

JAN 5, 26

Day: MONDAY

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PAKISTAN AFFAIRS

QNO21:

Critically examine the political strategy of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan for the protection of Muslim interests in British India. How did his approach differ from the methods adopted by the Indian National Congress?

1. INTRODUCTION:

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan (1817-1898) was the premier architect of the Muslim renaissance in British India. Following the 1857 war, he rescued the Muslim community from systemic marginalization through his "Trinity of ideas": loyalty to the British, modern scientific education and political abstinence. This strategy was not merely a reaction to colonial rule but a visionary roadmap that transformed a demoralized community into a self-aware nation, laying the intellectual foundations for the Two-Nation Theory.

2. POLITICAL STRATEGY FOR THE PROTECTION OF MUSLIM INTERESTS:

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was characterized by pragmatism and deep understanding of the changing socio-political landscape:

(i) RECOLONIZATION WITH BRITISH:

To dispel the perception that Muslims were the sole instigators of the 1857 revolt, he authored "Asbab-e-Baghawat-e-Hind" (The Causes of Indian Revolt). He argued that British ignorance of Indian culture was the primary cause, thereby mitigating official hostility.

(ii) THE ALIGARH MOVEMENT:

He believed that political power without educational parity was futile. By establishing the MOA College in 1875, he created a class of modern Muslim intellectuals capable of competing for civil services roles and administrative influence.

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(iii) ARTICULATION OF THE TWO-NATION THEORY:

Originally, a proponent of Hindu-Muslim Unity, the "Hindi-Urdu Controversy" (1867) convinced him that the two communities have diverging cultural and political paths. He was the first to use the word "Nation" for Muslims in a modern political sense.

(iv) ADVOCACY FOR SEPARATE MUSLIM REPRESENTATION:

Fearing that a Western-style parliamentary democracy would lead to permanent subjugation of the Muslim minority by a Hindu majority, he advocated for "separate electorates and nomination systems" rather than open competitive exams.

3. COMPARISON OF APPROACHES:

Sir Syed vs INC: (Indian National Congress)

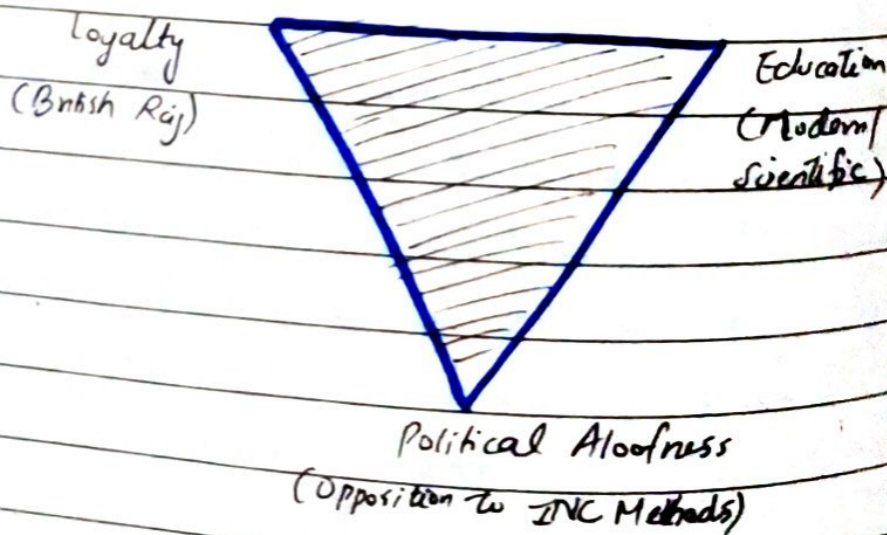
Sir Syed's Political methodology was fundamentally at odds with INC (1885). While the INC championed "Western-style democracy" and "one-man, one vote", Sir Syed rejected this as a mechanism for permanent Hindu majority.

rule over Muslim Minority. Philosophically, he promoted the Two Nation Theory contrasting the INC's vision of a single Indian nationality.

Strategically, Sir Syed advocated for "political abstinence" and unconditional loyalty to the British to secure "breathing space" for Muslim Education, whereas the INC employed administrative matters, Sir Syed opposed open competitive exams for civil services (fearing a Hindu Monopoly) and instead favoured a system of nominations to ensure communal representation, a direct contrast to the INC's demand for merit-based competitive entry.

4. VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF ALI- GHARI STRATEGY:

SURVIVAL OF MUSLIM INTERESTS



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5. CRITICAL EVALUATION:

While Sir Syed's strategy was successful in creating a new leadership (Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Inayatullah Khan) and restoring Muslim dignity, it faced criticism on two fronts:

5.1. Communal Divide:

Critics argue that his emphasis on separate identities sowed the seeds of communalism that eventually led to partition of India.

His reforms primarily targeted the aristocratic and urban middle classes, leaving the rural Muslim masses largely untouched in the initial decades.

6. CONCLUSION:

Sir Syed's "Strategic Pragmatism" transformed a demoralized community into a self-aware nation. By prioritizing educational empowerment over political agitation, he safeguarded Muslim interests from majority domination. His two-nation theory became the ideological corner stone of Muslim separatism, making him the primary intellectual architect of the journey toward Pakistan.

Q No 3: Evaluate geo-economic significance of Pakistan's connectivity initiatives under the Belt and Road framework. Has the evolving regional alignment in Asia reduced Pakistan's strategic relevance?

1. INTRODUCTION:

In 2026, Pakistan's strategic posture is defined by a transition from a traditional security-centric focus to a more robust geo-economic framework. Central to this shift, is the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship pilot project of the global Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) that aims to transform Pakistan into a regional connectivity hub. Despite the rise of competing regional alignments in Asia, Pakistan's strategic relevance remains substantial, anchored by its unique geographic location at the crossroads of the China, Central Asia and the Middle East.

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2. GEO-ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF PAKISTAN'S CONNECTIVITY INITIATIVES UNDER BR FRAMEWORK.

The significance of Pakistan's connectivity initiatives under BRI is multi-faceted, impacting trade, energy and regional integration.

2.1. Regional Tradehub and Transit Economy:

Pakistan serves as the shortest land route from landlocked Central Asian Republics (CARs) and western China to access the Arabian Sea. By 2026, projects like the Trans-Afghan Railway and Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) Railway are actively pursued by synergize these strengths.

2.2. Energy and Industrial Modernization:
~~has shifted~~ / CPEC phase II (2026-30)
has shifted focus toward Special Economic
zones (SEZs) such as Rashakai, and
business-to-business (B2B) linkages to
boost industrial output.

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2.3. Strategic Infrastructure and
Gwadar Port:

Gwadarport is the linchpin
of Pakistan's maritime strategy, acting
as potential bridge for global

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trade and a gateway to African markets, completed projects like Eastbay Expressway and the New Gwadas International Airport have significantly improved logistics and maritime capabilities.

2.4. Digital Connectivity:

The development of cross-border ~~fiber~~ fibre optic networks under CPEC is modernizing Pakistan's digital landscape, facilitating e-commerce growth and high-tech smart infrastructure for border trade.

trade.

3. EVOLVING REGIONAL ALIGNMENT IN ASIA AND PAKISTAN'S STRATEGIC RELEVANCE:

While new regional alignments have emerged, they have evolved Pakistan's role rather than reduced its relevance.

3-1. Competing Corridors:

Initiatives like Indian Middle-East-Europe Corridor (IMEC) and North-South Transport Corridor (NSTC) present alternatives for regional trade. However, Pakistan's route remains the most direct for specific regions, ensuring

it stays on "active supply chain hub" if internal stability and security for investors are maintained.

3.2. Balancing Great Power Rivalries:

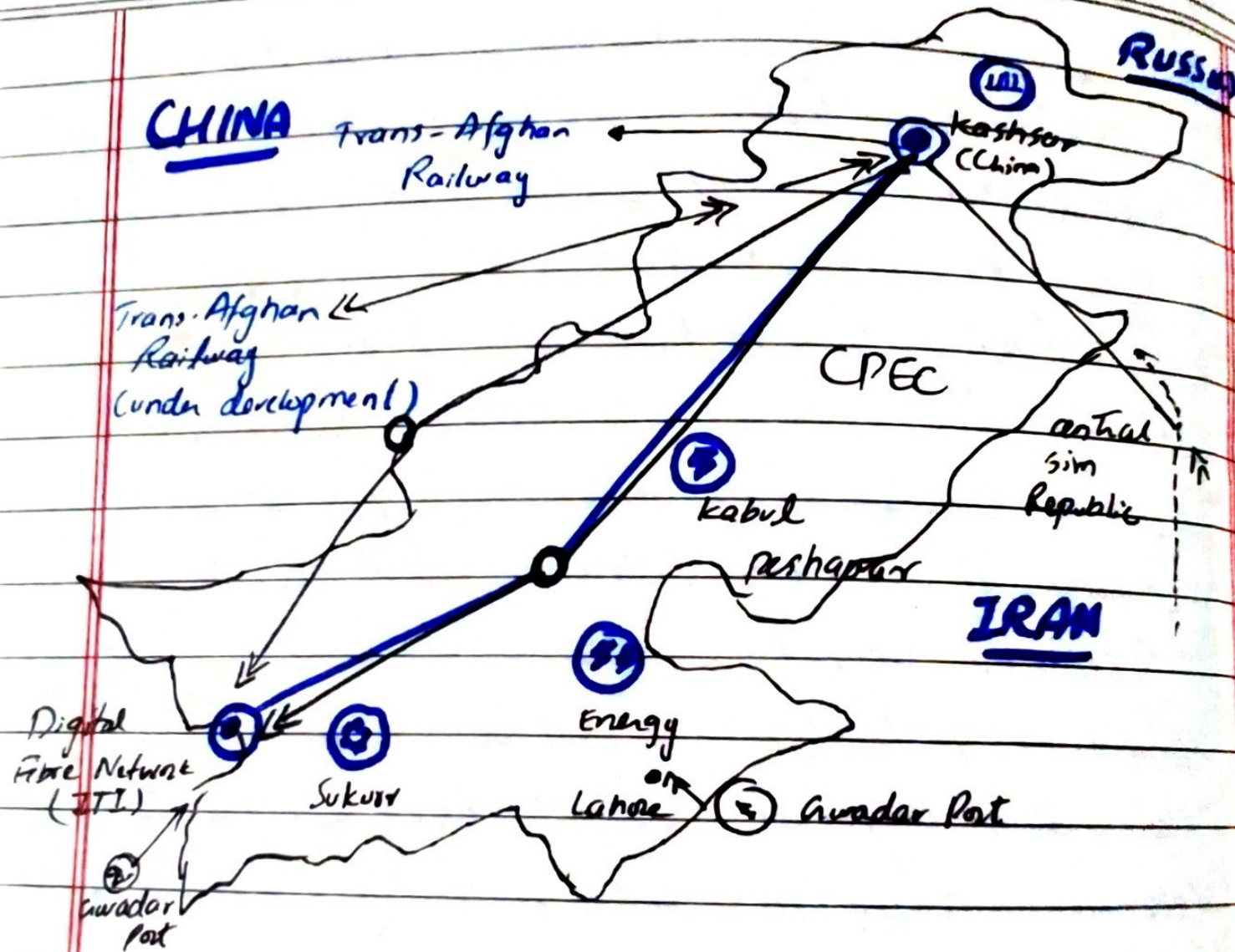
Pakistan's strategy in 2026, emphasizes ~~complementary~~ engagement. Instead of binary choice between the U.S. and China, Islamabad is positioning itself as "middle power" that can hold regional fault lines together through mediation and stability-oriented diplomacy.

3.3. Central Asian Outreach:

As Russia remains pre-occupied, Pakistan has intensified its role as a "trade bridge" for cars, seeking to link CPEC with expanding Central Asian Railways and pipelines like "TAPI".

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TRADE & TRANSPORT CORRIDORS

4. CONCLUSION :

Pakistan's connectivity initiatives under the BRI have solidified its status as a vital geo-economic actor, transforming it from a passive transit state into a central hub for regional integration. While the evolving regional alignments in Asia introduce competition, they haven't diminished Pakistan's strategic relevance; rather, they have necessitated a more nuanced, "outcomes-oriented" diplomacy that leverages its geography to bridge diverse interests. For Pakistan to fully realize its potential by 2030, it must prioritize internal economic discipline, security of foreign projects and sustained regional outreach.

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Q No 1: Assess the role of Pakistan's security establishment in shaping the country's foreign security policies. To what extent has it influenced Pakistan's international standing.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Historically, Pakistan's security establishment has been the primary architect of foreign and security policy, driven by "seige narrative" regarding India and Afghanistan. By 2026, this role has expanded under a hybrid governance model, with the military central to geo-economics and strategic diplomacy. While this ensures a unified national responses, it projects a "hard power" image that often complicates Pakistan's democratic standing and diplomatic flexibility.

2. ROLE OF SECURITY ESTABLISHMENT IN SHAPING FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICIES:

The security establishment's influence is characterized by its control over "covert" policy areas and its emerging role in economic diplomacy.

2.1. Architect of Strategic Doctrines:

The military remains the lead entity in formulating responses to traditional threats.

The National Security Policy (NSP) (2022-26), while introducing a "citizen-centric", continues to rely on the establishment for its implementation regarding territorial integrity and internal security.

2.2. Leading Geo-economic and Investments:

Under the "Munir Doctrine" in (2025-26), the establishment has painted boards geo-economics. Through the special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), the military has taken a direct role in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) from Gulf allies, essentially merging national security with economic survival.

3. MANAGEMENT OF KEY

EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS:

3. INFLUENCE ON INTERNATIONAL STANDING: A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT

The extent to which the establishment has influenced Pakistan's global reputation is a dual-edged sword.

3.1. POSITIVE INFLUENCE:

RESTORING STRATEGIC CREDIBILITY:

3.1.1. Demonstrated Military Capability:

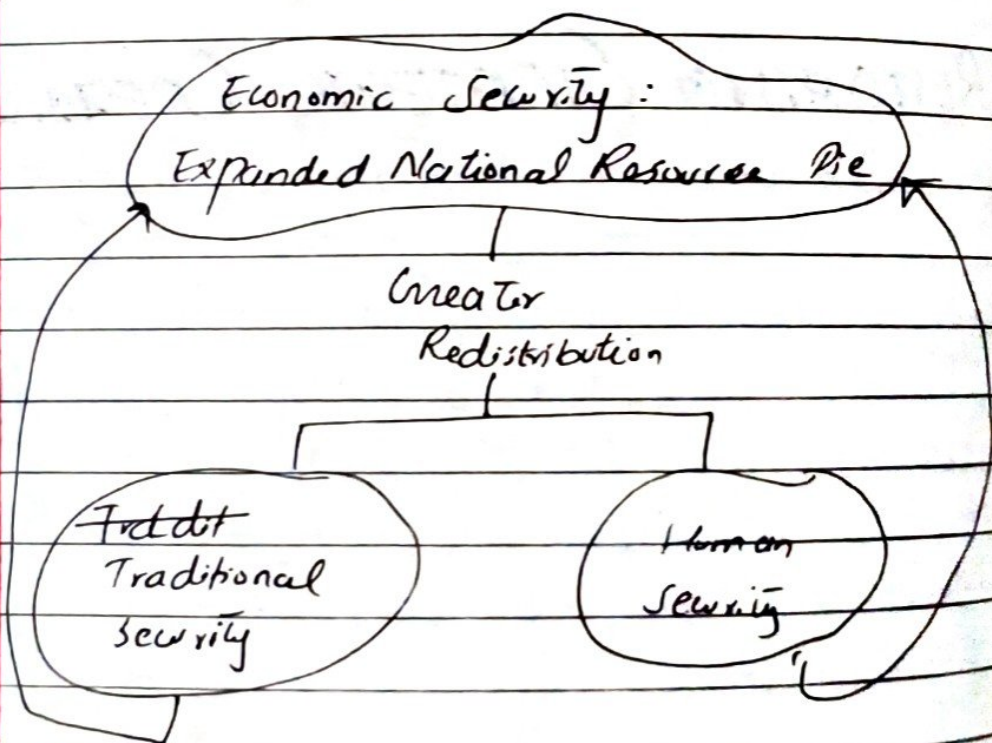
Intense 4-day clashes with India in May 2025 (Muskoo-Pt. 1) reportedly showcased Pakistan's operational readiness and air superiority, restoring strategic credibility that had been questioned due to domestic economic woes.

3.1.2. Regional Stabilizer:

Pakistan's role in counter terrorism (collaborating with Turkey and managing the "War on Terror" legacy) positions it as a vital stakeholder in regional peace.

3.1.3: Dependency Risks:

Despite the push for self-~~defence~~ reliance, the establishment's reliance on "development partnership" (like SIFC) rather than "assistance" still keeps Pakistan tied to the strategic interests of its benefactors, potentially leading to a "rentier state" model.



4. CONCLUSION:

In 2026, Pakistan's security establishment remains the anchor of its foreign policy, evolving from conventional defense to high-stakes geo-economics. While this, "security-first" approach restored strategic deterrence following in 2025 crises, it has entrenched a hybrid model that hinders Pakistan's global "soft image".

Q No 08:

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Technological innovation is increasingly viewed as a driver of economic growth. Examine Pakistan's potential to achieve technology-led development through policy and institutional reforms.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Technological innovation is increasingly viewed as a primary driver of economic growth, shifting nations from resource-dependent models to knowledge-based economies. For Pakistan, a country with a massive youth bulge and a rapidly growing digital footprint, technology-led development is no longer optional but a strategic necessity to ensure long-term resilience and competitiveness.

2. PAKISTAN'S POTENTIAL FOR

TECHNOLOGY-LED DEVELOPMENT

Pakistan has a young, large population and a rapidly growing digital landscape, offering a conducive environment for technological advancement.

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2.1. Demographic Dividend:

A significant portion of the population is under 30, a tech-savvy demographic ready to drive innovation and adoption.

2.2. Growing IT sector:

The IT and IT-enabled services (ITES) sector has shown robust growth, with a higher no. of freelancers and increasing exports, indicating entrepreneurial spirit.

2.3. Digital Infrastructure Expansions

Investments in broadband connectivity and mobile phone penetration have laid a basic foundation for digital inclusion.

3. POLICY AND INDUSTRIAL

REFORMS:

Achieving technology-led development requires targeted and sustained reforms that foster an innovative ecosystem.

3.1. EDUCATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT:

A skilled workforce is backbone of a Tech economy.

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- 3.1.1. Curriculum Modernization
 - 3.1.2. TVET Revitalization
 - 3.1.3. Industry - Academia Linkages

3.2 REGULATORY AND GOVERNANCE REFORMS:

A stable and predictable regulatory environment attracts investments and encourages innovation.

- 3.2.1 Ease of Doing Business.
- 3.2.2. Data Protection and Privacy Laws
- 3.2.3. Digital Infrastructure Investment

3.3. ~~2nd~~ FINANCIAL AND INVESTMENT INCENTIVES:

Access to capital is crucial for scaling tech ventures.

- 3.3.1. Venture Capital (VC) Ecosystem Support
- 3.3.2. Start-up Funding
- 3.3.3. Financial Inclusion.

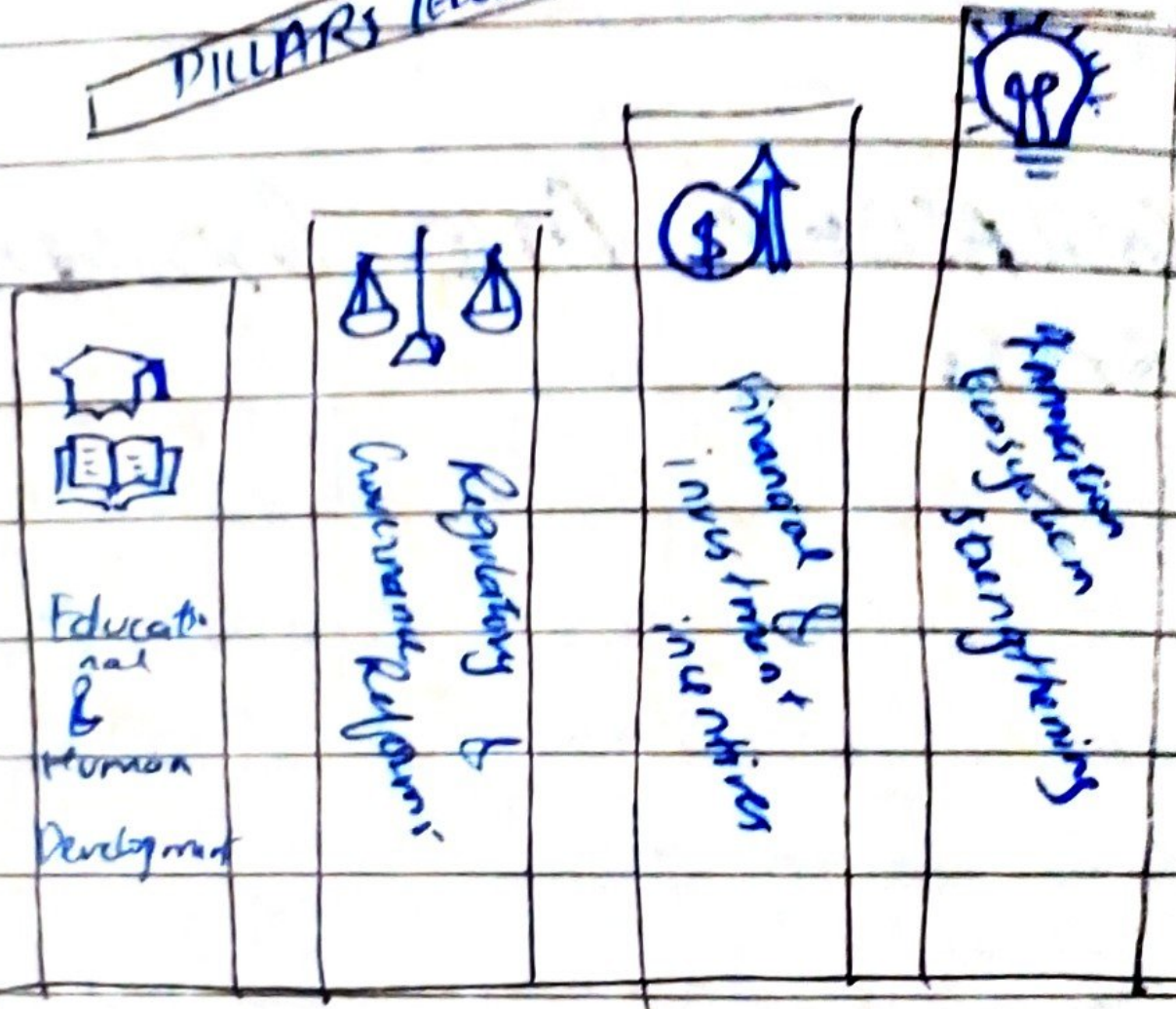
3.4. INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM STRENGTHENING.

- 3.4.1. Incubators and Accelerators
- 3.4.2. R & D Tax Credits
- 3.4.3. Public Sector Digitization

PILLARS OF TECH-LED IN PAKISTAN

DEVELOPMENT

PILLARS (ECONOMIC GROWTH)



DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE & CONNECTIVITY

4. CONCLUSION:

Pakistan stands at a crossroads where its "youth bulge" can either become a liability or the engine of a digital revolution. While the "Digital Nation Pakistan Act" (2025) and growing IT exports offer hope, the transition to tech-led development depends entirely on the government's ability to sustain institutional reforms and bridge the human resource gap. By prioritizing a knowledge economy, Pakistan can finally achieve the sustainable growth envisioned in its "Vision 2025".