

# Current Affairs

## PART - II

### Question: No 2

#### 1. Introduction:-

Islamist rebels have toppled the Bashar-ul-Assad regime in Syria in 11 days. A coalition of rebel groups overthrew the Assad regime which was ruling the Syria for 53 years. These rebel groups are not separate entities but the proxies of major regional and international powers. However, HTS (Hayat Tahrir al-Sham) emerged as the leading rebel group in the coalition. HTS has established a transitional government in Syria after the fall of Assad regime. The reasons for the fall of Assad regime are multifaceted ranging from brutal autocratic rule of Assad regime to the geopolitics of

major powers such as Iran, Russia, Turkey and USA. In the contemporary scenario, the fall of Assad regime and the emergence of HTS to establish an Islamist government in Syria is giving a sense of salvation.

While, the presence of other rebel groups backed by Turkey, Russia and Iran (may) will draw the Syria into another phase of crisis. The rebel groups will fight for their military and political power in the crisis-ridden Syria.

## 2. Reasons that caused the HTS and other rebel groups in Syria to topple down the Bashar-ul-Assad regime

The weak political and social context of the Syria since 2011 have fostered the factors that lead to fall of Bashar-al-Assad.

2.1. The ac by the Syrians to Bashar-ul-Assad presided over in Syria. They weapons against political opponents were by the people were and their aware of loved ones

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2.2 - The protests and

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2.1. The autocratic governance by the Bashar regime caused Syrians to protest. Bashar-ul-Anad and his father, Hafez, presided over an autocratic government in Syria. They used the chemical weapons against Syrian citizens and political opponents. Many political opponents were oppressed and brutalised by the Anad government. Many people were detained for years and their families were not aware of the whereabouts of their loved ones.

These persecutions and forced detentions forced people to protest on streets in 2011. The people demanded for rule of law, justice and democracy. The movement to get rid of Bashar-ul-Anad regime finds traces in Arab Spring in 2011.

2.2 - The transformation of civilian protests into armed protests and ultimately into a war

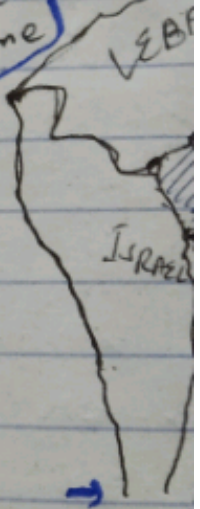
Bashar-al-Assad regime responded the civilian protestors with force. This caused the people to support the armed factions against the Assad regime. The pro-democratic protests during Arab spring allowed the Syrians to demonstrate against Assad regime. Thus, an armed opposition movement started against the Syrian government.

### 2.3- The involvement of foreign powers in Syrian crisis and emergence of HTS

The Syrian crisis drew many foreign players into the support of different armed factions. Iran and Russia supported the Assad regime for their own vested interests. Russia established its airbase and naval base in Syria to deter the USA in the region. Iran used it as a logistic tool to support its proxies in

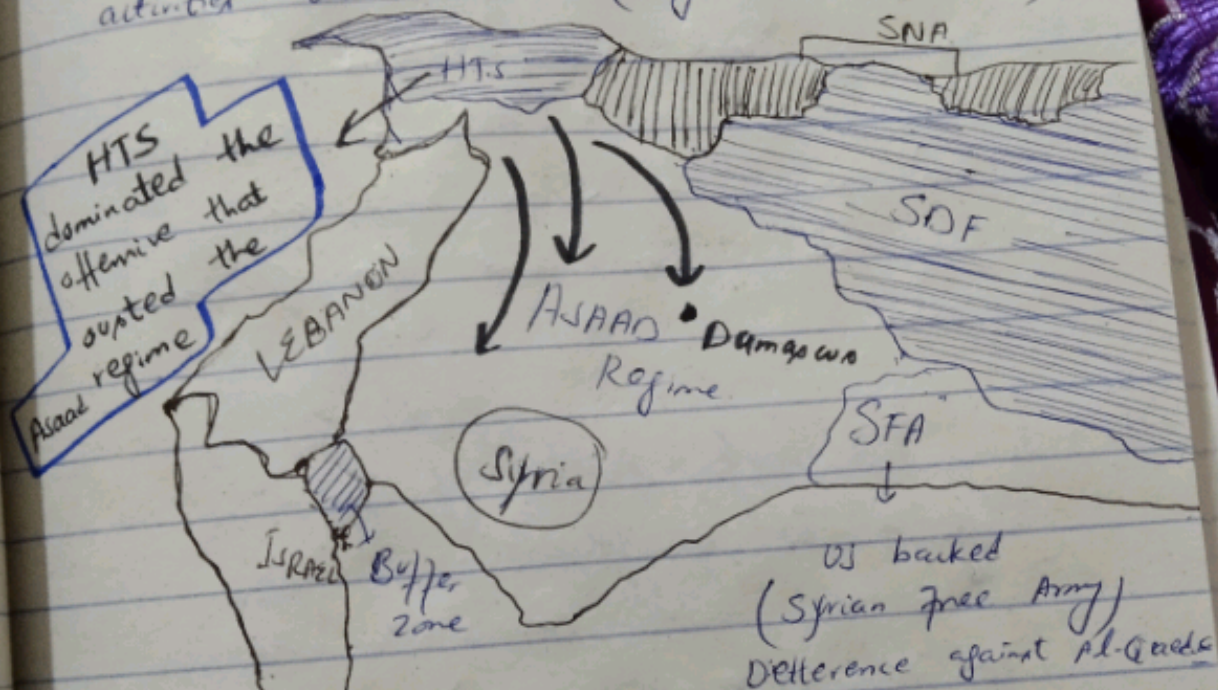
LEBANON, there are such as backed by (Syrian activities)

HTS dominated the offensive that ousted the Assad regime



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LEBANON, Yemen and Palestine. While there are also other opposition groups such as SNA (Syrian National Army) backed by Turkey, SDF (Syrian Democratic Forces) involved anti-Turkey activities and HTS (Hayat Tahrir al-Sham)



→ HTS emerged as the main group in offensive against the Assad regime

The HTS is a splinter group of ISIS in Iraq. The founder of HTS is Muhammad al-Jolani who was an armed rebel from Al-Qaeda. He established HTS in Syria. HTS is a classified terrorist organization by the US, Turkey, UK and others.

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### 3. Implications of the unprecedented change in Syria

As the causes of the Syrian crisis are multidimensional that's why, its implications are also regional and internal. The change will affect all the stakeholders, both within the Syria such as opposition forces and the foreign powers.

#### 3.1. Internal stability of Syria is in peril

An Syria has more than one opposition groups who were fighting together against a common enemy named as "Bashar al-Assad". However, the fall of Assad regime and the leading position of HTS among other groups may lead to further escalation of fights. Each faction would compete with others, to enhance and maximize their control. These groups are already

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with each other  
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#### 3.2 - Multilateral Syrians like Iran &

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with each other like Turkey backed  
SNA and Kurd dominated SDF.

### 3.2 - Multilateral conflicts among Syrians and stakeholders like US, Russia, Turkey Iran & Israel

The foreign powers will try to  
assert their control through proxy  
struggle in Syria. However, Turkey  
in this regard have more leverage  
due to its good terms with HTS.

It recently invited the military  
training and sports for Syrian army.  
On the other hand, Israel has

started its encroachment towards  
Golan heights. Israel claims that  
advancement in buffer zone is  
for the defense and safety of its  
citizens because in the region Israel  
faces existential threats. The US  
will not interfere like it did in

Afghanistan after the regime of  
Taliban. However, the rise of  
extremists will shape the geo-politics

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of the middle east differently. The monarchs of middle east will try to protect their internal order amid the regional power imbalance and rise of extremism.

### 3.3. The Islamist government and the divide of Sunni and Shiite rule will be challenging for peace and security of diverse Syria

Syria is a diverse country with different religions, sects and ethnic minorities. However, the attempt to promote co-existence in such transitional phase is challenging for HTS. HTS, however, showed a positive perception.

"Different sects have co-existed in this region and no one has the right to eliminate them."

- Al Jolani to CNN  
He said, Syria need a governing

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system that is where a single arbitrary doctrine the ideological and Al

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## I. INTRODUCTION

state owned burden on the enterprisers have for the state liability for has to sub work. The for the co enterprisers to sale the ongoing fine proposed for

## 2. Reasons of



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system that is institutional, not one where a single ruler can make an arbitrary decision. These statements represent the ideological overhaul between HTS and Al-Qaeda.

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Answer

### I. INTRODUCTION:

In Pakistan, the state owned enterprises have been a huge burden on the economy of country. These enterprises have failed to earn profit for the state. They have become a liability for the country and government has to subsidise these enterprises to work. The money for subsidy and for the compensation of losses of these enterprises have forced government to sell these enterprises. Currently, the ongoing fiscal crisis of Pakistan has proposed for privatisation of SOEs.

2. Reasons for the privatisation of SOE's

There are several reasons for the privatisation of state owned enterprises. These are related to poor governance and management model of the enterprises, lack of proper investment and poor infrastructure. Moreover, the legal framework to run SOEs are outdated.

## 2.1 - Poor governance and management model have reduced efficiency

Technology, globalization and modern management model have advanced in last couple of decades. It is not appropriate to continue with the same model of governance and management of SOEs as had been followed since their establishment some time ago.

There are 50 SOEs, which have significant share of public sector. All of these are related to energy, communication and manufacturing sectors. The poor governance have reduced the efficiency of these SOEs.

The crisis in point. Corruption, poor inf the mi government

## 2.2. The S the Fi Country

loss in government Many of closed, For example (Airlines) losses Corruption debt of bailouts drains the could Similarly crisis companies

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The crisis of power sector is a case in point. The sector is marred by corruption, political interference and poor infrastructure thus adding to the miseries of the consumers and government alike.

2.2. The SOEs have contributed to the fiscal deficit of the country :-

Many SOEs operate at loss in Pakistan. They require the government subsidies to stay afloat.

Many of these SOEs should be closed, disbanded or liquidated.

For example PIA (Pakistan International Airlines) has faced consistent

losses due to mismanagement, and corruption. Thus accumulating the debt of billions of dollars. Frequent bailouts to these enterprises

drains the national budget that could be used for better purposes.

Similarly, the circular debt

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Companies of Pakistan's power sector

has exceeded PKR 2.6 trillion  
due to mismanagement & power theft.  
This hurting the economy of the  
country.

### 2.3. Poor Services Delivery

Many SOEs have failed  
to deliver the quality services and  
products. These SOEs require to  
be better operated by private  
sector. For example Pakistan Railways  
and steel mills are the cases  
in point. PSM (Pakistan steel mills)  
has been closed since 2015,  
resulting in massive financial  
losses. Its collapse led to the  
layoff of thousands of employees  
and a significant impact on  
the steel industry, forcing Pakistan  
to rely on imported steel.

Pakistan railways has struggled  
outdated infrastructure. For countries  
like Pakistan with vast geography  
Railways is a vital source  
for passenger traffic. But lack  
of investment and poor service

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### 3- Methods Enterprises

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Delivery like delay in train, caused public inconvenience and major financial losses.

### 3- Methods to privatise these enterprises

There are several methods to privatise these SOEs in order to improve governance and transparency in the SOEs.

#### 3.1 Public offering

The government sells shares of SOEs on the stock exchange through initial public offerings (IPO).

For example: UBL (United Bank Limited) offered its share through IPO

in 1990's, allowing public investment while retaining some government control. This approach will improve

transparency, efficiency and encourage public participation. Moreover, generates capital for the government.

However, it requires a well

functioning stock market without

risk of speculation.

## MBO (Management Buyout)

Sell management or employees purchase the enterprise, gaining ownership and control of the company. For example the small enterprises like textiles & agriculture. This method motivates employees to improve performance and reduces the political resistance to privatisation. However, the financial capacity of the employee is the limitation.

## Public - private partnership

The government partners with private firms to manage or operate SEOs while retaining ownership. For example K-elastic is privately owned, but operates under a regulatory framework involving the government. In such partnership both stakeholders share risks and investments. Thus, improving the efficiency and services delivery. But it also holds the potential for disputes over profit-sharing.

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## Leasing and franchising

The government leases or franchises SOEs while maintaining ownership. For example, Pakistan railway (freight services) the leasing of this sector has been considered. It generates steady income for the government and reduces the operational cost. However, effective monitoring and control are required.

### 4. Conclusion:-

The poor governance, economic strain and poor services delivery has compelled the Pakistan to consider the privatization of loss making SOEs. There are a number of privatization models the government of Pakistan can consider to ensure the efficient governance and services delivery in these enterprises. These models of privatization support the ownership of the enterprises by any private or non-governmental actor. The corporate governance model is functional in privatization process.