

Pakistan Affairs Part - II

Question # 4:

Since the emergence of Pakistan; population growth has not been addressed. Underscore its effects on the country's socio-economic climate?

Answer:

Introduction:

Pakistan is a developing country with a population of 231.4 million and population is increasing at a rate of 1.9 percent per annum. It stands at Fifth highly populated country after India, China, USA, and Indonesia. If the present fertility trends follow, population of Pakistan is expected to reach 487 million by 22nd century.

Population growth has been a persistent challenge for Pakistan since its inception. The uncontrolled increase in population poses multifaceted impacts on the socio-economic fabric of the country.

Population Impacts on Pakistan's Socio-economic Climate:

1- Pressure on Resources and Infrastructure:

The surge in population intensifies pressure on limited resources such as water, energy; and arable land. This strain can lead

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to resource scarcity, affecting both urban and rural areas. Rapid population growth strains existing infrastructure, resulting in inadequate public services, transportation, and health care facilities. There are 14,568 total health care centers in Pakistan with 146,053 beds (NJM, 2022). Overloaded infrastructure impedes socio-economic development.

2. Unemployment and Underemployment:

The expanding labor force outpaces job creation, leading to high unemployment rates in Pakistan. The unemployment rate in Pakistan is forecast to 8.50% which is 15.51 m people (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2023) - This not only results in economic hardships for individuals and families but also contributes to social unrest. Even for those employed, underemployment is prevalent due to lack of suitable job opportunities. This hampers the country's capacity to utilize its human capital effectively.

3. Education and Health care challenges:

The burgeoning population exerts strain on the education system, resulted in overcrowded classrooms, insufficient resources such as the unavailability of toilets in public schools, and compromised quality of education. The demand for health

care services surges with population growth, stressing the already fragile healthcare infrastructure, particularly in rural areas.

4- Poverty Alleviation hurdles:

Rapid population growth exacerbates income disparities. Poverty alleviation efforts become more challenging as resources are stretched thin, hindering the effectiveness of poverty reduction programs. High population growth and poverty creates a vicious cycle where most of the families struggle to meet basic needs. 39% of entire population are living below the poverty line and unable to support their basic needs (Pakistan Homeless Statistics, 2022). This perpetuating socio-economic challenges across generations.

5- Environmental Degradation:

Unchecked population growth contributes to environmental degradation. Deforestation, pollution, and over-exploitation of natural resources intensify, leading to ecological imbalances and climate-related challenges. It also raises concerns about the long-term ecological sustainability of the country.

6- Policy implications:

Policy makers face challenges in formulating effective policies to address

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the socio-economic ramifications of population growth. In a country like Pakistan, comprehensive strategies are required to manage population dynamics while fostering economic development.

Conclusion:

Addressing the impact of population growth on Pakistan's socio-economic climate necessitates a holistic approach. Efforts should be directed towards sustainable population management. A balanced and integrated strategy is crucial for steering the country towards socio-economic resilience in the face of demographic pressure.

Question # 7:

Pakistan's sustainable economic recovery is not linked with foreign aid but with its political stability. Discuss?

Answer:

Introduction:

Pakistan's journey towards sustainable economic recovery has been a complex and multifaceted endeavor. Pakistan's downward drift is evident in its frequent balance of payment crisis. Foreign aid has historically played a role but, the pivotal factor influencing the trajectory of economic revival lies in the realm

of political stability.

Foreign Aid is a temporary boost for economic crisis:

Foreign aid can provide a temporary boost to economic stability in Pakistan through various mechanisms.

1- Addressing Fiscal deficits:

Foreign aid can provide immediate financial support to address fiscal deficit. This is crucial for meeting budgetary requirements, including public spending on essential services.

2- Project Financing:

Foreign-aid is often directed towards financing infrastructure projects. These projects can stimulate economic activity, create jobs, and contribute to short-term economic growth.

3- Debt dependency:

Foreign-aid may include debt relief components, reducing the financial burden on the country but, excessive reliance on aid can lead to debt dependency, especially if the aid comes in the forms of loans.

4- Conditionality and policy constraints:

Foreign-aid often comes with conditions and policy constraints set by

donors. These conditions may limit the country's policy space and sovereignty in shaping economic policies.

Political Stability as the Cornerstone of Economic Stability:

Political stability plays a pivotal role in shaping economic landscape of any country, and Pakistan is no exception. The relationship between political stability and economic stability is intricate, with political condition significantly influencing economic performance.

1- Policy continuity and economic planning through stable political system:

Political stability ensures continuity in economic policies, allowing for long-term planning. Sudden policy changes, often associated with political instability, can disrupt economic activities. Stable political conditions enable the government to implement and execute comprehensive economic plans, addressing issues like inflation, unemployment, and poverty.

2. Political stability help to boost investor's confidence and Foreign direct investment:

Political stability fosters a conducive

environment for investment by providing certainty and minimizing risks. This attracts both domestic and foreign investors. It encourages higher FDI inflows, contributing to economic growth, job creation, and technological advancement.

3- Trade and International relations:

Political stability enhances a country's credibility in international relations and trade negotiations. Pakistan's stable political environment can lead to favorable trade agreements, boosting exports and economic growth. It also ensures positive diplomatic relations to access to the global market.

4- Currency and Monetary stability:

Political stability allows for the independence of central bank, promoting sound monetary policies. This leads to currency stability, controlling inflation, and ensuring investor confidence.

5- Resilience to external shocks:

Politically stable countries are better equipped to navigate global economic uncertainties and external shocks. This resilience is crucial for safeguarding Pakistan's economic interests in international arena.

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Conclusion :

Political stability acts as a catalyst for economic stability in Pakistan by creating an environment conducive to investment and other initiatives.

As the cornerstone of economic progress, a politically stable climate positions Pakistan to harness its full economic potential and meet the aspirations of its citizens.
