

Ans: 1. Introduction: After almost a decade of fighting against terrorism, Pakistan was finally able to purge the terrorists from their hideout. Military operations such as Zarb-e-Azb played an imperative role in disintegrating militancy in the country. However, this peace was truncated and now faces resurgence of militancy once again.

2. Evidence of growing militancy: The resurgence of militancy is evident from the increasingly suicide bombings that are primarily targetted at military, para-military and police. These attacks include attacks on Police station in South Waziristan, attack of Military in north Waziristan and multiple attacks in Lakki Marwat. These attacks are also aimed at the Chinese and Shia population, e.g. the suicide bomber attacked a van near University of Karachi, killing three Chinese academics. Moreover, the mosques are also being targetted which is evident from the attack conducted on Peshawar mosque, this was the most deadliest attack after APs. There has also been an increase in strategic attacks, the attack on CDT office in Bannu serves as a good example, where the fight lasted for 40 hours before the armed force were able to eliminate the militants. Further more, there have also been attempts made to enter the capital and the recent car bomb detonation is the testament of this.



3. Reasons: There are many reasons which have contributed to the revival of militant activities in Pakistan.

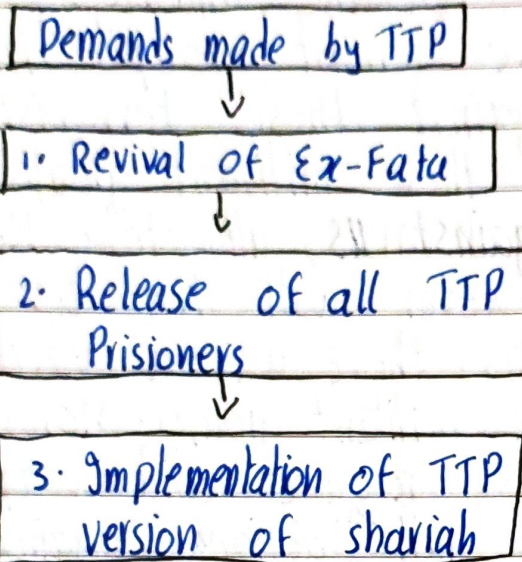
3.1. US withdrawal from Afghanistan: US withdrawal from Afghanistan is one of the underlying causes of resurgence of these terrorist groups in Pakistan. The US was fighting against these terrorist group in Afghanistan, therefore these militant groups were pretty occupied with this war, this ultimately kept their terrorist activities at bay ~~elsewhere~~. However with the US gone, and Afghan Taliban in power, there was a vacuum created which was exploited by these militant groups. Moreover, the Afghan Taliban do not possess resources and weapons like the US, hence they fail to take <sup>serious</sup> actions against terrorists residing in their country.

3.2. Afghan Taliban's soft spot for Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan: Afghan Taliban and TTP are known as ideological brothers. They have fought many wars alongside against USSR and US. Afghan Taliban are hesitant to take any serious actions against TTP, harboring in their country. TTP leverage this soft spot to conduct cross border terrorism and other infiltration insurgencies by using Afghan soil as a launching pad.

3.3. Negotiations between TTP and Pakistan failed: The negotiations between TTP and Pakistan that were mediated by the Afghan Taliban have failed. Pakistan, as a gesture of good will, even allowed the militants to come back and settle in their



areas on the condition that they will remain peaceful, in an attempt to keep the negotiations running smoothly, However, The demands put forward by TTP were un acceptable.



When the dialogue failed to produce any fruitful results, TTP resorted to terrorist attacks.

### 3.4. Fragile Economy and Political instability in Pakistan:

The weak economy and the political turmoil that Pakistan has been facing, especially after the former premier was ousted, has exacerbated the terrorist activities in the country. This is evident from the drastic increase in terrorist attacks from April 2022 onwards. These turbulent times, where the country is already suffers from chaos, have given an opportunity to the terrorists to conduct attacks inside Pakistan.



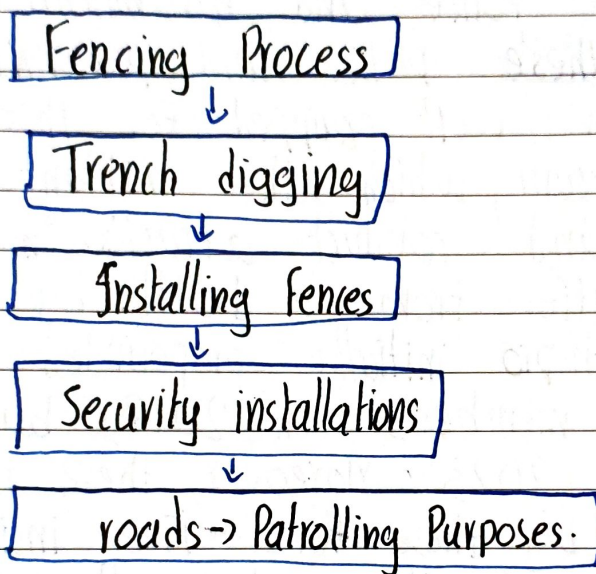
4. Solutions: The terrorist activities, albeit, rapidly increasing, can still be alleviated by emplacing stern measures.

4.1 Untrained Police and Paramilitary: The areas the Army fought to purge out the militants are now over to Police and Paramilitary to retain control. However, the police and paramilitary forces are not trained nor well equipped for this purpose, this creates a vacuum, which the militant groups can take advantage of and conduct attacks. In Addition, these institutions suffer from a dearth of recruits. This is evident from the initially propounded proposal of inducting 6000 members in 2018, but only 600 are inducted till 2023. Moreover, there is poor planning and management by these forces. The incident of Bannu speaks volumes of this, where the office was situated in a civilian area and also contained a prison cell. The TTP members held in that prison cell got a chance to attack and as a result they were able to hijack the office for several hours before the Army came to the rescue.

4.2 Military operations: There is an urgent need for military operations to purge the terrorists. However, given the fragile state of the economy, the country cannot afford operation such as zarb-e-Azb, which results in major displacements of locals. Instead, there is a need for intelligence based operations that have no or least collateral damage.



4.3. Border management: Open border with Afghanistan acts as a catalyst for militant insurgencies. Pakistan has taken a profound initiative to fence all the border with Afghanistan. Pakistan has already sealed 80% of the border already, however the remaining area is a hilly belt which is quite difficult to fence.



Pakistan should expedite the process of fencing and, thereby close the main gate way of terrorism.

4.4. NO more Talks with TTP: Pakistan should stop any with TTP. There should be talks held with Afghan Taliban, and the message should be delivered to them in pressing tone about the retaliation from Pakistan if these terrorists activities initiated from Afghan soil go unpunished.

4.5. Approach all neighbours: Pakistan should approach all the neighbouring countries who are directly or indirectly affected from terrorist insurgencies origination from Afghanistan.



These countries should develop a collective policy to persuade Afghanistan into taking strict actions against these threats.

4.6. Dialogue on Pakistan's terms: Wars are eventually solved on Table. Military can dominate on grounds but unless there is a peace agreement from both sides, threat of attack never fade. The experience of US serves as a good example, where the mightiest army had to resort to dialogue after fighting in Afghanistan for two decades. If Pakistan has to once again talk with TTP, it should be from the point of strength not weakness. Pakistan should clarify that the demands put forward by TTP are unacceptable and that concession would be given to militants, including allowing <sup>them</sup> back to settle in their areas, on the condition that they surrender peacefully.

5. Conclusion: There is no doubt that Pakistan is one of the most affected country from terrorism. Pakistan has suffered heavy loses, and yet again, the same threat emerges. However, the resurgence of militancy, albeit seems daunting, can be dealt by stern measures emplaced and a collective national policy aimed at eradicating militants from the country. Inspiration should be drawn from the fact that the country was able to disintegrate militancy once before, so doing it a second time should also be achievable.



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## 1) Introduction:

It is an established axiom that economy is the backbone of any thriving nation, functioning as a sturdy defense to multitude of challenges faced by a country. Pakistan, however, since its inception, is grappled with severe economic challenges that continue to plague the country hitherto. Some of the factors that have had a dire impact on the economy of Pakistan are as follows:

## 2) Economic, Political and Constitutional Crisis:

### 2.1) Energy Crisis:

The energy sector of ~~the~~ Pakistan has long suffered from inefficiencies, high transmission losses, and inadequate investment in the energy infrastructure. This energy crisis leads to frequent power outages and price volatility, hindering industrial productivity which in turn

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exacerbates the economic crisis.

### 2.2) Tax Collection and Narrow Tax Base:

Pakistan faces challenges in tax collection, with a large informal sector and low tax compliance. The narrow tax base limits the government's revenue generation capacity, making it challenging to fund essential public services and development projects.

### 2.3) Low Human Capital:

Despite having a sizable population, Pakistan's human capital is hindered by inadequate investments in education and health care. The lack of skilled workers and a healthy labor force limits economic productivity and innovation.

### 2.4) Agriculture Dependency:

Pakistan's economy heavily relies on the agriculture sector, which is vulnerable to climate change, water scarcity, and market fluctuations. Over dependence on agriculture makes the economy susceptible to shocks in this sector.



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## 2.5) Security Concerns:

Security concerns are one of the, if not the foremost, important hurdles to a thriving and prosperous Pakistan. The ongoing security challenges, including terrorism and regional instability, pose risks to business operations and deter foreign investment.

### Example of the severe nature of Security Concerns

The Peshawar mosque attack, which is considered to be the most deadliest attack after APS, is a manifestation of these militant activities. This attack was executed in a mosque when a suicide bomber blew himself up, claiming lives of as many as 84 people, while more than 200 were left injured.

## 2.6) Policy Reversals:

The business policies, established by the government, are marred with inconsistencies, abrupt changes, and even reversal of the policy altogether. In such a precarious

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ambience, businessmen are deterred from investing.

2.7) Economy susceptible to broad-range of External factors:

The economy of Pakistan is vulnerable to external shocks, such as fluctuations in global commodity prices, international trade dynamic, and geopolitical tensions. These external factors can erode investor confidence

2.8) Political Instability:

Frequent changes in government, weak governance and political uncertainty have induced an unstable business environment, leading to reduced investor confidence and reluctance to invest in long-term projects. This, in turn, recedes the already dwindling economy of the country.

Example:

A quintessential example of political instability

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is the current political crisis that ushered when a coalition of 11 political parties ousted Prime Minister Imran Khan, plunging the country in a deep rooted political and economic predicament that is perpetuating hitherto.

### 2.9.) Fiscal Challenge :

Pakistan faces significant fiscal deficits, increasing public debt, and challenges in managing public finances effectively. This weak fiscal position limits the government's ability to invest in infrastructure and social development projects.

### 2.10) Smart Monetary Policy :

The State Bank of Pakistan faces challenges in implementing effective monetary policies to control inflation and stabilize the currency, which impacts overall economic stability. Hence there is a dire need to introduce and implement policies that ensure and support economic growth.



## 2.11) Brazen Violations of Constitution:

In retrospect, the constitution of Pakistan has recurrently been, with impunity, violated by civil and military leadership alike. This gross practice, however, has proliferated in recent times. Such violations tarnish the sanctity ~~and~~ of constitution and sets abysmal precedents for generations to follow.

### Example:

A recent and a quintessential example pertaining to such a violation is the dispute encompassing Punjab elections. Despite the stipulated time of 90 days, enshrined in the constitution, and the Supreme Court's judgement on the matter, the polls could not be held since it contradicted with the government's interest.

## 3) Recommendations:

### 3.1) Encourage Foreign Investment.

The embattled financial sector is in  
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divine need of foreign support. The government needs to revamp its policy and aim to embellish the country for foreign investment by endowing special incentives to international businessmen.

### Example :

In the face of turbulent economic challenges, President Erdogan initiated a citizenship by investment scheme, pursuant to which foreigners could be granted citizenship status for investment as low as \$ 400,000 in the country's real-estate sector.

### 3.2) Investment in Human Capital :

The country need to give precedence to human capital. This translates to improving health, education sectors. This would not only empower individuals to harness their true potential and work towards the betterment of the country, but would also foster foreign investment.



### 3.3) Political Dialogue:

In our blinkered milieu, sensitised informed discourse can set the tone for congruence. Engaging in such discussions can lead to consensus building and better governance.

### 3.4) Reconciling Foreign Policy:

Engaging in constructive diplomacy and maintaining positive relations with neighboring countries and the international community can enhance economic cooperation, trade, and investment, which can contribute to economic stability.

### 3.5) Good Governance:

Strengthening institutions and promoting transparency, accountability and rule of law are indispensable to address political and constitutional challenges. Strengthening anti-corruption measures, ensuring independent judiciary can help to restore public trust in governance.



4) Conclusion:

The causes, of the severe ongoing challenges, embodied in this answer is only the tip of iceberg. There are countless other factors that contributed to the contemporary crisis. There is no single panacea that can navigate the, nearly default, country to thriving hub of ~~the~~ excellence. However, with meticulous planning and implementing robust measures, the shipwrecked country can still be steered to safer shores.



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## 1) Introduction:

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran have long had tense ties. Their relation can be characterised with persistent hostilities and policies to undermine the other. The world, however, was taken aback when the news of reapproachment between the two arch-rivals, with China being the arbitrator, was disseminated.

## 2) Cursorry glance at the past relationship between Iran and Saudi Arabia (KSA):

As aforementioned, the relationship between Iran and KSA can be characterised by a long history of tensions, conflicts disputes. Both the countries are home to significant religious sites for Shia and Sunni fractions. Both the

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countries have been involved in proxy conflicts, competition for acquiring larger market shares within Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). However, the execution of Nimr-al-Nimr, a prominent cleric, by KSA and the subsequent assault on Saudi embassy in Iran was the final nail in the coffin, for it led to the complete departure of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

### 3) Reapproachment between KSA and Iran:

The discussions between Tehran and Riyadh commenced back in 2021 with support from their Iraqi President, Mustafa Al-Kadhimi. Officials from both sides held 5 meetings in Baghdad and other regional capitals. The warming of diplomatic ties between the two arch-rivals was only possible due to these ties.

### 4) Why is KSA and Iran interested in restoring diplomatic ties:

#### 4.1) Why is Iran interested:

United States is actively pursuing to isolate

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Iran both economically and diplomatically in the region, as seen through its withdrawal from JCPOA. Furthermore, Israel has taken a strong stance against Iran, ultimately resulting in ~~the~~ normalisation of relations between Arab countries and Israel through Abraham Accords, further isolating Iran in the region. Therefore, Iran was in desperate need of breaking free from these economic sanctions and integrating back in the region.

#### 4.2) Why is Saudi Interested:

KSA has been driven by the desire to stabilise its economy, which has been plagued by its rivalry with Iran. KSA has suffered tremendous economic losses due to attacks on its critical oil infrastructure, and by the ongoing proxy wars in Yemen and involvement in Lebanon. Furthermore, KSA, in a bid to bolster its defense, has signed expensive weapon and defense deals with USA, which is further depleting its reserves. This is why KSA is interested in thawing its relationship with Iran.



## 5) Implications of KSA-Iran rapprochement on the Middle East:

### 5.1) Peace and Stability in the Region:

With the restoration of cordial ties between KSA and Iran, the region is likely to experience peace and stability. This means that the proxies in Yemen and Lebanon will slowly dwindle away as its key patrons withdraw their support. This, in turn, will lead to a more prosperous and stable Middle East.

### 5.2) Economic Integrations:

With Iran's newly befriended ties with KSA, it will be easy for Tehran to integrate itself back into the region and resume activities. This will provide an impetus to countries within and out of the region to sign of new trade agreements with Tehran. With a giant economic hub like Iran integrating in the region's economy, Middle East is likely to witness economic stability.

### 5.3) Oil-Producing Capacity of Middle East Increased,



With its integration in the region, there is a high probability of Iran's return to OPEC platform. This can inflate the oil-producing capacity of the region, which not only ensures fulfilment of global oil demand but also engages the region in economic activity with other regions.

#### 5.4) Proliferation of Tourism in the Region:

Peace and stability in the region will proliferate tourism. Some countries, such as UAE, already enjoys tourism. Other unfortunate countries such as Yemen and Syria, which have been exposed to severe violence and civil unrests, are bereft of such activities. Diminishing violence and prevalent peace can embellish such areas and stimulate tourist sectors.

#### 5.5) Enhanced Religious Diplomacy:

Saudi Arabia and Iran are influential players in the muslim world. Improved relations between them could foster joint efforts on issues that affect muslim community such as secularism.



6) Major setback for Foreign Policy of US and Israel:

6.1) No more isolated Iran:

There remains no ambiguity that US and Israel have put great efforts to diplomatically isolate Tehran. Whether its Iran's nuclear enrichment facilities or its extremist tendencies, the US-Israel duo have used all the pretexts, no matter how frivolous, in order to justify the extreme sanctions. However, much to their dismay, despite their best endeavours, Tehran has found it self opening diplomatic ties with Saudi-Arab, owing to China. With these fresh cordial ties with Iran, the other gulf states will be quick to follow suit, marking the end of Tehran's isolation.

6.2) Dwindling US Influence in Middle East:

China's successful arbitration serves as an indication of the withering US influence in the region. Not long



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ago US enjoyed uncontended influence over middle east and was an important component of deciding the region's foreign Policy. With many gulf states actively pursuing US-created defense technology, the presence of US in the region was assumed to be inalienable. However, the new peace deal manifests the growing chinese presence in the region.

### 6.3) Growing Chinese Influence in the world:

After the disintegration of USSR in the wake of Afghan Invasion, US enjoyed the status of super power for several decades. This slot for global hegemony is now seriously challenged by china who has emerged as a global giant in recent times. The role of china ~~was~~ cannot be overlooked in securing a peace deal between two arch-rivals, and this may be the herald that America's time of being the sole hegemon has just run out.

### 6.4) Israel's cordial ties with the Gulf States might be hindered:

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The establishment of diplomatic ties between UAE and Israel, back in 2020, and many gulf countries following suit, sent shock waves throughout muslim world. Ever since, Israel is enjoying diplomatic ties with gulf with many even expecting it to establish ties with KSA. This new development has poured cold water on such prospects. And, being adamantly averse to the existence of Israel, it is likely that country's might concur with Iran's point of view and revisit their foreign policy.

### 7) Conclusion:

The growing relations between KSA and Iran is an indication of the changing world order. The establishment of diplomatic ties have taken a huge toll on US and Israel's foreign policy. This also serves as an herald that China can claim the role of global hegemon in times to come.