

Question # 2

{ Climate Change as a Non-traditional Security Threat to Pakistan's Implications }

1- Introduction

Due to the severe damage causing ability, climate change is now considered as a non-traditional security threat to Pakistan. It has surpassed the limit of danger posed by military oriented conventional security threat. Former UN secretary general Ban Ki Moon rightly said:

Climate change has no border respect, no distinction of rich and poor,...

~ Ban Ki Moon

This quotation fits perfectly well in the condition of Pakistan. Its implications in socio-economic and political domain has exposed Pakistan's failure to combat it and the challenges it poses to Pakistan.

Climate change events like extreme flooding, glacial lake outbursts, intense heatwaves, droughts etc. are a serious threat to the existence of Pakistan. Although some institutional measures have been taken but still it persists as a biggest challenge to handle with.

2- Climate Change as a Non-traditional Security Threat — An overview

Non-traditional security threats are those threats which do not involve a direct military confrontation but it has the potential of causing damage upto the conventional threat limit. These include natural disasters, climate change, terrorism, cyber warfare etc. Among all these non-traditional security threats climate change is now becoming vulnerable.

Climate change is no more a scientific prediction of future. It is happening right now.

~ Antonio Guterres

Pakistan is one of the worst affected of climate change. Despite having <1% contribution to the green-house gases, Pakistan is among the top 10 most vulnerable country to fully face the brunt of climate change.

3. Socio-Economic Implications of Climate Change for Pakistan

3.1- Social Implications of Climate Change

a) Loss of life

Climate change induces uncontrollable climatic events such as floods, avalanches and heat waves, each posing greater threat than the other. 2022 Floods caused ~1700 deaths. Death toll of 2015 flood is also in hundreds.

This year summer heat wave also caused almost 50 deaths across

Sindh — as per reported by Ministry of Climate Change Pakistan.

b) Diseases Eruptions and Health Issues

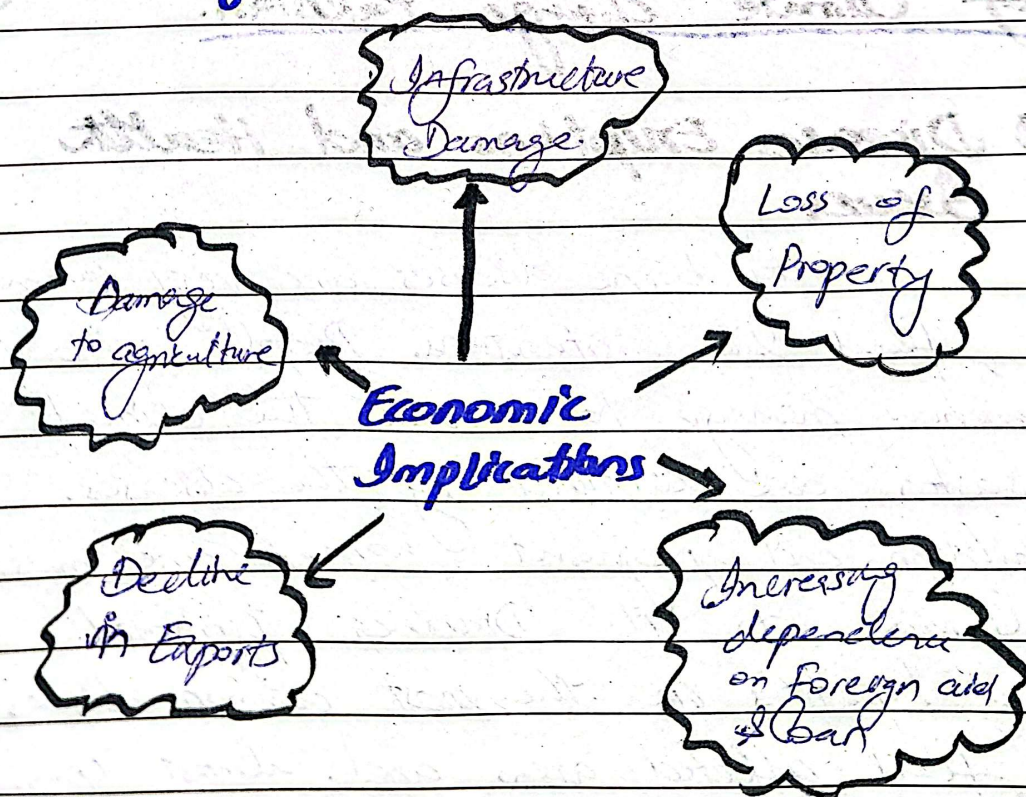
Water borne diseases are very common in flood like situations. People who somehow manage to survive the climate disasters are captured by the diseases.

Children and pregnant women are most vulnerable to it. Diarrhea, typhoid and hepatitis are the most common disease in flood affected areas and almost 400,000 to 800,000 people die every year due to these water borne diseases in Pakistan.

c) Internal Displacement

Internal migration or internal displacement is another serious implication of climate change. As per World Bank Report 2023 on climate affected countries, the number of internally displaced person in Pakistan is much more than internal displacement caused by war or terrorism.

3.2 Economic Implications of Climate Change



4. Political Implications of Climate Change for Pakistan

a) Deterioration of Center-Province Relations

Climate change events can also cause a conflict between center and provinces over resource distribution and development issues. The provinces which face much damage due to climate disaster are more likely to put blame on the center for mitigation and preparedness and providing less funds to provinces.

b) Inter-Provincial Conflicts

Climate change events like droughts and floods can initiate inter-province conflicts as well. Due to increasing heat waves, droughts are now common to Balochistan and Sindh. In this way, there arises conflict upon the building of dams in any other province or on canal making issues as the provinces already facing water scarcity will further be pushed toward death. Such a conflict was seen in canal making project in Punjab province and Sindh protested.

(c) Possibility of War with Neighboring countries

The most hot topic of climate change is water related. Either water becomes too much in the form of floods or it becomes too less causing droughts and deteriorating agriculture. So the climate change can also initiate a conflict or war between the neighboring countries. For example, Pakistan and India - water War. India often unilaterally takes decisions related to water flowing to Pakistan by announcing dam making or diverting the water flow and hoarding water. Pakistan has already announced that Weaponization of water in any form will be considered as an act of war - Pakistan. So the climate change can also induce war between the neighbouring countries.

5. Pakistan's Institutional Response to Climate Induced Challenges

5.1. Pakistan's Policy on Climate Change

Policy on climate change (PCC) was introduced for the very first time

in 2012 to address the climate related issues and to take steps regarding the reversal of climate change.

PCC was updated in 2021 to add further things such as **clean energy policy** - (moec.com.pk)

5.2. Billion Tree Tsunami Project

Under the afforestation drive a project of Billion Tree Tsunami was initiated in 2020 by Federal government. Provincial governments also planted 10 million trees in KP and Punjab.

5.3. Diplomacy for FCC (Fund for climate change)

Pakistan paid high level visits to different countries and also participated in global climate events such as conference of Parties (COPs), UN Framework on climate change convention (UNFCCC) and others to get climate fund because of its extreme vulnerability to climate change. World Bank 2023 report mentioned Pakistan's 2022 flood loss to be exceeding 30 Billion Dollars.

5.4. Build Back Better Policy

To deal with the effects of climate change, a Build Back Better policy was

launched to rebuild the infrastructure, in a better way as climate resilient infrastructure.

5.5 Pakistan's Disaster Risk Management Authority and MCC

Pakistan has made a disaster risk management authority at the national, provincial and district level for mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery mechanism, to deal with disasters even induced by climate change. Pakistan has also established the ministry of climate change to specifically deal with the issues of climate change.

6. Conclusion

Climate change is now a much bigger threat than the traditional security threats as no place is safe and no other country could intervene to stop the climate catastrophe. Developing countries like Pakistan are facing more implications of climate change in the form of shattering economy and loss of lives and property. Challenges of climate change are too many which need to be addressed in time.