

Date _____

WHY NATIONS FAIL?

1) Introduction:

Why nations fail? The Structural, Normative and Material Impulses

2) Contextualizing a 'National Failure':

Attributed to internal or external upheaval; weakened institutions; democratic decline; economic or technological backwardness

3) The Structural Impulses of Failure:

- i- Geopolitics: Ideological confrontations and proxies;
- ii- Globalization: Technological and economic exploitations.

4) The Normative Impulses of Failure:

- i- Historical legacy;
- ii- Institutional Integrity;
- iii- Political, Economic and Social Nature of Society.

5) The Tangible, Material Factors of Failure:

- i- The Prisoners of Geography;
- ii- Fate of Nations associated with Natural Resources;
- iii- Human Capital; Blessing or a disguise?

6) Arresting the Pathway towards Failure:

Path reorientation: self consciousness and institutionalized behavior

The case of Pakistan and suggestions.

7) Conclusion:

Failure as Lesson; Revival possible

A failing nation fails primarily because of its poorly constructed national 'choices', contends the authors of a comparative study conducted under the title of "Why Nations Fail". Nevertheless, one can't undermine the significance of 'choice', otherwise called policies, in navigating the fate of any nation. Simultaneously, it would be insufficient to disregard external - beyond the ambit of 'choice' - factors alongside internal decisions to entirely understand why nations fail. Therefore, a wide-array of causes might be attributed to the evident decline or failure of a nation. To begin with the broader context, one must consider global contexts i.e. the structural impulses. The conflict ridden Middle Eastern nations are clear manifestation of how geopolitical factors contribute to internal upheavals. Similarly, the crafted and consistent backwardness of the African continent suggests how north-south divide works, to imposing inequalities. Apart from structure that nations operate in, their internal i.e. normative culture is also equally crucial in guiding nations pathway. South Asian and Latin American nations illustrate the phenomenon where historical colonial legacies, contentious political culture, and technological/economic repulsions and exclusivity contributes to steady fall of a nation. Lastly, few tangible, material and natural factors must be taken into consideration i.e. geographic location, natural resources and human capital to fully grasp why nations might fail. Therefore, it is imperative to conclude that failure of any nation attributes to not only its internal ^{policies} but external factors in which state is bound to operate in.

The health of institutions are supposedly direct indicator of the health of any nation. To elaborate, nations prosperity, stability and resilience are outcome of and a clear depiction of its Institution's integrity, proficiency and efficacy. Therefore any national failure is directly assessed with respect to the condition of its institutions - drivers of policies. However promising the document of 'choice' will be its ultimate success or failure lies in the hands of institutions. Against this backdrop, the main feature of a failed nation is failing institutions. Replacement of inclusive, principle-driven institutions with exclusive, monopolised and individualistic / interest-driven institutions set the pathway to failure. For instance, economic productivity and democratic politics in South Korea versus economic strangulation and political crackdown in North Korea is a simplest comparison between successful and failed nation. Strong institutions foster transparency, accountability and responsiveness to the needs of the people, all of which are crucial for the sustainable growth and development. Conversely, weak institutions are plagued by corruption, inefficiency and exploitation, creating a vicious cycle of masses poverty inequality, and discontent. History provides numerous examples of how the state institutions can make or break a nation. Nations tend to thrive, at their fullest, in rules-based, democratic and transparent models of governance. Institutional imbalances does the opposite of prosperity.

Afghanistan under Zahir Shah, Iran under Mosaddegh or Iraq under Saddam Hussein, all were detracked from the pathways of progress to the shadows of failure - owing not to institutional failure but the geopolitics of nations, rather great powers. In the world of anarchy, great powers tend to alter the course of history often for their gains. 'The strong do what they can, the weak suffer what they must' adage continues to rewrite the fate of many nations till date. The geopolitical rivalries and their impact on secondary nations can not be undermined. Similarly, the global economic and social culture tends to impact significantly on nations, take global financial crisis 2008 as marking a shift in statuses of nations.

Globalization, for instance, marked an era of neo-exploitation for many nations, given persistent degree of inequalities. This subtle interference and influence has a destabilizing impact on nations of the global south, further pushing them into internal discord and upheaval.

The interplay of geopolitics, culture and global economic forces cannot be overlooked in understanding why nations fail.

It is often scholarly analysed that nations are built around ideas and circumstances. The ideational significance for a nation's course and direction therefore might not be overlooked either. These 'ideas' essentially set the pathway, ^{form the} pillars of institutions and rules of the game.

Progressive, liberal and modern ideas lead a nation to successful, relevant and long lasting impactful journey.

Date:

These ideas are deeply rooted in nation's history i.e. colonialism or authoritarianism and are later manifested in its political, economic and social culture. Colonialism left a lasting impact on many nations, dealing with perpetual 'failures' ~~subtly~~, even after years of decolonization. Countries where prioritization of center's interest, exploitation or extraction of resources continue to the pace that has left societal development and self-sufficiency weakened and elusive. Such nations keep failing because of historical legacies; perpetuate inequalities, weakens state sovereignty and foster external dependencies. Beyond historical legacies, nation's political, economic and social structures are equally crucial in determining nation's trajectory. Politically, nations with corrupt, exclusive and authoritative tendencies dominant models tend to push ~~country~~ nation into failure. Economically, nations whose model rely heavily on elite capture, monopolised interactions render economic growth unattainable. Subsequently resulting in widespread economic turmoil, poverty and inequalities. Socially, nations that are more repulsive to tolerance, inclusivity, dialogue and inter-faith harmonies leave nation divided, fragmented and failed. Together, these institutional failures create an environment where stability and growth are perpetually hindered, keeping nations trapped in the cycles of poverty and dependency, unable to overcome the shadows historical legacies, at worse feeding them.

Date: _____

Tangible factors such as geography, natural resources and human capital are critical determinants in any nation's success ^{or} ~~and~~ failure besides structural and institutional factors. Geography plays significant role, as nations with favorable conditions - climatic conditions, access to functional waterways, fertility and productivity of land, trade and economic connectivity - are at natural advantage. In contrast, nations with geographic constraints such as harsh weather condition, land locked territories, challenging terrains may ~~may~~ face territorial barriers resulting economic dependency on external entities.

Natural resources similarly are crucial factor. Acting as a double edged sword, can be an asset, could be a curse - given institutional inefficiency or corruption.

Countries in Africa despite resource enriched status continue to struggle pertaining to nation's practices of monopolisation and external exploitation. Conversely, the extraction of oil and natural gas from Middle East has added to the success of nations positively. Finally, human capital skills, knowledge, and health of the population - is perhaps the most significant resource which determines the pathway nation follows.

Nations with well-educated, skilled, and healthy workforce tend to innovate, adapt and grow more resilient over time. In contrast, nations with ill-equipped population welcomes cycles of poverty, decline and eventual failure.

Together, geography, natural resources and human capital shape any nation's ability to thrive or fall behind, underlining how these tangible factors either empower or constrain national power and success.

Averting the pathway of failure requires a conscious reorientation of national priorities and a heightened sense of self-standing and awareness. Path reorientation involves a deliberate shift away from practices that promote short-term goals but undermine long-term stability. It involves institutional recalibration, making them more inclusive, functional, transparent and accountable. The reform must intent to address and incorporate 'general will', popular approval and welfare instead of approving the goodness of few individuals. Apart from reorientation, a heightened sense of self-awareness entails nation wide acknowledgement of past mistakes and present need for revisiting those misguided 'choices' and broad consensus to alter those motives for future security and survival. Such a reset must undertake the factor of failure into consideration and try in best spirit to avert those practices.

The contemporary challenges of Pakistan marked by institutional imbalances, political instability, economic struggles, geopolitical shocks and societal discord depict a grimful situation pertaining nation's fate. For Pakistan to truly avert the pathway to failure, it must prioritize sustainable economic growth, strengthen democratic institutions and invest in human capital to harness its young and growing population. By embracing self-conscious reforms and a reoriented path toward inclusive governance and collective interest, Pakistan can build resilience against internal and external pressures, charting a course toward lasting success.

Date:

In conclusion, nations failure often manifested in the form of institutional breakdown, democratic upheaval, economic discord and societal degradation is a collective outcome of both internal weaknesses and external pressures. Nations fail due to structural global impulses, internal normative directions and natural tangible endowments. At structural level, global context either marked by cooperation or confrontation among great powers impact the trajectory of secondary nations. At normative level, internal context in which nation's institutions, ideas and people behave is equally crucial as determinant of nation's fate. At material level, few natural factors can be attributed as deciding factors of nations success or failure, to name, its geography, natural resources availability and consumption, and effectiveness of human capital. All together contributes in deciding national success or failure. "A nation may rise or fall, but idea lives on". Therefore, to avert the path of failure and eradication nations must reset their pathways marked by heightened sense of self-consciousness and planning long term stability. Moreover, failures are only helpful when they're looked upon as lessons, otherwise its a tragedy.