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There is a crisis of national integration in Pakistance since its creation. What measures do you suggest for promotion of national integration. (CSS 2018)

I. Introduction

National Integration indicates national consciousness, a common national consensus and common national identity. It entails that regional subcultures get interacted into a national political system in order to keep intact their cultural, political, religious and ethnic sub-identities. There is a crisis of national integration in Pakistan since its creation. This is due to many factors including overdeveloped state structure, ethnic and linguistic divides, among others. A number of measures need to be taken to overcome the challenge of national integration. This includes economic development, education reforms, among others.

II. Reasons for the crisis of national integration in Pakistan

1. Overdeveloped state structure

Overdeveloped state structure refers to a situation where ~~state~~

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~~apparatus is~~ the state apparatus becomes increasingly modernized, while the society and economy lag behind. The state becomes authoritarian, and the good of the people is not decided by them but by influential few. This is true in case of Pakistan as the country was downgraded to authoritarian regime in **Democracy Index, 2023**.

2- Ethnic and linguistic tensions

¶ Pakistan remained a victim of ethnic and linguistic tensions since its creation. Today, they continue to persist, especially in Balochistan and Sindh. Baloch separatist movements have gained traction due to perceived exploitation of local resources and lack of development. For example, Balochistan's residents continue to demand a fair share of revenues from its gas fields. Similarly, Sindhi nationalism has also not died down. It is also fueled by socio-economic disparities.

3- Crisis of education

Provision of equal rights and opportunities to all members of a democratic state is integral to the process of national integration. Despite being a fundamental right, as enshrined in

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Article 25A of the Constitution, 39% of the children are out of the school.

They are deprived of the exposure to civic values, critical thinking and national narratives that promote unity. There also exist parallel systems of education, each instilling distinct worldviews, that fail to promote national cohesion. Furthermore, interprovincial disparity as well rural-urban disparity in terms of access and quality of education continue to prevail. This reinforces the feelings of alienation, fosters resentment towards state and generates demands for greater autonomy.

Separatist movements in Balochistan is one such evidence. The province has the most out of the school children, and has the least developed education sector in contrast to other federating units.

4. Weak law and order

A weak law and order situation perpetuates the crisis of national integration.

~~Pakistan~~ The performance of Pakistan in ~~maintaining~~ upholding law and order is dismal. The country has been ranked third-worst country among 142 countries in **Rule of Law Index, 2024**. A direct consequence of such predicament is the lost faith of citizens in state's ability to protect their fundamental

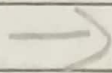
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rights. It also undermines the state's ability to grant justice, and ensure security for its citizens. This is happening in case of Pakistan. That is why people resort to alternative authorities, such as tribal systems, ~~or~~ extremist groups, or separatist groups. Hence, civic nationalism ~~is unable to~~ ^{is unable to} ~~deepen its roots,~~ ~~but~~ placing national cohesion under threat.

5- Lack of tolerance for diversity

Pakistan is a spectacularly diverse country. For promotion of national integration, it is imperative for the country's populace to have tolerance and respect for the diversity. However, this does not prevail in the country as evident from the finding of **Next Generation 2023**, a research study by **British Council**. According to it, Two in three respondents claim complain of discrimination in Pakistan on the basis of ethnicity, religious beliefs and political beliefs.

III. Measures for the promotion of National Integration



1. Devolution of powers to the local governments

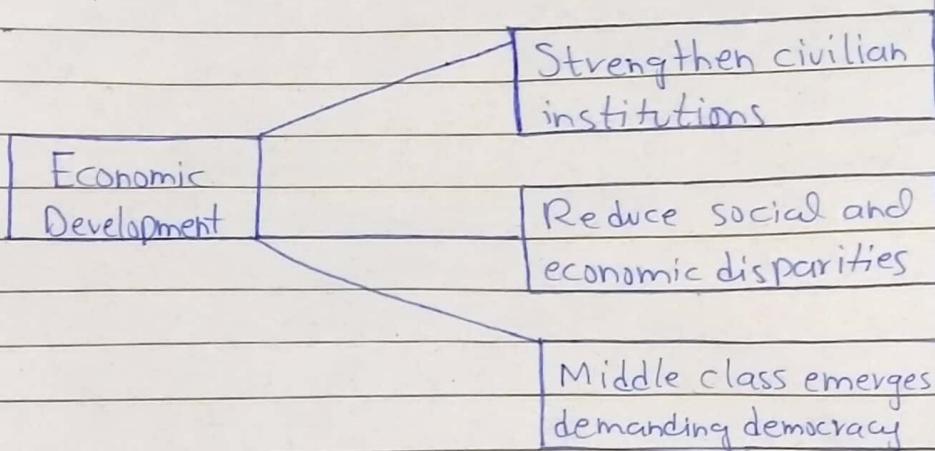
In order to resolve the problem of overdeveloped state structure, it is imperative to strengthen local government system. Strengthening local government systems means weakening the authoritarian and overcentralised apparatus of the state. This model of grassroots democratic governance ^{ensures} that a country's citizens are part of decision-making processes. This is also essential to reduce ethnic and linguistic tensions, which are exacerbated due to a sense of alienation and neglect from the state. Local government institutions ~~are~~ ~~to~~ provide an effective platform to redress the ~~the~~ short term and long term grievances of the citizens. It ensures greater responsiveness of the government, and greater accountability of those in power. An interplay of these factors help build the confidence and trust of citizens in the state, which is one of the building blocks of national integration.

2. Focus on economic development

Economic development

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helps resolve crisis of national integration through various channels.



In an economically developed country, civilian institutions are strengthened to invest in public service delivery. This includes infrastructure, healthcare, social security programs, among others. This means the gap between the state and its people is reduced. This promotes a sense of common national identity. Similarly, to reduce ethnic and linguistic ~~it is imperative~~ divisions to economic development is imperative. These divisions ~~at~~ have primarily stemmed from socio-economic disparities. By ensuring equitable resource distribution, and doing targeted economic interventions, the gaps between ~~the~~ underdeveloped regions, like Balochistan, and central government would be reduced. This would lead to a downfall of anti-state and separatist movements.

Finally, stable economies reduce poverty, increase employment opportunities and minimize inequality. All these factors ~~lead~~ ^{leads} to a growing middle class that demands democratic governance and accountability. This ~~reverse~~ provides fewer opportunities for authoritarian control, which ^{is} ~~one~~ ^{of} the primary ~~causes~~ perpetrators of disintegration for a country as diverse as Pakistan.

3. Educational reforms to resolve ~~our~~'s educational apartheid and to promote tolerance

~~our~~ ~~measures~~ ~~to~~ ~~resolve~~ ~~educational~~ ~~apartheid~~

As per **Pakistan Economic Survey FY 2023**, the budget of education stands at 1.5% of GDP. It has never exceeded above 2.1% of GDP in past 10 years. This is inadequate to bring any reformation because, according to **World Bank**, it should be 4% of GDP of developing nations. Increasing budget is necessary to reduce the number of out of the school children, ~~as this will~~ This will allow the government to increase the number of public schools that grant free education, and expand social

security nets to encourage families from the poorest strata to send their children to schools. Furthermore, although Single National Curriculum is introduced to narrow down quality gaps, teacher education needs to be revamped to gain its potential benefits. To reduce inter-provincial ~~and~~ and urban-rural disparities, targeted interventions to develop infrastructure, to enhance facilities and to ~~provide~~ employ greater number of teachers is imperative. There is a strong correlation between education and tolerance ~~for others~~ as well. Education promoting reflective and critical thinking changes individuals' cognitive styles in a manner that they recognize the importance of extending civil liberties to those they dislike or find dissimilar in views. Hence, for Pakistan, a strong education system will ensure a more tolerant society.

4- Improve law and order situation

To resolve crisis of national integration, it is crucial to improve law and order situation of Pakistan. For that, the implementation of 26th Amendment in a transparent and ~~impar~~ democratic manner can be an impactful step. This is because the ^{purpose of} creation of constitutional benches was to ~~reduce~~ reduce the

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backlog of cases. The expediation in the resolution of civil as well as criminal cases would ^{significantly} improve law and order of the country. Furthermore, ~~transparency~~ transparency and accountability, ~~such as by e-governance~~ such as by e-governance, should be enhanced, such as, by e-governance, to make law enforcement agencies impartial and incorruptable.

IV. Conclusion

The issue of national integration has existed in Pakistan since its creation. There are many factors due to which the crisis still exists. These factors include overdeveloped state structure, ethnic and linguistic divider, educational apartheid, among others. However, these obstacles are not insurmountable. By devolving power to local governments, by focusing on economic development, by reforming the education sector and by improving law and order situation of the country, the crisis of national integration can be resolved.