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Name: Maryam Kainaat

Q.1

Formation of New Provinces in Pakistan: Hurdles and Recommendations

Introduction

The debate on creating new provinces in Pakistan resurfaces periodically, driven by demands for administrative efficiency, ethnic recognition, and better service delivery. Proposals range from carving out South Punjab, Hazara and Urban Sindh to converting the country's 32 divisions into provinces. Supportes often cite India, where the ~~number~~ number of states increased from 17 at independence to 28 today, following regional and linguistic movements and the recommendations of the States ~~Reorganiza~~ Reorginazation Comission

(1953-56). India's experience shows that careful study, phased implementation, and broad consensus can enable state creation without destabilizing the federation. Pakistan lacks strong mass movements, and constitutional amendments need super-majorities, making the process politically and legally difficult. Economic constraints, administrative challenges and the risk of worsening regional inequalities make hasty reorganization impractical. Therefore, strengthening local governments may achieve governance objectives without the high cost or political turmoil of new provinces. This answer evaluates the hurdles and provides recommendations for effective, equitable governance.

Hurdles in Formation of New Provinces

a- Constitutional Hurdles

Under Article **239(4)** of Pakistan's Constitution, creating a new province requires a **two-third** majority in the provincial assembly and both Houses of Parliament. Achieving this consensus is extremely difficult given the country's fragmented politics. Unlike **India**, which relied on structured mechanism - the States Reorganization Commission - to study, guide and implement bandary changes, Pakistan lacks any formal institutional framework to mange this complex process. As a result, legal and procedural barriers make forming new provinces nearly impossible under conditions.

b- **Political Herdles**

Provincial elites often oppose creating new provinces to protect their influence, control over resources, and electoral dominance. Ethno linguistic demands from groups like Seraiki, Hazara, and Muhajir communities add an emotional dimension, raising the risk of social unrest. Political parties sometimes use the debate as a slogan rather than a serious agenda. Additionally, multiple new provinces could complicate centre-province relations and delay decision-making in bodies like the CCI, NFC, and NEC.. Hence, political fragmentation and elite resistance significantly hinder Susbstantive progress.

c- **Economic and Fiscal Constraints**

Creating new provinces require fresh assemblies, governors, chief ministers, cabinets, high courts, police, bureaucracy, secretariats, and physical infrastructure. This entails billions in additional recurring expenditures, straining a country already under IMF programs and fiscal stress. Bussinesses would also face multiple new tax jurisdictions, increasing compliance costs. Consequently, Pakistan's weak economy cannot sustain the enormous financial and administrative burden.

d- **Administrative and Governance Challenges**

Redrawing boundaries, ~~divid~~ dividing assets and liabilities, reassigning civil servants, and restructuring institutions would create administrative chaos. The transition could divert attention from pressing issues like economic stability, terrorism, and public service delivery. Moreover, inequalities within new provinces, for example, Peshawar versus Kohistan or Lahore versus DG Khan, could worsen. Hence, reorganization may generate new inefficiences rather than resolving existing ones.

5- **Ethnic and Social Sensitivities**

India created states based on linguistic identity, which gave communities representation and reduced conflict in the long term. Pakistan's existing provinces already roughly align to dominant linguistic groups (Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, Balochi). creating new provinces could intensify ethnic polarization, generate new majority-minority tensions, and encourage identity-based provincialism. Boundary changes could unintentionally deepen disparities and inflame identity politics. Such changes risk undermining social cohesion.

Recommendations

a- **Strengthen Local Governments Instead of Creating Provinces**

Local governments can be stengthened through constitutional protection under **Article 140-A**, assured fiscal transfers of **30-40%** of provincial funds, and control over key services like education, health, water, waste management and municipal ~~admi~~ administration. This ensures real devolution of power and better service delivery without the huge costs of creating new provinces.

b- **Establish a National**

Commission on Provincial Reorganization

A National Commission on Provincial Reorganization, modeled on **India's States Reorganization Commission (1953)**, should be established to study demographic, administrative, fiscal, and cultural realities and recommend feasible restructing options. This would ensure that decisions are evidence-based rather than driven by emotions or political pressures.

c- Build National Consensus

Decisions on provincial reorganization should involve parliamentary debates, public consultations, and expert input. By avoiding the politicization of ethnic sentiments and encouraging rational dialogue, this approach helps reduce tensions and build legitamcy for any proposed changes.

d- Prioritise Administrative Efficiency over Boundary Changes

Improving provincial service delivery through digitization, civil service reforms, and enhanced transparency addresses the core governance challenges efficiently. This approach enhances efficiency and accountability without the need to redraw provincial boundaries.

e - **Incremental Approach to New Provinces**

If creating new provinces becomes unavoidable, start with one or two cases that enjoy genuine consensus, such as South Punjab. Implement pilot administrative decentralisation before constitutional changes to minimise political and administrative instability.

Conclusion

While the formation of new provinces remains a recurring demand, Pakistan faces significant constitutional, political, economic, administrative, and social hurdles that make large-scale reorganization impractical in the current environment. Most governance challenges stem not from the size of provinces but from the absence of meaningful devolution to the local level. A realistic path forward lies in strengthening local governments, institutionalising evidence-based decision-making, and pursuing reform that enhances service delivery without triggering new tensions or unsustainable fiscal burdens. Empowered LGs, not new provinces, offer the most effective and least disruptive route to improved governance in Pakistan.

Q.3

Trump's Withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement: Future Implications

Introduction

Climate change represents the most pressing global challenge of the 21st century, with far-reaching environmental, social, and economic consequences. International mechanisms like the Paris Agreement (2015) aim to limit global warming to below 2°C, ideally 1.5 °C, through collective emissions reduction commitments. In 2025, President Donald Trump once again withdrew the United States, the world's second-largest emitter, from the accord, citing economic costs and prioritizing fossil fuel expansion. This withdrawal has profound implications for global climate governance, international cooperation, and the achievement of emissions targets. This write-up critically evaluates the future of climate efforts in the absence of U.S. leadership and explores alternative pathways to mitigate global warming.

Impact of U.S. Withdrawal on Global Climate Efforts

a- Undermining Collective Action

The U.S., responsible for roughly **20% of global carbon emissions**, significantly weakens the enforceability and credibility of international commitments by withdrawing, and its absence may prompt other countries to scale back their ambitions, creating a domino effect that undermines global mitigation efforts.

b- Shift in Global Leadership

The U.S. retreat creates space for **China and the EU** to lead in climate policy and clean energy innovation. This shift may reshape global climate diplomacy, with new alliances forming to compensate for the U.S. absence c- **Financial and Technological Gaps**

U.S. funding for initiatives like the **Loss and Damage Fund** and global clean energy innovation programs may be reduced. Developing nations, particularly those most vulnerable to climate disasters, may face shortfalls in financing and technology transfer.

d- **Domestic Policy Instability**

Feedback rollbacks of regulations like the **Clean Power Plan (CPP)** and expanded fossil fuel production reduce the chances of meeting even partial **Paris targets** domestically. While subnational actors such as **California**, **New York**, and other states and cities pursue ambitious plans, national-level emissions reductions remain insufficient.

Critical Evaluation

The absence of U.S. leadership casts doubt on achieving the **1.5-2°C target**, risking severe environmental cosequences: rising sea levels threatening coastal populations, more frequent heatwaves, droughts, and floods, and loss of biodiversity and coral reefs.

Without coordinated global action, carbon emissions may keep rising, making technological and nature-based solutions costlier and more urgent. Reliance on voluntary pledges increases the risk of free-riding, where major emitters evade responsibilities, undermining global trust and cooperation.

Recommendation for Future Climate Action

a- Strengthen Minilateral and Regional Initiatives

Groups such as the G20 and regional coalitions can coordinate climate actions in the absence of U.S. participation. Additionally, cities, corporations, and subnational governments should take the lead in implementing local mitigation efforts.

b- Enhance Accountability and Monitoring

Transparent reporting mechanism and independent verification systems can help maintain pressure on all countries to meet their climate commitments by ensuring that progress is tracked accurately, shortcomings are exposed, and states are held accountable before the international community.

c- **Promote Clean Energy Innovation**

Investment in renewable technologies, energy efficiency, and carbon capture should be accelerated by other major powers and the private sector to close the gap left by the US, drive innovation, and keep global mitigation efforts on track.

d- **Diversify Climate Financing**

International funds should mobilize greater resources from the EU, Japan, and private investors to support vulnerable countries. Innovative financial instruments and public-private partnerships can also help compensate for the financial gap created by the U.S. withdrawal

e- **Global Advocacy and Awareness**

NGOs, civil society, and educational campaigns can sustain momentum for emissions reduction and adaptation strategies. They can raise public awareness, influence policymakers, and encourage communities to adopt climatefriendly practices even without strong U.S. leadership.

Conclusion

Trump's withdrawal from the Paris Agreement represents a significant setback for global climate governance. While the U.S. absence weakens collective action and funding, opportunities exist for other actors to fill the leadership void. Future success depends on cordinated international strategies, robust monitoring, technological innovation, and subnational initiatives. Without urgent adaptation, the world risks exceeding critical temperature thresholds, triggering irreversible environmental and socio-economic consequences. Effective climate action must continue, even in the absence of the world's former leader, leveraging global collaboration and innovation to mitigate climate risks.

The End