

PAKISTAN AFFAIRS

PART-II

Question 5:-

If we don't take charge to address it.

INTRODUCTION

Some environmental scientists theorise that nature has a set capacity when it comes to population. They believe that when population exceeds the threshold set by nature, it tries to keep under check by different means. Nature has limited resources so if demand exceeds the resources, nature balances out the surplus. In case of Pakistan we have seen this phenomenon play into effect in the past few years but the extent hasn't been severe. Taking a general example ~~the~~, in a report WHO recently mentioned that 4 million people die annually because of air pollution and air pollution is a byproduct of steps taken to meet the increasing demand of bulging population and hence a way of nature to wipe out the excess. Nature by its very definition loves balance and the things that tip its balance are bound to fall off.

LAYOUT / MINDMAP

To actually grasp the context and significance of nature playing its role in the evergrowing population's outgrowth a few major factors need to be discussed. This will be done according to the following scheme.

The Bulging Population of Pakistan
and Nature's counter measures

↓
The Bulging Population Size

Reason

Effects

↓
The Role of Nature as A Provider

Climate Agriculture Resources

↓
Nature keeping a check on
Population

↓
Measure to Address population
Size and Nature's tendencies

The Bulging Population size of Pakistan:

In the past few years Pakistan has seen an almost exponential growth in its population so much so that now it ranks as the 5th most populous country in the world. This growth was largely unprecedented and the administration was left unprepared. Just before the turn of the century the population of Pakistan stood at 132 million but now the figure stands at 241 million.. Thus Pakistan has been one of the steadiest growing country in terms of population size, which wouldn't have been an issue if its economic and resources grew alongside it in equal proportion. However that is not the case.

Reasons for an Uncontrollable Growth

While there are many reasons for an unsustainable growth in population, the few major ones are

1. Lack of Awareness about the issue.

The fact that most people tend to live in their own little world enables them to bypass most of the issues face by their nation and lack of control over population is one of them. Most people may not even be aware of the issue and its consequences until it's too late. People have, due to various disappointments detached themselves for national issues and so they need to be brought back to the table and made aware of the seriousness of the issue. Without awareness people will continue to be a strain on both nature and the state of Pakistan.

2. Family Planning Taboo

This unmanageable population crisis ^{is} a by product of lack of Family Planning in Pakistan especially in the lower and middle class families. Family Planning or merely limiting the number of children a family has is considered to be a taboo and a hush hush topic. People view the use of contraceptives as going against the will of God. Thus no efforts are taken to limit the population on an individual level are being made.

3. Twisted Concepts of Financial Security

The lower class families have a concept of viewing children as a measure of future financial security. The greater the number of children they have the more earners and hence more finances. They do not keep in account that the possibility of individual not being productive enough to their state or the health of mother and children. Such mindset of viewing children as money printers is a major issue.

4. Cultural Norms at Play.

Pakistan being a patriarchal society has various customs that looks favourably towards large families and shuns those without children. So people both willingly and unwillingly are subjected to these cultural standings. This is that culture that ~~erect~~ encourages women to stay at home and be a good "mother". Imagine that if all the women were to sit at home, 51% of the population would be unproductive towards the state in the economic sense and how much further the population would get increase by it.

The Effects of Growing Population Size

The growing population has various effects on Pakistan, some of which are:

1. Lack of Available Resources

As the population increases, so does the demand of resources like water, food and shelter. It also increases the consumption of oil and other similar natural resources. This puts a strain on the production and distribution which results in increase in inflation and decreased standard of living for the populace.

2. A Burden on the Economy

A state should have enough resources to manage its population, however in the context of Pakistan's economy not growing with population, the people are proving to be a burden on the economy. With the economy further crashing due to high demands people tend to take matters into their own hands.

3. Conjusted Communities

With growing population and limited inhabitable area and resources available people tend to live together in large groups in small spaces. This gives rise to many "kachi Abadies" popping up around urban centers as the poor tend to be larger in numbers.

4. Increased Competition

With lack of resources and increase in population the competition increases by leaps and bounds. In 1957 Pakistan had 5000 MAF per capita water however that has gone down to 461 MAF now. Imagine having so many more people now compared to them competing over water. This causes many other social evils.

Nature as a Provider

Nature has been given the title of mother nature because of its ability to provide now while nature needs to look out for all its "children", but in such a case looking after everyone means looking after no one ~~one~~. To continue the balance of nature with the resources available and consumers there are and since nature can't actually produce more stuff out of the blue it tends to cut down the consumers. It must be noted it is humans themselves that force the hand of nature.

Nature is a powerful force and has various components deeply interlinked with each other and an imbalance in one may disrupt the whole cycle. Nature needs to maintain an equilibrium of sorts and when humans or an increase in population disrupts it, Nature takes matters into its own hands.

Nature Managing the Population Size:

The nature manages population size in the following ways.

1. Natural Disasters

The increase in population has disrupted the natural order and mechanism which is leading to increased natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, tsunamis and famines. These natural phenomena because of their destructive tendencies tend to wipe out scores of people keep the population in check.

2. Disease and Pandemics

The Covid-19 pandemic showed how pandemic especially the recent one be used to wipe out communities. Millions of people have died throughout history because of disease. In Pakistan every single year sees a surge in dengue cases and ~~the~~ other diseases that can lead to be a counter measure to growing population.

3. War and Conflicts

As people live in congested areas and compete for resources many conflicts can arise. Some insurgent groups rise up conducting terrorist activities just to demand their rights but end up killing tens of people.

4. Other Accident.

Other mysterious accidents like plane crashes and boats sinking, mass shooting etc also are a hand of nature that wouldn't be there if a population was limited. In Pakistan rage because of inavailability of resources has lead to many murders and suicides.

Measures to Address the Issue

The following measures need to be taken to resolve and address the issue.

1. Realising the Consequences

The people should be made aware of the consequences of such a growing population. They should know that their decision don't ensure a good life for them and can actually ruin the balance of nature leading to all kinds of chaos and mayhem.

2. Awareness Campaigns

Awareness campaigns should be started at the government level. Nothing can be done without awareness. An issue cannot be addressed unless it is known.

3. Removing Social Barrier Related to Family Planning

The stigmas and barriers attached to family planning should be removed and people should be encouraged to manage such constraints. Contraceptives should be made easily available to everyone especially those that have less means.

4. Making sure the population is a benefit and not a liability

The population that exists should be properly educated to be a product part of the society and ensure the progress of state. They should not become a liability for a liable population tends to easily fall prey to nature.

5. Sustainable Development

Development must be encouraged on sustainable grounds as to not go against natural phenomenon. Even if the population rises if that is accommodated and integrated with nature it will not cause issues.

6. Better population Management Strategies

Better urban structures and facilities should be established to accommodate everyone. This is done to avoid dense community and spread of disease. Earthquake proof structures are a good option to enforce in ensuring the safety of life.

7. Working with Nature

When people tend to push the boundary of nature ~~and~~ only then do problems arise. It is better to ^{not} work against nature when it comes to population. ~~The~~ Population must be managed before nature has to do it. Natural resources should be utilized with care so it is not burdened.

8. Conclusion

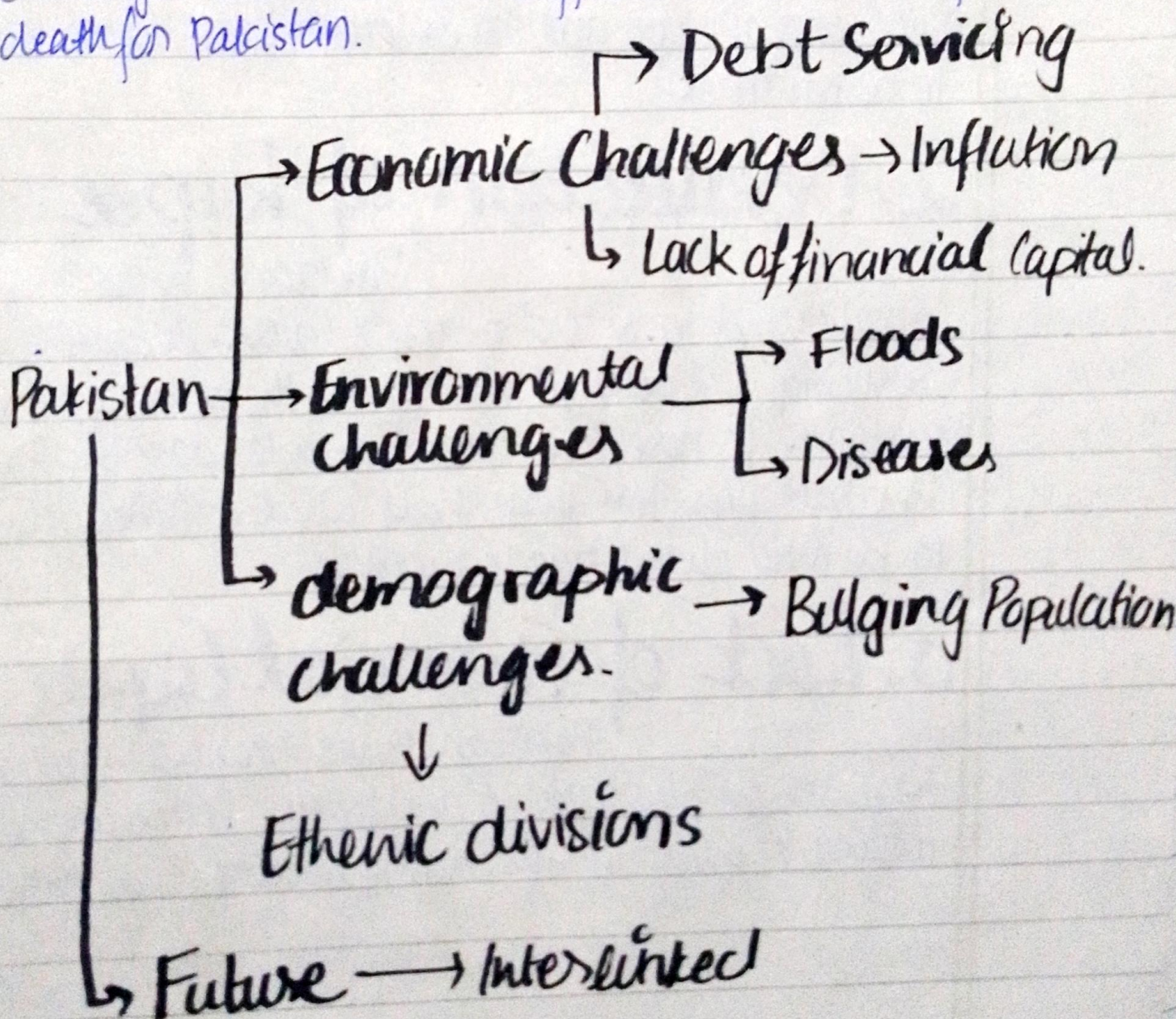
Pakistan has seen events where nature has tried to limit the population size by many means and it will continue to do so until the people realize their mistake. But by overcoming challenges Pakistan can overcome this population ~~is~~ issue in the future.

Question 8.

Pakistan stands Explain

PAKISTAN AT A CRUCIAL JUNCTURE

Ever since its inception Pakistan has been undergoing various challenges however now all those challenges have grown manifold and are seem to be present all at the same time. Pakistan stands at a point in time when overcoming these challenges can mean the difference between life and death for Pakistan.



Economic Challenges Faced By Pakistan

1. Piling Debt

Pakistan has been called a country that has "borrowed" growth in away that all the development that occurred has taken quite a toll on Pakistan's economy as it has taken many loans to escape one financial crisis after another. Even now Pakistan continues to sink into the quicksand of debt and sooner rather than later it needs to be paid back.

2. Devaluation of Rupee

Pakistani Rupee is facing devaluation in record breaking levels. Because of debt servicing and reliance on imports the value of rupee continues to nose dive. Just a decade ago the Dollar to PKR rate was less than half what it is now. This proves to be a big challenge to Pakistan.

3. Lack of Financial Capital

Pakistan lacks financial capital it requires for development and trade. People are no longer willing to invest in this country leading to a financial crisis.

4. Balance of Payments Crisis

The BOP crisis is said to be the biggest issue to Pakistan's economy right now. Pakistan being a large importer needs to pay foreign exchange in dollars which it essentially does not have due to lack of exports. With further devaluation to PKR and debt servicing the balance of payment crisis continues to increase.

5. Sky Rocketing Inflation

with Pakistan's finances in tatters inflation was highest this year similar to when Pakistan conducted nuclear tests against US wishes. This makes the common man suffer and further deters out any potential investment making it an egg and a chicken problem.

Environmental Challenges Faced by Pakistan

With the economic challenges, Pakistan faces many environmental challenges as well. Pakistan being a developing country that may not even be termed as an industrial country is only responsible for less than 1% of global emissions and yet is one of the top 5 affected by climate change. The following mentioned challenges are the ones likely to be the changing climate.

1 FLOODS

Pakistan stands as a witness to serious flooding events. The first major flood Pakistan witnessed was in 2010 but that was less damaging than the one it faced in 2022. The total damages as a result of the 2022 flood stand at \$30bn which is a huge environmental consequence to an already struggling economy. The floods have further degraded environment and Pakistan's ability to get resources.

2. Climate Change disrupting Agricultural Produce

with floods and other changes in climate, Pakistan's agri sector has suffered a lot. Pakistan is an agrarian economy and so it all depends on when and how much it produces. Last year Pakistan expected to have 29 million tonnes of wheat harvest however was only able to harvest 27 million tonnes due to climate change.

3. Environmental Degradation

The environment in general is degrading in Pakistan because of the changing climate. The rivers are drying up and glaciers melting increasing the threat of GLOF. Some agricultural land being left barren because of it becoming uncultivable.

4. Widespread Diseases triggered by Weather Patterns

Diseases such as influenza, dengue, hepatitis, Respiratory disorders are increasing every year to to changes in environment witnessed. Dengue has recently been linked to environmental changes and now now it has become more wide spread. It cost precious resources to keep these diseases under check.

Demographic Challenges Faced by Pakistan.

Pakistan has a diverse demography and hence faces challenges. Pakistan's population was never truly managed or used to serve the country's interest. Following are the challenges Pakistan faces.

1. Bulging and Uncontrollable Population

As Pakistan's Population bulges there is a high chance of it becoming unmanageable as it has now. A growing population is a country's greatest Asset in terms of it being able to serve a country. In case of Pakistan, due to lack of planning on part of individuals and management on part of state the population is getting out of hand and putting a strain on resources.

2. Ethnic Division

Pakistan has always been a multi ethnic state but as of late these ethnicities have started to become more prominent and divided. Ethnic tensions are on the rise with one fraction fighting against another over limited resources and attention. This of course has been triggered by rise of insurgency and continues to threaten internal security of Pakistan.

3. Lack of Literacy

While Pakistan's literacy metric continue to improve themselves but they are still not promising. Around 25 million children are out of school in Pakistan. If such big part of a generation remains uneducated they will prove to be a major challenge in the future.

4. Brain Drain

While literacy rate remains low in Pakistan, brain drains seems to have increased. Just in the first half of last year Pakistan saw an upward of 75000 individuals leaving the country for better opportunities. If they leave the country Pakistan will be left with uneducated and unproductive lot.

5. Fear of Individual becoming a liability.

Pakistan's population is proving to be a liability and not an advantage to the state with already has limited resources. on this will be a major issue going forward.

Dirge Need of Effective Policy Making

Pakistan needs to start working on new policies to mitigate these challenges. New approaches must be adopted because things are not looking up as of now. Policies must be made for the sake of masses and to overcome economic challenges that bring in more investment and make Pakistan seem more stable and less prone to default.

National Unity and Efforts for Environmental Upkeep

Only when a nation stands behind the state can a state truly develop. The people need to start owning the state and start doing something for its betterment and on an individual level it begins by paying taxes and taking part in efforts for environmental upkeep.

National Integration

Just like at the time of partition every single citizen, no matter what ethnicity or religion they belonged to, thought of themselves as Pakistani, the same spirit needs to be adopted now. We need to overcome our differences to achieve national integration and live as one Pakistani nation.

environment sector. The environment will give back by being more favourable and provide better living conditions. After all according to Goldman Sachs Pakistan will be the 6th largest economy in 2015. They must have seen the potential Pakistan has that people need to see too.

Conclusion:-

With everything said, Pakistan can no longer afford to delay its progress as it sits at this crucial juncture. These challenges need to be tackled head on before they end up further exacerbating one another. Pakistan demography can be the greatest asset to its economy and in demography and economy work hand in hand the environment will improve itself. But time is of the essence and so that Pakistan can move on its way of becoming the 6th largest economy before the turn of the century.