

Question no: 03Future of democracy in Pakistan:
Opportunities and ChallengesIntroduction:

Since Independence, democracy in Pakistan has oscillated between civilian rule and military interruptions. Pakistan has experienced repeated military interventions (1958, 1969, 1977, 1999) which disrupted the democratic continuity. Despite this democratic resilience has grown in the post 2008 era. The future of democracy depends on how Pakistan balances opportunities for democratic deepening while overcoming obstacles that hinder its development.

1) Historical background of democracy
in Pakistan

Pakistan inherited weak political institutions, a powerful bureaucracy and an over-developed military from the colonial state. Earlier constitutional delays in 1956, 1962 and political instability enabled military dominance. However, landmark developments such as the 1973 constitution

restoration of democratic framework through parliamentary democracy and Eighteenth amendment indicate a gradual democratic learning process.

2) Opportunities for democratic growth in Pakistan

i) Constitutional continuity and parliamentary supremacy

For the 1st time in history, Pakistan has witnessed multiple peaceful democratic transitions back in 2008, 2013, 2018 and 2024, thus strengthening parliamentary legitimacy. The Eighteenth amendment restored federalism, reduced presidential authoritarian powers and enhanced provincial autonomy.

The 18th amendment marked a decisive shift from centralized authoritarianism to cooperative federalism.

(Constitutional and political history of Pak-Hamid War)

ii) Rise of political awareness and youth mobilization

With a large youth population and digital connectivity,

political awareness has increased dramatically. Social media, political rallies and civic movements have expanded political participation beyond elite circles, thus strengthening the democratic consciousness.

(iii) Strengthening role of civil society organizations

Civil society groups like PILDAT, FAFEN and lawyer's movement have promoted electoral transparency, rule of law and constitutionalism, thus playing a pivotal role in consolidating democratic values.

civil society acts as a buffer between the state and citizens.

(Shrat Hussain: Governing the Ungovernable)

is Decentralization through Federalism

Under the 18th amendment, provincial empowerment enhanced democratic inclusion by addressing the long-standing grievances of smaller provinces, like especially in KPK and Balochistan, thus creating a fertile ground for democratic norms to flourish.

N) Vibrant media and judicial activism

Despite pressures, Pakistan's media and judiciary have historically acted as checks on executive power, simplifying public scrutiny of governance. Judicial interventions and investigative reporting have often exposed malpractice and corruption, strengthening democratic oversight.

3) Challenges hindering democratic development

a) Civil-military imbalances

One of the major challenges in democratic development is military's political influence which have repeatedly interrupted democratic evolution through coups. Military dominance in policymaking and security overshadows civilian supremacy — limiting democratic institutional growth.

No democracy can mature unless unrelated institutions dominate related ones.

(Dr. Hasan Askari Rizvi)

b) Weak political parties and dynastic politics

Political parties remain personality-centric, dynastic and internally undemocratic. It limits opportunities for policy-based politics as leadership is self-centric.

c) Weak civilian institutions

Civil institutions such as judiciary, electoral bodies and bureaucracy lack full autonomy and accountability. Weak institutional checks and balances allow political elites to manipulate systems for personal gains, thereby creating hurdles for democratic growth.

d) Political polarisation and lack of consensus

Deep political polarisation and mistrust among major parties weaken democratic culture. Intense rivalry often translate into animosity rather than constructive debate - hindering consensus on democratic reforms.

e) Persistent socio-economic inequalities

In Pakistan, high poverty, inequality, and low literacy limit meaningful public engagement in democratic processes. Socio-economic marginalisation reduces political participation and undermines democratic accountability.

Conclusion:

The future of democracy in Pakistan lies between institutional consolidation and structural fragility. While constitutional continuity, federalism and judicial activism offer strong opportunities for democratic growth, the civil-military imbalance, weak governance and socio-economic exclusion remain serious impediments for democracy.

Question no: 05

National Integration in Pakistan

Introduction:

National integration refers to the process of creating a shared national identity, political loyalty and socio-economic cohesion among diverse ethnic,

Linguistic and regional groups. In Pakistan, national integration remains both a necessity and a challenge. Its strength depends on adherence to certain core principles and the relative impact of political and economic factors.

1) Principles of national integration in Pakistan

(a) Shared national identity and ideology

One of the principles of national integration in Pakistan is its shared national identity and ideology. Islam, national symbols and shared historical narratives serve as a unifying elements.

b) Constitutionalism and rule of law

A shared commitment to the 1973 constitution, equal citizenship and supremacy of law forms the legal foundation of national unity. Constitutional guarantees of fundamental rights foster trust between the state and citizens.

c) Federalism and provincial autonomy

Given Pakistan's ethnic and regional diversity, federalism is essential for integration. The Eighteenth Amendment strengthened provincial autonomy, thus helping to reduce marginalization among smaller provinces.

d) Ensuring Socio economic justice

For national integration, balanced regional development, fair resource distribution i.e. NFE awards and access to education and employment are vital to reducing alienation and strengthening national cohesion.

e) Respect for cultural and linguistic diversity

In a culturally distinct region like in Pakistan, recognition and protection of linguistic, ethnic and cultural identities promote voluntary integration rather than forced assimilation.

f) Inclusive political participation

Inclusive political processes — free elections, representative institutions and local governments enable citizens to feel ownership of the state, thereby reinforcing

national integration.

3) Political factors affecting national integration

a) Denial of political participation

Inclusive representation in parliament, local governments and state institutions creates loyalty to the federation. Denial of political mandate to East Pakistan in 1970 elections led to disintegration in 1971 highlighting the political costs of national disunity.

b) Repeated military interventions

Repeated military interventions disrupted democratic continuity and weakened civilian institutions, undermining trust between state and society. For instance, military rule in Balochistan in 1970s and 2000s intensified alienation rather than integration.

c) Weak local government system

The absence of local government limits grassroots participation and reinforces feelings of neglect. Repeated dissolution of local bodies after elections weakened political integration at the community level.

4) Economic factors affecting national integration

a) Regional economic disparities

Unequal development between provinces fuel resentment and feelings of deprivation. Punjab's relative development compared to Balochistan deepened perceptions of exploitation.

b) Resource distribution through NFC awards

Equitable distribution of resources between federal and provinces strengthens integration. The 7th NFC award increased provincial shares and reduced fiscal grievances.

c) Rural-urban economic divide

Economic imbalance between rural and urban areas generate social polarization. Rural development in Sindh contributed to rural-urban political tensions.

5) Comparative analysis: Political vs Economic factors

Political factors matter more than economic factors because economic grievances

can be addressed through political accommodation. It is the political exclusion that transforms economic issues into identity conflicts. Also, historical disintegration of East Pakistan proves this fact that roots of political national disintegration ^{was} ~~were~~ primarily political in nature.

Conclusion :

National integration in Pakistan is influenced by both political and economic factors; however, political inclusion and democratic governance play a more decisive role. Sustainable national integration requires strong democratic institutions supported by inclusive economic development.

Question no: 06

Pakistan's foremost national interest _____ challenges to its climate

Introduction :

Climate change has emerged as one of the most serious non-traditional security threats facing Pakistan. Despite contributing less than 2% to global greenhouse gas emissions, Pakistan

consistently ranks among the top 10 most climate-vulnerable countries. The frequency of floods, droughts, heatwaves, glacial melt, and water scarcity has transformed climate change from an environmental concern into a core national interest that is affecting Pakistan's economy, food security and national security.

Climate change is no longer a future threat; it is a present danger for Pakistan.

(Economic Survey of Pakistan)

1. Understanding climate change as a national interest.

National interest, traditionally focused on territorial integrity and military security. However, contemporary security includes economic resilience and environmental sustainability.

As UNDP mentioned in Human Security Report,

Non-traditional threats like climate change now pose a greater danger to states than conventional wars.

For Pakistan, climate change threatens;

- Water availability
- Internal national cohesion
- Economic stability
- Agricultural sustainability

2. Major climate change challenges facing Pakistan

Due to climate change, Pakistan is facing following climate ^{change} challenges;

a) Water Scarcity

Pakistan depends heavily on the Indus Basin, fed by Himalayan and Karakoram glaciers. Due to melting of glaciers, it leads to severe water shortages.

Pakistan has crossed the water scarcity threshold - $< 1000 \text{ m}^3$ per capita.

As per the World Bank, water insecurity is Pakistan's gravest climate-induced threat.

b) Increasing frequency of floods

Erratic patterns of monsoon and glacial lake outburst floods have intensified flooding. The 2022 floods affected 33 million people, caused losses exceeding 30 Bn\$ and

displaced millions — posing a humanitarian and governance crisis.

c) Food insecurity

Agriculture contributes around 20% of GDP and employs over 40% of the labor force, climate variability affected crop cycles, irrigation and yields.

Floods damaged cotton, rice, and wheat crops thus increasing inflation and import dependence.

d) Climate-induced migration

Environmental degradation forces internal migration, straining urban centres and aggravating unemployment, poverty and law and order issues.

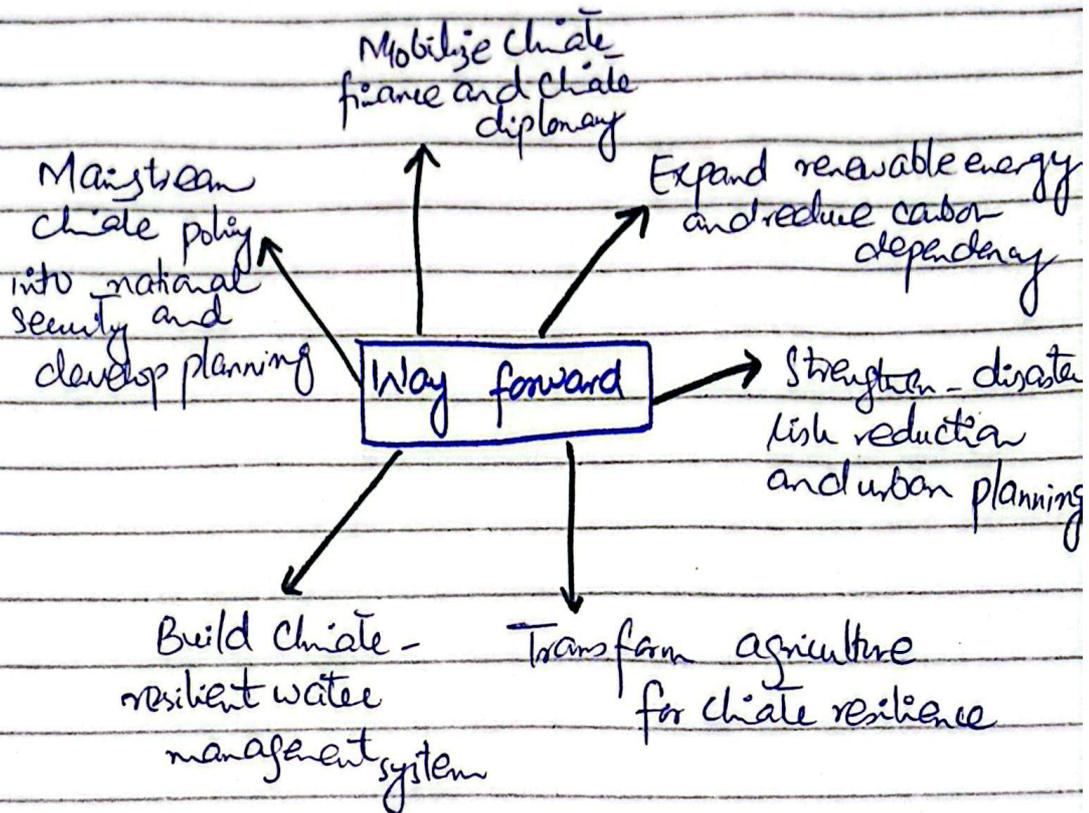
Rural to urban migration after flash floods has increased pressure on cities like Karachi and Lahore.

e) Coastal degradation

Rising sea level threaten Pakistan's coastline particularly in the Indus Delta, causing 'loss of livelihoods.

Sindh's coastal districts face displacement due to mangrove loss and seawater intrusion.

4. Way forward: making climate action Pakistan's national strategy



Conclusion:

Climate change threatens Pakistan's water security, economy, food system and social cohesion, making climate action the foremost national interest. Without mainstreaming climate resilience into governance, Pakistan risks facing a compound crisis of survival.