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#### Q4 Introduction

The exponential growth rate of Pakistan's population is an issue that has never been seriously evaluated by the policy makers of the country. As a developing nation with constraint of limited resources and a moribund economy, a population bulge is highly unsustainable for the nation. As per the digital census of year 2023, country's population peak at 241.49 million. Already being the 5<sup>th</sup> most populous country in the world, it will soon overtake Indonesia, due to the steep growth rate of 2.55%. (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics). A large population significantly affects the socio-economic landscape of the country. At the economic front, a population bulge will be strain on the limited resources of the country. Whereas at the social front, a large population leads to issues such as poverty, food insecurity and even crime.

#### Pakistan's population growth in context of Malthusian theory

Malthusian theory states that a developing country's population rises with a geometric progression. However, the increase of resources occur at an arithmetic progression. This mismatch

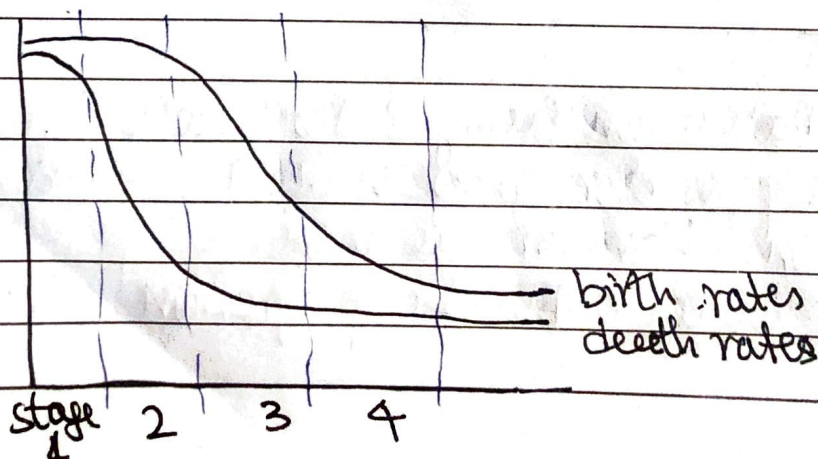


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Between the growth of population and the availability of resources results in a disorderly situation. People will have to compete for scarce resources to ensure their survival. The theory aptly applies in the context of Pakistan's population explosion. ~~It~~ It is witnessed that while Pakistan's population graph sharply rises, the resources are not growing at pace and hence, the abysmal state of affairs of our country.

### Pakistan's standing according to demographic transition theory

The demographic transition theory highlights how countries' birth rate, death rate and thus the population growth rate vary according to the degree of technological advancement and industrialisation they achieve. Pakistan currently lies at the stage 2 of the demographic transition - where although the death rates have slightly decreased than in the past, the birth rates continue to rise and hence, the population continues to grow. In contrast, the

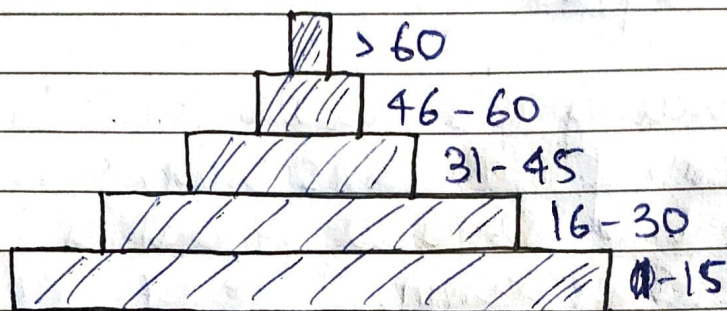




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Countries who have achieved industrialisation are at stage 4, where both the birth and the death rates are low and hence, low population growth.

### Pakistan's population pyramid



Another significant feature of Pakistan's population is that > 60% of its population is under 30 years (PBS); this youth extensive population base also has significant impacts on the socio-economic climate of the country. While on one hand, it is a burden on the economy and can lead to social disorder, on the other hand, it also gives an opportunity to utilise <sup>other</sup> the young workforce to improve the status of the country.

### Social implication of high population growth

- i) Poverty: One inevitable consequence of a large population is that many of them will have to live in deprived economic



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Conditions. At present majority of Pakistan's population lives under the poverty line.

As per economic survey of Pakistan 2022-23, per capita income is just \$1568 per annum. This reflects that with a magnanimous population, not everyone will get a sufficient share of the pie.

ii) Food insecurity and malnutrition: In the initial years of Pakistan's birth, it was a country with sufficient agricultural resources to feed its population. However, Pakistan now faces a crisis and experiences food shortages. Moreover, the country has to import expensive wheat and grain to meet the demands of its population.

Subsequently, children are not only having limited food to eat, their nutritional requirements are also not being fulfilled. This has resulted in a malnutrition crisis in the country, where every second child is either stunted or wasted.

iii) Increase in crime rates: According to Robert Merton's theory of Anomie, people seek illegal means to achieve their ends, when the society blocks them from achieving the ends through institutional means. This is to say that when people will not



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have sufficient resources to survive and thrive under normal circumstances, they will have to resort to crime and other illegal means to fulfil their needs. Moreover, as population continues to grow, there would be a greater competition for scarce resources and people will resort to snatching their share from others.

iv) Social unrest: With the number of people rising, the society will lead towards chaos. As already seen in Pakistan, people resort to mob violence, lack tolerance and show an extremist behavior in many different circumstances. The reason behind this is that the state fails to meet their needs and they retaliate with violence.

v) Unplanned urbanisation: Cities in Pakistan continue to expand. The largest city of the country, Karachi, has many unsustainable and unplanned slum communities. This unplanned development results in derailing of the city infrastructure. Moreover, it leads to several environment related negative impacts.

Economic implications of exponential population rise

i) Increasing unemployment: Pakistan is a country



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where there is inadequate industrialization. With limited spaces for people to work in, there is tough competition. As the population keeps rising and moreover, a youthful population, implies that many people will be left without a job. Hence, it will lead to very ~~excess~~ unemployment levels.

ii) Strain on state's economic resources: Sustaining a population of more than 240 million people is no easy task. Pakistan does not have enough economic capital to ensure sufficient amenities, development and infrastructure for its people. As population would further increase, so will our economic crisis deepen.

iii) Unmet ~~own~~ energy requirements: One of the chief concerns of Pakistan's economy is the energy crisis and its associated budget. With expensive electricity being generated, Pakistan would have to further increase the bills and this will burden the people. Furthermore, as number of people increase, the state would not have enough resources to meet their energy requirements.

iv) Youth bulge - a blessing in disguise: However, not all is bleak. One way to look at the population numbers is to see



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It is an asset to the country. The increasing young population can be trained and engaged to contribute to services, information and industrial sectors. Moreover, Pakistan can export labor to countries where the population rates are declining. They in turn would contribute to country's economy via remittances. Although the population needs to be controlled, the existing number of people should be given the necessary skills to be a part of productive workforce.

### Conclusion

In a nutshell, Pakistan since its emergence has not addressed the issue of population growth. Due to this the country is soon to become the 4<sup>th</sup> most populous nation. However, with limited resources, the exponential population is detrimental. It leads to several social and economic problems. Only a comprehensive plan to control population growth can be a panacea for Pakistan's economic and social woes.



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## Q7. Introduction

Ever since Pakistan came into existence it has needed an uplift from the foreign nations to bolster its economy. Initially, it was the need of the moment, as the nascent state hardly had any infrastructure or means to sustain itself. However, even after 76 years of existence, the country has not lived to its expectations and the economy continues to be in ~~the~~ <sup>an</sup> abyss. Although, Pakistan still relies on foreign aid for its economic recovery, it is not a sustainable long term solution. The first and foremost sine qua non of sustainable economic recovery is setting the internal house in order by achieving a lasting political stability. Once political stability is gained, then long term economic plans can be formulated, implemented and evaluated. Moreover, it also contributes to a continuum of policies, which unfortunately Pakistan's economic history has lacked.

### Unsustainability of foreign aid

Foreign aid or loans provide a temporary reprieve for the country. Although they may be necessary to avert a default, they are not



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the panacea for economic woes. Pakistan first went to IMF in the 1950's and even in 2023, Pakistan has to go to the lender of last resort, to rescue its economy. The 2023, \$3 billion standby agreement is an example. However, even after so many foreign loans, Pakistan's economy is at a standstill. Other than that Pakistan has been given aid by the foreign nations throughout its history. China, USA, KSA and other middle eastern nations, have contributed to its economic ventilation. However, what makes these aids and grants unsustainable is that they do not address the root causes of economic woes. The structural flaws continue to persist. As a consequence, even after a temporary recovery, Pakistan again falls back to square zero as the honeymoon period ends and the economy collapses again.

### Direct and indirect costs attached to foreign aid

In the global politics, no country assists other out of moral goodwill. There are strings attached to every aid. Sometimes these can lead to a country in a quagmire. Pakistan's equation with US has been on such basis. Whether it was US aid to Pakistan after Soviet invasion of Afghanistan or US aid to



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Pakistan after the 9/11 attacks, there were set conditions attached to the aid. Pakistan was to act as US proxy to curtail communism in the former case and in the later it had to assist US in the global war on terror. However, as a consequence Pakistan had to bear several economic, social and political costs. Hence, these are another reasons, why the foreign aids are not a good solution for economic recovery.

### Political stability as a remedy for economic conditions

- i) Ensures societal order: One of the major reasons that political stability is essential, is that it creates order in the society. All the economic and business activities require a well settled and stable society. If there is chaos and social disintegration, it leads to economic deterioration as well.
- ii) Allows strong policy decisions: Unless there is political order, policy decisions can not be made. In case of instability, as witnessed in the recent times, governments make narrow sighted decisions which are politically motivated. However, a legitimate, stable political government can formulate policies,



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which would then be beneficial for the nation at micro and macro levels.

iii) Continuum of policies: Political stability ensures a smooth transition of governments. Even if a new government comes, it can modulate the existing economic policies without creating fissures in the existing structural framework. Moreover, they can carry out long term plans such as 5 year economic plans that are beneficial for the economy.

iv) Can bring structural reforms: As mentioned before, the major shortcoming of foreign aid is that it does not address root causes for the economic issues. However, political stability will allow Pakistan to bring about structural reforms. These include steps such as promoting industrialisation, exports oriented economy, broadening tax net, reducing government expenditures, promoting green economy etc. In a scenario of political instability, these steps can not be taken.

v) Political stability promotes good governance, accountability and constitutionalism: Another advantage of a stable political order is that it makes the state's machinery efficient. Therefore, implementation of economic policies is effective. Moreover, there is accountability for any mishaps or



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shortcomings. Therefore, policies are productively executed.

vi) Boosts investor confidence: In periods of political disorder, the business transactions and economic activities become stagnant. However, stable governments boost investor confidence and ensure their financial security and prosperity. Therefore, businesses prosper when there is stability.

vii) Stronger economic collaboration: Instead of taking foreign aids, mutual economic cooperation is a prerogative of political stability. They can conduct multilateral and bilateral agreements with other nations and promote projects that mutually benefit them. Hence, economic collaboration can be successfully achieved in times of political stability.

### Conclusion

Thus, it can be concluded that the remedy to Pakistan's sustainable economic recovery is not foreign aid but political stability. Foreign aid provides short-term relief but at cost of greater political dependence. However, political stability gives an opportunity for long term planning and boosting economy through sustainable structural reforms.



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## Q8. Introduction

Pak-US relations have historically been bitter-sweet. Borne out of a marriage of convenience, their relationship fluctuates with the transitory tides of global politics and economic and geopolitical calculus. The trade off between the two nations has been on the account of Pakistan's geostrategic location in the south asian region and US's economic aid to the nascent economy of Pakistan. In the cold war era, US allied with Pakistan to curtail the growing influence of communist USSR in the region. In return, Pakistan found itself a partner to boost its economic growth. This relationship further deepened when USSR invaded Afghanistan. Moreover, after 9/11 attacks, US partnered with Pakistan in the agenda of global war on terror. However, in periods of demand geopolitical status, the relationship status has also dwindled. As is the case in recent times, where US does not have further geostrategic interests with Pakistan and hence, it also has reduced its financial support to Pakistan.

### US-Pak ties in the context of Cold War:

Post WWII order saw a confrontation between



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two global superpowers of time, USA and USSR. USSR was trying to spread communism in its neighboring states. USA was opposed to USSR's agenda and sought partners in the region to contain ~~the~~ USSR's growing influence. India at the time had opted for a non-aligned status. Pakistan, a newly born nation, lacked economic structure at the time. Hence, the relationship between the two states was not a surprise. Pakistan signed SEATO in 1954 followed by CENTO in 1955, as defence pacts to support USA against the growing USSR influence. As the confrontations between global hegemonies intensified and USSR invaded Afghanistan in 1979, it was the time that US actively armed Pakistan's enemy to battle the Russians. Although Pakistan got numerous aid programs as a result, ~~this~~ this decision to support USA against USSR drew Pakistan in a quagmire, whose cost Pakistan pays till date.

Dynamics during the global war on terror

In 2001, the 9/11 incident occurred which forced US to again reach out to Pakistan to support its global war on terror. Pakistan once again got economic support to bolster its internal economy as well as strengthen



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Its defence capacities. However, the Iraq-Iran war was not only waged against USA, but had detrimental effects on Pakistan as well. Pakistan joined the alliance in hopes of long-term economic development and US used Pakistan's geostrategic location to combat the terrorist elements. However, once the frasco culminated in 2021, US geopolitical interests in Pakistan declined and consequently they cut off their financial assistance from Pakistan.

### Relations at times of opposing national interests

Another way to look at the geopolitical-economic based ties, is to see the relations between the two states when these national interests were not aligned. After India conducted nuclear power tests, Pakistan made its aim clear that it will also pursue a nuclear program. At that time USA did not have any active geostrategic interests in Pakistan as well. So they not only curtailed economic aid to Pakistan, but also imposed sanctions on Pakistan. For Pakistan, the necessity of that time was to protect its security even at the cost of economic deprivation. Hence, the relations took a long break as their interests clashed and



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so was the case till the war on terror commenced.

### Present day equation

In the recent times, Pakistan has aligned more closely with China to support its economic needs. On the other hand, USA has turned to India to be its geostrategic partner to counter the role of China in the Indo Pacific region. Hence, as the economic interests of Pakistan are not in line with that of the geopolitical goals of US, the relations at present are at a pause stage. While the two continue to communicate, there is no active pursuance of an strategy in the region, as was the case in the past.

### Conclusion

Therefore, in light of the previously stated arguments it can be suggested that historically the US - Paki relations were borne out of a doctrine of necessity for both the states. While US pursued the bend due to its geopolitical commitments, Pakistan saw the relations in light of its economic motives.



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## Q5. Introduction

18<sup>th</sup> amendment is a landmark event in the constitutional history of Pakistan. From being a quasi federal state in the past, Pakistan transitioned into achieving the true nature of federation. With 18<sup>th</sup> amendment in place, the power was devolved from the centre to the provinces, which then became autonomous entities in themselves. However, the implementation and the true realization of the essence of 18<sup>th</sup> amendment has not been without challenges. Pakistan has historically and even contemporarily had strong centre with weak provincial governments. But the devolution of powers to provinces now makes it difficult for centre to exercise its control without obstacles. This has led to political strain between the centre and the provinces on a number of issues of national interests such as energy, security, resource distribution and socio-political conflicts.

## Evolution of a federation in Pakistan

Pakistan comprised of five provinces as it came into existence. It was envisioned to be a republic and a federal state. However, since the beginning the leaders at the centre,



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concentrated power within their hands. Policies such as that of 'One unit' were also propagated as to suppress the growth unit of any individual province. After the separation of East Pakistan in 1971 and subsequent constitution of 1973, it was thought to be the need of the hour that the power be devolved and vested in the hands of the state. But the clear cut mechanism was not prescribed in the constitution. Moreover, the martial laws following the 1973 constitution ~~and~~ further strengthened the role of the centre in contrast to that of the provinces. Only in 2010 was the 18th amendment promulgated such as the powers were given to the provinces to administer their affairs on their own. This gave provinces autonomy over many subjects such as revenue, health, education, police and local developments. Only subjects such as currency, national defence and foreign policy lie within the hands of the centre. However, as having a history of concentration of power the centre continues to attract the power towards itself.

### Autonomous provinces challenge the centre

As the provinces have become autonomous, they sense that the centre does not encroach upon their domain. Because of



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this devolution of power, resources to the centre have become limited. The natural resources are capitalised by the provinces themselves. Provinces exist upon use of their natural resources such as those of fossil fuels, minerals and agriculture. This leaves the centre with minimal resources to carry out its state of affairs. Moreover, the provinces demand a greater share in the NFC awards. With the limited resources of the centre it seeks to keep the natural resources within itself. However, after the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment it has to guarantee the provinces a fair share of NFC awards. Moreover, it can constitutionally not decrease the NFC share. Another point of concern for the centre is that it can not meddle with the governance of the provinces. Even if the provincial governments perform inadequately, the centre can not lay down directives to improve their performance. They have to accept the performance of provincial governments as they are constitutionally bound. This is the reason that different provinces have achieved different levels of development across the past decade. Adding into this, Pakistan's political scenario is such ~~is~~ that the major political parties reflect their dominance in a certain province. Therefore, when



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one of these parties succeeds at the centre, it curbs the development of their own province at the cost of others. This also creates a political chaos within the state, when the party at the centre supports one province. In addition to this, the centre also faces the challenge when managing disputes between the autonomous provinces. Although Council of Common Interests was established to resolve the issues between the provinces and also to mediate the province - centre relations, it often proves to be ineffective and a deadlock persists. One such case is that of the Kalabagh dam, where the provinces do not agree and the state can not impose its will against the autonomous provinces.

### Political strain

As a result of the centre - province disputes, there is a continuous political strain in Pakistan. Provinces blame the centre for inappropriate treatment and unjust practices, whereas the centre condemns the provinces for their ineffective performances. Moreover, the responsibility become blur in certain cases. Issues such as terrorism or increased security



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disagreements cause a blame game between the centre and the provinces of who is responsible and to be held accountable for security lapses. Moreover, issues such as lack of development, infrastructure management, natural disaster, climate change management, use of natural resources, also exacerbate the centre-province relations. This leads to a gridlock between the centre and the provinces and a political disorder runs.

### Conclusion

Therefore, to conclude it can be said that although 18th amendment was a necessary and a bright step for democracy in Pakistan, the challenges continue as the centre and provinces do not effectively play their roles in its effective implementation. Moreover, as the centre faces resistance from the provinces over its jurisdiction, there is a resultant strain which leads to political disorder and tense centre-province relations.