

## Question No. 03

### Introduction:

The resurgence of terrorism in Pakistan has raised critical concerns about the efficacy of its counterterrorism policies. Recent attacks in various parts of the country highlight deep-rooted challenges in strategy formation, inter-agency coordination, and the implementation of security measures. Despite substantial investments and policy frameworks, the increase in terrorist activities call for an urgent reassessment of Pakistan's approach. Steps need to be taken for the shortcomings in policy formation in combating terrorism and comprehensive strategy that serves path for the sustainable peace in the country.

### The Resurgence of terrorism:

The frequency and intensity of terrorism have seen a sharp rise in 2024. According to Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), militant attacks have increased over 30% in 2024, as compared to the previous year. Key regions like KPK and Balochistan, and parts of Punjab continue to bear the brunt of violence. Karachi also remains targeted, right before the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's Summit in Islamabad. Chinese personnel killed in a bomb blast.

## Recent Incidents of concern

1. Shangla Police Check post Attack:  
Militants targeted a police check post in Shangla, KPK, resulting the deaths of two officers and injuries to three others Sepoy. This attack shown the vulnerability in securing key regions like Shangla.

2. Quetta Railway Station Attack:  
A suicide bomber detonated explosives at a crowded train station in Quetta. The attack became responsible in killing at least 24 people and injuring over 40 civilians. The Balochistan Liberation Army claimed the responsibility, emphasizing separatist tensions and the regions volatile nature.

3. Dera Ismail Khan Polio Escort Bombing:  
A roadside bomber targeted a police vehicle escorting polio vaccination workers, killing three officers and wounding two others. This incident underscores the ongoing threats to public health initiatives and the complexities of operating in conflict-prone areas.

These incidents are emblematic of the resurgence of organised militant activities, attributed primarily to the groups like Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Baloch Liberation Army (BLA). The current situation in the country not only demands immediate operational response but also a long-term

## Strategic interventions.

**Policy Gaps in Counter-terrorism**  
Despite having a robust counterterrorism frameworks on paper, Pakistan's execution of these policies remains inconsistent and riddled with gaps. Following are some subsections to examine the critical shortcomings:

### a. Inconsistent implementation of National Action Plan (NAP):

National Action Plan was envisioned as a comprehensive strategy to combat terrorism. It was launched in July, after the tragedy of Army Public School, Peshawar. However many of its key provisions remain unimplemented:

#### • Rehabilitation of Madrasahs:

Religious seminaries continue to serve as recruitment grounds for extremist groups. While some progress has been made in monitoring their activities, the lack of uniform curriculum and regulation remains a significant gap.

#### • Judicial reforms:

The judicial reforms has failed to ensure swift protection of terrorists. Prolonged trials, inadequate evidence collection, and lack of witness protection allow many perpetrators to evade justice, eroding public confidence in the system.

b. Intelligence and Security Failures:  
 Pakistan has invested heavily in ~~building~~ its intelligence infrastructure. However, coordination between agencies such as, Inter Service Intelligence (ISI), Intelligence Bureau (IB), and Provincial Police Forces remains fractured:

- Lack of Preemptive Action:

The Shangla attack highlighted glaring lapses in gathering and acting on actionable intelligence. Despite prior warnings, security measures were insufficient to that ~~thwart~~ the attack.

- Inadequate Monitoring of Cross-Border Movements:

The porous border with Afghanistan allows militants to move freely. The situation worsened following the Taliban's takeover in 2021, with increased infiltration of fighters and arms into Pakistan.

c. Failures to Address Root Causes  
 Structural inequalities, unemployment, and lack of education in underdeveloped areas create a fertile ground for radicalization. Despite pledges, government policies have failed to address these socioeconomic issues, particularly in KPK and Balochistan, without addressing the root causes, counterterrorism efforts will continue to treat symptoms rather than the underlying disease.

## External Factors Compounding the Problem:

While internal policy failures are significant, external factors also exacerbate Pakistan's challenges in combating terrorism.

### a. Fallout of U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan:

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 and the subsequent Taliban takeover have had profound impact on Pakistan. Militant groups, particularly the TTP, have been emboldened by the Taliban's resurgence. A recent UNSC report revealed an increase in cross-border terrorism attacks and the movement of arms from Afghanistan into Pakistan. The lack of effective border management has further exacerbated the situation.

### b. Regional Power Dynamics:

Pakistan's regional relationships add another layer of complexity:

#### • India and Proxy groups:

Pakistan's alleged support for proxy groups operating in India has drawn criticism, leading to strained diplomatic relations and complicating regional counterterrorism cooperation.

#### 4. Recent Government Initiatives:

While failures dominate the narrative, recent measures by the Pakistani government:

Show some promise:

## • a. Border Security Enhancements:

The construction of border fence along the durand line is a key initiative to curb cross-border militant movements. Although progress has been slow, the fencing has led to a measurable reduction in certain types of cross-border attacks.

## b. Revival of military operations:

In response to the recent surge in violence the government has launched military operations in KPK and Balochistan. These operations aim to dismantle militant hideouts and neutralize key leaders. However without addressing the root causes, these operations risk providing only temporary relief.

## 5. Recommendations for Sustainable Counterterrorism Strategy:

To combat terrorism effectively, Pakistan must adopt a multi-faceted and long-term strategy. The following recommendations outline key areas of focus:

### a. Strengthening Policy Implementation:

⇒ Fully enforce the provisions of national action plan with particular focus on madassa regulation and judicial reforms.

⇒ Introduce accountability mechanisms to ensure compliance at all levels of governance, including periodic audits of counterterrorism activities.

### b. Enhancing Inter-Agency Coordination

⇒ Establish a centralized intelligence sharing platform to improve real-time threat analysis and response.

⇒ conduct joint training programs for military and civilian agencies to foster collaboration and build trust.

### c. Socioeconomic Development:

⇒ Invest in education, healthcare, and infrastructure in marginalized regions to address the root causes of extremism.

For instance, building schools and vocational training centers in KPK and Balochistan could provide alternatives to joining militant groups.

⇒ launch targeted poverty alleviation programs to reduce appeal of extremist ideologies.

### d. Diplomatic Engagement:

⇒ Strengthen bilateral ties with Afghanistan to address cross-border terrorism collaboratively. Confidence-building measures, such as joint border patrols, could help ease tensions.

⇒ Work with international organizations to counter the funding networks of terrorist groups and gain technical support for counterterrorism initiatives.

### Conclusion:

The new wave of terrorism reveals critical gaps in Pakistan's counterterrorism policies. While recent government steps in a right direction to combat terrorism, a comprehensive and sustained approach is needed to combat this menace effectively. Addressing structural weaknesses, improving inter-agency coordination, and focusing socioeconomic

Upliftment are essential to ensure lasting peace and security in the region. By learning from past mistakes and committing to a meaningful reforms, Pakistan can build resilient counterterrorism framework capable of addressing both immediate threats and long-term challenges.

Question No. 05

Introduction:

Pakistan's international relevance is deeply intertwined with its domestic stability, governance, and policy choices. In an increasingly interconnected world, a nation's ability to effectively participate in global affairs depends on the strength of its internal systems. A well functioning democracy, political stability and competent governance are essential not only for addressing domestic issues but also for shaping Pakistan's image as credible and reliable partner on the global stage. Conversely, persistent issues such as political turmoil, weak institutions, economic mismanagement and trust deficit between the state and citizens continue to undermine the country's potential. Without addressing these issues Pakistan risks diminishing its geopolitical influence and losing opportunities economic and diplomatic engagement. This analysis explores how domestic repositioning can serve as a catalyst for Pakistan's enhanced international relevance focusing on key areas such as democratic reforms, political stability



governance efficiency, and public trust restoration.

## Strengthening Democracy

Importance of Democratic institutions  
Democracy is foundation of nation's credibility on the global stage.

According to Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index, Pakistan ranks as a "Hybrid regime" highlighting deficiencies in electoral processes, civil liberties and political participation.

Reforms needed:

### 1. Free and fair Elections:

Strengthening the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and ensuring transparency in electoral processes.

### 2. Judicial Independence:

Empowering judicial institutions to uphold the rule of law without any political interference.

A strong democracy enhances Pakistan's legitimacy in global forums, enabling it to advocate for its interests effectively.

Establishing durable Political Stability  
Political instability, driven by frequent government changes and inter-party rivalries, hampers long-term policy-making. Reports from Transparency International indicate that political uncertainty has a direct impact on governance and economic performance.

## Key measures for stability

### 1. Consensus building Among Political Parties:

Establishing dialogue to create a unified vision for the country's future.

### 2. Civil-Military Relations:

Redefining the role of the military to ensure civilian supremacy in governance.

Political stability is essential for fostering investor confidence and maintaining consistent foreign policies, both of which are crucial for international relevance.

### Providing competent Governance:

#### Governance deficit:

The World Governance Indicators highlight Pakistan's weak performance in areas such as regulatory quality, government effectiveness, and control of corruption.

#### Steps toward effective governance

1. Decentralization: Strengthening local government to ensure efficient delivery of services.
2. Transparency and Accountability:

Implementing a governance system that ensures in reducing corruption and increase public trust.

3. Capacity building:

Training civil servants and improving bureaucratic efficiency.

Component governance projects position Pakistan as a reliable partner in international collaborations, especially in areas such as trade, climate

change, and counterterrorism.

Addressing trust deficits between people and State:

The disconnection between public and state stems from economic disparities, human rights violations, lack of accountability. According to the Edelman Trust Barometer, trust in Pakistan's public institutions remain alarmingly low.

Bridging the Gap:

1. Citizen-Centric Policies:

Ensuring inclusivity and addressing issues such as unemployment, poverty, and inflation.

2. Freedom of Expression:

Protecting media freedom to foster open dialogue and transparency.

3. Social Justice:

Promoting equality and addressing grievances of marginalized communities.

Restoring public trust strengthens the social fabric, making Pakistan more resilient to external pressures and enhancing credibility internationally.

Economic reforms as a catalyst for relevance:

Economic instability, high inflation, and unsustainable debt have weakened Pakistan's global standing. Reports by IMF and WB stress the need for structural reforms.

## Reforms for Economic Stability:

1. Tax reforms: Broadening the tax base and curbing tax evasion.
2. Export diversification: Reducing dependency on textiles and promoting sectors such as technology and agriculture.
3. Energy Security: Investing in renewable energy to reduce reliance on imports.

A stable economy enables Pakistan to participate in regional and global trade agreements such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

## Geopolitical Relevance through domestic Strength:

Pakistan's position as a gateway to Central Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia gives it geopolitical importance. However, leveraging this requires a strong and domestic base.

## Regional Cooperation

1. Strengthening ties with Neighbors:

Resolving disputes with India and Afghanistan to unlock economic potential.

2. Role of Global forums:

Actively participating in initiatives such as Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and United Nations.

## Conclusion:

Pakistan's international relevance hinges on its ability to address domestic challenges. Strengthening democracy, ensuring political stability, improving governance, and bridging trust deficit are critical steps toward repositioning the country as a credible and influential player on the global stage. By making the right choices at home, Pakistan can't only uplift its citizens but also carve out a stronger position in the international arena.

## Question No. 07

### Introduction:

Education is cornerstone of a nation's progress, shaping its future through innovation, economic growth and social harmony. However, Pakistan's education system faces critical challenges that hinder its ability to compete globally. As the world rapidly advances in science, technology and education, lack of requisite advancements in Pakistan's educational framework threatens to leave the country behind. Moreover, without significant reforms, Pakistan risks not only stagnation but also potential marginalization in the global community. These key issues; systemic problems and practical solutions to address the shortcomings of Pakistan's education system.

## Issues in Pakistan's Education System

### a. Low Literacy Rate:

Pakistan's literacy rates among the lowest in South Asia. According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the literacy rate is approximately **62%**, far below the regional average. (2024)

### b. Out of School Children:

A staggering **25.3 million** children aged 5-16 are currently out of school in Pakistan, representing **36%** of the country's school age population.

### c. Lack of Funding:

Education remains underfunded with only **1.77%** of GDP allocated to education in 2023-24 budget significantly below than recommended by UNESCO, that is, **4-6%** of GDP.

### d. Inequality in Access

Rural areas and marginalized communities face severe disparities in access to education. Urban centres are relatively better off, creating a wide rural-urban divide. Additionally, private schools provide higher quality education compared to underfunded public schools, further deepening inequality.

## Problems in Education System

### a. Outdated Curriculum:

Pakistan's curriculum emphasizes rote learning rather than critical

thinking and practical skills. It lacks modern subjects like STEM and digital literacy, leaving students unprepared for future challenges. Updating the curriculum to include these areas is essential to ensure students are competitive globally.

#### b. Teacher's Quality and Training:

Teachers are often underqualified and lack proper training, especially in public schools. This leads to poor teaching quality and ineffective learning. Providing regular professional development and improving teacher recruitment can address this problem.

#### c. Exam-centric approach:

The Education System often focuses on exams, promoting the memorization over deeper learning. This approach stifles creativity and critical thinking. Shifting to continuous assessment methods would foster a more well-rounded education.

#### d. Political interference and corruption:

Political influence and corruption in education lead to misallocation of resources and poor governance. Addressing these requires establishing independent educational bodies to ensure transparency and accountability in resource management.

### Step forward to improve the Education System in Pakistan:

#### a. Increasing Funding:

Increasing education budget to 4-6% <sup>of GDP</sup> as per recommendation by

UNESCO is crucial for improving infrastructure, teachers's salaries, and resources. More investment is necessary to ensure quality education for all, especially in rural and underserved areas.

#### b. Curriculum reform:

Updating the curriculum to focus on critical thinking, STEM education and digital literacy will better equip students for the modern world. National Standardization can ensure equal learning opportunities across schools.

#### c. Teacher training:

Improving teacher training and professional development will enhance teaching quality. Regular workshops and modern pedagogical techniques will ensure teachers can effectively engage students and promote learning.

#### d. Reduce Exam-centric approaches:

Moving away from exam focused system to continuous assessment would encourage deeper learning and better education. This approach will foster skills like creativity and problem solving.

### Impact of Educational System on National development

#### a. Economic growth:

A robust Education system is directly linked to a country's economic development. Pakistan's low literacy rates and lack of skilled labor hinders economic growth as the workforce is not equipped with the



necessary skills of modern industries. By investing in education particularly in STEM fields, Pakistan can build a competitive workforce, attract foreign investment, and improve productivity across sectors.

### Conclusion:

Pakistan's education system, with its outdated curriculum, inadequate funding, and poor teacher quality poses significant barriers to national development. Addressing these challenges through increase funding, curriculum reforms, and professional teacher development will be essential to achieving long-term growth and stability. Education is key to unlocking Pakistan's potential and ensuring it is not left behind in the rapidly advancing global landscape. A reformed education system will not only improve the nation's economic and social stability but also enhance its international relevance.