

Why Nations Fail?

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The world has become largely globalized in the 21st century. With the nations being highly interconnected and interdependent, the failure of a nation does not solely rely on its internal conditions. The economies, societies and politics have so much intertwined that actions of one nation can influence the fate of another nation. But, it was not always like that, initially the societies were not very complex and they usually had to focus on only internal consolidation without giving much thought to the geo-political realities of the world. The 19th century saw the rise of industrialization and free market economy and now we are completely submerged in the capitalistic model of governance which, Karl Marx highlighted, is doomed to fail. The nations around the world watch very closely the decisions taken by the leaders of liberal international order

so that they are not isolated. But, with the rise of China and emerging economies the international order is falling and failing bringing more challenges to the existing nations of the world. In the new geo-political world order, the nations with struggling societies due to weak democracy, poor quality of education, political instability, lack of national integration, rising internal and external conflicts, frequent violation of Human Rights and most importantly moribund economy are doomed to fail as not even divine intervention can save them from their ill-fate.

The term nation can be simply defined as: 'A social group or amalgamation of more than one group with shared identity, culture, race or ethnicity came together to form a collective identity and to work towards a common goal constitutes a nation'. Frequently the term nation is used inter

changeably with the term 'state'. But, it is so important to draw a distinction between state, nation and a nation-state to better understand why nations actually fail. A nation can exist independently without being organized into a state. For example, Kurds in the Middle East, and Sikhs in the Indian part of Punjab who are striving for a separate 'Khalistan' state. Therefore, four elements are absolutely crucial for a nation to be called as a state. These essential elements of a state are territory, population, sovereignty and government according to the Montevideo Convention which defines a state as an international identity. Obviously, in international law other elements like recognition by other states and effective control over the territory are also vital but they are generally secondary elements. Most of the states of the world, for instance, US and Pakistan

are a nation-state because they have catered multiple nations inside its territory and formed a collective identity. In case of Pakistan, Islam is the force which binds together different nations.

Historically, the nations were not always like this. The society was much more easier to understand and comprehend. People used to live in caves and hunt to fulfill their appetite. Then, the individuals realized that living in isolation is more difficult due to security as well as specialization reasons. Therefore, the few individuals organized themselves into a social group with loosely defined and constructed roles and were called as hunting and gathering society. The humans are social beings as they can not survive for long in wilderness. As the society gradually evolve the small group comprising of few individuals transformed

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into a clan and as the society grew more complex it constituted itself into a tribe and then finally into a nation. The current world order in which nations-states are the central player of the International Relations is the breed of Westphalian system which was the result of 'Treaty of Westphalia - 1648'. Largely, the world has been ruled by the west and their economic imperialist and colonialist policies of the past are still influencing the policies of the present. Developing world has been entangled into a vicious cycle, from which their revival seems like a distant reality.

Moreover, the western societies through the colonialism has not only robbed the developing world physically through slavery but also mentally and spiritually. Historians tells the barbaric realities of colonialism that it has robbed rich and diverse culture of Africa,

Asia and South America and forcefully imposed western material and non material culture onto the society. Furthermore, due to already disadvantaged position of nations which have colonial history, the west feels entitled to put labels like Global south, underdeveloped world or developing world and more recently the label of 'failed states' especially in the case of Afghanistan and Iraq. The current economic model or western modernization thesis have been rejected by the 'Karl Marx' as well as 'Andre Gunder Frank' who calls the modernization thesis as the 'development of the under-development'. For western society, the any nation not on track or aligned with the western model of liberal democracy or free market economy is a failed nation and therefore permanently put in inferior class of nations. The west, historically speaking, has one fundamental problem while

putting labels on nations like 'failed state', they always fail to realize that they do not share the planet with inferior but equals, and it - is not only humiliating but also disheartening for the nations to receive labels like this from the west.

While it was important to understand the concept of nation, its historical evolution and to explore why labels like 'failed state' are so frequently used by west, it is also extremely important to understand the point of view of mainstream IR Theories. From the dawn of IR as a discipline two theories have constantly dominated the IR: Liberalism and Realism. Both the theories explains and provides way forward to nation according to their own framework. For realist school of thought, if a nation does not have a survival instinct, strong military and offensive-defensive capabilities then

a nation is doomed to fail. Moreover, in an anarchic world only a state can be rational and takes decision due to the uncertainty of the intentions of its rivals. Therefore, if a nation does not consolidate itself internally and externally, it will be eaten by the rival. Whereas, the liberal school of thought which according to Fukuyama has won (The End of History) posits that the world now has become highly interdependent and globalized. Gone are the days when states and even large empires could survive on their own. The world has evolved so do geo-politics. That's why for a nation to not only survive but also thrive cooperation and integration with other nations have become much more important.

After developing fair understanding of the nation and also looking at the term through theoretical angles, it becomes abso-

lutely vital to dig deep into the reasons for the failure of the nation. The first indicator for the potential failure of the society is the overall condition of the nation. When a nation is physically (health of individual) weak, it becomes almost impossible for it to get up and strive for success. Similarly, if a nation is mentally weak and in a state of colonial mindset and xenocentrism, progress of that nation is a remote reality. Only a strong physically and mentally nation can rise from the ashes; the biggest example of such rise is Japan which rose as one of the top nations after the tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and became part of G-7 countries. Moreover, if a society is suffering from the ailment of intolerance, then extremism and radicalization of that society is almost certain which impedes national progress and prepares it for failure. In the recent review by UN HR Committee review, Pakistan is one of those societies where

intolerance is at high level whether it is politics or day-to-day affairs. In addition to that, the amount and age of population of a nation is also a potential indicator of nation's fate. Because overpopulation puts unnecessary strain on nation's economy and resources. For example, Pakistan is the 5th largest nation with 241.5 million population and it is currently in severe economic crisis which is a perfect recipe of disaster.

Moreover, Education quality is also a huge reason for nation's success or failure. It is highly believed that education is the cornerstone of any nation's progress. According to Nelson Mandela, education decides the future of nation. Education is so important for a nation that even Holy Prophet PBUH has once said 'The ink of a scholar is sacred than a sword'. To highlight the significance of the education in nation's progress, it is very favour-

shy said; 'Classrooms decides the future of nation'. The quality of education have direct consequences on the nation's policy formulation whether it is related to economy or politics. Because at the end of the day, the individual in power was once the part of the same education system which shows that why Pakistan's economy is in moribund stage. Dying economy of a nation can be the result of state's poor policy, as well as external geo-political influence such as conflicts in the Middle East and COVID-19 pandemic. One thing is certain that economic crises does not come and fade away in isolation, it has devastating impacts on the overall health of a nation. Therefore, dying economy is the harbinger of the potential death of a nation physically as well as meta-physically. The looming economic crises

of Pakistan deeply impacts the political condition of a nation. If the economic wheel of a nation is running well so do the politics will run well. Political and economic stability are two wheels of a same motorcycle which means change in one side can affect the other as well. Political instability can result in nation's failure and it can be triggered by relentless internal and external conflicts as well as when other state institutions try to breach their constitutional boundaries and erode democracy. In a famous book (Why Nations Fail?); the author says, "There are many elements here and there who try to grab power for their own interest keep them under check through democracy or your nation will fail. In simple words, when institutions like military, judiciary or bureaucracy overstep their boundaries then the space for democracy shrinks, and once

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The space for democracy shrinks
numerous internal and
external conflicts come to the
surface. It can be in the
form of hostile neighbours trying
to exploit the situation by
funding and supporting anti-
state elements. For example; the
Kalbushan Yadav case proves that
Indian intelligence tried to
exploit Pakistan's internal affairs
due to lack of social and
national integration.

In addition
to that, a nation where there
is frequent violation of Human
rights for personal, political or
economic gains is also doomed
for failure. It has been evident
in the history that women
has played a huge role in
the nation's progress whether
it is giving birth to a children
which later becomes part of
economic or political leadership
or herself become an active
member of progress by standing
in frontlines, shoulder-to-shoulder
with men. The nations which

suppress women rights and basic fundamental human rights of everyone are condemned by the international community. For example, the current Afghan regime's policies regarding women and human rights are not only internationally condemned by the other nations but also become a source of their isolation. Consequently, isolation whether it is political, economic or diplomatic can prove to be very devastating for the nation's future. Similarly, Israel atrocities in Gaza has not only highlighted the war crimes and blatant violation of Human rights but also the Western hypocrisy around the discrimination in the proliferation of Human Rights. That is the reason why Western nations and liberal international order is under decline and the world is looking for an alternative in the form of BRICS.

Nations which strive to avert their potential failure as a state needs

To be proactive in solving their internal and external conflicts. Nations, just like Pakistan needs to ~~add~~ devise and adopt a comprehensive strategy for the future where all stakeholders are involved. Upon considering all the reasons for failure, following recommendations can be made; firstly, in the post-modern society, there is a need of pragmatic civil-military relationship. Secondly, a long term de-radicalization strategy to improve the overall health of a nation. Thirdly, a nation-state needs to ensure the internalization and externalization of human rights. Fourthly, a nation must focus on internal consolidation by exercising 'strategic patience' to external conflicts. Lastly, all the state institutions must work inside the boundaries set forth by the constitution to ensure the democracy prevails.

Unless nations adhere to the aforementioned recommendations, they are doomed for failure due to deadlock between states institutions, risk of bigger confrontation with their rivals, sometimes internally and other times externally. Nations striving for a better tomorrow ought to understand the urgency and gravity of their own situation and take steps today which will manifest into a promising tomorrow. Any nation of the world developing or developed can solidify their position in the international arena by focusing on what truly matters not by indulging into petty conflicts which impedes their chances of progress. The grounds laid by the mainstream IR are both right in their own ways because it really comes down to the amount of social solidarity, strategic culture, leadership and geography of a nation which is instruments

for the nation's future. It has
been very famously said that
"Your future is decided
by what you do today not
tomorrow"