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Q6.

Introduction

On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched an unprecedented attack on Israeli forces and shattered the myths revolving ~~around~~ ^{around an} unbreachable Israeli defence and the fear-mengering cloud of the Iron dome. However, this confrontation was not an out of the blue event. The Israel-Palestine conflict dates back a long time ago. This attack was carried out as an emblem of resistance to the oppressors. The attack was in planning for almost 6 months and culminated with Hamas crossing the erected walls around Gaza and their paratroopers landing on Israeli military installations. The attack made waves around the global community. While majority saw it as resistance of the oppressed against the oppressor, the western world especially US, condemned the attack. Following the attack, Israel declared war on Gaza and Hamas and since then have massacred many civilians and damaged the infrastructure of the city, causing a humanitarian crisis. The attack has numerous impacts on the geopolitical landscape of the region as well as impacts on the global power politics.

Perspectives regarding the ongoing Hamas-Israel war

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- i) Dent to Israel's global image as having an impenetrable defence line: The ongoing attack caused Israel a great deal of embarrassment as Hamas managed to permeate through their defence lines. Many regard this as a failure of Israel's security intelligence agencies. Moreover, attack was being planned for six months. But despite that, Israel was not able to intercept or gather intelligence regarding such a attack.
- ii) Oppressed rise against the tyrants: Since 1948 when Israel announced its establishment, it has taken steps to expunge as many Palestinians as it could. Moreover, in areas where Palestinians reside, it has surrounded them and blockaded the movement of goods and people. Gaza is the most densely populated place on earth and is described as the world's largest 'open air prison'. It is without doubt that this recent attack was a result of years of frustration of Palestinians against the cruel policies of Israel.
- iii) Debate regarding Israel's deliberate intent to allow the execution of the attack: One view that has emerged in the current

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scenario is that Israel allowed the attack to happen so it would give it a legitimate reason to annihilate Hamas and exterminate the citizens of Gaza. The ruthless retaliation by Israel, bolsters this view to a certain extent.

- iv) Humanitarian crisis caused by Israel: With over 14000 civilians laid to rest, Israel has launched a horrendous attack. It has violated many international laws by attacking civilians especially women and children. Moreover, it has bombarded hospitals, residential areas and refugee camps. It also held back the humanitarian aid and cut off internet, water and electricity supplies. All these reflect heinous war crimes.
- v) The rise of the public opinion in support of Palestine: The striking difference between the wars of the past and the present is that social media has allowed spread of information to all people. Even though governments of the west support Israel, people have raised their voices against Israel's tyranny. All over the world, be it east or west, be it muslim, christian or even jews, all have raised their voices to

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end the ongoing crisis and to provide relief to innocent Palestinians.

Implications on regional and global politics

i) Conflagration in the middle east : One of the most imminent possibilities and impact of the ongoing dispute can be that the war can erupt flames across the entire middle east. To the north of Israeli territory is Lebanon, where Hezbollah has displayed allegiance to Hamas. It has also launched calculated attacks on Israel. Hence, it can easily open another warfront for Israel. Moreover, Syria has also become involved in the conflict. It has stopped Israel ships travelling across its sea lanes and intends to restrict Israel's commercial activities. Furthermore, if the conflict goes on for a longer time, neighbouring states such as Egypt and Jordan might face trickle down effects. Although Iran has ~~not~~ not declared direct confrontation against the Israeli state, it has reprimanded it fiercely and called for sanctions against it. Hence, this dispute can easily spread across the entire middle eastern region.

ii) The future of the Abraham accords :

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In 2020, Arab countries such as UAE, Oman, Bahrain normalised ties with Israel and established diplomatic and economic ties. Moreover, Sudan and Morocco also followed their suit. However, the ongoing conflict has caused the Arab-Israel normalisation to reach a stalemate. Although these countries have not censured Israel, but due to the mounting public pressures, they had to halt the progress of their relations with Israel. Hence, the conflict has led the future of Abraham accord's obscure.

iii) KSA - Israel ties: It was reported that on the eve of October 7, there were diplomatic engagements between KSA and Israel. Some scholars have also hypothesized that the trigger point for the attack may likely have been the foresight of KSA-Israel rapprochement. If a concrete bond would have been established, then the Palestinian ~~question~~ ^{cause} would have lost whatever mettle it had left. Hence, with this conflict in place, KSA has to postpone normalisation ties with the state of Israel.

iv) Geoeconomic implications in the region: The middle eastern states are a hub for the oil and gas reserves. The conflict can

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result in the disruption of supply routes and supply chains which would increase the costs of oil and gas in the region. Moreover, it can also have impact on the global oil prices as well because ME is a major exporter of oil and gas.

v) The US - China calculus: The policy of US related to the middle east was undergoing a paradigm shift prior to the attack. It wanted to establish an Indian - Middle eastern corridor and also involve Israel in it. Moreover, it also wanted to facilitate ties between Arab and Israel state to decrease its military role in the region. However, with this conflict arising, US has openly supported Israel. Moreover, it has warned states against involving them in the war. US has placed its aircraft carrier in the region as well. On the contrary, China has developed strong relations with the middle eastern states in the past few years. It brokered the KSA - Iran rapprochement deal in March, this year. Moreover, it condones the actions of Israel and wants a sustained truce to happen. Hence, the muslim world sees China as a friendly nation. Moreover,

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It expects China to mediate the truce in the ongoing conflict. However, considering the polarities that US and China have taken, this conflict can be another point of contention between the two states in their ongoing global power game. This can, hence, further frustrate their relations.

vi) Role of Russia in the present conflict: Russia has strategically used this conflict to deflect the eyes of the world from the Russo-Ukraine war. Moreover, it has gained the support of muslim nations by its support of Palestinian causes and the resolution plan in the UNSC. Although, many see Russian motives towards the conflict as full of vested interests. The global power is also condemning US's role in support of Israel.

vii) OIC and UN's future: Another impact that the dispute has highlighted is the toothless nature of the global peacekeeping organisations. Although UN has repeatedly called for humanitarian truce, but US keeps vetoing any calls for truce on behalf of Israel. Moreover, OIC has also played an ineffective role. While it condemns Israeli actions, it does not lay down

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any framework to resolve the dispute or to sanction Israel.

Conclusion

Therefore, in light of the previously stated arguments it can be summarised that the ongoing Hamas - Israel conflict is another manifestation of long going Palestinian cause and Israel's oppression. The conflict can have regional impacts such as a war in the region and breakdown of Israel - Arab normalisation. Moreover, globally it can impact US - China relations and can even trigger a third world war.

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Q2. Introduction

The global alliance of emerging economies known as BRICS has recently expanded its membership by incorporating 6 new states. These states are the emerging economies from their respective regions.

Moreover, they are energy rich and hold a clout as the 'middle powers' of the world. Addition of KSA, UAE, Iran, Ethiopia, Egypt and Argentina would have geoeconomic and political impacts. It would strengthen this economic scope and would also aid in the drive towards decolonisation. Moreover, the expanded organisation can be seen to rival the developed nations alliance of G7 and move in direction of redefining the global order. However, the expansion will not be without hurdles. It will dilute the decision making of the organisation. In addition to this the internal rivalries between the member states as well as the vested interests of the nations would also contribute to the hiccups in the smooth running of the alliance.

Geoeconomic implications

i) Addition of energy rich states: The addition

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of energy rich nations like UAE, KSA and Iran would boost the economic strength of the alliance. Energy is an important driver of development. Hence, by incorporating these oil and gas exporters, the entire alliance would benefit and it will also give them an edge against the rest of the world.

ii) Step towards dedollarisation: For decades, dollar has remained as the dominant currency of international trade. This has given US an undue advantage at the cost of many developing nations. However, with this alliance, the hegemony of dollar would be challenged. The countries of different continents of the world can now trade in their own currencies. Already Russia and China are exchanging goods in their local currencies. China has also traded with India in Yuan. Thus, this would dethrone dollar as the strongest currency of the world and in future these countries may also launch a unified currency to counter dollar.

iii) Paradigm shift in world economic order: In the past and even at present, the global north, especially US, has

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dominated the world economic order. Moreover, many international institutions like IMF and World Bank have also contributed to promoting the interests of western states. This has according to the 'dependency theory' come at the cost of exploitation of developing nations and it has made the developing states dependent on the global north. However, as China, India, Russia and Brazil have emerged as world's leading economies and the addition of more affluent economies, the world economic order would now shift with the global south having a more prominent role and the might of the global north waning.

iv) Intra alliance monetary institutions: Another impact of this alliance is that the role of Bretton Woods institutions would diminish. As BRICS have created their own fiscal institutions like New Development Bank and undergoing new economic policies, this would cause the hegemony of international institutions like IMF to decrease.

v) Greater economic cooperation: As more countries have been added to the alliance, the economic cooperation would increase. BRICS already contributes to a quarter

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of world GDP and this is expected to grow as these countries would develop further with each other's help. It will also ~~increase~~^{elevate} the standard of living of their population.

Political implications

- i) Rivaling G7: Previously G7 used to be the world's strongest alliance, composed of western economic and military might. However, with a population of ^{three} quarters of the world, 25% of the world's GDP and having 3 nuclear power states, BRICS is an alliance that can easily overshadow the clout of G7.
- ii) Greater room for sanctioned states like Russia and Iran: Both Russia and Iran face the sanctions from the countries of the west. Russia faces sanctions due to its war with Ukraine. Whereas, Iran has been facing sanctions for its nuclear program. However, this alliance would support both Iran and Russia politically and economically and would help end their isolation, meanwhile giving them space to pursue their politically driven agendas.

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iii) China growing in influence: With the alliance expanding to a greater number of nations, Chinese influence would dominate as well. China has tactically improved its standing in the global political arena through economic and soft diplomacy maneuvers. Hence, expansion of BRICS could be seen as another step to increasing China's influence across the globe as the new world leader.

iv) New direction of the world: multipolarity: At the start of the 21st century, the world was unipolar with US being the sole hegemon. However, with rise of China, reemergence of Russia and India's expanding economic prowess, world is moving towards multipolarity. Moreover, with the expansion of BRICS it will further contribute to the shift to the power poles of the world, as power would be distributed between many different states. Moreover, the role of 'middle powers' as stated by Dr. Malika Lashy, is increasing in the new global order.

Hurdles in the way of the organization

i) Direction of its agenda: Although the

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expansion of the organisation presents great benefits, it will not be without any hurdles. The first important hurdle is that with new countries being added, it will be difficult to achieve a uniform stance on economic and political front. This could lead to a deadlock and hence, the clout of the alliance as a close knitted ~~strong~~ ~~strong~~ organisation would diminish.

ii) Vested interests of the newly added and existing members: Each country joins a alliance to promote its national interests. The newly added states will all have their vested interests which they would seek to promote. It can come at the cost of organisation's effectiveness. Hence, this is another challenge for the alliance.

iii) Internal rivalries between members: Many states within the alliance have certain issues among and between themselves that they are conflicting. India and China have their border disputes. They have altercation with each other over relationship with US. In the newly added members, USA and Iran have long been the rivals. Although they

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Recently had a rapprochement deal but it is hard to expect a complete thaw between the two rivals. These rivalries can negatively impact the alliance.

iv) Contrasting relations with the West:

BRICS would need to be a unified force if it is to counter the global north. However, the newly added and existing states have different and contrasting equations with the west. India, Brazil, USA, UAE and Argentina are pro west, whereas, China, Russia and Iran have tense relations. Therefore, this is another added hurdle to the alliance.

Swimmoney in a SWOT analysis

Strengths:

- Dedollarisation
- Economic cooperation
- Changing global order
- Multipolarity
- Rivalry G7

Opportunities:

- World's economically most powerful alliance
- Rise of the global south
- Further expansion to include developing
- Cooperation in non-traditional sectors
- security threats

Weaknesses:

- Lack a proper organisational structure
- Internal rivalries
- Vested interests
- Dilution of agenda

Threats

- Conflicts among states
- Disintegration of organisations
- Ineffectiveness

Expansion of BRICS

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Conclusion:

Therefore, it can be concluded that the expansion of BRICS will have geopolitical and geo-economic impacts. It can create a new global economic order and also establish a multipolar world. However, it first needs to address the hurdles of internal rivalries and retaliation from the west.

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Q8. Introduction :

The contemporary India - US entente has been described as a marriage of convenience to counter the looming threat of Chinese influence. The Indo Pacific politics has become a linchpin for the triad of power game, to establish hegemony in the region. Although the primary purpose of grand US - ~~China~~ India relationship is to contain China's influence, Pakistan will also be negatively impacted with their cordial ties. It is important that Pakistan plays a proactive role in the current scenario, whereby it needs to take steps to protect its national interests, while maintaining peaceful relations with its neighbours and US as well. It will have to use its geostrategic position and the tools of soft diplomacy to guard itself against the negative implications of US - India relations.

Negative implications of US - India Entente

1) Security concerns for Pakistan : Recently in July, the Indian PM visited the US President. At the meeting several points were concluded which also

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included defence, science and technology deals. One of them was sale of sophisticated fighter jets to India. In the light of historical tensions between India and Pakistan and the constant flashpoint of Kashmir, defence and military deals between the two states would be a security concern for Pakistan.

ii) Deteriorating US - Pak relations: US and Pakistan shared strategic relationship after the US ~~initiated~~ initiated global war on terror. In return for its strategic and military assistance to counter the threat of extremist elements, Pakistan received economic aid. However, with US mending ties with Pakistan's rival state, the relations between Pakistan and US would take a nosedive as well.

iii) Sino-Pak calculus in the context: Although Pakistan is not a direct part of the ongoing Indo-pacific region dispute, but since Pakistan has cordial ties with China and China is a major investor in Pakistan through CPEC, the confrontation between China and India-US, would also pose a question for Pakistan, whether it ~~will~~ would choose to ally with China or not.

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iv) Growing geopolitical isolation of Pakistan:
In the past, Pakistan held an important geopolitical leverage in the south asian region. However, due to its economic conditions and rise of India as a global economic power, the role of Pakistan in the region is waning. This will further be highlighted through the Indo-US entente, as Pakistan's isolation in the global political arena would further diminish.

Recommendations for Pakistan

- i) Maintain a balance in relationship between China and USA: Instead of choosing sides between the two global superpowers, Pakistan needs to maintain cordial relation with both China and USA. In the context of their confederation, Pakistan needs not to engage directly as a proxy of either of the two states.
- ii) Voice its security concern with the global community: The defence and military deals between India and USA pose a security dilemma for Pakistan. It is important that Pakistan voices its concerns to US and global political leaders through proper

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diplomatic channels. Moreover, it needs to ascertain that its security concerns are not taken lightly and hence, it needs to proactively take measures to highlight its dilemma.

iii) Pakistan needs to sort its house in order:

In order to play a constructive role in global politics and to negate the negative implications of US-India deal, Pakistan needs to set its house in order. Only by attaining political and economic stability will Pakistan be able to counter the threats posed by external elements.

iv) Use the Chinese model of soft diplomacy:

Pakistan needs to strengthen its soft diplomacy skills. China and India have both gained global attention through the use of soft diplomacy. This includes progress in the fields of science, technology, artificial intelligence, arts and culture. Through this not only would the national image be mended, but the countries would regard Pakistan as an important state whose concerns can not be neglected.

v) Pakistan can mediate to lessen the regional tension: Although currently Pakistan's

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international clout is not at par with its geostrategic and its population strength, but it can play a role as a 'middle power' to lessen the tensions between US and China. Having historic relations with both the countries, it understands the dynamics of the two states and hence, it can effectively make them realise that the world is big enough for two global superpowers.

Conclusion:

Therefore, it can be concluded that the US-India relationship can have negative security, political and economic impacts on Pakistan. However, if Pakistan balances its relation with the two superpowers, uses its soft diplomatic skills and manages its internal disorder, it can play an effective role to broker the US-China detente.

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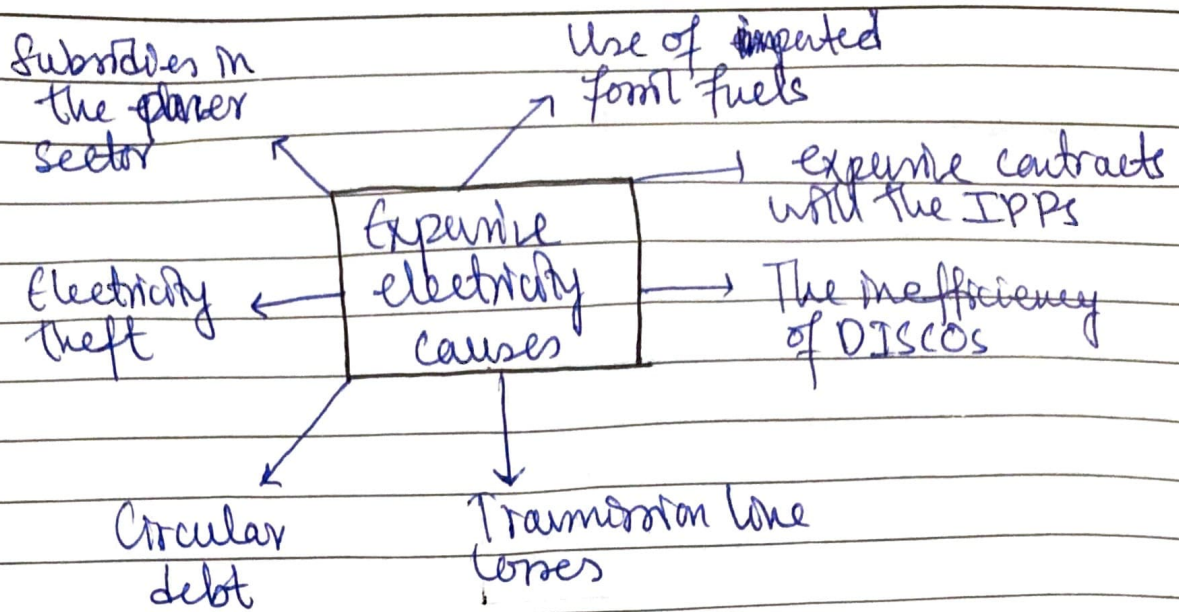
Q5. Introduction

Pakistan produces one of the most expensive energy in the world. The core reason being that 60% of its energy demands are met by the imported fossil fuels. Moreover, the expensive contracts with the IPPs, the transmission line losses, electricity theft and hence, a massive circular debt all cause an insurmountable crisis in the energy sector. This can have economic repercussions such as a balance of payment crisis, gross inflation. Moreover, social consequences such as rising crime rates and social disorder would be seen. Additionally, political ramifications such as political instability will also be witnessed. The solutions to the energy crisis have to be through structural reform by transition to renewable sources of energy, re-augmenting of transmission lines and prevention of electricity theft.

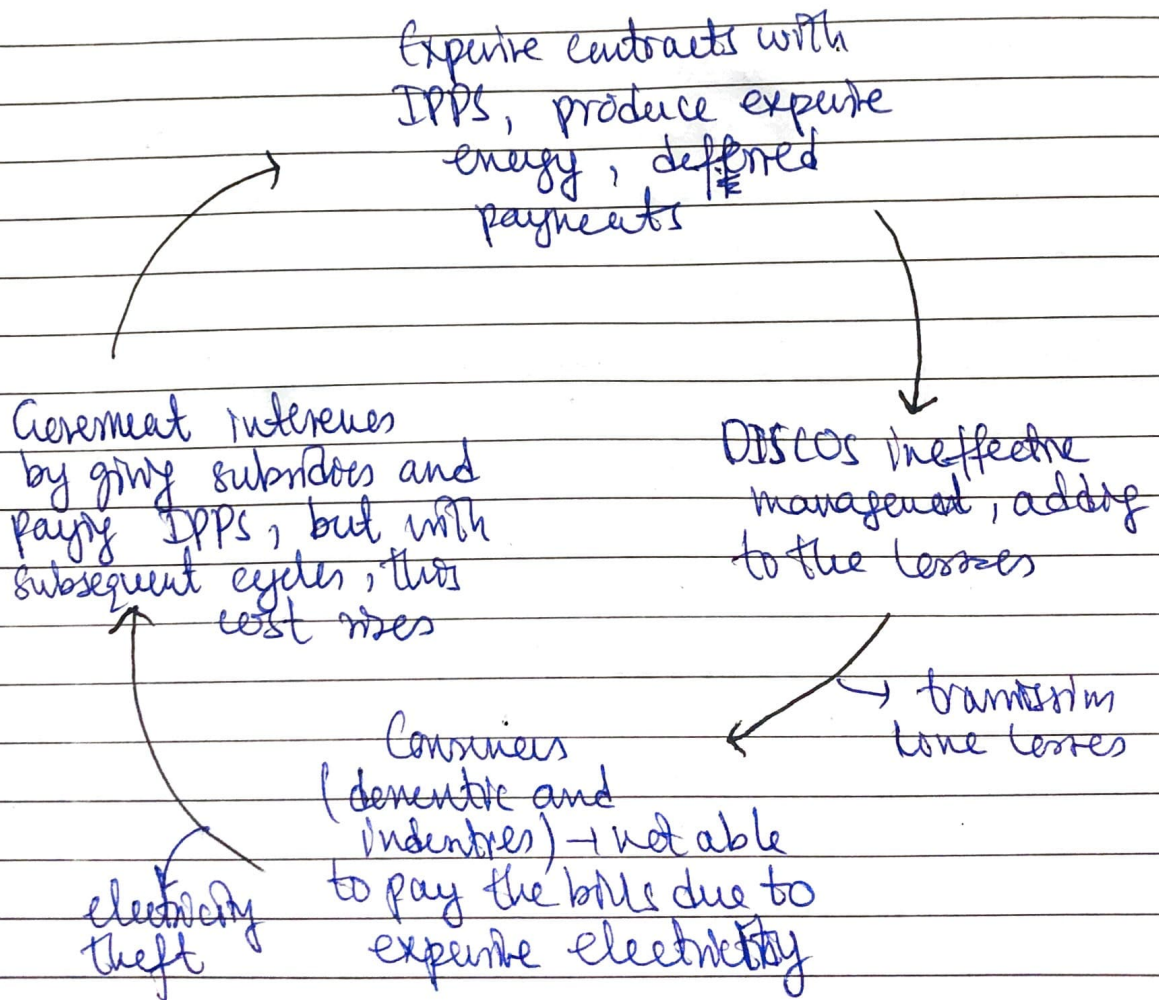
Causes of expensive electricity in Pakistan

The illustration on the following page highlights the causes of expensive electricity in Pakistan.

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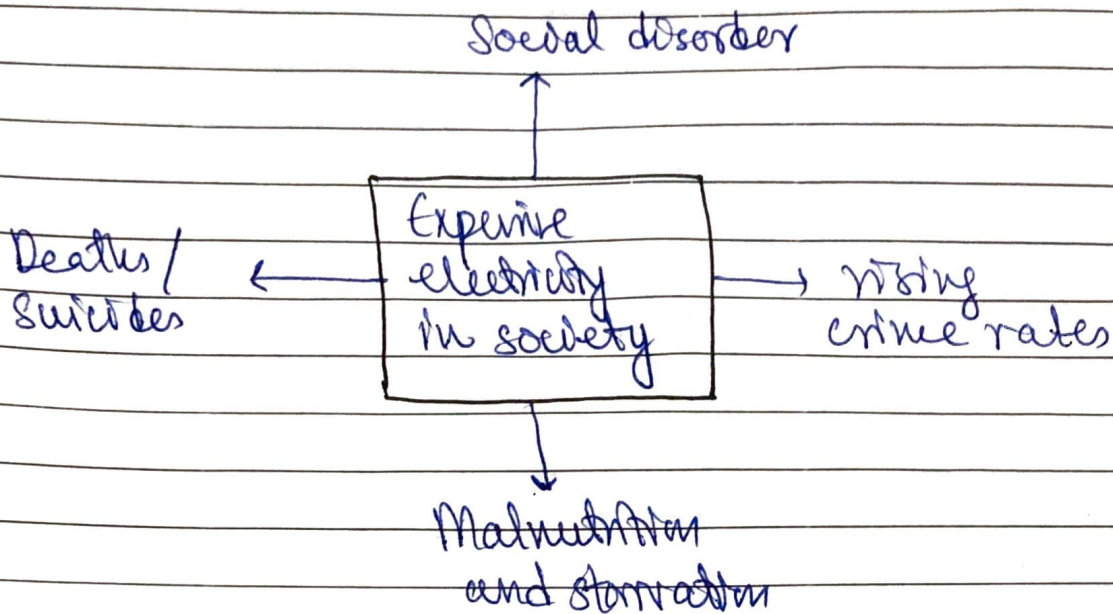


- Due to these reasons a circular debt is created



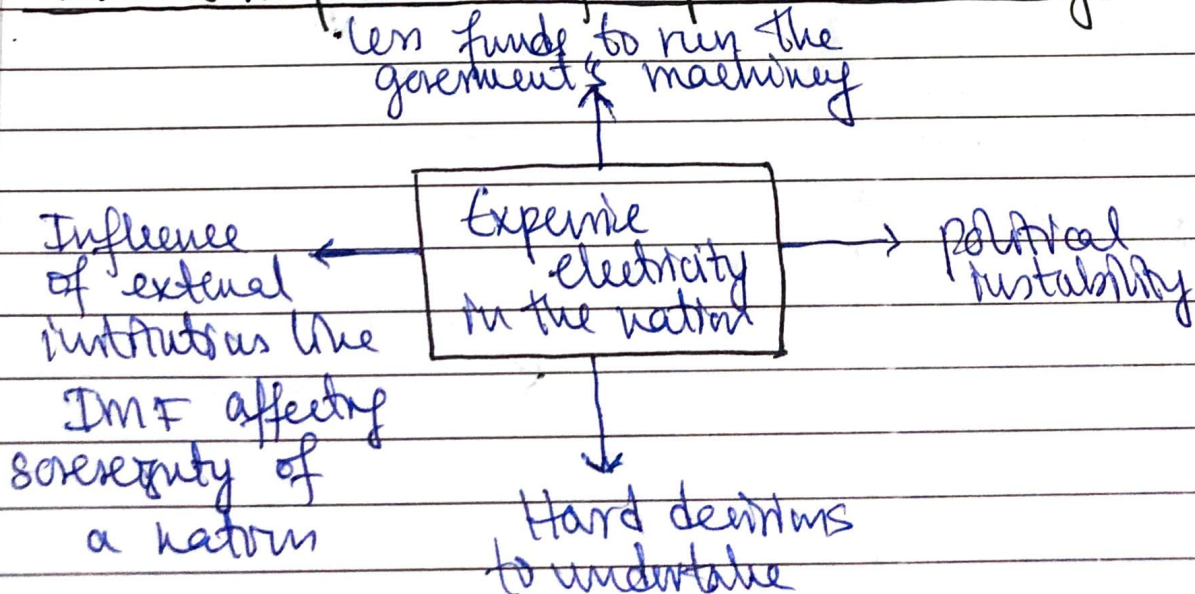
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Social implications of expensive electricity



As illustrated above, expensive electricity breaks down the social nervous system of the country and directly and indirectly adds to human suffering.

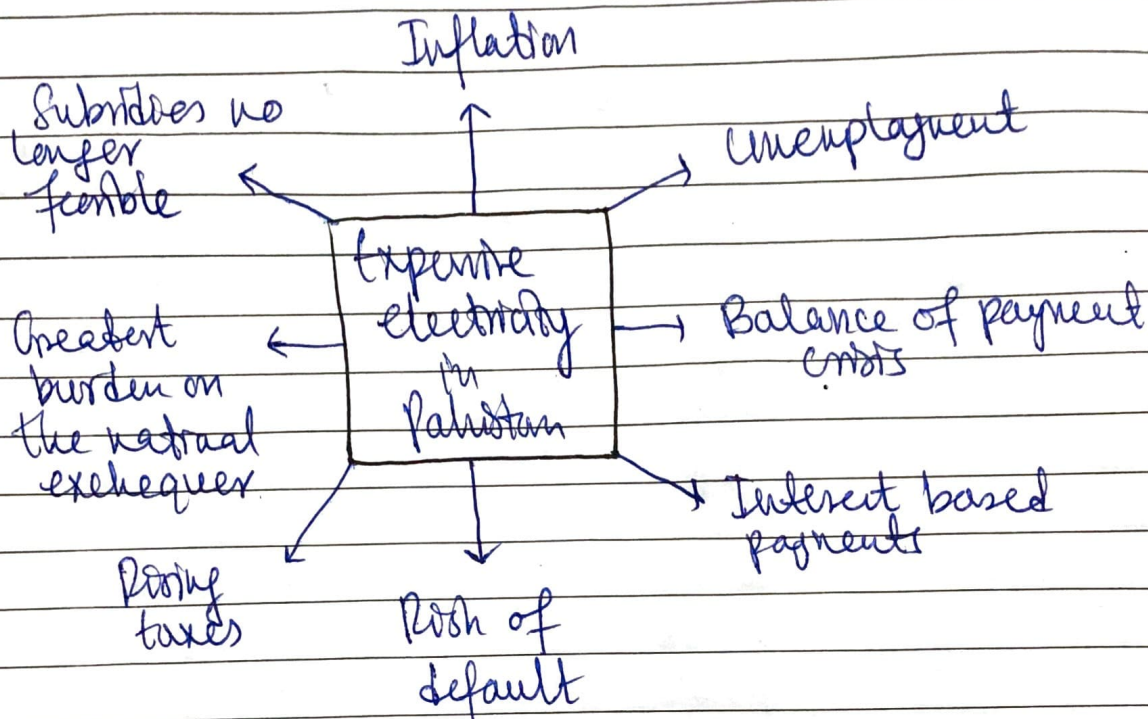
Political implications of expensive electricity



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As illustrated previously, expensive electricity also leads to a political crisis in the country and significantly impacts the democratic values apparatus.

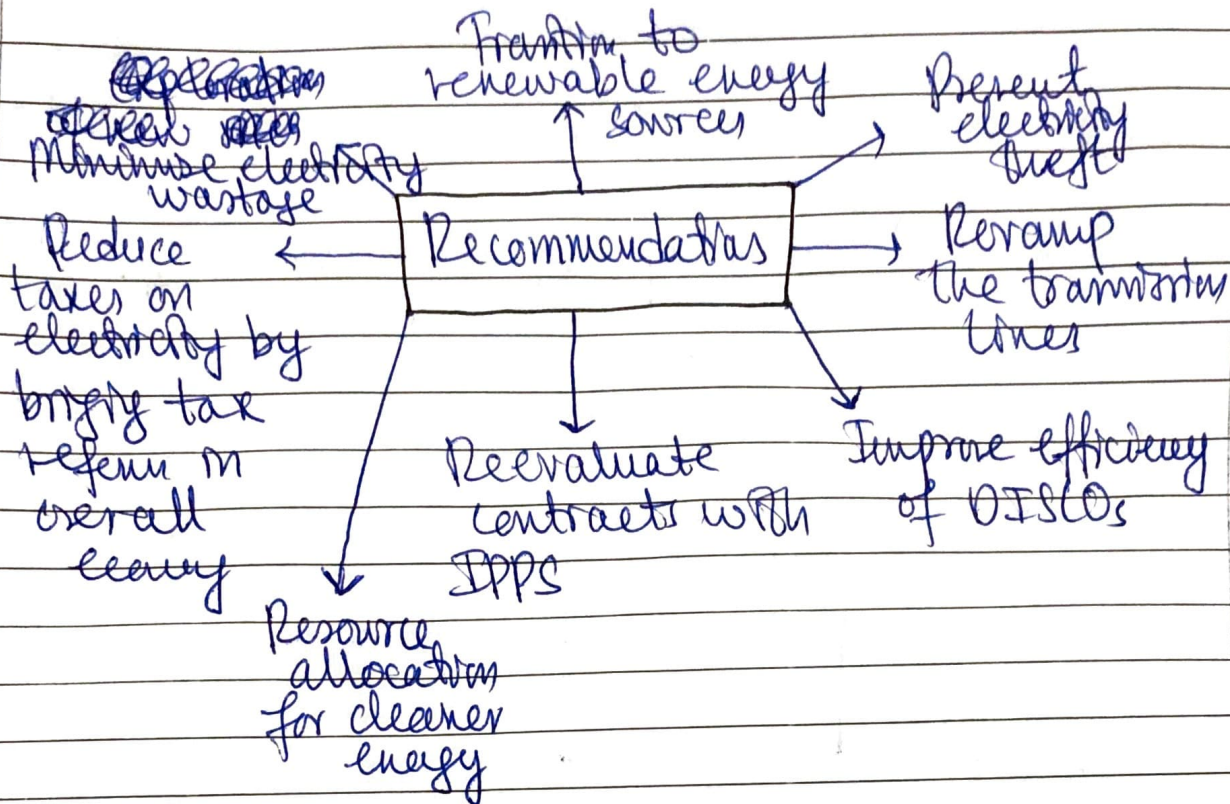
Economic implication of expensive electricity.



Expensive electricity is the greatest burden on national treasury. Since most of our electricity is through imported fossil fuel it continues to pose a challenge to our economic recovery. Moreover, it causes inflation and rise of prices of all commodities and affects the economy at macro and micro levels.

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Recommendations



In order to counter the issue to expensive electricity, first & foremost the country needs to utilize renewable sources such as hydel, solar and wind. Moreover, macro and micro decisions need to be taken to solve the electricity and energy crisis issue.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the issue of Pakistan's expensive electricity arises from a multitude of causes such as importing fossil fuels. These have socio-economic and political implications. To mitigate the electricity crisis transition to renewable energy is a need.