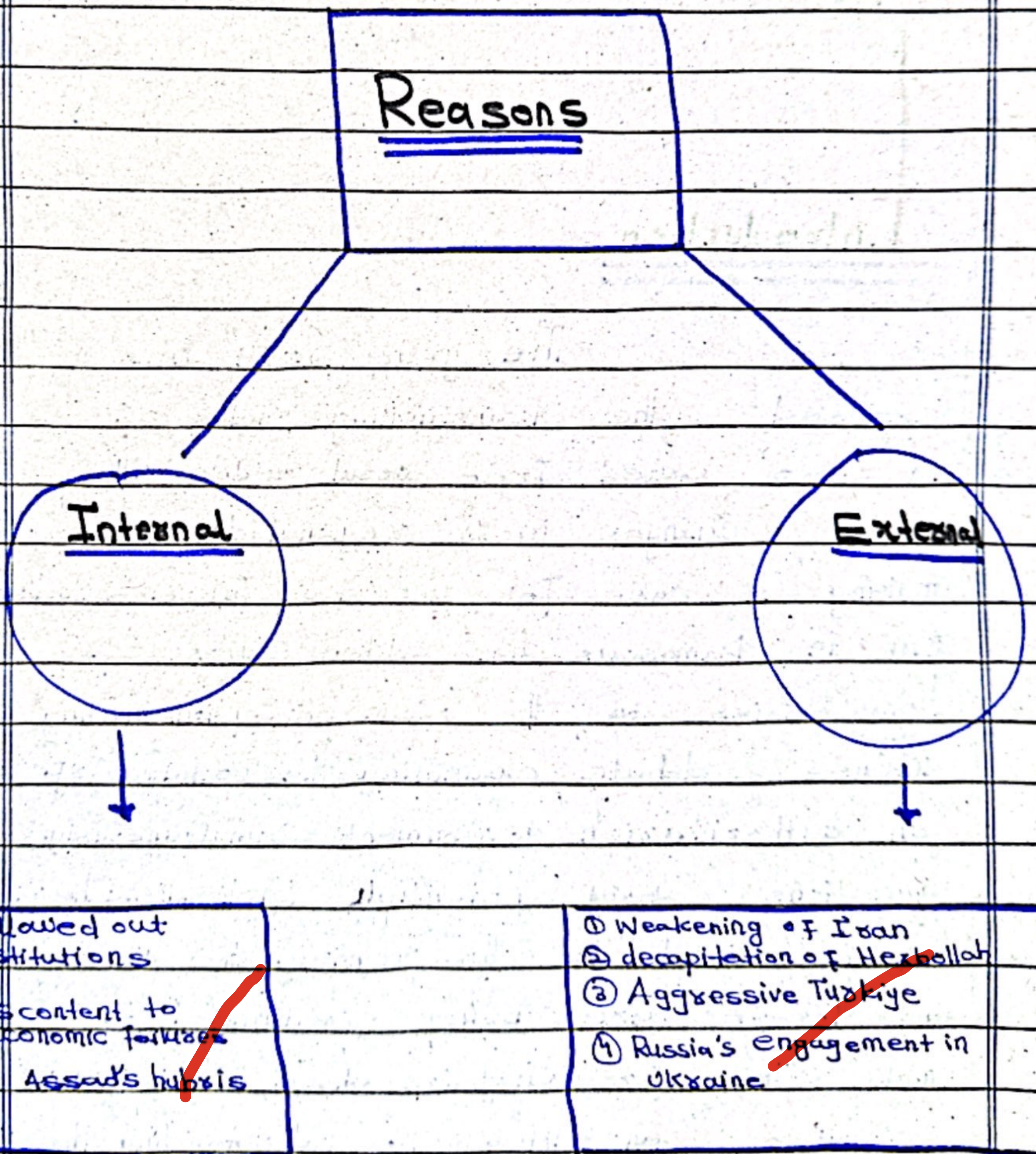


# Question #01

## 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

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In summer of 2024, fluxy  
of diplomatic activity failed to  
stimulate dialogue, enabling Ankara to  
opt for a military solution  
to Assad's intransigence.

Tel Aviv doubled down to leave  
Assad vulnerable

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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

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DATE: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Internal reasons contributing to change of regime

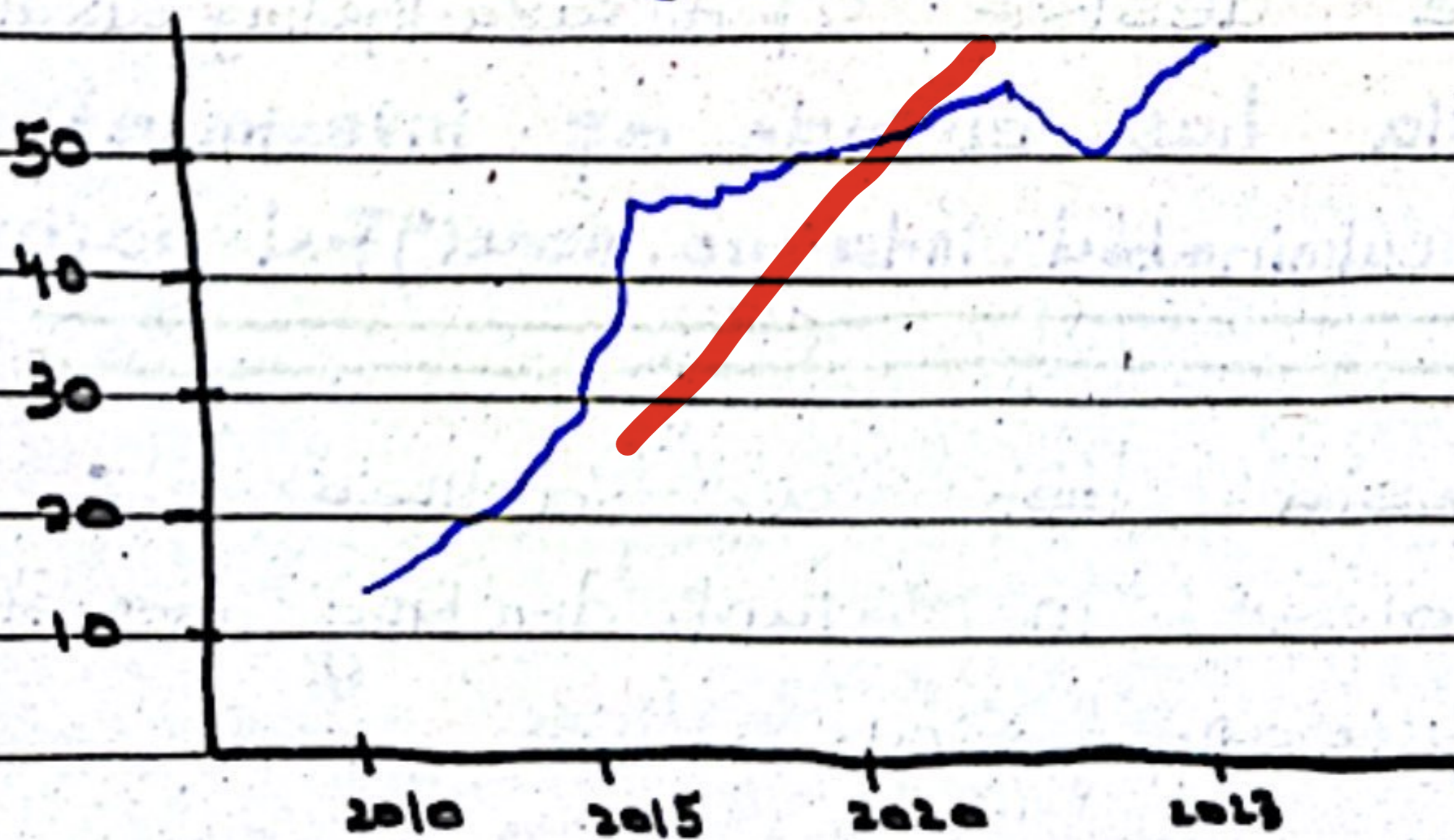
Institutions of Syria remain dilapidated, with under-paid military finding no reason to mount challenge

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

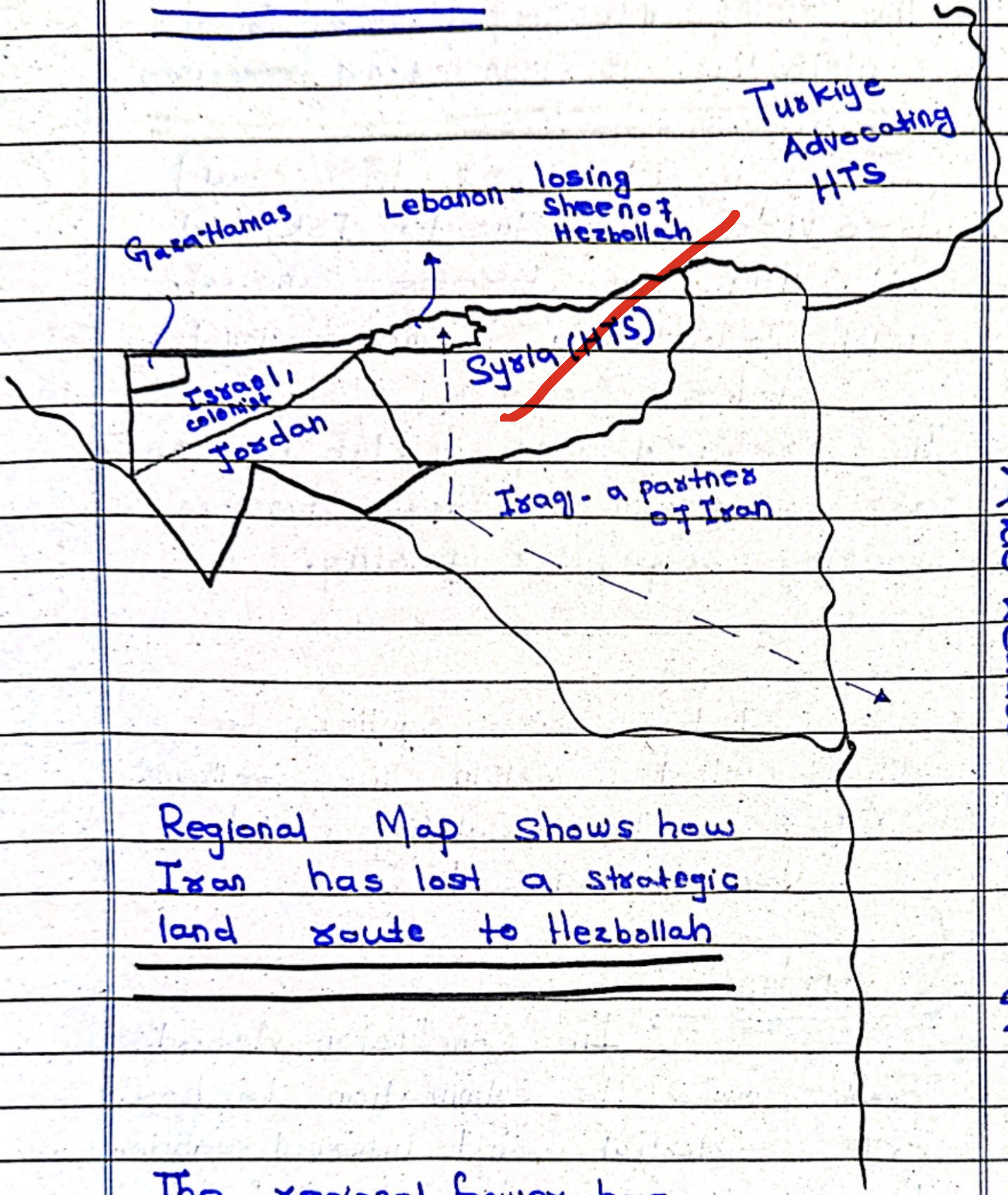
The change is choreographed to the desire of Ankara fighting Kurdish cadres.

### 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

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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.

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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

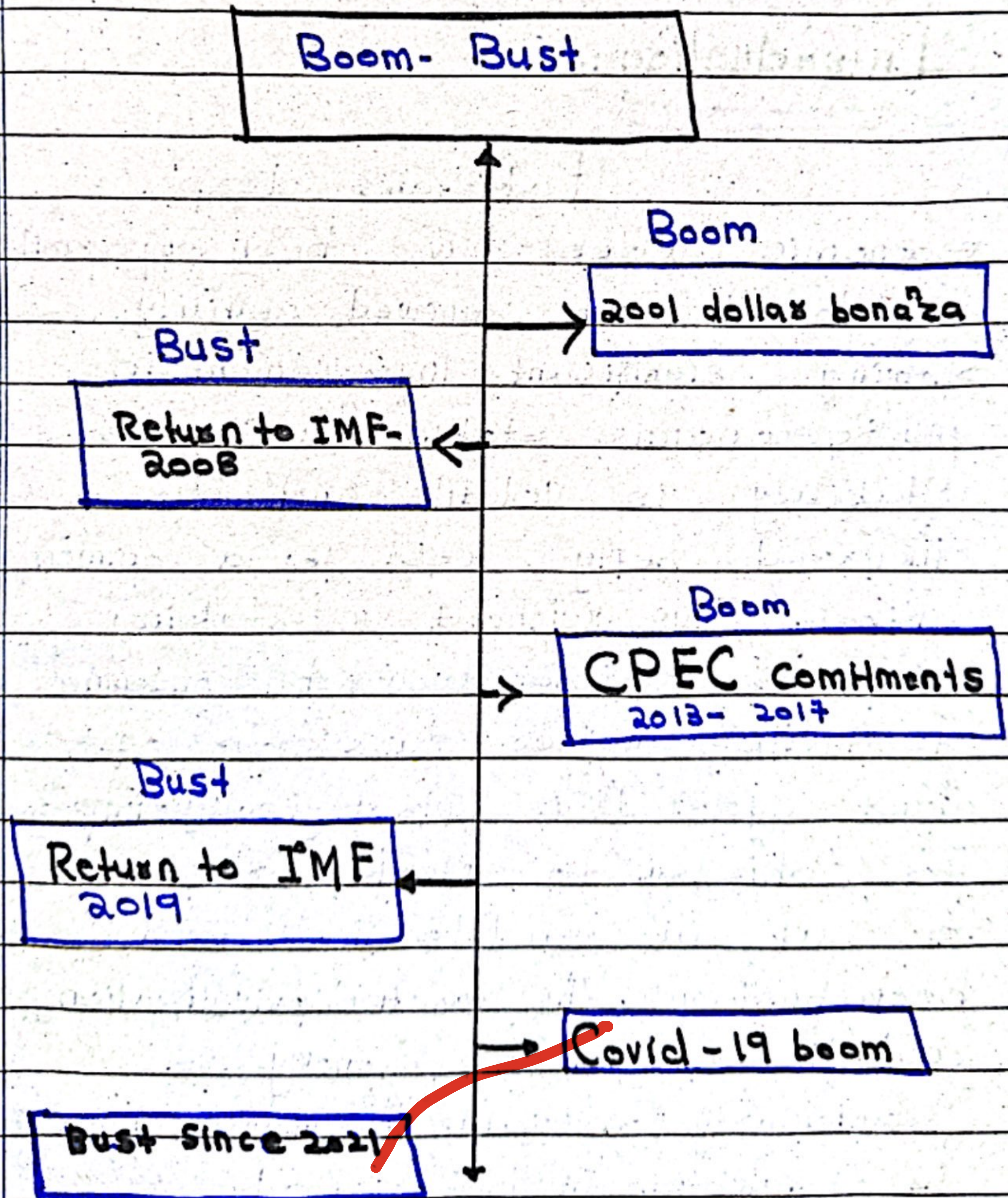
## # 6

### 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 21<sup>st</sup> century



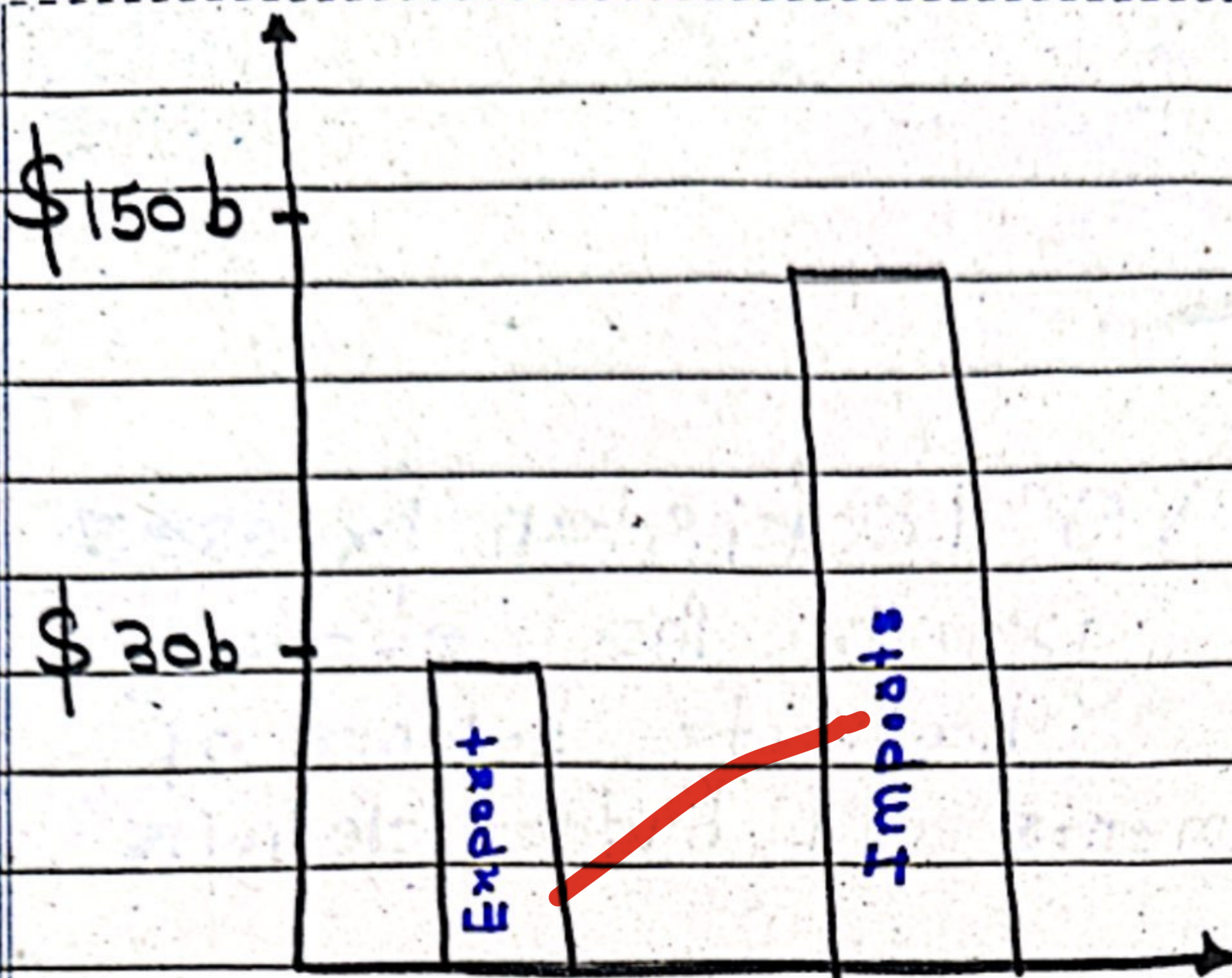
As Pakistan presses for growth, the economy falls back to balance of payments and budget deficits

## 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.

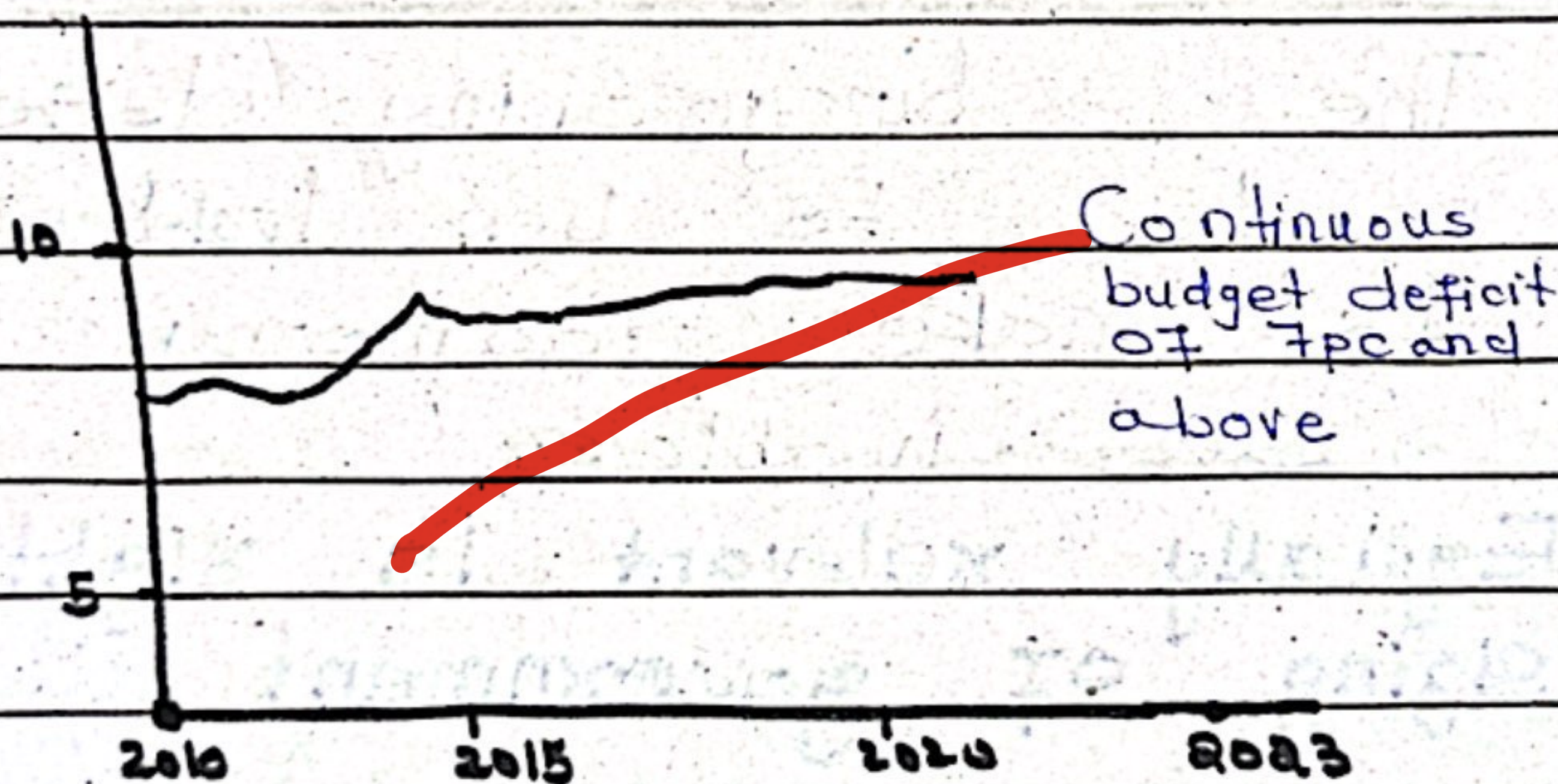
Revenue resources are meagre, while expenditure remains high

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.

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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)

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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

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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

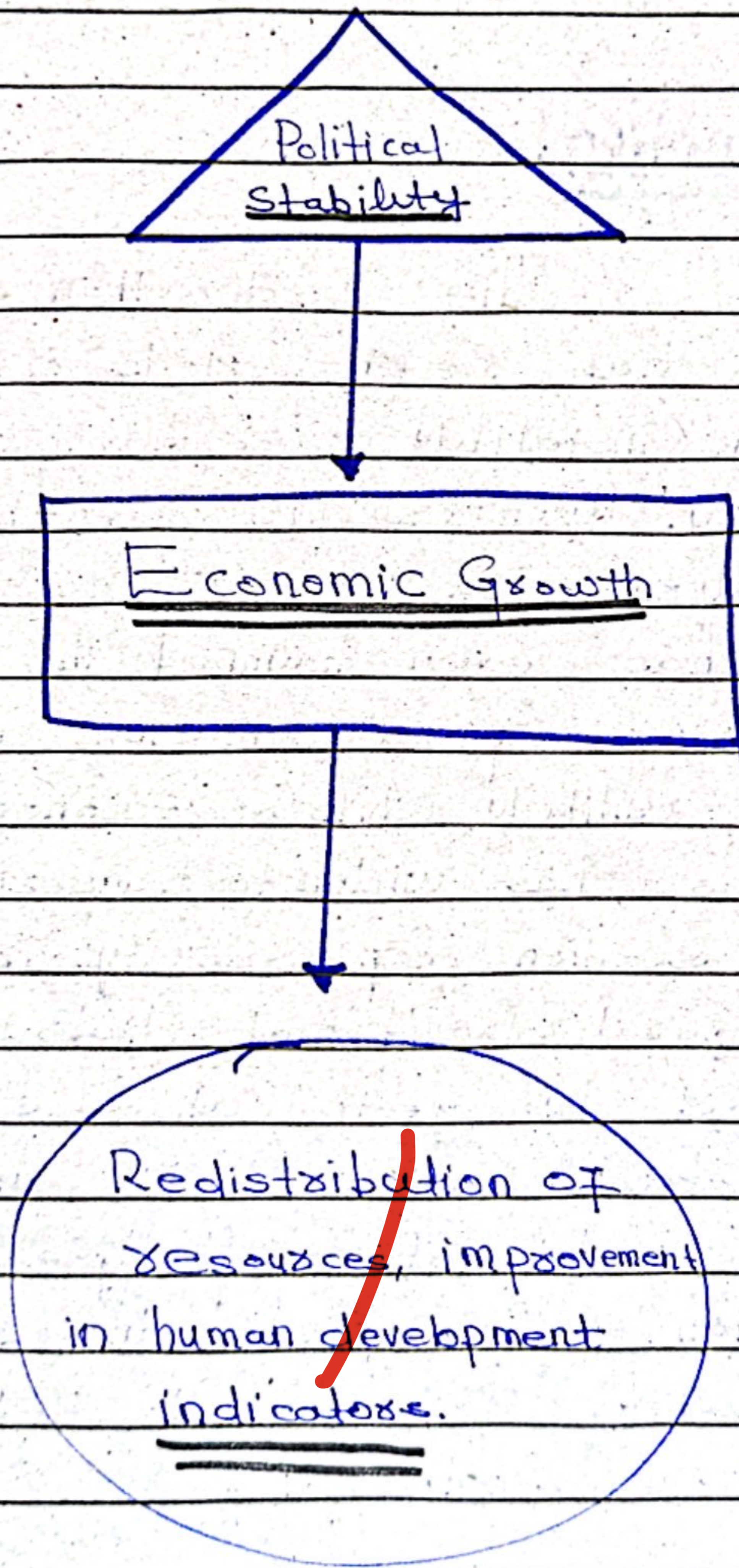


Q7

## Introduction:

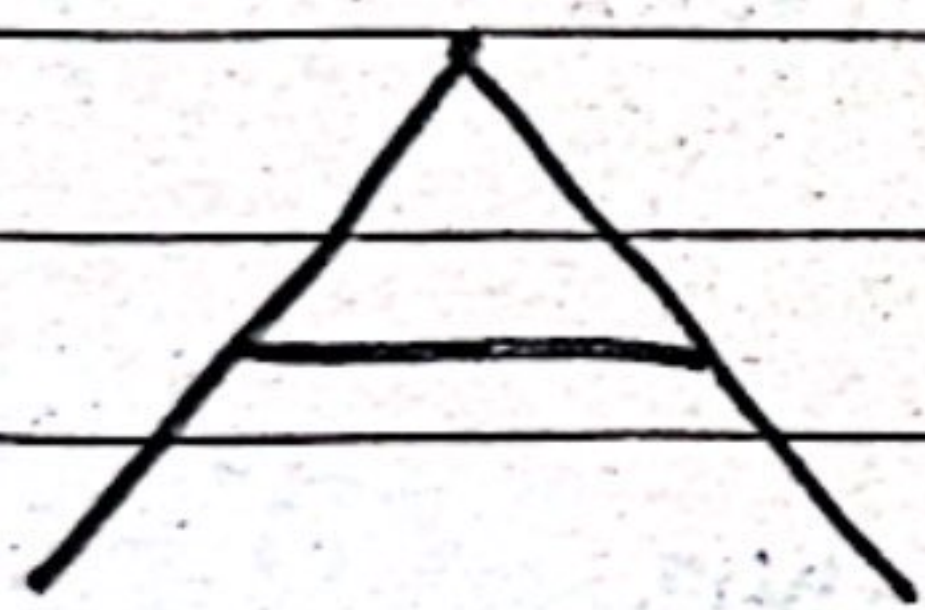
The Federation of Pakistan has seen periods of spiralling instability over the course of history. However, the recent bout following April 2022 vote of no confidence has even trumped the levels of earlier episodes, making any progress unlikely, while socioeconomic inequalities has widened to impoverish 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.

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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

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Reimagining Pakistan  
Hussain Haqanni

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

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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.

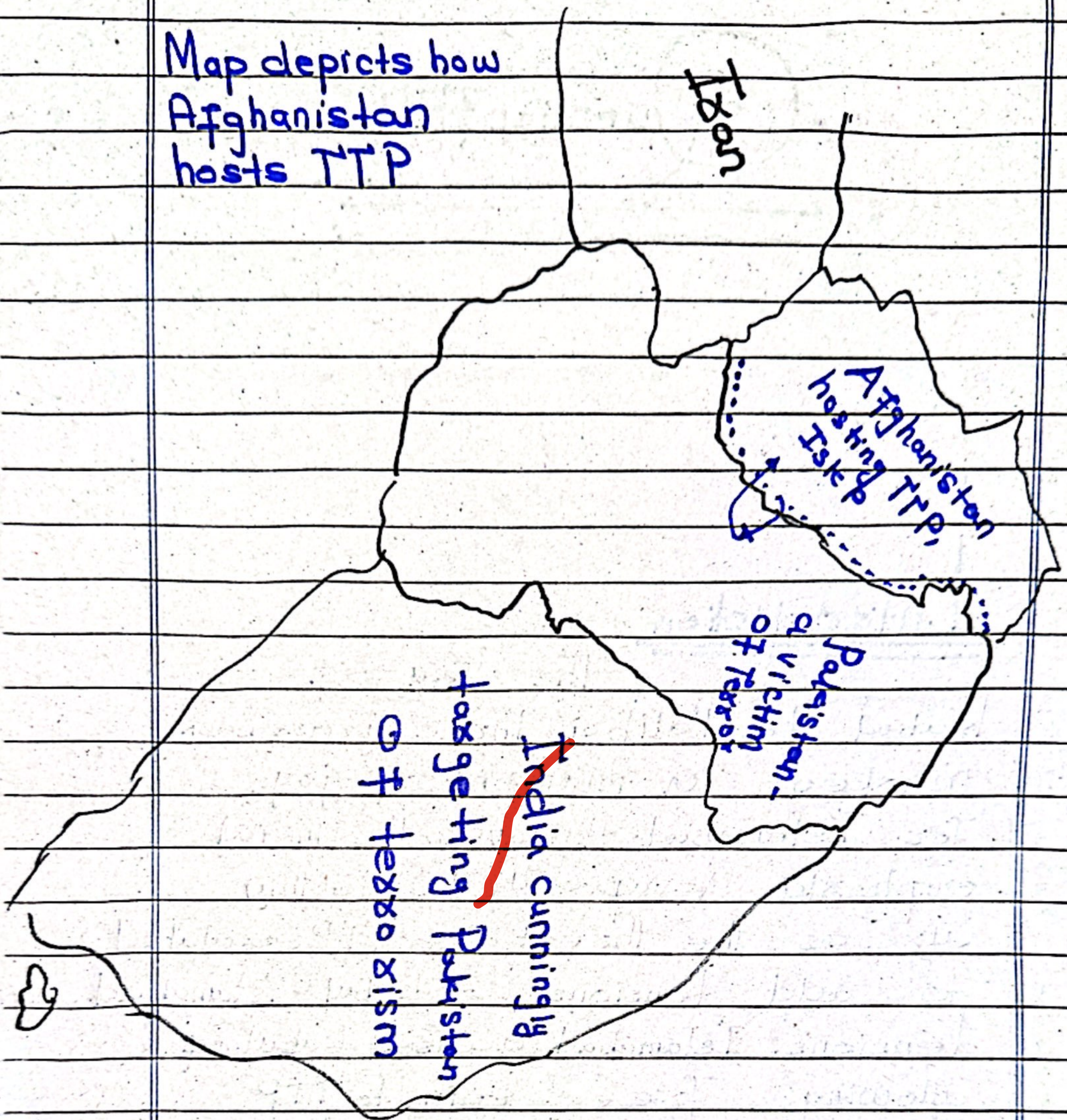


# Question #4

## 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

# P

## 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.

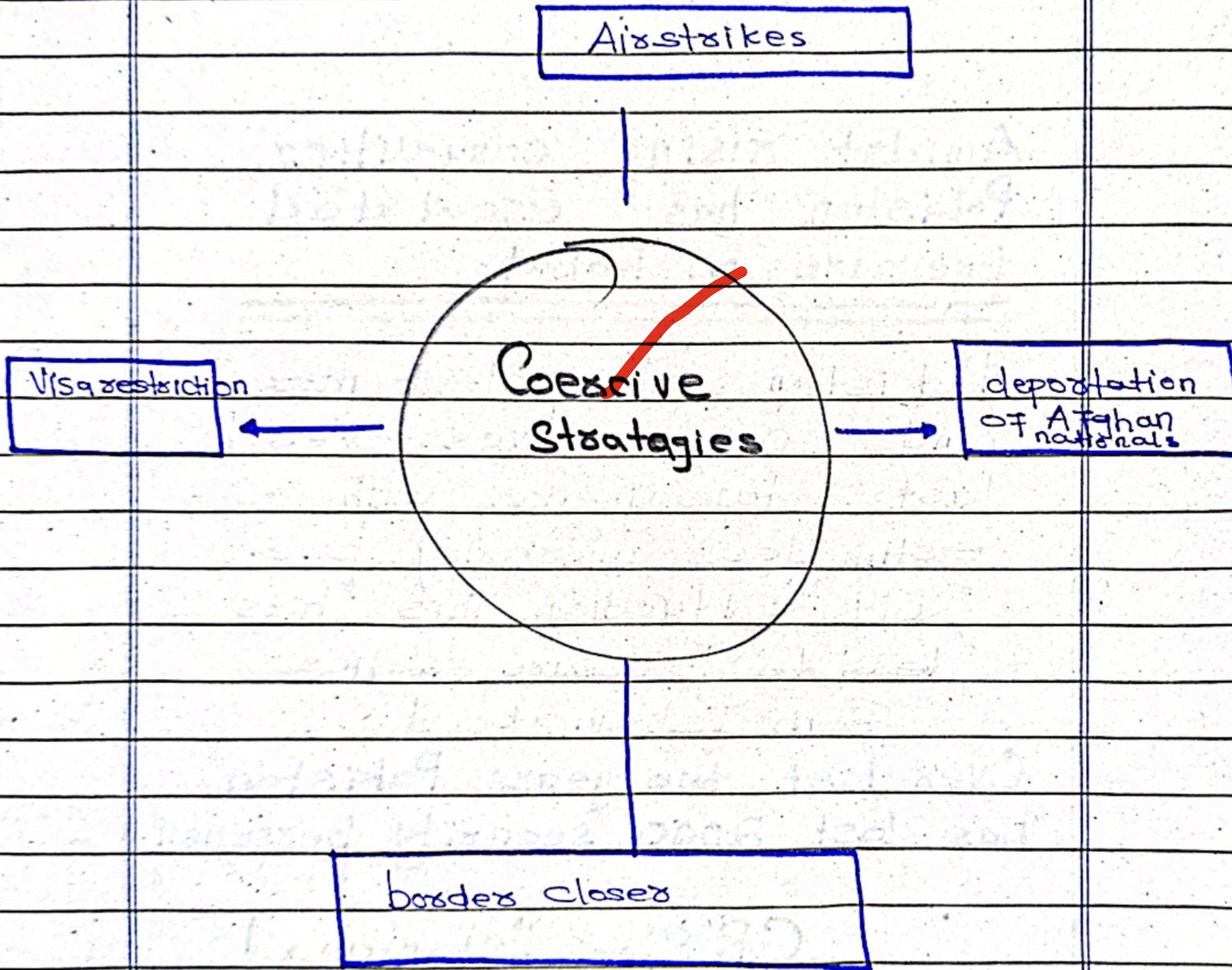
Over last two years, Pakistan has lost 2000 security personnel

CRSS - Islamabad

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

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

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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

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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

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

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

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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

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

Involving Kandhar 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.