

(Part - II)

Q.5

Growth of Population in Pakistan

Introduction:

Pakistan is a developing country in South Asia whose population is growing rapidly day by day. Pakistan ranks 5th in the world after having a massive population of 241 million (Census 2023) excluding the population growth of Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. The population of Pakistan is growing at a rate of 2.5% in census of 2023 as compared to 2.4% in 2017, which was more lower than 2.69% in 1998.

This population explosion has many social and economic impacts on Pakistan's natural resources. It is difficult to feed such a huge population with limited resources, which can result in many social disparities and injustices. This massive population is a liability on the country instead of an asset due to lack of opportunities and resources.

Social Impacts of Population growth

There arises many social disparities due to such whopping population growth. These impacts can vary in nature from area to area and province to province, depending on the availability of resources and opportunities. Let us discuss these impacts one by one.

(i) Lack of Justice

When the population increases in its size in any developing country, its access to the justice decreases. There is a lack of governance and administration to provide prompt justice to the massive population. It can be best understood by the pending cases of supreme court. In 2001, there were 13000 cases, 20,000 in 2011, rising to 53,000 in 2022. And now, there are 56,544 cases pending in supreme court. It become difficult for administration to provide justice quickly to the people due to massive population growth.

(ii) Decrease in natural resources

A country like Pakistan has limited natural resource which cannot fulfil the demands of population. As there is no balance between the growing population and natural resources, there arises an imbalance in the society. This leads to many many problems such as lack of job opportunities, health and education facilities. This disparity divides country into elites and the poor. It is estimated that around 40 percent Pakistani live in poverty and 24 percent Pakistani are below poverty line (IMF Report). This exerts a great pressure not only on natural resources but also on the administration and government.

(iii) Increase in child labor:

When population keeps on growing at a fastest rate, then masses face many employment and economic problems. Parents

afford the expenses of children. They live from hand to mouth due to inflation and poverty. They force their minor children to earn to meet their both ends. In 2004 ILO assessed over 264,000 children were child worker in domestic settings across the country. This child labor is increasing continuously because of increasing population. This is the social implication of growing population in Pakistan.

Economic Implications of Population growth

Along with social effects, there are some economic implications of population explosion in Pakistan. Pakistan is facing economic ups and downs due to bad governance as well as massive population growth. This growing population is not skillful and proficient in its working and so becoming a liability for Pakistan. This huge population can turn into an asset, if proper actions and policies should place side by side. Let us discuss economic effects of growing population.

(i) Liability on national exchequer

A massive population is a burden on national exchequer. Government has to create many employment opportunities for the youth who are freshly educated and lack in any experience and practical work. Like Rs 10 billion earmarked for PM's youth Business and Agriculture Loans scheme (Budget of FY 2023-24). When government of Pakistan allots such a big amount of money to the people, it puts a burden on national exchequer.

(ii) Increase in imports and decrease in exports

As the number of people increase in the country, their needs and demands are also increase. Pakistan cannot fulfil all the requirements of people through its natural resources. Therefore, Pakistan has to import many items and goods of basic needs of daily life. Hence, imports of Pakistan increases and exports

decrease in proportion. According to World Bank Collection of Development Indicator 2022, Exports during July-February FY 2022-23 totaled \$ 18,678 million and Imports during July-February FY 2022-23 totaled \$ 40,118 million. These statistics show that Pakistan imports more products and exports lesser product to other countries due to more demand of growing population.

(iii) Energy and water shortage

Pakistan is facing energy and water shortage. The high prices of fuel due to more consumption of fuel - by massive population - puts an pressure on the economic sector of Pakistan. Every year Pakistan has to give the subsidies of Rs 200 billion in energy sector. Another issue is scarcity of water. A lot of Pakistani who live in slum areas, do not have access to the fresh water. Only 36 percent of the population has access to clean water. When the government of Pakistan make policies and implement them to provide these basic resources to people, it costs much.

Conclusion:

Pakistan's growing population is posing a serious threat to the well-being of people and progress of country. Numerous people lack basic needs of life due to shortage of resources and opportunities in various fields of life. They are exerting a pressure on national exchequer and causing many problem in the normal functioning of government.

A lot of people are being forced to live in poverty and below the poverty line. The Government of Pakistan has to taken some serious steps to control the overgrowing population.

Q.6

Causes of Current Economic Meltdown

Introduction:

The economy of Pakistan is passing through its worst period of decline. Pakistan is facing a debt trap and debt crisis due to various reason. Political unwillingness and non-unanimous decisions on the policies of government are major causes. Moreover, natural disaster such as seasonal

climate patterns, floods and earthquakes etc are also responsible for the current economic meltdown. Political instability and lack of any sustainable development also make their part in this instability and meltdown. Pakistan has always focused on temporary boost in economy and never put any effort in long-term sustainable achievement. The successive governments blame their predecessors for the turmoil.

Causes of Economic meltdown:

Let us bring the various of economic meltdown under light by discussing each cause one by one.

(i) Political Instability:

Political stability is a major requirement for economic development. Political instability severely hinders the economic growth as the behaviour of the government plays an important role in stimulating the economic activity of government. The construction of Kalabagh dam has not completed due to political reasons. The government of Sindh

is not giving its assent to the construction of dam. The construction of Kalabagh dam can reduce the energy expenditures of billions of dollars which are major cause of current economic meltdown.

(ii) Bureaucratic attitude of government officials

The bureaucratic attitude of government officials is another factor which has been responsible for the country's economic backwardness. The planning and administration is pre-dominately bureaucratic rather than professional in its working and perception. They are unaware of the factors blocking the economic growth and how to eliminate the hurdles. The administration functioning in government departments is generally weak, incompetent and lacking in national spirit. Self interest precedes the national interest in administration and in political set-up which is the real problem.

(iii) Economic recession and backwardness

It is very difficult for the less developed countries to come out of economic recession and backwardness as they are the victims of their own poverty. Pakistan being one of the LDCs could not overcome its poverty. The poor masses become a formidable hurdle in the way of economic progress and a major cause of economic meltdown. Pakistan fell prey to a vicious circle of poverty which is caused by low productivity, deficiency in capital, market imperfections, economic backwardness and underdevelopment.

(iv) Illiteracy and lack of Science and technology

Widespread of illiteracy and lack of science and technology in Pakistan is a cause of economic backwardness and economic meltdown. People could not flourish in the fields of science and technology because of scarcity of resources and due to economic

and political policies of successive governments which occupied the authority from time to time.

(v) Natural disasters and climate change

Natural disasters such as floods due to global warming and climate change has remained a cause and impediment in the way of economic progress. The floods of 2022, has caused severe losses to the country. Almost 38 million people were affected due to floods of 2022.

Pakistan is prone to natural disaster and activities of climate change. Such problems are also contributed to the current economic meltdown.

Measures to improve Economy

The economic backwardness and current economic meltdown can be improved through taking serious measures. Such measures are given as.

(i) Change in National Psyche and Mindset

Pakistanis as a nation are too much negative

oriented and too much cynical where they find everything wrong in this country. Unless they change their mindset and unless everybody who is doing what he is supposed to do, comes out his task with honesty and sincerity. They should not expect any Messiah to come and fix their problems. They have to do it themselves: individually and collectively.

(ii) Use of technology

Technology is spreading like a wild fire. This technology can also be helpful in stabilizing the economy of country. This technology can be used in banking services, information on climate or weather, agriculture extension, health and education etc. A more holistic and comprehensive approach that deploys technology for poverty eradication has to be put in place.

(iii) Governance and decentralization of powers

As the population of Pakistan is increasing

one cannot govern Pakistan sitting in Islamabad or any other city. Government has to devolve powers, decentralize and delegate authority provide resources to the local or district governments so that they can take decisions at their own. These decisions would be very much in accordance with the requirements and needs of the community.

There would be better utilization of resources.

If this could be done, then a lot more can happen which are being wasted today, and the economic growth rate can be raised from 6-7 percent average to 8-9 percent annually.

Conclusion:

The current economic melt-down of Pakistan is a result of various political governance and administration reasons. Every factor contributes to the severity of situation. Through sincere efforts and measure, country can be put on the way of economic growth. In this process, the collective efforts of masses and government are needed.