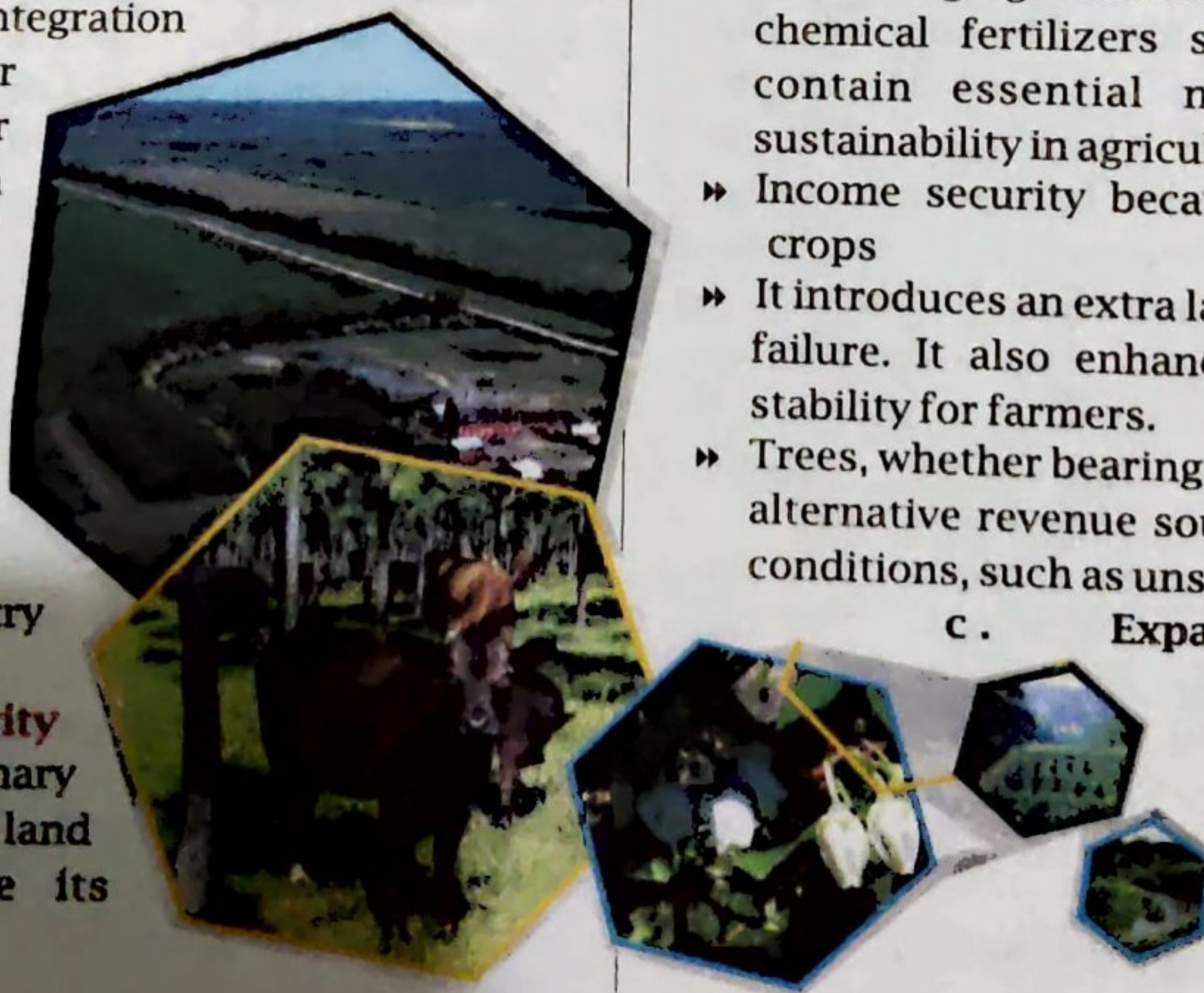
b. Sustainable food production

- » Agroforestry practices can enhance soil quality by improving nutrient cycling, preventing erosion and enhancing overall soil structure. Healthy soils are essential for sustainable food production.
- » Embracing agroforestry can reduce our reliance on chemical fertilizers since healthy soils naturally contain essential nutrients, promoting self-sustainability in agriculture.
- » Income security because of the diversification of crops
- » It introduces an extra layer of protection against crop failure. It also enhances productivity and income stability for farmers.
- » Trees, whether bearing fruits, nuts or timber, offer an alternative revenue source in cases of unfavourable conditions, such as unseasonable weather.

c. Expanded habitat for wildlife

It acknowledges the importance of biodiversity and allocates space within farming landscapes for wildlife.

- » By optimizing land use,



farmers can set aside areas for planting additional trees and hedgerows, creating sanctuaries for wildlife.

d. Environmental benefits

- » As climate patterns become less predictable, its systems offer resilience.
- » The trees play a pivotal role in mitigating climate change by sequestering carbon from the atmosphere and storing it deep within the soil.
- » Trees also facilitate nutrient cycling, nourishing plants, animals, and fungi, which, in turn, enrich the soil.

e. Progress on SDGs

Agroforestry development will also help achieve several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) including no poverty, industry, innovation and infrastructure, climate action and life on land.

Challenges

Scarce high-quality planting material: High-quality planting material is rare, with only about 10% meeting standards, leaving the majority without quality guarantees.

Limited research diversity: Inadequate research for various agro-climatic regions, indigenous species, and domestication, resulting in an overreliance on a few tree species.

Shortage of landscape-level research: Research is primarily small-scale and short-term, with a lack of comprehensive studies at the ecosystem or landscape level.

Weak marketing infrastructure: The scarcity of marketing facilities leads to a buyer's market, favoring middlemen.

Regulatory challenges: Complex legislation regarding tree felling, wood transportation and processing hinders agroforestry adoption.

Taxation complexity: Multiple agencies impose taxes at different processing stages, disadvantaging domestic agroforestry products.

Inadequate extension services: Lack of extension system prevents research dissemination to farmers.

Equitable access for small farmers: Large landholding farmers tend to benefit more from agroforestry schemes, creating an inequity. Special programs for agroforestry models tailored to marginal and small farmers are necessary, given that two-thirds of Indian farmers fall into this category.

Some examples from Pakistan

Here are some examples of agroforestry practices in Pakistan:

- » Growing trees on common property lands (Shamlat or common community lands) outside villages for fuel and grazing

- » Growing poplar trees along canal banks and farm boundaries for timber and shade
- » Growing multipurpose trees such as *Acacia nilotica*, *Prosopis cineraria* and *Ziziphus mauritiana* in arid and semi-arid regions for fodder, fuelwood, gum and medicinal uses
- » Growing walnut, apricot and other fruit trees in mountainous regions for food and income
- » Growing date palm trees in desert areas for food, shade and windbreaks
- » Growing bamboo trees along river banks and slopes for erosion control and handicrafts
- » Growing medicinal plants such as *Aloe vera*, *Withania somnifera* and *Moringa oleifera* in home gardens for health and nutrition

Importance for Pakistan

Pakistan stands as a prominent global producer and supplier of food and crops, underscoring the pivotal role played by its agricultural sector in the country's economic landscape. Accounting for 22.9 percent of the GDP and generating 37.4 percent of employment, the agricultural sector not only ensures food security but also supplies raw materials to the industrial sector, thus fostering sustainable growth. However, traditional agricultural practices and the increasing frequency of adverse climatic events present significant challenges to productivity and sustainability. In response to these challenges, agroforestry has emerged as a sustainable paradigm aiming to address the inefficiencies and environmental impacts of conventional agriculture. Furthermore, agroforestry, requiring fewer external inputs, presents an accessible avenue for female farmers with limited financial means, promoting empowerment within the rural economy.

Way Forward

Agroforestry represents a crucial avenue for farmers and rural communities to achieve prosperity by creating jobs, generating income, and ensuring food and nutritional security. There is a need for more research in developing suitable technologies for critical areas like arid and semi-arid zones and other fragile ecosystems such as the Himalayan region and coastal ecosystems to sustain these areas for higher productivity and natural resource management.

There is also a need for the adoption of agroforestry models linked to the market to enhance productivity and profitability for small-holding farmers. There is a need for the amalgamation of proactive farmer policies of government, involvement of the industries, support services from NGOs, and willingness of farmers. ■

The writer is a student of MSc Botany.



EXAM PACK

“It's not a stretch to say that my personality got a complete overhaul at WTI. I am deeply indebted to the WTI faculty for their relentless efforts and sound guidance.”

Rana Faisal Latif (PSP)

**28th in Pakistan,
CSS 2022-23**

JWT Editorial Board



Jahangir's World Times (JWT): First of all, please tell us about your educational background.

Rana Faisal Latif (RFL): I belong to Arifwala; however, I received most of my elementary education in Lahore. I am an ex-Beaconite (Defence Campus), class of 2014, passing O-levels with 8 A* and 3 A' and earning a gold medal in school. After doing FSc (premedical), I switched fields from medicine to law and did LLB from the prestigious Punjab University Law College. Although my master's degree is in Political Science, I found International Relations more intriguing during my preparation for competitive exams. For that reason, I did a one-year post-graduate diploma in this subject.

JWT: Since you have been allocated to Police Service of Pakistan (PSP), what feature of it attracted you most?

RFL: Although my first choice was PAS, I got allocated to PSP - My brother-in-law is an SI in the Punjab Police and he pushed me to place PSP as my second choice.

The story goes that while working as a Naib Tehsildar in the Revenue Dept. for almost a year, I came across multi-faceted challenges that an administrator has to cope with on a daily basis. This pushed me out of my comfort zone and helped me to be productive and solution-oriented at all times. Thus, PAS seemed a logical choice to me, but I was allocated to PSP in the final result. *Alhamdulillah*, I am very satisfied and grateful to the almighty for this.

JWT: How was your experience with the World Times Institute?

RFL: A highly rigorous regime of lectures, assessments, one-on-one interviews and panel mocks at WTI made it possible for me to sit in front of the FPSC panel confidently. It's not a stretch to say that my personality got a complete overhaul at WTI. I am deeply

indebted to the faculty at WTI for their relentless efforts and sound guidance.

JWT: What, in your opinion, is the key to making a difference in the written part of CSS exam?

RFL: Logical structuring of an answer, sound argumentation and orderly presentation are the prerequisites for a good score in any paper. You should write concise, correct and to-the-point answers in legible handwriting. Notwithstanding this, the importance of the right selection of optional subjects cannot be overstated.

JWT: Generally, compulsory subjects are considered low-scoring, what was your strategy to get through these very papers?

RFL: One major mistake aspirants make is over-relying on market-available resources, ignoring FPSC-recommended books. Summary notes and guidebooks are no substitute for sourcebooks. Sticking to authentic material helps develop fitting arguments.

JWT: What areas should the new aspirants focus on while preparing for the CSS exam?

RFL: Most candidates flunk Essay and Précis papers. So, new aspirants should spend a major chunk of their time preparing for these papers. Since most CSS papers demand critical analysis, aspirants should polish their analytical skills and do away with cramming.

Detailed Marks Sheet

Subject	Marks
Compulsory Subjects	
Essay	40
English Précis & Composition	49
GSA	85
Current Affairs	46
Pakistan Affairs	19
Islamiat	60
Optional Subjects	
International Relations	151
History of Pakistan & India	81
Environmental Science	63
International Law	64
Punjabi	63
Total Written	721
Viva Voce	150
Grand Total	871

Advice to fresh aspirants

Never underestimate your potential to crack CSS exam. It is equally doable for everyone, if you follow the right path and have right guidance. A good write-up is the reflection of your good reading. So, develop the skills I mentioned earlier to ace this exam.

Best of luck to new aspirants!

EXAM PACK

Selection of optional subjects

1. Background knowledge/degree
2. Syllabus
3. Types of questions asked in past papers, i.e. Descriptive or analytical
4. General scoring trend of that subject in previous 2-3 years
5. Personal aptitude toward the content of a subject, e.g. Gender Studies might be antagonistic for a religion-oriented aspirant.

Notes-making

1. Make separate detailed as well as short notes for both compulsory and optional subjects
2. Don't skip any topic deeming it unimportant
3. Use different coloured pencils/markers to make them legible
4. Use relevant data (facts, figures, statistics, and maps) and update them before the exam

Revision

1. Thorough revision of all the content is crucial.
2. Mix up the time spent on notes-making and retaining the content by heart in an eclectic way.
3. Any content in your notes is only good if you are able to recall it in the examination hall.
4. If you tend to forget easily, try writing a summary of whatever you retain after reading a long passage.

MY TIPS ON

JWT: What should be an ideal timetable for a new aspirant to make sound preparations for CSS exam?

SA: Studying for 6-8 hours a day, for 8-12 months, should be enough for an average aspirant to ace this exam. However, depending on the educational background and proficiency level in English, this time span may vary.

JWT: How answers should be written to get maximum marks?

RFL: Answers should be concise, relevant and logical. An argument must be backed up with adequate examples. The use of pictorial and graphical illustrations, maps and tables is also important to drive the point home.

JWT: Should there be some word limit kept in mind while writing answers?

RFL: A good answer elucidates all the essential aspects of a question. No

arbitrary word cap can be put on the length of an answer. Depending upon the requirements of the question, the length of your answer may vary. Quality over quantity, therefore, should be the motto.

JWT: How did you structure your Essay and what was your strategy for Précis and Composition paper?

RFL: For Essay, I tried to deconstruct the topic in a coherent manner. The outline, although devoid of flowery language, was crisp and it depicted my command over the topic. I was very conscious about not making grammatical errors and keeping the content lucid. Solving the last 20 years' past papers and getting them evaluated helped me in getting a grip on what the précis paper demands.

JWT: How did you handle de-

motivations?

RFL: My parents have been a constant support for me throughout my journey. Whenever I felt anxious or directionless, I just talked to them and felt immediate relief. Sufi poetry and music are full of wisdom and can also help in navigating through difficult phases of life. Kalam of Sufi saints like Bulleh Shah and Baba Fareed always uplifted my spirits in times when I felt lost.

JWT: What was the key to your phenomenal success?

RFL: I kept going persistently with faith, discipline and positive intent, even after facing two consecutive failures. It is very important to learn from your mistakes and keep your head high.

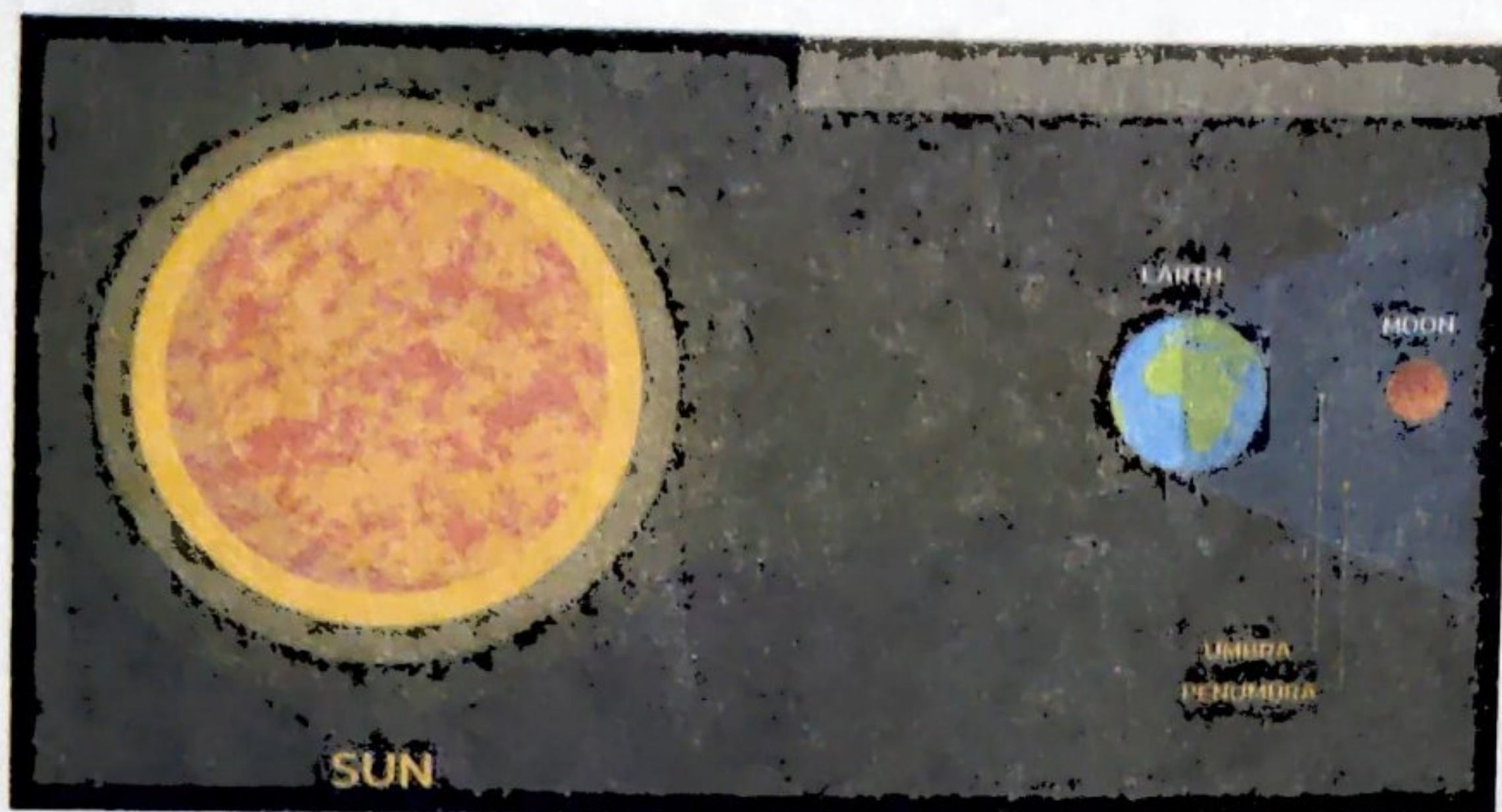


My Interview Experience

My interview lasted 38-40 minutes. It was balanced; neither too shabby nor exceptional. Panel chairman (Mr. Fazal Abbas Maken) was very cooperative and he gave me ample time to respond. While one panellist grilled me on questions related to Indo-Pak history (I had mentioned in my pro-forma that I am a history buff), I was able to respond coherently and managed to get a hold of my stream of thoughts. Skipping a couple of token questions in a row did shake my confidence a bit but I was able to regain my composure in no time.

Detailed Marks Sheet

Your inspiration	My brother-in-law (Rana Haroon Rashid Khan)
Attempts	02
Previous successes in competitive exams	Naib Tehsildar exam (1st in Sahiwal Division)
Qualification	LLB, M.A (Political Science), Post-Graduate Diploma in IR
Alma mater	PU, Lahore
Schooling medium	English
Your study schedule	6-8 hrs a day (No studies on weekends)
Your sources	FPSC-recommended books, Foreign Affairs, The Economist, research articles and YouTube lectures
Academy or Institute you joined	World Times Institute (for Interview)
Group preferences	1. PAS 2. PSP 3. PCS
Why PSP?	Opportunities for public service delivery at the grassroots level, alleviation of common man's woes, active participation in the provision of justice and 'righting a wrong'
Hobbies	Playing chess, table tennis and cricket.
Fave personality(ies)	Baacha Khan, Mian Muhammad Bakhsh
Fave book	Amusing Ourselves to Death by Neil Postman
Fave quote	"If you need motivation and inspiring words to do something, you shouldn't do it." — Elon Musk
Secret of your success	Self-belief, diligence and unwavering faith in the Almighty
Your role model	Mawlana Rumi



On Oct. 28, skygazers from across vast geographic regions, including Australia, Africa, the Pacific, Atlantic, Indian Ocean, South and East Europe and various Asian nations were dazzled by a partial lunar eclipse, a stunning celestial event that occurs when Earth comes between the sun and the moon, casting its shadow across the lunar surface. It is important to note here that eclipses of the sun and moon usually come in pairs. A solar eclipse is almost always accompanied by a lunar eclipse two weeks before or after it, since in two weeks the moon travels halfway around its orbit and is likely to form another almost-straight line with the Earth and the sun. This time was no exception as two weeks after casting its shadow across the Americas on Oct. 14 during an annular solar eclipse, the moon swung around to barely skim through the northern edge of the Earth's own shadow on Oct. 28.

Let's know more about the lunar eclipse.

A lunar eclipse (*Chand Grahān* in Urdu) is an astronomical event in which the moon darkens as it passes into the Earth's shadow. The event occurs when Earth comes between the sun and the moon, casting its shadow across the lunar surface. This captivating event can only transpire during a full moon when the sun, Earth, and moon align in a straight line or in close proximity.

Occurrence:

Lunar eclipses are a rather common occurrence, with approximately three lunar eclipses occurring each year. On average, a total lunar eclipse occurs once every 2.5 years.

Shadow

The Umbra (shadow): The dark center of the Earth's shadow is known as the Umbra.

The Penumbra: The Penumbra is the Earth's outermost shadow.

Mechanism of Occurrence: The phenomena happen when the Earth passes between the sun and the moon.

Earth throws a shadow on the Moon's surface during this time, making it less visible.

Types

Total Lunar Eclipse: During this event, the moon moves into the inner section of Earth's shadow or the umbra. Some sunlight weakly travels through the Earth's atmosphere and illuminates the moon's surface.

Partial Lunar Eclipse: Because the sun, earth and moon are not perfectly aligned, only a portion of the Earth's umbra falls on the moon. This shadow rises and falls, never

entirely covering the moon's surface.

Penumbral Eclipse: The moon passes through the Earth's penumbra, or the outer section of its shadow, during a penumbral eclipse. The moon's fading is so subtle that it can be overlooked.

Why does a total lunar eclipse cause the moon to turn red?

When the moon enters the umbra or the inner part of Earth's shadow, some sunlight weakly travels through the Earth's atmosphere and illuminates the moon's surface. During this event, the Moon appears reddish because of the Rayleigh scattering of blue light. The redder the Moon appears, the higher the dust or clouds in the Earth's atmosphere during the occurrence.

Effects

Tidal Effect: Tidal impacts on Earth are greatest during full moons and lunar eclipses because the sun and moon are in line with Earth.

Wildlife Behaviour: Studies have shown that during a lunar eclipse, animals behave differently. An owl monkey study revealed a significant change in activity during a lunar eclipse.

Cultural Belief: Lunar eclipses were thought to be a terrible omen by ancient human cultures. During this event, they engaged in human and animal sacrifice.

Scientific Significance

Shape of the Earth: Earth's shadow projected on the moon allowed ancient people to deduce that Earth was spherical.

Lunar Diameter: Calculation of lunar diameter was possible using lunar eclipse timing.

Longitude Determination: Previously, the chief use of total lunar eclipse was for the determination of longitude as the moment of total eclipse is the same for every station on that half of the globe.

Star Observations: Stars that are present behind the Moon can be observed only during an eclipse as the surroundings get dimmed.

Spectroscopic Examination: The lunar eclipse provides the opportunity of making a spectroscopic examination of the Earth's atmosphere.

Lunar Surface: The study of lunar eclipse helped astronomers determine the nature of the surface they would be stepping on during the Apollo Moon mission.

Lunar Materials: Measurements of heat radiation of the moon as it cools down helps determine the nature of lunar materials.

Dust in Earth's Atmosphere: The amount of dust in Earth's atmosphere can be determined by studying how bright or how dark each lunar eclipse is. □



Lunar Eclipse



AIR Quality INDEX

As soon as the winter season comes in, we often hear about Air Quality Index, especially of Lahore. We often hear that this provincial metropolis of Punjab, which is Pakistan's second-largest city with a population of 11 million, has been ranked the world's most polluted city and people have been advised to stay home and wear masks. In November, the city was placed under lockdown due to its hazardous air quality. Let's find out what the Air Quality Index (AQI) is and how does it work:

What is AQI?

AQI is a number, which is a measure of air quality. The higher the AQI value, the greater the level of air pollution and danger to human health. It is a scale that provides real-time information on the amount of pollution in the air. When the AQI is high, governmental bodies generally encourage people to reduce physical activity outdoors, or even avoid going out altogether. Most commonly, it is used to describe ground-level ozone levels.

Importance

The AQI helps the public and the government understand the condition of the air and what subsequent measures are to be taken to combat the situation, based on its severity. As AQI increases, which means high air pollution, an increasingly large percentage of the population is likely to experience increasingly adverse health effects. Air pollution can harm anyone, but it can be especially dangerous for many people, including children and teens, people with asthma and other lung diseases, anyone over 65, people who have diabetes or cardiovascular disease or who are pregnant. According to WHO, air pollution is responsible for millions of deaths worldwide every year.

How does it work?

AQI is acquired by measuring emissions of eight major pollutants present in the air: Particulate matter (PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ - PM_{2.5} particles include pollutants such as sulfates, nitrates and black carbon, exposure to which can impair people's cognitive and immune functions. They are also linked to lung and heart disorders), Ozone (O₃), Carbon Monoxide (CO), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂), Lead (Pb) and Ammonia (NH₃) emissions. Readings are noted every hour. There are six or eight pollutants in the affected air and each of

these pollutants is given a weight based on a formula. That weight depends on the kind of impact it has on human health. The worst of these weights is given as composite air quality, so instead of giving you six different numbers, and six different colours, it throws up one single colour, one single number to denote the overall impact.

Categories

The AQI breaks air pollution levels into six categories, each of which has a name, an associated color, and advice to go along with it.

Number	Description	Color
0-50	Good	Green
51-100	Moderate	Yellow
101-150	Unhealthy for sensitive groups	Orange
151-200	Unhealthy	Red
201-300	Very unhealthy	Purple
301-500	Hazardous	Maroon

For a general understanding, it is considered 'One Number-One Colour-One Description' to know the air quality in a particular area.

Relevance for Pakistan

Air pollution is a major problem confronting Pakistan, with cities like Lahore and Karachi ranking among the most polluted worldwide. The onset of winter exacerbates air pollution, leading to smog that disrupts traffic and work life. Typically, the smog season extends from the beginning of November to the end of February — a third of the year. This adversely affects the 48 million-strong population residing in bustling business and industrial hubs, resulting in economic losses, hindering education and disrupting travel and transportation. To combat the rising air pollution crisis, experts suggest that real-time air quality data should be made readily available to the public with greater granularity. When individuals are aware of the pollution levels they are exposed to, they can take informed measures to protect themselves and contribute to collective efforts in combating air pollution. □

That's what AQI is all about!

EXAM PACK

JWT Editorial Board

Jahangir's World Times (JWT): First of all, please tell something about your educational background.

Waqas Anjum (WA): My schooling has been from Nishat High School, Multan. I did my FSc (Pre-Engineering) from Rise College of Science, Multan. After that, I did Petroleum & Gas Engineering from UET, Lahore. Later on, I did MA in Political Science from BZU, Multan.

JWT: How was your experience with the World Times Institute?

WA: WTI has helped me a lot in honing my analytical skills. Moreover, I have been a part of mock series of WTI and it helped me improve my score every time. The teachers at WTI know exactly what they are doing. Their exposure and techniques they impart to students to crack these competitive exams are unmatched.

JWT: What, in your opinion, is the key to getting through the compulsory papers of PMS exam, especially that of General Knowledge?

WA: Compulsory papers need an in-depth analysis, and for that, a good aspirant should read from quality sources and books written by international authors.

For General Knowledge paper, I would say practice is the key. Try to attempt maximum MCQs from different websites and past papers. Moreover, reading newspapers has also helped me a lot in attempting MCQs related to Current Affairs.

JWT: How answers should be written to get maximum marks in the written part of PMS exam?

WA: To get maximum marks in the written part, one should, first of all, read a question at least three times, and try to understand how many parts are there in that. Each and every part of the question should be answered using your own sense and wisdom. This is where the analytical skills of an aspirant are tested. One

"WTI has helped me a lot in honing my analytical skills. Moreover, I have been a part of mock series of WTI and it helped me in improving my score every time."

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Waqas Anjum



26th in Punjab, PMS 2021-22

Subject	Marks
Compulsory Subjects	
English Essay	58
English (Précis & Composition)	49
General Knowledge	50
Urdu	42
Pakistan Affairs	70
Islamic Studies	60
Optional Subjects	
1. Political Science	129
2. Geology	145
3. Social Work	129
Total Written	732
Viva Voce	136.2
Grand Total	868.2

should know what to write, how to write and how much should be the length of an answer. Furthermore, maps, flowcharts and pictorial representations plus elaborative headings add value to one's answer. Equal time and space allocation to every answer is very important to get maximum score.

JWT: How did you structure your Essay?

WA: I structured my essay in a very simple manner. Firstly, I did brainstorming for 30-35 minutes. After that, by using the principles of ORC (organization, relevance and clarity), I wrote my outline, which had a thesis statement, in the start.

Then, I wrote my introduction of one page which included the roadmap and all the necessary components of the essay. Then, I wrote 12 to 14 body paragraphs and connected those using different connectors to maintain coherence. In the last 15 minutes, I wrote a short, brief and concise conclusion in which I wrapped up my discussion on a positive note.

JWT: Since you have scored excellent marks in Political Science and Social Work, what was your strategy for both these papers?

WA: For Political Science, I consulted 6-7 different books. Moreover, I watched several videos on YouTube. While writing answers, I used to give an additional critical analysis in every question. In Social Work, I focused on including data in every answer. I used to write case studies of famous cases in order to support my arguments.

JWT: Should there be some word limit kept in mind while writing answers?

WA: Yes, the word limit should be 600-800 and in terms of pages, it should be 7-8 pages per question. This word limit helps an aspirant to structure the answer well and to be

EXAM PACK

Advice for Fresh Aspirants

Make a well-informed decision. Know all the nuances of this journey. But once you take a decision, then start preparing for it the way it should be prepared for.



My Interview Experience

My interview experience will always remain a lifetime memory for me. It was interactive and discussion-oriented. The panel was very courteous and open to discussion. They let me speak at my full potential. There was a mix of token and discussion-related questions. Although I dropped around 30% of the questions, I didn't panic at any situation. I tried to engage the panel at every moment. I gave leading answers and I was asked leading questions too. I was confident and maintained an assertive body language with full control on my nerves. ain my composure in no time.

relevant all the time. Nonetheless, this word limit is subjective and may vary from person to person.

JWT: Is it better to attempt optional papers in Urdu or one should go with English only?

WA: It depends on one's choice and comfort level. Common practice is to attempt the optional papers in English, but if one wants to attempt in Urdu, I don't think there is any harm in it.

JWT: How should one choose Optional Subjects?

WA: One should follow the following criterion while choosing the optional subjects:

- 1. Interest: 33%
- 2. Background: 33%

Notes-Making

Make your own notes. Don't try to copy someone else's notes, because they are not going to help you. Try to make short notes so that you can revise them easily close to the exams.

Revision

Try to revise as much things as you can. It will boost your confidence. Revision helps you retain things which you can reproduce in exams.

MY TIPS ON

3. Scoring trend: 34%

After choosing an optional, a mentor or a subject specialist may be consulted for further guidance.

JWT: Who deserves the credit for your success?

WA: My parents and family who always showed confidence in me; my

wife who remained with me through every thick and thin; my elder brother who has always been a consistent support to me; my two uncles (One who taught me how to compete in this exam and the other kept me motivated whenever I felt low; my cousin, Amman, with whom I started this journey; and last but not least, my friends who always kept me going, come what may.

JWT: As interviewers usually grill the candidates, how did you manage the situation?

WA: It was my third interview for competitive exams so I went into the interview room with a very different mindset. I had just one thing in mind: this is not the end of the world and

whether I get selected today or not, I'll make this interview experience a lifetime memory for myself, and *Alhamdulillah*, I have made it. During this interview, I had the grilling experience of my previous interview in my mind, so I maintained a firm, assertive and confident body language this time. When they tried to grill me, I maintained my composure. And after that, things got entirely changed. They shifted themselves to the discussion mode and the interview went very smooth after that.

Detailed Marks Sheet

Your inspiration	My uncle
Attempts	3
Schooling medium	English Medium
Your qualification	BSc Petroleum Engineering; MA Political Science
Alma mater	UET, Lahore
Your study schedule	8-10 hours a day and 16 hours on weekends
Your sources	Recommended books, JWT magazine, scholarly articles, YouTube videos
Your hobbies	Playing cricket & table tennis, doing gym, watching movies and seasons, book-reading
Your strengths	Inclusive leadership, team player, empathetic
Fave personality	Malala Yousafzai
Fave book	Sapiens: A Brief History of Mankind by Yuval Noah Harari
Fave quote	"Think a hundred times before you take a decision, but once that decision is taken, stand by it as one man." Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah
Secret of your success	Better preparation every time, smart work and most importantly, learning from failures
Your role model	My uncle

Hamza Zaman Khan

Assistant Director (Ministry of Defence)

"World Times Institute has always been my go-to institution ... it has played a vital role in my success."

JWT Edit. Board

Jahangir's World Times (JWT): Please tell us about your educational background.

Hamza Zaman Khan (HMK): I did my O Level from Beaconhouse School System, FSc from Government College University (GCU), Lahore, and Electrical Engineering from UET, Taxila.

JWT: How long did it take you to prepare for Assistant Director, Ministry of Defence, exam?

HMK: I graduated back in 2016 but started preparing for competitive exams in 2019, as previously I was working as a Project Engineer in PEL. Since then, I have been able to qualify PMS 2020 & PMS 2021 and CSS 2022. In addition, I have also qualified the tests for Assistant Director, Ministry of Defence, and Assistant Director, Intelligence Bureau.

JWT: How was your experience with the World Times Institute?

HMK: World Times Institute has always been my go-to institution. I enrolled here for my written and interview preparation for various exams. With its multiple test sessions in the beginning followed by panel mock interviews, WTI has played a vital role in my success, *Alhamdulillah*. After being linked to the institution for almost five years, WTI feels almost like home. A unique combination of learned and friendly faculty ensures that no student shies away from discussing any sort of problem. The satisfaction that your queries are being addressed by the very best teachers is in itself a great sigh of relief.

JWT: How should new aspirants start preparations for the various one-paper exams?

HMK: I would recommend new aspirants to always start by reading Current Affairs, especially through newspapers. It is through this practice that they realize their own aptitude and commitment to the cause of preparing for any competitive examination. The next step is to enrol yourself in a good institution or seek assistance from an experienced mentor so as to set a clear direction.

JWT: What areas should they focus on?

HMK: Broadly speaking, examinations for government positions have always been an amalgamation of knowledge and a certain degree of paper presentation. If one is not able to properly produce on paper what one's mind encompasses, it is of no use. Needless to say, all opted subjects should make an integral part of your focus with special emphasis on improving your written expression.

JWT: What is, in your opinion, an ideal timetable for a sound preparation?

HMK: A particular timetable may vary from person to person but what I have always relied on is smart study rather than studying all the time. Remember, your brain has only a limited attention span, and it is that particular time that you need to make maximum use of. You should set your schedule according to your own routine.

JWT: What strategy should the in-job aspirants follow as they have scant time at their disposal?

HMK: I disagree to the part where the question says 'scant time at their disposal'. I happened to have cleared all my exams while also doing a full-time job. Arnold Schwarzenegger used to say that one should sleep 6 hours a day, and if you want more sleep, just sleep faster. I used to reach home at 5.30pm from office and after having a small meal, I used to rest until 9pm. Once I woke up, I used to study till 3.30am and then go to bed only to wake up again at 8.30am for office. The routine repeated everyday till my exams. This is how it is. Remember, you and you alone are responsible for maintaining your energy. Rather than blaming and complaining, keep taking action towards your goals. That's the bottom line!

JWT: How did you handle the interview pressure while before the panel?

HMK: Once you go through a rigorous, grilling mock interview process, the mind starts getting relaxed every next time. Prepare for the interview well and practice your English speaking. Always keep track of questions that are being asked from the candidates interviewed before you.

JWT: Please share some questions the panellists asked during the interview.

HMK: I would take this opportunity to clear a myth, once and for all. For all those who say that your 'psychological exam doesn't matter', the very first comment I got from Mr Chairman in the interview was, "I must say your drawing is very good. Have you ever been told this before?" The drawing in reference was none other than the one I drew in the psychological exam. So, psychological exam does matter a lot. It indeed sets the tone for your final interview.

JWT: On the basis of your experience, what tips would you give to prospective aspirants?

HMK: I would say that there is no winning or losing in these exams. There is only winning and learning. Just work hard enough that your heart and mind agree with each other on the point: "This guy has given his best". Leave the results to Allah Almighty. ■



environmental ethics.

Anthropocentric ethicists believe that human interests should come before natural interests.

Ecocentric ethicists find intrinsic value in nature's existence, and believe that destroying it is wrong, even though it is non-human.

It is important to remember that ecocentric and anthropocentric thinkers often reach the same conclusion, but for different reasons. For example, both groups want to preserve the same forest. The ecocentric camp wants to preserve the forest for its intrinsic, non-human value, believing that it has the right to exist, untouched by humanity. The anthropocentric camp, on the other hand, wants to preserve the forest because its existence provides an excellent food source through hunting and foraging, and hurting the forest would remove this food source for future generations of humanity. In this example, both camps want to keep the forest safe.

Types

1. Libertarian Extension:

Libertarian extension is a type of environmental ethics that focuses on one's right to do whatever one wants with the environment and its resources. This concept also stresses that one should not impose one's own values on others and should instead respect the choices of others.

2. Ecological Extension: Ecological extension focuses on preserving the natural environment and its resources in order to maintain the balance and health of the ecosystem. This concept stresses the importance of humans working with nature to sustain it for future generations.

3. Conservation Ethics: It focuses on preserving natural resources for future generations by ensuring that current resources are not depleted

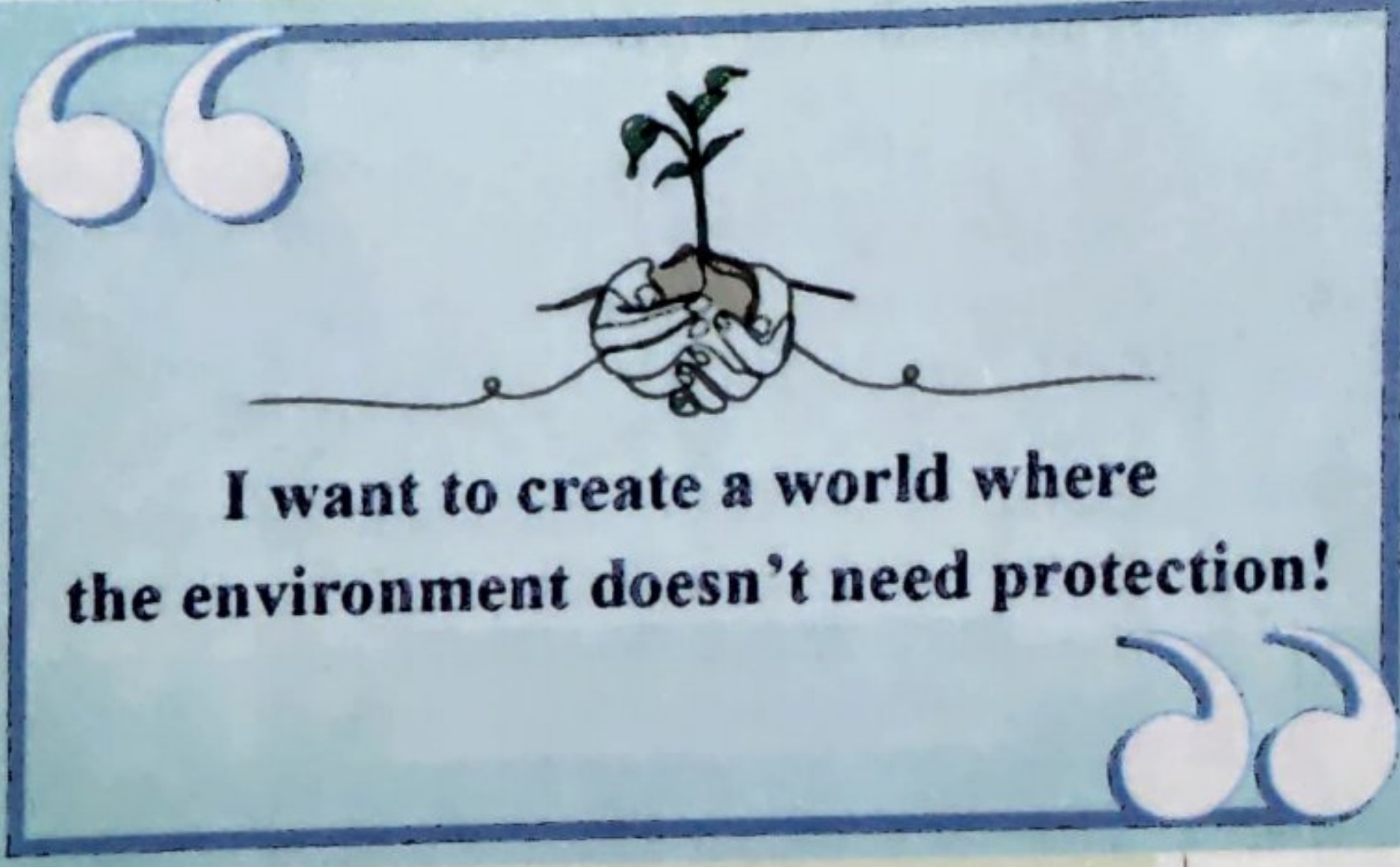
or damaged beyond repair. This concept encourages individuals to use natural resources responsibly and judiciously so there will be enough for future generations.

Principles

1. Respect for the intrinsic value of nature: Nature should not be treated as a commodity or resource to be exploited and discarded.

2. Interdependence of species and ecosystems: Humans depend on nature and natural systems. We must recognize our role in preserving and protecting the environment.

3. Ecological sustainability: We must strive to use resources responsibly and with an eye on preserving ecosystems and biodiversity.



4. Human responsibility: We are responsible for our actions and decisions and their consequences for the environment.

5. Human equity: We must strive for a just world where the rights and needs of humans, animals and plants are respected and protected.

6. Precautionary principle: We should take precautions against environmental harm, even when scientific evidence is inconclusive.

7. Right to know: Individuals have the right to access information about environmental issues.

8. Right to participate: Citizens have the right to participate in environmental decision-making processes.

Importance

Environmental ethics is essential for protecting the environment, species and resources.

It promotes sustainable practices and encourages people to become more aware of the impact their actions have on the environment.

It emphasizes the interconnectedness of all living things and the need to respect them. It encourages us to think about our place in the world and how we can contribute to preserving the natural environment.

Environmental ethics helps to build better relationships with nature, recognizing its intrinsic value, not just the instrumental one.

It encourages us to think beyond our immediate needs and consider the

long-term implications of our actions.

It teaches us responsibility towards our environment, advocating for environmentally-friendly practices that help protect natural resources.

Environmental ethics also promotes better public policies and laws, which help ensure that our environment is properly cared for.

Difference between ecology and environmental ethics

Ecology is the scientific study of the relationships between organisms and their environment, while environmental ethics focuses on how humans should interact with the natural environment. Ecology looks at how organisms interact with each other and with their environment. In contrast, environmental ethics looks at how humans should interact with the natural environment in order to minimize harm and promote sustainability.

Environmental Ethics and Sustainable Development

Creating a healthy balance between development and the environment is a major factor in achieving the

Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable development implies harmony in human-environment interactions and inter-generational responsibility, with an emphasis on a harmonious relationship among population, resources, environment and development. The role of environmental ethics toward sustainable development is that it not only harmonises the relationship of population, resource, environment and economic development, but also guides behaviour selection, pushes social and political system transformation, strengthens the legal system, and raises environmental awareness among the public.

Sustainable development recognises that all development decisions must simultaneously consider aspects of economy, environment, and equity. If future generations are to enjoy a high quality of life, then this generation's plans must guarantee the integrity of our natural resources.

Viewing sustainable development from an environmental ethics perspective extends the emphasis of sustainable development from the traditional understanding, to take into account ethical issues relating to a wide range of economic, social and cultural factors that help achieve the ethical values of equity, justice, temperance and wisdom in the choices we make concerning the environment.

Future

Given the increasing concern for the environment and the impact that our actions have upon it, it is clear that the field of environmental ethics is here to stay. However, it is less clear in what way the discipline will move forward. Having said that, there is evidence for at least three future developments. First of all, environmental ethics needs to be, and will be, informed by changes in the political efforts to ameliorate environmental problems.

Environmental ethics concerns formulating our moral obligations regarding the environment. While this enterprise can be, and often is, quite abstract, it is also meant to engage with the real world. After all, ethicists are making claims about how they think the world ought to be. Given this, the effectiveness of states and governments in "getting there" will affect the types of ethics that emerge. For example, the Kyoto Protocol might be regarded as the first real global attempt to deal with the problem of climate change. However, without the participation of so many large polluters, with the agreed reductions in greenhouse gas emissions so small, and with many countries looking like they may well miss their targets, many commentators already regard it as a failure.

Ethicists need to respond; not just by castigating those they blame for the failure. Rather, they must propose alternative and better means of resolving the problems we face. For example, is it more important to outline a scheme of obligations for individuals rather than states, and go for a bottom-up solution to these problems? Alternatively, perhaps businesses should take the lead in tackling these problems. Indeed, it may even be in the interests of big business to be active in this way, given the power of consumers. It is quite possible, then, that we will see business ethics address many of the same issues that environmental ethics has been tackling.

However, the effects of environmental ethics will not be limited to influencing and informing business ethics alone, but will undoubtedly feed into, and merge with, more mainstream ethical

thinking.

After all, the environment is not something one can remove oneself from. In light of this, once it is recognized that we have environmental obligations, all areas of ethics are affected, including just war theory, domestic distributive justice, global distributive justice, human rights theory and many others. Take global distributive justice as an example: if one considers how climate change will affect people throughout the world so differently - affecting individuals' homes, sanitation, resistance to disease, ability to earn a living and so on - it is clear that consideration of the environment is essential to such questions of justice. Part of the job of the environmental ethicist will, thus, be to give such disciplines the benefit of his or her expertise.

Finally, environmental ethics will, of course, be informed by our scientific understanding of the environment. Whether it be changes in our understanding of how ecosystems work or changes in the evidence concerning the environmental crisis, it is clear that such change will inform and influence those thinkers writing on our environmental obligations. ■

The writer is a student at the University of Karachi.



Outline

1. Introduction

2. An overview of the advent and spread of technology in the world

- a. Definition of technology
- b. An overview of the spread of technology

3. Facts that highlight humans' overdependence on technology

- a. Excessive use of technology for communication and social interaction
- b. Technology's encroachment upon people's domestic lives
- c. Overreliance on technology for the purpose of transportation
- d. Overdependence on technology in the preparation and preservation of food
- e. Overutilization of technology as a means of entertainment
- f. Overemphasis on technology in the agriculture sector
- g. Excessive use of technology in the industrial sector
- h. An unchecked race of technology in the defence sector
- i. Overdependence on technology in the health sector
- j. Excessive use of technology in the education sector of a country

4. Drawbacks of overdependence on technology

- a. Waste of energy
- b. Environmental degradation
- c. Creation of health issues
- d. Promotion of crime
- e. Increase in lethality of wars and terrorism
- f. Wastage of energy and time
- g. Spread of psychological unrest in society
- h. Devastating impacts on humans' relationships with one another

5. Recommendations for minimizing the side effects of technology

- a. Organizing of seminars, workshops and awareness campaigns to sensitize people to the drawbacks of overuse of technology
- b. Promoting of physical sports and other physical activities using different promotional and persuasive techniques
- c. Focusing on research to minimize the environmental hazards of technology
- d. Putting in concerted efforts for the control of the arms race
- e. Promoting a simple lifestyle

6. Conclusion

**PEOPLE HAVE BECOME
OVERLY DEPENDENT ON
TECHNOLOGY**

Essay



Man started his journey from a cave and now, after conquering the vast skies and deep seas, he seems set for his new journey towards controlling time. Whatever man has done in the field of science and technology is good in the sense that he has made life on Earth much more comfortable and beautiful. This is, however, only half the story; the other half is a bit gloomy and bleak. The man, who invented technology for his support and assistance, has become excessively dependent on it. From communication and transportation to the production and con-

sumption of food; from the entertainment sector to the defence sector, and from education to administration, this is technology that rules to such an extent that man can't do anything without it, even in a reasonable way. Quite understandably, there are a number of drawbacks to people's overdependence on technology. Some meticulously devised measures to create a balance with reference to the intrusion of technology in human life are the need of the hour.

Technology has been, and can be, defined in a number of ways. Oxford Languages defines it as "the application of

Asim Raza

EXAM PACK

scientific knowledge for practical purposes, especially in industry." Wikipedia describes technology as the application of knowledge for achieving practical goals in a reproducible way. According to it, the word technology also means the products resulting from such efforts, including both tangible tools such as utensils or machines and intangible ones such as software. Although technology has remained a part of human life for centuries, the first industrial revolution (of the 18th century) can justifiably be termed a milestone in its overall journey. The use of steam power led to the invention of different types of machines for the industrial and agricultural sectors. The second industrial revolution in the 19th century, which revolved around the use of oil, gas and electricity; the third industrial revolution in the 20th century with electronics and nuclear power as its salient features; and the fourth industrial revolution in the 21st century, which involves the use of the Internet and renewable energy sources, are the different phases of the advent and advancement of technology.

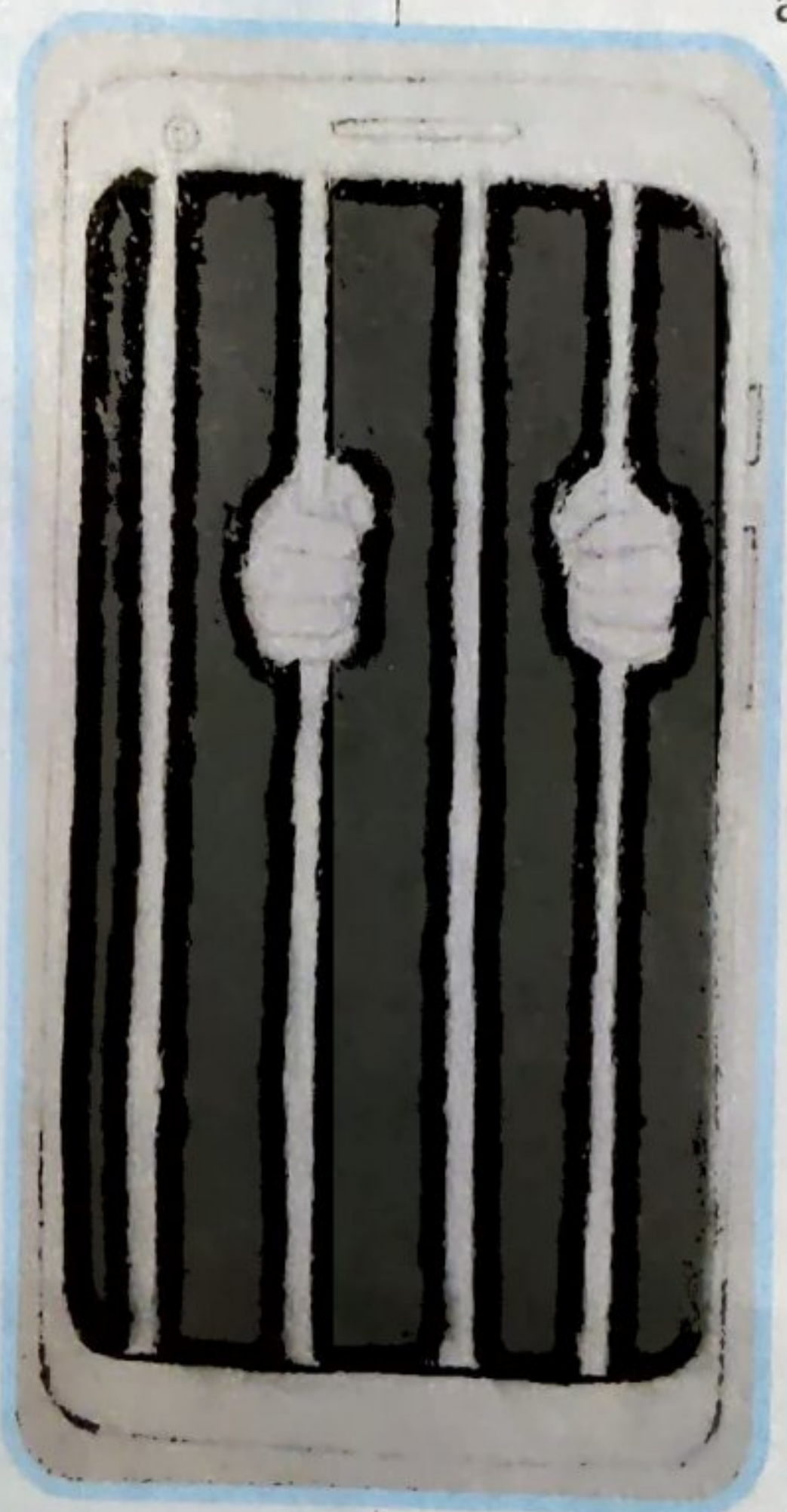
Now, when the intrusion of technology into human life is to be discussed, there are a number of facts that can be delineated.

Firstly, these are the cell phones that people keep carrying with them all day long so as to communicate with others. Remaining in contact with others is, indeed, a genuine need of people but the way everyone has gotten tied to cell phones is unjustifiable and untenable as well. From dining tables to washrooms, everyone who has got a cell phone feels the need to carry it along everywhere. The only time cell phones are away is when they are being charged as most people keep them beneath their pillows even when they are asleep. Given the way obsession with cell phones is increasing, they will soon outnumber the population count and even those who don't have food for their stomachs will be seen carrying cell phones in their hands. **Similarly, with the passage of time, people's transportation has become immensely technology-dependent. People in almost all countries have become dependent on motor-driven vehicles, even for travelling small distances. The public transport system is giving way to personal vehicles at a very fast pace, even in developing countries. The practice of vehicle-sharing is becoming uncommon as personal vehicles are considered more than merely the means of transportation in materialistic societies. Likewise, kitchens, even in economically lower-class houses, are considered incomplete unless they have**

some technological appliances like refrigerators and microwave ovens. In the affluent class, many more types of technological appliances, e.g. electric burners, air fryers and baking machines, are not only available but are brought to regular use as well. People, regardless of their economic standing, have become so dependent on appliances that spending even a day without those is nothing less than a nightmare for them. Food is the primary need of man, and he has been consuming it since his very first day on this Earth. Cooking and eating food have never been so largely technology-dependent the way we are seeing in the present age. Technology was invented as a comfort for people but it is no longer merely a comfort to them; it is now one of the basic necessities of life.

And, what about people's sources of entertainment? Here again, technology rules the business. Cell phones, laptops, multimedia, movie theatres, PlayStation - all these technological appliances and gadgets are, today, the most-used sources of entertainment, as people love to spend their free time watching movies and videos and playing videogames. Physical games like cricket, hockey, football and badminton, which used to be the only sources of entertainment and enjoyment a few decades ago, have been rapidly losing their charm and the day does not appear to be much far when they will be completely substituted by technology-based sources of entertainment. Surprisingly, even toddlers have become so habitual with these gadgets that they refuse to take food without having those in their hands.

Similarly, all the activities in the field of agriculture have also become dependent on technology, one way or another. For instance, the production of agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers and insecticides is carried out in large industrial units having different types of machines. In addition, the process of sowing and ploughing the fields, watering and harvesting the crops involves different types of machines and equipment, e.g. zero-tillage drills, sprinklers, laser land levellers, tractors, threshers and harvesters. The role of technology in the field of agriculture has proliferated so much that the extent of its involvement in agricultural activities is considered the only parameter for gauging efficiency of this sector. Societies and nations where agricultural activities are carried out through technology-free methods are considered least developed and unprogressive, and even international organizations advise them to move towards mechanization to get out of the vicious



circle of poverty.

The bedrooms and living areas of houses are also infested with technological appliances. Let us make a count: wall clocks, electric bulbs, tube lights, energy savers and lamps, ceiling or wall fans, air-conditioners, exhaust fans - all these technological appliances can be seen in the home of a middle-class family of even a developing country, not to mention the developed states. It is an irrefutable reality that this is technology that awakens people by ringing an alarm in the morning and makes them sleep at night by giving them a room having temperature and environment conducive to sound sleep. Technology certainly dominates people's lives in this era and it is very difficult for them to get out of its trap.

Another field that is immensely dependent on technology in all countries of the world is the one of defence. Be it the air force, the army or the navy, no sector is considered capable of defending the borders of the country unless it is equipped with advanced technology duly compatible with the one possessed by the rivals. In the defence sector particularly, there exists a race of technology among states having antagonistic relations with one another, and there is no end to it.

Fighter jets, navigation radars, early warning systems, bombs and missiles, tanks and cannons, ships and submarines: even a number of chapters can be written to delineate the names and types of the technological products that have become a part and parcel of the defence sector of even developing countries. The wars in the present age appear to be the combat only between the technologies of the warring forces, and not their soldiers.

Finally, the field of medical science is also dependent on technology to such an extent that medical practitioners appear to be completely helpless in case they don't have access to different types of machines and equipment. From diagnosis to treatment, and from the conduct of research to the production of medicines, this is technology that assists people, in a number of ways. Without even an iota of doubt, if today's man is far more equipped against fatal diseases than his forefathers, it is just because of technology that supports him much more than he could have expected just two decades ago. Minus technology from the health sector, even the precise measurement of blood pressure would become a mighty challenge.

Having discussed the ubiquitous involvement of technology in human life, it is pertinent to have a glance at the drawbacks that the obsessive use of technology

entails.

Firstly, technological appliances being dependent on energy have been the biggest cause of the depletion of world's oil, gas and coal reserves. These reserves, which once used to be in abundance, have now become short of requirement and even world politics has started revolving around them. Survival of the technology-dependent man on Earth in the absence of some alternative energy sources will certainly be a big challenge.

Secondly, this is nothing but technology that has wreaked havoc on the climate. The presence of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrous oxide, etc. has increased multiple times in the air since the industrial revolution of the seventeenth century. The role of technological advancement in environmental degradation is so vivid and obvious that no further explication is required to vindicate the stance.

Thirdly, an overdependence on technology has been causing a number of health issues for people. Obesity, high blood pressure, loss of vision, diabetes, cardiac

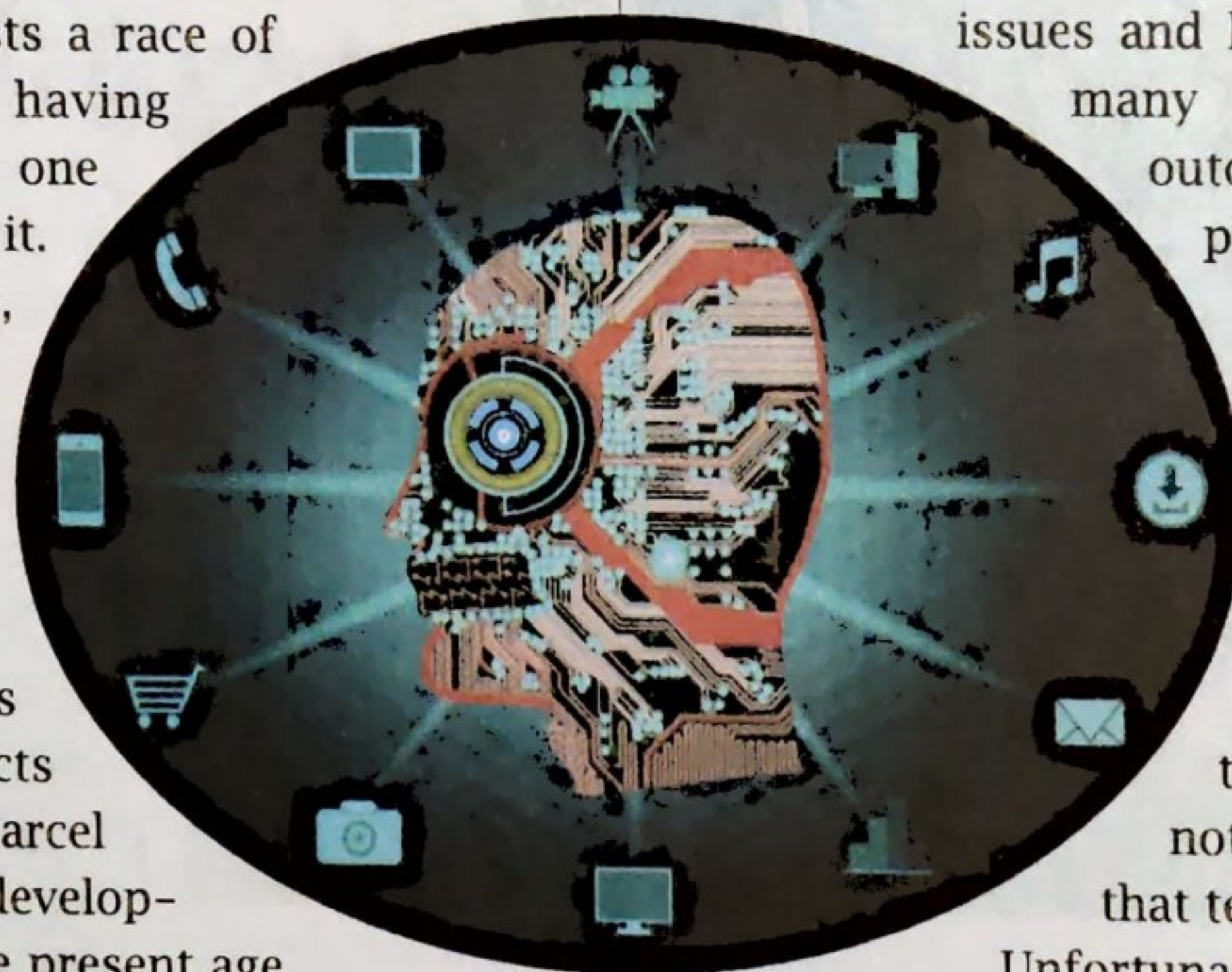
issues and hypertension are a few of the many such diseases that are an outcome of people's abandoning physical games and activities and spending time with cell phones and laptops. More alarmingly, the situation is getting worse with every passing day.

Fourthly, technology supports crime, directly or indirectly. Gun violence, cyber theft, child pornography, etc. are nothing else but the disadvantages that technology has brought for men.

Unfortunately, the more a country is technologically advanced, the more it is vulnerable to such sorts of criminal activities.

Likewise, this is technology that has enhanced the harrowing impacts of wars and terrorist activities multiple times by widening their range of lethality. Atomic bombs, hydrogen bombs, cluster bombs, suicide bombs and different types of missiles and guns are those products of technology that have no other aim than killing people. Human loss in all the battles fought prior to the invention of gunpowder would be cumulatively far less than that in the two World Wars which killed millions and millions of people. Technology is certainly a killer.

Technology is a source of time waste as well. The very drawback of technology has aggravated, particularly after the advent of social media, which keeps people engaged in futile activities throughout the day. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok and Snapchat; all these platforms that were actually invented just for social connectivity, have turned out to be the primary purpose of people's lives now, as they do nothing throughout the



day except scroll on these platforms and wasting precious time and energy.

Finally, technology is a direct contributor to the psychological unrest that prevails in human societies, besides also being a cause of deteriorated relationships among people. The fast advent of technology has put people in an invisible race with each other and those who lag behind others fall prey to different types of disorders and issues. The world of glamour and commercialism that technological advancement has created for man is more an evil than a blessing, but rarely do people realize it.

Before concluding the discussion, it is relevant as well as important to identify some measures that can prove to be helpful in mitigating the inimical impacts of technology.



To start with, creating awareness regarding the pernicious effects of technology can be the first step. Seminars, workshops, lectures, motivational speeches; everything will work. Educational institutions and workplaces can be the right platforms for such campaigns. A meticulous plan of action will have to be chalked out for the purpose. Secondly, the culture of physical games and activities should be promoted to replace an extensive use of technology as a source of entertainment. Provision of necessary facilities, promotion of school games and patronizing sports events at national and international levels on a regular basis can be some helpful measures in this context.

Thirdly, some sincere measures for limiting the damage caused by climate change are also immensely important to curtail the drawbacks of technology. Global protocols chalked out for this purpose should be implemented by all the countries in letter and spirit. The United Nations should take strict action against those states that are unable to discharge their responsibilities as per their

commitment.

Fourthly, the UN and other global organizations should adopt strict measures so as to curtail the arms race and other negative uses of technology. Some global treaties with sound implementation mechanisms are the need of the hour. An analysis of bilateral agreements like START and START I can be helpful in devising an action plan for the creation of an arms-free world.

Finally, some scrupulously devised measures are required for the promotion of a simple lifestyle and discouragement of materialism to as great an extent as possible. Although the task appears to be more of a wish than a recommendation, it will have to be performed to slow down the march of technology. A more mature and responsible role of the media is the key to the achievement of this goal.

In a nutshell, it can be said that people have given technology undue space in their lives by becoming excessively dependent on appliances of different types. Technology has blatantly and ignominiously encroached upon all sectors of human life and this transgression is easily visible and noticeable. Quite understandably, people's overreliance on technology has many negative implications and repercussions for their health and comfort of life in a direct or indirect way. Keeping in view the pernicious nature of technology, some well-planned measures will have to be adopted to minimize the harms that technology entails. The spread of

awareness through seminars and workshops, concerted efforts by different organizations at the state and international levels and necessary steps for ensuring a more mature role of media can be some pertinent measures for ameliorating the situation. As human beings, we need to realize that the excess of everything, whatever it might be, is always counterproductive. This is the balance that maintains the colour and charm in human life and its different sectors; while chasing our dreams as humans, we should try to maintain this balance at every cost. Scientific development is not the end of our struggle; it is the means to the ultimate goal, which is to bring comfort and ease to life. The exuberance of struggle should not be allowed to obfuscate the actual goal; the earlier we realize it, the better it is. ■

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"We are now all Pakistanis — not Balochis, Pathans, Sindhis, Bengalis, Punjabis and so on — and as Pakistanis we must feel, behave and act, and we should be proud to be known as Pakistanis and nothing else."

— Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah

Education Promotes National Unity

The best way to promote national integration

The challenge of national integration in Pakistan is as old as the history of this country. Besides a plethora of socio-economic problems, today's Pakistan is facing a gigantic issue of political and social polarization that could be detrimental to the country's future. The one way to slay this hydra is to foster national integration that is, indeed, a centripetal social force that develops a sense of oneness among the different individuals and groups of society. National integration promotes social stability and harmony, bolsters national unity, guarantees inclusive development, affords common identity and direction and guards against schisms of regionalism, religionism, provincialism, ethnicism and racism. However, promoting this binding force in a country like Pakistan, which hosts groups and individuals from vast diversity and backgrounds, is indeed a humungous task. However, one way to achieve this coveted goal is to promote education as a key catalyst in promoting national unity — it can help citizens of the nation appreciate the diversity and uniqueness of their country and participate in its democratic and developmental processes.

What is national integration?

A nation is a country with a unified socio-economic and political structure. It denotes a body of people who have a feeling of oneness, built on the basis of common history, society, culture and values. This feeling of oneness binds the people together into a nation. In general terms, it is

this feeling which is known as national integration. So, by definition, national integration is the awareness of a common identity amongst the citizens of a country. It means that though we belong to different castes, races and regions and speak different languages, we recognize the fact that we are all one. This kind of integration is very important in the building of a strong and prosperous nation.

National unity helps in maintaining the oneness of the country in a strong form despite the diversity. The spirit of unity holds people together in a nation. A nation that remains integrated will always move ahead on the path of prosperity and development. It advocates the principle of unity which makes a country stronger and prosperous. National integration plays an important role in making the country one.

Why Pakistan needs integration?

Pakistan is a multiethnic, multicultural, multilingual and multi-religious society, where people of all ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious groups belonging to different provinces are living together. There are 97 percent Muslims of different sects and the remaining three percent are Christians, Hindus, Sikhs and others. Pakistan has been facing issues in its national integration, as because of lack of proper education, knowledge and motivation, some sections of the Muslim-majority population have continued to prefer their ethnicity, language and provincial identities above their common

Ali Waqar Khan

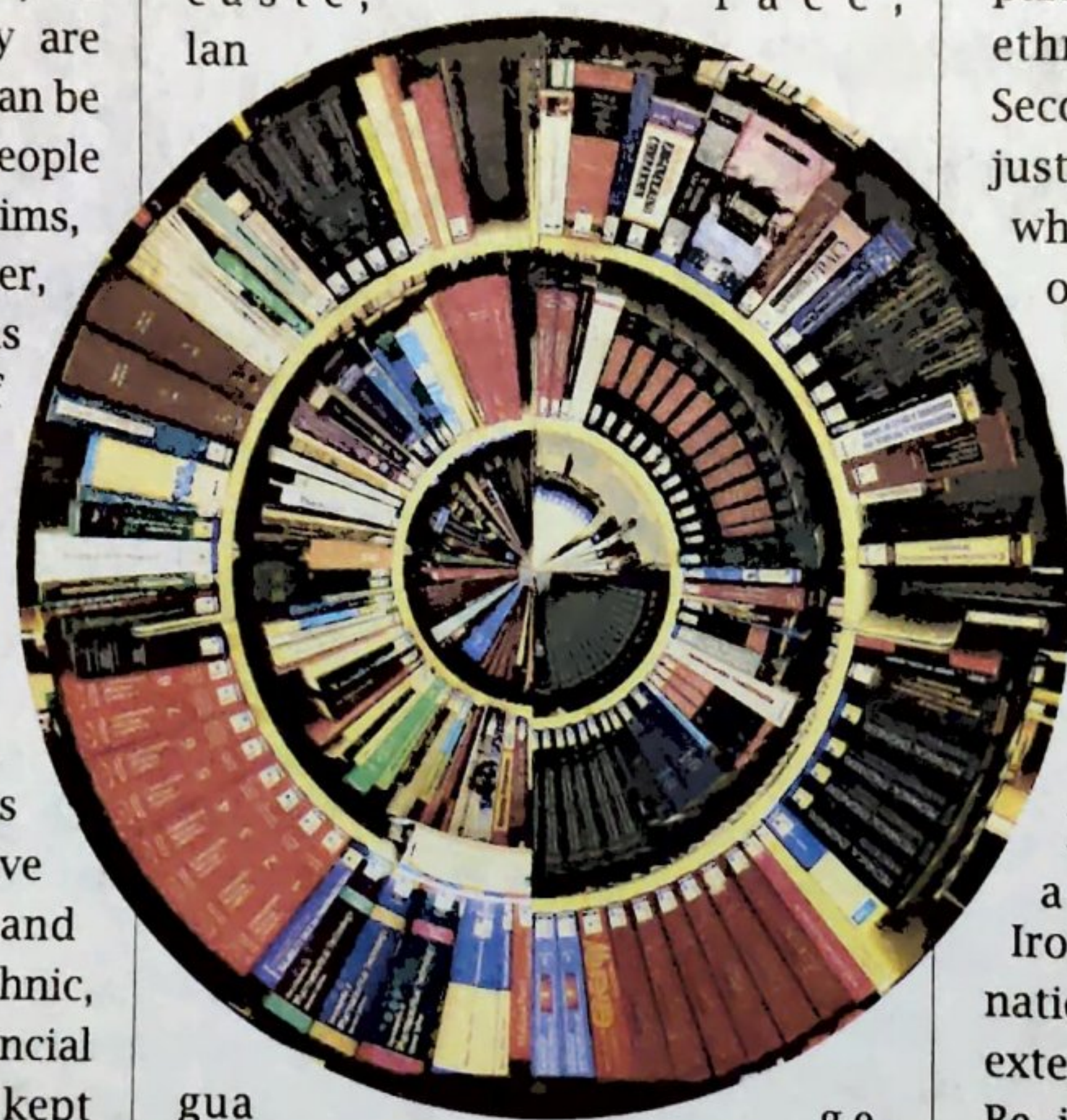
identity as Pakistanis and Muslims. Also, some sections of the Muslim majority were ignorant that Islam wants them to respect and protect the rights of the minorities belonging to other religions. Moreover, some provinces and some areas within the provinces had developed a perception - a genuine one - that their provinces and areas were being ignored in the fields of education and socioeconomic development. Also there was a lack of communication among the people of various provinces, due to language and ethnic/cultural differences.

Therefore, the common identity of Pakistani citizens is that they are Pakistanis. This binding force can be strengthened if the common people are educated that, being Muslims, they are brothers to each other, and Islam says that the Muslims have to respect the rights of other religious minorities living in a Muslim-majority country. Likewise, the people of minorities should think that they are Pakistanis, who are living with the Muslim majority, who firmly believe that the rights of other religious minorities have to be properly respected and guarded. In this context, the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and provincial identities in Pakistan have to be kept next to their respective religions and their common identity of being Pakistanis.

Pakistan's dilemma of national integration

National integration cannot be artificially created but it evolves as a result of the process of social and economic justice along with democratic political pluralism. Cultural, lingual and religious variations exist in many countries of the world but it is wise and prudent leadership that provides a sense of participation, opportunities for progress and development. In case of Pakistan, after the assassination of the country's first Prime Minister

Liaquat Ali Khan, the West Pakistan dominated military-bureaucratic elite along with the feudal class, and clergy began to propagate the notion of a strong centre and used religion to artificially integrate the diverse provinces of the country. But, religion alone cannot be a binding force to integrate dissimilar people as a nation. There are other essential requirements to unite people as a nation like economic progress, human and social development, justice system, rule of law, political pluralism, non-discriminatory policy of the state by providing equal opportunities regardless of religion, caste, race, language



gender and place of origin. The absence of such requirements cannot transform people of a country into a nation but can cause ethnic, racial, lingual, religious and sectarian polarisation. Pakistan's dilemma of national integration needs to be examined from three different angles. First, Pakistan came into being as a result of an accord reached between the Muslim-majority regions of North West and North East of the Indian subcontinent. That accord was the result of a demand which was made through the Lahore Resolution of March 23, 1940, and then reiterated in Muslim League's

convention in Delhi held in April 1946. Two-Nation Theory was the essence of the creation of Pakistan, as the founder of the country and his colleagues in the Muslim League realised that in an undivided India with a Hindu majority, the Muslim minority will not be able to live as equal citizens.

Unfortunately, after the creation of Pakistan, religion, which was the bond trying to integrate the nascent state, became weak as economic and political exploitation of the majority province of East Pakistan and the smaller provinces of West Pakistan under the system of One-Unit and parity unleashed the process of ethnic and lingual nationalism. Second, democracy, rule of law, justice system and good governance, which should have been the essence of the new state of Pakistan, went into oblivion. Democracy became the first casualty because of the military-bureaucratic nexus to seize power through unconstitutional means. Back to back imposition of martial laws and military takeover diminished hopes to transform Pakistan into a viable nation state.

Ironically, feelings of Pakistani nation only surfaced at the time of an external threat or natural disaster. Be it the 1965 war or the recent terrorist attacks, surge of nationalistic feelings among the people of Pakistan helped to unitedly deal with issues threatening survival of the country. The earthquake of October 2005 and the terrorist attack on Army Public School, Peshawar on December 16, 2014, also united the people of Pakistan. But, once such threats receded, Pakistan's internal contradictions in the form of political polarisation and ethnic/lingual discords reappeared. It is yet to be seen what will be the duration of the current spell of national harmony and unity in the wake of the Indian threat or once the

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threat fades, will the country revert back to political schism and inter and intra-provincial disharmony.

Third, national harmony and integration require ownership of the land, resources, good and bad things of a country. Except few exceptions, the history of Pakistan is full of episodes which reflect lack of ownership. Nations are not created by mere slogans but through sheer hard work, integrity, brilliance, planning and statesmanship of the leadership. Unfortunately, the menaces of corruption, nepotism and bad governance tend to reflect the lack of ownership of the country as majority of the people, including those representing various state institutions, are interested in protecting their personal, community, clan or group interests than the interests of the country as a whole. The tendency to find faults with the country and not doing anything to remove things which cause social, economic, political and governance crises means the lack of ownership. Furthermore, the propensity to seek and explore migration as an option so as to achieve a better life abroad means a lack of responsibility and commitment to put things in order. The Pakistani diaspora, which reflects brain drain from the country, is more than 10 million as their migration means, to a large extent, the failure of state to fulfil essential needs of citizens like clean and safe drinking water, better education, equal employment opportunities, housing, public transport, health and basic security. Even after the induction of the new governments in 2018 and 2022, the migration of people abroad has not stopped and the brain drain continues. Lack of ownership of the resources and public institutions means there is absence of commitment for the country.

How to promote national integration?

To achieve national integration,

factors like political affiliation, religion, language, culture, tribes, castes and ethnicity, though they play a significant role, yet need harnessing under a single factor: nationalism. Pakistan has people from other religions who have lived in harmony with Muslims for decades now. Indeed, people from all political parties, religions, castes, creeds and different ethnic backgrounds have worked together for a cohesive society and a harmonious state.

Securing the fundamental rights of every human being is universally recognized as the most significant element of national integration and harmony of any nation. Upon attainment of the fundamental rights, there are obligations of the fundamental duties individuals and communities need to undertake and ensure within the ambit of their respective regions. In a way; there is a relationship of give and take, rights and obligations and their acceptable implementation at the level of nation-state. The other elements of national integration include: a transparent and identical justice system, exercise of free will in the form of democracy, a common national cause in the form of ideology and established leadership having indisputable character traits. The United Nations (UN) Charter amply covers all these, besides the explanations given in various conventions and covenants.

Role of education

The failure of national integration in



creating Pakistani men and women has much to do with the dysfunctional educational system of the country which is unable to provide equal opportunities for children to seek basic quality education. In the absence of a uniform educational system, particularly in terms of curricula and mode of education, one cannot expect the youths of Pakistan to seek attachment with the land, values, culture, history and other characteristics of the country. It should be state's responsibility to provide free, compulsory and quality education to all the citizens of Pakistan till high school regardless of their class, language, sect, religion and place of origin.

Education fosters curiosity, empathy and respect, transcending socio-cultural and religious barriers. It exposes students to diverse cultures and perspectives, cultivating understanding and effective communication while promoting social cohesion and inclusion. UNESCO's Cutting Edge initiative drives societal agility. Education also fuels regional development via student and teacher mobility, enhancing intercultural awareness. The Erasmus+ program in the EU promotes cross-cultural exchange - It is a European Union student-exchange initiative that supports education, training, youth, and sport in Europe and beyond.

Education is not only a way of acquiring information but also a way of transforming and preparing oneself for the world. By bridging cultural, social and regional divides through education, we can create a more just and peaceful society for all. Education is one of the most powerful forces that can shape the world for the better. It helps people to develop critical thinking skills, which enable them to question their assumptions, challenge stereotypes, and recognise biases. By learning to think critically, people can also appreciate the layered and diverse

human experiences, rather than relying on simplistic or binary views. Education can also create opportunities for intercultural exchange and collaboration, which can enhance mutual understanding and appreciation among people from different cultures on a level playing field. By exposing students to different languages, histories, values and traditions, education can help them to develop intercultural competence and global citizenship. In this regard, the Global School Net, founded in 1984 by teachers, connects schools from different countries and regions to engage in online projects and activities that foster inter-cultural learning.

Education can also empower people to take action for social justice and inclusion, which can contribute to a more peaceful and harmonious world. By raising awareness about the issues and challenges faced by marginalised or oppressed groups, education can inspire people to stand up for their rights and dignity, as well as support others in their struggles. For example, the Global Campaign for Education movement, founded in 1999, advocates for the right to quality education for all, especially for those who are excluded or discriminated against.

Real-world examples

Inclusive education is the practice of ensuring that all learners, regardless of their abilities, backgrounds or identities, have equal access to quality education that meets their needs and respects their rights. It increases accessibility for all in enhancing their skills and developing their potential. Inclusive education can benefit not only the learners themselves, but also the countries and societies that implement it. There are some inspiring stories of success made possible due to inclusive educational practices.

In Guatemala, UNESCO supported the development and implementation of a national policy on inclusive

education, which aimed to improve access, quality and equity of education for all learners, especially those from indigenous, rural and marginalised communities. The policy included measures such as bilingual and inter-cultural curricula, teacher training programs, community participation and monitoring and evaluation systems. In Nepal, UNICEF partnered with the government and local stakeholders to promote inclusive education for children with disabilities, who often face multiple barriers to learning and participation. The project involved providing assistive devices, accessible infrastructure, teacher



training, curriculum adaptation, and awareness-raising activities. The project reached more than 80,000 children with disabilities improving their enrollment, attendance, retention and learning outcomes through inclusive education.

In Tanzania, Leonard Cheshire supported the implementation of the Education for Life project, which aimed to improve the access and quality of education for girls with disabilities in rural areas. The project provided catch-up classes, life skills training, mentorship, scholarships and vocational opportunities for the girls, as well as sensitisation workshops for their

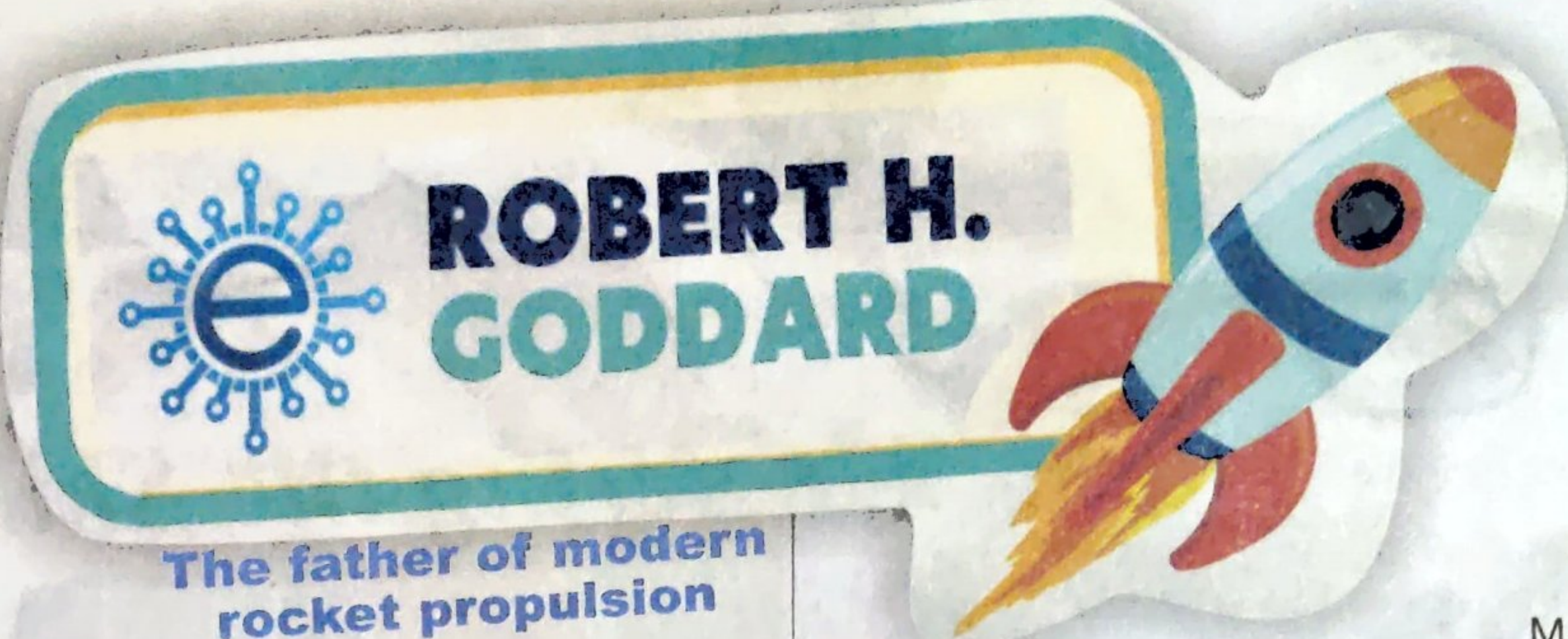
families and communities. The project benefited more than 800 children with disabilities in four regions, enhancing their self-confidence, skills and employability. The implementation of the Inclusive Education for Syrian Refugees project in Jordan by UNICEF, sought to improve the access and quality of education for Syrian refugee children and host community children in Za'atari camp. The project provided inclusive classrooms, psychosocial support, teacher training, parent engagement, and referral services for the children, as well as advocacy and coordination with relevant authorities.

These examples show how inclusive education can have positive impacts on individuals, communities and nations, and how small changes make big differences. By embracing diversity and inclusion in education systems, countries can foster social cohesion, economic development and human rights for all and promote the feeling of national unity.

Conclusion

Many countries face the challenge of national integration but, in some cases, their leadership is able to integrate diverse people by ensuring social justice, tolerance, rule of law, good governance and democratic pluralism. Pakistan's quest for national integration would remain elusive unless the bottom-top approach is adopted where a sense of belonging to the country evolves at the grassroots level. Care for the resources of the country and pursuing a tolerant approach vis-à-vis those who are different in race, language, class, religion and sect will go a long way in promoting what is called "Pakistaniat." Promoting the culture of merit instead of favouritism and nepotism is also of essence to achieve the goal of national integration. ■

The writer is a CSS aspirant.

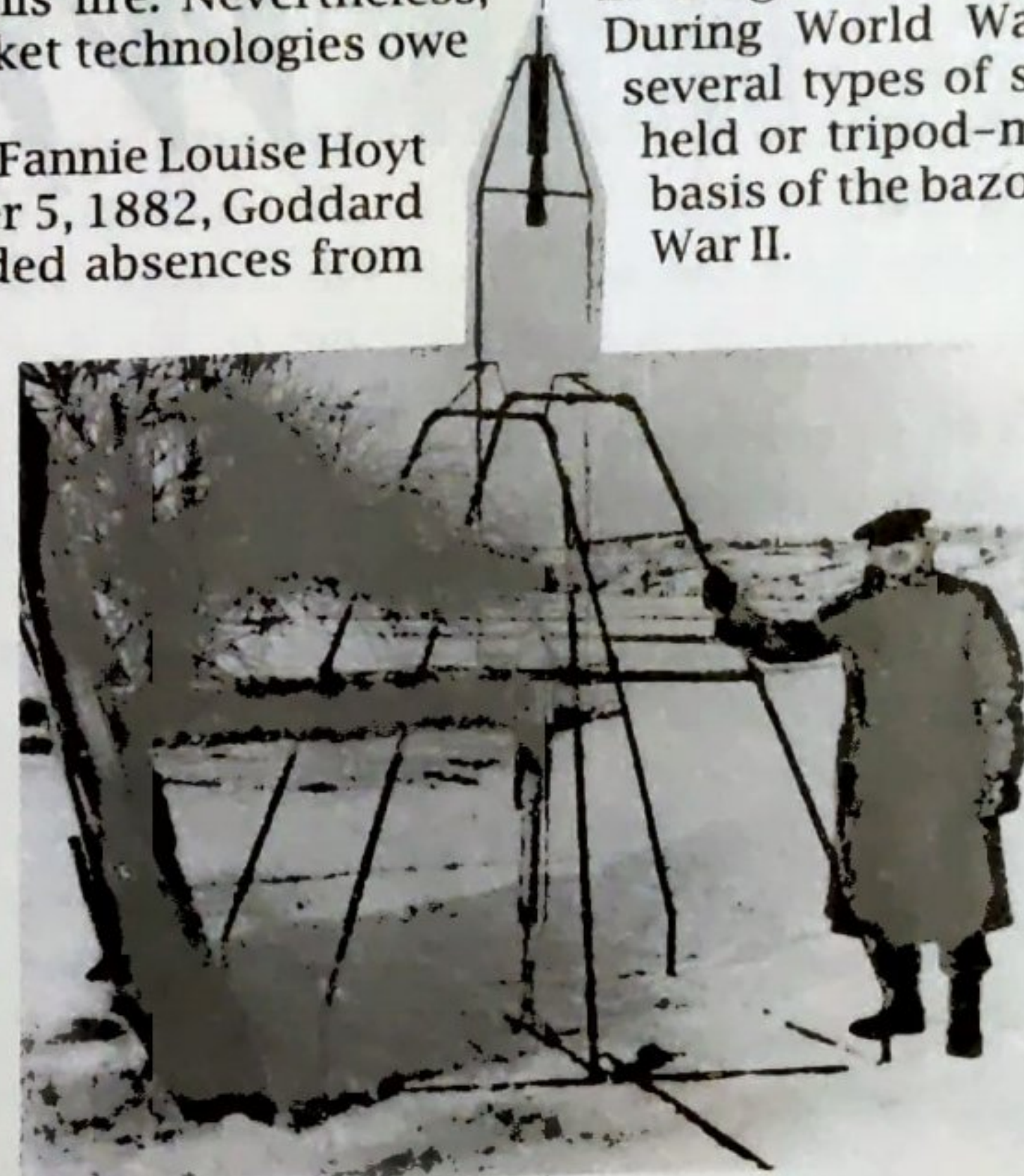


The father of modern rocket propulsion

M. Bilal Butt

Robert Hutchings Goddard, an influential American rocket scientist who pioneered modern rocketry and whose work shaped the history of space exploration, is known as the American father of modern rocketry as he built and tested the world's first liquid-fuel rocket in 1926. His achievement is considered as significant as the Wright Brothers' first flight. Yet, as far-reaching as Goddard's work became, it was not acknowledged as important by the government or military for much of his life. Nevertheless, Goddard persevered, and today, all rocket technologies owe him an intellectual debt.

Born to Nahum Goddard (a farmer) and Fannie Louise Hoyt in Worcester, Massachusetts, on October 5, 1882, Goddard was often ill as a child and had extended absences from school. But he had a telescope and often spent time studying the sky. He eventually became interested in science, particularly the mechanics of flight. As an undergraduate, Goddard attended the Worcester Polytechnic Institute, where he studied physics. He earned his physics Ph.D. at Clark University in 1911, then took a research fellowship at Princeton University the following year. He ultimately joined the faculty at Clark University as a professor of aerospace engineering and physics, a post he held for much of his life. As early as 1908, Goddard conducted static tests with small solid-fuel rockets at Worcester Tech, and in 1912



Goddard's research for many years, and not just with financial support. In 1919, the Smithsonian published Goddard's classic treatise "A Method of Reaching Extreme Altitudes" in the Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections (Vol. 71, No. 2). This publication contains the basic mathematical theory underlying rocket propulsion and rocket flight. Goddard often used Abbot as a sounding board for his ideas and his dreams for his rockets, one of which was the eventual investigation of space.

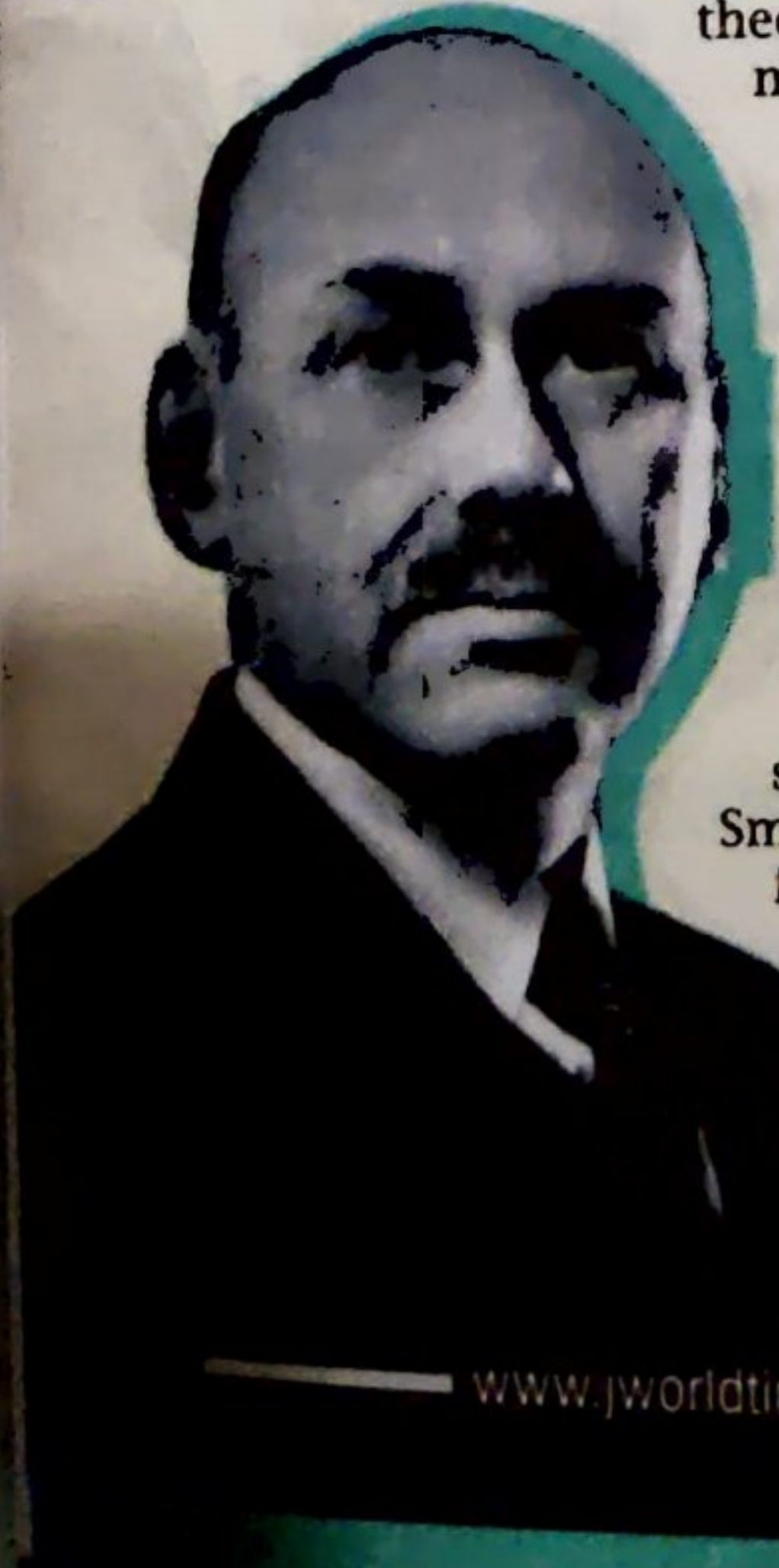
During World War I, Goddard succeeded in developing several types of solid-fuel rockets to be fired from hand-held or tripod-mounted launching tubes, which were the basis of the bazooka and other powerful weapons of World War II.

Goddard experimented with a number of different rocket configurations and fuel loads, beginning with solid-rocket propellant fuel mixes in 1915. Eventually, he switched to liquid fuels, which required a redesign of the rockets he was using. He had to engineer fuel tanks, turbines, and combustion chambers that hadn't been fashioned for this kind of work. On March 16, 1926, Goddard's first rocket soared up from a hill near Worcester, MA, on a 2.5-second flight that went up just over 12 meters. That gasoline-powered rocket led to further developments in rocket flight. Goddard began working on newer and more powerful designs using bigger

rockets. He had to solve problems controlling the angle and altitude of rocket flight, and also had to engineer rocket nozzles that would help to create greater thrust for the vehicle. Goddard also worked on a gyroscope system to control the stability of the rocket and devised a payload compartment to carry scientific instruments. Eventually, he created a parachute recovery system to return the rockets and payload safely to the ground. He also patented the multi-stage rocket in common use today. His 1919 paper, plus his other investigations into rocket design, are considered classics in the field.

During World War II, he was assigned by the US Navy to develop rocket-assisted takeoff of carrier planes and variable-thrust liquid-fuel rocket motors. At the time of his death, Goddard held 214 patents in rocketry.

Robert Goddard made great contributions to the development of rockets and space flight. He is credited with 214 patents, with 131 filed after his death. Goddard died on August 10, 1945, from throat cancer. On May 1, 1959, the National Air and Space Administration (NASA) established the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland, in his memory. ■



he developed the detailed mathematical theory of rocket propulsion. He was, in many ways, ahead of his time. His work was not understood by his colleagues, and he had great difficulty getting financial support for his experiments. By 1915, he was considering abandoning his work, since no one else seemed to think it promising. However, in that year, he proved that rocket engines could produce thrust in a vacuum and therefore make space flight possible. In 1916, the Smithsonian Institution provided him funds to continue his work on solid-propellant rockets and to begin the development of liquid-fuel rockets as well. The Smithsonian continued supporting



Mastering the Skill of

PRÉCIS Writing

Muhammad Asim Jasra



Précis writing is a skill that can be mastered with a lot of practice, good use of vocabulary and command over English-writing skills. This is the first question asked in the subjective part of CSS paper of English (Précis & Composition). Generally, the division of marks allotted to this question is as under:

Marks for précisising the text	=	15
Marks for giving a suitable title	=	05

However, sometimes, this division is not given in the question paper.

What does précis mean?

'A concise or an abridged statement' (Replica in miniature)

Summary vs précis

Summary may consist of disconnected facts, but a précis should be a connected and well-knit piece of composition, possessing all the qualities of the original text.

How to make a précis?

Step 1: Give at least three readings to the given passage.

- **First reading** to have just a hint of the topic
- **Second reading** for underlining and numbering of important ideas
- **Third reading**

should be an intensive reading aimed at comprehending the topic by applying connection marks and determining the main idea of the passage.

- You may have more than three readings, if required.

Step 2: Start making a rough draft of the passage.

- Use one-word substitutions where required.
- Use appropriate synonyms for complex words given in the passage.
- Write the draft in your own words. (**Tip:** Borrow the ideas, not the words)
- Write down only important ideas that encapsulate the crux of the given passage.
- One is required to emphasize the point(s) which has/have been emphasized in the given passage.

Note: More than one rough draft can also be written.

Step 3: Write the final draft.

Step 4: Do give a suitable title to the passage.

Basis of a good précis

- Vocabulary
- Understanding the text
- Coherent writing/no disjointed sentences

Strength of the précis

If some word limit has been given in the question paper, do follow that guideline. The précis you write should be

Some Examples

Example	Cut
When he finally reached the park he found that his friend had already arrived.	In the park, he found his friend waiting.
After he has graduated, he will go into the army.	After graduation, he will join army.
My friend who is a native of Brazil is coming for a visit.	My Brazilian friend is coming for a visit.
She entertained her friends in a gracious manner.	She entertained her friends graciously.

EXAM PACK

one-third of the original passage, if no word limit has been mentioned on the question paper.

- Count the words of the main passage; exclude punctuation marks from counting. For example, it is 300 words.
 - Divide the total strength by 3 (300/3=100 words)
 - You have a margin of ±5 words (100+5=105), (100-5=95). So, the précis should be in the range of 95 to 105 words, in this case.

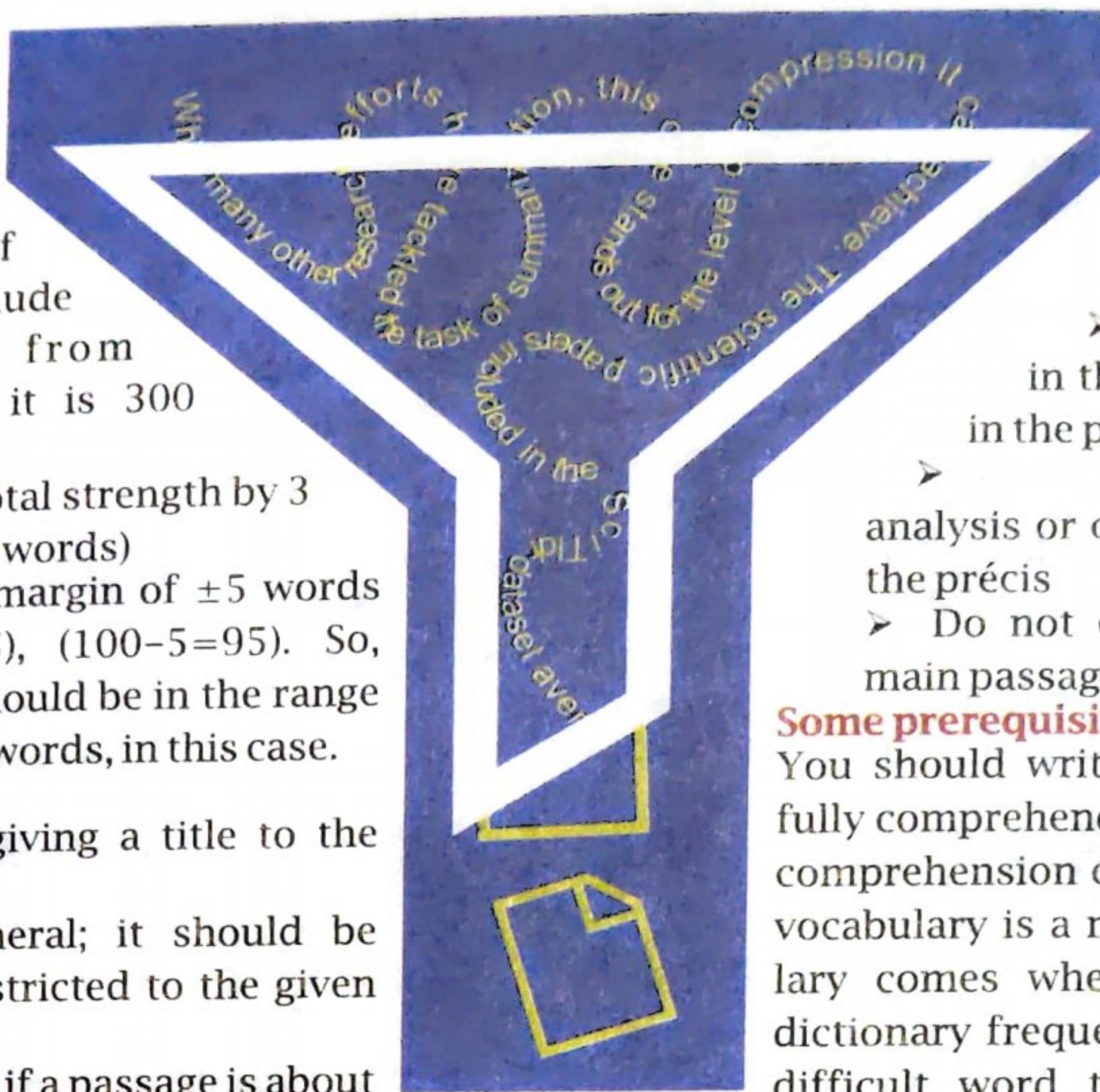
How to give a suitable title

Follow these guidelines for giving a title to the précis:

- It must not be general; it should be specific, qualified and restricted to the given passage.
 - For example, if a passage is about the role of education in the alleviation of poverty; the title should not be 'Advantages of education'. It should be specified like 'Education; the best way to counter poverty'. Also avoid giving such titles like 'Education and poverty alleviation'.
- Use of semi-colon (;) is recommended in the title.
- Title should be given, even if it has not been demanded.
 - Remember, it is always compulsory.
- The strength of the title should be 7 words or less.
- Words of the title are not counted in the strength of your précis.
- It should grasp the main idea.

Some don'ts of Précis writing

- Do not give your own ideas or opinion; only use the ideas given in the passage.
- Do not use first person in précis; it should either be in the third person or in the person given in the passage.
- Do not use direct speech.
- Do not forget to omit explanations, illustrations, examples and the likes.



- Only the main idea behind these illustrations should be written.
- Do not write stories, dialogues and interrogative sentences in the précis.
 - Do not repeat an idea in the précis, even if it is repeated in the passage
 - Do not include your own analysis or commentary on the passage in the précis
 - Do not copy the sentences from the main passage.

Some prerequisites for précis

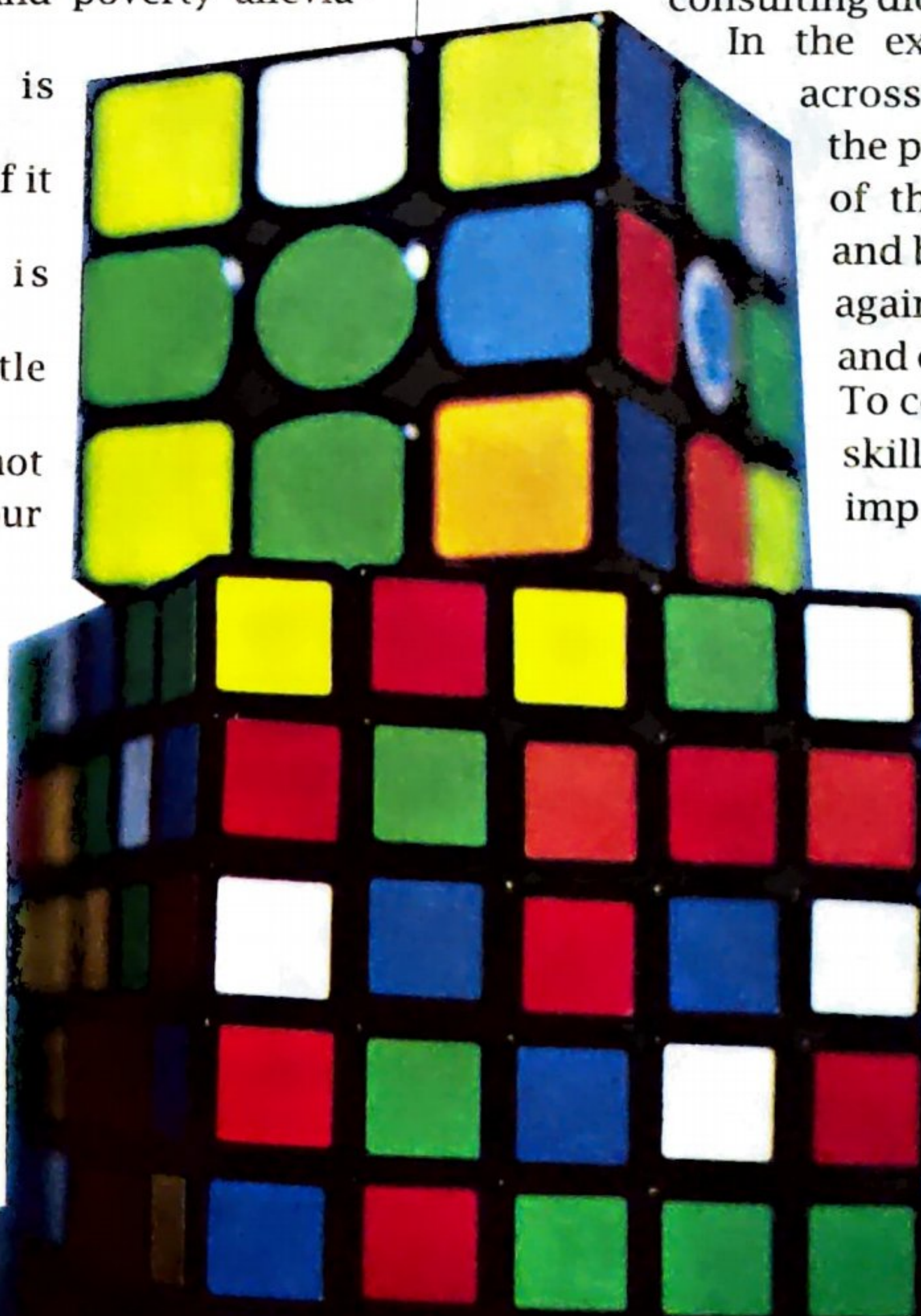
You should write précis only when you have fully comprehended the given passage. And for comprehension of the passage, command over vocabulary is a must. Command over vocabulary comes when you consult an authentic dictionary frequently for every unfamiliar and difficult word that you come across while reading any piece of writing. Make a habit of not

moving on without knowing the meanings of unfamiliar words. Not only should one know the meanings of the difficult words, but also their use in sentences. Skip no difficult word and make no exception when it comes to consulting dictionary for difficult words.

In the examination hall, if one comes across difficult or unfamiliar words in the passage, one should make a guess of the meaning through its context and by reading the passage again and again. The précis should be a clear and connected piece of prose.

To conclude, it can be stated that the skill of writing a good précis is very important for every CSS aspirant to learn. Apart from attempting one question in the English (Précis & Composition) paper, one can also make brief notes using this skill. Constant practice of précis writing will sharpen your skills of understanding and comprehending things. ■

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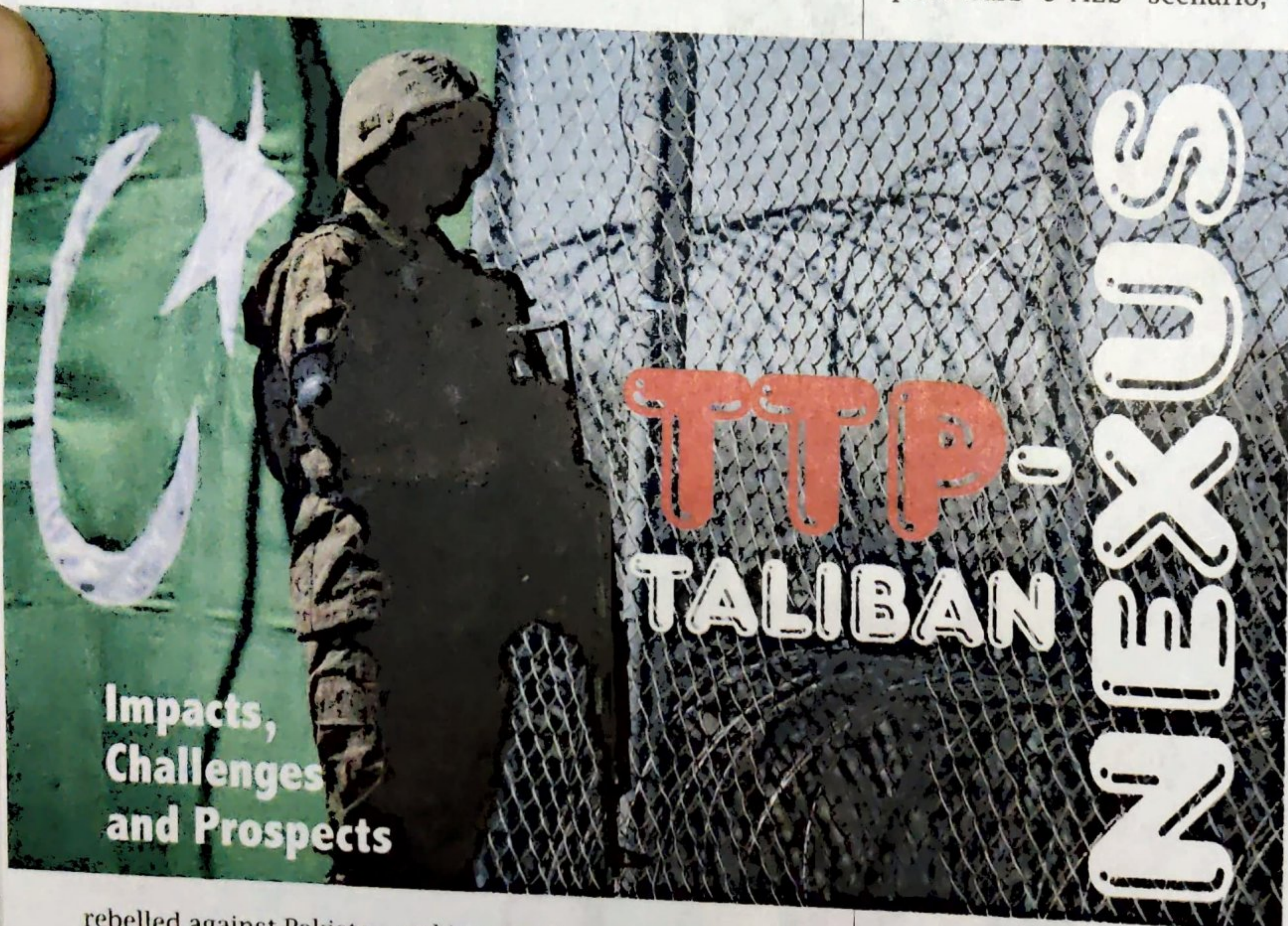
Mairaj ul Hamid Nasri

Pakistan has been facing the challenge of insurgency and militancy since long and it has shackled the whole system time and again. With the Taliban taking control of Kabul, analysts believed that the militancy inside Pakistan would diminish as the Afghan Taliban would exert their influence on their Pakistani counterparts, who have safe havens in Afghanistan. But what happened was in sharp contrast to Pakistan's aspirations and expectations, as TTP militants were provided with sanctuaries just because of their ideological nexus and long history of fighting together. So, expecting from the Taliban that they will expel TTP from Afghanistan is like living in a fool's paradise. Let's try to understand the historic links between these two: Established in 2007, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is an umbrella term to describe various militant groups that

Taliban and TTP is mainly because both of them believe in the jihadist narrative, are predominantly Pashtun and are adherents to the Deobandi School of Thought. When Afghans migrated to Pakistan during the Soviet occupation as refugees, they studied in various Deobandi seminaries (madaris) in Pakistan - the 1980s and 1990s. Then, in 1996, these madrasa students (Taliban) joined the Afghans in their fight and helped them take control of Kabul. After the Afghan Taliban were driven out by the United States in October 2001, they managed to take refuge on the other side of the border, where this relationship grew stronger. The fleeing Taliban got refuge in safe havens and received protection from Islamist tribal factions in the frontier areas near the Pak-Afghan border.

The inter-Taliban relationship was more apparent in the post-Zarb-e-Azb scenario, when Pakistan's security apparatus stepped up counter-insurgency operations in KP and erstwhile FATA. The TTP fighters went to Afghanistan, where they joined forces with the Afghan Taliban to drive out occupying Western forces and overthrow the puppet government of President Ashraf Ghani. Many TTP fighters were either killed by NATO forces or jailed by the Ashraf Ghani administration. As soon as the Afghan Taliban started gaining ground in early 2021, they were successful in releasing hundreds of TTP militants, including important leaders, from the prisons of Afghanistan. Many intelligence and media

reports suggest that the TTP fighters were funded by India to launch cross-border attacks inside Pakistan. Pakistani officials, at that time, accused the Ghani administration of allowing the insurgents to remain in the country. Islamabad further claimed that the TTP was supported by anti-Pakistani groups and pro-India factions in Afghanistan. In August 2021, following the fall of Kabul, TTP chief Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud renewed their oath of allegiance to the Afghan Taliban's Amir Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada. Moreover, the political and military leadership of Pakistan has always thought that a friendly government in Afghanistan will advance Pakistan's strategic interests and thus they welcomed the takeover by the Afghan Taliban in 2021. Prominent military officials, such as Lt. Gen. Faiz Hameed, hurried to Afghanistan to greet the new administration, urging them to either contain or expel the Pakistani Taliban.



Impacts, Challenges and Prospects

rebelled against Pakistan and its security apparatus owing to their actions against these self-proclaimed jihadist groups. Some analysts believe that TTP came into being to avenge the so-called atrocities done to the students in the Lal Masjid operation in Islamabad. As most of these militants had their roots in tribal areas of Pakistan, they took refuge there and started launching attacks on Pakistani security forces. They even frequently attacked NATO forces in Afghanistan and returned to their sanctuaries in this region. At that time, those areas were under the influence of tribal notables and elders who did not oppose their activities under the influence of their Jihadist narrative. They later signed a truce with the Pakistan Army under the leadership of Mulvi Naik Muhammad in Bajaur. Most of the TTP leaders have come from the Mehsud tribe, e.g. Abdullah Mehsud, Baitullah Mehsud, Hakimullah Mehsud and now Noor Wali Mehsud. Furthermore, the ideological nexus between the Afghan

Nevertheless, Pakistan was informed by the Afghan Taliban that they would act as a mediator in talks with the TTP leadership. Imran Khan's government then confirmed that the Pakistani military was in talks with the TTP in Kabul. While the TTP persisted in carrying out cross-border attacks, negotiations went on under the auspices of acting Afghan Taliban interior minister Sirajuddin Haqqani, who leads the group thought to be closest to Pakistan. Little progress was achieved in the negotiations because the TTP refused Pakistan's offer of amnesty, which was conditioned on the dissolution of the TTP. The TTP delegation refused to budge from its demands, either, even though the Pakistani side found several of them objectionable. Among these was the reversal of an amendment to Pakistan's constitution regarding the merger of FATA into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which brought Pakistani law to those regions. The militants' demand was that the Pakistani army should leave these border areas and that Islamic law be implemented throughout KP and the Pashtun belt of Balochistan. Last but not least, they refused to lay down their weapons and demanded the release of their warriors and commanders who were in custody and also wanted a general amnesty. During the negotiations, two prominent TTP officials were among more than a hundred TTP inmates who were freed from Pakistani prisons. Additionally, hundreds of armed Taliban members from Pakistan were permitted by the authorities to return from Afghanistan. Pakistan received a precarious and transient truce in exchange. It was first implemented in November 2021 and halted a month later when the TTP intensified its attacks to try and force Pakistan to accede to its final demands. However, the negotiations continued as the Afghan Taliban remained determined so that Pakistan could settle its issues with the TTP.

In KP province, militants were even more noticeable. They established roadblocks, demanded ransom from tourists, abducted police and army personnel, and killed political and tribal leaders who opposed them. A year after the Afghan Taliban took power, estimates set the number of militant assaults in Pakistan at 51% higher than the previous year, with over 75% of those attacks occurring in KP alone. Since then, the police chief for the province has revealed that over the year, 151 distinct occurrences resulted in the deaths of 105 officers. Mass demonstrations were organized by politicians and civil society activists across the province, from tribal districts to Malakand, Dir and Swat in the far north, with the goal of quelling renewed militancy and bloodshed.

Furthermore, the unsettling reality that some components of the Taliban's ideological viewpoint regarding the Pakistani government are similar to those of the TTP has further

exacerbated the problem. Mullah Haibatullah Akhunzada, like TTP head, Wali Mehsud, believes that Pakistan's constitution is anti-Islamic. The Pakistani interior minister issued a warning following the Peshawar incident in January 2023, stating that if the TTP's actions persisted, the Pakistani military might launch an attack in Afghanistan. In response, the foreign minister of the Afghan Taliban instead urged Pakistan to "put its own house in order." However, militancy may not be sufficiently suppressed by a twin policy of launching cross-border strikes and containing the TTP through military and law-enforcement operations in Pakistan. A method based on the rule of law, which involves gathering intelligence and prosecuting militants in court, is favored by a large number of top police personnel and other security officials, both active and retired. In the larger fight against militancy, a military operation is largely a last resort. At minimum, attacks like those that have rocked Peshawar and Karachi could be prevented by strengthening the ability of civilian law enforcement and intelligence services to recognize possible threats and address security lapses that allowed militants to enter heavily guarded, sensitive targets. Moreover, the decision of the caretaker government to drive out illegal and unregistered Afghans from Pakistan has certain grounds because, in many terrorist attacks, these migrants have been used to fulfil the malign agendas of the enemies of Pakistan.

To cut a long story short, along with understanding the counter-insurgency challenge inside the country, Pakistan should also understand the powerful nexus between the Afghan

Taliban and Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan. Afghan Taliban will never go against TTP and will never expel it from their land. Afghan Taliban will tactfully and diplomatically handle all the opponents just to neutralize the situation, but their all-time friend will not be given harm on their land. So, the policymakers should devise a strategy to use other states as well to realize Afghan Taliban that the game they are playing is very harmful for peaceful coexistence and maintaining harmonious relationships between both nations. Influence and stakes of China in Afghanistan can best serve this purpose, as only stable Afghanistan and Pakistan can ensure regional stability and consequent regional connectivity and economic integration meant for the betterment and welfare of the people of both the states of Pakistan and Afghanistan. ■

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“The Taliban have benefited from Pakistan's generous hospitality for a long time and they know it's now their turn to return the favour. Therefore, the negotiations would not break down without achieving something tangible

Maj Gen (retd) Inamul Haque



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The Israel-West NEXUS

... and crimes against
humanity in Gaza

Zain ul Abdin Jessar

Israel is a demon that has been devouring Palestinians for over seven decades now. The deplorable conditions of hapless Palestinians have not changed during this period. Poor Palestinians have been, and are still being, killed, raided and annexed by the Zionist regime in Israel. However, things took a sharp turn on October 7 when Hamas (an Arabic word to describe zeal) - a Palestinian national liberation and resistance movement that politically controls the Gaza Strip, a territory of about 365 sq km (141 sq miles) that is home to more than two million people but is blockaded by Israel - launched a flurry of missiles on Israel under an audacious campaign called "Operation Al-Aqsa Flood". Although the operation is being described as a retaliation, reaction and resistance against the decades-old brutality carried out by the Zionist state, it provided impetus to the efforts of the Zionist regime to quench its thirst for blood as Israel launched a ruthless offensive against the unarmed civilians in the Gaza strip.

The aggressive and disproportionate Israeli military offensive against the besieged enclave has taken thousands of lives and rendered almost the entire population of Gaza homeless. Amnesty International has termed the Israeli actions as war crime and crime against humanity. "Our research points to damning evidence of war crimes in Israel's bombing campaign that must be urgently investigated. Decades of impunity and injustice and the unprecedented level of death and destruction of the current offensive will

only result in further violence and instability in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories," said Agnès Callamard, Amnesty International's Secretary General. The organization also urged the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to "[u]rgently expedite its ongoing investigation in the situation of Palestine, examining alleged crimes by all parties, and including the crime against humanity of apartheid against Palestinians."

The heart-wrenching scenes of devastated Gaza posted on social media are powerful enough to make one's conscience shed tears. However, the Zionist regime is all set to commit genocide against the Palestinian Muslims, like the one Jews faced during the Second World War at the hands of Adolf Hitler. Disproportionate killing of children, the elderly, women and men has failed to prick the conscience of the global community, especially the world's major powers. Moreover, a tragedy of colossal proportion is unfolding in Gaza, where people are being denied aid, killed and bombed out of their homes. Furthermore, Israel has been attacking critical civilian infrastructure like hospitals, schools, mosques, churches and so on. The United Nations and its experts have also decried the bombing of hospitals and schools as a harrowing crime against humanity. There remains no doubt that Israeli attacks violated international humanitarian law, including by failing to take feasible precautions to spare civilians or by carrying out indiscriminate attacks that failed to distinguish

between civilians and military objectives, or by carrying out attacks that may have been directed against civilian objects.

However, despite documented violations of international humanitarian law by Israel in the Gaza Strip, the United States and the entire West have kept mum and are still avid supporters of the rogue state. Repeated vetoing of resolutions against Israel in the Security Council, the sending of huge military hardware to Israel and supporting the Zionist regime financially, militarily and politically have exposed the role of the USA and the West. Also, the West's support has exhorted Israel to continue with its violations of human rights, causing a grave humanitarian crisis. The in-person visits of Joe Biden, Rishi Sunak and Emmanuel Macron to Israel have buoyed up the Zionist

are great criminals, bloodsuckers and hypocrites. The conscience of the global community is asleep and only offers lip service. The United Nations and organizations of Muslim countries, e.g. the OIC, the Arab League, the GCC and other bodies, are dead horses. Even the plights of Palestinians have failed to awaken the rulers in Saudi Arabia and UAE, who call themselves the leaders of the Muslim Ummah, but they are waiting restlessly to enjoy the fruits of normalization of ties with Israel. The super-rich oil-exporting Arab countries have betrayed the entire Muslim Ummah, and the contemporary Arab world has no leader to protect Masjid al-Aqsa and its sanctity from the unholy motives of Zionism.

At a time when poor Palestinians are looking desperately for a saviour, the unholy nexus between Israel and the West is all set to surpass every parameter of humanity, as their most modern war machines are still sucking the



regime's offensive in Gaza. Thus, the USA and West share equal responsibility for the commission of crimes against humanity there.

It is due to the devilish role of the United States - which it has always played in the Middle East - that grave humanitarian crises, wars and conflicts have been ravaging the region. Despite ensuring a free and open world, the USA and its illegitimate child, Israel, have betrayed global humanity. The United States and Europe, the erstwhile colonial powers, along with Israel, have a historic record of violence and extravagant ideas to have killed people across the Middle East, Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq and elsewhere. This time, the West is at the nadir of its hypocrisy. On the one hand, they condemn Putin when civilians are killed in Ukraine; however, on the other, they themselves are committing crimes against humanity by supporting Israel for the genocide of the Palestinian Muslims. Is the blood of Europeans holier than that of the poor Palestinians, Syrians, Yemenis and Iraqis? Are they the children of a lesser god? Indeed, the USA and the West

blood of countless innocent Palestinians. Therefore, humanity bemoans and asks: Is there any institution or international law that can reign in the brutality of Israel? Will Israel, the US and the West ever be held responsible for their grave crimes against humanity? There is a need for the global community to put an end to the double standard of allowing for the massacre of innocent civilians in Gaza while helping Ukrainians every possible way. ■

The writer is a student of law and a CSS aspirant from Larkana, having a keen interest in national and international affairs.



Climate change is real and is already affecting human beings. There is no space for its deniers. Realizing the reality of climate change, followed by wide-ranging reforms and serious efforts, thereupon, to put those into practice, the effect of climate change can be mitigated in Pakistan.

Climate change is one of the most pressing global challenges faced by human beings. Every country is vulnerable to the vagaries of this phenomenon, and so is Pakistan. Recurrent flooding in Pakistan is a stark reminder that the country is on the verge of climate-induced precipitation. Nevertheless, its adverse impact can be mitigated by prioritizing the challenge of climate change and putting far-reaching reforms in place, followed by serious action - both by the state and the society. It is also a fact that Pakistan is one of the countries most affected by climate change, in spite of its minimal contribution to global pollution, greenhouse gases, and similar factors.

However, the root cause of climate change is carbon emissions by developed nations. The increasing burning of fossil fuels by industrialized states has polluted the environment and raised temperatures, resulting in devastating impacts worldwide. Unsurprisingly, the effects of climate change have pushed Pakistan into a dangerous zone, jeopardizing its economic growth and threatening the survival of its people. As mentioned earlier, Pakistan has faced devastating floods as well as other detrimental effects of climate change, including droughts, heavy and prolonged rains, cloudbursts, flash floods, heatwaves, wildfires, catastrophic storms, tsunamis and cyclones. In this context, Pakistan is ranked among the ten countries most vulnerable to climate change, according to Germanwatch, a Bonn-based think tank that seeks to influence public policy on trade, the environment and relations between countries in the

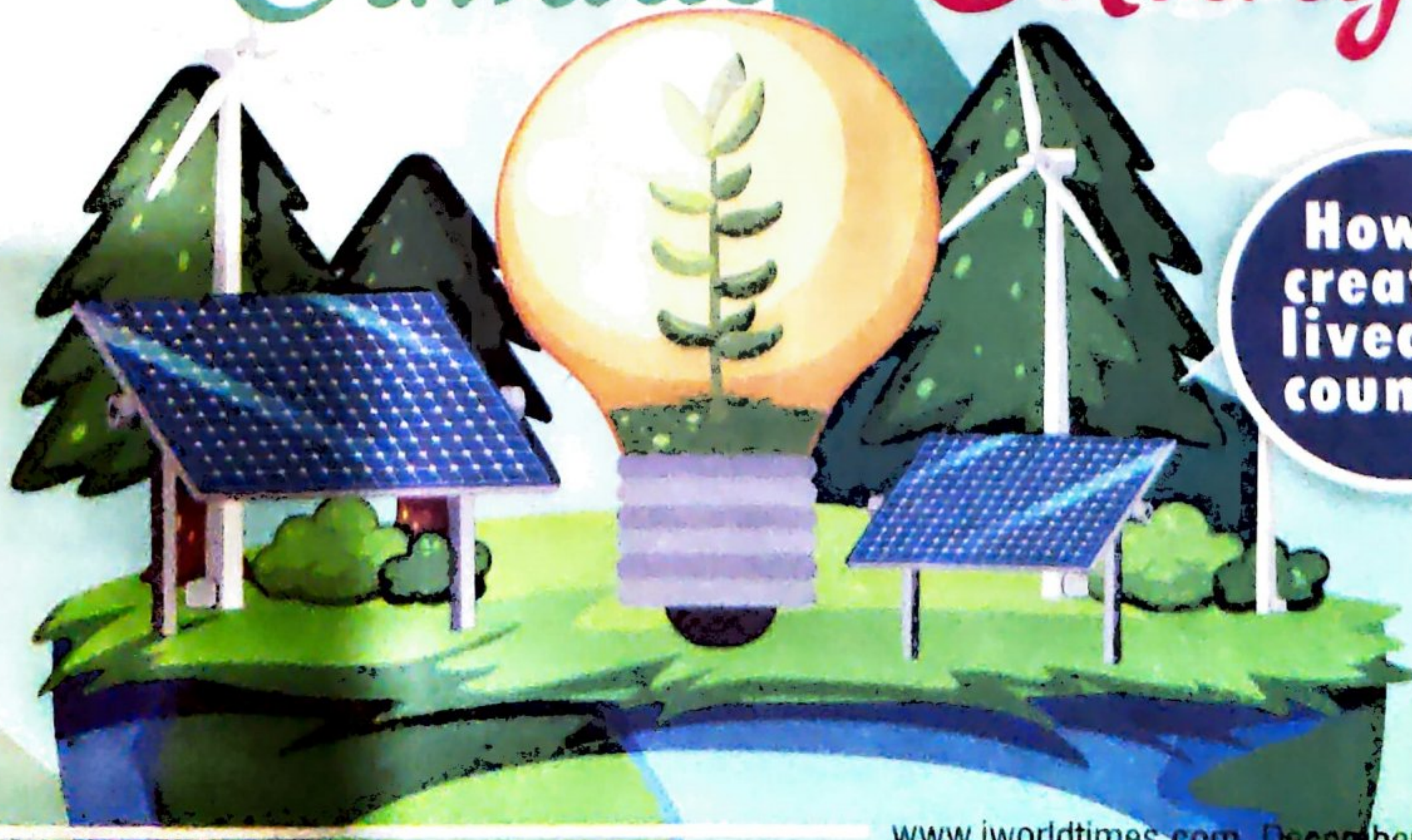
industrialized north and underdeveloped south. The effects of climate change have a direct impact on economic growth and various social sectors, leading to gigantic societal challenges like unemployment, poverty, malnutrition and the spread of new diseases. Furthermore, green industrialization is a beneficial way to replace non-renewable energy sources, which are harmful to the environment and cannot stimulate economic growth. Sustainable mobility is a major contributing factor in achieving green industrialization. On October 17-18, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Social Protection Resource Center (SPRC) organized a conference on the theme of green industrialization in Pakistan, focusing on integrated policy strategies for a sustainable future.

The National Electric Vehicles Policy (NEVP) of Pakistan is a great initiative. Its adoption would reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, and if the state implements a policy to limit government vehicles to bureaucrats and elites, it would encourage the use of public transport. This, in turn, would help mitigate the effects of climate change and create a liveable country for the coming generations to pursue their dreams. Moreover, cheap renewable energy is a prerequisite for advancing green industrialization and the utilization of renewable energy sources like solar, wind, hydro and geothermal power, which are cost-effective and even cheaper than traditional fossil fuels. By replacing our current sources of electricity production with renewable energy sources, we can ultimately mitigate the effects of climate change. Our current electricity production relies on coal consumption, and the more electricity we produce, the more coal we consume, leading to an escalation of greenhouse gas emissions and contributing to global warming.

The Quaid-e-Azam Solar Park in Bahawalpur was envisioned

Mitigating the Effects of

Climate Change



How to create a liveable country?

to be the epitome of renewable energy in the country, with a planned capacity of 1000MW. However, it typically produces slightly over 300MW due to high capital and operational costs. It is the need of the hour for the government and other relevant stakeholders to draw up proper policies that prioritize nature over development. Initiatives such as tree plantations in both urban and rural areas are necessary to make Pakistan greener. Tree plantation and reforestation are essential environmental initiatives that involve planting trees or restoring forests in order to combat deforestation, promote biodiversity, capture carbon dioxide and maintain ecological balance. These efforts contribute to improving air and water quality, mitigating climate change and providing habitat for various species. They are vital for a sustainable and healthier environment.

Indeed, real, serious and effective climate finance reforms are essential for mitigating climate change. The government should allocate a significant amount of investment for climate change mitigation and adaptation measures rather than relying on foreign loans to fill the climate finance gaps. To sum up, Pakistan must design policies to access both local and international green finance for initiatives related to energy efficiency, climate change adaptation, waste management and sustainable energy investments. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) should prioritize and focus on pre-assessment risk rather than post-assessment risk. Concentrating on pre-assessment risks would help mitigate the effects of and control the devastation that occurs as a result of natural disasters. The upcoming 28th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will be held at Expo City, Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in November-December. It is a vital opportunity for Pakistan to assert its stance on long-term solutions rather than just seeking funds for loss and damage. According to the Germanwatch Global Climate Risk Index, Pakistan ranks as the 8th most vulnerable country. This situation is akin to that of a patient admitted to the ICU but unable to achieve sound health. Public awareness is highly essential, and encouraging it to contribute to the collective effort to combat the effects of climate change through seminars, innovation and research at research centers, and campaigns in both urban and rural areas is crucial. The government should encourage people to take initiatives such as tree planting at the local level, using public transport and reducing the burning of fossil fuels and GHG emissions. The Country Climate and Development Report (CCDR) emphasizes how a country's development goals can be achieved in the context of adapting to and mitigating climate change. As such, the Pakistan CCDR provides analysis and policy

recommendations on how to harmonize the country's efforts to achieve further economic growth and lower poverty rates, on the one hand, with the pursuit of a climate-resilient, low-carbon and equitable development path, on the other. In a nutshell, it is imperative to mitigate the effects of climate change to not only make Pakistan a liveable country but also to make it a role model for other nations. For that to happen, a strong commitment to collective action and innovative solutions are key to success. Reforms such as putting in place mechanisms whereby Pakistan can make a smooth and effective transition to renewable energy sources and implementing environment-friendly policies. The path to a liveable country, therefore, lies in our commitment to make climate change the center of our policies; the state needs to assign adequate funds for the implementation of those policies; and to make it a joint venture of both the state and society as our future is at stake. Inaction today is tantamount to inviting environmental catastrophe in the future. The sooner Pakistanis realize this, the better. ■

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Key Takeaways from the Conference on Green Industrialization in Pakistan

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and Social Protection Resource Centre (SPRC) organized a conference on the theme of Green Industrialization in Pakistan, focusing on integrated policy strategies for a sustainable future on 17-18 October 2023 in Islamabad.

Many important thematic issues were deliberated, which included constraints impacting green industrialisation, sectoral challenges, especially in transport, agriculture and textiles and options for benefiting better from international climate finance.

It was noted that Pakistan is one of the most climate change-affected countries despite its minimal contribution to global pollution, greenhouse gases and other similar factors.

However, it was agreed that playing the victim would not bring relief to the most impacted stakeholders, including the poor and vulnerable communities.

The country needs to effectively factor in the unpredictable consequences of climate change and make production processes robust and climate-resilient. It was deliberated that agriculture must be treated as an industrial enterprise and should be planned and organized as such.

The preparedness for climate impacts in the agricultural sector includes ensuring ring-fencing of fields for two common extremes of droughts and torrential rains. Some mentions include proper siting, improving the drainage pattern of fields, articulating the road and highway design to prevent inundation and storing the excess water through targeted rainwater harvesting and replenishment of underground aquifers.

If we modify our road and highway designs so that water can flow underneath the road surface through properly designed culverts and drain pipes, enormous relief can be acquired for the farmers. The fact that many rain-affected locations in Sindh in 2022 remained inundated for weeks displays a commonly observed development flaw.

In the transport sector, the exponential rise in motor cars and motorcycles in cities and hinterlands is a source of enormous pollution and inefficiency. There is a high cost to mobility and unnecessary restrictions on the smooth operations of public transport wherever it exists.

A people-supported regulatory regime for motor cars and motorcycle operations is essentially required. Tools such as congestion taxes may be imposed in downtown areas. It also requires a lifestyle alteration. When the elite stop using their SUVs and luxury cars and opt for public transport, the masses shall certainly follow. Work trips must be made using public vehicles as preferred options. Sustainable mobility is a major contributing factor in achieving green industrialization.

Unravelling the COP28 jargon

News reports on the UN climate summit, beginning in Dubai next week, have been riddled with acronyms spawned over decades of climate negotiations. A guide to break through the esoteric language of the summit. By Tannu Jain

What is COP?

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the supreme body of the UNFCCC. At the annual conference, representatives of parties to the convention review its implementation and of any other legal instruments that the COP adopts, like the Paris Agreement.

The convention it flows from

UNFCCC or the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change entered into force on March 21, 1994. To date, 197 countries have ratified the Convention, becoming the Parties to the Convention, which aims to prevent "dangerous" human interference with the climate system

Paris Agreement

A legally binding treaty, the Paris Agreement was adopted by 196 Parties at COP21 in 2015. Its goal is to hold "the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels" and pursue efforts "to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels"

What the agreements enshrine

Nationally determined contributions

NDCs are action plans submitted by countries party to the Paris Agreement wherein they set targets for mitigating emissions and adapt to impacts of climate crisis. The plans define how to reach targets and verify progress to stay on track. Under the Paris Agreement, countries are expected to update their NDCs every five years. But, owing to the large gap in emissions cuts and current plans, the 2021 Glasgow Climate Pact called on countries to revisit targets in 2022, earlier than the 2025 deadline



CBDR

The principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities", was enshrined in Kyoto Protocol. Under it, developed countries, responsible for higher historical emissions, should take the lead in fighting climate crisis and its impacts



Loss and damage

At last year's summit, countries agreed to establish a Loss and Damage Fund to help low-income countries pay for the damages caused by climate change. Over the past year, objections including over the text, have stymied setting up of the fund



'Just transition'

The term is used to describe a shift to a low-carbon economy that keeps the social and economic disruption of moving away from fossil fuels to a minimum while maximising the benefits for workers, communities and consumers



Climate finance

In 2009, developed countries promised \$100 billion a year from 2020 to poorer nations hit.



Rich nations had earlier signalled the target would not be met until 2023. But the OECD last week said they may have achieved the overdue promise in 2022



EXAM PACK

Usman Ahmad

Despite rapidly increasing climate risks, which necessitate greater efforts to adapt, the money being made available to developing countries for adaptation measures has been declining, and nowhere close to the scale of the requirement. This has been revealed by the Adaptation Gap Report, which was recently issued by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The report, which looks at progress in planning, financing and implementing adaptation actions, finds that the adaptation finance needs of developing countries are 10-18 times as big as international public finance flows. This is over 50 percent higher than the previous range estimate.

What is Adaptation Gap?

The Adaptation Gap is the difference between the funds needed to adapt to climate change in countries (generally developing and least developed countries) and the actual financial support received. For instance, developing countries require \$215-387 billion annually for climate adaptation, but they are only receiving about \$21 billion.

Methodology

The Adaptation Gap Report assessed the current need for adaptation finance in two ways.

1. It put together all the requirements put forward by the countries in their NDCs, and that came to about USD 387 billion every year this decade.
2. It did a modelling exercise of the kind of adaptation that was required across the world, and the money needed to support those efforts.

That exercise yielded a sum of USD 215 billion every year in this decade. The numbers are expected to go up sharply beyond this decade as the risks from climate change increase rapidly.

Executive Summary

In 2023, climate change yet again grew more disruptive and deadly. Temperature records toppled, globally and regionally. Storms, floods, heatwaves and wildfires caused devastation. These intensifying impacts tell us two things: the world must urgently cut greenhouse gas emissions and it must increase adaptation efforts to protect vulnerable populations. Neither is happening. Inadequate investment and planning on climate adaptation leave the world exposed. It finds that progress on adaptation is slowing across all three areas annually assessed - finance, planning and implementation - when it should be rapidly accelerating. This has massive implications for people left to face the full force of climate impacts without any shield and, as a result, for losses and damages - which are worldwide, but most forcefully felt in the developing countries least able to deal with them.

Despite the clear signs of accelerating climate risks and impacts worldwide, the adaptation finance gap is widening and now stands at between US\$194 billion and US\$366 billion per year. Adaptation finance needs are 10-18 times as great as current international public adaptation finance flows.

This is the main conclusion of a comprehensive assessment of the literature and new analyses to provide updated estimates of the costs and needs of adaptation in developing countries, as well as the international finance flows required to address these needs. The report also provides

UNEP's Adaptation Gap Report 2023

Progress on adaptation is slowing



Building Adaptive Capacity in Pakistan

Over the past three decades, the increasing frequency, scale and magnitude of climate extremes in Pakistan have caused significant loss of life, while triggering a reversal of development gains. The compounding impacts of the climate crisis mean that for each climate disaster which occurs, the window to build back is getting smaller and people are falling deeper in the poverty trap.

In Pakistan, the adverse and cascading impacts of disasters have eroded livelihoods and coping capacities. Flooding results in greater loss of life and damage to property than other natural hazards. The intensity and frequency of these events has increased since Pakistan was formed in 1947, with the most devastating floods to date occurring in 2022.

Responding to the cascading risks and impacts of the climate crisis requires a transdisciplinary, cross-scale and cross-sector approach. Understanding, identifying and attributing cascading effects to specific climate shocks and stressors is key to developing ways to build adaptive capacity and resilience. However, it is very likely that the costs of adaptation will be higher than anticipated.

updates on adaptation planning and implementation and concludes that global progress on adaptation is slowing rather than showing the urgently needed acceleration.

In view of ever-increasing weather extremes such as a multi-year drought in East Africa, flooding in China and Europe, and extreme heat and wildfires in the United States of America and Canada, among others, narrowing the adaptation finance gap is of particular importance because of the high benefits that investments in adaptation can offer in terms of reducing climate

risks and improving equity and climate justice. Left unchecked, however, increasing climate risks will inevitably lead to more climate-related losses and damages. Therefore, the Report also focuses on loss and damage to support Parties in the negotiations following the decision at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 27) in Sharm El-Sheikh to establish a loss and damage fund and funding arrangements for vulnerable developing countries.

Global temperatures and climate impacts and risks continue to rise, highlighting the urgent need for rapid acceleration of global adaptation action. Current climate action is woefully inadequate to meet the temperature and adaptation goals of the Paris Agreement. While global average temperatures are already exceeding 1.1°C above pre-industrial levels, current plans reflected in the nationally determined contributions (NDCs) are putting

us on a path towards 2.4°C–2.6°C by the end of the century. Even if the rise in temperature eventually slows as a result of more ambitious collective climate change mitigation efforts, climate risks will accelerate with every fraction of a degree because of the compounding and cascading nature of climate-related impacts.

In addition, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concludes that residual climate risks - that is risks remaining after ambitious adaptation efforts - will

persist even if the Paris Agreement goals are reached. Residual climate risks, in turn, will inevitably lead to both economic and non-economic losses and damages. This demonstrates the importance of accelerating and scaling up both mitigation and adaptation action, to respectively avert catastrophic climate change and minimize the climate impacts that remain. In addition, more focus must be placed on anticipatory, just and effective adaptation action and support.

One out of six countries still does not have a national adaptation planning instrument and more must be done to close the remaining gap.

Five out of six Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have established at least one national adaptation plan, strategy or policy, and just under half of them have two or more national-level instruments that serve to replace or update the initial ones. Moreover, 25 percent of countries have put in place legal instruments that require national governments to plan for adaptation. There has also



been significant improvement in certain aspects of the potential adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation planning since 2021. Both findings suggest a growing determination to address climate risks, but more needs to be done to ensure the implementation of planning instruments. Meanwhile, 15 percent of Parties still do not have a national adaptation planning instrument, and the rate of increase dropped from 4 percent to 1 percent in 2022. While half of the 29 countries without any such instrument are in the process of developing one, most of them are particularly vulnerable to climate impacts, and more must be done to support them to close the remaining gap faster.

Analysis of major findings and recommendations

Following are some major findings of the report:

- There is a growing divide between need and action when it comes to protecting people from climate extremes.
 - In 2023, temperature records toppled, while storms, floods, droughts and heatwaves caused devastation.
 - However, progress on adaptation is slowing across all three areas assessed: finance, planning and implementation.
- Adaptation finance needs of developing countries are 10-18 times as big as international public finance flows. This is over 50 percent higher than the previous range estimate.
 - The adaptation finance gap is the difference between the estimated costs of adapting to climate change in developing countries and the amount of finance available to meet these costs.
- Climate adaptation finance flows from public multilateral (like the World Bank) and bilateral sources (from a developed to a developing nation) declined by 15 percent.
 - Domestic budgets seem to be the largest source of funding for adaptation in many developing countries.
- Neither domestic nor private funding sources could help bridge the adaptation finance gaps, especially in low-income countries.

Efforts

Efforts are being made to increase the finance flows, not just for adaptation, but for all other kinds of climate needs, together called climate finance. Developed countries had promised, way back in 2009, to mobilise at least USD 100 billion in climate finance every year from 2020 but even three years after the deadline, that amount has not been realised. In the meanwhile, the need for climate finance has skyrocketed and is now assessed to be in trillions of dollars every year.

At the Glasgow Climate Conference in 2021, the developed countries had committed themselves to double the money for adaptation. Separately, there is also an agreement that a new climate financing goal, over and above USD 100 billion

every year, would be set by 2025.

But the Adaptation Gap Report suggests that the current ambition of raising climate finance would just not be enough.

"While the doubling of adaptation finance by 2025 and the new collective quantified goal for 2030 that is under deliberation will be instrumental in helping to close this finance gap, the increase in international public finance alone is unlikely to close it. For example, achieving the goal of doubling adaptation finance (by 2025) would only reduce the gap by between 5 percent and 10 percent," the report says.

It says countries would have to increasingly depend on their own resources, and on private finance, to fund their adaptation efforts.

Way Ahead

This report identifies seven ways to increase financing, including through domestic expenditure and international and private sector finance.


Additional avenues include remittances, increasing and tailoring finance to Small and Medium Enterprises and a reform of the global financial architecture.

The new Loss and Damage fund will also need to move towards more innovative financing mechanisms to reach the necessary scale of investment. ■

The writer is a member of staff.

In a nutshell

- Adaptation finance needs are 10-18 times higher than current public flows.
 - **Recommendation:** Developed countries should double their climate finance for adaptation from 2019 levels by 2025.
- Adaptation costs are expected to significantly increase by 2050. For example, coastal protection costs will rise due to sea-level rise.
 - The report emphasizes the need for urgent climate action in three domains: mitigation, adaptation, and addressing loss and damage.
- The adaptation finance gap is expanding.
 - Increase and improve budget tagging and tracking for integrating adaptation into budget planning.
- Action plan on loss and damage has overlooked non-economic losses like cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge.
 - Mobilize private investments, by methods like resilience bonds, and insurance.
- Only 2% of gender-tagged international adaptation finance is gender-responsive.
 - Leverage remittances which often contribute significantly to Gross Domestic Product. Financing Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), stimulating them to offer adaptation-relevant products and services.



Understanding the **US-Israel** *Relationship*

Muhammad Sheraz

Long called the most special bilateral relationship, US-Israeli ties are, in fact, the world's strangest. The United States has been a strong supporter of Israel since 1948, when President Harry Truman became the first world leader to recognize the Jewish state, moments after its creation. The USA also remains deeply involved in supporting the Israeli military and security forces. The long history of US military aid to Israel has helped the nation develop its military prowess, and it

continues to represent a significant share of Israel's military budget. Over time, it has become less critical operationally as Israel has built up its own military production capacity, but the USA has continued its aid as a demonstration of its resolute support for Israel, even in the face of global opposition to the country's treatment of Palestinians. In the following write-up, we will try to analyse the 'special relationship' between the two countries. The United States of America, which provides billions in military

support to Israel each year, has traditionally been a staunch ally of the Jewish state in the Middle East. Despite political differences that at times strained relations between the two countries, this relationship remains as tightly knit as ever. After the Hamas attack on Israel in October, US officials repeatedly reiterated their unwavering support for Israel — diplomatically, financially and militarily. President Biden, who has previously criticized Netanyahu's right-wing government, was unequivocal in an

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address at the White House when he said: "We stand with Israel ... And we will make sure Israel has what it needs to take care of its citizens, defend itself and respond to this attack." Moreover, appearing alongside Netanyahu on Oct. 12, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said, "You may be strong enough on your own to defend yourself, but as long as America exists, you will never ever have to. We will always be there by your side." The USA has also continued its unconditional aid to Israel, which has totalled \$158 billion (not adjusted for inflation) since World War II — more than the USA has given to any other nation. In addition, the USA has been careful

not to criticise Israel even in

the face of the latter's disproportionate attack on the tiny enclave of 2.3 million people. The USA has also vetoed a UN Security Council resolution that called for a humanitarian pause to Israel's attacks and voted against a resolution at the UN General Assembly calling for a humanitarian truce, which was passed with a landslide. This is not surprising given the history of US-Israel relations.

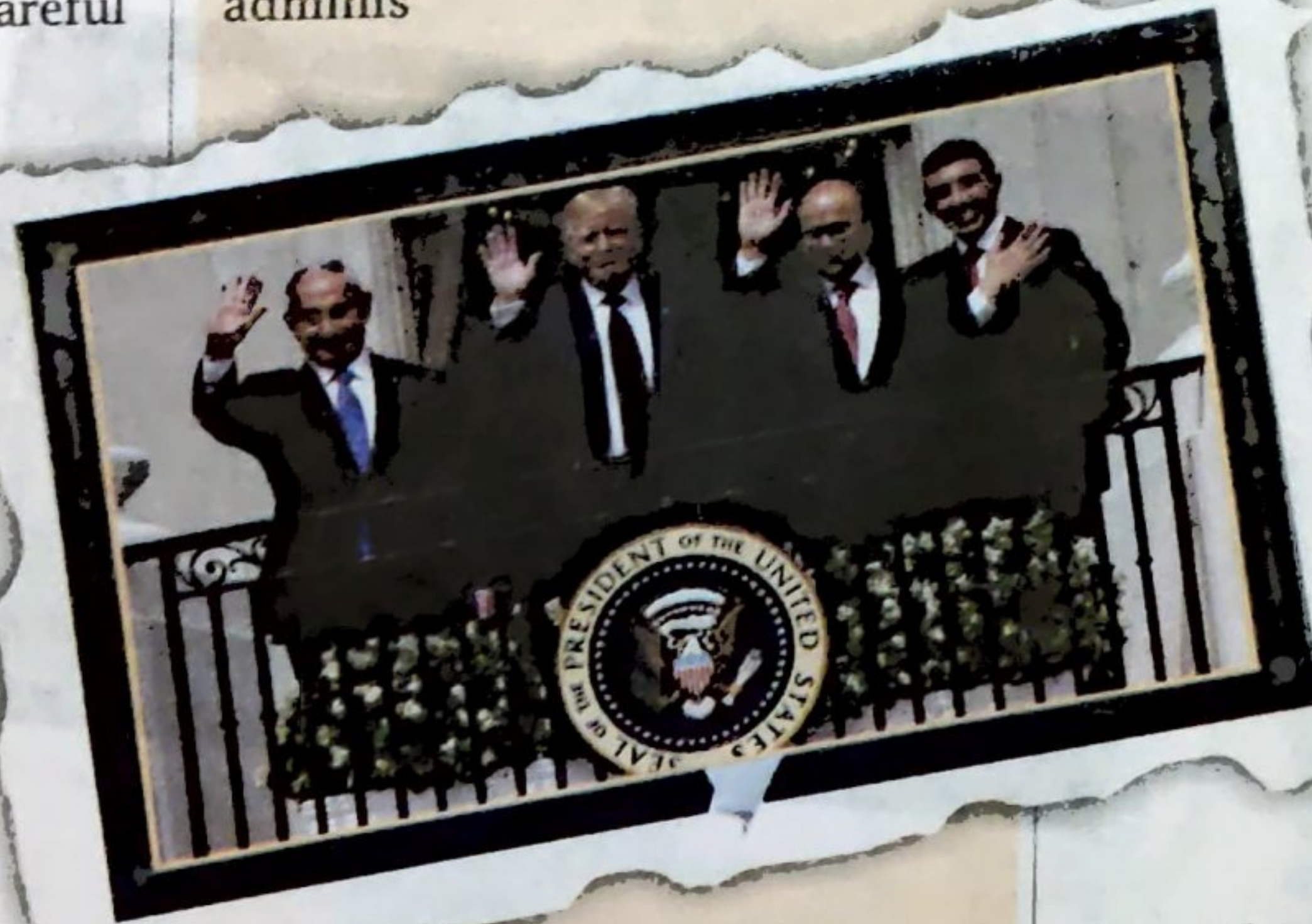
Barring minor personality clashes between leaders, the USA has stood solidly behind Israel, irrespective of the latter's actions, at least since 1967.

Origins of US-Israel ties

The USA had supported the idea of a Jewish homeland even before the state of Israel was declared within historical Palestine in 1948. On March 3, 1919, two years after the Balfour Declaration, in which the British government declared its support for the creation of a "Jewish homeland in Palestine," President Woodrow Wilson said, "The allied nations with the fullest concurrence

of our government and people are agreed that in Palestine shall be laid the foundations of a Jewish Commonwealth." In 1922 and 1944, the US Congress passed resolutions endorsing the Balfour Declaration. The US was the first country that recognised Israel in 1948. The recognition came within 11 minutes after the proclamation. "I had faith in Israel before it was established, I have faith in it now," President Harry Truman said on May 26, 1952.

Though the USA offered the state of Israel support right from the latter's birth, the initial two decades of their relationship had not been very smooth. The Eisenhower adminis



tration was unhappy when Israel, along with France and Britain, launched the Suez war. Washington threatened to cut aid to Israel if it did not withdraw from the territories it had captured. The Soviet Union also threatened to fire missiles unless Israel withdrew, and finally Israel had to pull back from the areas it seized. Similarly, in the 1960s, the Kennedy administration had voiced concerns about Israel's secret nuclear programme. However, the 1967 war, in which Israel defeated Jordan, Syria and Egypt, all in six days, and captured swathes of territories, brought about a paradigm shift in the way

Washington looked at the Jewish state. The USA at that time was bogged down in Vietnam. Israel defeated the Arab countries without any major US help and the war was wrapped up quickly. Also, two of the Arab countries Israel defeated — Egypt and Syria — were Soviet allies. From then on, the USA started seeing Israel as a stable ally who could check the expansion of Soviet influence in West Asia.

Current Status

Today, Israel is an exceptional ally of Washington. The US offers practically unconditional financial, military and political support for Israel, which has been occupying Palestinian territories since 1967. Israel is an undeclared nuclear power but has never faced any global scrutiny or pushback, thanks to the protection offered by the USA. Israel is also the largest recipient of America's aid. Currently, Israel gets \$3.8 billion in military aid every year

from the USA, which accounts for about 16% of Israel's total military budget.

The USA is also Israel's largest trading partner, with annual two-way trade hovering around \$50 billion. Both Israel and the USA also have a deep defence partnership, which involves joint research and development and weapons production. For example, the Iron Dome, Israel's famed missile defence shield, uses parts built in the USA and the system is financed in part by the USA. With US help, Israel has built a highly advanced defence manufacturing base, which has made the country the world's 10th largest military exporter.

Since 1972, the USA has used its veto power over 50 times to strike down resolutions critical of Israel in the UN Security Council.

From the 1973 Yom Kippur War onwards, the USA has also offered solid military support to Israel in its conflicts. In 1973, after Israel was taken aback by the surprise attack by Egypt and Syria, US supplies proved vital for Israel to push back the enemy troops from the occupied Golan Heights and Sinai Peninsula. In 1982, the USA sent Multinational Forces to Lebanon after Israel's invasion of the country. After the first Intifada, the US supported the Oslo process and the two-state solution, but without compromis-

ing its relationship with Israel. Now, the running theme in Washington is that it supports "Israel's right to defend". The previous US administration, of Donald Trump, recognised Jerusalem as Israel's capital and moved America's embassy to the disputed city. The Trump administration also recognised Israel's annexation of Golan Heights, a Syrian territory it captured in 1967 and held under its occupation ever since.

Instances of tensions

While there were personality clashes between American Presidents and Israeli Prime Ministers, such clashes never led to a breakdown in what President John F. Kennedy called "the special relationship".

1. In 1956, Israel attacked Egypt in an attempt, along with France and the United Kingdom, to seize the Suez Canal and overthrow Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser. President Dwight Eisenhower became infuriated at Israel and he pressured Israel to remove troops - which it eventually did.

2. President John F. Kennedy was

concerned about Israel's nuclear ambitions. He engaged in a quiet pressure campaign to let US inspectors into its nuclear sites and halt an Israeli nuclear program. Israel is thought to have developed nuclear weapons in the 1960s, although it has never formally acknowledged them.

3. Although President Lyndon Johnson had helped supply Israel in the years preceding the Six-Day War - Johnson agreed to sell some military equipment to the Israelis which was a shift in US policy at the time - in which Israel seized land from its neighbours, when Egypt, as a result of



war, closed the Suez Canal for years, Johnson used the hotline to calm the Soviets. The teletype machines were installed to ease tensions between the nuclear superpowers after the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Soviets initiated contact, and Johnson told them not to be alarmed by US military activity in the Mediterranean.

4. President Richard Nixon supported Israel during the Yom Kippur War of 1973, a key moment that may have saved the country. But, his secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, remained engaged in so-called "shuttle diplomacy," engineering an end to the war and ultimately

reopening the Suez Canal under President Gerald Ford.

5. In the 1970s, President Jimmy Carter brokered peace between Egypt and Israel. He brought Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat together for the Camp David Accords, which created a lasting peace between Israel and Egypt, its Arab neighbour to the South. Israel would finally agree to sign the Framework for Peace Agreement as part of the Camp David Accords, which would set the stage for the Oslo process. Today, Israel enforces its borders on the Gaza Strip, but so

does Egypt. That more than two million Palestinians live in the 140-square-mile strip without the ability to easily leave is why it is today frequently referred to as the biggest open-air prison on earth.

6. During the second Intifada, President George W. Bush pressed Israel to show restraint in the occupied West

Bank, and, in return, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon accused him of appeasing the Arabs. Israel 'will not be Czechoslovakia', Sharon said, indirectly drawing parallels between British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's surrender before Hitler in the 1938 Munich agreement and Bush. Sharon later apologised for the comparison.

7. Obama tried to hit reset with the Middle East after the Bush years. He continued to support Israel, but he described Israel's presence in the West Bank as an "occupation." He was more forcefully opposed to the construction of new settlements in the West Bank. He engineered a summit between then-Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and

American Public Support for Israel

Supporting Israel has also historically been incredibly politically popular in the US, bolstered by a well-funded pro-Israel lobby in Washington. However, that public support has markedly waned in recent years, particularly among Democrats, who marginally supported Palestinians over Israelis in a March 2023 Gallup poll for the first time. Some argue that the benefits of the US's relationship with Israel do not justify their moral and literal price. As Stephen Walt, a professor of international affairs at Harvard Kennedy School, noted in *Foreign Policy*, Israel did not support the US in two wars against Iraq and even required the US's protection from Iraqi Scud attacks in the first Gulf War. Moreover, he wrote before the Gaza war, "decades of brutal Israeli control have demolished the moral case for unconditional US support." But US policymakers seem to have accepted that it's just the cost of maintaining the special relationship, which is not just military and political in nature, but also personal.

Abbas at the White House, but the effort ultimately failed. President Barack Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had also clashed over the Iran nuclear deal. Netanyahu had visited the Republican-controlled US Congress and attacked Obama over his Iran policy. But the same Obama vetoed all resolutions at the UN Security Council critical of Israel except one during his eight-year term. Obama, during his last months in office, also cleared a \$38 billion aid package for Israel.

8. The Biden administration had earlier criticised the Netanyahu government's plan to overhaul the country's judiciary. But after the October 7 attack by Hamas, it has thrown its full weight behind the Netanyahu government's war on Gaza.

Why the US believes supporting Israel is in its interest

The USA has strong historical and economic ties with Israel.

The USA, which has supported the formation of a Jewish state since World War II, is Israel's top trading partner, with annual bilateral trade of nearly \$50 billion in goods and services.

Beyond that, US officials have also long maintained that America's relationship with Israel holds strategic value as a stabilizing force in the Middle East, keeping at bay

unrest that would threaten access to the regional oil supply on which America remains dependent. Initially, Israel served as a counter-vailing force to Soviet influence and this line of thinking persisted even after the Cold War. And it became even more pervasive after 9/11, when it was discovered that some of the perpetrators of the attack were citizens of Saudi Arabia, which the USA

commitment," then-Vice President Biden said in 2013. "An independent Israel, secure in its own borders, recognized by the world is in the practical strategic interest of the United States of America. I used to say ... if there were no Israel, we'd have to invent one."

More recently, Israel has been a key pillar of the US's stated goal to create an "integrated, prosperous and secure Middle East" as it looks to turn its focus to other parts of the world, including Russia and China. The Trump administration facilitated agreements to normalize relations between Israel and several of its Muslim-majority neighbours, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain,

and Morocco. There is speculation that Hamas's attack was intended to upend talks brokered by the Biden administration to also normalize relations between Israel and its main regional rival Saudi Arabia so that they can form a united front against Iran, a common enemy that financially supports Hamas. However, the Gaza war may threaten Israel's position to act as a vehicle for US peacemaking in the region. ■

The writer is a member of staff.



counted as another key ally in the region. Doubting that it could continue to rely on the Saudis, the US leaned more heavily on Israel, based on the perception that it had more shared values and interests. That includes a shared commitment to democracy, though Netanyahu's undemocratic plan to overhaul the Israeli judiciary has recently put that in question.

"It's not only a long-standing moral commitment; it's a strategic



Atoms4Food

Nuclear science against world hunger

Uzair Salman

With an aim to provide a broad-based response to the global need for sustainable food systems, the heads of two United Nations agencies - the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) - recently announced a new initiative called Atoms4Food. Introduced during a special event on "Innovation Breakthroughs" held at the World Food Forum 2023, hosted in Rome by the UN agency for food and agriculture, the initiative seeks to offer member countries assistance in strategic planning, increasing food production and food safety.

"We are at an unprecedented moment when hunger and malnutrition are on the rise, posing a threat to humanity," said FAO Director-General QU Dongyu and IAEA Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi in a joint statement. "The Atoms4Food initiative aims to provide innovative solutions tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of member states, harnessing the benefits of nuclear technologies along with other advanced techniques," they said. It is important to note here that Atoms4Food comes 70 years after President Dwight D. Eisenhower delivered his iconic "Atoms for Peace" speech and shares similar objectives.

Why this initiative?

The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report for 2023 has revealed a concerning increase in global food insecurity. The number of people experiencing hunger has more than doubled since 2020, with an estimated 900 million individuals facing food insecurity. This alarming trend is primarily attributed to the growing pressure on natural resources and the increasing risks associated with climate change, which pose significant threats to the sustainability of food systems worldwide.

The one domain that offers innovative tools to grow stronger, healthier and safer crops and to protect food sources to sustain our lives is nuclear science.

Highlights

- It is an initiative to help countries boost food security and to tackle growing hunger.
- It aims to help nations use innovative nuclear techniques to improve agricultural productivity, reduce food losses, ensure food security, improve nutrition and adapt to the challenges of climate change.
- It is well placed to provide Member States with ground-breaking solutions - in areas ranging

from cropping systems to natural resource management, tailored to their specific needs and circumstances.

- It will enable them to harness the advantages of nuclear techniques along with other advanced technologies to enhance agricultural and livestock productivity, natural resource management, reduce food losses, ensure food safety, improve nutrition and adapt to the challenges of climate change.
- It will be run through the Joint FAO/IAEA Centre of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture.

Services

Atoms4Food offers the following:

- **Assessment Mission** to map food security needs and develop a tailored plan to address food security challenges.
- **Crop Variety Improvement Service** to build crop improvement programmes using the nuclear method of plant mutation breeding to create more robust and nutritious crops.
- **Soil and Water Management and Crop Nutrition Service** to use the precision of nuclear and isotopic science to gather information on soil fertility, major crops and their average yield, availability of fertilizer and water irrigation systems.
- **Animal Production and Health Service** to provide a scientific assessment of the epidemiological situation of animal diseases; interventions for prevention, diagnosis and control; and laboratory and other veterinary service capacities.
- **Insect Pest Control Service** to address insect pests that affect agricultural production by using the nuclear-based sterile insect technique.
- **Food Safety and Control Service** to assess laboratory capabilities and the ability to conduct surveillance of food hazards.
- **Public Health Nutrition Service** to inform impactful nutrition programming using evidence on the nutritional value of foods and diet quality derived from the use of stable isotope techniques. ■

The writer is a member of staff.



THE FALL OF DHAKA

A NATION DIVIDED INTO TWOFOLD!

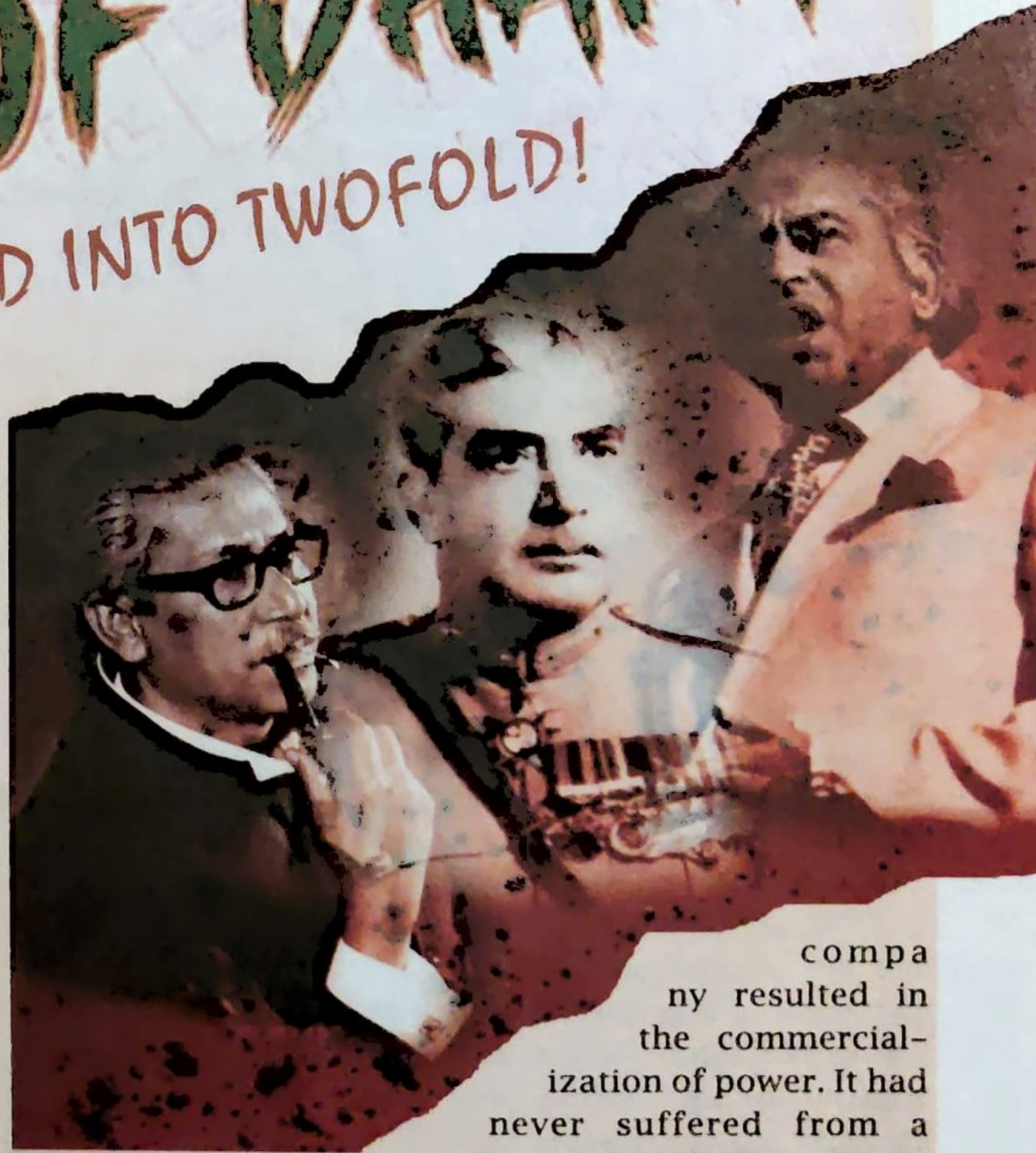
Dr. Hassaan Bin Zubair



The creation of Bangladesh is one of the most sensitive but tragic chapters in the history of Pakistan. On December 16, 1971, Pakistani troops laid down their arms and surrendered for the secession of East Pakistan - it is considered the darkest day in our history. The grievances of Bengalis were political ones and they should have been handled with a reconciliatory political approach.

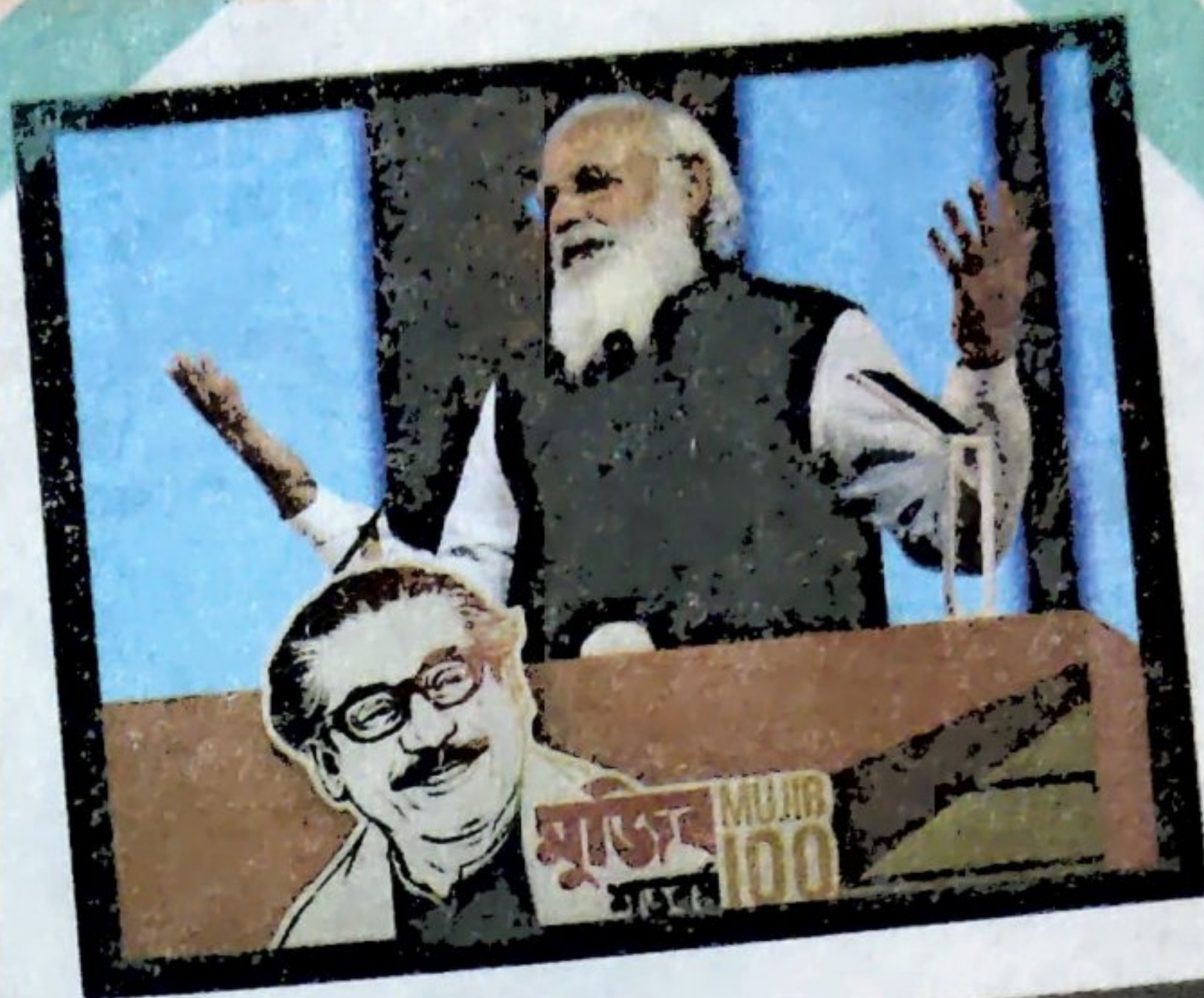
In official Pakistani memory, the year 1971 is selectively remembered. There isn't a blanket denial of events; instead, awkward pauses and silences mar the memory of the 24 years in which East and West Pakistan coexisted, with uncomfortable truths circumvented, if not distorted. Events of the nine-month-long war are also selectively mined and presented, creating a distinct national narrative on the birth of Bangladesh.

The greatest discontinuity in the history of the Bengal region occurred on June 23, 1757, when the East India Company, a mercantile company of England, became the virtual ruler of Bengal by defeating Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah through conspiracy. Territorial rule by a trading



company resulted in the commercialization of power. It had never suffered from a systematic glitch that touched their trades, their occupations, their lives so closely. The plunder of Bengal directly contributed to the Industrial Revolution in England. The capital collected in Bengal was invested in British industries. Lack of capital and fall in demand, on the other hand, resulted in de-industrialization in the region.

Fast forward to the independence of Pakistan which gave birth to seemingly insurmountable problems as the subjugation of the people of Bengal, which became East Pakistan, continued. Until 1947, the East Wing of Pakistan, had been heavily dependent on Hindu management. After partition, people from West Pakistan took their place. Moreover, much of the investment in East Pakistan came from banks in West Pakistan due to which Bengalis found themselves excluded from the managerial level and from skilled labour, and West Pakistanis



tended to favour Urdu-speaking Biharis. Pakistan had a severe shortage of trained administrative personnel. The Muslim Bengalis didn't have any past administrative experience because of which high-level posts in Dhaka, were usually filled by West Pakistanis or by refugees from India who had adopted Pakistani citizenship.

Political gimmicks and machinations, which involved the dissolution of assemblies and a quick fall of successive governments, further widened the gulf between the people from the two wings.

Later, in 1956, the provinces of West Pakistan were amalgamated into one administrative unit. The national parliament was to comprise one house of 300 members with equal representation from both the western and eastern wings. However, it was too late as from 1954 to Ayub's assumption of power in 1958, the Krishak Sramik and the Awami League waged a ceaseless battle for control of East Pakistan's provincial government.

Because of the prevalent conditions, President Iskander Mirza issued a proclamation on October 7, 1958, by which political parties were abolished, the two-year-old constitution was abrogated, and the country was placed under martial law. On October 24, he swore in a 12-member cabinet that included four generals in ministerial positions and eight civilians. It was an effort to shift the role of Chief Martial Law Administrator (CMLA) General Ayub Khan to that of a Prime



Minister. On 27th October 1958, Ayub Khan ordered to have President Mirza arrested, with the help of Military Police. He was then exiled to London until his death in 1969.

Until 1962, martial law continued and Ayub purged several politicians and civil servants from the government and replaced them with army officers. In 1966, Mujib announced his controversial six-point political and economic program for

East Pakistani provincial autonomy wherein he demanded:

1. Through a federal parliamentary system based on direct adult franchise representation of provinces would be based on population in the federal legislature.
2. The federal government will be restricted only to foreign affairs, defence and currency.

And even concerning foreign affairs, the subject of economic issues would rest with the provinces.

3. There would be either two different currencies for the two wings or a single one with a separate Federal Reserve System for each wing.
4. The power of implementing and collecting taxes would rest with the provinces. The federal government will be given enough shares to fulfil its tasks of foreign affairs and defence.
5. There would be separate accounts of foreign exchange earnings for each wing.

6. East Pakistan would be entitled to have militia or paramilitary force solely under its jurisdiction.

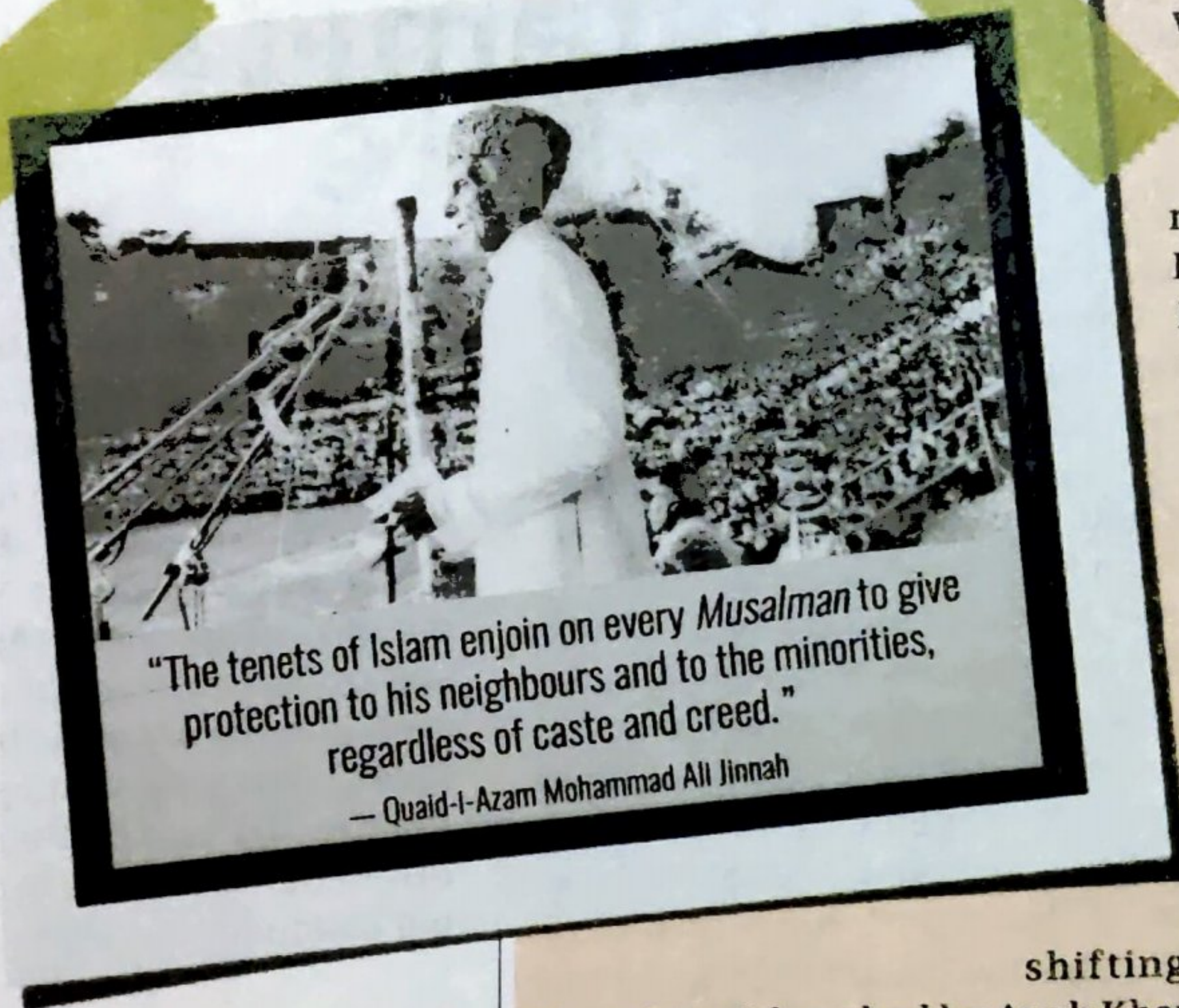
6. East Pakistan would be entitled to have militia or paramilitary force solely under its jurisdiction.

Mujib's six points ran directly counter to President Ayub's plan for greater national integration. In January 1968, the government arrested Mujib. In 1968, Ayub suffered several setbacks. His health was poor, and he was almost assassinated at a ceremony marking ten years of his rule. On February 21, 1969, Ayub announced that he would not run in the next presidential election in 1970. A state of near anarchy reigned with

protests and strikes throughout the country. On March 25, 1969, General Ayub Khan resigned and handed over the government to General Yahya Khan. After that, the first democratic election in the history of Pakistan took place in Dec. 1970, which saw the Awami League winning with a majority - Awami League did not get a single seat from West Pakistan and PPP met the same fate in the Eastern wing.

So, Mujib-ur-Rehman's Awami League had full rights to form a government and rule over Pakistan. However, the leadership of West Pakistan denied the transfer of power to the party.

Besides this political background, the external factor still played a major role in the fall of Dhaka. For example, India had, surreptitiously, built hundreds of camps in West Bengal where it recruited Bengali youths from East Pakistan to form Mukti Bahini. The Indian army trained the organization enough in just six months to foment an insurgency in East Pakistan. The Indian army, along with Mukti Bahini started invading the main check posts from 30th November, and till 3rd December 1971, they had encircled the Eastern wing completely. By mid-Nov 1971, border skirmishes were rapidly turning into bloody attacks on Pakistani troops. Eventually, on December 3, 1971, war with India was declared. On December 4-5, Indian planes, MIG-21s and SU-7s, attacked Dhaka Airport. Indian artillery was used extensively in support of rebel operations in East Pakistan to disintegrate Pakistan in 1971. The ground war was being fought in Jessore, Khulna, Natore, Kushtia, Rangpur, Dinajpur and Sylhet. After getting surrounded by Indian forces on December 16, 1971, General Niazi signed the Instrument of Surrender and handed over his pistol to General Jagjit Singh Aurora. Even with a common ideology and a joint struggle for freedom, the physical separation of East and West Pakistan by 1000 miles exerted tremendous pressure on the two sides to go their separate ways. The binding force between the people of East and West Pakistan was Islam; otherwise, there were huge differences in language culture, and traditions.



India certainly played a shameful role in the secession of Pakistan and the birth of Bangladesh. It was not only millions of refugees who sought shelter in bordering states as they fled violence in East Pakistan; there is significant scholarship on how the Indian state lent support to those fighting against the Pakistani state long before the open war of December 1971. Any discussion on the fateful year would, thus, make mention of India's position in the war. It is also undeniable that many non-Bengalis were targeted, raped and killed. There are horrific stories of the violence, bloodshed and trauma they endured and many of them continue to live with those scars in present-day Bangladesh and Pakistan. Another factor responsible for this debacle was the pace of economic development which was uneven as it was much slower in East Pakistan than in West Pakistan. Pakistan's main foreign exchange-earner was jute, which was known the world over as golden fiber, followed by tea. Both were mainly grown in East Pakistan and the Eastern wing felt that they were not getting their justified share. Another major grievance was the lack of proper representation of Bengalis in the military and bureaucracy despite the fact they were in majority. The shifting of capital from Karachi to Islamabad by Ayub Khan deepened a sense of deprivation and ignited a strong nationalism among the Bengali population. In the end, it seems apt to say that mistakes were committed by both sides that led to bloodshed and the creation of Bangladesh. Great nations learn from their past mistakes and chart their way forward. As a nation, we must understand that if we want to live with unity and dignity, we have to strengthen our bonds by sharing justice, love and respect. ■

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Ruler of an Islamic State

Dr Inam Ahmad

Islam gives a comprehensive code of administration. This code implies the essential components and constitutions with their jurisdiction to maintain the system of a state. The administrative body comprises the ruler and the executive body in his subordination for which selection is made to ensure public welfare. Similarly, it plans and organizes the strategies and oversees the system. As sincerity towards assignment and purity in conduct are the signs of their success, mismanagement, negligence towards duties and brutal attitude collapse the system. In this regard, Islam presents a due guideline for the executive body. In this article, the rights and duties of rulers are presented from Islamic sources with reference to the current perspective.

Islam provides guidance to humanity in all important matters and in all spheres of life. While it guides humans perfectly in matters like those of faith, worship and affairs, it also gives very clear instructions about politics and many related issues. The attributes and responsibilities of exemplary rulers are mentioned at several places in the Quran.

Mention of some Prophets as rulers in Quran

Since the selection of the ruler is an integral part of Islamic political system, the Quran mentions several prophets upon whom Allah Almighty bestowed kingship and rule.

1. Hazrat Talut

Allah Almighty has stated in the Quran in a very beautiful way the attributes and responsibilities of rulers. In verses 246-247 of Surah Al-Baqarah, Allah Almighty says:

"Have you not seen those chiefs of the Children of Israel after Moses? They said to one of their prophets, "Appoint for us a king, and we will fight in the cause of Allah." He said, "Are you not going to cower if ordered to fight?" They replied, "How could we refuse to fight in the cause of Allah, while we were driven out of our homes and separated from our children?" But when they were ordered to fight, they fled, except for a few of them. And Allah has perfect knowledge of the wrongdoers ... Their prophet told them, "Allah has appointed Talut [who is traditionally identified with the Israelite king Saul] to be your king." They protested, "How can he be our king when some of us are more deserving of kingship than he, and he has not been blessed with vast riches?" He replied, "Allah has chosen him over you and blessed him with knowledge and stature. Allah grants kingship to whoever He wills. And Allah is All-Bountiful, All-Knowing."

2. Hazrat Dawud and Hazrat Sulaiman (AS)

The Quran mentions the reigns of Hazrat Dawud (AS) in verse 20 of Surah Sad as: "We strengthened his kingship, and gave him

wisdom and sound judgment."

In Surah al-Anbya, Allah Almighty says: "And remember when Dawud and Sulaiman passed judgment regarding the crops ruined at night by someone's sheep, and We were witness to their judgments. We guided young Sulaiman to a fairer settlement, and granted each of them wisdom and knowledge. We subjected the mountains as well as the birds to hymn Our praises along with Dawud. It is We Who did it all."

At another place, Allah Almighty says:

"We instructed him: "O Dawud! We have surely made you an authority in the land, so judge between people with truth. And do not follow your desires or they will lead you astray from Allah's Way. Surely, those who go astray from Allah's Way will suffer a severe punishment for neglecting the Day of Reckoning." (Surah Sad: 26)

3. Hazrat Yusuf (AS)

- > When Hazrat Yusuf (AS) was being appointed by the Egyptian king, the incident has been described in Surah Yusuf in the following words:
- > "And when Yusuf spoke to him, the King said, "Today you are highly esteemed and fully trusted by us." Yusuf proposed, "Put me in charge of the store-houses of the land, for I am truly reliable and adept." This is how We established Yusuf in the land to settle wherever he pleased. We shower Our mercy on whoever We will, and We never discount

Can a woman be a ruler?

A debate about being a head of state had been the matter of masculinity. While the majority of the ulema had stipulated this requirement judging from some of the a hadith; the others had argued that females also can be qualified as a head of state by referring to the verses of Quran about Balqis, the Queen of Sheba. Especially the first-period Islamic scholars had stated that the head of state should be a member of the Quraysh tribe but scholars such as Imam Al-Baqillani and Ibn Khaldun had interpreted the matter in a different way and stated that this requirement is not mandatory or valid for the future periods.

Since further research is required because there is a lot of debating going on around this matter, and it is a fact that some of them do not have any practical value today. However, I would like to state that these requirements are directly related to performing the duties in excellence, and they do not concern the essence of the matter.

the reward of the good-doers."

- > From these verses, it can be inferred that an ideal ruler of an Islamic state should:
- > be a person of knowledge and wisdom as knowledge guides him to the right path and he is able to assimilate to the situation wisely due to his knowledge.
- > wield power because if he does not have power, then he will be unable to implement his decisions
- > be free as a slave is not free to make decisions that is the most principal duty of a ruler.
- > be the protector of life and property of the subjects as the ruler must recognize his responsibility to actually take care of his people to make sure that the citizens of the State are not hungry, have shelter, their wealth and property are safe and their minds and their honour are all protected.
- > be fair and just. The ruler is responsible for the moral and material development of the subjects. This happiness can be achieved when the ruler supervises the subjects, pays attention to their interests, secures their rights of security, justice, and luxury, raises their scientific, physical, social, moral, and structural levels, cares for the industrial, agricultural, and commercial development, and encourages the talents and abilities.
- > be righteous because most people try to imitate him, it is obligatory upon a ruler to be characterized by righteousness and well-behaved so as to act as good examples for his subjects. Likewise, the ruler's deviation and misconduct could push most people towards deviation. He should have good ethics and values such as honesty and truthfulness.
- > be physically fit and he should be free from such faults and weakness which obstruct him to perform his duties.
- > be lenient to people. Rulers are required to govern people with means of lenience and avoid persecution because despotism is the most disreputable manner of the rulers and the most injurious act towards the subjects. The Prophet (PBUH) said: Lenience will beautify anything it accompanies and will disfigure anything it leaves.
- > not be a despot and should be able to hold consultations in such matters which do not have any clear description in the Holy Quran and Sunnah. ■

The writer is a student of Islamic Studies.

LITERATURE AND LIFE

Life without literature is a life reduced to penury

Prof. Fazal Tanha Gharshin

Human beings are always in a constant phase of change and development. This requires them to have an experience of life that is a good blend of literature, philosophy and science. For this noble cause, they require the services of literary men, philosophers and writers who, in light of their knowledge and wisdom, guide them to tread the path well. Religion, mysticism and history are also in search of truth and peace, in parallel with science and literature. However, scientism in the West and religionism in the East have excluded, to a large extent, literature from everyday life, though it is a sublime expression of the best thoughts. "Literature is the comprehensive essence of the intellectual life of a nation," says Shakespeare. The beauty of life lies in maintaining balance in all the realities of life - philosophy, literature, science, religion, etc.

No doubt science has uncovered many secrets of the universe and enabled mankind to meet all its materialistic needs, but still, it has failed to meet mankind with itself. Science deals with man's outside world while literature deals with its inside, especially its most pressing concerns: relations, love, aesthetics, life, death, like, dislike, good and evil. The unwise use of science swamps mankind into the vortex of wars and anti-human activities, but literature, on the other hand, heals the deep wounds of wars by preaching humanity, peace, equality and love. Literature offers us an opportunity to imagine how another human might live, think, dream and feel. Literature is a life-giving power and gives mankind the sense of "myself," which puts an end to science-induced mental slavery and religion-imposed xenophobic circles.

Literature is the main source for cultivating imagination and empathy. We had the subversive imagination of inventing bombs, and now we have to demonstrate empathy towards bombed humans. Unlike science and mathematics, literature has no practical returns, though, by the grace of imaginative power, it has predictable returns. The core product of literature is imagination. Clinton says, "Children cannot be expected to live a balanced life, for they cannot imagine." Poor imagination breeds economic disparity, political chaos and social uncertainty. Literature snuffs out geographic borders, social discriminations and cultic divisions. It gives voice to the voiceless and freedom to the depressed. It wipes out gender apartheid and promotes critical thinking. Literature classifies the past, criticises the present and envisions the future. Retrospection, introspection and rumination are the core subjects of literature.

Indeed, literature deals with human life in a soft manner: poetry expresses the beauty of life; fiction replicates the reality of life; novels unveil the abominable face of life; and drama represents life on stage. However, nowadays, literature is not given the importance it used to have. MH Abrams quotes: "Life without literature is a life reduced to penury." There is no blinking at the fact that scientific inventions, agricultural revolutions and religious exclusivism have planted the seeds of hate, greed, cruelty and immorality. Guided missiles need guided souls; frothing mobs need tolerance; greedy souls need serenity; egoistic minds need patience; pessimistic spirits need optimism; prejudiced hearts need tranquility; exploited individuals need justice and materialists need love.

Literature brings smiles to war-affected faces; it infuses a ray of hope into discouraged hearts; it instils creative ideas in enslaved brains; it works as catharsis - purging of emotional tensions - it works as a powerbroker in the realms of science and religion; it maintains the balance of power between materialism and spirituality; and it holds science and religion accountable for criticism, which unveils new vistas for modernization and civilization. In the end, mankind has harnessed the earth, the moon, the sun and what not. Now it is time to dispel ego, vanity, greed, selfishness and hate by the virtue of literature. We need smile, love, peace and tolerance. After the heavy devastation of science and religion, humans are now in dire need of promoting literature. ■

The writer is a lecturer at Govt. Degree College, Pishin.



Looping in Education

Syeda Arifa Zahra

research in the field. And teachers are entrusted with a great deal of autonomy.

In Dr Grant's opinion, the secret behind these countries' educational excellence was proven through a research in the US state of North Carolina where economists examined data on several million elementary school students to discover a common pattern across about 7,000 classrooms that achieved significant gains in math and reading performance. Those students didn't have better teachers. They just happened to have the same

teacher at least twice in different grades. A separate team of economists replicated the study with nearly a million elementary and middle schoolers in Indiana — and found the same results.

Dr Grant, then, maintains that instead of teaching a new cohort of students each year, teachers should practice "looping" and move up a grade or more with their students. It can be a powerful tool. He opined:

"With more time to get to know each student personally, teachers gain a deeper grasp of the kids' strengths and challenges. The teachers have more opportunities to tailor their instructional and emotional support to help all the students in the class reach their potential. They're able to identify growth not only in peaks reached, but also in obstacles overcome. The nuanced knowledge they acquire about each student isn't lost in the handoff to the next year's teacher.

Finland and Estonia go even further. In both countries, it's common for elementary schoolers to have the same teacher not just two years in a row but sometimes for up to six straight years. Instead of specializing just in their subjects, teachers also get to specialize in their students. Their role evolves from instructor to coach and mentor."

Dr Grant concluded his piece in the following words:

"Great education systems create cultures of opportunity for all. They don't settle for no child left behind; they strive to help every child get ahead. As the education expert Pasi Sahlberg writes, success is when "all students perform beyond expectations." Finnish and Estonian schools don't invest just in students who show early signs of high ability — they invest in every student regardless of apparent ability. And there are few better ways to do that than to keep students with teachers who have the time to get to know their abilities." ■

The writer is an educational psychologist and an educator.

In his book, "Hidden Potential," noted American organizational psychologist Dr Adam Grant who works with the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, has advocated for "looping" in education — teachers staying with same students for more than one grade or class — to deepen teacher-student relationships and nurture personalized learning. He has asserted that those teachers who have students for just one year could blame their pupils' shortcomings on their previous teachers. He says, "Every child has hidden potential. It's easy to spot the ones who are already sparkling, but many students are uncut gems. When teachers stay with their students longer, they can see beyond the surface and recognize the brilliance beneath."

Dr Grant cited the example of the recently conducted "Program for International Student Assessment," a standardized test of math, reading and science skills which is taken by 15-year-olds in dozens of countries.

On the inaugural test, which focused on reading, the top country came as a big surprise: tiny Finland. Finnish students had claimed victory in 2003 (when the focus was on math) and 2006 (when it was on science), all while spending about the same time on homework per week as the typical teenager in Shanghai does in a single day.

Just over a decade later, Europe had a new champion. Here, too, it wasn't one of the usual suspects — not a big, wealthy country like Germany or Britain but the small underdog nation of Estonia.

In both countries, it's common for elementary schoolers to have the same teacher for not just two years in a row but sometimes for up to six straight years. Instead of specializing just in their subjects, teachers also get to specialize in their students. Their role evolves from instructor to coach and mentor. Looping isn't the only practice that makes a difference. Both Finland and Estonia have professionalized education systems — they often require master's degrees for teachers, training them in evidence-based education practices and methods for interpreting ongoing

Cloud Seeding

The way to fight water scarcity

At a time when many areas of Pakistan are facing the menace of smog and many are reeling under acute water scarcity, the government is facing increasing demand for making water available to the people so as to help them meet not only their domestic demand but also that for agricultural purposes. Moreover, an increased recurrence of heatwaves in the country, especially in Karachi, also highlights the urgency of coaxing rain so as to provide people with some respite from scorching heat. An effective way to achieve this goal can be cloud seeding, a technique that has already proven its worth in many parts of the world.

Clouds

Clouds are made up of tiny water droplets or ice crystals that form when water vapour in the atmo-

sphere cools and condenses around a tiny particle of dust or salt floating in the atmosphere. Without these particles, known as condensation or ice nuclei, raindrops or snowflakes cannot form and precipitation will not occur.

Cloud seeding

Cloud seeding is a weather-modification technique that improves a cloud's ability to produce rain or snow by introducing tiny ice nuclei into certain types of subfreezing clouds. These nuclei provide a base for snowflakes to form. After cloud seeding takes place, the newly-formed snowflakes quickly grow and fall from the clouds back to the surface of the Earth, increasing snowpack and streamflow.

In simple words, it is the process of artificially generating rain by

implanting clouds with particles such as silver iodide crystals.

Background

It was started in 1946 by scientists at the General Electric Research Laboratory. They discovered that they could use silver iodide - an inorganic compound - and dry ice to improve the creation of ice crystals in clouds. Today, cloud seeding still involves silver iodide and dry ice. But in the last 60 years, experts have learned a lot more about this method. This has since boosted the understanding of rain and snow processes and improved seeding methods.

How does it work?

Not all clouds create rain. Even if they do make rainwater, only a few clouds are able to produce enough moisture that allows for large raindrops.

Ahmad Mujtaba

This may happen because there aren't enough ice particles within a cloud. Because of this, there aren't enough cloud droplets to combine and make raindrops. Another reason that certain rainclouds may struggle to make rain is that some don't last long enough to have cloud droplets gather to create rain.

Cloud seeding gives these clouds a

into cold clouds that have supercooled liquid water droplets.

- The ice nuclei can trigger the formation of ice crystals or snowflakes, which can grow at the expense of the liquid droplets and fall as precipitation.

b. Dynamic

- This method involves spraying fine particles of hygroscopic materials, such as salts through flares or explosives into the base of warm clouds.
- The particles can act as cloud condensation nuclei and increase the number and size of the cloud

Weather Warfare Challenge for Pakistan

As the world continues to see quick technical advancements and geopolitical conflicts, cloud seeding can be an effective tool to launch a weather warfare against the enemy country. Weather manipulation might have a significant negative impact on Pakistan, especially on its agriculture, water resources, economy, and overall stability.

- Pakistan significantly depends on its rivers and glacier meltwater for hydropower production, agriculture and drinking water. These water resources might be the target of weather warfare, which would affect river flows and the water supply.
- The water cycle might be disturbed by changing precipitation patterns, which could result in a shortage of water, decreased agricultural output and possible disputes between nations or regional groups.
- The disruption brought on by weather warfare might have a substantial impact on Pakistan's economy.
- Crop yields would be lower, and infrastructure would be harmed, both of which would be detrimental to agriculture.
- There might be negative effects on the energy industry, especially hydropower production, which would increase dependency on costly fossil fuels and cause power shortages.
- Techniques for manipulating the weather might have unforeseen effects on the environment and public health as well.
- Modifying precipitation patterns may cause ecosystems to go out of balance, lose biodiversity, and become more susceptible to pests and illnesses. Additionally, the spread of pesticides or other materials used to manipulate the weather might endanger both people and animals, adding to the enormous strain on the healthcare system.
- To combat any such warfare, Pakistan must adopt a multifaceted strategy to successfully address this issue, one that involves building resilience, fostering

international collaboration, and making investments in technology and legislative frameworks.

- Pakistan must prioritise climate resilience and adaptation strategies. This entails creating reliable early warning systems, disaster management systems, and resilient infrastructure.
- Pakistan must also diversify its water supplies to lessen its exposure to water-related weather warfare. Investments in alternate water sources, desalination plants, wastewater treatment facilities and rainfall-gathering systems, may help accomplish this.
- To combat the risks posed by weather warfare, sophisticated research and technology investments are essential.
- It is also crucial to educate the public about weather warfare and its possible effects. Campaigns for public education may aid in the development of an educated and watchful community that is able to recognise ominous weather patterns or behaviours.



lot more ice crystals (or cloud nuclei). If experts complete seeding at the right time, it leads to more moisture supply, which will eventually create rainwater.

Methods

a. Static

- This method involves introducing ice nuclei, such as silver iodide or dry ice,

- Dynamic cloud seeding is a method of inducing rain by boosting vertical air currents.

- The process is considered more complex than static cloud seeding because it depends on a sequence of events working properly.

c. Hygroscopic

droplets, which can enhance the reflectivity and stability of the clouds.

Process

Cloud seeding can be done from ground-based generators or aircraft. Most cloud seeding operations use a compound called silver iodide (AgI) to aid in the formation of ice crystals. Silver

iodide exists naturally in the environment at low concentrations, and is not known to be harmful to humans or wildlife.

When storm systems move through an area, a solution containing a small amount of silver iodide is burned from ground-based generators or released from aircraft. Upon reaching the cloud, the silver iodide acts as an ice-forming nuclei to aid in the production of snowflakes.

Potential harms

Cloud seeding has many uses. It has been around for a long time. But not everyone is convinced it's a good idea. Why?

Silver iodide, the material used in cloud seeding, is toxic to aquatic life. So, precipitation from seeded clouds can harm the environment.

In response to these concerns, scientists have tested nontoxic replacements for silver iodide. They have found calcium chloride to be effective. Low doses of this salt are unlikely to harm the environment. Cloud physicists are also researching the possibility of using negatively charged ions instead of ice-like crystals.

There are other potential risks to increasing precipitation in a specific area. Will rain in one area bring drought to another? Could cloud seeding cause too much rain to fall? Can it cause flooding? Scientists don't know all the answers. After all, weather systems are very complex. It's impossible to predict exactly how weather modification efforts will play out.

Some example

Cloud seeding has been adopted by many countries.

1. China

China has suffered in the past from extreme temperatures which affected its agriculture and caused large-scale flooding. But rather than using a reactive approach, China has resorted to weather-modification techniques to influence where it rains and to stop rains too. China

rockets into the sky when it needs rain. China used the same cloud seeding method over Beijing before the 2008 Olympic Games in order to have a dry Olympic season.

2. UAE

The UAE, a country having an arid climate with less than 100mm per year of rainfall, is leading the way in cloud seeding, aiming to boost agricultural output with increased rainfall, and addressing water security issues. It carries out nearly 300 cloud seeding missions annually as part of its efforts to enhance rainfall.

Recently, the UAE's National Centre of Meteorology's (NCM), concluded the field campaign titled 'Cloud-Aerosol-Electrical Interactions for Rainfall Enhancement Experiment (CLOUDIX)' through the UAE Research Programme for Rain Enhancement Science (UAERP) in collaboration with Stratton Park Engineering Company (SPEC), a US-based company specialising in cloud physics research and instrumentation.

3. Saudi Arabia

The Saudi environment ministry and meteorology centre aim to generate additional water sources and expand green areas through cloud seeding. In May this year, the country signed

an agreement to acquire five aircraft for the Regional Cloud Seeding Program.

The purchase of cloud-seeding aircraft aims to enhance domestic capabilities, transfer localised knowledge, ensure business sustainability, improve the effectiveness and coverage of cloud-seeding, and reduce operating costs by employing private aircraft equipped with cloud-seeding capabilities and techniques.

4. Other examples

Cloud seeding operations have also been undertaken in Malaysia because of smoke pollution from forest fires in Indonesian Sumatra.

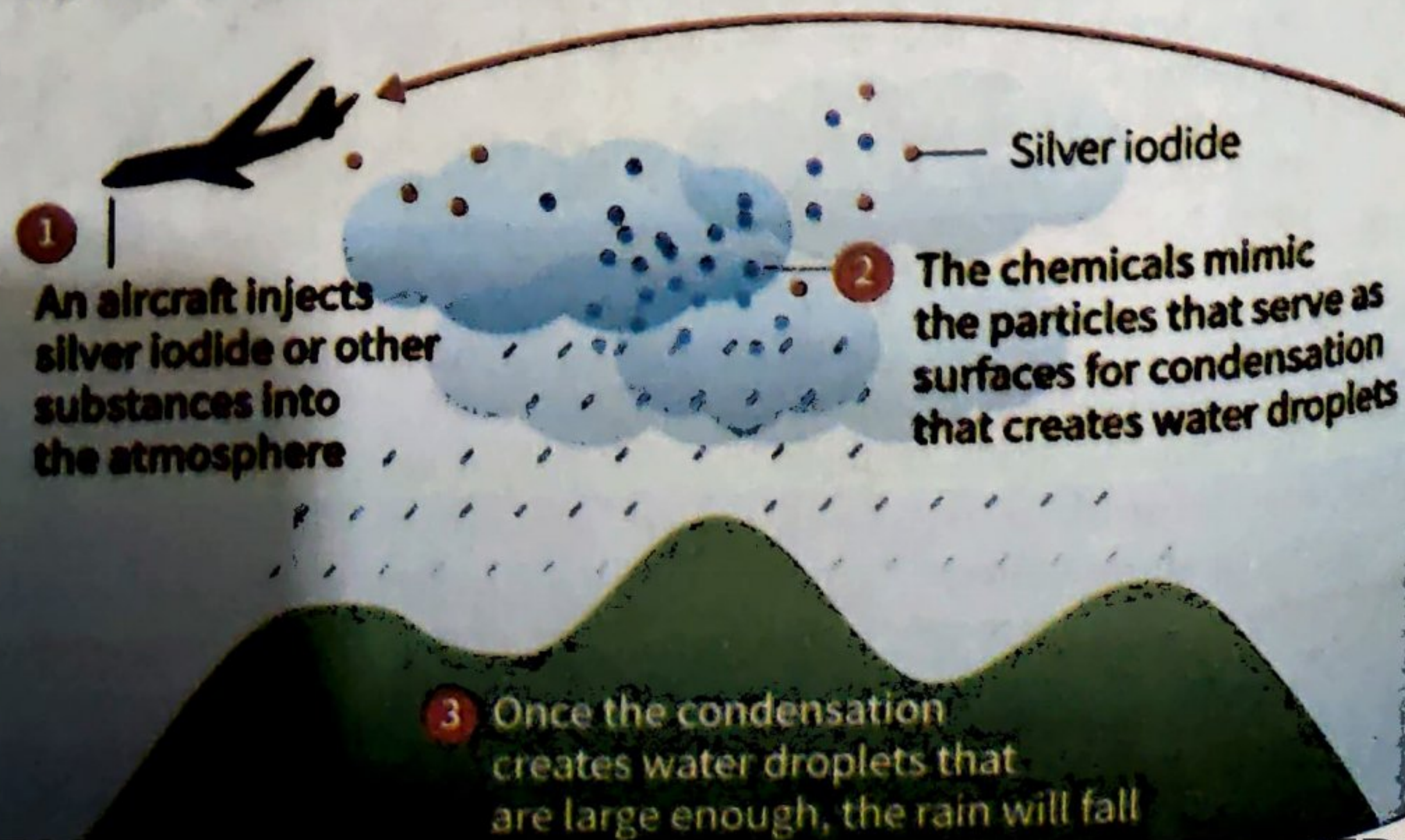
Conclusion

The basic concept of cloud seeding technology is that rain is generated by firing a rocket propelled by sugar at the clouds. Many countries are already using this technology and have even devoted research efforts to this area. As governments and private companies weigh the pros and cons, the debate around cloud seeding remains as dynamic and unpredictable as the weather it aims to influence. This can be a good option for Pakistan to fight water shortages. ■

The writer is a student of Environmental Science.

Cloud seeding

Traditional method of rainmaking, in use since the 1940s



Sarmila Bose's Dead Reckoning

Memories of 1971 Bangladesh War

Muhammad Sadiq Farooq

Sarmila Bose, a prominent Indian-American historian, political scientist and academic, brings a unique perspective to her work due to her Bengali roots and her familial ties with a lineage of politically active nationalist individuals, including Subhas Chandra Bose and Krishna Bose. Throughout her illustrious career, Sarmila has held significant academic and research positions at prestigious institutions, including Oxford, Harvard and George Washington University. Her contributions have been diverse; she served as the Director of the Reuters Institute for Journalism and as a senior research associate at the Center for International Studies at Oxford. Embodying a commitment to unbiased and evidence-based research, she has focused particularly on South Asia, delving into conflict zones and war-affected regions. It is this academic background and scholarly reputation that make her a credible choice as the author of the book "Dead Reckoning: Memories of the 1971 Bangladesh War."

Chapter one, "Call to Arms," discusses the 1970 general election in Pakistan which the Awami League, led by East Pakistan leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won. Despite his defeat, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto aimed to become the country's prime minister. So, he rejected negotiations mediated by President Yahya Khan, leading to the postponement of the inauguration of the National Assembly. This resulted in violent uprisings in East Pakistan, and Mujib's March 7 speech hinted at a desire for independence.

The following chapters explore escalating tensions and weakening control of the government in East Pakistan, leading to a parallel government under Mujib and eventually an armed conflict.

"Operation Searchlight" marks the onset of large-scale violence, with subsequent chapters portraying brutal atrocities committed by both sides, causing widespread suffering and loss of life.

The next chapters detail acts of violence committed by Bengali guerrillas, who were trained in India, against their fellow Bengalis based on their positions regarding a United Pakistan. The groups involved in these uprisings were Alvi, Rumi, Al Badr, and Al Shams.

The last chapter discredits the myths surrounding casualty numbers and questions the claims made by both India and Bangladesh regarding casualties and prisoners of war, presenting strong evidence and unbiased arguments to refute the highly exaggerated and unrealistic assertions.

The book is a valuable and indispensable resource for researchers studying the 1971 crisis. The author's innovative methodology of conducting meticulous fieldwork, interviewing all parties involved, and thoroughly investigating alleged atrocities dispels the prevailing myths. The research is enriched with diverse sources, cross-referenced with eye-witness testimonies from 70+ interviews, lending unparalleled authenticity and preserving invaluable insights from primary sources.

As a lasting repository of information, the book offers a fresh, comprehensive perspective on the events, shaping future research and understanding of the complexities and implications of the 1971 crisis.

Resultantly, the book's unique approach and rigorous research make it an essential reference for

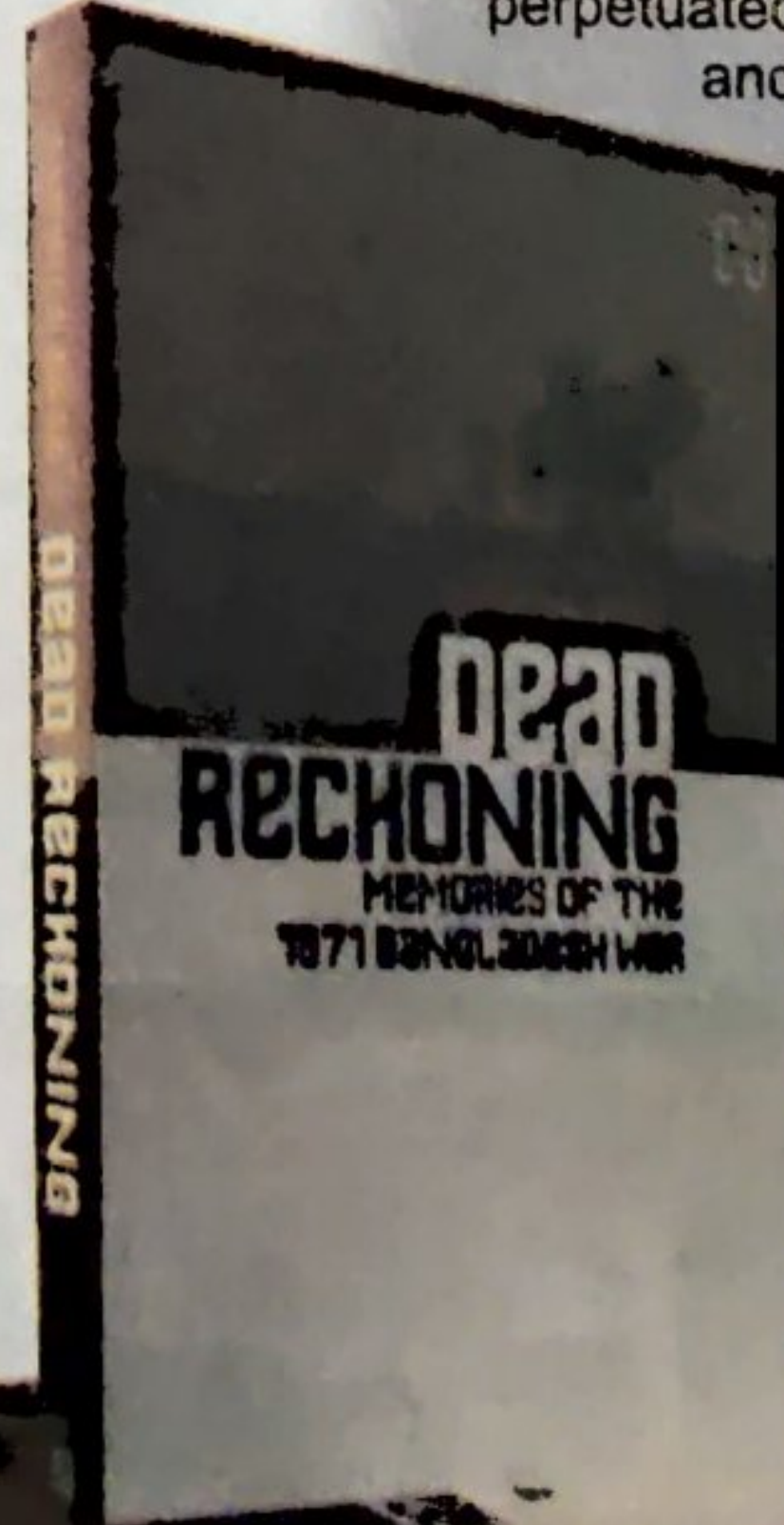
scholars exploring this historically significant topic. By shedding light on lesser-known aspects and providing a reliable account of the events, it stands as a testament to the author's dedication, contributing significantly to our knowledge and comprehension of the 1971 debacle.

Despite possessing various strengths, the book also exhibits significant weaknesses that deserve attention. One of the major limitations is its failure to adequately provide contextual information, particularly concerning the history of East Pakistan from 1948 onwards, encompassing its economic, political and social developments. This lack of context hinders a comprehensive understanding of the events leading to the conflict. Additionally, relying heavily on oral testimonies as historical evidence presents another drawback, as it neglects the potential distortion of memories over time and questions the accuracy of these accounts.

Moreover, the book's predominant focus on documenting killings and rape allegations and the pursuit of identifying culprits tends to overshadow the book's core purpose and the underlying causes behind the conflict, such as the people's desire for self-determination. This narrow focus inhibits a deeper exploration of the true catalysts that contributed to the 1971 crisis. By neglecting the examination of deeper-rooted issues, the book inadvertently avoids providing a more profound and comprehensive analysis of the complex historical event.

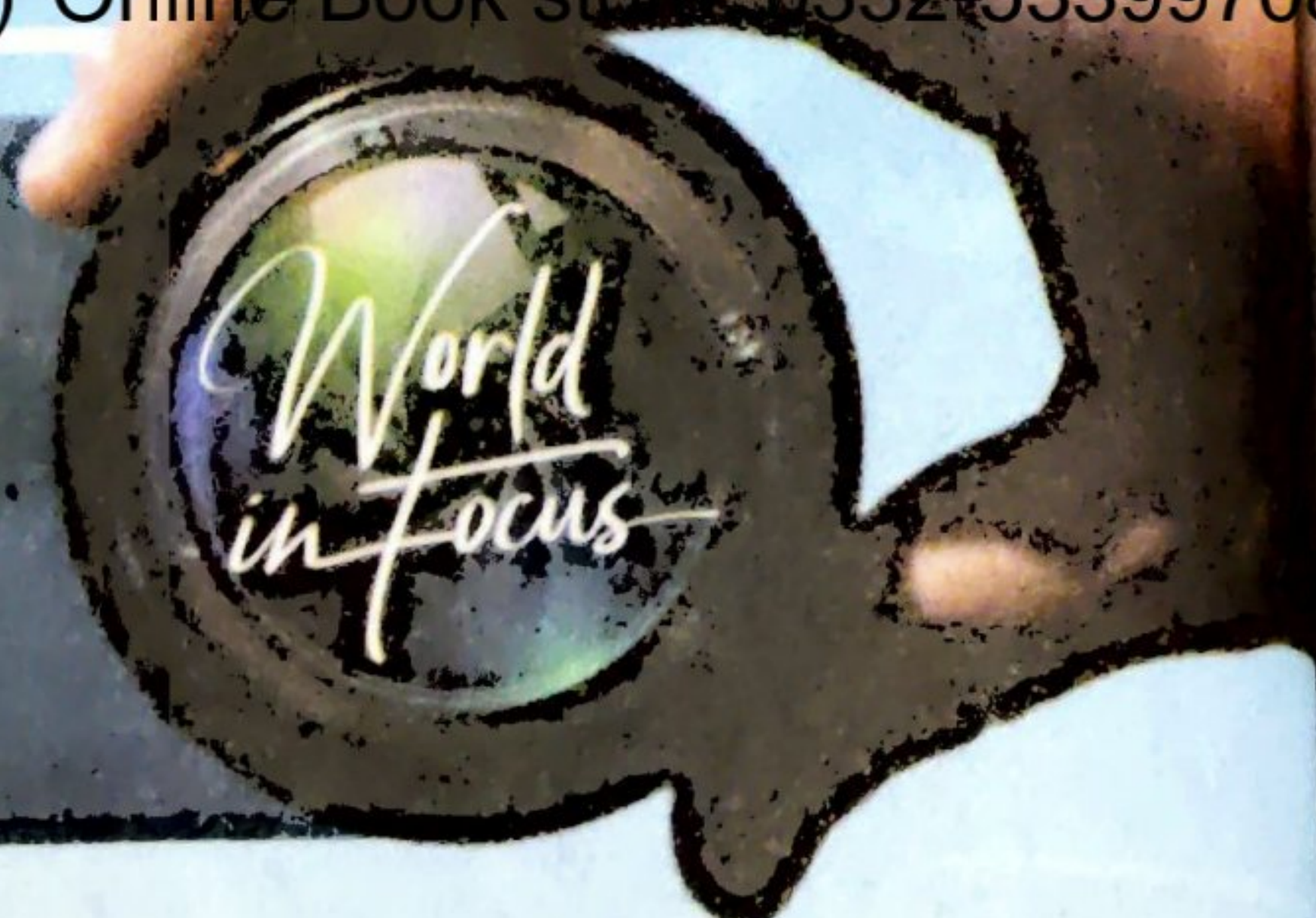
To present a more holistic perspective, the author should've addressed weaknesses and expanded its scope to encompass a broader array of historical factors that influenced the conflict's development and eventual outcome. Despite that, the book remains an exceptional piece of scholarship on the topic, although one may have some minor disagreements with the author. It adequately challenges and discredits long-held myths perpetuated by Bengalis and Indians, leading to controversy and criticism from those unwilling to accept their truths being debunked. Nevertheless, the book fills a significant gap in history, as the events of 1971 have largely been depicted from the victor's perspective. By consulting the other side's perspective, the author brings a fresh and unbiased approach to the conflict, grounded in rigorous research and scholarly discourse. The author's fairness, objectivity, and impartiality shine through, making this book a crucial read for anyone interested in a balanced analysis of the 1971 crisis.

In essence, this book offers a groundbreaking alternative narrative, departing from the prejudices and emotions that have clouded historical accounts. Instead, it provides a comprehensive and unbiased examination of the events, making it essential reading for scholars of South Asia studies and even for laypersons seeking an objective understanding of what truly transpired during the 1971 crisis.



The author is an undergraduate student of History at QAU, Islamabad.

Oct-Nov '23
NATIONAL



M. Usman Butt

Oct. 16: The Supreme Court (SCP) overturned the Lahore High Court's (LHC) ruling that had declared the collection of fuel price adjustment on the monthly bills of electricity consumers illegal.

research work – for the year 2021 by the Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL).

Oct. 16: The caretaker Balochistan cabinet approved the formation of an information commission to ensure the right to information under Article 19-A of the Constitution.

Other Award-winners

Award	Winner	Work
Saadat Hasan Manto Award for Urdu Prose (Creative Literature)	Irfan Javaid	Ajait Khana
Baba-I-Urdu Molvi Abdul Haq Award for Urdu Prose (Criticism and Research)	Tauseef Tabassum	Yahe Aakhir Ko Thahera Fun Hamara
Dr Allama Mohammad Iqbal Award for Urdu Poetry	Iftikhar Anf	Bagh+Gul Surakh
Syed Waris Shah Award for Punjabi Poetry	Nasir Baloch	Un Mia Bhaar
	Shafiq Hussain	Kon Koian De Jorr
	Zahid Hasan	Kahani ik Maan Di
Afzal Ahsan Randhawa Award for Punjabi Prose	Khalida Nasreen	Deewan
Shah Abdul Latif Bhital Award for Sindhi Poetry	Zubaida Berwani	Aaradhni
Mirza Qaleech Baig Award for Sindhi Prose	Laiq Zada Laiq	Da Watan Sandere
Khushhal Khan Khattak Award for Pushto Poetry	Dr Waqar Ali Shah	Abdul Ghani Khan Zond o Zaman
Mohammad Ajmal Khan Khattak Award for Pushto Prose	Dr Fazal Khaliq	Sheeshlo
Syed Zahoor Shah Hashmi Award for Balochi Prose	Masroor Shad	Charag Laib ae Ant
Mast Tawakli Award for Balochi Poetry	Malik Ashtar	Nazmen De Mujasme
Khwaja Ghulam Fareed Award for Seraiki Poetry	Hafeez Khan	Hik Raat Da Sijn
Dr Maher Abdul Haq Award for Seraiki Prose	Rahim Naz	Dasimsara
Taj Mohammad Tajal Award for Brahui Poetry	Zauq Brahui	Brahui Giri
Ghulam Nabi Rahi Award for Brahui Prose	Imtiazul Haq	Adhi Dua
Saeen Ahmad Ali Award for Hindko Poetry	Imtiaz	

Oct. 16: Prominent educationist and former vice-chancellor of several universities in KP, Ajmal Khan, breathed his last.

Oct. 17: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Beijing on the sidelines of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation.

Oct. 17: The caretaker Punjab Cabinet gave the green light to expanding the jurisdiction of the Walled City of Lahore Authority across the province.

Oct. 17: Pakistan secured its first-ever victory in FIFA World Cup qualifiers, defeating Cambodia 1-0.

Oct. 17: Former Ireland international Catherine Dalton became the first female coach in the Pakistan Super League when she became Multan Sultans' fast bowling coach.

Oct. 18: The United Energy Group of China and Pakistan Refinery Limited signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for an investment of \$1.5 billion in the petroleum sector.

Oct. 18: Pakistan conducted a successful flight test of the Ababeel weapon system.

Oct. 18: Pakistan and the United States signed a five-year extension of the US-Pakistan Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement to expand relations between the two countries' scientific and technological communities.

Oct. 19: Senior Pakistani jurist and former senator Syed Muhammad Zafar, popularly known as SM Zafar, passed away at the age of 93.

Oct. 19: Pakistan sent humanitarian assistance for the Palestinians.

Oct. 19: Caretaker PM Kakar met Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the Third Belt and Road Forum.

Oct. 19: In recognition of his longstanding role in CPEC, Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed was presented with a special award during the Media Cooperation Forum on Belt & Road Initiative being held in Beijing.

Oct. 19: Renowned poet Zafar Iqbal was awarded the Kamal-i-Fun Award – Pakistan's highest literary award in the field of creative and

Oct. 20: The United States announced the imposition of sanctions on three China-based companies that worked to supply missile applicable items to Pakistan's ballistic missile programme.

Oct. 20: Pakistan joined China's expanding club of partners in an ambitious project to build a research station on the moon's south pole, an area of "mystery, science and intrigue".

Oct. 20: Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi was reappointed Special Representative to the Prime Minister for Religious Harmony and the Pakistani Diaspora in the Middle East and Islamic Countries.

Oct. 20: Abdullah Shafique and Imam-ul-Haq scored 134 runs to become the first Pakistani opening pair to register a century partnership against Australia in a World Cup match.

Oct. 20: The Judicial Commission of Pakistan unanimously approved the elevation of Sindh High Court (SHC) acting Chief Justice Irfan Saadat Khan to the Supreme Court.

Oct. 20: The commander of the Sri Lanka Army Lieutenant General HLVM Liyanage called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir at General Headquarters [GHQ] in Rawalpindi.

Oct. 21: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PMLN) supremo Nawaz Sharif returned to Pakistan after four years due to a self-imposed exile after he was allowed to travel to the British capital in 2019 on health grounds.

Oct. 22: The Bombay High Court ruled against a petition that aimed to ban Pakistani artists from working or performing in India.

Oct. 23: In a 4-1 verdict, SCP declared the trial of civilians in the

Dengue

- Dengue is a viral infection caused by the dengue virus, transmitted to humans through the bite of infected mosquitoes. It is more common in tropical and subtropical climates.
- DENV is an RNA virus of the Flaviviridae family with four serotypes (DENV-1 to 4). Infection with one serotype provides lifelong immunity to that type, but subsequent infections with different serotypes can lead to severe, life-threatening forms of the disease.

Symptoms

- Most people who get dengue won't have symptoms. But for those that do, the most common symptoms are high fever (40°C/104°F), severe headache, pain behind the eyes, muscle and joint pains, nausea, vomiting, swollen glands, rash.

Transmission

- **Vector:** The virus is transmitted to humans through the bites of infected female mosquitoes, primarily the Aedes Aegypti mosquito.
- **Human-to-mosquito transmission:** After feeding on a DENV-infected person, the virus replicates in the mosquito midgut before disseminating to secondary tissues, including the salivary glands.

- **Extrinsic incubation period (EIP):** The time taken from ingesting the virus to actual transmission to a new host is termed the extrinsic incubation period (EIP). The EIP takes about 8–12 days when the ambient temperature is between 25 and 28°C. Once infectious, the mosquito can transmit the virus for the rest of its life.
- **Other transmission modes:** There is a possibility of maternal transmission of Dengue (from a pregnant mother to her baby), transmission via blood products, organ donation and transfusions.

Prevention

- There is no specific antiviral treatment for dengue, so prevention relies on controlling mosquito populations and raising public awareness.
- The mosquitoes that spread dengue are active during the day. The best way of protection is to protect yourself from mosquito bites.
- **Dengvaxia:** So far one vaccine, Dengvaxia, has been approved and licensed in some countries. However, only persons with evidence of past dengue infection can be protected by this vaccine.

military courts as unconstitutional.

Oct. 23: A special court, established under the Official Secrets Act, indicted former prime minister Imran Khan and former foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi in the cipher case

Oct. 23: Caretaker PM Kakar removed Texas-based Pakistani-American businessman Muhammad Tahir from the post of SAPM.

Oct. 24: The interim Punjab cabinet suspended the sentence of PML-N supremo, Nawaz Sharif, in the Al-Azizia reference, under Section 401 of the Criminal Procedural Code.

Oct. 24: Saim Ayub became the first batter to score a double century and a century in a Quaid-e-Azam Trophy match.

Oct. 24: Pakistan successfully conducted a training launch of the Ghauri weapon system.

Oct. 24: Abrar Ahmad Mirza was appointed Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Secretary, replacing Mohyuddin Ahmed Wani.

Oct. 24: The Punjab government announced the establishment of business facilitation centers across the province.

Oct. 25: The ECP invited international observers to observe the upcoming general election.

Oct. 25: As part of the trophy hunting programme for 2023-24, the GB Forest, Parks and Wildlife Department auctioned four licences for hunting the prized Astore Markhor, one of which fetched a record \$186,000.

Oct. 25: The 11-year-old Syed Abdul Hadi Jafri bagged silver medal at the Qatar Open Taekwondo Championship 2023 in Doha.

Oct. 25: Former Olympian Rana Mujahid was elected as the new Secretary of the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF).

Oct. 25: Caretaker CM Punjab Mohsin Naqvi launched the construction work of 6000 cubic meter bio gas plant at Gujjar Colony Rakh Chand Rai Lahore, one of the biggest bio gas plants of Pakistan at official level.

Oct. 25: Aga Khan University (AKU) Medical College Dean Dr Adil Haider received the prestigious Johns Hopkins University Award for Distinguished Alumnus.

Oct. 25: The IHC restored Nawaz Sharif's appeals against accountability courts' conviction verdicts in the Avenfield and Al-Azizia cases.

Oct. 26: The IHC dismissed PTI Chairman Imran Khan's petition seeking to stop the proceedings against him in the cipher case by a special court.

Oct. 26: Pakistan, in a meeting in Bishkek (capital of Kyrgyzstan), assumed the Chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Council of Heads of Government (SCO-CHG) and this tenure will continue till autumn 2024.

Oct. 26: Pakistan's four frontline athletes – Uzair Rehman (Army), Naeem Akhtar (Army), Olympian Rabia Ashiq (WAPDA) and Esha Imran (WAPDA) – were handed three-year bans for doping violations at the 34th National Games.

Oct. 26: Pakistan's seasoned Paralympic athlete Haider Ali earned 2024 Paris Paralympic Games slot when he won gold in men's discus throw F37 category in the Hangzhou Asian Para Games.

Oct. 27: Nighat Dad, the executive director of the Digital Rights Foundation, was appointed to the high-level advisory board on Artificial Intelligence by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

Oct. 27: Dr Tauqeer Hussain Shah stepped down from the post of the caretaker prime minister's principal secretary to assume his new role in the World Bank as an executive director.

Oct. 27: At the 9th meeting of the Board of Directors of the OIC Ombudsman Association, Pakistan's Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah was

Former Chinese Premier Li Keqiang dies of heart attack



• Born in Hefei, Anhui province in 1955

• Served as China's premier from 2013 to 2023

• Li was the second most powerful member of the ruling Chinese Communist Party from 2012 to 2022

• Li, 68, had recently been taking a rest in Shanghai, died following a heart attack



GK CORNER

On 17 October 1956, the world's first full-scale nuclear power station was opened in the United Kingdom in the presence of Queen Elizabeth II.

1956



elected secretary general of the body.

Oct. 27: The government of Japan conferred the 2023 Spring Imperial Decoration, 'The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star' on Imtiaz Ahmad, former ambassador of Pakistan to Japan.

Oct. 28: A partial lunar eclipse – this year's second and last – was witnessed in the skies across Pakistan.

Oct. 29: Renowned religious scholar Maulana Tariq Jamil's son Asim Jamil committed suicide in Talamba, their native town in Punjab.

Oct. 29: The Pakistan Railways restored train services at Sibi-Harnai section after 18 years.

Oct. 30: Caretaker Punjab government approved Rs2076.2 billion budget for the next four months, from Nov. 2023 to Feb. 2024.

Oct. 30: Inzamam-ul-Haq, the former Pakistan captain, stepped down from his role as the chief selector over allegations of conflict of interest.

Oct. 30: Sino-Pak Bio health Agriculture Overseas Sci-tech Demonstration Park was inaugurated at the University of Haripur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Oct. 30: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Service Commission (PSC) declared the result of the competitive examination for 95 posts of Provincial Management Service (PMS).

Oct. 30: Renowned film director Hassan Askari passed away. He was 78.

Oct. 31: Pakistan's Zainab Nawaz, a ninth-grade student, earned a Silver Award in the Junior writing category of the international essay writing competition "The Queen's International Commonwealth Essay Writing Competition 2023".

Oct. 31: Advocate Shahzad Shaukat of the Independent Group-Ahsan Bhoon Group, also known as Asma Jahangir Group, was elected president of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) for the year 2023-24.

Oct. 31: In a World Cup match against Bangladesh, Pakistan's ace fast bowler, Shaheen Shah Afridi, became the quickest fast bowler to reach 100 wickets in the history of ODI cricket.

Oct. 31: AJK Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq finally allocated portfolios to his 29-member cabinet, comprising lawmakers from PTI's forward bloc, PPP and PML-N.

Oct. 31: The government appointed Capt. (ret'd) Muhammad Khurram Agha the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.

Nov. 01: Shell Petroleum Company Limited (SPCo), the parent company of Shell Pakistan Limited (SPL), signed a deal to sell its domestic operations to Saudi Arabia's Wafi Energy LLC.

Nov. 01: PTI appointed Barrister Ali Zafar its new parliamentary leader in the Senate.

Nov. 01: The Supreme Court dismissed the review petitions of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Intelligence Bureau (IB) and Defence Ministry about the 2017 Faizabad sit-in case after they were withdrawn by the petitioners.

Nov. 02: President Alvi and the ECP unanimously agreed on holding general elections in the country on February 8, 2024.

Nov. 02: Saeed Ahmad Nawaz joined the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) as its Fourth Member.

Nov. 02: Secretary Power Division, Arshad Majeed Mohmand, was appointed as National Highway Authority Chairman.

Women in STEM

In their latest research, Gallup Pakistan and PRIDE conclude that only 28 percent of women engineers in Pakistan are employed. The survey is based on data from the Labour Force Survey 2020-21 and has found that 20.9 percent of a total of 28,920 women engineering graduates were unemployed, and close to 50.9 percent were out of the labour force. The research also highlights that 64 percent of those graduates who opted to remain out of the labour force were married.

Engineering had long been considered a men-only field with a shockingly low number of women. Over the years, many girls showed an interest in science and technology and entered the field. But the market is not designed in a way to accommodate women employees who still have to fight their battles to get some space in an increasingly male-dominated work environment.

From long work hours to unsanitary conditions at workplaces, women have to deal with a lot of issues that eventually push them out of the labour force. In our society, an unchallenged belief is that women do not want to work and that they choose to stay at home instead of finding a good job. But the entire structure is so ridiculously anti-women that all that is left for them is to either look for home-based work opportunities or abandon their dreams of having a long, fulfilling career. And this is something that requires the government's undivided attention. On the Global Gender Gap

Index 2023, Pakistan ranks 142 out of 146 countries. Less than 5.0 percent of professionals in senior positions in the country are women and when they take to the streets or use social media platforms to voice their concerns, they are called troublemakers. Managerial positions in most sectors are filled with men, who often have no understanding of the restrictions this society imposes on women. In engineering, where women will have to do field work, this means making arrangements for women and being mindful of their needs. No one is ready to do the extra work. Even though the government allows women to take maternity leave, most private organizations give such leaves without pay, forcing women to rejoin a few weeks after giving birth. Lack of daycare at organizations and cultural roles attached to women also push them away from being an integral part of the job market.

In a country where crimes against women are rampant, the genuine demands of women regarding commuting facilities is seen as financially unprofitable for most employers who deliberately prefer male candidates over women. Women around the world are leading businesses and heading scientific discoveries. Pakistan has a lot of potential and talent to join the race of technological advancements and the world of innovation. It now rests with the government to give the attention the matter deserves and make women feel welcome in the labour force.

Palestine: the land of sacred places

Palestine is a region with deep religious significance for Muslims, Christians and Jews. The Holy Land has been a focal point of religious aspirations and ideals since ages. For the Christian, it is the birthplace of Jesus of Nazareth and the site of his ministry; for Muslims, Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque is the third holiest site and Dome of the Rock marks the spot from which the beloved Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) ascended to heaven.

And for the Jews, it is toward Jerusalem that the pious turn three times each day in prayer; and it is to Jerusalem that Jews pledge to return each year, with the words 'Next Year in Jerusalem' chanted after the Passover Seder and the Day of Atonement prayer service.

Here are some of the most significant places for each of these three Abrahamic faiths:

For Muslims

The Al-Aqsa lies at the heart of Jerusalem's Old City on a hill known to Jews as Har ha-Bayit, or Temple Mount, and to Muslims as al-Haram al-Sharif, or The Noble Sanctuary. It is the third holiest site after Makkah and Medina. It is believed to be the place from which the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) ascended to the heavens on the Night Journey (Shab-e-Mairaj).

Al-Aqsa is the name given to the whole compound and is home to two Muslim holy places: The Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque, also known as the Qibli Mosque, which was built in the 8th century AD.

Bethlehem: Bethlehem is significant for Muslims because it is the birthplace of Jesus (Prophet Isa) and contains the Church of the Nativity.

For Christians

Church of the Holy Sepulchre: Located in the Old City of

Jerusalem, this church is believed to be the site of the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is one of the most important pilgrimage sites for Christians worldwide.

Bethlehem: As mentioned earlier, Bethlehem is the birthplace of Jesus, and the Church of the Nativity is a central Christian pilgrimage site.

Mount of Olives: This site is significant in Christianity for its association with several events in the life of Jesus, including his ascension into heaven. The Church of the Pater Noster and the Chapel of the Ascension are located on the Mount of Olives.

For Jews

Western Wall (Wailing Wall): Located in the Old City of Jerusalem, the Western Wall is a remnant of the ancient Jewish Temple and is considered one of the holiest sites in Judaism. It is a place of prayer and pilgrimage for Jews from around the world.

Temple Mount (Haram al-Sharif): This is the site of the First and Second Jewish Temples and is also significant for Muslims as the location of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. It is a highly contested and sensitive religious and political area in Jerusalem.

Hebron: The city of Hebron is associated with the Cave of the Patriarchs, which is believed to be the burial place of Prophet Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Leah, making it a significant religious site for Jews.

These are just a few of the many important religious sites in Palestine that hold significance for Jews, Muslims and Christians. The region's rich history and diverse religious heritage have made it a focal point for religious worship, pilgrimage and cultural exchanges for centuries. However, it's important to note that these sites are often a source of tension and conflict due to their shared significance among different religious groups.

Nov. 02: The Board of Investment and the World Bank-affiliate International Finance Corporation unveiled a visionary investment plan, for which the IFC committed to inject over \$1.5 billion into Pakistan's economy in the form of short- and long-term investments.

Nov. 02: The Senate extended the National Accountability (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023, for another 120 days.

Nov. 03: Justice Irfan Saadat Khan, acting Chief Justice of the SHC, took oath as judge of the Supreme Court.

Nov. 03: The Pakistan Naval Academy won the fourth PN International Nautical Competition 2023.

Nov. 03: Senior SHC judge Justice Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi took the oath as acting chief justice of the high court.

Nov. 03: Pakistan's Ihtisham-ul-Haq defeated Michael Rodriguez in the Kyorugi -87kg event final of the fifth Asian Taekwondo Open Championship.

Nov. 04: The security forces foiled a terrorist attack on Mianwali Training Air Base of Pakistan Air Force (PAF), killing all the nine terrorists.

Nov. 04: The federal cabinet extended the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Management Committee's tenure for three months.

Nov. 06: Pakistan secured second position in the 5th Asian Open Taekwondo Championship with two gold, 1 silver, and 7 bronze medals.

Nov. 06: According to the latest data from the

US-based research lab AidData, Pakistan is the third biggest



recipient of China's development financing in the world as during the last two decades (2000 to 2021), 98 percent of Chinese development funding in Pakistan came in the form of loans, with only 2 percent coming in the form of grants.

Nov. 06: Authorities imposed a "health emergency" in Balochistan in the wake of a worrisome surge in cases of the novel Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) commonly known as the "Congo virus" in the province.

Nov. 06: Information Service Academy Director General Saeed Ahmed Sheikh was entrusted with additional charge of director general Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC).

Nov. 06: Caretaker PM Kakar assigned the additional charge of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs to Minister for Information Murtaza Solangi.

Nov. 06: A staggering 187 scientists hailing from Pakistan and representing diverse fields of specialization featured on the list of the world's top scientists for 2023 by Stanford University.

Nov. 06: The SECP and FIA

signed an agreement to share information and cooperate on tackling cybercrime and fraud in the country's digital financial system.

Nov. 06: Pakistan joined a programme being carried out by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations for strengthening capacity towards rabies elimination in Asia.

Nov. 07: 'Pakistan Investment Roadshow, which was organized by Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) in Dubai, came to a close.

Nov. 08: The first vice chief of army staff during the era of General Ziaul Haq, and later Punjab governor, Gen (R) Sawar Khan, passed away.

Nov. 08: Pakistan Women A defeated West Indies Women A by 8 wickets to win the tri-series.

Nov. 10: Caretaker PM Kakar confirmed the extension in the term of ISI director general Nadeem Anjum.

Nov. 10: Bangladesh Women clinched the three-match ODI series against Pakistan by 2-1.

Nov. 11: Caretaker Chief Minister KP Mohammad Azam Khan passed away. He was 90.

Nov. 11: England beat Pakistan to kick the latter out of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023.

Nov. 11: Caretaker PM Kakar and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman held a meeting on the sidelines of the Joint Arab-Islamic Extraordinary Summit.

Nov. 12: Justice (R) Arshad Hussain Shah took oath as the caretaker chief minister of KP.

Nov. 13: The Senate passed a resolution against the Supreme

HOW TROPICAL STORMS ARE FORMED

High humidity and ocean temperatures of over 26°C are major contributing factors

Water evaporates from the ocean surface and comes into contact with a mass of cold air, forming clouds

A column of low pressure develops at the centre. Winds form around the column

As pressure in the central column (the eye) weakens, the speed of the wind around it increases



Saffir-Simpson hurricane wind scale

CATEGORY 1	CATEGORY 2	CATEGORY 3	CATEGORY 4	CATEGORY 5
Minimal damage	Moderate damage	Extensive damage	Extreme damage	Catastrophic
Winds 119-153 kph	Winds 154-177 kph	Winds 178-208 kph	Winds 209-251 kph	Winds 252 kph and more

SOURCE: NHC

Court's verdict on civilians' trial in the military courts, urging the top court to stop implementation of the judgment "unless it is considered by a larger bench".

Nov. 13: Major General Irfan Ahmed Malik was appointed Director General Military Land and Cantonment Department on secondment basis for two years.

Nov. 14: A two-member bench of the IHC, comprising Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb and Justice Saman Rafat Imtiaz, issued a stay order against PTI Chairman Imran Khan's jail trial in the cipher case.

Nov. 14: Caretaker KP government appointed two advisers and a special assistant.

Nov. 14: The Karachi Strikers clinched the Pakistan Women T20 Cricket Cup title after defeating Punjab University Unbeatables.

Nov. 15: The Supreme Court banned the use of the word "sahib" with the titles of government officials.

Nov. 15: Babar Azam quit as skipper with Shan Masood becoming the Test captain, Shaheen Shah Afridi taking the reins of the T20 side.

Nov. 15: The federal cabinet accorded approval to 40 percent tax on windfall profit earned by banks on the foreign exchange transactions during the years 2021 and 2022.

Nov. 15: Pakistan and the IMF struck a staff-level agreement for the release of a \$700 million tranche under the \$3 billion Standby Arrangement (SBA) programme.

Nov. 15: Pakistan's Ahsan Ramzan finished as runner-up in the IBSF 6-Red World Snooker Championship.

GK CORNER

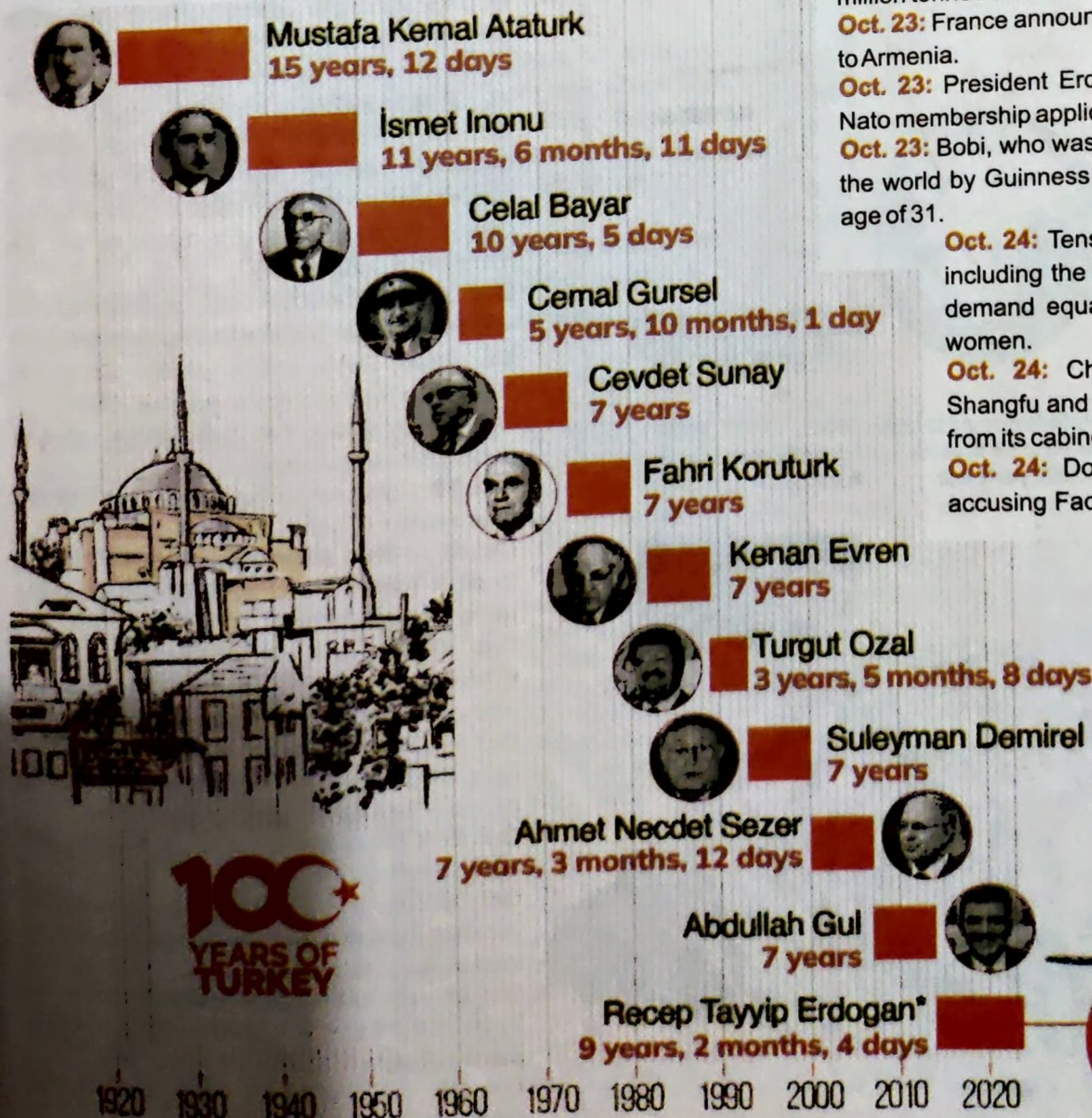
INTERNATIONAL

- Oct. 16:** The 9th summit of the Berlin Process, launched in 2014 by then-German chancellor Angela Merkel, opened in the Albanian capital Tirana.
- Oct. 16:** The world's largest tech event 'Gitex Global' opened in Dubai.
- Oct. 16:** The EU presented plans to curb pollution caused by microplastic leaks from pellets used extensively by industry, by introducing tougher rules for companies that use the tiny material.
- Oct. 16:** South Korea's Tom Kim captured his second consecutive PGA Shriners Children's Open title.
- Oct. 16:** Nobel Peace laureate Martti Ahtisaari, who served as Finland's 10th president between 1994 and 2000, died aged 86.
- Oct. 16:** Ivory Coast's presidency appointed, the governor of Abidjan, Robert Beugre Mambe, as prime minister.
- Oct. 16:** The UN Security Council failed to adopt a Russian resolution that would have called for a humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza.
- Oct. 17:** India's Supreme Court refused to legalise same-sex marriages.
- Oct. 17:** Russian lawmakers voted to revoke Moscow's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.
- Oct. 17:** Iran banned the teaching of all foreign languages, including English and Arabic, in kindergartens and primary schools.

- Oct. 18:** President Biden visited Israel where he backed his ally's stance blaming Palestinian militants for a rocket strike on a hospital.
- Oct. 18:** Chinese President Xi Jinping announced eight major steps China will take to support high-quality Belt and Road cooperation.
- Oct. 19:** Canada withdrew 41 diplomats from India amid a dispute over the murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar.
- Oct. 19:** The European Union awarded its top rights honour, the Sakharov Prize, to Mahsa Amini, the Iranian Kurdish woman who died in Iranian custody a year ago, and the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement her death triggered.
- Oct. 19:** Two UN agencies – FAO and IAEA – unveiled a new initiative called 'Atoms4Food' that will bolster a response to the global need to achieve sustainable agrifood systems.
- Oct. 21:** A crucial meeting, in Aswan, in southern Egypt, on climate "loss and damages" ahead of COP28 ended in failure.
- Oct. 21:** Australian Kaylee McKeown became the first woman to hold world records in all three backstroke disciplines.
- Oct. 21:** A meeting of Arab leaders in Cairo ended without leaders and foreign ministers agreeing a joint statement.
- Oct. 22:** The right-wing populist Swiss People's Party, which campaigned against mass migration and "woke madness", comfortably topped Switzerland's general election.
- Oct. 22:** South Korea, the United States and Japan carried out their first joint aerial drills.
- Oct. 23:** Indian cricketer hero and spin great Bishan Singh Bedi died aged 77.

- Oct. 23:** Qatar agreed to supply Italian firm Eni with one million tonnes of natural gas a year for 27 years.
- Oct. 23:** France announced the sale of defensive equipment to Armenia.
- Oct. 23:** President Erdogan officially submitted Sweden's Nato membership application to parliament.
- Oct. 23:** Bobi, who was this year ordained the oldest dog in the world by Guinness World Records, died at the ripe old age of 31.
- Oct. 24:** Tens of thousands of Icelandic women, including the prime minister, walked off the job to demand equal pay and protest violence against women.
- Oct. 24:** China removed defence minister Li Shangfu and ousted ex-foreign minister Qin Gang from its cabinet.
- Oct. 24:** Dozens of US states filed a lawsuit accusing Facebook and Instagram owner Meta of profiting "from children's pain," damaging their mental health and misleading the public over the safety of its platforms.

- Oct. 25:** Slovakia's president appointed a new coalition government led by populist Robert Fico.
- Oct. 25:** China adopted a new law strengthening patriotic education.



THREE PREVIOUS SPELLS AS PRIME MINISTER

1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000 2010 2020

100 YEARS OF TURKEY

Hepatitis

- Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver.
- **Triggering agents:** Heavy alcohol use, toxins, some medications, and certain medical conditions can cause hepatitis.
 - However, hepatitis is often caused by a virus.
- **Main Strains:** There are five main strains of the hepatitis virus, referred to as types A, B, C, D and E.
 - While they all cause liver disease, they differ in important ways including modes of transmission, severity of the illness, geographical distribution and prevention methods.
 - In particular, types B and C lead to chronic disease in hundreds of millions of people and together are the most common cause of liver cirrhosis, liver cancer and viral hepatitis-related deaths.

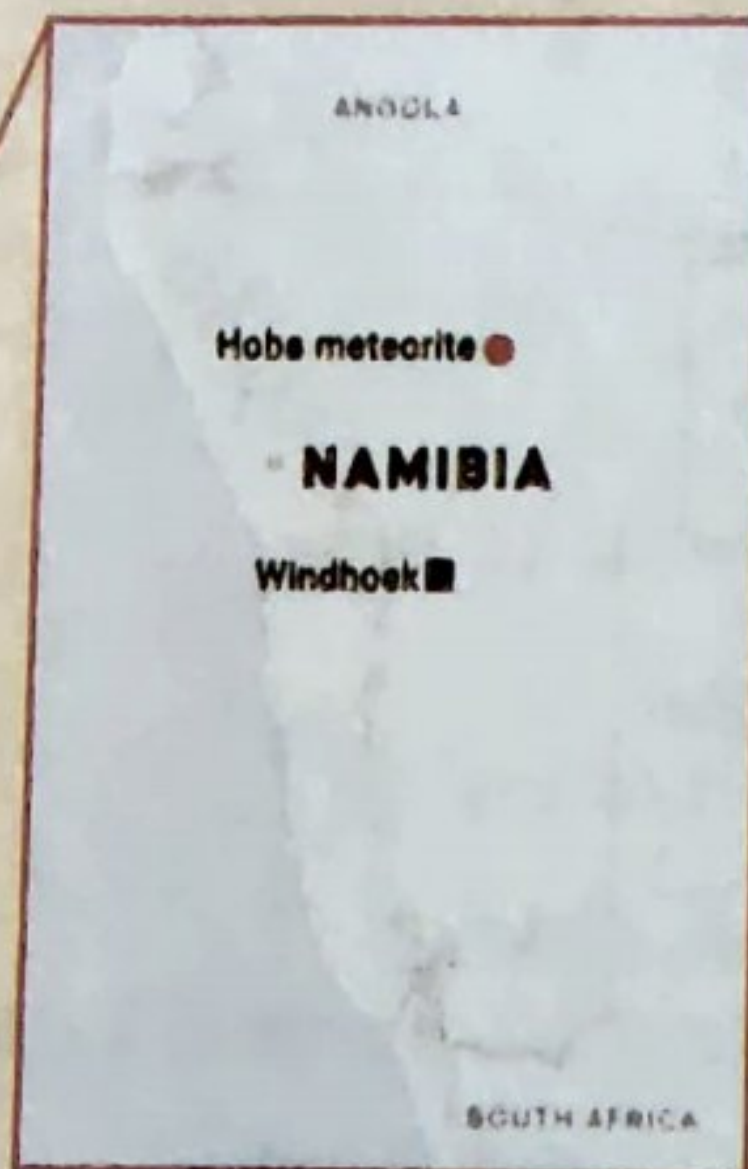
Treatment:

- **Hepatitis A:** Hepatitis A is a short-term illness and may not require treatment.
- **Hepatitis B:** There is no specific treatment program for acute hepatitis B.
- **Hepatitis C:** Antiviral medications can treat both acute and chronic forms of hepatitis C.
- **Hepatitis D:** The WHO trusted Source lists pegylated interferon alpha as a treatment for hepatitis D. However, this medication can have severe side effects.
- **Hepatitis E:** Currently, no specific medical therapies are available to treat hepatitis E. However, pregnant women who develop this infection require close monitoring and care.
- **Autoimmune hepatitis:** Corticosteroids, like prednisone or budesonide, are extremely important in the early treatment of autoimmune hepatitis. They're effective in about 80 percent of people with this condition.

The largest known single-piece meteorite in the world:

Hoba Meteorite

The Hoba area near the town of Grootfontein in northern Namibia hosts one of the best-preserved fallen celestial objects in the world



MAIN MASS OVER 60 TONNES

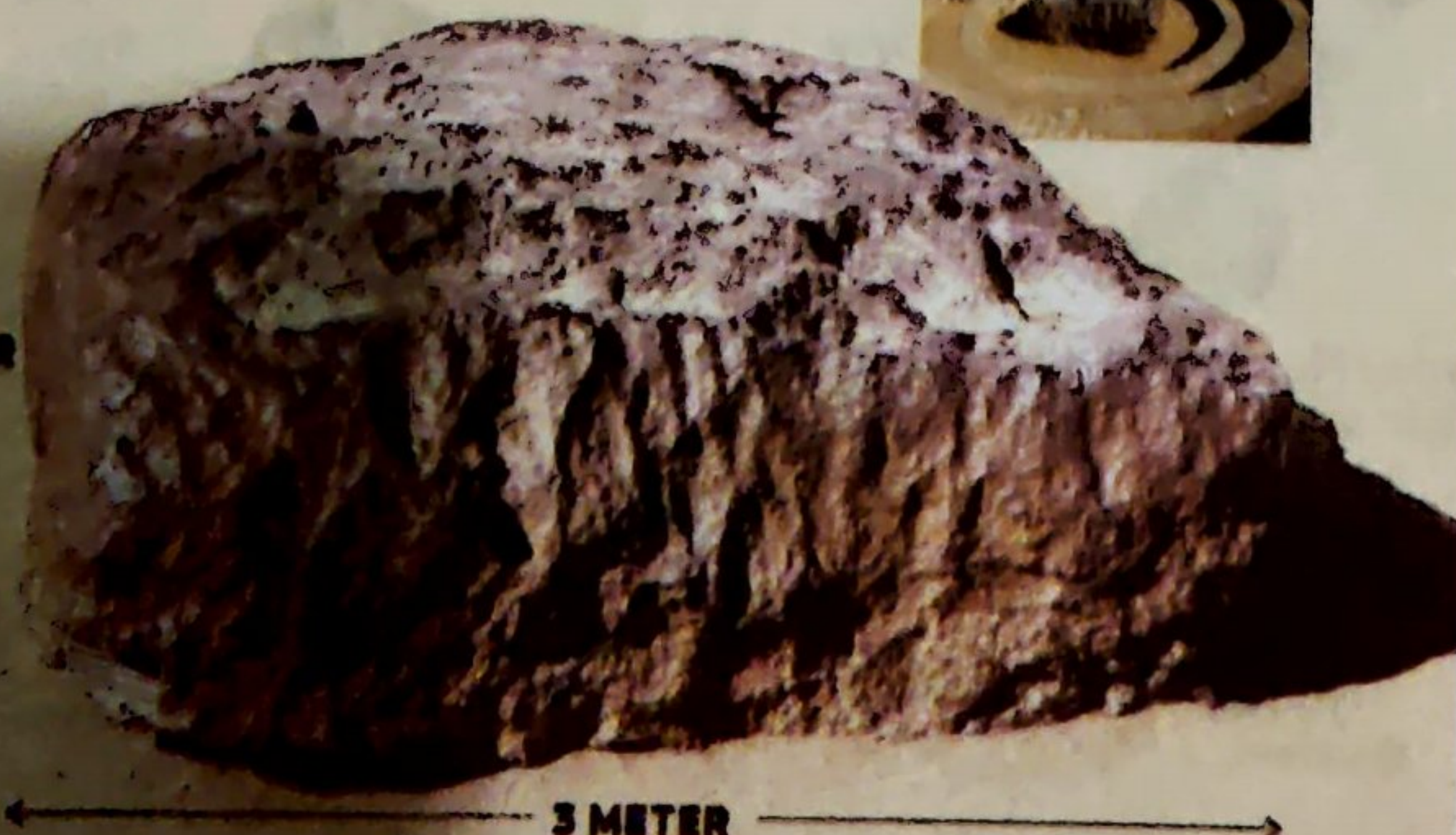
FE 80% IRON

NI 16% NICKEL

CO 0.76% COBALT

Hoba is thought to have fallen to Earth about 80,000 years ago

1920 Found by chance in a farm



Oct. 25: The US House of Representatives elected Mike Johnson, a staunch ally of Donald Trump who spearheaded legal efforts to overturn the 2020 presidential election, as its 56th speaker.

Oct. 25: Australia's Glenn Maxwell scored the fastest World Cup century off just 40 balls.

Oct. 25: Australia secured a record World Cup 309-run rout of the Netherlands, bettering their previous margin of World Cup victory – against Afghanistan by 275 runs at Perth in 2015.

Oct. 25: Russia and China vetoed a US-drafted Security Council resolution to address a worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza whereas a rival Russian-drafted text failed to win the minimum number of votes.

Oct. 25: The Green Climate Fund approved \$120 million in climate adaptation financing to support the Asian Development Bank's 'Community Resilience Partnership Programme' (CRPP).

Oct. 25: China launched its first nuclear-powered guided missile submarines.

Oct. 26: China sent a fresh crew to its Tiangong space station.

Oct. 26: A court in Qatar handed death penalties to eight former Indian Navy officers for selling military secrets to Israel.

Oct. 27: The editor-in-chief of British Vogue, Edward Enninful OBE, was named the UK's most influential black person.

Oct. 27: The UN General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted a non-binding resolution seeking an immediate humanitarian truce in Gaza.

Oct. 27: China's former Premier Li Keqiang died of a heart attack. He was 68.

Oct. 28: Ghana received a fleet of 100 armoured vehicles from the European Union as part of increased aid for border security.

Oct. 28: Australia edged out gallant New Zealand by just five runs in the highest-scoring World Cup game in history.

Oct. 29: Group of Seven trade ministers held talks in Tokyo, Japan.

GK CORNER

SIM CARD

- SIM stands for 'subscriber identification module'. It is an integrated circuit, or a microchip, that identifies the subscriber on a given network.
- SIM cards store information about its own ID number (the integrated circuit card identifier), the international mobile subscriber identity (IMSI), the subscriber's location area identity (i.e. their current location), a list of preferred networks (to whom the subscriber can connect when roaming), emergency numbers, and – depending on the space available – the subscriber's contacts and SMS messages.
- **Working:** When a subscriber dials a recipient's number, the phone sends data via the network – signed by the key on the SIM card – to a telephone exchange. If the recipient is connected to the same exchange, the network establishes their identity and the call is routed to them. If the recipient is 'located' elsewhere, a computer connected to the network routes the call there according to the most optimum route.

Oct. 29: Matthew Perry, troubled star of the smash hit TV sitcom "Friends," died. He was 54.

Oct. 29: South Africa won a record fourth Rugby World Cup, beating New Zealand in the final.

Oct. 31: Lionel Messi won the eighth Ballon d'Or.

Oct. 31: Spain's World Cup-winning star Aitana Bonmati took the women's Ballon d'Or.

Oct. 31: Yemen's Houthis fired drones towards Israel in retaliation for its bombardment against Gazans.

Nov. 01: The EU banned Meta's use of personal data for behavioural advertising.

Nov. 01: Bolivia announced to sever diplomatic ties with Israel over its 'disproportionate' attacks in Gaza.

Nov. 01: At the world's first summit on artificial intelligence safety 28 countries and the EU agreed the "need for international action" through the "Bletchley Declaration".

Nov. 02: Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a law revoking Russia's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

Nov. 03: UEFA announced partnership with Groupe Amaury to co-organise the prestigious Ballon d'Or awards from 2024.

Nov. 03: President Biden kicked off the inaugural Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity (APEP) summit which was attended by leaders from Barbados, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay.

Nov. 04: Qatar agreed to supply Sinopec with natural gas for 27 years.

Nov. 04: Five schools, including a bilingual, integrated Jewish-Arab one in Jerusalem, triumphed at the World's Best School prizes.

Nov. 05: Afghanistan won the 5th Asian Open Taekwondo Championship, winning two gold and as many silver medals.

Nov. 05: North Korea created a new holiday on November 18 to celebrate the anniversary of the successful test launch of its Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile.

Nov. 05: Russia successfully test-launched the "Bulava" sea-based intercontinental ballistic missile.

Nov. 05: The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) said that Opium poppy production in Afghanistan, previously the world's top supplier, has plummeted since the Taliban administration banned the cultivation

of narcotics last year. Opium cultivation fell throughout the country to just 10,800 hectares in 2023 from 233,000 hectares the previous year, slashing supply by 95 percent to 333 tons.

Nov. 06: Italy signed a deal with Albania under which migrants rescued in the Mediterranean will be sent to purpose-built centres in Albania.

Nov. 06: Novak Djokovic defeated Grigor Dimitrov to win a record-extending seventh Paris Masters title.

Nov. 06: Sri Lanka batsman Angelo Mathews became the first player to be given "timed out" in the 146-year history of international cricket in a match won by Bangladesh.

Nov. 07: Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa announced his resignation after he was embroiled in a corruption investigation into the awarding of energy-related contracts.

Nov. 07: Poland's Iga Swiatek thrashed Jessica Pegula to win the

GK Tidbits

1. Sebastian Kurz is a former Chancellor of: **Austria**

2. The real name of former chief minister KP Dr Khan Sahib was: **Abdul Jabbar Khan**

3. The current Managing Director of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is: **Richard Kozul-Wright**

4. The seismic activity or quake occurring on the planet Mars is called: **Marsquake**

5. The only official language in Iran is: **Persian**

6. The hero in Turkish drama 'Kurus Osman' is: **Burak Özcivit**

7. Hakim Mohammed Said (1920-1998) established Hamdard Pakistan in: **1948**

8. The current Banking Mohtasib of Pakistan is: **Sirajuddin Aziz**

9. The University of Community Development is located in: **Balochistan**

10. With its headquarters at Paris, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was established in: **1961**

11. The Objectives Resolution was passed on: **12 March 1949**

12. Pakistan's first Constituent Assembly was

dissolved in: **October 1954**

13. The current Chairperson of the Pakistan Academy of Letters is: **Dr Najeeba Arif**

14. The second Constituent Assembly was convened in: **May 1955**

15. The current Chairman of Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) is: **Mirza Saleem Balg**

16. The other name of Rome's world-famous Colosseum is: **Flavian Amphitheater**

17. Sydney Opera House was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II on: **Oct. 20, 1973**

18. The World Heritage site Shalimar Gardens was built in: **1642**

19. The first Christian to play Test Cricket for Pakistan was: **Wallis Mathias**

20. 'The Life and Times of a Gentleman Cricketer' was written by: **Hanif Mohammad**

21. The xerographic process, which laid the foundation for modern-day photocopying and printing, was invented by: **Chester Carlson (1938)**

22. The Azad government of the State of Jammu and Kashmir was formed on: **October 24, 1947**

23. The second Constituent Assembly framed and

passed the first Constitution of Pakistan on: **29 February 1956**

24. The Government of India Act, 1935, served as the Constitution of Pakistan till: **1st March 1956**

25. Another name for the snow leopards is: **Ounce**

26. Naik Saif Ali Janjua Shaheed valiantly defended vital Pir Kaleva Ridge against repeated Indian attacks in: **1948**

27. Bishkek is the capital of: **Kyrgyzstan**

28. A constitutional monarchy having a unique arrangement where the throne changes hands every five years between rulers of the country's nine states is: **Malaysia**

29. Duki coal mine field is located in: **Balochistan**

30. Dagestan is a Caucus republic of: **Russia**

31. Rosaviatsiya is the aviation agency of: **Russia**

32. Brazzaville is the capital and largest city of: **DR Congo**

33. South Africa's national rugby union team is commonly known as: **Springboks**

34. Formed in 1945, UNESCO, a specialised UN agency is based in: **Paris**

35. World Cities Day falls on: **October 31**

36. World Biosphere Reserve Day is celebrated on:

GK CORNER

WTA Finals, sealing her return to world number one.

Nov. 07: Ibrahim Zadran scored 129 not out against Australia to become the first Afghan centurion at a World Cup.

Nov. 07: Australia's Glenn Maxwell became the third batsman after New Zealand's Martin Guptill and West Indies' Chris Gayle to score a World Cup double century.

Nov. 07: A judicial panel dismissed Indonesia's Chief Justice Anwar Usman, who is Widodo's brother-in-law, after he was found guilty of a 'gross violation' of the court's ethics code.

Nov. 07: Russia formally withdrew from the 1990 Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE).

Nov. 07: Charles III delivered the first King's Speech in 72 years, formally opening the UK parliament.

Nov. 08: The US House of Representatives voted to censure Democratic Representative Rashida Tlaib, Congress's lone Palestinian-American lawmaker, for comments she made regarding Israel's war with Hamas in Gaza.

Nov. 09: Kazakhstan, the world's top uranium producer, announced a long-term deal to supply the radioactive metal to China.

Nov. 09: The 16th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Nov. 09: JKN Global Group, the Thai media company that owns the Miss Universe beauty pageant brand, filed for bankruptcy.

Nov. 09: Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez clinched a controversial deal offering amnesty to Catalan separatists.

Nov. 09: A team of surgeons in New York performed the world's first transplant of an entire eye.

Nov. 09: Record-breaking Australian women's captain Meg Lanning retired from cricket.

Nov. 09: Indonesia inaugurated a \$100 million Cirata floating solar farm, the largest in Southeast Asia.

Nov. 10: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken reached New Delhi to hold talks to bolster India as a regional counterweight to China and win backing for its position on Israel's war with Hamas.

Nov. 10: The International Cricket Council (ICC) suspended Sri Lanka's cricket board, saying it had failed to ensure there was no

government interference in its affairs.

Nov. 11: The extraordinary joint Islamic-Arab summit was held in Riyadh.

Which continent has the most countries? **Africa**

Which continent has the most languages? **Asia**

Which continent has the most fresh water? **Antarctica**

Which continent has the most lakes? **North America**

Which continent has the most deserts? **Australia**

The second most populated continent? **Europe**

Which continent has the most rivers? **Asia**

Which is the most populated continent? **Asia**

Which continent has the most islands? **Asia**

Which continent has the most diamonds? **Africa**

Which continent has the most beaches? **Asia**

The continent has the most wind resources? **Antarctica**

Which continent has many rain forest? **South America**

Which continent has the longest coastline? **Asia**

Which continent has the most oil? **Africa**

Which continent has no glaciers? **Australia**

GK Tidbits

November 3

37. The separate electorate, which was introduced in Indian Councils Act, 1909, for Muslims, was extended to Sikhs, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans by: **Government of India Act, 1919**

38. Created by the British prime minister Ramsay MacDonald on 16 August 1932 and announced after the Round Table Conferences (1930-32), the Communal Award is also known as: **The MacDonald Award**

39. Action launched by the Indian Army on Sept. 13, 1948, to annex the princely state of Hyderabad to India was named: **Operation Polo**

40. The Olympic Games have alternated between a summer and winter edition every two years within the four-year period of each Olympiad since: **1994**

41. The number of categories in Air Quality Index is: **Six**

42. Headquartered in Paris, France, the International Energy Agency (IEA) was formed in: **Nov. 1974**

43. The North Field is part of the world's largest gas field which Qatar shares with: **Iran**

44. Daduocha Dam is being constructed on the

upstream: **Soan River**

45. The Bar Lev Line was a chain of fortifications built by Israel along the eastern bank of: **Suez Canal**

46. The team that has won the National Hockey Championship more than any other side is: **PIA**

47. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was born on November 13, 1780 in: **Gujranwala**

48. The Sikh ruler who was also known as Sher-e-Punjab is: **Maharaja Ranjit Singh**

49. The unified Sikh empire existed from 1799 to: **1849**

50. Ranjit Singh's army was known as: **Khalsa Army**

51. The 5th Asian Open Taekwondo Championship was held in: **Liaquat Gymnasium, Islamabad**

52. Four religions that originated in the Indian Subcontinent are Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and: **Buddhism**

53. The Congo virus is caused by a tick-borne virus called: **Nairovirus**

54. The country that has the largest lithium reserves in Europe is: **Portugal**

55. Pakistan officially ended its membership in SEATO on: **Nov. 7, 1973**

56. The world's largest producer of uranium is: **Kazakhstan**

57. The current head of Israel's Mossad intelligence service is: **David Barnea**

58. The university often referred to as another Pakistan or a mini-Pakistan is: **Aligarh Muslim University**

59. Anthony Albanese is the prime Minister of: **Australia**

60. The highest paved international border at 15,500 feet from sea level is: **Khunjerab Pass**

61. The border protocol agreement between Pakistan and China was signed in: **1985**

62. Cairo is the capital of: **Egypt**

63. Catharine Mountain is the highest point in: **Egypt**

64. Sharda Temple is located in: **Neelum Valley (AJK)**

65. The current President of South Korea is: **Yoon Suk Yeol**

66. The first edition of the modern Olympic Games was staged in Athens, Greece, in: **1896**

67. The first winter edition of the modern Olympic Games was held in Chamonix, France, in: **1924**

68. The crops sown in winter and harvested in

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Nov. 11: Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler Mohammed bin Salman and Iran's president Ebrahim Raisi held their first meeting since the Middle East heavyweights agreed to mend ties in March.

Nov. 12: Israel's defence ministry announced a 317 million euro (\$340m) deal for the sale of its David's Sling air defence system to new Nato member Finland.

Nov. 12: Ducati's Enea Bastianini won the Malaysian MotoGP.

Nov. 13: India's Virender Sehwag, Sri Lankan batsman Aravinda de Silva and pioneering Indian women's captain Diana Edulji were inducted into ICC Hall of Fame.

Nov. 13: The Maldives Speaker of Parliament Mohamed Nasheed, who is also a former president, resigned.

Nov. 13: US and South Korean defence chiefs updated the Tailored Deterrence Strategy (TDS), a deal on joint deterrence strategies to counter North Korea's nuclear weapons and other arms.

Nov. 13: The US Army announced to set aside the "unfair" convictions of 110 Black soldiers who were court-martialled over 1917 unrest in Houston, Texas.

Nov. 13: Former UK leader David Cameron returned to the British government as foreign secretary.

Nov. 14: The Federal Supreme Court of Iraq dismissed Speaker Mohamed al-Halbussi over the alleged "falsification" of a document.

Nov. 14: Russia signed a contract to supply Igla-S hand-held anti-aircraft missiles to India and allow production of the Igla there.

Nov. 15: President Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping pledged to reduce tensions as they met for the first time in a year at a high-stakes summit in California.

Nov. 15: In his 279th innings in the World Cup semi-final against New Zealand at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium, India's Virat Kohli struck his 50th ODI century, taking him past Sachin Tendulkar's all-time record.

Nov. 15: An Israeli army operation in Gaza's biggest medical facility Al-Shifa hospital was called off.

Nov. 15: The World Health Organisation (WHO) announced the 'Commission on Social Connection' to address loneliness as a pressing health threat, promote social connection as a priority, and accelerating the scaling-up of solutions.

Nov. 15: France issued an international arrest warrant for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Nov. 15: One of India's most controversial tycoons, Subrata Roy, died at 75.

WHAT IS SMOG

In simple terms, smog is a general word for specific kinds of polluted air, particularly very visible, thick air pollution observed in urban areas and industrial zones.

Components of smog

Smoke, ash, sulphur, nitrogen, carbon dioxide and other pollutants



Air Pollution

The term was likely first used in 1905 by H.A. Des Voeux to talk about the air in many British towns.

WHAT CAUSES SMOG

Smog forms when descending, heated air (caused by high pressure) confines cooler air below, leading to the development of a stagnant layer where pollutants gather and give rise to smog.

GK Tidbits

spring are called: **Rabi crops**

69. The International Solar Alliance (ISA), the largest grouping of states, after the United Nations, was established in: **2015**

70. The world's largest importer of arms is: **India**

71. RIA is a state news agency of: **Russia**

72. Lake Snow Eagle is located in: **Antarctica**

73. Nipah virus (NiV) was first identified in 1998 during an outbreak in: **Malaysia**

74. The largest land mammals are: **Elephants**

75. The branch of quantum physics that studies the dynamics of classically chaotic systems is called: **Quantum chaos**

76. Internationally known as Pratas Islands, Paracel Islands, the Macclesfield Bank area and the Spratly Islands, the four island groups in the South China Seas region are collectively called: **Four She**

77. The South China Sea is an arm of: **Western Pacific Ocean**

78. The South China Sea connects the Pacific Ocean with: **Indian Ocean**

79. Thallium, also known as the 'poisoner's poison', is a chemical element with the symbol "Tl" and atomic number: **81**

80. The world's top graphite producer and exporter

is: **China**

81. Also called plumbago or black lead, graphite is a naturally occurring form of crystalline: **Carbon**

82. The only three Asian countries that have hosted the Olympics are China, Japan and: **South Korea**

83. Japan hosted Olympic Games twice in 1964 and: **2020**

84. The host for the Olympic Games is selected by: **International Olympic Committee (IOC)**

85. The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations was adopted in: **1961**

86. The "Best Tourism Village" was launched by the United Nations World Tourism Organization in: **2021**

87. Rafah Border Crossing is the sole crossing point between Gaza and: **Egypt**

88. Headquartered in Beijing, China, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) was established in: **2016**

89. Headquartered in Luxembourg, the European Investment Bank was established in: **1958**

90. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a regional development bank established in: **1966**

91. Palestine is used to refer to the geographic region between the Mediterranean Sea and: **Jordan River**

92. Set up in 1988, the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought is awarded each year by the: **European Parliament**

93. Andrei Sakharov, in whose honour the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought was established, was a physicist and political dissident from: **Soviet Union**

94. The part of the cell that houses the DNA and the associated proteins is: **Nucleus**

95. The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is celebrated annually on: **October 17**

96. Port-au-Prince is the capital of: **Haiti**

97. Haiti became the first postcolonial black republic in: **1804**

98. United Nations Peacekeeping began in 1948 when the Security Council authorized the deployment of military observers to the: **Middle East**

99. All subatomic particles can be classified as either fermions or: **Bosons**.

100. A unit of an incentive provided for a specified activity; delivering a positive impact on the environment is commonly known as: **Green credit**

MCQs / NATIONAL

1. The right to information is enshrined in Article _____ of the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973.
(a) 19-A (b) 20-A
(c) 25-A (d) 29-B
2. On Oct. 17, caretaker PM Anwaarul Haq Kakar met Russian President Vladimir Putin in _____.
(a) Moscow (b) Beijing
(c) Shanghai (d) Istanbul
3. On Oct. 17, Pakistan secured its first-ever victory in FIFA World Cup qualifiers, defeating _____.
(a) Cambodia (b) Vietnam
(c) India (d) Nepal
4. Former Ireland international Catherine Dalton, the first female coach in the Pakistan Super League is the fast bowling coach of _____.
(a) Multan Sultans
(b) Lahore Qalandars
(c) Karachi Kings
(d) Quetta Gladiators
5. On Oct. 18, Pakistan conducted a successful flight test of the _____ weapon system.
(a) Shaheen (b) Abdali
(c) Ghauri (d) Ababeel
6. On Oct. 18, Pakistan and the United States signed a _____-year extension of the US-Pakistan Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement.
(a) Three (b) Four
(c) Five (d) Ten
7. Senior Pakistani jurist and former senator Syed Muhammad (SM) Zafar passed away on _____.
(a) Oct. 17 (b) Oct. 19

- (c) Oct. 20 (d) Oct. 22
8. The Kamal-i-Fun Award for the year 2021 has been awarded to _____.
(a) Zafar Iqbal (b) Abbas Tabish
(c) Anwar Masood (d) Wasi Shah
9. The Kamal-i-Fun Award is awarded by the Pakistan Academy of Letters which is based in _____.
(a) Karachi (b) Lahore
(c) Islamabad (d) Rawalpindi
10. On Oct. 20, Pakistan joined _____ expanding club of partners in an ambitious project to build a research station on the moon's south pole.
(a) SpaceX's (b) China's
(c) Tesla's (d) Russia's
11. PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif returned to Pakistan on _____.
(a) Oct. 21 (b) Oct. 22
(c) Oct. 23 (d) Oct. 24
12. On Oct. 22, the _____ High Court ruled against a petition that aimed to ban Pakistani artists from working or performing in India.
(a) Amritsar (b) Delhi
(c) Bombay (d) Allahabad
13. On _____, in a 4-1 verdict, the Supreme Court declared the trial of civilians in the military courts as unconstitutional.
(a) Oct. 23 (b) Oct. 24
(c) Oct. 25 (d) Oct. 26
14. On Oct. 24, the interim Punjab cabinet suspended the sentence of Nawaz Sharif in the Al-Azizia reference, under Section _____ of the Criminal Procedural Code.
(a) 401 (b) 416
(c) 422 (d) 470

15. _____ is the first batter to score a double century and a century in a Quaid-i-Azam Trophy match.
(a) Saim Ayub (b) Sarfraz Ahmad
(c) Abdullah Shafiq (d) Shan Masood
16. On Oct. 25, former Olympian _____ was elected as the new Secretary of the Pakistan Hockey Federation.
(a) Rana Mujahid (b) Shahbaz Jr.
(c) Khalid Bashir (d) Rehan Butt
17. On Oct. 26, Pakistan, in a meeting in _____, assumed the Chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Council of Heads of Government.
(a) Astana (b) Bishkek
(c) Ankara (d) Tashkent
18. On Oct. 27, _____, the executive director of the Digital Rights Foundation, was appointed to the high-level advisory board on Artificial Intelligence by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres.
(a) Fiza Farhan (b) Nighat Dad
(c) Amina Ilyas (d) Sadiqa Syed
19. On Oct. 27, Pakistan's Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah was elected _____ of the OIC Ombudsman Association.
(a) Director-General
(b) Secretary-General
(c) President (d) Multan
20. On Oct. 27, the government of _____ conferred the 2023 Spring Imperial Decoration, 'The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star' on Imtiaz Ahmad, former Pakistan's ambassador to this Asian country.
(a) Cambodia (b) Indonesia
(c) Japan (d) South Korea
21. On Oct. 29, the Pakistan Railways restored train services at Sibi-Harnai section after _____ years.
(a) 10 (b) 15
(c) 18 (d) 20
22. On Oct. 30, Sino-Pak Bio-health Agriculture Overseas Sci-tech Demonstration Park was inaugurated at the University of _____.
(a) Balochistan (b) Gwadar
(c) Haripur (d) Malakand
23. On _____, renowned film director Hassan Askari passed away.
(a) Oct. 28 (b) Oct. 30
(c) Nov. 01 (d) Nov. 02
24. On Oct. 31, Pakistan's Zainab Nawaz earned a _____ Award in the Junior writing category of the Queen's International Commonwealth Essay Writing Competition 2023.
(a) Gold (b) Silver
(c) Bronze (d) Consolation
25. The president of the Supreme Court Bar Association for 2023-24 is _____.

7th Apex Committee Meeting of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC)

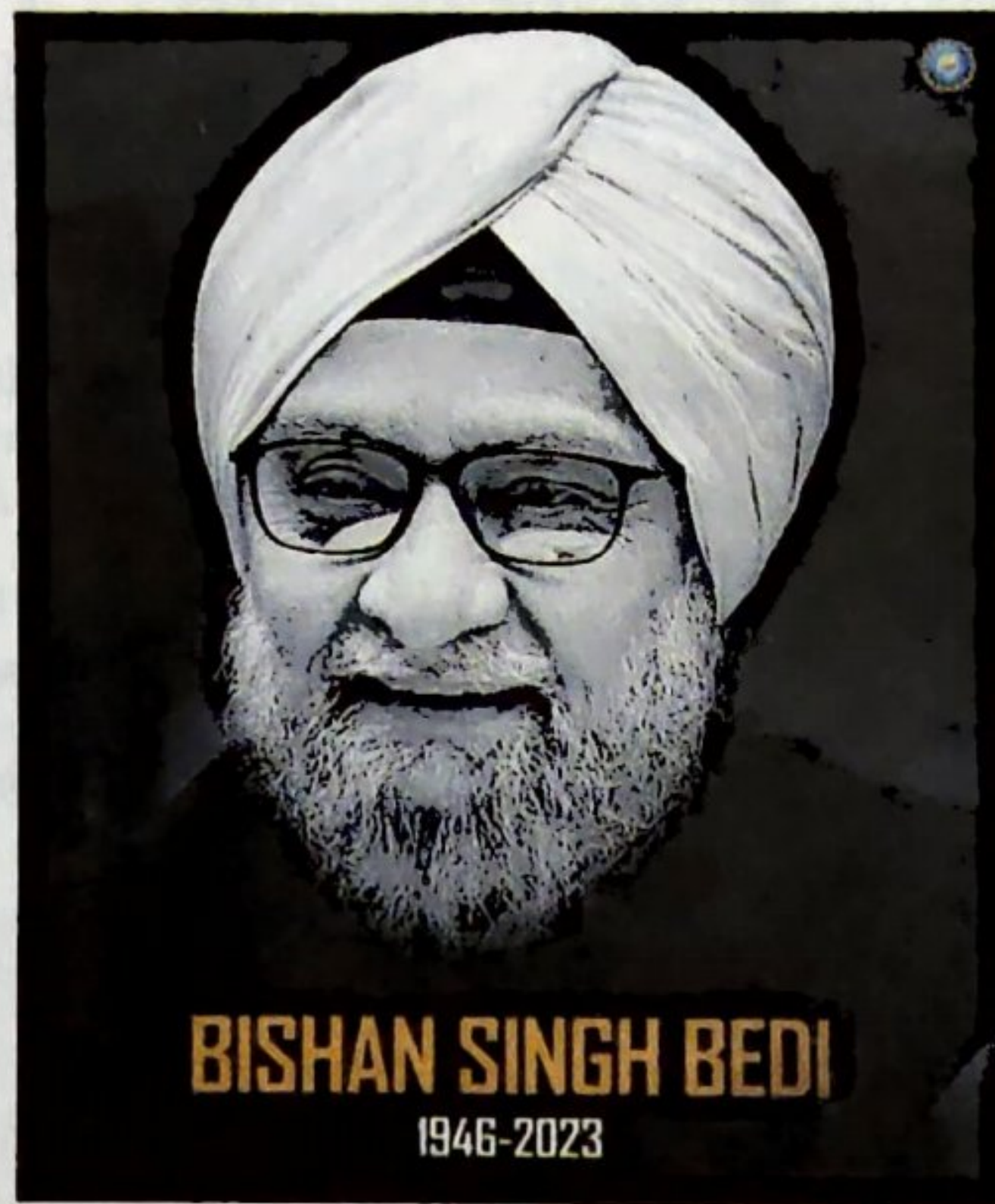
The Committee

- Appreciated enhancing level of engagements with friendly countries, both public and private entities
- Reviewed progress on various measures undertaken to improve investment climate and approved policy level interventions.
- Directed to make a comprehensive strategy to address oil and gas issues in a sustainable manner by investing in relevant industries.
- Appreciated the progress on privatization of public-owned Enterprises and directed to expedite the process.

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- (a) *Shahzad Shaukat* (b) Hamid Khan
(c) Ahsan Bhoon (d) Abid Zuberi
26. On Oct. 31, Pakistan's ace fast bowler, _____, became the quickest fast bowler to reach 100 wickets in the history of ODI cricket.
(a) Muhammad Wasim
(b) *Shaheen Shah Afridi*
(c) Haris Rauf (d) None of these
27. On Nov. 02, President Alvi and the ECP unanimously agreed on holding general elections on _____, 2024.
(a) *Feb. 08* (b) Feb. 10
(c) Feb. 12 (d) Feb. 25
28. The current chairman of National Highway Authority is _____.
(a) Sabin Butt (b) Arshad Hakim
(c) Shaheera Salman Haider
(d) *Arshad Majeed Mohmand*
29. On Nov. 03, Justice Irfan Saadat Khan, acting Chief Justice of the _____ High Court, took oath as a judge of the Supreme Court.
(a) *Sindh* (b) Lahore
(c) Balochistan (d) Peshawar
30. On Nov. 05, Pakistan secured _____ position in the 5th Asian Open Taekwondo Championship.
(a) First (b) *Second*
(c) Third (d) Sixth
31. On Nov. 06, PM Kakar assigned the additional charge of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs to _____.
(a) Sarfraz Bugti (b) Ahmad I. Aslam
(c) *Murtaza Solangi*
(d) Fawad Hassan Fawad
32. On Nov. 06, Pakistan joined an international programme, being carried out by the _____, for strengthening capacity towards rabies elimination in Asia.
(a) UNEP (b) WHO
(c) UNFP (d) *FAO*
33. 'Pakistan Investment Road Show' was organized by Special Investment Facilitation Council in _____.
(a) Geneva (b) London
(c) Beijing (d) *Dubai*
34. On _____, KP caretaker Chief Minister Mohammad Azam Khan passed away.
(a) Nov. 08 (b) Nov. 10
(c) *Nov. 11* (d) Nov. 14
35. On Nov. 11, _____ beat Pakistan to kick it out of the ICC World Cup 2023.
(a) *England* (b) Bangladesh
(c) Afghanistan (d) New Zealand
36. On Nov. 12, _____ took oath as the caretaker chief minister of KP.
(a) Justice (R) Baqir Ali
(b) Justice (R) Mansoor Ali Shah

- (c) Justice (R) Faqir Hussain Bangash
(d) *Justice (R) Arshad Hussain Shah*
37. On Nov. 14, the _____ Strikers clinched the Pakistan Women T20 Cricket Cup title.
(a) Quetta (b) Rawalpindi
(c) Lahore (d) *Karachi*
38. On Nov. 15, the federal cabinet accorded approval to _____ tax on windfall profit earned by banks on the forex transactions during the years 2021 and 2022.
(a) 25% (b) 30%
(c) 35% (d) *40%*
39. On Nov. 15, Pakistan and the IMF struck a staff-level agreement for the release of a _____ tranche under the \$3 billion Standby Arrangement program.
(a) \$500 million (b) *\$700 million*
(c) \$900 million (d) \$1000 million
40. On Nov. 15, Pakistan's Ahsan



- Ramzan finished at _____ position in the IBSF 6-Red World Snooker Championship.
(a) First (b) *Second*
(c) Third (d) Sixth

INTERNATIONAL

1. On Oct. 16, the 9th summit of the Berlin Process opened in the _____ capital Tirana.
(a) *Albanian* (b) Armenian
(c) Serbian (d) Kazakh
2. The Berlin Process was launched in _____ by then-German chancellor Angela Merkel.
(a) 2012 (b) *2014*
(c) 2015 (d) 2016
3. On Oct. 16, the world's largest tech event 'Gitex Global' opened in _____.

- (a) Oslo (b) Tokyo
(c) *Dubai* (d) Beijing
4. On Oct. 16, Nobel Peace laureate Martti Ahtisaari, who served as _____ 10th president, died at the age of 86.
(a) Luxembourg's (b) Austria's
(c) Iceland's (d) *Finland's*
5. On Oct. 17, _____ Supreme Court refused to legalise same-sex marriages.
(a) Austria's (b) Australia's
(c) New Zealand's (d) *India's*
6. On _____, Russian lawmakers voted to revoke Moscow's ratification of CTBT.
(a) Oct. 15 (b) Oct. 16
(c) *Oct. 17* (d) Oct. 18
7. On Oct. 17, _____ banned the teaching of all foreign languages in kindergartens and primary schools.
(a) *Iran* (b) Turkiye
(c) Switzerland (d) Nepal
8. On Oct. 19, the European Union awarded its top rights honour, the Sakharov Prize, to _____.
(a) Greta Thunberg (b) *Mahsa Amini*
(c) Ahed Tamimi (d) Nadia Murad
9. On Oct. 19, two UN agencies - FAO and _____ - unveiled a new initiative called 'Atoms4Food'.
(a) *IAEA* (b) UNDP
(c) UNICEF (d) UNEP
10. On _____, Indian spin great Bishan Singh Bedi died aged 77.
(a) Oct. 20 (b) *Oct. 23*
(c) Oct. 24 (d) Oct. 25
11. On Oct. 24, China removed _____ minister Li Shangfu and ousted ex-foreign minister Qin Gang from the cabinet.
(a) Foreign (b) Finance
(c) *Defence* (d) BRI
12. On Oct. 25, the US House of Representatives elected Mike Johnson as its _____ speaker.
(a) 50th (b) 54th
(c) 55th (d) *56th*
13. On Oct. 25, Australia's _____ scored the fastest World Cup century off just 40 balls.
(a) *Glenn Maxwell* (b) David Warner
(c) Travis Head (d) Mitchell Starc
14. On Oct. 26, a court in _____ handed death penalties to eight former Indian Navy officers.
(a) *Qatar* (b) Australia
(c) Canada (d) China
15. On _____, China's former Premier Li Keqiang died of a heart attack.
(a) Oct. 25 (b) *Oct. 27*
(c) Oct. 28 (d) Oct. 30
16. On Oct. 28, _____ received a fleet of

GK CORNER

- 100 armoured vehicles from the European Union as part of increased aid for border security.
 (a) Ghana (b) Burkina Faso
 (c) Niger (d) Ethiopia
17. On Oct. 28, Australia edged out _____ in the highest-scoring World Cup game in history (771 runs).
 (a) Pakistan (b) England
 (c) New Zealand (d) Afghanistan
18. On Oct. 29, _____ won a record fourth Rugby World Cup beating New Zealand in the final.
 (a) Indonesia (b) South Africa
 (c) Australia (d) New Zealand
19. On Oct. 31, Lionel Messi won his _____ Ballon d'Or.
 (a) Sixth (b) Seventh
 (c) Eighth (d) Ninth
20. On Oct. 31, _____ World Cup-winning star Aitana Bonmati took the women's Ballon d'Or.
 (a) UK's (b) Germany's
 (c) Italy's (d) Spain's
21. The world's first summit on artificial intelligence safety was held at Bletchley Park in _____.
 (a) France (b) Brazil
 (c) UAS (d) UK
22. On Nov. 05, _____ won the 5th Asian Open Taekwondo Championship, winning two gold and as many silver medals.
 (a) China (b) Japan
 (c) Afghanistan (d) India
23. On Nov. 05, _____ successfully test-launched the "Bulava" sea-based intercontinental ballistic missile.
 (a) North Korea (b) Russia
 (c) South Korea (d) Turkiye
24. On Nov. 06, _____ signed a deal with Albania under which migrants rescued in the Mediterranean will be sent to Albania.
 (a) Italy (b) Germany
 (c) UK (d) Norway
25. On Nov. 06, Novak Djokovic defeated Grigor Dimitrov to win a record-extending _____ Paris Masters title.
 (a) Seventh (b) Eighth
 (c) Ninth (d) Tenth
26. On _____, Sri Lanka batsman Angelo Mathews became the first player to be given "timed out" in the 146-year history of international cricket.
 (a) Nov. 05 (b) Nov. 06
 (c) Nov. 07 (d) Nov. 09
27. The first Afghan batter to score a 100 in a World Cup match is _____. (129)
 (a) Naveen-ul-Haq (b) Ibrahim Zadran

- (c) Rahmat Shah (d) M. Nabi
28. On Nov. 07, Australia's Glenn Maxwell became the _____ batsman to score a World Cup double century.
 (a) First (b) Second
 (c) Third (d) Zambia
29. On Nov. 07, Russia formally withdrew from the _____ Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.
 (a) 1981 (b) 1985
 (c) 1990 (d) 1991
30. On Nov. 09, Kazakhstan, the world's top uranium producer, announced a long-term deal to supply the radioactive metal to _____.
 (a) UAE (b) Saudi Arabia
 (c) China (d) India
31. On Nov. 09, the 16th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organisation was held in Tashkent, _____ capital.
 (a) Azerbaijan's (b) Uzbekistan's
 (c) Turkmenistan's (d) Tajikistan's
32. On Nov. 10, the ICC suspended _____ cricket board.
 (a) Zimbabwe's
 (b) Sri Lanka's
 (c) West Indies' (d) Nepal's
33. On Nov. 11, the extraordinary joint Islamic-Arab summit was held in _____.
 (a) Riyadh (b) Tehran
 (c) Jakarta (d) Doha
34. On Nov. 13, India's Virender Sehwag, Sri Lanka's _____ and pioneering Indian women's captain Diana Edulji were inducted into ICC Hall of Fame.
 (a) Arjuna Ranatunga
 (b) Aravinda de Silva
 (c) Muttiah Muralitharan
 (d) Chaminda Vaas
35. On Nov. 13, former UK leader David Cameron returned to the British government as _____ secretary.
 (a) Defence (b) Environment
 (c) Foreign (d) Home
36. On Nov. 14, Russia signed a contract to supply Igla-S hand-held anti-aircraft missiles to _____.
 (a) Iran (b) North Korea
 (c) India (d) Armenia
37. On _____, in his 279th innings, India's Virat Kohli

- struck his 50th ODI century, taking him past Sachin Tendulkar's all-time record.
 (a) Nov. 12 (b) Nov. 13
 (c) Nov. 14 (d) Nov. 15
38. Gaza's biggest medical facility is _____ hospital.
 (a) Al-Ahli Arab (b) Al-Ouds
 (c) Al-Shifa (d) Al-Rantisi
39. On Nov. 15, _____ issued an international arrest warrant for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.
 (a) ICJ (b) France
 (c) EU (d) Germany
40. On Nov. 15, one of India's most controversial tycoons, Subrata Roy, who was the founder of _____ Group, died at 75.
 (a) Tata (b) Brihan
 (c) Lion Dates (d) Sahara

What is a Windfall Tax?

Windfall tax is a higher tax levied by the government on specific industries when they experience unexpected and above-average profits.

→ This tax is imposed when the government notices a sudden rise in an industry's revenue due to external events, not as a result of the company's business decisions.

Why is it Called 'Windfall'?

→ The term "windfall" reflects a sudden and unexpected gain or profit, without any efforts.

Impacts on the Economy

- **Redistribution of Wealth:**
 - Windfall taxes are often seen as a means of redistributing wealth, taking a portion of excessive profits during times of a significant geopolitical event to fund social welfare schemes of the country.
- **Economic Stability:**
 - By taxing windfall gains, governments aim to maintain economic stability by preventing excessive concentration of wealth and addressing income inequality
- **Investor Sentiment:**
 - Windfall taxes can influence investor sentiment, as they may be perceived as unpredictable and could impact the attractiveness of certain sectors for investment.
 - They may reduce the incentive for businesses to invest in the affected industry or may lead to job losses.