

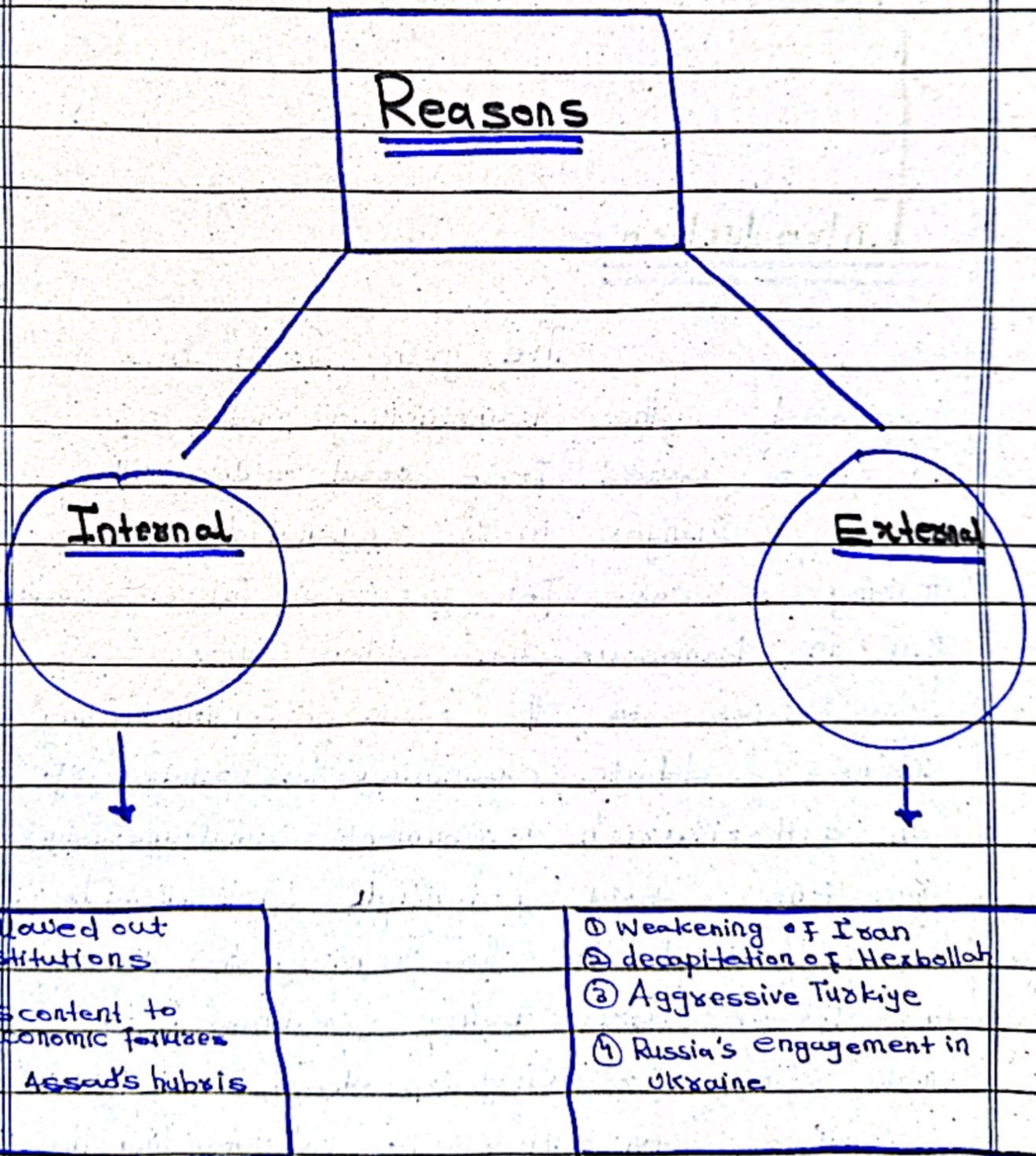
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Question #01

Introduction

The year 2024 has exposed the transitioning status of a so called free world order, with rapid changes in the regional dynamics making a case for uncertain future. Assad's fall in Damascus has added layers of complexities to the risk perception, inviting intense debate examining the collapse of an authoritarian government. Simultaneously, questions about potential implications have been hurled to the centre. The victors and losers are being scrutinised to make sense for what lies ahead. This answer is also an attempt to understanding the intricate details of Assad's fall and implications ahead.

Reasons for the collapse of Assad's regime



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External reasons

① Iran has been weakened; its forward defence asymmetrical strategy has shown cracks

No doubt, the weakening of Iran had exposed Assad to host of threats.

② Hezbollah's decapitation left no avenue for troops mobilisation

Hezbollah has lost key leaders, which made it to restrict its activities.

③ Russia remained too mixed in Ukraine to provide air reinforcement

Following the uprisings in 2011, Russia had come to the rescue of Assad, this time it failed to do so, largely due to commitments in Ukraine.

DATE _ / _ / _

△ Ankara's failure to secure a deal with Damascus led to change in approach, proving Assad's Waterloo

In Summer of 2024, Fluxy of diplomatic activity failed to stir dialogue, enabling Ankara to opt for a military solution to Assad's intransigence.

Tel Aviv doubled down to leave Assad vulnerable

Tel Aviv kept Assad busy as its attacks made him miscalculate about the nature of threat imminent.

△ top reason for Assad's stunning fall is vulnerable security policy of Iran

Veli Nash
Foreign Policy

DATE: ___/___/___

Internal reasons contributing to change of regime

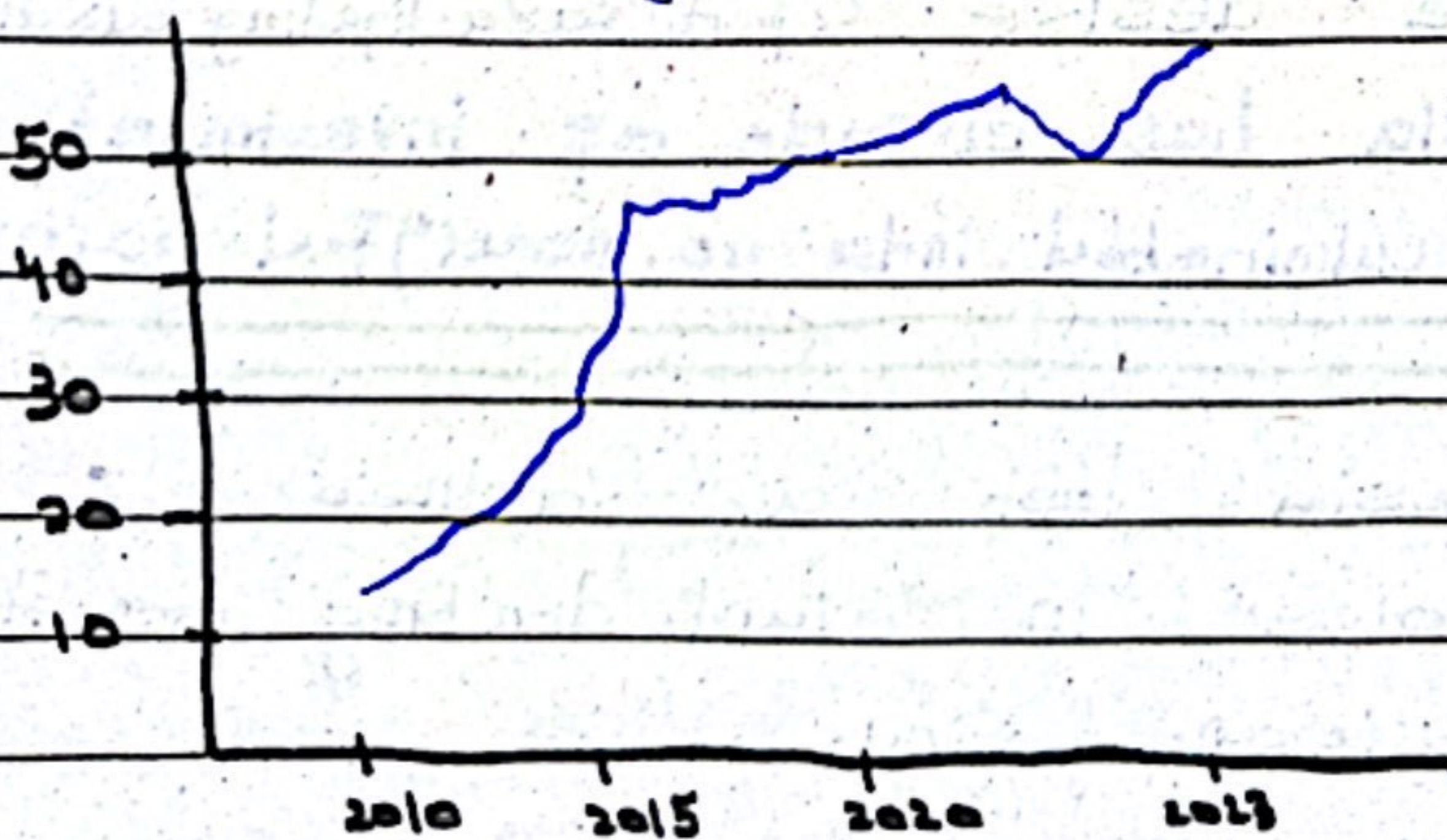
Institutions of Syria remain dilapidated, with under-paid military finding no reason to mount challenge

Military was hollowed out, crippled and underpaid. It found no reason to wage a bloody war.

A palpable economic discontent meant revolutionary change was in the air

The graph shows how most Syrians remained unemployed, weakening Assad's regime.

unemployment - Syria



Implications of the Change

① Israel has been greatly emboldened

The failure of Assad has emboldened Tel Aviv to annex land and resources of Syria.

② Iran has lost a key ally, making Axis weaker than ever in recent times

Iran has lost a vital ally, denting the security calculus of ~~Tel Aviv~~ Tehran.

③ The change has played to the tunes of Ankara

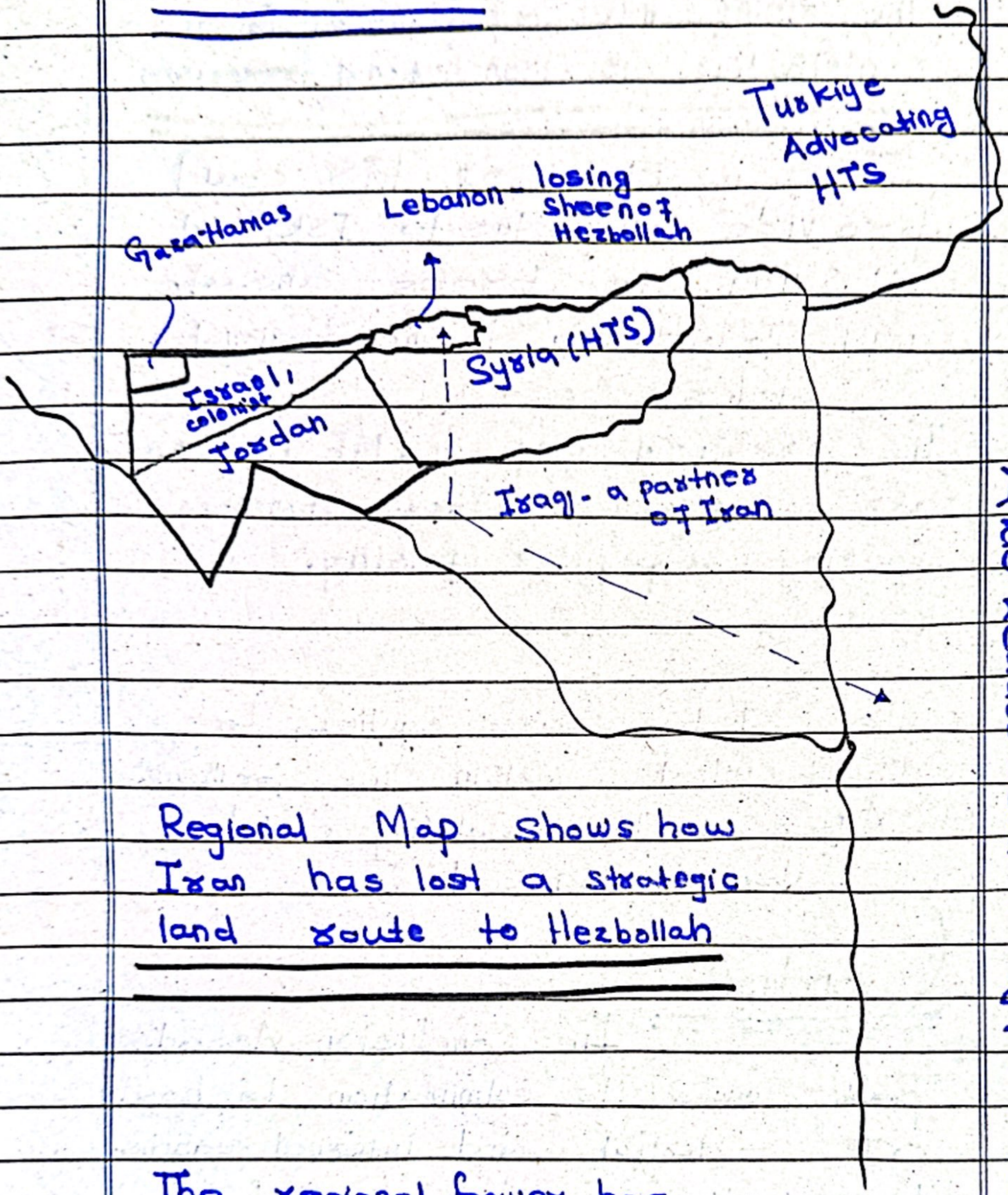
The change is choreographed to the desire of Ankara fighting Kurdish cadres.

④ Russia has decade of investment has culminated into no meaningful gain

Russia lost a partner of choice in Levant, denting its African policy.

DATE: ___/___/___

Regional Map



Regional Map shows how Iran has lost a strategic land route to Hezbollah

The regional power has tipped in the favour of Israel

Steven A Cook
Council for Foreign Relations

Axis Leader Iran - losing partners

Another implication includes the rising tide of political Islam contributing to transnational terrorism

The rise of HTS could provide impetus to ISKP and Al Qaida to press ahead, much frustrating to the regional states

The regional gulf and ME nations are depicting cautious stance, fearing a popular uprising.

The states are cautious to craft what next in line for them. After all, their stability could also be risked

Conclusion:

In Conclusion, Assad's Fall owes its culmination to host of external and internal reasons. The implications have enabled Ankara and Tel Aviv to centre stage, while significantly denting the cause of Palestine, Axis and Tehran. Russia, too, has lost a partner.

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Question

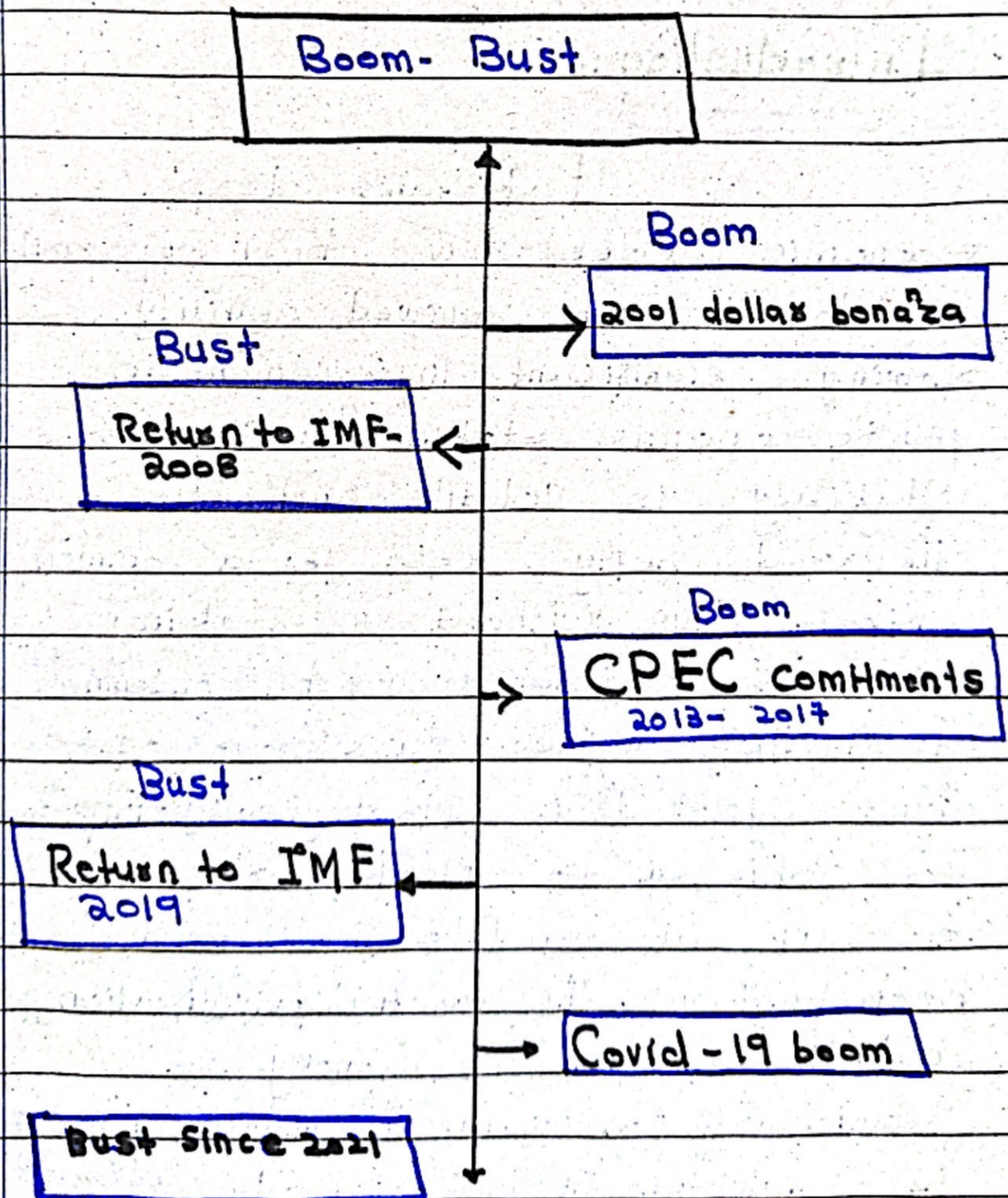
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Introduction :-

Pakistan's deep economic woes have been temporarily beclouded, with renewed stability showing significant improvement in macroeconomic status. However, the stability is volatile and has incurred hefty cost for a common citizen. Thus, without undertaking reforms, Pakistan would be condemned to invite another dark hour of bust cycle. It is strategically imperative for Pakistan to entertain reforms to put an end to the toxic boom-bust cycle. The taxation, privatization and diversification of economy are particularly relevant. The answer, thus, is evaluation in this regard.

Boom and Bust Cycle of Pakistan's Economy

A timeline of 21st century



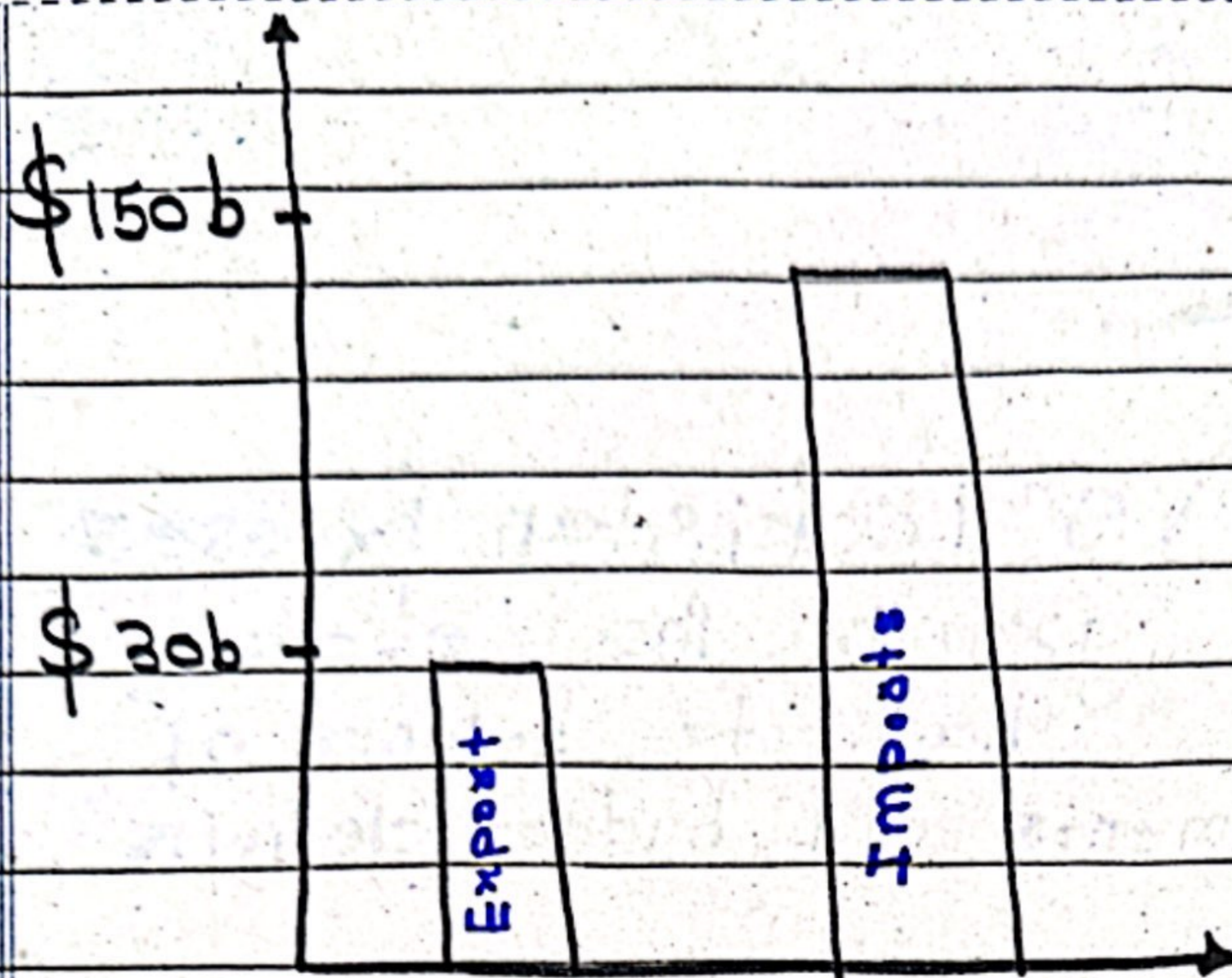
As Pakistan presses for growth, the economy falls back to balance of payments and budget deficits

Issues in Pakistan's Economy S Akber Zaidi

Reasons for Cyclical trap

Following each boom cycle, the import growth outweighs exports, FDI and other resources

The consumption pattern of the economy engenders a toxic cycle of boom and bust.



2022-23

2023-24

Economic Survey of Pakistan

A consumption-import based economy invites trade balance

This trade imbalance make returning to IMF inevitable and necessary as reserves are inadequate.

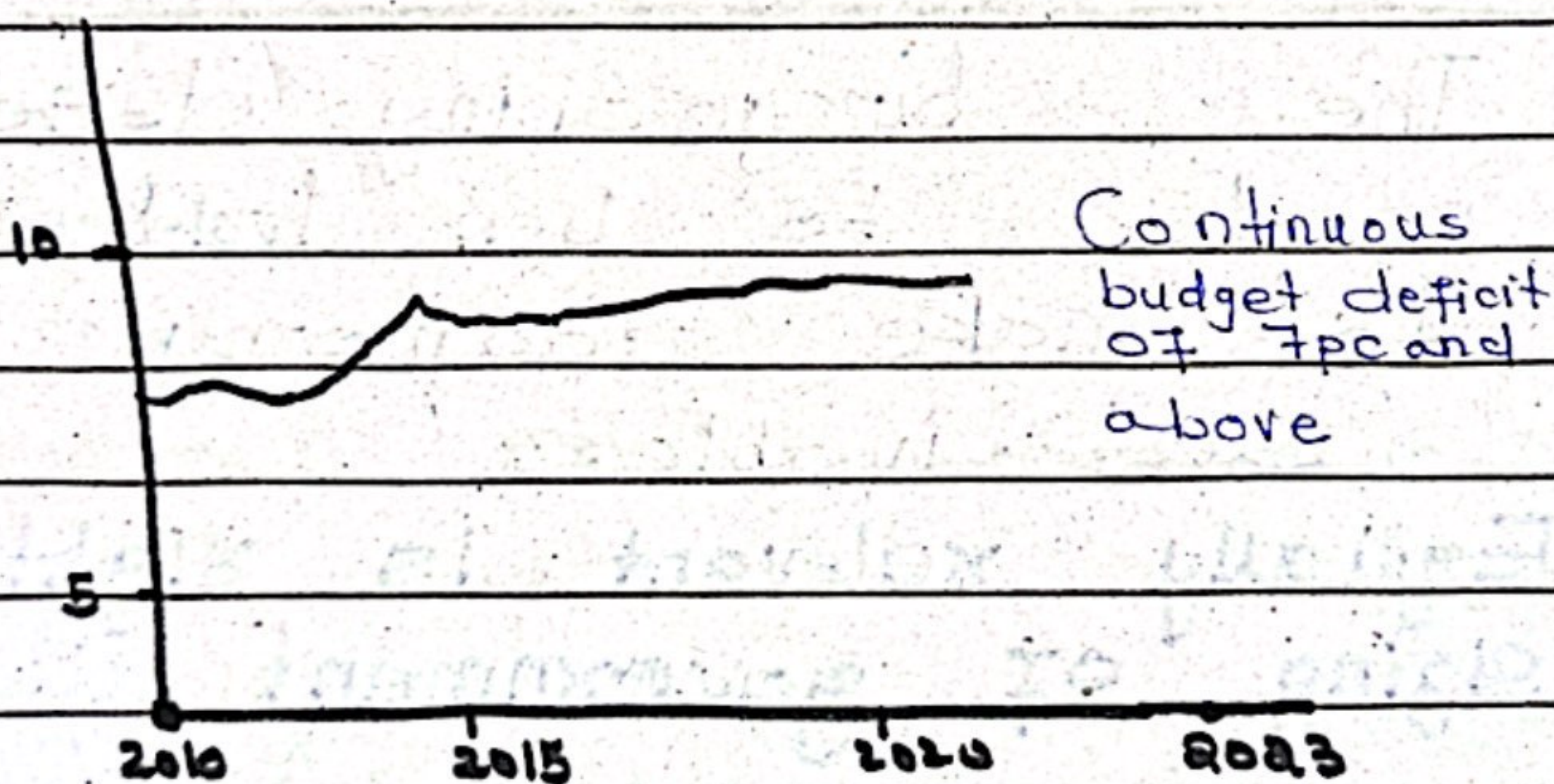
Revenue resources are meagre, while expenditure remains high

Budget deficit are recurring and growing in the economy.

Pakistan should undertake reforms to find solid economic footings

Taxation is vitally imperative for Pakistan

Tax to GDP = 9pc / 10pc



Taxing real estate, retailers and agriculture income

These three sectors need to be taxed to enhance revenue share.

Renouncing the habit of tax exemption is important

Islamabad has a knack of playing to the tunes of investors who promise to bring investment. This bargain needs an end.

Pakistan needs to cut down its burgeoning expenditure

The burgeoning deficit needs to be bridged to make economy sustainable.

Equally relevant is right-sizing of government

The right sizing is a key step to curb revenue shortfall and improve governance.

DATE: ___/___/___

Pakistan's taxation is lowest in the regions

IMF, 2024

Efforts to privatise loss making entities is important for the economy

PIA is yet to be privatized. steel Mills also remain in line. Discos, too, need a rethinking. Pakistan should make serious effort.

Pakistan's economy lose 2pc of GDP each year to SOEs

Governing the Ungovernable

Ishrat Hussain

Pakistan needs to put in
order its power sector bleeding
circular debt (2393 billion)

The power sector needs
to be overhauled and reformed.
This will help economy.

Investment in services sector, in
IT particular, could help Islamabad
diversify exports and earn foreign
exchange reserves

Investment in IT could help
Pakistan in multiple ways
and earn dollars.

Conclusion In conclusion, reforms
are critically imperative for
stability and sustainability of
economy. Pakistan should underscore
the reforms highlighted to escape
boom and bust cycle.

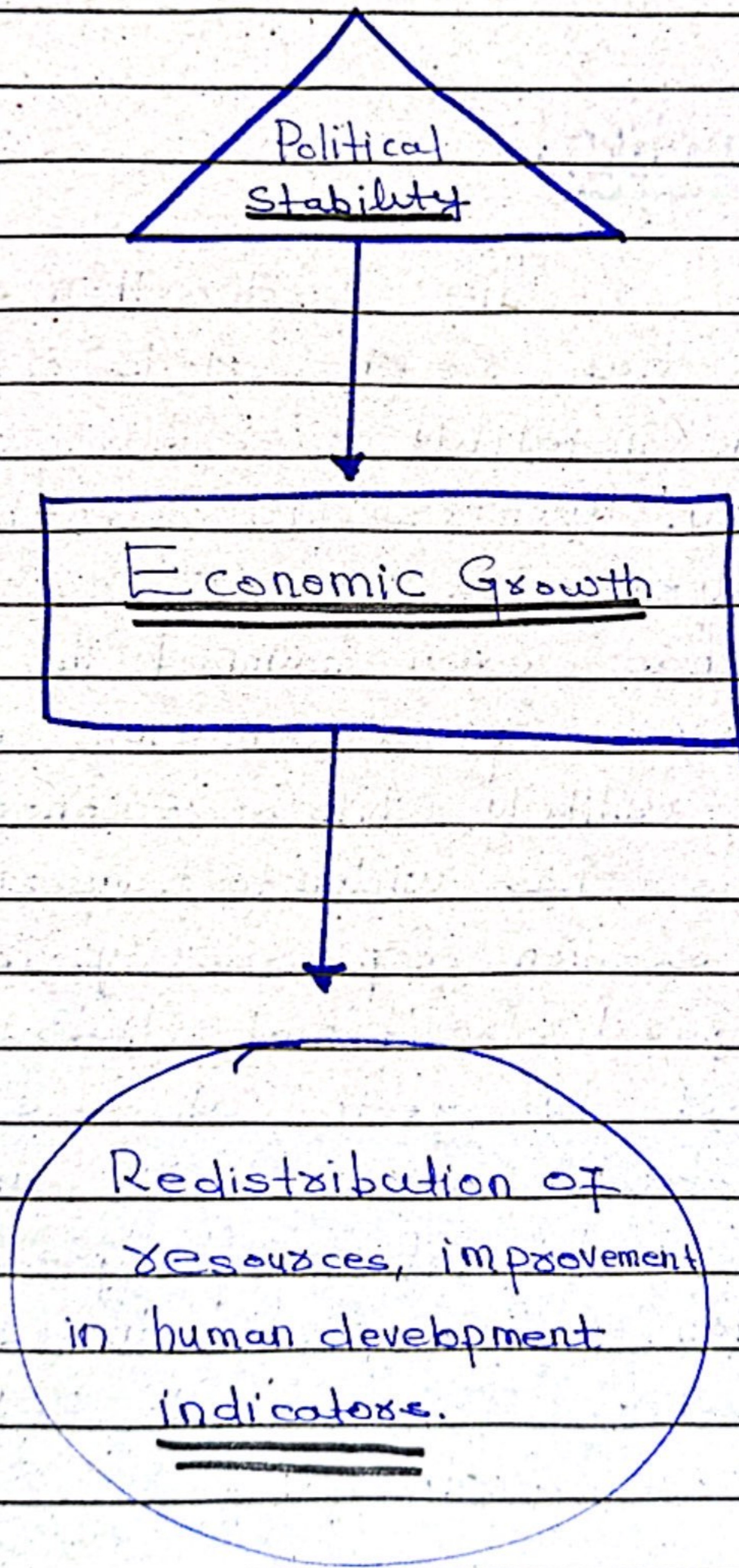
Without reforms, there will be no
escape of recurring cycle

Pakistan Institute of
Development Economics

Q7Introduction:

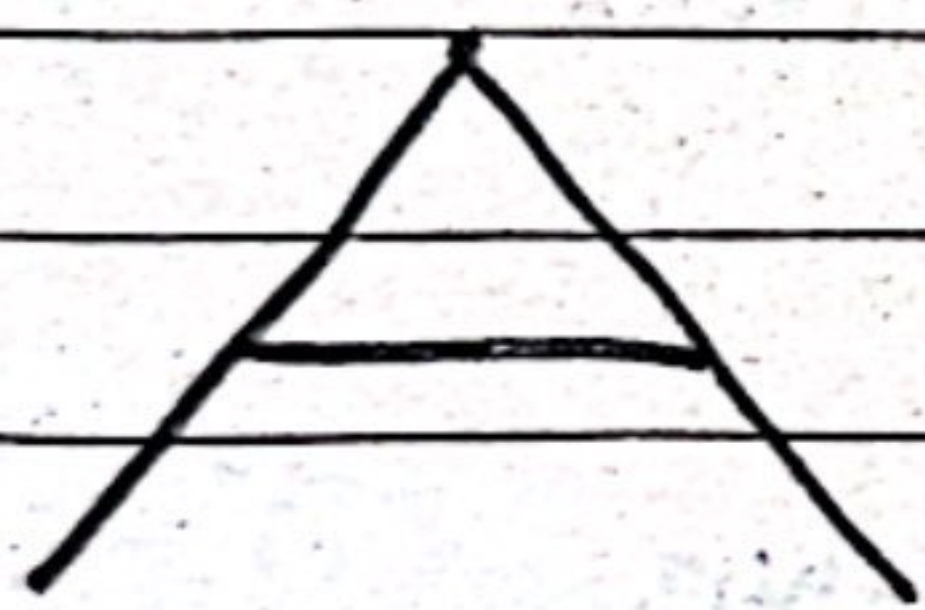
The Federation of Pakistan has seen periods of spiralling instability over the course of history. However, the recent bout following April 2022 vote of no confidence has even trumped the levels of earlier episodes, making any progress unlikely, while socioeconomic inequalities has widened to impoverish a wider section of society. In this regard, political dialogue is vital to get ahead of strife and unrest, in an attempt to put progress in motion. The answer introduces a strategy for grand dialogue in this regard.

Low political stability
is vital for socio-economic
Stability



Without consensus and political stability, economy is unlikely to grow and socio-economic progress is unattainable

Gambling On Development Stefon Dexcon

 Grand Strategy
For political dialogue

All political parties to recognise legitimacy to each other

For Political culture to change, this marks a crucial step. Today, it is lacking.

Convincing military elites to reevaluate their institutional stance over politics

Institution should be made part of the process and convince to think of its role.

Entering into a contract, like Charter of Democracy 2008.

The contract of such nature would establish rules and norms.

The top agenda is to solve political questions politically without bringing military into play

The question needs an articulation and such a process will agree not to drag military into politics.

Restoration of fundamental rights. Chapter II of Constitution, should be agreed upon

Fundamental rights will be discussed and their implementation and status will be assessed.

This will provide future roadmap.

Baluch Yekjehi Committee should be made part of the process

All the middle class Baluch are moving away from Federation. They need to be heard and be part of stakeholders.

Ex-Fata elders, Pashtoon nationalist should be invited to find consensus of inclusive nature

This is relevant, for Pakistan has failed to mainstream Fata and tribal areas.

For Pakistan to progress, a new political Compact involving all regions and factions is required

Reimagining Pakistan
Hussain Haqanni

Given the trust deficit, it is not bad to involve a friendly sovereign.

One would not like to opt for this. However, it can be given a thought.

Above has happened in 2000, following Oct, 1999 coup

A Charter of economy
can also be signed

The Charter of economy would laid the foundation of reforms, enabling the decision makers direction and way forward

Because reforms stir political cost, a consensus may remove the barriers

Miftah Ismail
Former Finance Minister
(2017/18, 2022)

A clear plan over human
development must be made
part of dialogue

Indeed, for true stability,
human development is
foremost important

Role of higher judiciary and Criminal justice system should be revisited

The role of judiciary and CJ's should be given a thinking, helping the socio-economic growth to prevail

Women should be made part of this grand dialogue to make it inclusive

Women form half the sky. Their inclusion would provide great solutions and way forward for stability.

Conclusion

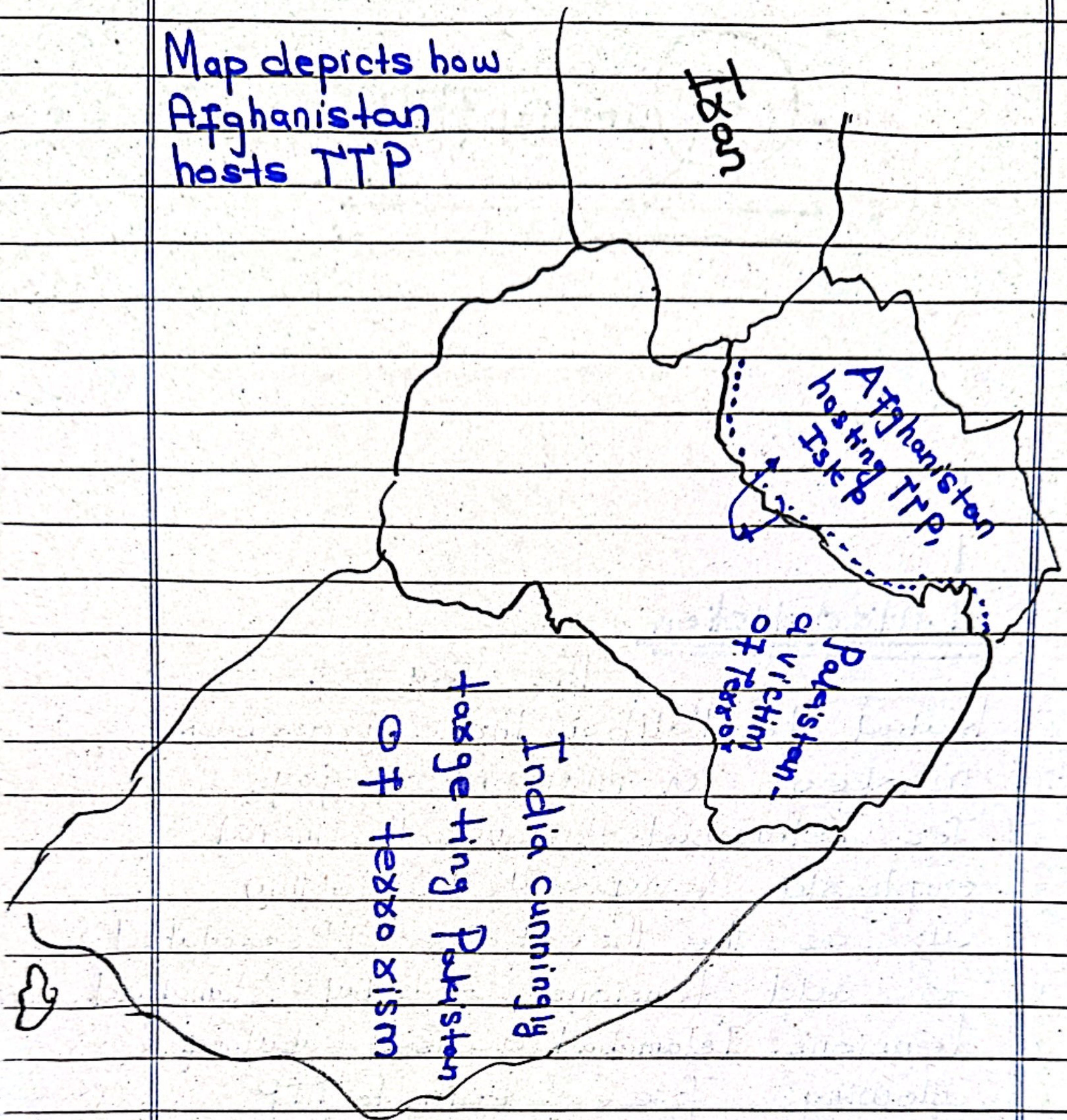
In a nutshell, the importance of political dialogue cannot be overstated in today's Pakistan. Thus, a grand strategy and agenda is devised to help the cause of Pakistan and its people.

Question #4

Introduction

The fall of Kabul to Taliban three years back marked a moment of joy for Islamabad. However, the initial euphoria evaporated into thin air as the threat of TTP escalated to add tensions to Kabul-Islamabad tensions. Islamabad accuses Kabul of allowing free rein to TTP for targeting national security of Pakistan. Islamabad has employed a complex set of policy involving carrots and stick. But none has found a genuine response. The answer aims to evaluate the situation, culminating in offering recommendations.

Map depicts how
Afghanistan
hosts TTP



TTP has emerged a victor
of Taliban capture of
Afghanistan

UN Sanctions Monitoring
Committee

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Present Situation of Af Pak relations

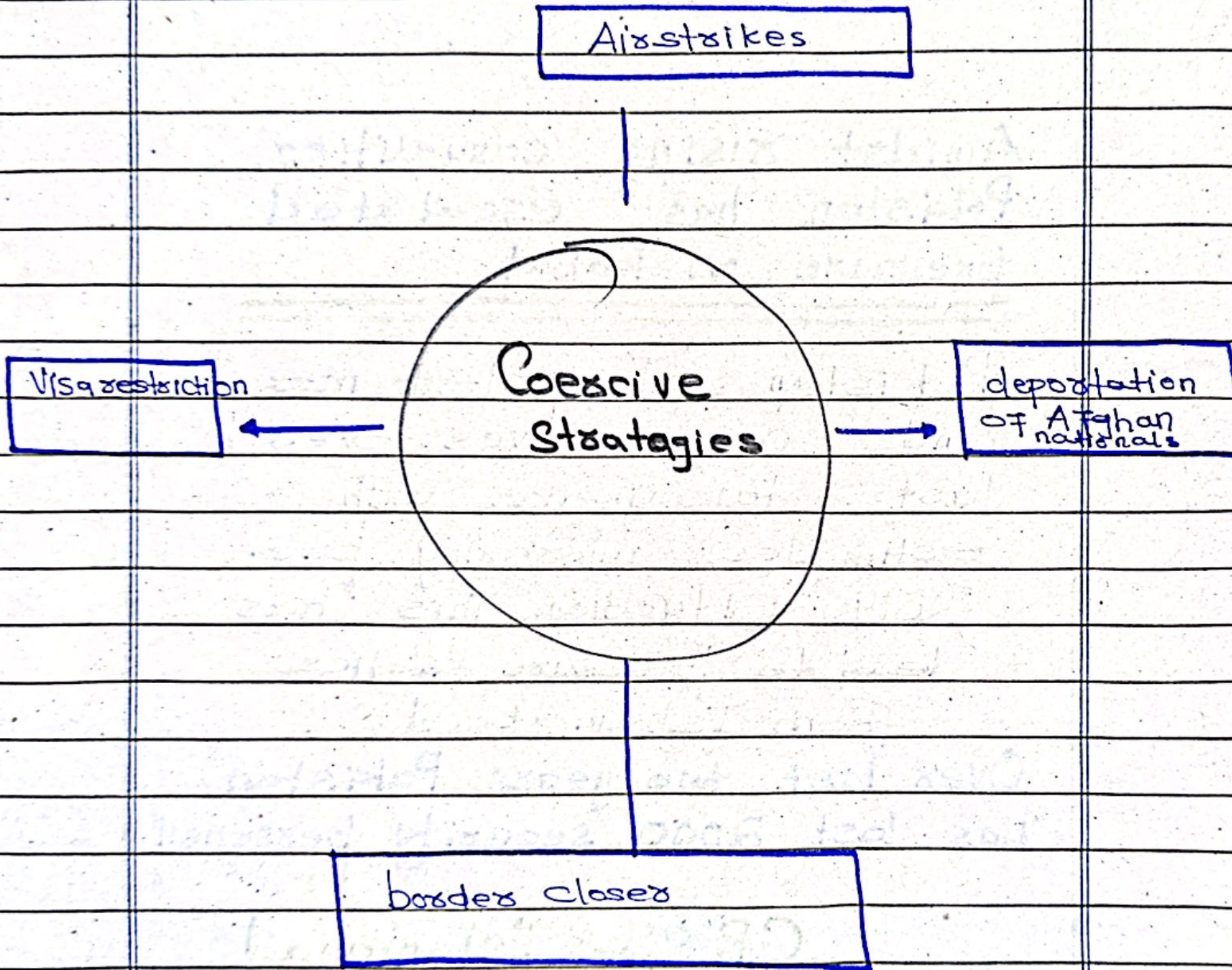
Amidst rising casualties,
Pakistan has escalated
pressure on Kabul

Pakistan has lost more
and more lives over
last two years, with
estimates mirroring pre-
2014 situation. This has
led to pressure tactics
from Islamabad.

Over last two years, Pakistan
has lost 2000 security personnel

CRSS - Islamabad

Pakistan has employed
host of coercive strategies.
None among them stimulate
response



Such a stiff response has allowed India an opening to manoeuvre.

The stiff Pakistan has forced Taliban to strike back, evident in their meetings with India in UAE. This means signalling Pakistan they had options.

Taliban's overtures to New Delhi is a response to air strikes by Pakistan

Michael Kugelman
Wilson Centre

And Pakistan remains a victim, while Taliban continues to express excuses

Pakistan has been bleeding. And Taliban remain unresponsive.

Recommendations for Pakistan

Pakistan should contact
Kandhaz leadership to
shape relations with Kabul

This needs to
be examined whether it
is possible to bring
a solution.

Pakistan should take up
the issue on SCO

There is no denying that
SCO could play a role

Evolving a regional response
is mandatory to put terrorism
to rest

Regional response is
essential to address
the challenge.

The trilateral dialogue -
Pakistan - Afg, China -
Should be restored

The tri-lateral dialogue could help bring stability in region.

Instead of merely coercive knee jerk reactions, Pakistan should have a dynamic strategy

Indeed, one solution - fits all never works. A coherent strategy involving buying-in of all stakeholders would help greatly.

Pakistan should advocate the relocation of TTP cadres

The relocation could dent the mobilisation capacity, helping Pakistan to beat back terrorism.

Involving Kandhaz instead
of Kabul with the
help of China is likely
to aid Pakistan

Muhammad Aamir
Rana
Pakistan Institute
of Peace Studies

Conclusion In Conclusion,

Pakistan. Afghanistan has
entered into vortex of
uncertainty over last two years.
Pakistan needs to find a dynamic
strategy to address the tension.
The underscored strategies are
likely to help Pakistan end the
cycle of terrorist violence.
It is hope things will finally
find a solution.