

## Russia - Ukraine War.

The war between Russia and Ukraine could have culminated long ago if the USA had stopped supporting and funding the latter. It is ~~in~~ in everyone's knowledge that Ukraine is not a parallel of Russia; it is a very small country with comparatively smaller economy than its opponent, Russia. This reflects on the fact that Ukraine would have easily given in to the demands of Russia and there would not have been any war, or it would have ended by now. Very recently, the US senate approved a staggering amount of aid, i.e. \$92 billion, for Israel and Ukraine. Even the former President of America, Donald Trump has questioned the continuous flow of aid to Ukraine. Without the support of America, Ukraine cannot sustain to continue fighting war with Russia.

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## Threat to World

The real threat that the world is facing in 21<sup>st</sup> century is not from great powers but from the small economies. There is this wider conception in the international community that the rising competition among large economies will trigger direct and cold wars in future; as a result of which, the world will be in great agony and destruction. This is indeed true, but threat from the great powers is relatively milder than the threat from the small nations, which are struggling with lower economies and growing population. These countries appear to be unable to maintain rising number of heads, which is apparent from worsening HDI in these nations. People from these fragile countries are moving to advanced for better lives, which is creating imbalance and fueling crises & social injustice. Therefore, the world faces threat from small countries, not the great powers in 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Phone-tapping

The act by the government to give permission to the intelligence agencies for phone tapping is unconstitutional. ~~and~~ Amidst the growing hatred ~~and~~ towards and attitudes on the prime institutions of the country, military, the government has given permission to tap calls of any person to the intelligence agencies. Many people have immediately voiced their concerns and demanded for the cancellation of the order. In their view, it is a direct invasion on the privacy of individuals. This decision indeed amounts to unconstitutional act, for the constitution extends full protection to individuals under Article 4. Moreover, battling the misinformation, disinformation, propagandas, etc. requires and necessitates the government to take well-aligned actions. With empowering watch-dogs by allowing them to intrude in any individual's privacy at will, the government will unfortunately get no cherishable outcome.

## Effective Governance

What Pakistan can do to make its governance effective remains to be an often-asked question. A lot of solutions and answers have been suggested and advanced in this regard; however, none has so far received any attention ~~to~~ seen implementation owing to different reasons — more particularly due to prevailing political polarization and stark deficiency of resources. Among the solutions, there is one that more provinces should be created. In every respect, it is indeed a solid solution. More provinces will mean that more delegation of responsibilities and easier handling of smaller units.

Afghanistan — One-sixth of Pakistan's population — has 34 provinces. Smaller, Turkey, with three times less population than Pakistan, has 81 provinces. This is indeed a workable solution, provided that the politicians and other concerned authorities show willingness to implement it.

## Breast milk bank

The idea of opening milkbanks across the country to <sup>save</sup> lives of many premature babies every year is indeed commendable. If this idea gets nod from all the concerned people and institutions, more particularly, the clergy, it will indeed lead to saving of lives of many children in Pakistan every year. According to a report by the UN's child sex agency, Pakistan with stands 39 deaths in every 1000 live births, which is one of the highest rate in South Asia. To this end, the project of setting up breast milk banks will surely cause a significant decline in Pakistan's staggering neonatal fertility rate. However, the idea is shrouded in onerous controversy, particularly the one that it is inherently un-Islamic. ~~idea~~ Hopefully, all the stakeholders in the said matter will be taken on board in order to achieve greater good, by implementing the idea.

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## Mobile and Student

The overuse of mobile is impacting student's education across Pakistan. Nowadays, if one looks to any side - provided there are humans in that place, one will surely be disappointed to see people using mobiles unnecessarily, more particularly students who have very little to do <sup>with</sup> this technology. It is surely appreciable if they use it for the purpose of study, but unfortunately, a majority use mobiles for useless activities such as watching reels on Instagram, using TikTok, scrolling Facebook or playing games. As a result of this, students get distracted from their studies since they can not maintain focus. Moreover, such activities mentioned above consume a great significant chunk of their time. Therefore, it is not untrue that mobile's excessive use is bringing harm to student's careers.

14-07-2024

## Dialogue with Baluch insurgents

Dealing with the Baluch insurgency in Baluchistan requires a policy of wider level of dialogue by the State. In past few years, the insurgent tendency in Baluchistan has significantly intensified. ~~That~~ Earlier, the insurgents were involved in harmful anti-state activities within the province only. However, they have now broadened the horizon, as recently seen. They are now involved in attacks in other cities such as Karachi, Islamabad, etc. It was a disgruntled Baluch who killed Chinese teachers in Karachi university. Unfortunately, the state's strategy to deal with the Baluch insurgent is inherently flawed. These insurgents can not be stifled at the dint of force. The state must initiate peaceful measures including incentives and a broader level of dialogue program. It is, thus, highly likely that the state will achieve the desired outcome with this peace-oriented strategy.

## China's concerns

Will the operation Azm-e-Istehkam raise the confidence of China regarding the security situation in Pakistan? Time and again, China has expressed concerns and displeasure at the worsening security situation in Pakistan. Basically, it is extremely concerned with its staggering investment and nationals in Pakistan, both of which have been the target of terrorist outfits and insurgent groups. Some of Chinese engineers this year fell victims to a terrorist attack in Dasu - a site of power project. Similarly, a couple of teachers were killed in Karachi university. Moreover, Chinese funded infrastructure has been a constant target, more particularly CPEC. At this deteriorating security situation, Chinese side was discontent with Pakistan. To appease it and to demonstrate that the country is bent on obliterating this threat, Pakistan has launched a new military operation called Azm-e-Istehkam. It is broadly being expected that the operation will give impetus to China's democracy mood.



## Iran and KSA

There is every likelihood that the process of friendship between Iran and Saudi Arabia will be derailed as a result of latter's engagements with the USA. For ending their long-standing tussle, which especially intensified after the execution of a Shia cleric in the KSA in 2016, the two old rivals — Iran and Saudi Arabia — have started dialogue process to rebuild bilateral ties. However, there is a great obstacle in the way to achieve this purpose, USA. In past few years, KSA has been pushing hard to stretch a defence agreement with the USA. The agreement is being negotiated and there is good possibility, it will soon be finalized. However, this new bonhomie between USA and KSA will push the latter to stop engaging with Iran — which is a formidable threat to America. Hence, it is true that the closeness between KSA and USA will deepen fissures between Iran and KSA.

## Taxes and Brain drain

The rising tax burden on the masses in Pakistan is leading to the problem of brain drain. The government of Pakistan, under the immense pressure of decreasing/depleting revenues, has decided to expand taxes. It has already raised the taxes at an enormous rate in the recent budget. The salaried class bore the blow of two times higher taxes. The salaried people have been pained by not only increasing the tax rate but also lowering the tax bracket, which is, in more technical words, also called tax slabs. Similarly, the government has raised taxes on products including baby cere and packaged milk. GST on books has also hiked. Amidst this, people are finding it very difficult to reside in Pakistan. The inflation has sky-rocketed, leaving many to face elusiveness in meeting basic needs. Reluctantly, people are exploring and casting around for opportunities abroad in order to escape difficult life in Pakistan.

## Economic instability

The economic instability in Pakistan is shrinking country's ability to make independent decisions. The country is mired into a pile of economic issues that are holding it back to the prevailing economic world. These issues include ~~the~~ depleting foreign reserves, growing trade imbalance, rampant inflation, amassing debt, etc. The country is indeed reeling in these ailments; however the greater affliction it is enduring is lack of ability to make independent decisions. The incumbent Prime Minister of the country has himself accepted that ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> latest budget was prepared under dictations of the IMF. Even the current Army Chief asserted that complete independence was not possible without economic stability. It is, thus, true that fragile economy of the country is undermining its independent functionality.