

Question no: 03

Pakistan's Energy Crisis: Geoeconomic Perspective

Introduction:

Pakistan's energy crisis is not merely in technical failures but in geoeconomic constraints. Energy insecurity has become a major consequence of economic fragility, thus undermining the industrial competitiveness and national development. In geoeconomic context, import-driven energy sources, IMF conditioned pricing and weak regional energy integration are the factors for the looming energy crisis. Also, the underlying structural weakness such as overreliance on thermal power, circular debt and weak energy governance are the structural weaknesses hindering the sustainable energy policy.

1. Geoeconomic context of Energy Crisis

i) Strategic location but weak regional energy integration

Pakistan, being situated at the crossroads of South Asia, Central Asia, West Asia and the Gulf, has become

an energy corridor. Projects like TAPI pipeline (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) and the Iran-Pakistan pipeline show this potential. However, security, sanctions on Iran and diplomatic constraints have undermined energy connectivity.

Geography has granted Pakistan a corridor role, but geopolitics has denied it.

Robert Kaplan - The Revenge of Geography

(ii) Dependence on global energy markets

Pakistan imports 84-86% of its oil, and a major share of liquid Natural Gas (LNG). This exposes the economy to price shocks such as the 2022 LNG crisis, forcing Pakistan to cancel cargoes and face nation-wide loadshedding.

(iii) CPEC and shifts in energy geoeconomics

Under CPEC, China invested over \$25 billion in energy, adding 12,000 MW since 2015. However, it created new energy dependencies through

- Coal-based plants
- dollar repayments
- High Capacity charges

It linked Pakistan's energy security to Chinese financial flows.

iv) Regional Security challenges and limited cross-border pipelines

Pakistan's energy corridors pass through conflict-prone regions i.e. FATA, Balochistan, Afghanistan. Repeated attacks on transmission lines, sabotage of gas pipelines and regional unrest disrupted investment confidence, thereby raising transit costs.

v) Dollar-indexed energy contracts

IPP contract under the 1994 and 2002 power policies are dollar-indexed, which means currency depreciation against dollar directly increases electricity costs. Moreover, capacity payments to IPPs have exceeded Rs 2 billion annually. So, domestic energy pricing are linked to external macroeconomic pressures.

2. Structural weaknesses hindering sustainable energy policy

i) overreliance on thermal power and imported fuels

At independence (1947), hydropower accounted for over 70% of generation. By 2024, the energy is shifted to thermal

power comprising 65%, and most of it is imported. This structural imbalance creates,

- High electricity tariffs
- Chronic balance of payment crisis
- Import bills exceeding \$17 billion annually

Pakistan's growth model is import-dependent and energy is at the heart of the imbalance.

(Ishrat Hussain)

(ii) Weak energy governance

Pakistan's energy governance is split among;

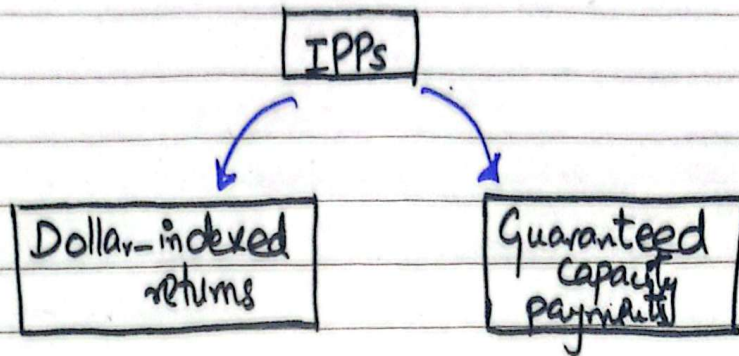
- Ministry of Energy (Power and petroleum divisions)
- Provincial departments post-18th amend
- IPPs and private distributors
- NEPRA and OGRA

This creates duplication and lack of integrated energy policy is a major blockade in achieving sustainable energy.

(iii) Legacy of contracts with Independent power producers (IPPs)

Another structural weakness in achieving sustainable energy is the

distorted power policies. The 1994 and 2002 power policies initiated unbalanced agreements, conditioned to;



By 2023, capacity charges had risen to 55% of the total tariff. Former finance minister Miftah Ismail called it, a death spiral for the power sector.

iv) Underinvestment in transmission and distribution lines

Pakistan's transmission system can only evacuate 24,000 MW of energy which is far below peak potential. This signifies that due to grid instability, renewable integration is delayed.

v) Neglect of renewable energy despite huge potential

Another structural weakness is the obstruction by the IPPs lobbies to shift to renewables. Pakistan possesses;

- 50,000 MW wind potential in Gharo-Ghinjil corridor
- Huge untapped hydropower

yet, renewables form less than 6% of the energy mix.

vi) Political instability and short-term energy policies

Since 2008, Pakistan has had eight ministers for energy which results in numerous policy shifts. Energy became politicized for short-term electoral gains such as subsidies, thus undermining sustainability.

4. Policy Recommendations to attain Sustainable Energy

i) Renegotiate IPPs contracts

Pakistan should cap dollar indexation for new plants; and also need to extend repayment tenure.

ii) Strengthen transmission and distribution infrastructure

Upgrading the national grid is essential. Investment in smart grids and regional grids can cut transmission lines losses from 17% to below 10%.

iii) Expand regional energy connectivity

Pakistan should actively pursue;

→ CASA - 1000 - from Central Asia

- Revival of TAPI
 - Iran-Pakistan gas pipelines
- This would reduce reliance on expensive LNG and diversify resources.

Conclusion:

A sustainable energy requires breaking the cycle of import dependence, governance failures and short-term political decision-making. With structural reforms, regional integration and renewable expansion, Pakistan can transform its energy sector.

Question no: 06

Pak-US Relations Post 9/11 era

Introduction:

Pakistan-US relations in the post 9/11 era have remained security centric, mainly oscillating between intense cooperation and deep mistrust. The two states, although entered in war on terror, as a major allies, yet had diverging strategic interests. Both have competing regional visions from sanctions to strategic partnership. As Hussain Haqqani aptly remarks in *Magnificent Delusions*,

Pakistan and the United States have been allies without sharing a worldview.

1. Post 9/11 relations: From Sanctions to Strategic partnership

i) Reversal of Sanctions and Strategic re-alignment

After 9/11, the US ~~re~~ lifted nuclear-related sanctions imposed after the 1998 nuclear tests and along with the premier sanctions of the 1990s. Pakistan became central part to Operation Enduring Freedom, launched by US against Taliban.

Pakistan is the frontline state in the battle against terror.
(President Bush)

ii) Pakistan's Special status as non-NATO ally

Following the Operation Enduring Freedom, US granted Pakistan a status of major Non-NATO ally which enabled Pakistan access to advanced weapons, strategic technologies and training programs. Between 2001-2011, Pakistan received \$33 billion in military and economic flows.

iii) Pakistan's heavy human military support to U.S operations

Against the backdrop of US operations in Afghanistan, Pakistan provided

→ air bases (Jacobabad, Shabaz)

→ overflight permissions

→ Intelligence support against Al-Qaeda

Resultantly, over 600 Al-Qaeda operatives were captured with Pakistan's cooperation.

iv) Heightened intelligence cooperation

In early war on Terror years, both states shared intense intelligence against Al-Qaeda and TTP. Both CIA and ISI conducted multiple joint operations in Karachi, Faisalabad and Swat.

2. The Collapse of trust in bilateral relations

The year 2011 is widely considered the lowest point in bilateral relations.

i) Allegations of Pakistan's Dual policy towards Afghan Taliban

The US repeatedly accused Pakistan of fighting Al-Qaeda and providing support to Afghan Taliban and

Haggar network. This was highlighted in the 2009 White House Afghan Pakistan Strategy Review.

Obama administration in this regard, stated that;

The insurgency is fed by safe havens in Pakistan.

(ii) Violation of Sovereignty

The US conducted over 400 drone strikes in Pakistan between 2004-2018, causing civilian casualties and widespread anti-American sentiments. Pakistan condemned them as violations of Sovereignty.

Amnesty international called U.S drone attacks as unlawful extrajudicial killings.

(iii) Osama bin Laden Episode

The unilateral U.S raid to kill Osama Bin Laden (OBL) was the greatest shock to bilateral trust. Pakistan called it as a gross-breach of Sovereignty, while U.S officials questioned ISI's competence.

iv) US-India strategic partnership and Pakistan's Security Concerns

The U.S tilted towards India through;

→ 2005 Civil nuclear deal

→ Expanded Indo-Pacific strategy

Pakistan viewed this as threat to regional stability, to which foreign office of Pakistan responded;

U.S policies are tilting the strategic balance against Pakistan.

3. Renewed areas of Cooperation in bilateral relations

i) Counter-terrorism collaboration approach

The intelligence-led CIA and ISI cooperation led to the capture of key Al-Qaeda figures such as Khalid Sheikh Mohammad.

US appreciated Pakistan's help in neutralizing Al-Qaeda's core leadership. Also, US acknowledged Pakistan's progress in Operation Zarb-e-Azb (2014) and Radd-ul-Fasad (2017) to reduce militancy.

viii) Bringing the Taliban to dialogue Islamabad facilitated;

Doha
talks

Prisoner
exchanges

U.S Taliban
agreement
of Feb 2020

Intra-Afghan
negotiations

In lieu of these efforts, U.S Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad frequently praised Pakistan's constructive engagement.

(iii) Post-withdrawal convergence timeline

Both U.S and Pakistan agreed on ending the war in Afghanistan. Pakistan wanted stability in the region, while the U.S sought a safer exit. Also, after U.S withdrawal, both countries shared concerns over ISIS-K, TTP and Afghan instability. Selective intelligence cooperation resumed especially on regional terrorism threats.

Conclusion:

Pakistan-US relations after 9/11 have been marked by high cooperation but deep mistrust. The relations are mainly driven by conflicting Afghan strategies and shifting geopolitical priorities. As Stephen Cohen concluded;

Pakistan and the US are partners that cannot divorce, yet cannot fully trust each other.

Question no: 08

Pakistan's national Security Paradigm: An analysis

Introduction:

Since 1947, Pakistan's national security has focused mainly on military strength and protecting its borders, especially against India. Although this security-centric approach ensured defence and deterrence but ignored economic growth, human development and internal security challenges. Emerging issues like poverty, energy shortages, water crisis and climate change demands to shift its security paradigm from security-centric to geo-economic one.

1) Critical analysis of Pakistan's National Security Paradigm

i) Historical foundations of Security Centric national policy

From 1947 onwards, Pakistan's National security paradigm emerged

from partition violence, the Kashmir conflict and further shaped by regional hostilities.

Early policymakers - A.S. Abdur Rehman emphasized on survival first.

Historian Ian Talbot calls early Pakistan as a security preoccupied state shaped by existential anxieties.

ii) India - a constant security threat

The Kashmir disputes and multiple wars (1948, 1965, 1991) entrenched India as the core security threat for Pakistan. For this, defence evolved around establishing nuclear deterrence. So, Pakistan devoted its spending towards military strengthening.

iii) Constitutional ambiguity and civil-military imbalance

Although 1973 constitution grants executive authority to elected leaders under article 90-95, 243, along with military command. In practice, security-decision making has remained heavily militarized.

National Security Councils institutionalized this imbalance.

is Over-militarization and Economic costs

High defence spending i.e. often 15-20% of federal budget diverted resources from education, health, infrastructure, thus constraining human development.

Despite nuclear capabilities, Pakistan ranks low on global education and health indices.

v) Rise of non traditional and internal Security threats

After 9/11, Pakistan faced terrorism, extremism, cyber threats and sectarian conflicts. Internal Security Operations such as Zarb-e-Azb, Radd-ul-Fasad succeeded militarily but highlighted governance gaps.

Pakistan lost 83,000 lives and suffered \$126 billion in economic losses.

(Economic Survey of Pakistan)
-2019

vi) Dependency on external Support

Pakistan's Security paradigm relied on alliances with China, USA, and Gulf states. This created strategic dependencies and sometimes constrained independent foreign and economic policy.

2. Should Pakistan shift from security-centric to geo-economic model?

Pakistan should shift from security-centric towards geo-economic model. It is because that a sustainable national security in the 21st Century requires economic resilience, human development and regional connectivity.

i) Recognition in National Security Policy - 2022

The National Security Policy 2022-26 emphasizes that;

The Security of Pakistan rests in the security of its citizens.

It marks a formal policy shift from military security to include economic, human and environmental dimensions.

ii) Strategic use of geography to connectivity hub

Pakistan's location - linking South Asia, Central Asia, Middle East and China can be monetized through:

→ CPEC phase-II

→ TAPI and CASA-1000 pipelines

→ Gwadar port as a regional trade gateway

iii) Economic revival as core national security imperative

Weak economic growth undermines nation's sovereignty through frequent IMF bailout packages that reduces strategic autonomy. Also, rising debt servicing squeezes defence and development alike. In this case, geo-economic shift emphasizes productivity, exports, industry and innovation to lessen dependency on external powers.

iv) Geoeconomic shift allows balanced military modernization

A strong economy enhances defence capability without overburdening fiscal resources. Investment in cyber, aerospace, and naval modernization becomes possible only when the economy is strong.

v) Regional integration as tool for stability

By shifting towards geo-economic model, Pakistan can significantly reduce conflicts and ensure peace within region.

For instance, Pakistan trade with Central Asia, Iran, and Afghanistan can create mutual stakes in ensuring peace in the region.

vi) Reducing internal vulnerabilities

Pakistan is currently grappled with challenges like high poverty, energy shortages, unemployment and infrastructure gaps. Geo-economic development can address socio-economic drivers of unrest and terrorism.

Special Economic zones under CPEC created jobs, thus reducing local grievances in Balochistan.

Conclusion:

The emerging global reality and Pakistan's own economic challenges make it clear that military security alone cannot guarantee long-term national stability. To ensure sustainable security, Pakistan must gradually but decisively shift towards geo-economic model for trade, investment and regional integration.

Question no: 02

Constitutional Crisis in Pakistan

Introduction:

Between 1947 and 1973, Pakistan passed through successive constitutional crises that prevented the emergence of a stable constitutional order. Lack of political leadership, judicial validation of extra constitutional acts, repeated military interventions and Centre-province relations conflicts are some of the contributing factors for constitutional delay. After a brief period of negotiated settlements, Pakistan managed to provide 1973 constitution. This period shows how competing powers such as Governor General, military, judiciary, provincial elites and weak political parties created barricade towards constitutional consolidation.

1. Constitutional Crisis in Pakistan (1947-1973)

a) Weak political foundations and leadership vacuum

Pakistan began without a complete constitution, relying on the Government of India Act 1935 as an interim framework. Further, the early death of Quaid and assassination of Liaqat Ali Khan in 1948 and

1951 respectively created a leadership vacuum, which slowed down constitution making.

ii) Governor General's dominance and Executive interference (1951-54)

Governor Generals Ghulam Muhammad and Iskandar Mirza repeatedly interfered in parliamentary affairs. Dismissal of Khwaja Nazimuddin's government (1953) despite majority support undermined parliamentary norms. It led to establishment of executive supremacy over constitutionalism.

iii) Constitutional order subordinate to political power

In October 1954, Governor General Ghulam Muhammad dissolved the constituent Assembly. Furthermore, in *Maulvi Tamizuddin* case (1955), Chief Justice Munir upheld the dissolution under the Doctrine of Necessity. Consequently, constitutional order became subordinate to political power.

iv) East-West tensions (1955-56)

The one unit (1955) act merged West Pakistan into a single province to counterbalance East Pakistan's demographic majority. East Pakistan

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perceived it as a denial of democratic rights. Despite 1956 constitution, it failed to resolve centre-province tensions thus deepened regional resentments.

v) Military takeover and controlled constitutionalism

vi) Denial of mandate and Fall of Dhaka