

Topic: Nations do not die from invasion, they die from internal rottenness

### Outline:

#### 1. Introduction

A nation needs protection against both external and internal threats. However, the internal threats have the potential to devour from within. Nations face various external threats but minimizing the internal ones is essential to overcome the national level risks.

2. How external threats and internal rifts destroy the nations

3. Internal rottenness rather than external invasion destroys the nations (athesis)

a. political polarisation shakes

the basis of government machinery of a state

- b. Economic instability can give rise to revolutionary sentiments in public
- c. Debt quagmire prevents the governments from designing long-term development programmes
- d. Gender inequality divides the men and women into "us" versus "them" in a country
- e. Lack of educational opportunities deprives a country of learned and skilled workforce
- f. Religious extremism and sectarianism tarnish the image of country in front of world
- g. Moral decline; the root cause of many social evils

4. Foreign invasions can cause more damage than internal rifts (antithesis)

- a. Foreign interference in political

matters weaken the political system of a country

- b. International monetary forums, lead by big powers, govern and manipulate economic policies of weaker states
- c. Social media owners can play with the privacy of any country
- d. Environmental deterioration on part of developed countries' big industries affect all irrespective of borders
- e. The influential players in global arena control education system, as per their will, of the unprivileged states

5. Only societies that are internally weak get affected by external invasions (synthesis)

- a. Only politically weak governments accept external interference in political matters
- b. If economy of a nation is stable, it need not to depend

on international monetary institutions

- c. state surveillance of social media, deprives the citizens of their right to the expression of opinion
- d. National level industries also contribute to the environmental degradation of a state
- e. Lack of funding and poor infrastructure make the educational system of a country worst

## 6. Conclusion

The proverbial farmer's sons tried their best to disintegrate and break down the fagot but failed in their efforts because the wooden sticks were collectively too strong to break. But, once the fagot was split, the individual wooden sticks were broken down rather easily. In the same manner, the nations that are internally strong and united cannot be disintegrated or disturbed by external forces and vice versa. A nation needs protection against both external and internal threats. However, the internal threats have the potential to devour from within. Nations face various external threats but minimizing the internal ones is essential to overcome the national level risks. The nations that are internally weak are more likely to end up in

smoke. The future of the nations where there is political instability, economic deterioration, debt crisis, gender discrimination, pathetic educational system, religious extremism and moral decline, is at stake.

Even though some external factors like foreign intervention in politics and economy, control of social media by big powers, exploitation and control of environment and education system on part of <sup>external</sup> influential players weaken the roots of a state. However, only those nations whose aforementioned sectors are internally weak and dysfunctional fall a prey to external interference.

Both external threats and internal weaknesses play a significant role in the destruction of a nation. On one hand, the external threats can destroy a nation by undermining its

its economy, political stability. The military interventions, economic sanctions and political subversion can result in the collapse of government, social unrest and loss of sovereignty. On the other hand, the internal rifts in a state in the form of incompetent government, lack of cooperation among state institutions, economic disparities and lack of education and awareness is manifested in such ways that destroy the very foundations of a society and such societies cannot sustain such unfavourable circumstances for a long time and they eventually collapse.

One of the reasons that internal rotteness rather than external invasion destroys the nations is that political

polarisation shakes the basis of government machinery of a state. When the political polarisation prevails in a society, the government becomes less democratic and more authoritarian. Moreover, under such circumstances, the extreme political ideologies are at play, public gets divided into "us" versus "them" which can further lead to political violence.

In America, as an instance, the rise of "us" versus "them" mindset and political identity in socio-political life is evident in everything from the rise of highly partisan media to the decline in American's willingness to marry someone from the opposing political party (What happens when democracies become perniciously polarized, Jennifer Mc Coy, January 2022). In this way, political



polarisation weakens the structure of a state.

When the political polarisation is on its peak, the economy cannot flourish under such circumstances and this economic instability can give rise to revolutionary sentiments in public. When masses come across the harsh conditions such as inflation, unemployment and high taxes, they lose trust in the government and, at times, get ready to overthrow it through revolution. Furthermore, the countries who ~~countries~~ constantly face the challenge of economic instability cannot protect well the country from both internal and external security challenges. Pakistan's current economic crisis has significantly weakened its capacity to address both



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Owing to the long-term political economic instability, the governments have to depend on foreign aid and loans and this debt quagmire prevents the governments from developing long-term development programmes. In this scenario, a major chunk of GDP is spent on paying back the borrowed revenues including high interest rates. This causes the other development programmes and welfare projects to take the back seat. Moreover, the countries facing debt crises fail to attract foreign direct investment (FDI), ~~whi~~ without which the economy of a country cannot flourish in recent times. The consequences of a debt crisis can last for years, if not decades. It can lead to a

loss of access to international credit markets, reduced FDI, and long term damage to the country's economic reputation. (Large changes is fiscal policy: taxes versus spending, Alesina A, 2009). In this manner, the debt distress can hinder the economic growth of a country.

This debt crisis hindering the economic development of a nation manifests itself in the form of social chaos which is evident in gender inequality dividing the masses into "men" versus "women" mindset. The gender discrimination is higher especially in the countries having economic turmoil and adverse political situation.

Here, the retrogressive mindsets discourage the women participation in any political and

economic activity. The patriarchal norms suppress the rights of women which deprives the country of almost fifty percent talent and workforce comprising of women. Countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan top the list in giving priority to men over women in economy related matters. Only 5.7 percent of managerial positions are occupied by women in Pakistan (Women in Leadership, Hadia Majid, August 2024). Thus, gender inequality also contributes to push a country backward in the global arena.

In addition to the menace of gender inequality, lack of educational opportunities deprives a country of learned and skilled workforce. The countries with the higher literacy

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rates such as United state, China and Russia are leading the world today. On contrary, the countries with low literacy rates are left behind not only economically but also technologically. Such countries fail to produce an efficient and productive workforce that can compete and excel in advanced jobs especially those in technology, finance and management. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization report (UNESCO) report 2017, low literacy rates are often linked to lower productivity and limited employment opportunities, which can hinder economic growth. Therefore, lack of educational opportunities also contribute to weaken a country.

Lack of educational

opportunities and awareness gives rise to religious extremism and sectarianism in a society that tarnishes the image of a country in front of world. Lack of relig

When religious extremism, motivated by extreme ideologies, prevails in a society, the social unrest and violence becomes a common practice. In the era of social media, such events get highlighted on media. Despite the strategic importance of a country, when the violent groups are active in that country, the developed states try to find some safe and better alternatives for investment.

In case of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project headed by China, the desired outcomes have not been fully achieved yet owing to the security issues being faced by

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Chinese workers in Pakistan. The rise in religious extremism in Hazara, Balochistan and ISIS footprint are a threat to \$46 billion worth of CPEC (The Diplomat, 2017). Thus, the higher the religious extremism in a country, the lower the chances of its progress.

The ~~mini~~ misinterpretation of religion and aloofness from it results in religious extremism which ultimately leads to moral decline - the root cause of many social evils. It has the potential to destroy the social fabric of a country. When a certain fragment of a society living luxurious life shows apathy towards the grievances faced by the poor, the rich become more rich and poor hardly make both ends meet. Moreover, if the authorities of a



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state become corrupt, manipulate the laws as per their interests or become indifferent to the challenges being faced by masses, the decline of such states is obvious. History is replete with such examples where the great empires broke down into pieces because of the poor conduct and moral collapse on part of the then government. One of the reasons cited for the decline of the Ottoman Empire, particularly in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century is the moral and social decay among the rulers. Corruption, administrative inefficiency, and apathy toward public grievances contributed to the empire's gradual weakening, which ultimately led to its dissolution after World War I. In this way, the moral decline can make a country just a

story of past.

However, some argue that the foreign invasions can cause more damage than internal rifts as external interference in political matters weakens the political system of a country. The foreign intervention in politics threatens the political sovereignty of a state and, at times, the decisions taken by the external actors sideline the will of the public of a state. The great powers try to manipulate the policies of the government in the states to serve their security and strategic interests. Thus the lifespan of the governments in those states depends upon the will of the great powers. Under such circumstances, the democratic values are pushed to the wall. The US tries to influence

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and sometimes manipulate the government policies in Pakistan by established diplomatic messaging, or via exploiting the vulnerability of a regime. The elitist, army-led, and feudal-dominated 'organizing' idea of Pakistan has for long had the US as its external pillar. For this reason, Pakistan has become dependent on external financiers like the USA and Saudi Arabia who have used it for their own strategic purposes. (Foreign interference, Touqir Hussain, April 2022). Thus, the external interference in political matters undermines the government machinery of a state.

Besides weakening the political system of weaker states, the stronger countries also try to control and manipulate the economic policies of weaker states through international

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financial institutions. Dependency on foreign aid plays a vital role in shaping the economy of the recipient country. A country that acquires loan from some foreign international financial institution, say World Bank, must act upon the conditions of the institution such as adjusting its economic structure, liberalizing its economy, and increasing its international financial accountability. The foreign aid in the form of loans can never be a panacea to the economic challenges of a fragile economy. Though, the foreign aid may provide temporary relief and can boost the economic growth of a ~~weak~~ weaker state for time being; but, in the long run, sustainable development cannot be achieved through such band aids. A

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country's adoption of policies that suit the interests of stronger country can hinder the <sup>weaker</sup> country's domestic growth, may cause speed environment destruction, or create temporary relief that hamper the long-term economic growth (Britannica, britannica.com, August 2024). In such a way, international financial institutions control the economy of weaker states.

In addition to controlling the economy of the fragile states, the next target of the social media platform owners, the stronger states, is to play with the privacy of the weaker states. In contemporary times, the users of social media are found in every corner of the world. When the users agree to the terms of service of any such platform, its owners get

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access to the user's personal data and manipulate and even (ab)use it for their own interest. In ancient times "land" and "machines" or "factories" used to be center of attention and the whole political struggle revolved around it. In recent times, however, data has taken their place and struggles are already underway, on part of stronger powers, to maximize their efficiency in this domain so that the weaker states could be controlled and exploited. Yuval Noah Harari in his book, "21 lessons for the 21st century" states that the race to obtain data is already on, headed by data-giants such as google, facebook, baidu and tencent. Their real target is not to sell advertisements but their real target is to accumulate

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immense amount of data about users, which is worth more than any advertising revenue. For this reason, the privacy and even the sensitive data of the weaker states is at stake.

After governing and controlling the weaker states through digital dictatorship, and surveillance, the environmental deterioration on part of developed countries' big industries affect all irrespective of borders. The under developed and developing countries too though lag behind in the race of industrial advancement but a few of them are facing the dire consequences - of the efforts put by the developed countries to flourish their economies - in the form of environmental degradation. Pollution knows no boundaries. While the contribution

of the weaker states toward global emission might be smaller, but they are more vulnerable to climate change. Many of these countries are located in such regions that are highly susceptible to extreme, sea-level rise and other climate related hazards. Pakistan and Bangladesh are among these states that are most vulnerable to climate change despite their minimum contribution in exacerbating the phenomenon of climate change. These two countries contribute around 0.8% and 0.4% respectively of global greenhouse gas emissions, but these two states are highly susceptible to flooding, extreme heat, drought and water scarcity, which demands billions of dollars for mitigation. In this way,



environmental declination, a product of industrialization in developed countries negatively impact the weaker states.

Apart from creating harsh environmental conditions for the weaker states in physical world, the developed states also hamper the intellectual growth of less privileged countries as the influential players in the global arena control the education system of marginal states. The external influence in educational system weakens the very foundations of a country. The powerful countries often provide textbooks to the fragile states; these textbooks promoting the language and worldview of the provider states manipulate and shape the mindset of students in the recipient states. It becomes difficult for the students to

fully comprehend and grasp the idea written in some foreign language and they prefer cramming to critically analyzing the concepts. Their thinking capability is hindered and they become mentally retarded. Moreover, the influential actors also provide loans and financial aids and loans to the unprivileged countries on the condition that they will design and re-structure their educational institutions that promote the values and culture of the provider state. Conditional funding from international financial institutions, led by big powers, often ties education reforms to broader economic policies favoured by donor countries (World Development Report 2018; Learning to Realize Education's promise). In this manner, the fragile states

are undermined and dominated by external dominant actor through directing their education system.

Nonetheless, only societies that are internally weak and incompetent get affected by external invasions as the politically weak governments accept external interference in political matters. The societies that are politically divided, where there is lack of political awareness, where politicians preach the extreme ideologies are more prone to external ~~internal~~ intervention in politics as they provide edge to the foreign actors to intervene. In addition, the countries that are politically instable, internally divided and economically fragile might accept external interference to stabilize the situation

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or to gain an advantage over domestic rivals. Lebanon, for instance, has experienced chronic political instability and economic crises which resulted in interference from various external actors including its neighbouring states as well as international organizations. Hezbollah, a powerful political and military organization in Lebanon receives substantial support from Iran which influences Lebanese politics. The Lebanese government's weakness and internal division makes it susceptible to such external influence. Thus, the states that are politically weak are exposed to foreign intervention.

When there is political instability in a country, its economy cannot thrive under such circumstances and so the

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country has to depend on international financial institutions. Such countries get loans from the financial institutions at the cost of their liberty to pursue the autonomous and long-term economic policies. On contrary, the countries having stable economy can spark in the global market and may carry on their strategic autonomy without external pressure. Moreover, the countries that do not rely on foreign loans can maintain strong strategic partnership with the global powers. India and Pakistan both got independence in 1947; India sought the IMF loan back in 1991 for the last time. but Pakistan is waiting for the 24th IMF agreement to be enforced! ~~In~~ For this reason, India's enhanced ties with the major powers owing to its economic

or by extracting resources from citizens to benefit a small group of politically connected elites. This badly hinders the individual agency, freedom and democracy, mines the democracy. Moreover, this predatory data collection accomplished in the guise of national security considerations gives the ultimate power to the authorities in a country to control and nip in the bud any revolutionary sentiments that can endanger the status quo of incumbents. When power becomes synonymous with the ability to surveil the activities of others - shame them, report them and so ultimately control them - then it will contaminate the society (predatory instincts, Huma Yusuf, August 2024). Thus, the state surveillance of social media suppresses the rights of citizens.

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When most of the attention of government is focused on controlling the citizens through surveillance, the critical subjects like environment get neglected and so the expanding national level industries contribute to the environmental degradation of a state. In the race of catching up with the other states, the countries install more and more industries whose immediate effect is environmental pollution. This environmental pollution produced at national level, creates different health and survival issues for human beings, animals, plants, aquatic life and even <sup>for</sup> micro-organisms. In recent years, Pakistan has come across various climate disasters including heatwaves and catastrophic floods. The country's rankings on global indices related to environment remains dismal. The

lack of pro-active strategies and long term measures resulted in 1,739 deaths, Rs 3.2 trillion of damage and Rs 3.3 trillion of economic losses in 2022 floods in Pakistan. Owing to the lack of concern on part of citizens as well as government, the future of 241 million Pakistanis is at stake. Hence, the harmful and unchecked national level industrial activities pose a threat to the people living there.

In addition to environmental degradation, the dysfunctional educational system because of lack of funding and poor infrastructure pushes a country backward. The countries that are leading the world today have prioritized their education system, provided it due funds, equipped the educational institutions with latest research and technology,



and did not comprise on the required infrastructure and staff. On contrary, the countries that are struggling to survive and thrive in the global arena are those unlucky states whose legislatures failed to upgrade the educational system and its populace ~~does~~ is not entitled to equal educational opportunities. Moreover, the patriarchal norms in the backward societies discourage the female education mainly because of misinterpretation of religion. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the female literacy rate in Afghanistan is 22.6%, ~~whereas~~ whereas it is 49.6% in Pakistan. This is one of the reasons that both the countries are left behind in global arena and their economic

performance is not satisfactory because through depriving women of their right to education, they deprive the country of fifty percent talent and workforce. In this fashion, poor education state system weakens the roots of a nation.

To cut the long story short, the whole discussion shows that the internal rifts are more dangerous for a country than external threats. Though the external dangers have the potential to hamper the progress of a country and the country becomes unable to compete in global market. When the important sectors of a country such as economy, politics, media and education are under the control of some foreign actor, the government of the country cannot make independent decisions and

the sovereignty of the state is often sidelined. But still, the threat posed by these external invasions is not as large as that of internal weaknesses. When a country is not internally united and strong enough to handle its different sectors like economy, politics, media and education, only then it becomes prone to external threats. "Civilizations die from suicide, not by murder" (Arnold J. Toynbee).

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